

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
Synod Council
Grace Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls
March 14, 2025, 8:30 am**

Present: Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, Dennis Thompson, Jill Beers, Terry Johnson, Kristie Anderson, SAM (zoom), Rev. Michael DeKraai, John Rasmussen, Rev. Karl Breddin, Marlee Braun, Gary Kaufmann, Deacon Christie Meier, Thad Titze, Christy Harkness, Jake Hoffner, Rev. Jeff Otterman, Chad Nilson, Rev. Justin Van Orman (zoom), Jeff Clark, Bonny Hansen, Rev. Becky Senner, Rev. Wilbur Holz, Jody Johnson (zoom), Craig Pfeifle, Juan Angel, Danielle Toates (afternoon), Lois Borchardt, Kathy McHenry, Rev. Renee Splichal Larson, Rev. Jonathan Vehar

Dennis Thompson called the meeting to order.

Dennis Thompson read the Land Acknowledgement

Land Acknowledgement

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. Karl Breddin, Medary Conference

Rev. Jackie Braun of the Medary Conference has moved out of the conference. The conference has lifted up Rev. Karl Breddin to fill the position.

**MSC to appoint Rev. Karl Breddin to the Synod Council for the unexpired term
vacated by Rev. Jackie Braun.
SC.2025.03.01**

Opening Prayer - Rev. Siri Sorenson, Grace Lutheran Church

Roll Call and introductions

Forward any corrections to Lois at lorchardt@sdsynod.org

Approve Agenda

9:00 Vicar Jonathan Old Horse

10:30 Ryan Cumming - ELCA Social Statements
12:00 lunch (Qdoba)
1:30 Carla Borchardt - Bishop Election Committee Chair

**MSC to approve the agenda in the order as the chair deems most appropriate.
SC.2025.03.02**

Approve Minutes for October 18, 2024

**MSC to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2024 synod council meeting.
SC.2025.03.03**

Vicar Jonathan Old Horse presentation

Vicar Jonathan gave a presentation on Sacred Storm Tatonka. He explained the program to the council. Told of the skills the people are getting from being a part of the program. You can find more from the Sacred Storm Facebook page.

New Business

2026 Mission Plan presented by Terry Johnson

The proposed 2026 Mission Plan was present to the council.

**MSC to present to the 2025 Synod Assembly the proposed 2026 Mission Plan
(2.1.2026-1.31.2027) for the South Dakota Synod.
SC.2025.03.04**

Roster Matter

Roster matters will be discussed in executive session.

**MSC to enter executive session to discuss Roster Matters and will be reported in
the minutes.
SC.2025.03.05**

Synod Council met in Executive Session.

Exit Executive Session.

**MSC to leave executive session and report all actions taken in the minutes.
SC.2025.03.16**

Inform only:

Rev. Leland Armbricht - Transferred to Saint Paul Area Synod effective 3/17/25

Rev. Shawna Day - Transferred into SD from Minneapolis Area Synod effective 8/01/24 (Augustana)

Rev. Justin Kosec - Resigned from ELCA Roster effective 1/28/25

Rev. Jason Kramme - Transferred into SD from Saint Paul Area Synod effective 5/01/24 (Peace Lutheran, Sioux Falls)

Deacon Amanda Randall - Transferred to Southwestern Minnesota Synod effective 1/03/25

Rev. Mary Sacco - Transferred to Northwest Intermountain Synod effective 11/12/24 (Idaho)

Rev. Paul Svingen - Transferred to Northeastern Minnesota Synod effective 12/01/24

Rev. Tim Thies - Transferred to Rocky Mountain Synod effective 6/10/24

Action Items:

MSC to grant Rev. Renae Boehmer a Specialized Synod Letter of Call to serve as Director for the Holy Playground Initiative for the South Dakota Synod effective 4/01/25.

SC.2025.03.06

MSC to grant Rev. Steve Brandsrud retirement effective 4/01/25

SC.2025.03.07

MSC to grant Rev. Nancy Eckels retirement effective 4/01/25

SC.2025.03.08

MSC to grant Rev. Randy Fett retirement effective 3/01/25

SC.2025.03.09

MSC to grant Rev. Kari Foss On-Leave-from-Call effective 11/01/24

SC.2025.03.10

MSC to grant Rev. Ramona Hayes a Letter of Invitation to Extended Service to Full Communion Partner effective 4/01/25 (serve as rector at St. Paul's Episcopal, Brookings)

SC.2025.03.11

MSC to grant Rev. Sam Kost an Extension of On-Leave-from-Call effective 5/01/22 (in Germany)

SC.2025.03.12

MSC to grant Rev. Lars Olson a Study Leave - 6 years, effective 7/01/22

SC.2025.03.13

MSC to grant Rev. Nancy Rieke retirement effective 6/01/25

SC.2025.03.14

MSC to grant Deacon Laurel Vogl renewal of Family On-Leave-from-Call effective 12/06/20

SC.2025.03.15

Congregation Matters

Inform Only:

Prairie Lutheran Parish - First, Artesian/Trinity, Carthage/Immanuel, Iroquois - 2nd Votes to Leave ELCA on 3/01/25 & 2/02/25

Action Items:

MSC to approve constitution of Scandinavia Lutheran, Aberdeen approved by Brett Koenecke on 10/22/24.

