

MINUTES

88th Meeting of MNO SYNOD COUNCIL

April 20 – 21st, 2017

Synod Office

935 Nesbitt Bay, Winnipeg MB

Participants

Synod Council:

Bishop Elaine Sauer

Heather Howdle -Chair

Rev. Carol Janke – Secretary

Neil Miller - Treasurer

Jim Mair – Metro

Linda Hettrick – Aurora

Haakon Dagsvik - Cambrian

Yolanda Yobb - Agassiz

Rev. Jason Zinko- At Large

Rev. Bart Coleman - At Large

Rev. Matthew Diegel – At large

Diana Fosty - Brokenhead

Westman – vacant position

Synod Staff:

Rev. Larry Ulrich - Assistant to the Bishop

Rev. Tyler Gingrich – Assistant to the Bishop (Fri. am.)

Debbie Beyer - Executive Assistant (Thurs.pm)

Guests:

Jeff Pym -- Eastern Foundation (Fri. am)

Jeff Buhse - NCC rep. (Thurs. pm.)

Bishop Susan Johnson – National Bishop

Regrets:

Rev. Dr. Cam Harder – NCC rep.

Tom Brook – Interlake

Thursday, April 20th

Chaplain: Yolanda Yobb

We gather on Treaty One territory and the Metis nation.

6:30 PM

1. Gathering in God's Name

We welcomed Debbie Beyer, Executive Assistant back from her medical leave, As well we welcomed our new council member Diana Fosty, Brokenhead.

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Our chaplain Yolanda Yobb led us in an evening prayer service.

1.1. A quorum was declared

2. We celebrate our past

2.1 **MSC SC 2017 02** that the agenda be approved as amended.

2.2 Approval of Consent Agenda

MSC SC 2017 03 that the consent agenda be approved

2.3 Communication and Correspondence

Allan Francis, MNO Synod Foundation Board Secretary responded to our request regarding whether better to engage in audits or reviews in the context of the Foundation. (Motion 16-04.) The Foundation Board is confident that a review engagement is sufficient.

Rev. Matthew Diegel brought greetings from the people gathered for "Together in Christ – Roman Catholic & Lutheran Study" - Thunder Bay, Ontario.

The chaplain led us in a Prayer of Thanksgiving.

7:00 PM

3. We proclaim God's Word

3.1. Reports

3.1.1. Staff -- a written report, prepared by all staff members was presented. Bishop Elaine and Larry spoke to some of the priorities engaged in as well as highlighting some concerns.

Bishop Elaine highlighted the various ways there will be carryover of our synodical ministry due to the end of call of Pastor Larry Ulrich, the hiring of Pastor Tyler Gingrich and Bishop Elaine's medical leave.

This report provided a new format around adaptive challenges we face as synod and staff. This allowed us to see the synod's ministry both its challenges and blessings, in a new way.

3.1.1 Secretary

- MSC SC 2017 04** **that the minutes of Synod Council, November 17-18, 2016 be approved**
- MSC SC 2017 05** **that the minutes of the Synod Council Executive meeting December 21, 2016 be approved.**
- MSC SC 2017 06** **that the minutes of Synod Council e-meeting, March 8, 2017 be approved.**
- MSC SC 2017 07** **that the minutes of the Synod Council Executive meeting, February 23, 2017 be approved.**

3.1.2 2016 Financial Statements

The audited statements will be available in the beginning of June. The statements reported at this meeting are according to the budget. We are on track with both budget and benevolence.

Report of the National Bishop: The national office continues to implement their strategic plan, focusing on *Spirited Discipleship, Healthy Church, Compassionate Justice, and Effective Partnerships*. Bishop Susan reported that the reformation challenges have seen individuals, groups, areas and synods showing amazing creativity in both meeting and exceeding the challenges set forth. As well she gave helpful information about documents, study guides, task forces, interfaith dialogue and prayers, as well as the upcoming national convention. We thanked her for 10 years of faithful service.

3.2 Constitution and Bylaws: The Governance Committee provided information on the edits to the Synod Constitution and Bylaws, prepared by committee members Brian Lorch, Matthew Diegel and Michael Kvern. We thank them for their good work.

There are some editorial changes still to be made as well as sending back part V and part VII for revision.

3.2 MNO Synod Convention Manual: Matthew

Diegel took us through this manual and highlighted some of the changes. These will help to streamline conventions as well as enable convention delegates to be knowledgeable about the process. Church Constitutional Consultant Rev. Leon Gilbertson provided insight for a number of these changes. A request was made for a nomination form and ballot template.

3.4 Personnel & Office Policies & Procedures:

Handbook Revision: the final paragraph on page 23 of the addendum should read "synod office" instead of "national office."

On page 6, under Permanent regular part time employees, should read "National Church" instead of Synod. Under Casual employees it should read "...employees are ineligible for the ELCIC pension ..."

On page 7 under Hiring Practices the word "Crossword" should be removed.

On page 7 under Offer of employment the wording related to the criminal record check should be consistent with the *ELCIC Employment Agreement for Rostered Ministers*.

Discussion followed regarding criminal record checks and employment requirements in different jurisdictions.

There is a consensus that we will add the wording for the criminal record check from the National Implementation Policy to the synod screening and interview portion of our policy.

The chaplain led us in the Lord's Prayer.

