

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
Synod Council
Peace Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD / Zoom
March 15, 2024**

Present: Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, Dennis Thompson, Terry Johnson, Jill Beers, John Rasmussen, Rev. Jackie Braun, Marlee Braun, Gary Kaufmann, Deacon Christie Meier, Dave Poppens, Anne Rieck McFarland, Rhonda Hansen, Jake Hoffner, Rev. Jeff Otterman, Rev. David Lund, Kelly Nelson, Chad Nilson, Jeff Clark, Bonny Hansen, Rev. Becky Senner, Rev. Wilbur Holz, Jody Johnson, Juan Angel

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

Dennis Thompson called the meeting to order.

Rev. Jonathan Vehar read the Land Acknowledgement

Land Acknowledgment

South Dakota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America recognizes that the Oceti Sakowin (the Seven Council Fires of the Lakota, Dakota, Nakota), the Arikara, the Ponca and the Cheyenne, are the historic inhabitants of South Dakota; and South Dakota is the current home of the Cheyenne River Tribe, Crow Creek Tribe, Flandreau Santee Tribe, Lower Brule Tribe, Oglala Tribe, Rosebud Tribe, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Standing Rock Tribe, and Yankton Tribe.

We recognize that we are called to be in good relationship with our neighbors, that the tribes are sovereign nations, that there is a history of broken treaties and broken trust, and that there is lots of work to be done. And we also recognize that as Christians, we have faith in new life, in hope for mending what is broken, and in our calling through the Holy Spirit to do this work.

Seat New Member

Rev. Alyssa Mitchell of the Southeastern Conference has moved out of the conference. The conference has lifted up Rev. Jeff Otterman to fill the position.

**MSC to elect Rev. Jeff Otterman to the Synod Council to the unexpired term
vacated by Rev. Alyssa Mitchell.
SC.2024.03.01**

Pastor Elizabeth Platts of Peace Lutheran Church gave the opening prayer.

Roll Call and introductions were given.

Approve Agenda

The agenda is in Google Drive

**MSC to approve the agenda in the order as the chair deems most appropriate.
SC.2024.03.02**

Approve Minutes

The minutes from the November 3, 2023 synod council meeting were approved electronically.

**MSC to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2023 Synod Council.
SC.2024.03.03**

Reports

Treasurer’s Report

Terry Johnson gave a recap of executive committee action in February of closing out the 2023 Mission Plan (Fiscal Year End 01.31.2024) and revising the 2024 Mission Plan (Fiscal Year End 01.31.2025). The 2024 Mission Plan revisions were based on statements of intent from congregations and updated expenses. The executive committee also approved increasing mission support to churchwide from 41% to 42%.

Johnson presented the proposed 2025 Mission Plan (2.1.2025 – 1.31.2026) that will be presented at the 2024 synod assembly for approval.

	Adopted 2024	Revised 2024	Proposed 2025
Revenue			
Mission Support			
Undesignated Mission Support	1,803,094	1,763,515	1,807,603
SD Synod Mission Support	28,675	23,800	23,800
Total Mission Support-Congregations	1,831,769	1,787,315	1,831,403
Program Ministry Income			
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center Income	45,000	45,000	45,000
Total Program Ministry Income			
Other Income			
DEM Support Staff Income	10,000	10,000	10,000
Interest Income	10,000	50,000	50,000
SDS Travel LLC Income	5,000	5,000	5,000
Misc Income	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Other Income	26,000	66,000	66,000
Total Revenue	1,902,769	1,898,315	1,942,403
Expenses			
Churchwide Ministries	41%	42%	42%
Churchwide Support	739,269	740,676	759,193

