

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod
Executive Committee
Minutes
August 31, 2006**

Members present: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, Treasurer Mark Bradley, John Petersburg, Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, Deborah Norrie, Recorder.

Shirley Gangstad called the meeting to order at 3:00PM in the synod office conference room. Ms. Gangstad welcomed Mark Bradley, the new synod treasurer, to his first meeting of the Executive Committee. Other members of the committee were asked to introduce themselves.

The agenda was reviewed; there were no additions.

BettyAnn Hernke led devotions.

Ms. Hernke presented the minutes of the meeting June 20, 2006. Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin made a motion to accept the minutes.

Voted

EC06.08.01 to approve the minutes of the meeting June 20, 2006.

Mark Bradley with the assistance of Deborah Norrie gave the treasurer's report.

Mission Support year-to-date at the end of August was \$1,110,838. That was \$16,955 ahead of 2005; \$33,974 ahead of anticipated income; and, \$162,142 behind budget.

The checkbook balance was \$383,071.40. Ms. Norrie noted that the \$100,000 special gift for Tanzania was transferred to the Central Diocese in August.

The most recent accounting report available was June 2006. Ms. Norrie made the following comments:

- \$1787.95 interest in the Thrivent Restricted Fund available for the Board Designated Operating Reserve.
- \$5831 in income offsetting expenses for FCTE and Candidacy not reflected on the budget pages.
- \$5911 income offsetting salary and administration expenses not reflected on the budget pages.

John Petersburg made a motion to accept treasurer's report.

Voted

EC06.08.02 to accept the treasurer's report.

Bishop Usgaard noted that Larry Iverson and Katie Butler asked for clarification on the Mission Support report in *River Crossings*. Does the committee want Larry Iverson to make comment about the report in each edition? The bishop thinks it would be good to put the report in context each month. John Petersburg commented that it is an opportunity for education about how the money is used and how the budget impacts people. Shirley Gangstad believes that it is not enough to say things once. People need to hear it again and again. Bishop Usgaard will talk to Larry Iverson about this.

Old Business

Ms. Norrie reported that she and the bishop met with Rev. Paul Baker, retired, Rochester and Jan Severson. Paul Baker has agreed to serve as the event planner for the 2007 assembly. Ms. Norrie asked for a recommendation from the Executive Committee on how much Rev. Baker should be paid. John Petersburg made a motion to set the fee for the 2007 assembly at \$3000.

Voted

EC.06.08.03 to pay Rev. Paul Baker a total of \$3000 for his service as assembly manager for the 2007 Synod Assembly to be paid in two installments in February 2007 and June 2007.

Lutheran Campus Ministry, Winona has requested assistance in paying their loan with NLCM. Bishop Usgaard explained the cuts to campus ministry and how the cuts throughout the state have gutted the campus ministry program. He reminded the committee that if we have excess money at the end of the year we can send them \$12,500 at the end of the year. He asked for clarification on the \$125 a month figure that John Carrier proposed. Shirley Gangstad will contact John Carrier and Mark Dumke to get more details about what the need is so that we have information for the council meeting. Perhaps we can e-mail the committee to have a recommendation from the committee for the council's action.

Ms. Norrie reported on the office renovation. The project went remarkably well with very few problems. Ms. Norrie noted:

- The various contractors working onsite were cooperative and did good work. The staff has been especially impressed with the men from Benike's.
- The electrical and low-voltage cabling work brought everything in the office up to code and improved the wiring for the computer system.
- Additional costs were incurred for the phone system that were not in the original cost projections. It was noted that the final payment on the phone lease would be made this fall.
- Almost all of the old furniture was sold. \$3140 has been deposited into Board Designated Operating Reserve.
- Additional bookcases and a later file have been ordered for the two synod ministers.

Ms. Norrie reported that the synod office will not have a formal agreement with Good Earth Village for use of space in the synod office. It was decided that the needs of GEV staff were not great enough to warrant a formal agreement.

