



**Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council  
 Meeting Minutes  
 Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council met on Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at 9am.

Members present: Rev. Regina Hassanally, Rev. Jay Dahlvang, Rev. Jason Bryan-Wegner, Rev. Mark Johnson, John Odegard, Rev. Heather Culuris, Amanda Gebhart, Rev. Dave Klawiter, Craig Nelson, Regina Seabrook, Vice President Ann Peterson, Secretary Jodie Archer, Treasurer Jeff Chestnut and Bishop Steve Delzer.

Staff: Kari MacIver, Rev. Pete Reuss and Mary Kay DuChene.

Absent: Rev. Ashley Osborn, Cheryl Kylo, Maria Nielsen and Rev. Kerry Eversole.

Special Guest: Tammy Walhof, Lutheran Advocacy Minnesota

Devotions were led by Rev. Mark Johnson; Communion by Rev. Heather Culuris.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice President Ann Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:32am.

**SC.16.11.01 Motion to approve the Agenda.**

**Motion approved.**

**Fiduciary Work**

- ✚ Consent Agenda  
 The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes from the September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Synod Council meeting and the reports submitted by the Executive Committee, the Bishop and the Bishop's staff.

**SC.16.11.02 Motion to approve the Consent Agenda en bloc.**

**Motion approved.**

✚ Bishop's Remarks

- The Bishop's youngest daughter, Sarah, is engaged and will be married in June 2017.
- The MN Council of Churches meets in January and the Bishop will be the President. Rev. Peg Chamberlain is retiring from the Minnesota Council of Churches. Bishop Delzer is now the chair of the search committee in charge of recruiting a new CEO. They will be working with a professional consultant for this position.
- Minnesota Lutheran and Catholic bishops met for the 39<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. There was discussion regarding the document Declaration on the Way.
- There is a change in the assignment process and the Bishop offered a brief explanation.
- An explanation of the rostered leaders commitments document was shared. This document contains the expectations of the rostered leaders in the synod. There was good conversation around including information on the back side of the commitments document showing the commitment of the Office of the Bishop staff to companionship in making this happen.

✚ Financial Reports

- Treasurer Jeff Chestnut reviewed the Profit and Loss Budget vs. Actual February through September 2016 document and the Profit & Loss Previous Year Comparison February through September 2016 document.

**SC.16.11.03 Motion to receive the financials.**

**Motion approved.**

- Jeff Chestnut reviewed the audit information. Rev. Pete Ruess has been in touch with the auditor in regards to the audits not yet completed. Conversations will take place with both the auditors and the accountant in regard to this.

- Temporarily Restricted Funds  
There was discussion regarding the temporarily restricted funds. There is a request to change the designation of temporarily restricted funds. No bank accounts were changed; the information was changed only in the books. It is important to know that this can be “proven” if a request was made. The funds were researched and the money was spent appropriately but was not moved from the restricted account in the books.

Moving forward, the preference will be to receive more of a “general” gift than to receive a “restricted” gift.

Action item from Rev. Regina Hassanally – find our red line for Synod Council.  
Action item from Rev. Regina Hassanally – have a few people be the PR people.

**SC.16.11.04 Move to approve the change of designation of temporarily restricted funds per the handout.**

**Motion approved.**

(Information provided during the Synod Council meeting in regards to the Temporarily Restricted Funds is located at the end of these minutes)

- ✚ Approval of Staff Housing Allowance  
The Bishop explained the housing allowance. Ordained ministers can designate part of their income to housing so that it is not taxed. Three members of the staff qualify – Bishop Steve Delzer, Rev. Susan Miller and Rev. Emily Carson. The housing allowance needs to be approved every year.

Secretary Jodie Archer read the following information to the Synod Council:

***Housing allowance  
Resolved that the designated housing allowance for Steven Delzer be set at \$35, 000;  
and  
Resolved that the designated housing allowance for Susan Miller***

***be set at \$27, 500;  
and  
Resolved that the designated housing allowance for Emily Carson be set at \$12, 000;  
and  
Resolved that the designation of the housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2017 and all future years unless otherwise provided.***

**SC16.11.05 Motion to approve the housing allowances for 2017.**

**Motion approved.**

✚ Approval of Roster Changes  
Call To Interim Ministry Through Synod Council:

- Rev. Chris Smith, Minneapolis Area Synod to Interim Senior Pastor at Our Savior’s, Faribault-11/01/2016.
- Rev. John Allen, Montana Synod to Interim Senior Pastor at St. John, Kasson-12/15/2016.