Region III			
Region III Support	8,004	9,153	8,004
South Dakota Ministries			
South Dakota Partnership Ministries			
SD Ministries Support	11,757	9,996	9,996
Luther Seminary	71,989	70,241	71,974
Church Colleges (ELCA Pool)	6,228	6,077	6,227
Lutheran Social Services	71,989	70,241	71,974
Campus Ministry	126,942	123,861	126,916
Lutheran Outdoors	35,903	35,031	35,895
South Dakota Supported Ministries			
Heartland Ephphatha	6,228	6,077	6,227
Youth Ministry	7,200	7,200	7,200
Campus Ministry Capital	0	0	0
Good Samaritan Society	1	1	1
Chapel in the Hills	1	1	1
Woyatan Lutheran/Wambli Ska	19,000	19,000	19,000
Lutheran Planned Generosity	58,300	58,300	58,300
Total Shared Ministries	415,538	406,026	413,712
	Adopted 2024	Revised 2024	Proposed 2025
Executive Leadership			
Bishop	102,005	104,952	108,101
Assoc/Director of Ev Mission	10,849	12,596	12,974
Assoc-Mobility/Candidacy	84,596	87,333	89,953
Executive Staff Benefits	89,546	71,668	73,818
Exec Travel/Continuing Ed	36,800	40,800	40,800
Program Ministries			
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center-Director	99,257	90,259	92,967
Youth Gathering Synod Coordinator	0	0	0
Companion Synod Coordinator	18,521	19,322	19,902
Support Staff and Office			
Support Staff Salaries/Benefit	176,980	180,380	185,791
Synod Office Expenses	66,791	76,020	78,000
Augustana University Occupancy Fee	30,108	31,824	32,300
Synod Committees			
Synod Council	5,000	5,000	5,000
Support to Ministries Committee	3,100	3,100	3,100
Candidacy Committee	6,000	9,000	9,000
Multi-Cultural Ministry Committee	1,000	1,000	1,000
Companion Synods Ministry Committee	200	200	200

Evangelical Outreach Committee	1,500	1,500	1,500
Mission & Outreach			
Mission Congregation Start-up	4,000	4,000	4,000
Mission Strategy Table	2,000	2,000	2,000
Contingency	1,705	1,506	1,089
Total South Dakota Ministries	739,958	742,460	761,494
Total Expenses	1,902,769	1,898,315	1,942,403
Net Total	0	0	0

MSC to present to the 2024 Synod Assembly the proposed 2025 Mission Plan (2.1.2025-1.31.2026) for the South Dakota Synod SC.2024.03.04

Johnson recapped the endowment year-end financial statements. The 2024 distribution from endowment funds was increased to 5%. Historically it has been at 4%.

Partner Ministries

Heartland Ephphatha - Jason Andera

Jason and his wife have worked with the deaf and hard of hearing for 20 years. They provide service at Peace Lutheran at their 9:00 service. They also work with Church on the Street providing one interpreter through Augustana University. They also provide sign language classes. They are willing to help other congregations. Thank you to the synod for the support.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Constanze reported on the Council of Bishops. Discussed Digital Communion, Extending the Table and Expanding Participation. CLRC - renewed Lutheran Church, asked to review initial documents. Seven subgroups have been asked to come up with a proposal for Churchwide in 2025. 63 congregations raised their mission support. Michael Burk is serving as Bishop Pro Temp. Bishop Eaton is scheduled to return March 18, 2024. The Council of Bishops had intentional learning about our social statement. There are two public statements: Crisis in the Middle East and the Border Crisis. Staff Development is due in 2028. We are doing educational events to get us to 2028. Bound Conscience.

Associate to the Bishop Reports

Rev. Renee Splichal Larson

There is a document in the Google Drive

Mobility is similar to last November, but they are different. She is doing monthly SAM calls and interim minister calls. She is also doing monthly Region 3 zoom meetings. She also touched on annual reviews for congregations. The Senior Pastor Retreat had 30-35 participants. The First Call Retreat is May 5-7 with Mark Allen Powell. She is also working on a pilot program with Wartburg.

Rev. Jonathan Vehar

There is a document in the Google Drive

Thank you for this work. Box Elder is experiencing a budget shortfall. New start money is being released in May. \$33,000 has been saved for this purpose. Box Elder is a great place to share the good news of Jesus. Neighbors in Solidarity takes up much of his time. Most are in high poverty areas - pray for them- show up if possible. Stewardship initiative - no one size fits all. He wants to do monthly meetings for different topics.

Vice President's Report

Dennis Thompson went to the Synod VP meeting in Chicago. There is now a 3 year rotation. There were 40 there at Lutheran Center. The VP's are also doing a monthly zoom. They are working to standardize the language between conferences.

