

**South Dakota Synod, ELCA
Synod Council
Haugo Room, Augustana University & Zoom
March 18, 2022**

Present: Bishop Constanze Hagmaier, Dennis Thompson, the Rev Jonathan Vehar, Val Parsley, the Rev. Ramona Hayes, Michael Miller, Pam Seefeldt, the Rev. Jackie Braun, Jim Iverson, Anne Rieck McFarland, Rhonda Hansen, Tom Stotz, the Rev. David Lund, Bonny Hansen, the Rev. John Paulson, Bonnie Lange, Jeff Clark, Terry Johnson, the Rev. Jim Fowler, the Rev. Pam Power

Absent: the Rev. Layne Nelson, Stan Jung, Dave Poppens, Malcom Chapman, Kelly Nelson, Truman Stoller, Caylee White Eagle

Staff: Lois Borchardt, the Rev. Renee Splichal Larson, the Rev. Jonathan Steiner, Kathy McHenry, the Rev. Dan Johnson, the Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson, Rev. Alan Blankenfeld, Tami Steffensen

Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:33 am.

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, and Standing Rock 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.

The Rev. Tera Kossow has resigned from the Synod Council. The Bear Butte Conference has nominated the Rev. Pamela Power.

**MSC to accept the resignation of the Rev. Tera Kossow as a representative of the
Bear Butte Conference.
SC.2022.03.01**

**MSC to seat the Rev. Pamela Power from the Bear Butte Conference to the
unexpired term on Synod Council.
SC.2022.03.02**

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier led in an opening prayer.

Approve the Agenda

The agenda was available on Google Drive.

MSC to adopt the agenda.

SC.2022.03.03

Partner Greetings

Rachel Nelson from the Lutheran Campus Ministries at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology and Black Hills State University brought greetings from the LuMin network of student ministries across South Dakota. There are several ways to be involved, including helping sponsor a meal, because students always need food.

The Rev. Dan Johnson brought a greeting from the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center. Ministry on the reservation continues to be both challenging and rewarding. The PRRC mission looks different than it did a few years ago, still driven much by the pandemic.

The minutes from the December 14, 2021, meeting were approved electronically.

MSC to adopt the minutes of the December 14, 2021 meeting.

SC.2022.03.04

Roster Matters:

Inform Only

1. The Rev. Martha Atkins – Transferred into SD Synod from Nebraska Synod effective 2/04/2022
2. The Rev. Nick Collins – Resigned from the Roster effective 2/28/2022
3. The Rev. George Johnson – Transferred into SD Synod from Manitoba Northwestern Ontario Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada effective 2/02/2022
4. The Rev. Paul Rohde – Transferred to Minneapolis Area Synod effective 2/03/2022
5. Deacon Susan Rohde – Transferred to Minneapolis Area Synod effective 2/03/2022
6. The Rev. Tim Sersen – Transferred to Southeastern MN Synod effective 12/14/2021
7. The Rev. Greg Wilcox – Transferred to Saint Paul Area Synod effective 3/03/2022

Action Items

The Rev. Jeff Backer has been called by the St Dymas congregation. Calls of Rostered ministers are issued by the synod.

MSC to extend a Synod Letter of Call to the Rev. Jeff Backer to serve as Pastor of St. Dymas.

SC.2022.03.05

The Rev. John Christopherson – Requesting retirement effective 12/12/2021.

MSC to grant retirement roster status to the Rev. John Christopherson effective 12/12/2021.

SC.2022.03.06

Deacon Katherine Eisele – Requesting renewal of On-Leave-from-Call effective 1/01/2021.

MSC to grant Deacon Katherine Eisele a renewal of On-Leave-from-Call first granted 01/01/2021.

SC.2022.03.07

The Rev. Mark Galbraith - Requesting a one-year Extension of On-Leave-from-Call effective 8/01/2019 (recommendation will need to go to the Conference of Bishops (COB) Roster Committee)

MSC to recommend to the roster committee of the Conference of Bishops a one year extension of On-Leave-from-Call for the Rev. Mark Galbraith.

SC.2022.03.08

The Rev. Wayne Gallipo - Requesting retirement effective 3/01/2022.