Call To Specialized Ministry Through Synod Council:

- Mary Kay Duchene, Diaconal, Assistant to the Bishop at the Southeastern Minnesota Synod-11/05/2016.
- Rev. Anthony Bateza, Instructor of Religion at St. Olaf College of Northfield, Minnesota-08/15/2015.

Synodically Authorized Ministers Through Synod Council: (Renewed yearly)

- Larry Iverson at Bear Creek, Grand Meadow-2016/2017

Retirement Status: (Acknowledge Only)

- Rev. Howard White -11/01/2016.
- Rev. Van Miller -12/01/2016.
- Rev. Stephanie Frey-12/01/2016.
- Rev. Ron Allen-03/01/2016.

Death: (Acknowledge Only)

- Rev. Sarah Nietz -08/24/2016.

**On Leave From Call, New Request**

- Paul Lutter, 11/01/2016
- Randal Fett, 11/15/2016

#### **On Leave From Call, Yearly Renewal**

- Jacqueline A. Ziemer, start date 12/15/2015

#### **SC16.11.06 Motion to accept roster changes en bloc.**

**Motion approved.**

#### **Continuation On Leave From Call**

- Becky Timm, start 01/01/2014, end 12/31/2016, 10/26/2016-Military Chaplain Training for 2 years ending 12/31/2018

#### **SC16.11.07 Action: To approve an extension of on-leave-from-call status for Becky Timm for one year, pending approval from the Conference of Bishops, and to forward this request to the Roster Committee of the Conference of Bishops.**

**Motion approved.**

#### **Strategic Work**

✚ Personnel Committee Report – Bishop Delzer’s annual review  
Vice President Ann Peterson explained the process involving the annual review for the Bishop. He was part of a pilot project. Conversation revolved around his goals and self-rating, staff structure. Looking forward to being able to reflect on the process and how the year went and what could be improved.

✚ Nominating Committee Report  
Update on open positions for 2017 Synod Assembly elections. Ann reviewed the nominations information and openings on each of the different committees or Synod Council for the nominations for 2017.

✚ Nominating Committee Appointment  
There are 5 members to the nominating committee; one from each of the conferences in the synod. Rev. Kerry Eversole is stepping down as he is now on the Synod Council. Rev. Elliott Malm (Root River Conference) has been brought forward to replace Rev. Eversole.

#### **SC.16.11.08 Motion to appoint Rev. Elliott Malm to the Nominating Committee for a 3 year term.**

**Motion approved.**

✚ RENEW!/Conference Assembly Update February 26, 2017.

Each of the conferences can opt to have their conference assembly immediately following the RENEW event.

Breakout sessions will be available again this year.

✚ Faith Formation Table Proposal  
Mary Kay DuChene is the staff liaison for this group. Representation from every conference and representation of those who are very knowledgeable is a priority. This table’s goal is to be a conduit for the entire synod whether it is for a staff person or for a volunteer in each and every congregation. This table ensures that Children, Youth and Family will continue no matter the staffing in the Office of the Bishop. Going forward, the name has changed from Children, Youth and Family to Faith Formation.

#### **SC.16.11.09 Motion to approve the creation of a Faith Formation table.**

**Motion approved.**

#### **Lutheran Advocacy Minnesota Presentation**

Tammy Walhof, from Lutheran Advocacy Minnesota, joined the Synod Council giving the members an update on the work of Lutheran Advocacy Minnesota this past year.

The Synod Council recessed for lunch at 12:15pm.

The Synod Council gathered together for the afternoon at 12:53pm.

#### **Generative Work**

Mary Kay DuChene, from the Office of the Bishop, shared a power point presentation on strategic planning for the Synod Council.

What is the work of the Synod Council?  
What is the role of the Synod Council?  
What does success look like?

Long range planning is no longer effective and the days of strategic planning may be gone as well. Then what? There is a place for strategic planning if it is done correctly and well. It is a cycle of learn and adapt.

The Council members wrote down their ideas of the responsibilities of the Synod Council. These ideas were separated into similar groups. The Council members then broke into small groups and brainstormed.

**BRIDGE BUILDING:** Connecting the three expressions of the church to one another. Is Synod Council the best group to do this? Are we equipped to do this? Is it harder to do this without having someone on each table or team? The thank you stops were a good example of how we do this, so our members know faces and have a relationship.

What is the expectation for council members outside of this meeting? Does the work of the Synod Council only happen at the meetings?

