

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

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met in retreat in the Sun Center, Assisi Heights, Rochester September 12 & 13, 2003.

Friday evening, September 12<sup>th</sup>, the council met for dinner and business.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Shirley Gangstad, Jeff Setterlund, Rev. Phil Lewison, Kathy Tanabe, Marilyn Carpenter, Cathy Mannel, Rev. Norman Wahl, Rev. Dan Baker, Kris Opegard, Rev. Nancy Dreier, Rev. Barbara Knutson, Waldo Bunge, and Byron Stadsvold.

Members absent were: Betty Ann Hernke, Rev. Steve Bohling, Rev. Mary Sue Dreier, all excused.

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

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

Rev. Joseph Crippen has resigned from the synod council due to scheduling conflicts with his service on the ELCA Church Council. David Moses has resigned from the council because of his missionary assignment in Indonesia for two years.

Following dinner, the meeting was called to order by Vice president Shirley Gangstad at 6:40 PM.

The minutes of the meeting April 12, 2003 were presented by Vice president Gangstad in Ms. Hernke's absence. Rev. Norman Wahl made a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded.

**Council Action**

**AC03.09.01 To accept the minutes of the Synod Council meeting April 12, 2003.**

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

- The checking account balance is \$107,717.17.
- August Mission Support to the ELCA of \$72,104.00 has not been paid but will be sent in the next week.
- Mission Support income for August is \$138,661.00. The total for year is \$1,090,497.00 or 85% of budget.

Larry Iverson commented on a pledge gift analysis report for the year to date. There are 128 congregations that are behind in gifts. It is probably too soon to start calling congregations to see if they will make their intents.

Bishop Usgaard and Larry Iverson are hosting a series of brown bag lunch meetings with pastors in September and October to see how the congregation are doing. They will be encouraging stewardship.

The August accounting report was distributed and Deborah Norrie reviewed budgeted expenditures.

Rev. Phil Lewison made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC03.09.02 To accept the Treasurer's report.**

The auditors have recommended that the Board Designated Operating funds held in the Thrivent investment account be moved to a separate account. Jeffery Setterlund made a motion to establish a second Thrivent account to be named Board Designated Operating Account. The motion was seconded. Ms. Norrie commented that we have been assured by Thrivent that moving the funds to a second account will not result in any loss of value to the account.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC03.09.03 To instruct Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to move \$103,294.76 from the LB Income Fund-Y Account 455-6974564 to a new account to be named Board Designated Operating Reserve.**

Ms. Gangstad called on the Synod Staff to make brief comments on their work.

Larry Iverson reported

- Natural Church Development has been selected to work with congregations interested in transformation;
- 14 congregations have participated in focus groups with the Stewardship Committee; and
- Challenge letters will be sent to congregations encouraging their Mission Support to the synod and ELCA.

Rev. Audree Catalano reported

- 4 additional Initial Interviewers have been trained for the Candidacy process;
- A task force has been formed for recruiting leaders for ministry;
- Will be attending the New England Synod Bishop's Convocation in October; and
- There are 8 seminary students in the endorsement process this fall.

Bishop Usgaard commented

- The conflict resolution training group has divided into three working groups: one group is making presentations to pastors conferences; the second group is preparing a presentation for congregations; and the third group is putting together resources to support healthy leaders.
- He informed the council that a woman in Mankato has written letters to ELCA clergy.

She was abused 35 years ago by a pastor in a church in Mankato. The pastor is no longer on the roster so he can't be disciplined by the church. The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is paying for her counseling now but this is not enough for her which is why she has written the letters. Bishop Usgaard will talk with anyone who is concerned if the council gets questions about her letter.

- He will be going to Tanzania in October for a bishop's conference.

Deborah Norrie informed the council of the attempted bank fraud that was caught by the synod's personal banker at Eastwood Bank. We are taking measures with the bank to protect our account and will no longer send synod checks to Africa. All checks sent to Africa will be Eastwood Bank Cashier's Checks.

#### Old Business

The synod council reviewed the resolutions from the 2003 Synod Assembly. Rev. Barbara Knutson made a motion to refer assembly resolutions 2003-03 and 2003-05 related to global mission issues to the Companion Synod/Global Mission Committee and request that the committee report to the Synod Council at the meeting February 21, 2004. The motion was seconded.

#### Council Action

**SC03.09.04 To refer 2003 Synod Assembly resolution 2003-03: A Renewed Vision for Mission Outreach in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod and 2003-05: Colombia: Give Peace A Place to the Companion Synod/Global Mission Committee for action and requests that the Committee report its actions to the synod council by February 21, 2004.**

There is a vacancy on the Committee on Discipline that was not filled by election at the 2003 Synod Assembly. The vacancy is for clergy from the Blue Earth River Conference. Rev. Don Rose has agreed to fill this vacancy. Rev. Dan Baker made a motion to appoint Rev. Don Rose to fill this vacancy. The motion was seconded.

#### Council Action

**SC03.09.05 To appoint Rev. Don Rose to the Committee on Discipline for a six year term beginning May 2003.**

Other old business.

Bishop Usgaard asked for the council's prayers for the churchwide staff. The restructuring plan will be announced September 15 & 16.