9 PM Refreshments

Friday, April 21

8:45 AM The chaplain led us in prayer, followed by a bible study led by Pastor Larry.

In our bible study we were asked to break into groups and discern adaptive challenges facing the synod. Then to helpfully name them and how we may or may not respond.

Group One: The synod and congregations disconnect with each other has made us unaware of the inherent good of mutuality and accountability and we don't know how to change this.

Group Two: We hear the continuing call of God to be the church and to go forward in mission but we are challenged to help members of the synod to hear God's voice and to go forward unafraid of being who we are and who we have.

Group Three: We continually strive to discern our role as one expression of a larger church. We've yet to arrive at a way in talking about our lived relationships with congregations in a way that seems to engage the imagination of congregations.

Group Four: Even though God calls us to community we struggle with helping people find their place – in communities, in families and as a wider church. We don't know how to engage with other in this way.

9:30 AM **4. We Present Our Offerings**

The chaplain led us in a prayer for a hurting world.

4.1 Discussion re: National Church Consultation Dec 1-3, 2017
Bishop Susan explained that we have a system that is in stress and a need to discuss the sharing of resources. NCC believes that we need to keep communication channels open between the national church and synods, in order to develop a mechanism that will clarify each group's responsibilities and prevent any future tension.

4.2 2018 Synod Convention

4.2.1 April 26th to 28th, 2018, Grace Lutheran, Winnipeg

4.2.2 Theme and Presenters

Bishop Elaine proposed several ideas for the theme and how we might change the format. One idea is to have the convention engage in a *Dwelling in the World* in order to look at how our narratives have changed. Another to have video presenters and then a bible study. Council is encouraged to be in contact with Bishop Elaine with ideas and feedback.

4.2.3 Nominating Committee update: Council has appointed Linda Hettrick as our Synod rep. There is a need for a further two people to help in this work -- one clergy and one layperson..

10:50 AM Refreshment Break

11:00 AM The chaplain prayed for wisdom and guidance.

4.3 Jeff Pym from ELFEC(www.elfec.ca) reported on the fund we have invested with them through the MNO Synod Foundation. ELFEC is a medium sized investor, related to the church structure, and strongly focused on portfolio management and responsible investing. (ie. minimizing investment in traditional oil and gas companies from their portfolio.)

Their goals for the MNO Synod Fund include:

1. Preservation of capital
2. Generation of annual income for granting
3. Appreciation in capital value

It was noted that Responsible Investing [RI] provides as good of a return as non-RI investing.

12:30 PM

Grace and Lunch

12:35 PM

The chaplain led us in reflection and prayer.

1:40 PM

4.4 In camera session

4.5 Transitional Funding for Convention: We have received as information that the MNO Synod Foundation has approved a one-time grant of \$25,000.

5. ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION

5.1 Motions stemming from Council and Staff Reports.

5.1.1 Governance – MNO Synod Convention Manual

MSC SC 2017 08 that we approve the MNO Synod Convention Manual as prepared by the Governance Committee, April 20, 2017.

5.1.2 Global Mission: Cameroon Appeal

Bishop Elaine gave us helpful background information on how we can support the ministry of the Cameroon church given the challenges they face both monetary and educationally.

MSC SC 2017 09 that the Synod Council initiate an appeal for funding for the Global Companion Partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon throughout the synod, for a one year period beginning October 2017, with a goal of raising \$50,000.

5.1.3 Staff Report – Internship Funding: Because of the difficulty of getting congregations to take on the total financial

responsibility of internship, we need to use synod funding to offset the costs of this program.

MSC SC 2017 10 that \$25,000 be transferred to the Brokenhead Shared Ministry Fund to fulfill one-half of the salary guidelines of Luther Seminary in St. Paul, for an intern in the Brokenhead area, from the following funds: \$5,000 from the Internship Fund; \$20,000 from the Our Saviour's, Winnipeg, Closure Fund

5.1.4 Personnel & Office Policies & Procedures Handbook

MSC SC 2017 11 that the MNO Synod of the ELCIC Personnel and Office Policies and Procedures Handbook be approved as updated.

5.2 Synod Constitution Revisions per NCC. Since most if not all the changes to the constitution were editorial in nature we will not need a new motion. Brian Lorch will forward this re-worked document to the synod office.

5.3 Synod Bylaw Revisions per NCC. Most were editorial in nature except for Part 5, Section 3a, and Part VII, Section 2n. which has been returned to the Governance Committee.

5.4 Enabling Motions

MSC SC 2017 12 that Synod Executive be authorized to appoint 2 members to the Nominating Committee for the 2018 Synod Convention.

MSC SC 2017 13 that Synod Executive be authorized to approve the 2016

**Audited Financial Statements
for the MNO Synod.**

5.4 Other Business:

MSC SC 2017 14 **that Synod Council defer appointments to the Luther Village Board until its fall meeting.**

MSC SC 2017 15 **that the Synod Executive be authorized to make appointments to boards and committees between meetings.**

5.5 Next council meeting: **November 16 – 17, 2017.**

Tom Brook has agreed to be the chaplain at our next meeting.

4:45 PM **6. We give thanks to God**

Chaplain We offer thanks for God's presence in our ministry
We remember our neighbours and ourselves.

7. We go out in thanks

Chaplain Sharing the Peace
Song of Sending

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Carol Janke