

LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD, ELCA
SYNOD COUNCIL
Draft Minutes
May 11, 2019

The Lower Susquehanna Synod Council met for its regular meeting on Saturday, May 11, 2019, in the Board Room of the Pennsylvania United Church Center, 900 S. Arlington Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17109. Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present:	Bishop James S. Dunlop Lucinda L. Bringman	Thomas E. McKee Joseph M. Stepansky
	Matthew B. Best Dana J. Blouch-Hanson Joel S.B. Folkemer Dawn O. Frees Virgil L. Gibson Kay A. Hinkle Jennifer R. Lau	Linda J. Long Jillian E. Riddle Timothy J. Seitz-Brown Stephanie M. Strauss Allen P. Stump Zachary J. Weiss
Staff present:	Robert C. Blezard Debbie M. Clark	Richard E. T. Jorgensen Jr. Marsha L. Roscoe
Members excused:	Eric N. Anderson Emma L. Johns	Stella Ludwig Carlotta C. Strevig
Liaison excused:	Fred Bohls Jeremy Filus	Lois A. Griffiths
Staff excused:	Jennifer Hope-Tringali Elizabeth G. Martini	Charlie R. Roberts III

Pastor Thomas McKee read from Luke 24:13-35, a section entitled "On the Road to Emmaus." He noted that this is one of his favorite scriptures and his text for the sermon he preached at Matema Beach, Tanzania, when he signed the renewed covenant with the Konde Diocese on behalf of our synod. We are on the road together as a synod. God gives us the gifts we need for the journey, God's Word, the Sacraments, the community of faith, and the presence of our Risen Lord. God guides and directs our journey and leads us forth according to God's will to do God's mission in this place. He led the members of Synod Council in prayer.

CONSENT AGENDA

Allen Stump moved:

ADOPTED: That the Consent Agenda be adopted.
SC19.05.27.

That the Synod Council approve the minutes of the April 6, 2019, meeting of Synod Council;

That the Synod Council appoint to the Candidacy Committee David Hostetter for a first five-year term, expiring 2024;

That the Synod Council appoint to the Audit Committee Terry Snyder for a first three-year term, expiring 2022;

That the Synod Council reappoint to the Stewardship Education and Mission Support Table the Rev. Kevin C. Stout and Linda M. Bennett for second three-year terms, expiring 2022 and appoint the Rev. Matthew B. Best for a first three-year term, expiring 2022;

That the Synod Council grant on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Michael K. Fischer, effective May 23, 2019, until May 23, 2020; and

That the Synod Council continue the Rev. Martine Joseph on on-leave-from-call-family-leave status for one additional year, from June 19, 2019, until June 19, 2020.

SYNOD COUNCIL ACTIONS

Bishop Dunlop moved the following Synod Council call:

ADOPTED: SC19.05.28. That the Synod Council renew the Synod Council call of the Rev. Pamela M. Illick to serve as pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Rouzerville, effective June 1, 2019, until May 31, 2022, under the terms of synod administration for renewal, pending positive approval by the congregation.

Bishop Dunlop moved:

That the Synod Council instruct the office of the treasurer to distribute the “Where Needed Most” proceeds from the Always Being Made New (ABMN) campaign in proportion to the shortfall to the goals set at the beginning of the campaign for the Lower Susquehanna Synod Ministries.

Bishop Dunlop explained that we never established a methodology for distributing undesignated funds for the ABMN campaign. The campaign exceeded the goals set for the ELCA and so there is no need to distribute additional dollars to that portion of the campaign. The only area that exceeded in our local campaign was local disaster relief. The remaining areas came up short in differing amounts, so this proposal would allow the money to be distributed based on the shortfalls, in proportion. Approximately 41% to the camps, 30% to the LSS Mission Fund, 19% to Synod Hunger, 5% to Seminarians and 5% to Youth and Young Adult. These are not the original goal percentages but rather the percentages based on the shortfall to the goal. These are approximate because we will not know the final numbers until we get the final totals at the end of June. Currently we have approximately \$68,000 in “Where Needed Most” proceeds from the ABMN campaign.

The motion was before the council.

ADOPTED: SC19.05.29. That the Synod Council instruct the office of the treasurer to distribute the “Where Needed Most” proceeds from the ABMN campaign in proportion to the shortfall to the goals set at the beginning of the campaign for the Lower Susquehanna Synod Ministries.

Pastor Thomas McKee moved:

That the Synod Council approve the Articles of Agreement for Renewed in Grace Cooperative Ministry of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Highspire, and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Steelton.

