

9:00 a.m. – Friday, October 25, 2019

Earline opened the meeting. Opening Introductions of members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bishop Jim Gonia, VP Earline Bohling, Secretary Susan Mitchell, Treasurer Dennis Reynolds, Diana Biggs, Terry Cole, Jay Voth, Ray Ferry, Pr. Dave Palma-Ruwe, Debra Frank Dew, Pr. Terry Schjang, Wyatt Smith, Pr. Sara Wirth, Jeff Fairfax, Pr. Julie Brooks, Pr. Reba Kiger-Kolasch, Todd Herreid, Bunga Manarung

STAFF PRESENT: Pr. Sarah Moening, Deacon Erin Power, Pr. Leslie Welton, Janice Ladd-Horkey, Kristen Lee, Ruth Hoffman (via Zoom), Peter Severson, Pr. Michael Tassler, Pr. Dana Peterson

ABSENT: Staff: Deniese Estrada, Pr. Kent Mueller (on leave), Member: Amelia Decker,

GUESTS PRESENT: Pr. Nicole Ferry

Devotions presented by Pastor Reba Kiger-Kolasch and Jeff Fairfax – Psalm 103 and opening prayer

Addition to Consent Agenda

Todd moved, seconded by Diana, to add 3 names to Consent Agenda – Motion carried.

Laura Stephenson (Call to Extended Service), Michael Tassler and Emily Ewing (On Leave from Call)

All items in the Consent Agenda were approved as below:

Approved all minutes from May through Aug., 2019

Approved Synod Call for Rev. Dana Peterson, Interim Director of Evangelical Mission

Approved Interim Call for Rev. Sara Wirth at King of Glory, Arvada, CO

Approved Call for Extended Service – Laura Stephenson

Approved On Leave from Call - Pr. Michael Tassler

Approved On Leave from Call - Pr. Emily Ewing

9:15 a.m. Sarah Moening Presentation– Excellence in Leadership

10:25a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Break

10:45 a.m. – Michael Tassler - Update on 3E - (Educate, Equip, Enact) the Lilly Foundation

We anticipate a second grant will be awarded to the Rocky Mountain Synod for \$1,000,000 and of that total amount, \$700,000 will be for RMS and \$300,000 will be for the Grand Canyon Synod. We should hear confirmation of the grant in January, 2020.

A new pillar (program) is being added: Vital Right-Sized Ministry. 3E will add a 4th staff member: the DEM. 3E is requesting more governance from the Executive Committee as this second grant will add complexity to the work.

Reports of Officers

Bishop’s Report – Expressed gratitude for his 3–month sabbatical which ended the first week of August. Our RMS Theme: “Be Transformed” - Theme for the next Synod Assembly: “Church Becoming”

Treasurer's Report – Dennis Reynolds

Our financials are down for this fiscal year.

Discussed Synod's current Health Care Plan – Gold Plus – Motion by Dennis, seconded by Ray, to continue on the same plan with Portico for this year. **Motion carried.**

Staff was asked to submit their budget requests to Deniese Estrada by December 1st.

12:00 – 12:45 – LUNCH BREAK

12:45 p.m. – Continued Reports of Officers

Secretary's Report – Susan Mitchell

Amendments to the Rocky Mountain Synod Constitution – Non-Required: take to Assembly in May, and Required: effective immediately (following Churchwide Assembly, Aug. 2019) – The Required Amendments will be put into our Synod Constitution, sent to the Churchwide Office and placed on the RMS website.

Motion made by Dave, seconded by Ray, to vote that the Non-Required Amendments to the Synod Constitution which have been recommended by the Office of the Churchwide Secretary be approved and sent to the May 2020 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly for a vote by the voting members in attendance. Synod Council is recommending these Non-Required Amendments. **Motion carried.**

Motion made by Jay, seconded by Ray, that the amendment to a Continuing Resolution in the Rocky Mountain Synod Constitution that Ruth Hoffman, Executive Director of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of New Mexico requested, be made to correct the term "Boards" to "Policy Committees." **Motion carried.**

Working with Congregations on amendments to their constitutions

Vice President's Report – Earline Bohling

Staff Handbook has been updated. There was discussion of the changes.

Motion made by Terry Cole, seconded by Diana to approve the Staff Handbook as presented.

Motion carried.