SC.2025.03.17

2025 Synod Assembly Registration Fee - increase all categories by \$25.

MSC to set the 2025 South Dakota Synod Assembly registration fee at: Voting Member \$200, Displayer \$160, Displayer/Voting Member \$255, Interns/On-Leave-from-Call \$125. A late fee of \$50 will be added after 5/19/2025. The cut off date for registration is 5/23/2025 with no voting member registrations after that date.

SC.2025.03.18

2026 Assembly dates & location

MSC to have the 2026 Synod Assembly May 29-30, 2026 at Our Savior's Lutheran, Sioux Falls.

SC.2025.03.19

Appoint Synod Treasurer

Per the South Dakota Synod constitution, the synod treasurer may be appointed by synod council.

MSC to appoint Terry Johnson to a second four-year term as Treasurer of the South Dakota Synod
SC.2025.03.20

An additional roster matter will be discussed in executive session.

MSC to enter executive session to discuss a Roster Matter and it will be reported in the minutes.
SC.2025.03.21

Synod Council met in Executive Session.

Exit Executive Session.

MSC to leave executive session and report all actions taken in the minutes.
SC.2025.03.23

Action Item:

MSC to grant Rev. Ramona Hayes On-Leave-from-Call effective 3/14/25
SC.2025.03.22

Additional congregational matter

MSC to approve the constitution for Emmanuel Lutheran, Groton approved on 3/11/25.
SC.2025.03.24

Executive Committee Election (replace Pastor Jackie Braun)

Pastor Jackie Braun moved conferences and had been on the executive committee. A replacement needs to be elected.

MSC to elect Deacon Christie Meier to fulfill Pastor Jackie Braun's one-year term as a member-at-large on the Executive Committee
SC.2025.03.25

Bishop Constanze gave an update on Lutheran Social Services. LSS is an accredited partner. She also encourages the council to download the 5 Call app on their phones.

Additional congregational matter

**MSC to approve changes to the constitution of St. Paul Lutheran, Elk Point
approve by Nick Moser on 3/14/25
SC.2025.03.26**

Ryan Cummings Presentation

Ryan Cummings gave a presentation of the Social Statement from Churchwide. He gave a definition of Social Teachings. More information can be found at ELCA.org. The Human Sexuality Reconsiderations Timeline is 2025/2028. We are encouraged to invite people into the process. Also, look for the new statement. He can be contacted at ryan.cumming@elca.org

Proposed Bylaw amendments

Rev. Jonathan Vehar reviewed proposed changes to the South Dakota Synod constitution.

**MSC to move forward to the Synod Assembly for consideration of amendments to the bylaws of the synod.
SC.2025.03.27**

Networking across the church and the Synod Council Board Book

Rev. Jonathan Vehar gave a presentation. Pasque is a good resource for setting up networking.

Break for Lunch

Funding requests

The synod executive committee generally receives and awards funding requests. Two came after the executive committee last night.

Request from Robert Peterson and Luther Seminary for \$6,000 for internship expenses for Robert Peterson (candidate from the South Dakota Synod). This would match the \$6,000 from Luther.

MS to award Robert Peterson \$12,000 for seminary expenses, money to come from the Clarence Engen Endowment.

Discuss was held on the wording of the motion.

MSC to amend the motion: match the \$6,000 from Luther Seminary and send an additional \$6,000 to aid the internship congregation in compensation.

SC.2025.03.28

MSC to approve the amended motion.

SC.2025.03.29

Pasque Demonstration

MSC to give \$1,800 annually (\$150 / month) to fund an app for Pasque from undesignated endowment.

SC.2025.03.30

Carla Borchardt, Bishop Election Committee

Carla Borchardt gave an update on the Bishop Election Committee. The process is well defined for the committee to follow. They have contacted all names that were lifted up at the conference meetings.

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will run our election. We will need 20-24 tellers for counting on Friday and Saturday.

Round Table Discussions

Dennis Thompson & Terry Johnson

Dennis reported on the Executive Committee. They closed out the year end and acted on funding requests.

Terry reported that the Mission Plan was approved. The budget was revised after congregational letter of intent were received. The big surprise this year has been the insurance

Rev. Renee Splichal Larson There are have been anywhere from 20-30 openings. It is an ongoing process. See her report in the Google drive.

Rev. Jonathan Vehar

Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center (PRRC) is now their own entity. The Job Corp payroll has now separate from the synod.

Bishop Constanze

The Bishop discussed the Bishop's Letter. Out of 10 responses, eight were favorable, one wanted a discussion and one was angry. She discussed Ryan Cumming's presentation. Encouraged us to watch videos from Wartburg on the google drive. Announced that the President of Wartburg will be at the Assembly.

Written Reports can be found on the Google Drive

Companion Synods - Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center (PRRC) - Rev. Dan Johnson
Lilly Grant/Pasque - Rev. Kari Webb
Rural Ministry - Rev. Joel Pakan

Future Meetings

- Synod Assembly: May 30-May 31, 2025, Our Savior's Lutheran, Sioux Falls
- Synod Council: May 31, 2025 following the close of the assembly
- Executive Committee: August 7, 2025, 6:00 pm, Synod Office Sioux Falls
- Synod Council Retreat: August 8-9, 2025, Gloria Dei Lutheran, Sioux Falls
- Executive Committee: October 9, 2025, 6:00, Synod Office, Sioux Falls
- Synod Council: October 10, 2025, 8:30 am, TBD

Closing Prayer

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Beers, secretary