Stephanie Strauss, council president of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Highspire, informed the members of Synod Council that completing the Articles of Agreement and seeking the approval of Synod Council was an exciting step for them after much discussion and much work on writing the Articles of Agreement. They are looking forward with great anticipation for the next phase of their life together.

The motion was before the Synod Council.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council approve the Articles of Agreement for Renewed in Grace SC19.05.30. Cooperative Ministry of St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Highspire, and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Steelton.

Pastor Folkemer expressed his concern that the minutes of the Executive Committee did not accurately represent the discussion about Synod Assembly that transpired at the Executive Committee meeting.

Pastor Joel Folkemer, vice chair of the Executive Committee, moved the following on behalf of the Executive Committee:

ADOPTED: That the amended proposed agenda for the 2019 Synod Assembly be recommended SC19.05.31. to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Vice Chair Folkemer moved the following on behalf of the Executive Committee:

That the Synod Council recommend the amended Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Pastor Thomas McKee moved the following amendment to the final sentence of Rule #9:

ADOPTED: That the last sentence of Rule #9 be amended to read: "The third ballot shall be scheduled early in before the close of the Friday afternoon the Saturday morning session."

The members of Synod Council discussed at length whether, in Rule #5, a hard copy should remain an option as a way to submit the biographic form for those nominated as bishop. No one offered a motion to delete the option of submitting a hard copy.

The motion to recommend the amended Rules of Procedure for the Election of a Bishop with the additional amendment to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption was before the council.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend the amended Rules of Procedure for the SC19.05.32. Election of a Bishop to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption.

Jennifer Lau moved the following motions on behalf of the Constitution Committee:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the Synod
SC19.05.33. Assembly amend the synod's constitution and bylaws by removing bylaw
S10.06.07. c. (the election of members to the board of directors of the Pennsylvania
Council of Churches), bylaw S11.01.05. (Church in Society Committee), and bylaw
S11.01.11. (Leadership Support Committee).

S10.06.07.

~~e. The election of members of the board of directors of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches
in a number to be determined by the constitution of said council;~~

S11.01.05.

~~The Committee for Church in Society shall be composed of no more than 12 persons. A
representative of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa) and of each of the social
ministry organizations on the territory of this synod shall serve as consultants. This committee
shall work with congregations, conferences, institutions, and agencies of this synod to help the
baptized carry out their baptismal affirmation to work to serve all people, following the example
of our Lord Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. This committee shall study
this church's theological and ethical analysis of social issues; relate this church's social witness
to the life of the congregations and to the ministry of members in daily life; encourage
communication among people throughout this synod who are committed to study, service, and
advocacy concerning social issues; and interpret and maintain, in partnership with the Domestic
Mission Unit, concern for advocacy and corporate social responsibility. This committee shall
advise the bishop on matters regarding this synod as a public church that witnesses boldly to
God's love. This committee shall work closely with the social ministry organizations of this synod.~~

S11.01.11.

~~The Leadership Support Committee shall be composed of at least 8 persons, both ministers of
Word and Sacrament and ministers of Word and Service as well as non-rostered laypersons. This
committee shall work in cooperation with the bishop to nurture faithful and effective rostered
persons and lay leaders in congregational, institutional, and synodical ministries. This
committee shall plan and carry out events and provide resources to meet these responsibilities.~~

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the Synod
SC19.05.34. Assembly amend bylaw S11.01.02. to change the name of the Bishop's
Congregational Mission Fund to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund (2X)
and the name of the Bishop's Congregational Mission Fund Committee to the Lower
Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee (2X).

S11.01.02.

~~The Bishop's Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee shall be
composed of 7 persons: the bishop and the treasurer of this synod and 5 members (one of whom
shall be an attorney) appointed by the Synod Council. Three of the appointed members shall be
lay voting members of congregations of this synod and 2 shall be ministers of Word and
Sacrament on the roster of this synod. The committee shall administer the Bishop's
Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The fund, established by the Synod
Council, shall be supported by bequests, trusts, endowments, planned and deferred gifts, assets
from closing congregations, gifts from merging and consolidating congregations, and gifts from
other congregations, individuals, and entities. The committee, Synod Council, and bishop shall
promote and encourage such gifts. The assets of the fund shall be invested in a manner consistent
with the purpose of the fund.~~

