

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council
Minutes
April 12, 2003**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met in retreat in the Earth Center, Assisi Heights, Rochester April 11 & 12, 2003.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Shirley Gangstad, Betty Ann Hernke, Rev. Steve Bohling, Rev. Phil Lewison, Cathy Mannel, Kathy Tanabe, Marilyn Carpenter, Rev. Dan Baker, David Moses, Kris Oppegard, Rev. Nancy Dreier, Rev. Norman Wahl, Waldo Bunge, Rev. Joseph Crippen, Rev. Barbara Knutson, and Byron Stadsvold.

Member absent: Rev. Mary Sue Dreier, Jeff Setterlund

Staff present were: Larry Iverson, Rev. Audree Catalano, and Deborah Norrie.

Christina Jackson-Skelton, Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and Rev. Richard Mork, Division for Outreach, ELCA were also present.

Friday evening, April 11th, the council met for dinner and conversation with Christina Jackson-Skelton.

Ms. Jackson-Skelton presented the 2002 Financial Report of the ELCA. She also presented the Statements of Mission, Vision and Strategic Directions of the ELCA that have been distilled from the small group conversations held at assemblies around the church in 2002.

Following her presentation and question time, the council adjourned to Clare Chapel for worship and Eucharist led by the Executive Committee.

On Saturday morning, April 12th, following morning prayer in Clare Chapel, the three teams met separately.

The Synod Council meeting was called to order in the Earth Center at 12:45 PM by Vice President Shirley Gangstad. Ms. Gangstad welcomed Cathy Mannel and Marilyn Carpenter. Ms. Carpenter was appointed to the remaining term of Julie Martini who resigned from the council. Ms. Mannel is to be appointed to fill the remaining term of Dennis Siemsen who has resigned. Ms. Gangstad passed around a card of thanks to Dennis Siemsen for the council members to sign.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Shirley Gangstad, Betty Ann Hernke, Jeff Setterlund, Rev. Steve Bohling, Rev. Phil Lewison, Cathy Mannel, Kathy Tanabe, Marilyn Carpenter, Rev. Dan Baker, David Moses, Kris Oppegard, Rev. Nancy Dreier, Rev. Norman Wahl, Waldo Bunge, Rev. Joseph Crippen, Rev. Barbara Knutson, Rev. Mary Sue Dreier, and

Byron Stadvold.

Staff present were: Larry Iverson, Rev. Audree Catalano, and Deborah Norrie.

Rev. Richard Mork, Division for Outreach, ELCA was also present.

Betty Ann Hernke, Secretary, presented the minutes of the February 22, 2003 meeting. There was no discussion. David Moses made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded.

Council Action

SC03.04.01 To accept the minutes of the Synod Council meeting February 22, 2003.

Jeffery Setterlund, Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's report.

- Mission Support for the first two months of the year total \$293,808; which is 80% of the projected budget.
- The checking account balance is \$157,090. All World Hunger, missionary support and Mission Support to the ELCA have been paid. All the bills and ministry partner payments have been paid.
- The March Accounting report was distributed and reviewed. Ms. Norrie noted that the Board Designated Operating Reserve is at \$103,295. During the audit, it was decided that the non-restricted funds in the Thrivent investment are Board Designated Operating Reserves.

Rev. Norman Wahl made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. The motion was seconded.

Council action

SC03.04.02 To accept the Treasurer's report.

Old business

Ms. Norrie reported on the plans for the 2003 Synod Assembly. Response by congregations to the Congregational Fair have been good. The speaker and Bible Study leaders are confirmed. There will be two worship services this year-the opening worship and a healing service which will be open to the public.

Ms. Gangstad called the council's attention to the revised Council Report on the Constitution that was printed in the pre-assembly report.

Bishop Usgaard reviewed the resolutions. One additional resolution about Colombia has been received.

Mr. Steve Christopherson from the accounting firm Coffman, Nehring & Christopherson was introduced to the Synod Council. He distributed copies of the 2002 Audit report and the audit letters. He then reviewed the audit and answered questions.

CPA's are required by accepted audit principles to present a management letter to the Board of Directors of an entity that has been audited. In the management letter the auditor reviews items

that are of concern to the auditor. The auditor continues to be concerned about segregation of duties in the synod office because of the small staff size. This concern is addressed in the manner in which the audit is conducted.

The second audit letter serves as the Audit Committee letter. The Synod Council serves as the audit committee. The audit letter lays out the responsibilities of the auditor and the synod office.

Ms. Gangstad called on the staff members present for brief reports.

Synod Minister Larry Iverson reported that the stewardship task force will visit selected congregations three times this year to lead the congregations in asset mapping.

