

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod
Executive Committee
Minutes
October 28, 2003**

Vice-president Shirley Gangstad called the meeting to order at 4:15 PM in the Synod Office Conference Room, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Ms. Shirley Gangstad, Vice-president, Mr. Jeffery Setterlund, Treasurer, Ms. Betty Ann Hernke, Secretary, Ms. Kathy Tanabe, Rev. Philip Lewison, and. Deborah Norrie, Recorder.

Shirley Gangstad led devotions.

Carolyn Goulet was invited to join the committee and comment on her recent sabbatical. She had e-mailed copies of her sabbatical report prior to the meeting. She highlighted the major events of the sabbatical (time at Spirit of the Desert Retreat Center, time with family and friends, a long book list and a trip to Rome, Assisi, and other sites in Italy with her husband) and reflected that she learned that time is a gift and comes to us each day. She expressed her gratitude to the committee for granting the sabbatical time. It was a wonderful experience. Welcome back, Carolyn!

Betty Ann Hernke presented the minutes of the meeting August 26, 2003. Rev. Phil Lewison made a motion to accept the minutes.

Committee Action

EC03.10.01 To accept the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting August 26, 2003 as written.

Jeff Setterlund presented the Treasurer's report.

- The September accounting report has not been received from the accounting office.
- The bank balance today is \$140,016.49.
- October income to date is not good. It is at 83% of budget. The committee had discussion about the dismal numbers. It is difficult to cut the budget because it will harm our ministry partners – Campus ministry, seminary, etc. We will focus on the income side and ask the stewardship committee to contact congregations that are seriously behind to see if they will be able to catch up.

As a way of modeling to other committees, Kathy Tanabe made a motion that at the next Executive Committee meeting each person attending the meeting will bring their own brown bag supper. The motion was seconded.

Committee Action

EC03.10.02 To ask each member of the Executive Committee to bring a brown bag supper to the next committee meeting.

Kathy Tanabe then made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded.

Committee Action

EC03.10.03 To accept the Treasurer's report.

The Executive Committee will meet at 4:40 PM, Friday November 14, 2003 prior to the Synod Council meeting to review finances.

Bishop Usgaard reviewed the progress made on the *Called Into God's Marvelous Light* plan. He has prepared a presentation for the theological conference. Fifty thousand copies of the bulletin insert have been prepared and will be handed out at the conference. Also, a video/DVD/CD/audio cassette of the bishop's introduction will be offered to each congregation. He hopes to have one person from each congregation volunteer to help work on the questionnaires. A process is being developed to handle the questionnaires. He will have a report to the synod assembly in April.

The agenda for the synod council meeting November 14 & 15 was discussed. Marcia Clark Johnson will come Friday evening and spend about an hour introducing the evaluation process. She will use the Saturday morning time from 9:00 to noon for the evaluation process. Some of the things that will be covered: what is the responsibility of the synod council? What should the council be doing? What should it not be doing?

Jeff Setterlund reported on the progress of the staff salary range project. We are asking the Department of Synodical Relations to make the 2002 salary survey they did available to us. If that doesn't happen, we will ask Jim Engh to do a salary survey of synods in Regions 3, 4 and 5. It is expected this can be completed by budgeting time.

Bishop Usgaard is gathering names for a task force to explore alternatives for the synod office. The task force has not been formed yet.

Bishop Usgaard reviewed his accomplishments in the last year and his goals for the upcoming year. The committee encouraged him to take his time off and continue to take care of himself.

Deborah Norrie asked the committee's response to changing registration procedures for the 2004 Synod Assembly. She proposes inserting registration information and forms in the River Crossings in December, January and February and making it available on the web site. This would be savings of staff time, postage and paper/envelope costs. The committee agrees with this idea and encouraged her to go ahead with this change.

Ms. Norrie then shared the assemblyships that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod offers each year to congregations with financial need. We have money left from the 2003 assembly that could be used to establish a \$1000 grant to offer 10-\$100 grants to congregations in financial need. Congregations will be asked to apply for the grants. It was suggested that the committee would give preference to congregations who have their congregational report forms filed!

Ms. Gangstad asked if a proposal for a youth staff person has been received yet. The bishop has not received any more information about a youth staff person or a Christian Education staff person.

Rev. Don Rose has agreed to serve on the Committee on Discipline. This is a full term of six years.

Ms. Norrie reported that the computer system in the office has been worked on and a new network hub installed. Two new computers were purchased. The office is still working with the computer tech people to replace the web site lines and Internet Service Provider that is expected to reduce the cost of the web site by 50%. This conversion should be completed by the end of the year. A new notebook computer has been purchased using the Communications budget.

There was no other old business.

New Business

The Lay and Clergy Leadership Development Team sent a proposal to the Executive Committee regarding Sunday Evening Retreats for Rostered Members and Families. The Executive Committee is referring this back to the Team. This is a decision for the Team to make and decide if they want to spend their Team budget on such a proposal. The committee also suggested that the Team may wish to look into other retreat places available to clergy: Shepherd's Rest, Good Earth Village, Rev. Jack Miller's retreat house in Millville, for example.

The committee received the offer from Bethel Lutheran Church, Rochester to host future synod assemblies when Bethel's new sanctuary is completed. This will be taken into consideration when planning future assemblies.

Bishop Robert Berg of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin has written a letter to Bishop Usgaard explaining Northwest Wisconsin's resource center. This resource center has many resources available via it's web site. Bishop Berg is asking for any amount of financial support to this resource center that we may be willing and able to offer. The Executive Committee is referring this request to the Congregational Renewal Team for their consideration.

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Constitution contains a bylaw that makes the synod's vice-president one of the voting members from the synod at churchwide assemblies. Attending churchwide assembly is a valuable education resource for synod leaders, especially synod officers. Ms. Gangstad would like to offer a resolution at the synod assembly to change the bylaws to include the Synod Secretary and Synod Treasurer as voters at churchwide assemblies beginning with the churchwide assembly in 2007. Ms. Gangstad and Ms Norrie will prepare a draft resolution for the Executive Committee to consider.

There was no other new business.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM.

Betty Ann Hernke, Secretary
Deborah Norrie, Recorder