~~The purpose of the Bishop's Congregational Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund shall be to
provide initial funding support for the growth of Word and Sacrament ministries within the
territory of this synod, such as funds to acquire sites and provide grants to congregations who~~

have committed to specific plans to expand their ministries, and funds to provide grants to congregations who have elected to relocate or consolidate with other congregations. In addition to expenditures for the purposes described in this bylaw, the fund may make loans to congregations if, in the judgment of a majority of the committee, the purpose of the loan is consistent with the purpose described above and the loans are adequately secured. The ~~Bishop's Congregational~~ Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee may from time to time adopt rules and regulations governing administration of the fund, which rules and regulations shall at all times be consistent with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Lower Susquehanna Synod.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the Synod Assembly amend bylaw S11.02.01. to change the number of persons on the Consultation Committee from 6 persons to 10 persons.

S11.02.01. *The Consultation Committee of this synod shall consist of 6 10 persons.*

Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson asked whether the terms of the four additional persons to be elected could be staggered so that the entire committee would not be replaced at the same time, enabling the new members of the committee to benefit from the experience of those remaining on the committee. Pastor McKee stated that there are no constitutional constraints that would prevent the election of committee members to be staggered. It was the consensus of the council that if this amendment was adopted by the assembly, the additional four members of the committee would be elected at the 2020 Synod Assembly to six-year terms, enabling them to serve on the committee for three years with the current members.

Jennifer Lau moved the following on behalf of the Constitution Committee:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the Synod Assembly amend bylaw S12.02.01. to read: “The boundaries and number of conferences shall be determined by Synod Council ~~by 1990 and thereafter at six year intervals~~ and reviewed at least every six years.”

S12.02.01. *The boundaries and number of conferences shall be determined by the Synod Council ~~by 1990 and thereafter at six year intervals~~ and reviewed at least every six years.*

It was noted that if this is adopted by the 2019 Synod Assembly, the boundaries of the conferences would be reviewed in 2020.

Jennifer Lau moved the following on behalf of the Constitution Committee:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly that the Synod Assembly amend bylaw S12.03.01., second sentence, to read: “This conference assembly shall be held within the ~~sixty~~ ninety days prior to the regular meeting of the synod assembly.”

S12.03.01. *Each conference shall hold an annual assembly of its rostered ministers and lay voting members of the Synod Assembly. This conference assembly shall be held within the ~~sixty~~ ninety days prior to the regular meeting of the synod assembly. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing 14 days in advance. Those rostered ministers and lay voting members present shall constitute a quorum and be eligible to vote.*

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council amend the synod's constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions by removing continuing resolution S11.01. r.C.16. 2) (The Learning Ministries Team).

S11.01. r.C.16.

- 2) ~~The Learning Ministries Team shall be composed of no more than 10 persons who are experienced Christian educators who currently serve or who have served in congregational, institutional or middle judicatory settings of the ELCA or that of an ecumenical partner. The team shall be responsible for providing continuing education and resourcing of congregational leaders in keeping with standard and emerging faith formative practices. This shall include but not be limited to workshops and events in addition to electronic resources and social networking. The Learning Ministries Team shall work cooperatively with established ELCA partners such as the ELCA Youth Ministry Network and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg's Youth Ministry Certification School.~~

Pastor Timothy Seitz-Brown asked if the ministry previously done by the Learning Ministries Team is now being accomplished through the Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry. Bishop Dunlop answered, "Yes."

Virgil Gibson, chair of the Finance and Budget Committee, moved the following on behalf of the committee:

That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption the proposed budget for FY 2020.

Treasurer Joseph Stepansky reviewed the budget summary and the detailed budget. Vice President Lucinda Bringman urged the members of the Synod Council to gain a full understanding of the detailed budget so if questions are directed to them about any aspect of the budget, they will be able to provide answers. Bishop Dunlop provided information about the \$125,000 grant from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund for new mission and about the appeal that is intended to restore this grant money to the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund.

The members of the Synod Council discussed the grant from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. Pastor Joel Folkemer asked if the committee approved this grant. Vice President Bringman replied that they did not take official action to provide the grant, but they were aware of its inclusion in the proposed budget.

Stephanie Strauss informed the members of Synod Council about concerns she heard about the budget presentation at the 2018 Synod Assembly. One request was to have documentation about the actual expenditures from the last fiscal year. Another request was for a full reporting of the restricted funds.

Bishop Dunlop pointed to line 80600 interim support under human resources 66300 on page 12 of 14 in the detailed budget. There is \$40,000 proposed for interim support to provide flexibility for the bishop, whoever that may be, to have some flexibility in addressing staffing needs.