Executive Committee Report

Thompson reported out action items that the executive committee has done. Lois Borchardt is now full time with the synod. Gave a \$5,000 grant to Shepherds Table. January was cash management; two grants were given for continuing ed. February closed out FY 2023-24. Revised the 2024 Mission Plan. Grants for Jamie Dupree, Media & technology and Seminary & debt. March approved the 2025 Mission Plan, approved electrical for Woyatan, approved Lilly Grant interest to be used, Funds for continuing ed, any grants under synod id must be approved by synod council.

Written reports from Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson – Companion Synods and Rev. Dan Johnson - Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center are in Google Drive.

Old Business

Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center proposal for Board of Directors

Not much has happened. They have some structure and bylaws. Hope to have a full set of bylaws soon.

Continuing Resolution for Synod Council to adopt

The Continuing Resolution for Synod Council will be put in the board book.

MSC to adopt the continuing resolution

S11.0.A.24 The Executive Committee is authorized to act on behalf of the Synod Council, within the policies and procedures adopted by the Synod Council, except where limited by the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the synod. A summary of actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Synod Council.

SC.2024.03.05

New Business

Partner Ministries (cont)

Lutheran Planned Generosity

Kathy McHenry, executive director for Lutheran Planned Generosity highlighted:

We are not seeing trends across the country.

Doing work with endowment committees.

No stock gifts. We are seeing gifts to the Lilly Grants.

There are many upcoming endowment gifts.

Thank you for not keeping Lutheran Planned Generosity a secret

Digital Learning

Rev. Kari Webb discussed Digital Learning - Lilly Grant. There are three cohorts: Rostered Leaders, Christian Parish Leadership and SAM - more cohesive learning.

Extraordinary Gifts

The original designations for the extraordinary gifts from 2021 need to be updated. Synod executive staff reviewed designations present the following for approval:

#1-35460	Reserves	\$20,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35463	Rural Ministry Accomplishment	\$7,604.44	expenses paid for Rural Ministry Round Table and Rural Ministry retreat
#1-35465	Box Elder New Site Development	\$33,000.00	includes \$10,000 from ELCA; paid monthly stipend to C Nelson (6 mo x \$2,000)
#1-35466	Two by Two	\$3,304.47	\$2,000 each distributed to Church on the Street, Vecinos Unidos, First Lutheran African & \$695.53 for Woyatan door balance
#1-35468	Dialog Works-Engaging God's Future	\$5,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35469	Non Traditional Internship Site Support	\$4,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35471	DWU Leadership	\$10,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35472	AntiRacism	\$4,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35473	Continuing Education	\$4,000.00	nothing distributed
#1-35474	Coaching	\$2,000.00	nothing distributed

\$92,908.91

3/14/2024 Updated Redistribution Proposal

Woyatan Building Upgrades	\$20,000.00
Box Elder Mission Start	\$33,000.00
Stewardship Initiatives	\$10,000.00
Neighbors in Solidarity	\$29,908.91

\$92,908.91

**MSC to approve the redistribution of Extraordinary Gifts (SC.2021.03.10) as presented.
SC.2024.03.06**

Synod Assembly voting devices - Aaron Matson

V Poll is a web service - it is much less expensive. \$720 for the subscription. It is compatible with any web-based device: cell phone, kindle, iPad, etc. We will make sure Our Savior's can handle all of the devices. We will make sure congregations know that their voting members need to be able to use their own devices.

Bishop Election (2025 Synod Assembly)

The Bishop Election Timeline is available on the Google Drive

The Bishop Election Committee's role & responsibility is available in Google Drive and was reviewed. The synod council needs to appoint three members to this committee.

**MSC to appoint Carla Borchardt, Rev. Becky Piper and Rev. Michael DeKraai to the 2025 Bishop Election Committee.
SC.2024.03.07**

**MSC to present to the 2024 Synod Assembly for consideration to amend the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the South Dakota Synod to strike S9.04A18 and insert S9.04.A24, "Process of Identifying Potential Nominees Leading to the Election of a Bishop".
SC.2024.03.08**

**MSC to present to the 2024 Synod Assembly for consideration amend the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the South Dakota Synod to strike S9.04.B18 and insert S9.04.B24, "Rules for the Procedure for the Election of a Bishop".
SC.2024.03.09**

The June synod council meeting will appoint the committee for the synod self-study.