MSC to grant the Rev. Wayne Gallipo retirement roster status effective 3/01/2022.

SC.2022.03.09

Due to miscommunication with the churchwide organization about the roster status of the Rev. Lisa Heffernan, there has been a lapse in roster status Requesting On-Leave-from-Call retroactive 6/15/2021 –1/31/2022

MSC to grant On-leave-from-call status for the period of 6/15/2021-1/31/2022.

SC.2022.03.10

The Rev. Sam Kost - Requesting On-Leave-from-Call effective 5/01/2022.

MSC to grant the Rev. Sam Kost On-Leave-from-Call status 05/01/2022.

SC.2022.03.11

The Rev. Paul Matchan – Requesting Retirement effective 4/25/2022

MSC to grant the Rev. Paul Matchan retirement roster status effective 4/25/2022.

SC.2022.03.12

The Rev. Steven Paulson – Requesting Retirement effective 1/20/2022

MSC to grant the Rev. Steven Paulson retirement roster status effective 1/20/2022.

SC.2022.03.13

The Rev. Kari Sansgaard – Requesting Synod Call to serve as Chaplain at Avera effective 4/03/2022

MSC to extend a Synod Letter of Call to the Rev. Kari Sansgaard to serve as Chaplain at Avera effective 4/3/2022.

SC.2022.03.14

The Rev. Jonathan Splichal Larson – Requesting Synod Call to serve as Interim Campus Pastor at Augustana University, Sioux Falls, effective 3/18/2022

MSC to extend a Synod Letter of Call to the Rev. Jonathan Splichal Larson to serve as Interim Campus Pastor at Augustana University, Sioux Falls, effective 3/18/2022.

SC.2022.03.15

The Rev. Kent Stillson – Requesting Retirement effective 4/01/2022

MSC to grant the Rev. Kent Stillson retirement roster status effective 4/01/2022.

SC.2022.03.16

Congregational Matters

Midway Lutheran, Flandreau voted to disaffiliate from the ELCA on 10.24.2021

MSC to remove Midway Lutheran, Flandreau from the roster of congregations of the ELCA.

SC.2022.03.17

Congregational Constitutions

MSC to approve the constitution for Bergen Lutheran, Meckling.

SC.2022.03.18

MSC to approve the constitution for St. John Lutheran, Sioux Falls.

SC.2022.03.19

MSC to approve the constitution for Grace Lutheran, Sturgis.

SC.2022.03.20

MSC to approve the constitution for Trinity Lutheran, Vermillion.

SC.2022.03.21

Incorporation of the South Dakota Synod

The synod's legal counsel had recommended to incorporate the synod in the State of South Dakota. When the ELCA was formed, each synod was incorporated into the state of the regional office. For the South Dakota Synod, that means the State of Minnesota. The Synod Council will need to approve moving forward and permit Bishop Hagmaier to engage in consultation with the ELCA.

MSC to authorize Bishop Hagmaier to begin consultation with the churchwide organization to re-incorporate in the State of South Dakota and to sign any necessary paperwork.

SC.2022.03.22

Partner Greeting

Rebecca Kiesow Knutson, Executive Director of Lutheran Social Services of South Dakota, brought a greeting and report from LSS. Just about every service of LSS was affected by COVID-19. Significant federal support has helped the organization maintain services.

A member asked if LSS was helping to resettle refugees from Ukraine. At this moment, most Refugees from Ukraine are being housed in Europe and have not engaged the long process for resettlement in the United States.

LSS is beginning a new program to offer early intervention for families at the early stages of child protection. A pilot program is being funded in part by a grant from the national branch of Lutheran Services in America.

LSS is also undergoing the process of re-accreditation that offers accountability and support, especially with work over children.

South Dakota Cares is a new fundraising endeavor to move away from benefit dinners to current and more effective ways of supporting the work of LSS. The full release will be May 17th.

Bishop's Report

Bishops met in retreat in March; it was the first in-person meeting of the conference of Bishops in two years. There has been a lot of changeover in the conference in that time.

