

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
Synod Council
Synod Office / Zoom Meeting
June 5, 2020**

Present: Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, Carla Borchardt, Rev Jonathan Vehar, Cynthia Wall, Deacon Kris Wollman, David Anderson, Erik Gilbertson, Rev. Lon Kvanli, Michael Miller, Rev. Tera Kossow, Tom Stotz, Jan Haugen-Rogers, Rev. Jim Fowler, Pam Seefeldt, Rev. Shelly Gehring, Rev. Layne Nelson, Joyce Vasgaard, Rev. Ryan Gage, Jim Iverson, Valarie Parsley, Bonnie Lange, Stan Jung

Staff: Lois Borchardt, Rev. Renee Splichal Larson, Rev. Jonathan Steiner, Kathy McHenry

Guests: Vicar Jonathan Old Horse, Caylee White Eagle

Borchardt called the meeting to order at 8:37 AM.

Pam Seefeldt led in a morning devotion.

Roll call and Introductions

Adoption of the Agenda

**MSC to adopt the agenda as presented.
SC.2020.06.01**

Adoption of the Minutes

**MSC to adopt the minutes from the March 20, 2020 meeting of the Synod Council.
SC.2020.06.02**

Treasurer's Report

The financial situation of the synod looks to be stable. The Executive Committee has been meeting regularly and has acted to cut expenses based on early trends. It is hard to determine the long-term impact of COVID-19 on congregations and, therefore, the synod.

**MSC to receive the Treasurer's Report.
SC.2020.06.03**

Bishop's Report

Synod Day

A day to celebrate the work of the South Dakota Synod has been designated for November 7, 2020. Events are being planned that will highlight the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, 40th anniversary of the first African American woman, and the 10th anniversary of policy change allowing for the rostering of people who are LGBT in partnered relationships.

COVID-19 Response

Congregations are responding to the COVID-19 in many creative ways. The wider church has also opened a COVID-19 response fund

Break

Jonathan Old Horse introduced Caylee White Eagle. They were able to share about the ministry happening at Woyatan Lutheran Church. Highlights include the sweat lodge and the construction of an outside area for traditional Lakota dance. Vicar Old Horse has been very active in the community and has performed a number of funeral services for members of the wider community.

Associate Reports

Pastor Splichal Larson: The work of the accompany congregations and leaders continues, primarily through Zoom. This includes walking with congregations through the call process and candidates for rostered leadership. After Avera transitioned its CPE program away from seminary students, the synod has worked with seminary students to find congregation-based CPE programs. The world of theological education continues to be in transition, especially with the availability of distance learning. Changes are being made in the first call assignment process. Seminary students ready for placement will be assigned to the synod of candidacy unless they have had arrangements to seek call elsewhere.

The call process for congregations has been complicated with COVID-19 and advisement to not meet in large groups. There has been a lot of engagement with the synod attorney to ensure that the actions that congregations take meet both the requirements of the constitution and state law.

A Memo of Understanding was signed with Luther Seminary to manage the internship program for students under the Kairos program. This comes with a \$3600 tuition fee to students; however, much of that cost has been able to be covered through the scholarship programs of the synod.

An opportunity for advanced theological education for lay leaders through Select Learning is opening today. This is an excellent opportunity for non-rostered leaders who want a taste of seminary education. This type of program will benefit lay-leaders in congregations.

Pastor Steiner: The Neighbors in Solidary Partners have received lots of exposure at the weekly Rostered Leader Zoom Meetings.

Woyatan Lutheran Church has been working on a ministry plan for how the center will best serve the ministry of Woyatan and the community. There are a number of ideas being dreamed about how it can become a true center of ministry and bridge-building between native and non-native people.

Borchardt reminded the council that at the August 2019 meeting, pledged \$15,000 to furnish the office space. This is a designated gift and has donor restrictions set by the Synod Council. It is being recommended that we lift the restrictions on the Synod Council gift so it can be used for the greatest need in the building.

MSCto re-designate the Synod Council gift to the Woyatan Retreat Center to the greatest need.

SC.2020.06.04

Stewardship in congregations is strong in churches that had strong stewardship practices before COVID-19. Congregations that didn't have as strong a program are experiencing a more difficult time. He is working with churchwide to offer online stewardship education for congregations.

Red River Leadership is a continued partnership with Red River Worship to provide leadership and worship aids to congregations. They are an invaluable tool for a moment when most congregations are engaged in digital-only worship.

Roster Matters

Sami Johnson has relocated to the East Coast following husband Josh Johnson as he enters full-time military service and is requesting on-leave-from-call status.

**MSC to grant on-leave-from-call status to the Rev. Sami Johnson effective 4/20/2020.
SC.2020.06.05**

Bishop Hagmaier is recommending that the Synod Council grant the request of Steven Martens for retired roster status effective 07/01/2020.

**MSC to grant retirement roster status to the Rev. Steven Martens effective 7/1/2020.
SC.2020.06.06**

Pastor Karen Russell will be leaving the ministry at Pine Ridge to move closer to family. A candidate has been identified to fill the position as Director. The Executive Committee has already acted to enter into an employment agreement; however, the Synod Council issues the Letter of Call.

**MSC to issue a Letter of Call to the Rev. Dan Johnson to serve as the Director of the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center.
SC.2020.06.07**

Congregation Constitutions

The Synod Council approves constitutions for congregations of the synod. Constitutions are reviewed by the Constitution Review Committee to ensure that they meet the requirements of the model constitution. The constitution for Brandon Lutheran has been recommended for approval.

**MSC to approve the amended constitution for Brandon Lutheran Church.
SC.2020.06.08**

Audit Committee

There is a vacancy on the audit committee.