The bishop then introduced the council to *Called into God's Marvelous Light*. He passed out a questionnaire and gave the council time to answer the questions. He asked for comments and support from the council. He commented that he sees declining attendance, declining giving, and

declining membership. People are trying; but together we can do more; it gives the synod direction; it answers the question what is the synod for; what can the synod offer its congregations; to inspire and support congregations but to also offer the synod as a partner in ministry by identifying the emphasis for the next three years. Rev. Barbara Knutson made a motion to wholeheartedly support the plan. The motion was seconded.

#### **Council Action**

**SC03.09.06 To wholeheartedly support *Called Into God's Marvelous Light* – a plan to enlist the congregations of the synod in identifying the ministry priorities of the synod for the next three years.**

A copy of the proposal is attached to these minutes.

Rev. Eric Bakken was elected at the 2003 Synod Assembly to the Augsburg College Corporation Board. Rev. Bakken has resigned his call at Peace, Eyota to accept a call in Wisconsin. Rev. Phil Lewison made a motion to appoint Rev. Phil Formo to the Augsburg College Corporation Board. The motion was seconded.

#### **Council Action**

**SC03.09.07 To appoint Rev. Philip Formo to the Augsburg College Corporation Board to fill the vacancy left by Rev. Eric Bakken's resignation.**

Deborah Norrie reviewed the plans for Bishop Hanson's visit to the synod September 30<sup>th</sup>. The council is asked to assist with hospitality during the day.

Jeffery Setterlund has begun work on the staff salary ranges. The Executive Committee will continue to work on this and have a plan in place for the next budget meeting.

The Executive Committee will also be bringing a proposal to the council to establish a policy for the Clergy Continuing Education Restricted Fund as requested by the council.

There was no other old business.

#### **New Business**

Marcia Clark Johnson from the Department for Synodical Relation, ELCA, has agreed to come to the November synod council meeting and lead the council through an evaluation process. Copies of the synod constitution referring to the council and the teams were distributed for the council to review prior to this meeting.

Rev. Norman Wahl made a motion to extend a *Letter of Call* to Rev. Kenneth H Carlson to serve as Interim Co-pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Blue Earth. The motion was seconded.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC03.09.08 To extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Kenneth H. Carlson as Interim Co-pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Blue Earth effective June 2, 2003.**

A request has been received asking the synod council to pass a resolution asking the ELCA Church Council to fund ongoing coordination, oversight and support of the First Call Theological Education. Marilyn Carpenter made a motion to pass the requested resolution as printed. The motion was seconded.

Rev Audree Catalano spoke of the importance of the FCTE program in the synod.

Rev. Norman Wahl expressed concern that this is irregular and we are telling the church council how to set their priorities.

After further discussion the council failed to pass the motion.

Bishop Usgaard updated the council on Project Assisi Heights. The Sisters will renovate the east portion of the building for their residence and needs. The remainder of the building is being made available to outside developers subject to the following standards: any renovations must be for the good of the Sister's community; must be for the financial well being of the Sister's community; and must be for mission. We have been notified that sometime during the summer of 2004 the synod office will be relocated to some place on the west side of the building. Once the east side renovations are done, we are uncertain where there might be space for the synod office. The Executive Committee asked him to have conversation with Augsburg and Luther Colleges regarding the possibility of a Lutheran Center. With the permission of the council, the Executive Committee would like to form a task force to look at future possibilities. The council was supportive and the Executive Committee will form a task force for future space needs.

The synod has received a funding request for the St Cloud campus ministry site. This request is in line with the agreement among the six Minnesota synods for funding Minnesota campus ministry projects.

Kathy Tanabe made a motion to approve the funding request from Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota for the University Lutheran Church of the Epiphany, St Cloud capital project. The motion was seconded.

### **Council Action**

#### **SC03.09.09 To approve the funding request from Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota for the University Lutheran Church of the Epiphany, St. Cloud capital project in the amount of \$5165.00 to be paid over three years.**

Bishop Usgaard, Audree Catalano, Larry Iverson, Deborah Norrie and Shirley Gangstad will attend the Region Three-ELCA regional consultation on November 11, 2004 at Luther Crest Bible Camp, Alexandria. The consultation will be held the day before the annual Bishop's

retreat scheduled for Luther Crest that the bishop and staff are attending.

These minutes need to reflect the response of the synod council to affirm the plans of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Rochester to their proposed satellite mission site in northwest Rochester. They want to keep the council informed of their progress. The council is supportive of their plans.

At the request of the Endowment Committee, Cathy Mannel made a motion to re-appoint Rev. Charles Jacobson and Gordon Larson to their second term on the Endowment Committee and appoint Rev. Sarah Nietz to a term on the committee. The motion was seconded.

### **Council Action**

**SC03.09.10 To reappoint Rev. Charles Jacobson and Gordon Larson to their second term and appoint Rev. Sarah Nietz to her first term on the Endowment Committee.**

The council meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Rev. Norman Wahl of the Lay and Clergy Leadership Development Team led the council in Evening Prayer. Guest pianist was Dale Mundahl from Bethel, Rochester. Following worship the group enjoyed a brief time of fellowship.

On Saturday morning, September 13, Rev. Nancy Dreier led a service of morning prayer at 8:30 AM following breakfast.

The teams then met separately during the morning. No meetings were held in the afternoon.

Betty Ann Hernke, Secretary  
Deborah Norrie, Recorder