**VISIONING:** Chart the future, set the goals, set the direction. Council and staff need to have a strong relationship to help set goals. Council should help do this and communicate these goals. Council set the general direction in consultation with the staff and taking the staff lead. A board offers direction, goals come from the staff to the board. Should it also come from the congregations? Council needs to listen to the people and pastors and taking it to council. Staff develop the action plan.

**FINANCE:** Synod Council should provide support and vision.

**SUPPORT OF THE BISHOP STAFF AND OFFICE OF BISHOP:** Provide structure to provide feedback, form oversight, feedback from and support for the office of the Bishop staff programs and staff, tables, teams, congregations and leaders.

**GOVERNANCE:** Are our priorities in line with the synod constitution? Council is charged with keeping the identity that we shape and form as a group in those documents.

What are the boundaries? We have a constitution and the Council members need to become familiar with the constitution so we have a better idea of our roles. Administrative work is covered in the constitution. Governance work is not well covered in the constitution.

Job descriptions have been clarified but what are the unprinted expectations of the members of this Council?

What is the constitutional role of the Synod Council?

Regina Seabrook, Craig Nelson, Jeff Chestnut and Rev. Jason Bryan-Wegner will meet to reflect on and review the documents that describe the work of the Synod Council. Mary Kay DuChene will facilitate. They will come to the next meeting of the Synod Council with feedback.

Meeting Summary (Observers: Jay Dahlvang & Jeff Chestnut): Rev. Mark Johnson warmed us up well for the conversation of the day.

Video (Rev. Jason Bryan-Wegner)

Key points for the video:

\*Conversation with Tammy Walhof – priorities for 2017 legislative session

Affordable housing

Clean energy

Racism/migration

**SC.16.11.10 Motion to adjourn.  
Motion approved.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jodie Archer  
Synod Council Secretary

Kari MacIver  
Recorder

Next meeting will be February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 9am  
Faith Lutheran in Dodge Center, tentatively  
Devotions – Rev. Jay Dahlvang  
Communion – Bishop is the backup  
Video – Regina Seabrook  
Process Observers – Rev. Jason Bryan-Wegner  
and Cheryl Kylo

Dates to Remember:

February 4, 2017 – Synod Council meeting in Dodge Center

April 1, 2017 – Synod Council Meeting

May 6 & 7, 2017 – Synod Assembly

- Move to 1<sup>st</sup> Call Debt Retirement Interest (800608)

The following is the information that was presented to the Synod Council during the financial reports time regarding the temporarily restricted funds.

Changes to end of year 2015 Temporarily Restricted Funds  
For Board approval

**While these funds have been held as restricted, over time the expenses for them were taken from non-restricted monies and not from these 'designated' funds. The auditors assure us that the money was spent on the proper things, but these funds no longer exist as 'restricted' or 'designated' funds. We are releasing the designation so they can simply exist as general synodical monies**

- Rostered Leader Continuing Education (800600)
  - \$36,574.12
  - Remove restriction
- Leadership Development (800602)
  - \$138,597.13
  - Remove restriction
- Bd. Designated Leadership Development (800604)
  - \$53,739.00
  - Remove restriction

**Because the balance sheet did not properly reflect undesignated funds of the synod (see above), there has been a separate tracking for an Operating Reserve. With proper accounting this 'restriction' is not necessary.**

- Operating reserve (800512)
  - \$122,477.43
  - Remove restriction

**These are many grants we received over the years which were never fully spent. Bishop Delzer, Pete Reuss, and Cheryse Brenno-Sloan met and made the decision to retain the intent of the grants and move the remaining monies to similar funds. Here is a list of the actions:**

- Evangelical Outreach Grant (800700)
  - \$7669.05
  - Move to New Ministry Starts (800400)
- World Hunger Grant (800704)
  - \$718.23
  - Move to EFFA (800852)
- Book of Faith Grant (800706)
  - \$500
  - Move to Bishop Discretionary Find (800502)
- Macedonia Grant (800708)
  - \$448.95
  - Move to LT Leadership (800997)
- Health & Wellness Grant (800710)
  - \$26,562.49
  - Move \$20,000 to Sabbaticals (800450) and \$6562.49 to Bishop Discretionary (800502)
- Mission Investment Fund Theo Conference Grant (800720)
  - \$1500
  - Move to budgeted Theo Conference (500532)
- Emotional Intelligence Grant (800730)
  - \$200
  - Moved to Bishop's Discretionary (800502)
- Designated Misc. Grants (800740)
  - -\$93.60
  - Funds added from Staff Travel (500224) to bring balance to \$0
- Seminary Support (Lokensgard & Others – 800506)
  - \$3634.66