

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council
Minutes
November 12-13, 2004**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met on Friday, November 12, 2004 in the Sun Center, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota at 6:00 PM.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, Treasurer Jeff Setterlund, Rev. James Ahlquist, Marilyn Carpenter, Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, Rev. Richard Spande, Rev. Daniel Baker, Rev. Scott Olson, John Petersburg, Beverly Sundheim, Ann Beatty, David Horning, and Rev. Barbara Knutson.

Members absent were: Cathy Mannel, Rebecca Koelln and Rev. Randy Johnson, all excused. Rev. Mary Sue Dreier, unexcused.

Guests present were: Rev. Mark Peters, Executive Director of Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy in Minnesota and Rev. Todd Hawkins on the Board for LCPPM.

Staff present: Larry Iverson and Deborah Norrie, Recorder.

Following prayer, dinner was served.

Continuing the practice of sharing our faith stories, the Congregational Renewal Team was called upon. Larry Iverson, Marilyn Carpenter, Dick Spande, Cindy Fisher-Broin and Jim Ahlquist briefly shared their faith stories.

The Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team was reminded that they would share their stories during breakfast at the meeting February 19, 2005.

Larry Iverson introduced Rev. Mark Peters, Executive Director of Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy in Minnesota. Rev. Todd Hawkins was also introduced. Rev. Hawkins is an LCPPM board member as is Larry Iverson.

Rev. Peters, taking a cue from the council's lead, briefly shared his faith story as a way to introduce himself.

LCPPM represents 1200 ELCA churches in Minnesota with more than 800,000 members. The focus of LCPPM is threefold:

1. caring for the hungry (work in conjunction with ELCA World Hunger)
2. caring for health
3. caring for creation

When legislation is proposed in the Minnesota Legislature, it is looked at through those three filters. LCPPM advocates for people in Minnesota who have no voice in the legislative process to care for the hungry, the sick and creation.

Following conversation with Rev. Peters, the council worshipped in Clare Chapel with the Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team leading worship. After worship, members of the council enjoyed fellowship and refreshments.

Saturday morning, November 13, 2004 the council gathered for Morning Prayer in Clare Chapel at 8:30 am. Following worship, the teams met individually.

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council meeting was called to order at 12:45 PM in the Sun Center, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota by Vice president Shirley Gangstad.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, Treasurer Jeff Setterlund, Rev. James Ahlquist, Marilyn Carpenter, Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, Rev. Richard Spande, Rev. Daniel Baker, Rebecca Koelln, Rev. Scott Olson, John Petersburg, Beverly Sundheim, Ann Beatty, David Horning, and Rev. Barbara Knutson.

Members absent were: Cathy Mannel and Rev. Randy Johnson, both excused. Rev. Mary Sue Dreier, unexcused.

Staff present: Deborah Norrie, Recorder

Reports

Secretary BettyAnn Hernke presented the minutes of the meeting September 17-18, 2004. John Petersburg made a motion to accept the minutes.

Voted

SC.04.11.01 to accept the minutes of the Synod Council meeting September 17-18, 2004 as written.

Treasurer Jeff Setterlund presented the treasurer's report.

1. October mission support was \$151,171. That is 84% of the straight budget and 95.7% of historical giving.
2. The total for the year, \$1,413,366, is \$1612 behind 2003 for the same period. It is \$63,000 behind the historical average for the same period.
3. The draft of the October accounting report was highlighted.
4. November Mission Support through November 10th was \$85,263.
5. The bank balance was \$103,573.07.
6. Ms. Norrie reported that all bills have been paid and all Mission Support, missionary support and World Hunger funds have been sent to Chicago.

There was a question about how concerned the Executive Committee is about the budget. Mr. Setterlund commented that we are watching it very carefully and November, December and January income will be critical.

Rev. Barbara Knutson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report.

Voted

SC.04.11.02 to approve the treasurer's report.

Reports from the bishop and synod staff were included in the council packet. Council members asked the bishop how things are going. Bishop Usgaard reflected how emotionally spent he was after the Conference of Bishops meeting and gives thanks that the Church belongs to God.

