

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council
Minutes
May 20, 2006**

The Synod Council gathered at 9:00AM Saturday, May 20, 2006 in Clare Chapel at Assisi Heights, Rochester for morning worship. The worship was led by the Lay and Clergy Leadership Team.

Vice President Shirley Gangstad called the meeting of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council to order at 10:15AM in the Walters Library at Assisi Heights, Rochester. Before the meeting Bishop Usgaard welcomed new members to the council. Members of the council introduced themselves and told where they had seen God in the past week.

Members present were: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice President Shirley Gangstad, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, Rev. James Ahlquist, Marcia Blackburn, Dorothy Gesme, Rev. Randy Johnson, Cathy Mannel, Craig Nelson, Rev. Scott Olson, Karen Ortloff, John Petersburg, and Rev. Richard Spande.

Members absent were: Treasurer Jeff Setterlund, new Treasurer Mark Bradley, Ann Beatty, Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, Rev. Linda Gunderson, Beth Krehbiel.

Staff present was Rev. Audree Catalano, Larry Iverson. Staff absent: Deborah Norrie, Recorder.

Ms. BettyAnn Hernke presented the minutes of the council meeting March 18, 2006. A motion was made by Cathy Mannel to approve the Minutes.

Voted

SC06.05.01 to approve the minutes of the synod council meeting March 18, 2006.

Ms. Shirley Gangstad presented financial information to the council for Treasurer, Jeff Setterlund who was absent. All 2006 Mission Support has been paid. The bank balance as of May 19, 2006 was \$317,399.12. A motion was made by Mr. John Petersburg to approve the treasurer's report.

Voted

SC06.05.02 to approve the treasurer's report.

Team minutes were included in the materials. There were no reports from the staff.

Rev. James Ahlquist made a motion to approve on leave from call request of the Rev. Kenneth H. Carlson, Northfield; on leave from call effective April 1, 2004; expires May 31, 2007.

Voted

SC06.05.03 to approve on leave from call request of the Rev. Kenneth H. Carlson, Northfield; on leave from call effective April 1, 2004; expires May 31, 2007.

Rev. Richard Spande made a motion that Rev. Darin Easler, Atlanta, Georgia on leave from call August 3, 2003, not be extended beyond August 2, 2006.

Voted

SC06.05.04 not to extend Rev. Darin Easler, Atlanta, Georgia on leave from call August 3, 2003 beyond August 2, 2006. Rev. Easler will be removed from the clergy roster of the ELCA effective August 3, 2006.

Bishop Usgaard explained a synod audit process that is done by the Department of Synodical Relations, ELCA. This is a ministry audit involving the whole synod identifying the strengths and weaknesses and where improvement can be made. This would be done after the election of the Bishop in 2007. More information will be given so that the council can act on this at the September meeting.

Bishop Usgaard discussed the naming of a task force to review the synod budget process and make recommendations for revisions to the process. It's been a flat budget for a few years. Where do our loyalties lie? Churchwide, Mission Partners or our own congregations? How do we decide who are our Mission Partners? What is the role of ministry in the synod? It's not very clear to the congregations where the synod money goes. Need positive way for congregations to have ownership in the synod. Need to continue talking about this Friday night at the synod council meeting in September. Executive Committee could name the task force members from around the synod.

Ms. Shirley Gangstad distributed a schedule of future Executive Committee and Synod Council Meetings: 2006-2010. Synod Council is a commitment! Mark the dates on calendar now.

Bishop Usgaard and Shirley Gangstad reviewed the proposal to update the synod office. Carpet, carpet installation, painting, and general construction cost is \$26,779. Furniture for reception area, Bishop's office, conference room, and recover guest chairs cost is \$26,080 or total cost of \$52,859. Additional furniture for the other offices is \$19,925. Total cost to do the whole synod office project is \$72,784. (some figures may be on the high side) Where is the money coming from to pay for this remodeling? Board designated operating reserve fund set aside for office renovation-\$30,000; excess in board designated operating reserve fund in excess of \$30,000-\$11,000; interest on restricted funds not moved to board designated operating reserve-\$2,775; cash left over from 2005-\$11,000. Total cash available is \$54,875. Need an extra \$16,000 to complete the total office remodeling project. Mr. John Petersburg made a motion to take money out of the reserve fund to complete the office remodeling project.

Voted

SC06.05.05 to take money from the reserve fund to complete the office remodeling project.

It was suggested that the synod could sell the used furniture at a garage sale with the Sisters at Assisi Heights. The date of this sale could be posted on the web site. Suggested that the Bishop write a positive article on the remodeling project.

There was no other old business.

Before going to lunch, the Synod Council was given a tour of the synod office to see where the changes would be in the remodeling project.

The meeting resumed after lunch.

New Business

Bishop Usgaard presented a number of candidates requesting Letters of Call to specialized ministry sites. Ms. Gangstad made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Terje Hausken.

Voted

SC06.05.06 to extend a Letter of Call to the Rev. Terje Hausken, interim pastor, Congregational Church UCC, Rochester, Minnesota effective June 4, 2006.

Rev. Richard Spande made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Dwight DoBell.

Voted

SCO6.05.07 to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Dwight DoBell, Minister of Mental Health, Community Presbyterian Church, Plainview, Minnesota effective March 21, 2006.

Craig Nelson made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Diane Goulson.

Voted

SC.06.05.08 to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Diane Goulson, Chaplain, Northfield Retirement Community effective March 26, 2006.

2006 Synod Council Assembly evaluation summary reports were passed out. Need more time to evaluate them so will be put on the agenda in September as old business.

Two members of the Synod Council are to be elected for a one year term to serve on the Executive Committee. A member may serve two consecutive terms. One is to be a clergy member and one a lay member. Ballots were passed out and Mr. John Petersburg, a lay member and Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, a clergy member were elected.

The Sabbatical Committee requested funds for 2007. 2006 sabbatical grants totaled \$16,000 were funded from the Clergy Continuing Education Restricted Fund. There is \$43,216.23 (interest money) in this fund. Mr. Craig Nelson made a motion to take \$16,000 from the Continuing Education Restricted Fund for 2007 sabbatical grants.

Voted

SC06.05.09 to take \$16,000 from the Continuing Education Restricted Fund for 2007 sabbatical grants.

Other business.

Ms. Shirley Gangstad explained the process for Election of Bishop in 2007. The vice president will convene this committee in June or early July of this year. This committee of seven is independent and is in charge of the whole election of bishop process.

Next meeting is September 8 & 9, 2006. Friday, September 8; 6:00PM dinner, orientation and planning for upcoming year: worship; conclude evening by 9:00PM. Saturday, September 9; 9:00-noon Synod Council meeting; teams meet after lunch.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM with the Lord's Prayer.

Team meetings were held during lunch and after the Synod Council meeting.

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary