

**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council
Minutes
March 17, 2007**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met in Walters Library, Assisi Heights, Rochester, Minnesota on Saturday, March 17, 2007. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Shirley Gangstad at 8:35 AM. Bishop Usgaard offered a brief devotion and prayer.

Members present: Bishop Harold Usgaard, Vice president Shirley Gangstad, Secretary BettyAnn Hernke, Treasurer Mark Bradley, Rev. James Ahlquist, Ann Beatty, Marcia Blackburn, Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin, Craig Nelson, Rev. Scott Olson, Karen Ortloff, John Petersburg, Rev. Richard Spande.

Staff present: Larry Iverson and Deborah Norrie, Recorder.

Members absent: Dorothy Gesme, Rev. Linda Gunderson, Rev. John Henriksen, Rev. Randy Johnson, Beth Krehbiel. All were excused absences.

Ms. BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary, was called on to present the minutes of the meeting November 18, 2006. Craig Nelson made a motion to adopt the minutes.

Voted

SC.07.03.01 to adopt the minutes of the Synod Council meeting March 17, 2007.

Mr. Mark Bradley, Treasurer, was called on to present the treasurer's report.

- The 2006 actual budget worksheet was distributed. The Mission Support at year end totaled \$2,247,052, the second highest income in the synod's history. Mr. Bradley reviewed the actual spending noting:
 - Ministry Partners were all paid at 100%
 - Synod Ministry spending when fee income was credited, was under budget \$8000
 - Synod Administration was under budget for several reasons: careful spending and vacancy on synod staff were two noted.
- The council was presented with \$135,000 in surplus funds to distribute.
- Mission support for 2007 February was \$147,448 which is behind projected income. It is too soon in the year to know what this means.
- The bank balance was \$303,432.24.

Bishop Usgaard reviewed the recommendation from the Executive Committee to distribute the funds:

- youth task force -- \$5000
- congregational renewal projects -- \$1000
- Board Designated Operating Reserves -- \$11,000
- Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota -- \$15,000
- Minnesota Council of Churches -- \$4000

- Endowment Fund -- \$50,000
- Hurricane relief to the Southeastern Synod, Florida-Bahamas Synod and the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod -- \$15,000
- Undesignated -- \$12,400

Rev. Richard Spande was called upon to offer prayer for discernment and guidance in how the decision is made to disburse the surplus funds.

John Petersburg asked about development of goals for the synod and how these disbursements might reflect those goals. Bishop Usgaard commented that both youth leadership and congregational renewal are top emphases in the current strategic plan.

Mark Bradley offered a motion to combine the youth task force and congregational renewal projects into one line and increase the amount to \$10,000. The Congregational Renewal Team will have responsibility for oversight of these funds. This motion was seconded and carried.

Craig Nelson offered a motion to disburse surplus funds to operating reserves, campus ministry, MCC, the endowment fund and hurricane relief as recommended by the Executive Committee; and, designate the \$12,400 to the Global Mission Committee. The motion was seconded. John Petersburg offered an amendment to send \$10,000 to Lutheran Campus Ministry, Minnesota, and \$2500 each to Winona Campus Ministry and Mankato Campus Ministry. Craig Nelson and Scott Olson, who seconded the original motion, agreed to the amendment. The amendment was seconded. The amended motion was carried.

Voted

SC.07.03.02 to disbursed surplus funds as follows:
Congregational Renewal, \$10,000
Board Designated Operating Reserve, \$11,000
Lutheran Campus Ministry, Minnesota, \$10,000
Campus Ministry, Winona, \$2500
Campus Ministry, Mankato, \$2500
Minnesota Council of Churches, \$4000
Leadership Endowment, \$50,000
Southeastern Synod, Florida-Bahamas Synod, Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, \$5000 each

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the treasurer's report.

Voted

SC.07.03.03 to approve the treasurer's report.

The revised Sabbatical Policy was tabled.

A resolution will be coming to the 2007 assembly calling for a youth task force to review youth ministry in the synod with the possibility of adding a staff person for youth and family ministry. LYO will be a part of that process.

The Executive Committee presented the 2007 Personnel Budget to the council. There was discussion of the amount of the 2007 budget for personnel. The council accepts the role of the Executive Committee as the Personnel Committee and does not need to see individual salaries.

Ann Beatty made a motion to adopt the revised budget as recommended by the Executive Committee. The motion was seconded.

Larry Iverson handed out a worksheet showing the intents of all congregations. The intent total is down. A couple of large congregations have cut their intents for 2007 but hope to do better. The revised budget is \$2,217,000 which is the intent total plus 1%. Budget expense items were cut accordingly. The motion carried.

Voted

SC.07.03.04 to adopt a revised 2007 budget at \$2,217,000.

The Executive Committee presented two 2008 proposed budget options:

- Budget proposal A: income \$2,283,500 at 52.5% to the ELCA
- Budget proposal B: income \$2,283,500 at 53% to the ELCA

Mark Bradley commented that as the personnel budget rises, it is difficult to increase other budget areas when income stays flat.

John Petersburg commented that the council needs to struggle with how the budget reflects the synod's vision and goals. The top third of the budget does not impact the work done in the synod but it feels good. The bottom 2/3 is where the ministry happens in the synod.

The council found it difficult to cut any more from any of the budget areas and the discussion turned to increasing income. Since this budget can be revised when 2008 intents are known it was suggested that the income be increased by 4% instead of 3% of the revised 2007 income.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend a proposed budget of \$2,305,700 at 52.5% to the ELCA. Discussion continued about flat income and how to continue cutting the budget.

Craig Nelson called the question and the motion passed.

Voted

SC.07.03.05 to recommend to the 2007 Synod Assembly a proposed budget of \$2,305,000 with 52.5% of Mission Support to the ELCA.

Rev. Scott Olson made a motion that the Executive Committee establish a budget task force. The motion was seconded and carried.

Voted

SC.07.03.06 to direct the Executive Committee to establish a task force to examine the Ministry Partners portion of the budget and make a recommendation prior to the 2008 budget cycle.

There was no other old business.

New Business

John Peterson made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Elaine Siemsen.

Voted

SC.07.03.07 to extend a Letter of Call to the Rev. Elaine Siemsen as campus pastor, Lutheran Campus Ministry at Minnesota State University, Mankato effective December 1, 2006.

Rev. Cindy Fisher-Broin made a motion to extend a Letter of Call to Rev. Luther Peterson.

Voted

SC.07.03.08 to extend a Letter of Call to the Rev. Luther Peterson as interim pastor, Lands Lutheran Church, Zumbrota effective February 1, 2007.

A recommendation was received from Rev. Richard Lund to approve the revised constitution of Hosanna Lutheran Church, Rochester. Rev. Richard Spande made a motion to approve the constitution.

Voted

SC.07.03.09 to inform Hosanna Lutheran Church, Rochester, that its constitution and bylaws document, ratified by the congregation January 28, 2007, is consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the ELCA and the constitution and bylaws of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod.

Shirley Gangstad read a letter from Cathy Mannel. She and her husband, Greg, are moving to Arizona and she has resigned from the council. The resignation was accepted with regret.

There were several announcements:

- Council as Leaders event in Owatonna on March 25th.
- The council meeting April 21st is at Urland, Cannon Falls; the agenda for the day was printed on the agenda for the March 17th meeting.

- Lay members of the Synod Council are assembly voters. The assembly is June 8-9 at the Civic Center in Rochester.
- Several items were distributed: an updated council meeting schedule; the assembly agenda and synod handbooks.
- The trip to Chicago being advertised is open to council members. Interested council members should call the office.

The meeting was adjourned at noon and closed with the Lord's Prayer. Council members enjoyed lunch and the Congregational Renewal Team and the Lay & Clergy Leadership Development Team met briefly.

BettyAnn Hernke, Secretary
Deborah Norrie, Recorder