Rev. Richard Spande commented on the good theological conference that just concluded and relayed Rev. Susan Briehl's comment on her feeling that the conference reflected a healthy atmosphere among the clergy.

There was no team business requiring the council's action.

Old Business

The council received reports on 2004 Synod Assembly resolutions.

1. Received a written report from the Global Mission/Companion Synod Committee on resolutions 2004-01, 02 & 08. A copy is attached.
2. Received a verbal report from the Mission Planning & Action Team on resolution 2004-05. Each conference has been asked to identify a site in the conference and plan how to implement and fund the project. The proposals will be presented at conference assemblies in February.
3. Received a written report from the Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team on resolution 2004-09. A copy is attached.
4. Received a written report from the Executive Committee on resolution 2004-10. A copy is attached.

There was no other old business.

New business

The Synod Council received a request from Rev. Lissa Kahl for a retroactive Letter of Call for the time she was under contract as an interim pastor at Zion, Stewartville.

Rev. Richard Spande made a motion to issue a Letter of Call to Rev. Lissa Kahl.

Voted

SC.04.11.03 to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Lissa Kahl as an interim pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, Stewartville effective July 1, 2003 for the term

ending April 30, 2004. Her on leave from call start date is effective May 1, 2004 and will expire April 30, 2007.

A request was received from Rev. Kathryn Gauger for a Letter of Call to interim ministry. Rev. Barbara Knutson made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to her.

Voted

SC.04.11.04 to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Kathryn Gauger as interim pastor at East & West St. Olaf Churches, Byron, effective October 15, 2004.

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod participates in a cafeteria plan for synod staff. Two employees are enrolled in the plan for flexible spending accounts. Administration Resources Corporation services this plan on behalf of the synod. There have been changes to the plan that require council action to adopt the amended and restated plan.

Ann Beatty made a motion to adopt the amended and restated Cafeteria Plan for the benefit of the synod staff.

Voted

SC.04.11.05 to adopt the Unanimous Written Action of the Synod council of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod for the amended and restated Cafeteria Plan designed to provide the benefits of the Cafeteria Plan.¹

Bishop Usgaard received a request from Mount Carmel Ministries, Alexandria, Minnesota for labels for a mailing to congregations in the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Mount Carmel would like to notify congregations that they can provide members who are deployed in the war and their families copies of the Moravian Daily Texts. A motion was made by John Petersburg to approve the request. There was a second to the motion. In discussion, the council questioned whether the ministry was selling the books or giving them away. Some council members expressed reservations about sharing the mailing list and suggested there are other ways to get the mailing information other than requesting labels from the synod office. John Petersburg amended his motion to authorize the Executive Committee to make the decision.

Voted

SC04.11.06 to refer the request received from Mount Carmel Ministries for mailing labels to the Executive Committee.

Bishop Usgaard read a letter from Rev. Glenn Monson, Our Savior's, Austin. The Austin Area Interfaith Disaster Response is requesting \$15,000 in aid for the families affected by the flood. We need to inform congregations of the relief needed in the area. There was discussion about the role Lutheran Disaster Response has played in this area and a suggestion that information about the relief needs be on the synod's web site.

¹ The resolution adopted by the council has not been signed by the bishop. The employees enrolled in the flexible spending cafeteria plan opted out of the plan for 2005.

Rev. Jim Ahlquist made a motion to take \$10,000 out of Board Designated Operating Reserves for flood relief.

Voted

**SC.04.11.07 to authorize the transfer of \$10,000 from the Board Designated Operating Reserve for the Austin Area Interfaith Disaster Response program;
To continue to encourage congregations in the synod to give to this disaster response request; and
To repay the Board Designated Operating Reserve \$1000 per month as cash is available and any unspent budgeted crisis assistance money at the end of the fiscal year.**

Ms. Gangstad announced the Synod Council meeting scheduled April 15-16, 2005 has been rescheduled for April 8-9, 2005. A question was asked about the possibility of starting the Friday evening part of the council meeting earlier than 6:00. This will be talked about again at the April meeting.

Ms. Gangstad announced that the next council meeting will be February 19, 2005 and explained how the budget process works. The meeting February 19th will start at 8:30 AM; breakfast will be served.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 PM and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary
Deborah Norrie, Recorder