Announcement by Pastor Dave Palma-Ruwe – he has accepted a call to be the pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, beginning the first Sunday in Advent, Dec., 2019. He has served 25 years in the Rocky Mountain Synod. Synod Council expressed their thanks for his years of pastoral ministry in our Synod and for serving on Council and the Executive Committee.

Strategic Plan Exercise led by Bishop Jim

1:50 p.m. - Report from Tina Kvitek – Regional Gift Planner

Bishop Jim and Earline (and all in the meeting) expressed appreciation for the work she is doing. Updated Council on her visits and gifts in progress.

Motion made by Todd Herreid, seconded by Diana to go into Executive Session. **Motion carried.**

2:04 p.m. - SYNOD COUNCIL IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Todd, seconded by Jay, to end Executive Session. **Motion carried.**

2:25 p.m. – SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING - OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bishop Jim told Council that Dana is serving as Interim DEM (half time) – and a search is underway for finding a fulltime DEM.

Dennis announced that he will be stepping down as Synod Treasurer in January, 2020. He has served in this position since 2004. Everyone expressed their appreciation for his service.

Jeff read a poem from the book On the Mountaintop – written by Sky Ranch campers. “Bubbles”

2:28 p.m. – Messiah Mountain Retreat Center Update by Jay

Need septic system improvements– Messiah Community Church bears the financial burden of this. We are working with engineering, with Roger Miller at the Messiah Community Church, and with the County. Dennis reported that there is roof damage on both buildings, and the insurance company is working on this. Bishop Jim reported on conversations held at Theological Conference with representatives of our 2 camps. Other issues need to be addressed – safety risk issues need to be identified and remedied. And we need to ask Messiah Community Church if they will continue to fund these things before the retreat center is deeded to RMS. Proposal is that we seek a mission site developer – the person would be under contract for 2 years; we would seek funding for this. And once we receive the property, we would know what we need to do about the site’s readiness and its programming. Leslie told us that she has spoken with Churchwide and received some ideas and names to contact about these issues.

Motion made by Todd, seconded Reba, that we continue with Jim’s plan to move forward with plans to hire Kyle Larson to make a report for each of the inspected items so that we then can move forward with the plan to acquire Messiah Mountain Retreat Center. **Motion carried.**

2:57 p.m. – BREAK

3:15 p.m. Reconvened meeting

Erin would like to have a small group of Synod Council members serve on a committee to give feedback on how the 2020 Synod Assembly plans are shaping up. Volunteers: Reba, Ray, Wyatt

3:24 p.m. - Ruth Hoffman, Executive Director, Lutheran Advocacy NM (via Zoom)

Earline led all of the Synod Council in expressing our thanks for her advocacy work over the years. Bishop Jim expressed our appreciation for her influence on policy and working with the Santa Fe Roundhouse (state legislators). Many shared memories of interacting with Ruth and her advocacy work our Synod.

3:35 p.m. – Peter Severson – Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Colorado

He is looking for a new synod council liaison person or two to be a part of the Policy Committee, to replace Dennis who is retiring as Synod Treasurer. Bunga Manarung volunteered.

Earline asked those who wanted to share a transformational event in their life. Several members told their stories.

Sarah asked for a member who could go to Gillette, WY, for a congregational vote. Diana asked for a member who could go to the Arvada congregational vote this Sunday in her place.

Bishop Jim and others told the council members about the funding problems at New Beginnings Worshipping Community – ministry in the Colorado Women’s Correctional Institution. Pr. Terry Schjang is searching for funds. Due to circumstances that occurred during her sabbatical, the annual major funding raising event was not held. Bunga offered her help.

Motion made by Terry Cole, seconded by Jay, to provide emergency funds this year to New Beginnings in an amount not to exceed \$10,000, if needed. Discussion followed. Bishop thinks it will be important for synod council to review all the ministries that the synod is supporting currently when we meet in Feb. **Motion carried.** Motion made by Jay, seconded by Terry Cole, that the New Beginnings funding come from the Synod’s Mission Fund. **Motion carried.**

4:37 p.m. – MEETING ADJOURNED. Closing and dinner prayer by Sara Wirth.

The meeting will continue at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, October 26, 2019

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Mitchell
Synod Secretary

MINUTES – SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING

SAT., OCTOBER 26, 2019

9:10 a.m. – Saturday, October 25, 2019

Earline called the meeting to order.

Opening Worship and Holy Communion

Pr. Reba Kiger-Kolasch & Jeff Fairfax

Members present: Bp. Jim Gonia, VP Earline Bohling, Secretary Susan Mitchell, Treasurer Dennis Reynolds, Pr. Matthew Weber, Diana Biggs, Terry Cole, Jay Voth, Ray Ferry, Wyatt Smith, Pr. Sara Wirth, Pr. Julie Brooks, Pr. Reba Kiger-Kolasch, Bunga Manurung, Jeff Fairfax, Debra Frank Dew, Todd Herreid, Pr. Terry Schjang, Pr. Dave Palma-Ruwe

Staff present: Pr. Sarah Moening, Pr. Ron Beckman, Deacon Erin Power, Pr. Dana Peterson, Kristen Lee

Members and Staff absent: Member: Amelia Decker, Staff: Ruth Hoffman, Peter Severson, Tina Kvitek, Janice Ladd-Horkey, Deniese Estrada

Guests present: Uhoby Rakotomalalaia & 2 students

9:18 a.m. – Presentation by Uhoby Rakotomalalaia - Auraria Campus Ministry

Website - aurariacampusministry.org - to sign up for their e-newsletter

9:34 a.m. – Update on some of our other campus ministries – Rev. Leslie Welton

Other Campus Ministries: There are 10 campus ministries in the RMS

Colorado State University (CSU) – Building project underway. Food & Housing Insecurity.

Greeley Campus – UNC – mortgage paid off; frees up \$20,000 yr. for programming

Univ. of WY – Laramie – congregation-based campus ministry

Grand Junction – Ecumenical by design – Sunday night worship

Denver University - DU – Ecumenical -

Prince of Peace, Logan, Utah – Utah State Univ.

NMSU – Las Cruces – Peace Lutheran – Pr. Jared Carson

Albuquerque – UNM Univ. of New Mexico

Discuss about starting (re-start) a campus ministry at Salt Lake

No campus ministry in El Paso – needs to have local interest

9:52 a.m. – Presentation by Pr. Ron Beckman – RMS Campaign

“Better Together – The Next Faithful Step” Name of the Campaign

Requesting 3 people from Council to be on the Advisory Board & chair committees.

Leadership Challenge Gifts are being requested – from Synod Council and others (\$5,000 +)

Checks to RMS to the campaign and soon will be able to donate online

10:20 a.m. – Synod Authorized Worshipping Community (SAWC) in Boulder County, CO

Presentation by Pr. Nicole Garcia, Mission Developer, Doug Reeves, Guidance Team Leader, and Carl Forsberg. Name of the church will be Westview.

New mission start – focus on reaching out to non-profit organizations who want to rent space

The building has a worshipping sanctuary, large fellowship room and a large community hall,

8 offices, pastor’s office, parking. Stress no gender-based wording but traditional service Sun. a.m.

Sat. night, informal worship style & music. Funding source: \$2.5 million proceeds of the sale of

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church. 60% of the members are coming over. Governing structure:

monthly mtgs. Consensus-based; many people involved in decision-making.

10:58 a.m. - BREAK

11:10 a.m. - Zoom Meeting with Kurt Rager – Albuquerque

Candidate of Choice for Lutheran Advocacy Ministry – New Mexico position opening at the retirement of Ruth Hoffman. Welcomed him. Noted by Bishop Jim after the Zoom: Ruth is working 4/5 time, and we need to think about how long before the position could go back to fulltime.

11:20 a.m. – Pr. Julie Brooks - Presentation on Compensation Guidelines

Pr. Julie Brooks, Pr. Sara Wirth, and Janet Phillips have worked on this report. Recommending adjustments to salaries. A survey is being prepared. The worksheet needs to be reworked. Synod guidelines on the worksheet have a low-to-high range gap. Possible direction: raise the low end of base salary (from \$45,000 up to \$50,000) and then remove the annual increase based on years of service and just offer cost-of-living increases. Side issue: need to advocate for affordable housing and health care. Jeff pointed out that 1/1/20 new minimums will apply for non-rostered staff at churches.

11:43 a.m.

Earline asked for devotions leaders for the Feb. Synod Council Meeting
Leslie, Matthew and Wyatt volunteered. Wyatt will use Matthew's guitar.

Jay questioned whether the Executive Committee meets in secret. He wondered if the minutes are open to the Synod Council. Pointed out that the synod constitution only lists one duty: personnel issues. Earline commented that we will make the minutes available.

11:48 a.m. MEETING ADJOURNED.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan H. Mitchell
Synod Secretary