Shirley Gangstad will review the constitution and Rev. Lund's comments and have a report for the October 12 meeting.

Ms. Gangstad and John Petersburg will have discussion about revisions to the manual for the October 12 meeting.

Ms. Norrie reported that support staff are making progress on their operations manuals.

Bishop Usgaard's Ministry Planning and Review was tabled at the June meeting. He explained his accomplishments, weaknesses and goals. The committee commented on accomplishments and was concerned about using the 360 degree evaluation tools. That may not be the best tool to use for staff evaluations.

Bishop Usgaard explained the agenda for the Synod Council meeting September 8-9. Mark Herman, Zumbro Lutheran Church, Rochester business administrator will facilitate the conversation.

- Orientation of new members will begin at 5:00. BettyAnn Hernke and Shirley Gangstad will come in early Friday afternoon to help assemble council notebooks for new members.
- Dinner will be served at 6:00.

There is one addition to the agenda for the council business meeting: Rev. Lane Zaffke and two youth will come to review their plans for starting a Lutheran Youth Organization in the synod. Bishop Usgaard also noted that Rejoice, Northfield will probably come to the November council meeting for approval to purchase land.

There was no other old business.

New Business.

Bishop Usgaard discussed Rev. Audree Catalano's resignation effective September 15. He is in the process of identifying areas that need to be covered. Candidacy will be handled by the committee and chair, Dr. Noel Peterson. The bishop will have conversation with Miri Mattson, a former member of the candidacy committee, to contract with her to do the preliminary interview with new candidates. The bishop is in conversation with a retired pastor to assist with First Call programming. Five pastors around the synod will be identified to assist with the call process. John Petersburg suggested call process may be better handled by congregation size than by conference. Miscellaneous duties will be handled by staff or arranged for on a need basis.

The Executive Committee will host an open house in honor of Audree on Tuesday, September 12th from 2-4:00 PM in the Clare Cafeteria, Assisi Heights.

The committee agreed to continue medical coverage for Audree from September 16-30.¹

¹ It was unnecessary for the synod to pay this expense. The Board of Pensions continues coverage if the gap in calls is less than 30 days.

2007 Synod Assembly.

- Ms. Gangstad reported that she has convened the Committee for the Election of a Bishop and they are at work. She also explained the nomination process.
- Ms. Gangstad indicated that she is discerning the Vice president election and will have conversation with Bishop Usgaard.
- This will be the last year for the theme – *Called Into God's Marvelous Light*. The emphasis for 2007 is witness to the world. The bishop asked for ideas about witness to the world: urge congregations to share faith stories; how do you share those stories outside the church; find 52 lay people to write a devotion and publish it; could be published on the web site and featured in the e-news; first Sunday in Advent have pastors share faith stories to kick off the theme for the year; at pastors conference meetings ask three to five congregations to share with the rest of the group an outreach program that their congregation is doing; i.e. Habitat; local food shelf; have a communicator at these meetings to get this stuff on the web site.
- Samples of assembly agendas were distributed. The agenda has to provide for a potential five ballots for bishop.
- The 2006 assembly voted to emphasize campus ministry at the 2007 assembly. The offering will be designated to Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota. The committee will explore other ways to highlight campus ministry.
- ELCA assignments to assemblies will be announced at the October Conference of Bishops meeting.
- The assembly planning committee will tentatively meet October 3 and October 31 to begin the planning.

A letter was received from St. Paul's ELCA/UCC, Lewiston in response to Shirley Gangstad's letter of March 14, 2006. Ms. Gangstad's letter requested that the congregation update constitutions and execute a Plan of Agreement for a Federated Congregation. The congregation leadership has refused to do any of this. They are operating under an undated yoking agreement. Ms. Norrie will contact Phil Harris, ELCA legal counsel, to get clarification on St. Paul's legal standing.

A letter was received from Rev. Stephen Fiksdal encouraging the council to support Campus Ministry.

There was no other new business.

Next meeting: October 12 at 3:00; devotions – Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary
Deborah Norrie, Recorder