SD Synod Seminary Debt Refinancing program

Kathy McHenry reported that the seminary debt refinancing program is all paid. There is so much to celebrate. The report can be found on the Google Drive. In December 2023 we paid the off the last loans. Those pastors are now debt free.

Seminary Debt reduction committee appointment

The synod council appoints members to the seminary debt reduction committee. The is one position to be filled.

MSC to elect Deacon Penny Steinken to a 4-year term on the South Dakota Synod Seminary Debt reduction committee.

SC.2024.03.10

Roster Matters

Inform Only

Rev. Alan Blankenfeld - Revised Synod Letter of Call to serve as Director for Rural Ministries effective 1/01/24

Rev. Paul Erdal - Transferred into SD from Northeastern MN Synod effective 10/21/23

Rev. Nicole Martin -Transferred into SD from Florida-Bahamas Synod effective 1/01/24

Rev. Kay Reeb - Transferred into SD from Western ND Synod effective 01/01/24

Rev. Dell Sanderson - Transferred into SD from Southwestern MN Synod effective 03/08/24

Rev. Jonathan Steiner - Transferred to Southeastern PA Synod effective 11/17/23

Rev. Paul Svingen - Transferred into SD from Northwest Synod of Wisconsin effective 11/03/23

Rev. Gary Andrew Woodruff - Transferred into SD from New Jersey Synod effective 01/01/24

Other roster matters will be addressed in Executive Session.

MSC to enter executive session for roster matters.

SC.2024.03.11

Synod Council met in Executive Session.

Exit Executive Session

MSC to come out of executive session and report all actions taken in the minutes.

SC.2024.03.19

Actions Taken While in Executive Session

- **MSC to grant Rev. Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett On-Leave-from-Call effective 04/01/24**
SC.2024.03.12
- **MSC to grant Rev. Dell Sanderson retirement effective 6/01/24**
SC.2024.03.13
- **MSC to grant Deacon Randy Youngquist-Thurow retirement effective 11/01/24**

SC.2024.03.14

- **MSC to extend a Synod Council Letter of Call to the Rev. Kari Webb as the Director of Digital Community and Learning/Project Director, *Journeying Together in Christ* effective 1/01/24**

SC.2024.03.15

- **MSC to grant Rev. Justin Kozec On-Leave-from-Call effective 3/01/24**

SC.2024.03.16

- **MSC to grant Rev. Bailey Landa a letter of call to serve as Spiritual Task Director at Legends on Lake Lorraine effective 3/15/24**

SC.2024.03.17

- **MSC to grant the Rev. Del Sanderson approval to enter the call process for Colman Lutheran Church in accordance with *C9.07**

SC.2024.03.18

Congregational Matters

Baltic Lutheran, Baltic has a Constitution Approved by Jane Pfeifle on 12/17/23

MSC to approve the constitution of Baltic Lutheran Church, Baltic

SC.2024.03.20

St. John's, Hot Springs has a Constitution Approved by Jane Pfeifle on 2/20/24

MSC to approve the constitution of St. John's Lutheran, Hot Springs

SC.2024.03.21

Grace Lutheran, Sisseton has a Constitution Approved by Pr. Jonathan Vehar on 12/01/23

MSC to approve the constitution of Grace Lutheran, Sisseton

SC.2024.03.22

Walla Lutheran, New Effington is requesting to return to the ELCA

MSC upon compliance with S13.01.A, to request that the 2024 Synod Assembly receive onto the roster of congregations of this synod, Wall Lutheran Church, New Effington, SD.

SC.2024.03.23

Two Questions

Two questions were posed to the Council for reflection.

- A. What will you share?
- B. How will you share it?

Future Meetings

- A. Synod Assembly: May 31-June 1, 2024, Our Savior's Lutheran, Sioux Falls
- B. Synod Council: June 1, 2024 after the close of assembly, Our Savior's Lutheran, Sioux Falls
- C. Executive Committee: August 8, 2024, Sioux Falls
- D. Synod Council Retreat: August 9-10, 2024, Sioux Falls
- E. Executive Committee: October 17, 2024, 6:00, Synod Office, Sioux Falls

F. Synod Council: October 18, 2024, 8:30 am TBD

G. Synod Assembly: May 30-31, 2025, Our Savior's Lutheran, Sioux Falls

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier led the Synod Council in the closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Beers, secretary