The Churchwide Assembly is scheduled for August 2022. The synod office is working towards gathering Voting Members ahead of time in order to best prepare for the experience. Information at the assembly comes, and we want to make sure our members are well equipped. Of note, the Churchwide Assembly will elect a vice-president after the death of Bill Horne. Carla Borchardt, former vice-president of the South Dakota Synod, has agreed to be nominated for the position.

Farm to Table Dinner

The long-awaited Farm to Table Dinner will be happening in August. Funds raised will help to support the Rural Ministry Liaison position and renewal efforts in rural congregations. The council is encouraged to attend if they are available.

Synod Youth Day

With the cancellation of the ELCA Youth Gathering, the synod will host a Youth Day on July 25. This will be an opportunity for young people from across the synod to come together for a day of activities and service. More details to follow.

Rural Mental Health

Access to mental health care services in rural communities continues to be a challenge, but more is available now than ever before through telemedicine. This continues to be a concern and priority for the bishop and LSS as they place to reintroduce Mental Health First Aid and Psychological Health First Aid.

Rural Ministry Strategic Vision

The bishop formed a task force to explore a wider strategic plan for supporting rural ministries. Some ideas already in the works are a "J-term plunge" in January 2024, through Wartburg Seminary. Wartburg Seminary offers a rural ministry class each year, but they have never come to South Dakota for the experience. The bishop is also exploring ideas to help equip lay leaders in leading prayers, worship, and community care. This can help to fill a void in pastoral vacancies and make a more substantial resource base for supporting congregation leaders everywhere. The last part of the strategy is to have six Rural Ministry liaisons.

Rural Ministry Liasion Report

Pastor Allen Blankenfeld has been busy on the road and spent time with three congregations in the absence of a called pastor. The initial reports and comments from participating congregations are positive. It offers the congregation a two-week period of preaching, pastor visits, and leadership development. The need continues to be great to support rural congregations in times of transition or extended vacancies.

Lunch Break

Pastor Greg Johnson

Johnson presented a proposal for a digital resource to help congregations explore the basics of the Christian faith called “I Send You.” He plans to spend much of his upcoming sabbatical filming the series that addresses questions of the faith and produces study material. It would be suitable for a lent series in rural congregations, small groups, or adult education forums. Johnson also intends to include worship material so that they might be used in services where a pastor or other lay leader is not able to lead worship.

MSC to approve the grant request of the Rev. Greg Johnson for \$7,000 from an anonymous gift to the synod.

SC.2022.03.23

Associate to the Bishop Reports

The Rev. Renee Splichal Larson

- Mobility
- In 2021 there were 38 Ministry Site Studies and 38 letters of call extended
- So far in 2022, there have been 7 Ministry Site Studies, with two more scheduled by the end of March
- So far in 2022, 7 calls have been extended, with another congregational vote to call a pastor on March 20th
- Of the 15 full-time calls accepting names at this time, 7 are currently interviewing
- We currently have 7 part-time calls ready to accept names
- Nearly every vacancy has an interim, a SAM, or lay leaders who are caring for the ministry as congregations move through the call process
- Last fall we put together a brief handbook on “how to leave well” for ministers
- Every rostered minister who is leaving a call has an exit interview with me
- The gift of the rural ministry liaison (emails we have received)
- Rostered Minister Care
- A monthly zoom call for our interims started in February 2022. 16 interims
- attended the call last month
- Monthly zoom calls for rostered ministers & Women in ministry zoom call once a month
- We have 5 first call peer mentor groups that meet regularly with a facilitator and 1 new peer mentor group made up of all women rostered ministers
- Lay Leader Night in February: “I’m elected to council, now what?” – nearly 95 participants

