

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council  
Executive Committee  
Minutes  
June 7, 2005**

Members present: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Treasurer Jeff Setterlund, Secretary Betty Ann Hernke, and Rev. Scott Olson.

Member absent: Ms. Ann Beatty, excused

Staff present: Deborah Norrie, Recorder

Vice president Shirley Gangstad called the meeting to order at 4:15 PM in the conference room of the synod office, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota. Ms. BettyAnn Hernke led devotions.

The agenda was reviewed and accepted with two minor additions: Old Business – update on management consultant; and, Old Business. – Congregation constitutions.

Ms. BettyAnn Hernke presented the minutes of the meeting March 22, 2005. Jeff Setterlund made a motion to accept the minutes as written.

**Voted**

**EC05.06.01 to accept the minutes of the meeting March 22, 2005 as written.**

Mr. Jeff Setterlund presented the treasurer's report.

1. May Mission Support was \$128,810; 83.5% of budget; 94% of historical budget
2. checkbook balance is \$95,763.55
3. the April accounting report was sent in the packet

Rev. Scott Olson asked if there is a way to inform congregations about the financial shortfall without being heavy handed about it. There was conversation about ways to inform congregations via the web site, the list serve, copies of congregation statements sent to pastors, etc. This needs to be addressed in positive ways always thanking congregations for their support.

Rev. Olson made a motion to accept the treasurer's report.

**Voted**

**EC05.06.02 to accept the treasurer's report.**

Old Business

2005 assembly evaluations. The Bishop asked the committee if the discussion times had been helpful. The consensus of the committee was, yes, it was time well used.

How can the assembly be refreshed? What are different models of organizing the agenda? Several comments referred to the assembly being "scripted". It is "scripted" so that all the business gets done. It is not "scripted" in terms of outcome. Jeff Setterlund commented that ratings are all average or above. It may be helpful to compare these ratings over the last couple of years. Generally, the assembly is a successful event, enjoyed by most of the lay people in attendance. It is the clergy who seem to be most critical. The committee suggested that in his opening remarks, the bishop could take more time to explain the theme – why are we doing things. For instance, it might have been helpful to talk more about the prayer tent and the prayer shawls. Take time to talk about what is new and different.

The committee was very pleased with the number of youth that attended. We will offer the rebate or 2-for-the price-of one offer in 2006.

Ms. Norrie said that she and Jan Severson will be very carefully reviewing the costs related to the civic center. We may be able to save some money by offering conference meetings in different ways.

The committee spent some time discussing how the assembly could worship at Bethel Lutheran Church, Rochester. They have a new worship space that would accommodate the assembly worship. Continental breakfast, opening worship with Eucharist could be held the morning of the first day of assembly. Certain parts of the assembly could be scheduled for the morning at Bethel that don't require people be registered. For instance, the recognition of ordination anniversaries, retirements, scholarship awards, introductions, and greetings could all be done before an official plenary session. The assembly planning committee will work on these ideas.

Bishop Usgaard asked for suggestions on how to focus on bible study. Perhaps the assembly participants could be asked to prepare a lesson ahead of time. Participants should be encouraged to bring their Bibles. Bible study leaders were suggested by the committee: Barbara Lundblad, Kelly Fryer, Barbara Brown Taylor, Susan Briehl, Francis Taylor Gensch, Barbara Rossing, Rick Warren, Jimmy Carter.

The committee also commented that worship was difficult. The worship can be new and use new resources but needs to be singable.

Computer Use Policy. Ms. Norrie presented a draft of an Electronic Communication Policy. The committee reviewed the policy and made several suggestions for revisions. A revised policy will be on the agenda in August for approval.

Bishop Usgaard commented that the ELCA policy, which the synod policy is based on, is a better document than the ones he has collected from other synods. He would like the synod policy to be a model for congregations to use.

Bishop Usgaard updated the committee on the strategic plan.

- Spent an afternoon with Good Earth Village summer counselors and encouraged them to consider ministry
- Had conversation with Good Earth Village board; they are interested in how they could support the synod's efforts in youth leadership development
- Has convened a group of synod musicians; they are working on a list of 20 hymns every congregation should know
- October 1<sup>st</sup> is the kickoff event of a synod in study; there will be a keynote and best practices; this event is in conjunction with Augsburg Fortress
- The spiritual growth for pastors project is in development

Mr. Jon Christensen, a management consultant, will be in the office to begin his work the week of July 18. He would like to present his findings August 29. The Executive Committee will meet August 29 instead of August 30 to be available to receive his report.

#### New Business

2006 assembly rules and voting procedures. Ms. Norrie presented a draft of proposed assembly rules for 2006. This document eliminates the old resolution language of the practice of previous years; proposes a Distribution of Materials Policy; re-states the voting procedures and notes that abstentions will not be called for when voting cards are used.

Rev. Scott Olson made a motion to recommend adoption of the assembly rules by the synod council.

#### **Voted**

**EC05.06.03 to recommend adoption of the assembly rules and the Distribution of Materials at Synod Assembly Policy by the synod council.**

Shirley Gangstad received a letter for the Synod Council from Rev. Norman Wahl, Bethel, Rochester addressing concerns about resolution deadlines for assembly. Rev. Wahl's letter will be on the council's agenda in September.

The committee reviewed a proposed revision to the synod's assembly display policy. This policy will be reviewed again at the August committee meeting.

The publication policy was tabled until the August meeting.

There were four constitutions submitted for review. Ms. Hernke made a motion to deal with two constitutions:

#### **Voted**

**EC05.06.04 to inform Central Freeborn Lutheran Church, Clarks Grove, that its constitution and bylaws amendments approved by the congregation March 5, 2005, submitted for synod review March 14, 2005, are generally consistent with the constitution**

**and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution and bylaws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod; and,**

**inform Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Mankato, that its constitution and bylaws document approved by the congregation in April 2005 which was submitted for synod review April 25, 2005 is generally consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution and bylaws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.**

The committee asked Ms. Norrie to notify Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Faribault, that its constitution adopted at the congregational meeting January 30, 2005, submitted for synod review February 18, 2005, is NOT consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution and bylaws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. The document was consistent with ELCA and Southeastern Minnesota Synod constitutions and bylaws when last review April 5, 1996.

The committee asked Ms. Norrie to have conversation with the Interim Senior Pastor at Gloria Dei, Rochester and inform Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Rochester, that its constitution and bylaws document approved by the congregation July 17, 1991, January 22, 1997 and January 22, 2004 and submitted to the synod for review May 4, 2005, is NOT consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution and bylaws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. The constitution as it currently stands contains a mixture of text from ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations and predecessor ALC material. Bylaws material, for example, continues many provisions from the old ALC model constitution and bylaws.

There was no other new business.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary  
Deborah Norrie, Recorder

Next meeting: Monday, August 29, 2005; Devotions: Jeff Setterlund