Pastor Joel Folkemer asked, "Will there still be grants awarded from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund?" The bishop answered, "Yes." Pastor Folkemer expressed his concern about not following the policy stated in our bylaws for distributing funds from the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund. The committee may feel as if it has no other option but to provide the \$125,000 grant, but, according to policy, the committee decides what grants to award. Vice President Bringman and Bishop Dunlop both stressed that the Synod Assembly possesses the highest authority. If the proposed budget is adopted, then the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee must award the grant. Secretary

McKee stated, that while the Synod Assembly is the highest authority, it must comply with its own governing documents.

Pastor Folkemer said that the process has not been handled well; therefore, he cannot support the motion.

Bishop Dunlop said that one way to handle this is to place the appeal in the budget. Another way would be to have the committee vote on awarding the grant.

Pastor Folkemer moved:

That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption the proposed budget for FY 2020, contingent upon the approval of the \$125,000 grant by the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee or upon decreasing the mission support given to our partners to the amount designated in the 2019 spending authorization (-\$21,842) and by reducing our mission support given to the ELCA churchwide expression by \$103,158.

Bishop Dunlop spoke against the motion, saying that causing our partners problems is not the way to solve our problems.

Pastor Folkemer and Virgil Gibson, who seconded the above motion, withdrew that motion.

Pastor Folkemer moved:

That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption the proposed budget for FY 2020, contingent upon the approval of the \$125,000 grant by the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee or upon placing an appeal to supplement new missions by \$125,000 in the budget.

It was noted that if the appeal does well, our synod would fulfill its budget. If the appeal does not gain traction, our Synod Council would need to adopt a spending authorization.

The amended motion was before the Synod Council.

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council recommend to the 2019 Synod Assembly for adoption proposed budget for FY 2020, contingent upon the approval of the \$125,000 grant by the Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee or upon placing an appeal to supplement new missions by \$125,000 in the budget.

REPORT OF THE BISHOP

Bishop Dunlop provided a written report.

REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

Vice President Lucinda L. Bringman submitted a written report. Vice President Bringman thanked Allen Stump for tending the door and Linda Long, Virgil Gibson, Pastor Richard Jorgensen, and Allen Stump for providing the refreshments. The vice president also thanked Dawn Frees and Linda Long for filling unexpired terms on Synod Council; Pastor Dana Blouch-Hanson and Stephanie Strauss for serving two full terms on Synod Council; and Emma Johns and Pastor Eric Anderson for fulfilling one term. She lifted up Connie Dunlop's retirement from teaching this June and apologized to Bishop Dunlop for his having to miss her retirement dinner, which will be held on Thursday evening of Synod Assembly. She asked the members of Synod Council about their desired seating arrangement at the assembly. Five

preferred reserved seating in the section designated for Synod Council. The following volunteered to be ushers at the Thursday evening service: Kay Hinkle, Dawn Frees, Virgil Gibson, and Jennifer Lau; to be a Communion Assistant at the Friday evening service: Pastor Richard Jorgensen, Allen Stump, Virgil Gibson, Dawn Frees, and Pastor Joel Folkemer; and to be an usher at the Friday evening service: Stephanie Strauss.

The vice president reminded the members of the Synod Council that they need to know and understand the process for the election of a bishop.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Treasurer Joseph M. Stepansky submitted a written report and a Statement of Operational Activities. He announced that mission support is on target for the first two months of FY 2019. We currently are running a deficit of \$36,000. Our external auditors have given us a draft report indicating that we had a clean audit. One deficiency was noted. We do not have enough staff to segregate the various responsibilities. The treasurer's office is currently looking for better ways to handle our 200 and 300 accounts, unrestricted designated and restricted funds, respectively.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD SECRETARY

Secretary Thomas E. McKee submitted a written report. Bishop Dunlop asked Pastor McKee if this will be the last report that the Synod Council will receive from him. Pastor McKee acknowledged that it is his last official report to Synod Council. He thanked the members of Synod Council for the privilege of serving as synod secretary for the past twenty years and for the partnership they shared advancing God's mission in our synod. He asked the members of Synod Council to support the St. Barnabas Center for Ministry by sponsoring him in the Highmark Walk for Healthy Communities. The proceeds will provide scholarship aid for the St. Barnabas Summer Day Camp Ministry.