- Open Door: SD Synod LGBTQIA+2S Accompaniment Team
- First Call Process
- In 2021 we received 8 new first call candidates
- We received 1 new first call candidate from a different synod (and region) in the first call process in February 2022. Then next first call process will be in April, and then again in June, July, and October
- The First Call Minister's Retreat was November 7-9 in Chamberlain. There were 24 participants and we received good feedback and all felt it was worthwhile. We are also meeting 3 other times a year over zoom
- Trends that we are seeing with the new first call process
- Movement from a national first call process to regional
- First call candidates are getting into calls faster
- It makes a lot more work for synod offices, but all agree that the pre-consultations are life-giving and a great change to the process
- Rural areas are struggling even more to receive candidates due to restrictions and candidate agency
- Candidacy
- There are 30 people in various stages of candidacy in the SD Synod
- In January, Region 3 hosted a "Discerning your Call" series and SD had the biggest showing with 14 participants
- In January, there were 2 entrance interviews and 2 endorsement interviews. There will be 2 more entrance interviews in April. In 2022, we will have at least 7 approval interviews
- We have 8 internship site congregations in SD
- We have been working on a Collaborative Learning Site through Wartburg Seminary in the Bear Butte Conference to begin in the fall of 2022

Staff Reports

The Rev. Dr. Aaron Matson

A report is included in the meeting material. The potential for traveling to campaign synods may be on the horizon. Pastor Matson will be able to visit Niguraira in the next few weeks. The political environment is calmer than it was a year ago. Bishop Hagmaier and Pastor Matson were also able to meet with Bishop Ruben Ngozo of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Camaroon via Zoom. That meeting went well and there is an agreement to meet quarterly.

Associate to the Bishop Reports cont.

The Rev. Jonathan Steiner

He will begin six weeks of Paternity leave starting March 27. There is also a sabbatical scheduled for July.

- Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery
- DEM cohort for Rural Ministry
- Digital Ministry Task Force
- Stewardship & Mission Support
- Drive toward Self-Determination among NiS ministries
- Woyatan

- FLAM
- PRRC
- FaithX use and renewal (action requested)

Treasurer's Report

Terry Johnson presented highlights of the closed out fiscal year end 01/31/2022 mission plan and the revised fiscal year end 01/31/2023 mission plan.

Johnson presented the proposed fiscal year 02/01/2023 – 01/31/2024 Mission Plan which is recommended by the Executive Committee. Johnson noted that the 2022-23 plan was revised down by about \$40,000. To cover the anticipated deficit, the executive committee decreased the Mission Support passed along to the churchwide organization from 45% to 43%. The proposed 2023-24 Mission Plan maintains the 43% level of Mission Support to the churchwide organization.

	Adopted 2022	Revised 2022	Proposed 2023
Revenue			
Mission Support			
Undesignated Mission Support	1,852,981	1,815,986	1,870,465
SD Synod Mission Support	28,866	25,000	25,000
Total Mission Support-Congregations	1,881,847	1,840,986	1,895,465
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	10,000	10,000
SDS Travel LLC Income	5,000	5,000	5,000
Misc Income	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Other Income	26,000	26,000	26,000
Total Revenue	1,952,847	1,911,986	1,966,465

Expenses			
Churchwide Ministries	45%	43%	43%
Churchwide Support	833,841	780,874	804,300
Region III			
Region III Support	7,260	7,260	7,260
South Dakota Ministries			
South Dakota Partnership Ministries			

SD Ministries Support	12,990	10,750	10,750
Luther Seminary	73,957	72,351	74,492
Church Colleges (ELCA Pool)	6,398	6,259	6,445
Lutheran Social Services	73,957	72,351	74,492
Campus Ministry	130,412	127,580	131,356
Lutheran Outdoors	36,884	36,083	37,151
South Dakota Supported Ministries			
Heartland Ephphatha	6,398	6,259	6,445
Youth Ministry	3,605	3,605	3,600
Campus Ministry Capital	1,030	1,030	1,030
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	422,933	413,570	423,063
	Adopted 2022	Revised 2022	Proposed 2023
Executive Leadership			
Bishop	96,123	93,859	96,675
Assoc/Director of Ev Mission	6,186	6,186	6,375
Assoc-Mobility/Candidacy	78,925	77,581	79,909
Executive Staff Benefits	84,838	103,099	106,192
Exec Travel/Continuing Ed	37,300	34,800	34,800
Program Ministries			
Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center-Director	95,730	96,365	98,872
Youth Gathering Synod Coordinator	6,959	6,959	6,959
Companion Synod Coordinator	12,397	15,407	15,839
Support Staff and Office			
Support Staff Salaries/Benefit	159,736	162,525	167,359
Synod Office Expenses	71,686	68,164	69,264
Augustana University Occupancy Fee	20,887	27,876	27,876
Synod Committees			
Synod Council	3,000	3,000	3,000
Support to Ministries Committee	2,100	2,100	2,100
Candidacy Committee	2,250	2,250	2,250
Multi-Cultural Ministry Committee	1,550	1,550	1,550
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	1,446	861	5,122
Total South Dakota Ministries	688,813	710,282	731,842
Total Expenses	1,952,847	1,911,986	1,966,465
Net Total	0	0	0