Rev. Audree Catalano reported that the Candidacy Committee at their recent meeting approved six candidates for entrance and three for ordination. She reported that the committee feels that pastors need to be educated about the candidacy process so they don't lead potential students astray. The synod requested ten seminary graduates in the recent assignment process and three were assigned to the synod. One candidate who was assigned in the fall assignment in 2002 has not received a call yet. FCTE is going well and the call process continues to be busy with interims continuing to be difficult to find.

Rev. Mary Sue Dreier reported that the rural ministry work will conclude the end of May. It was good to discover that there are some rural congregations that are "gems"! They appreciate being listened to. A rural life team is being formed to implement some of the ideas that have been developed over the last year.

Bishop Usgaard reported on the conflict management seminar. Twelve people from the synod including himself, Larry Iverson, Rev Audree Catalano and Shirley Gangstad, attended the training. This group will continue to meet to discuss how they will use this training to be resource people; how to manage conflict and how to build healthy congregations. There will be a conflict management presentation at each conference assembly next winter.

There was no other old business.

New business.

Rev. Jeffrey Laeger-Hagemeister has received a contract to serve as Chaplain at St. John's Lutheran Home, Albert Lea. Rev. Norman Wahl made a motion to extend a Synod Council call to Pastor Laeger-Hagemeister. The motion was seconded.

Council Action

SC03.04.03 To extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Jeffrey Laeger-Hagemeister to serve as Chaplain at St. John's Lutheran Home, Albert Lea, Minnesota effective April 21, 2003.

There are vacancies on the Candidacy Committee that have been filled by conferences. These

appointments need to be confirmed by the Synod Council. Rev. Joseph Crippen made a motion to confirm the appointments to the Candidacy Committee from the Minnesota River Conference and the Cannon River Conference.

Council Action

SC03.04.04 To confirm the appointment of Rev. Mark Boorsma, Minnesota River Conference and Rev. Richard Jorgensen, Cannon River Conference to a 5-year term on the Candidacy Committee.

Bishop Usgaard received a request from Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota to re-appoint Ann Peterson to the LSS Board. David Moses made a motion to re-appoint Ms. Peterson. The motion was seconded.

Council Action

SC03.04.05 To re-appoint Ann Peterson to the Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota Board.

Kathy Tanabe made a motion to appoint Cathy Mannel to council to complete the term of Dennis Siemsen until the election at the 2003 assembly. This motion was seconded.

Council Action

SC03.04.06 To appoint Cathy Mannel to the un-expired term of Dennis Siemsen on the Congregational Renewal Team/Synod Council until the 2003 synod assembly.

Ms. Gangstad called on the teams to briefly report on their activities.

Rev. Nancy Dreier reported that the Lay and clergy Leadership Development Team worked hard on the 2004 compensation guidelines to correct the problems from previous years. A spreadsheet was designed to make the future years easier to calculate. A 2005 Compensation Guidelines task force is going back to look at how the base salary was set and determine if that is fair. They also discussed repeating the Church Council event. It will have a different format with breakout groups by church size.

Kathy Tanabe reported that the Congregational Renewal Team spent most of their time working on the details of the assembly congregational fair and discussing 2004 assembly planning. They also made grants to the BLOChads and LACE.

Byron Stadsvold, Mission Planning & Action Team reported that the new start in Northfield, Rejoice! Lutheran Church, will begin this summer; Peace, Eyota, is doing some Mission Partner fund raising to jump start their building project; Jan Wennes, Little Cedar, Adams serves on the ELCA's Division for Outreach Board reported on the boards activities; *I'm Ready for Mission* will be emphasized at the assembly to get more people signed up; Rev. Mary Sue Dreier reported on the rural ministry task force; they received a multicultural ministry update from the bishop;

and discussed strategic planning for the team.

Other new business

The Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team has asked the Executive Committee to review the Clergy Continuing Education Restricted Fund and develop policy and guidelines for how those funds are to be used.

Rev. Norman Wahl reported on the award presented to Bethel, Rochester for total quality ministry improvements. They worked with the Malcolm Baldrige materials and were assessed by the Minnesota Council of Quality. They received a silver medal of quality and are the only church in Minnesota and probably the country to do this. It means Bethel is more focused in all they do. They plan, implement and evaluate-PIE-to improve ministry.

Rev. Joseph Crippen shared some experiences he had while accompanying Bishop Mark Hanson to Rome, Geneva, and London. He was very impressed with the level of ecumenism in the ELCA and feels we need to do a better job of getting involved ecumenically in Minnesota. The experience of church in Minnesota is so different from other parts of the country. Rome is grateful for the work the ELCA did on the joint statement on justification; the ELCA is the Lutheran body that the Roman Catholic Church can talk to. He shared how impressed he is with Bishop Hanson-he is so good on his feet and he reads people so well. It was unfortunate that they couldn't go to Istanbul which was going to be a historic meeting.

The next meeting of the Synod Council and teams will be September 12 & 13, 2003. The Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team is responsible for worship.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,
Betty Ann Hernke, Secretary
Deborah Norrie, Recorder