REPORT OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Synod Council Executive Committee provided draft minutes of its April 24, 2019, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES OF SYNOD COUNCIL

Assembly Planning Committee distributed minutes of its May 8, 2019, meeting.

Constitution Committee submitted minutes of its April 8, 2019, meeting.

Finance and Budget Committee provided minutes of its April 22, 2019, meeting.

REPORTS OF THE LIAISONS

Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) offered no report.

Lutheran Men in Mission liaison, Fred Bohls, provided no report.

Lower Susquehanna Synod Women of the ELCA did not provide a report.

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE STAFF

Deacon Marsha Roscoe provided a written report as Director for Mission Interpretation.

Charlie Roberts submitted a written report of the Office for Faith Formation and Youth Ministry.

Pastor Robert Blezard did not provide a written report.

Pastor Elizabeth Martini provided a written report.

Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali did not submit a written report.

Pastor Richard Jorgensen provided a written report.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Lower Susquehanna Synod Mission Fund Committee liaison, Jennifer Lau, submitted a Synod Council report.

REPORTS OF TASK FORCES

Toward Racial Justice Task Force liaison, Pastor Timothy J. Seitz-Brown submitted a list of the task force's offerings.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Committee of Reference and Counsel reviewed the Resolution to Recognize and Respond to the Plight of Central American Migrants adopted by Synod Council and offered an amended version of this resolution:

RESOLUTION TO IMPLEMENT THE ELCA AMMPARO STRATEGY IN THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD

WHEREAS, the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly overwhelmingly adopted a strategy on Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities or AMMPARO (based on the Spanish word "amparo," meaning the protection of a living creature from suffering or damage), in response to the plight of children who are forced to flee their communities because of complex and interrelated reasons, including chronic violence, poverty, environmental displacement and lack of opportunities, with a primary commitment of the strategy to uphold and guarantee basic human rights and safety of migrant children and their families; therefore, let it be

RESOLVED, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in Assembly direct the Synod Council to appoint a task force to implement the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's AMMPARO strategy within the Lower Susquehanna Synod in our synod and congregation expressions, with a progress report to be presented to the 2020 Synod Assembly.

Kay Hinkle, chair of the Committee of Reference and Counsel, moved:

ADOPTED: That the Synod Council accept the Resolution to Implement the ELCA SC19.05.40. AMMPARO Strategy in the Lower Susquehanna Synod as an amendment to the Resolution to Recognize and Respond to the Plight of Central American Migrants.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice President Bringman discussed the details of the Synod Assembly with the members of Synod Council. She urged the members of the Synod Council to go to the microphone to move the previous question if the discussion becomes repetitious.

Allen Stump, chair of the Committee on Memorials, shared with the members of Synod Council the three memorials we have received: Memorial to Restore Access to Affordable Healthcare to Churchwide Staff, Memorial Regarding Support for Humanitarian Aid to Palestinian Hospitals, and Memorial Regarding Engagement in the Holy Land.

Bishop Dunlop informed the members of the Synod Council that he hopes to bring to the Reorganizational Meeting of Synod Council at the close of the Synod Assembly a request for two Synod Council calls. These non-stipendiary calls are for Pastor Jennifer Hope-Tringali and Deacon David Hope-Tringali to serve as focused leaders for AMMPARO and Latin American Ministries. He desires them to continue on the active roster as they serve as missionaries for Latin America. As non-stipendiary calls, these calls would have to receive the approval of the Conference of Bishops. Some of their responsibilities would be to formalize their work with cultural immersion experiences, to build relationships that help our synod better understand the persons who are coming across our borders, to increase our synod's awareness of the plight of these immigrants, and to offer immersion-in-the-Spanish-language to pastors and other congregation leaders.

Pastor Folkemer questioned the timing of bringing this to the reorganizational meeting when new members of Synod Council, who have not yet had any orientation, come to their first meeting. They would have difficulty understanding and voting on this matter. Bishop Dunlop answered that it is a timing issue for him. He would prefer that the Hope-Tringalis not go on leave from call. Their current calls expire on June 30, 2019. Pastor Folkemer requested the secretary to provide constitutional information about Synod Council and non-stipendiary calls in the pre-meeting packet. Pastor McKee reminded the members of the council that non-stipendiary calls cannot be extended solely for the sake of the convenience of the rostered ministers. The reason for the call being extended must address the needs of the church.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m. with Bishop Dunlop offering prayer in thanksgiving for Pastor Thomas McKee, secretary of synod and assistant to the bishop.

Thomas E. McKee
synod secretary
5/11/19