**MSC to present to the 2022 Synod Assembly the proposed Fiscal Year 02/01/2023-01/31/2024 Mission Plan for the South Dakota Synod.
SC.2022.03.24**

Endowment Committee Report

Johnson and McHenry presented the annual report of the Endowment Committee. Action is taken each year by the Executive Committee to disburse funds according to donor designations. There is no action needed to approve the report. In addition, the term for Steve Anderson is coming to an end, and he is eligible and willing to serve a second term.

**MSC to appoint Steve Anderson to a second six-year term on the Endowment Committee of the South Dakota Synod.
SC.2022.03.25**

Digital Ministry Community

The Rev. Matt Spoden shared about some of the work of the Digital Ministry Task Force. The task force is dreaming up ways to inspire digital ministry in congregations. Opportunities range from ways of connecting small groups and resources like digital liturgies.

Synod Assembly

The Synod Council had previously acted to adopt COVID-19 protocols for the 2022 Synod Assembly that matched those of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church (assembly host church). Since that time, Our Savior’s has removed all COVID requirements for masks and social distancing. In order to provide an opportunity to attend the assembly as safe and less restrictive as possible, the previous policy is amended.

MSC to revise the COVID policy of the Synod Assembly, that

It is expected that voting members be vaccinated or have obtained a negative COVID test within 48 hours.

It is expected that voting members who are not feeling well abstain from proceedings of the assembly.

SC.2022.03.26

With the resignation for Rev. Tera Kossow from the Synod Council, a replacement is needed as an at-large member of the executive committee.

MS to nominate The Rev. Jackie Braun to the executive committee to replace the Rev. Tera Kossow.

MSC nominations cease.
SC.2022.03.27

Nomination carried.
SC.2022.03.28

Peggy Hahn, Executive Director of LEAD will be the guest speaker for the assembly. It was suggested that each congregation attending receive a gift of one of the LEAD resources that helps congregations move through mission planning.

MSC to purchase 200 copies of the LEAD Playbook for congregations attending the Synod Assembly. Total of \$5,000 paid from the Synod Assembly fund and \$1,000 from Mission Investment Fund sponsorship.
SC.2022.03.29

Transition of Funds to the Bishop Transition Fund

A portion of proceeds from each Synod Assembly is reserved in a fund to offset costs when a new bishop is elected.

MSC to transfer \$20,000 from the Synod Assembly fund to the Bishop Election/Transition Fund.
SC.2022.03.30

Listen! God is Calling Appeal

The synod appeal, Listen! God is Calling, is reaching the end of its commitments. A few gifts are still expected, but for all practical purposes the appeal has stopped soliciting gifts.

MSC to bring to a close the Listen! God is Calling Appeal and direct any further gifts to the Leadership portion of the prospectus.
SC.2022.03.31

The bishop expressed the importance of rostered leaders submitting the annual report. The form was revised this year to help obtain a better sense of the passions and stresses of rostered leaders. The report is required of all rostered leaders to be submitted at the beginning of each year.

Future Meetings

- Executive Committee: May 6, 2022 3:00 pm
- Synod Assembly: June 3-4, 2022, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls
- Synod Council: June 4, 2022 following the close of the assembly, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls – Devotions: Rev. Jim Fowler
- Executive Committee: August 18, 2022, 6:00 pm, Sioux Falls
- Synod Council Retreat: August 19-20, 2022, Sioux Falls
- Farm to Table Dinner: August 21, 2022, 4:00 pm, Beaver Valley Lutheran
- Executive Committee: October 20, 2022, 6:00 pm
- Synod Council: October 21, 2022, 8:30 am

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier led a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Rev. Jonathan Vehar, secretary