**MSC to appoint Angie Hillestadt to the Audit Committee.
SC.2020.06.09**

Executive Committee

The committee has been very active since the last Synod Council meeting, most notably because of COVID-19 and the need to monitor the financial gifts of the synod closely. Of other note, the Executive Committee approved the employment offer for the Rev. Don Johnson to serve at the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center, approved scholarship funds for rostered leaders from the Listen God is Calling Appeal, and evaluated the deployed staff arrangement with Steiner deployed West river.

Strategic Plan

The synod staff is working with Mud Mile for the release of the strategic plan to the synod. The first round of design material will be sent back for revision.

Outgoing Synod Council

Much thanks for the ministry of the Synod Council and for those whose terms are coming to an end. As a thank you, the Executive Committee has designated a gift in your honor to the Woyatan Retreat Center.

Appointment of Vacant Positions

With the canceling of the Synod Assembly, there are positions that need to be filled. The Constitution outlines the ways that vacancies on different committees are filled. Generally, the Synod Council elects after nomination from conferences.

MSC to elect the following individuals, as nominated by conferences, to full terms:

Candidacy Committee:

Rev. Max Miller (Northern Plains)

Bill Mulder (Prairie Rivers)

Joel Black (Bear Butte)

Evangelical Outreach:

Rev. Jeff Sorenson (Crossroads)

Todd Hakl (Southeastern)

the Rev. Matthew Spoden (Northern Plains)

Multicultural Committee:

Rev. Janet Miller (Prairie Coteau)

Support Ministries:

Nancy Moose (Medary)

Kari Sorensen (Crossroads)

Rev. Erik Olson (Southeastern)

Rev. Erika Lehmann (Prairie Rivers)

Rev. Wilbur Holz (Bear Butte)

Consultation Committee:

Larry McHenry (At-Large)

Discipline Committee:

Mary Rice O'Donnell (At-Large)
Krisma Dewitt (At-Large)

Chapel in the Hills
Troy Eggum

Lutheran Social Services – Board of Directors
Rev. Becky Piper
SC.2020.06.10

Appointment of Synod Council

The Synod Council acts to fill vacancies that occur, until filled by the Synod Assembly for a full term. Since several outgoing members of the Synod Council are on the Executive Committee, and elections for the Executive Committee won't happen until the August meeting, it was decided that elections of new member would take effect August 14.

MSC to elect to the Synod Council, until the next Synod Assembly, the following individuals:

Caylee White Eagle (Youth Rep)
Rev. Ramona Hayes (Prairie Coteau, Clergy)
Dave Poppens (Crossroads, Lay Male)
Rhonda Hansen (Southeastern, Lay Female)
Rev. David Lund (Northern Plains, Clergy)
Dave Anderson (Prairie Rivers, Lay Male)
Malcom Chapman (Bear Butte, Lay Male)
SC.2020.06.11

Election of the Augustana Association

Augustana University requested that the Synod Council elect members of the Augustana Association. Nominations were made by conferences.

MSC to elect the following individuals to the Augustana Association for 2020:
Rev. Mike DeKraai, Rev. Nancy Quatier, Victoria Kingslien, Paul Peterson, Darlene Dulitz, Jody Weldberg, Rev. Elisa Berndt, Rev. Dirk Hagmaier, Valerie Parsley, Carie Kuntson, Threasa Hopkins, Diane Bombeck, Rev. Eldon Thurow, Rev. Randy Gehring, Donna Thurow, Sawyer Vanden Heuvel, Dillion DeBoer, Dr. Thomas Krause, Rev. Ben Eisele, Rev. Kristen Eisele, Scott Munger, Jill Munger, Chuck Oster, Doreen Rooning, Rev. LeShea Avery, Rick Avery, Deacon Kris Wollman, Rev. Dennis Fonkert, Rev. Brian Wasmoen, LeAnn Wasmoen, Rev. Erika Lehmann, Rev. Becky Senner, Diane Brandsrud, Ione Klinger, Brett Seland, Kelly Seland, Rev. Dwayne Hunzeker, Rev. Duane Neugebauer, Don Oyan, Randi Oyan, Phil Hogen, Marty Hogen

Alternates: Rev. Nancy Eckels, Delvin Feistner, Lois Feistner

SC.2020.06.12

St Dymas Outside Council

The Synod Council has a representative to serve on the Outside Council for St Dymas. The council works to support the ministry of the prison congregation that worships in two locations, Sioux Falls and Springfield.

MSC to appoint David Anderson to serve of the St Dymas Outside Council.

SC.2020.06.13

Future Meetings

Executive Committee August 13, 2020, over Zoom

Synod Council, August 14, 2020, over Zoom

Synod Assembly, June 4-5, 2021 in Sioux Falls

MSC to set a date for the Synod Assembly for June 4-5, 2021, in Sioux Falls, SD.

SC.2020.06.14

Meeting Takeaway

One of the challenges is to communicate with the synod about the ministry that is happening and the work of the Synod Council. What can be shared from Synod Council?

- Update on Woyatan Lutheran Church and the evolving ministry around the Indian Center
- Managing the roster of leaders, acting on requests for retirement, and on-leave-from-call.
- The faithfulness of congregation members in continuing to support our joint ministries.
- How supportive the staff has been to churches in getting resources during this time of change.

There was a question about Lutheran Outdoors, given the cancellation of summer 2020 camps. Paul Hanson, Executive Director of LOSD, joined to give an update. They are trying to be creative in how to support congregations at this time. There is a significant financial consequence to not having summer camp. However, early reports from camps that decided to hold camp have resulted in wide-spread COVID-19 transmission. LO feels they made the best choice for the safety of campers and staff.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectably Submitted,



Jonathan Vehar
Secretary