

CENTRAL STATES SYNOD COUNCIL  
HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
7851 W. 119<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS  
MARCH 17-18, 2017

The meeting of the Central States Synod Council was called to order by Bishop Roger Gustafson, at 5:30 p.m., on Friday, March 17, 2017. Council members present included Bishop Roger Gustafson, Scott Schulte, Loren Mai, David Strommen, Valorie Bratcher, Tom Nelson, Lorna Paulus, Daniel Lilienkamp, Mindy Tillberg, Austin Krug, Chad Langdon, Linda Lockhart, Daniel Friberg, and Jeanie Schuler. Present from the Synod staff was Susan Candea, Bishop's Associate and Director for Evangelical Mission. Also present were Alan Walter of the PMA Task Force and Andrew Muller, Synod Legal Counsel. Synod Council members absent were Dennis Allerheiligen, Doug Reed, Jill Hayden, Janis Hutchinson, Lois Viebrock, and Jack King.

During the evening meal, a time of introductions included a sharing of Lenten experiences. In the absence of Dennis Allerheiligen, Vice-President, Bishop Gustafson led the Council in devotions based on the text of St. Patrick's Breastplate. The devotional time included reflections in small groups and in plenary. The devotional time concluded with prayer.

SC17.3.4D. NEW BUSINESS – REVIEW OF CAMP TOMAH SHINGA LEASE.

Andrew Muller, Synod Legal Counsel, was introduced to the Synod Council. He led the group in a review of the 10-year lease entered into on September 1, 2007, by the Synod and the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Association of Kansas. This lease, which governs the use of Camp Tomah Shinga, will expire on September 1, 2017. Pastor Susan Candea, Bishop's Associate, provided background on the partnership between the Synod and the Outdoors Ministries, noting that discussion between the two entities is warranted prior to September. It was observed that the Central States Synod owns the land on which the Camp is located, and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Association of Kansas owns the buildings. Noting that the lease is a use agreement, Mr. Muller led the Synod Council through the lease. He suggested that the Council has three options in terms of moving forward:

- (1) The Synod could renew the lease for ten more years under the existing terms;
- (2) The Synod could amend the lease with a shorter term;
- (3) The Synod could rethink the structure of the relationship and come up with a new way of being in partnership.

The discussion centered on the Council's expectations for ministry through Camp Tomah Shinga. It was observed that the camp is a large asset for the Synod; how can the camp facilities be better utilized? It was determined that the Council should engage in conversation with the Camp Board to discuss future direction for the camp. To that end, a task force was appointed to reach out to Ben Fulton, Camp Director, and the camp board, with the purpose of determining the direction of future outdoor ministry. Synod Council members appointed to the task force were Scott Schulte, Austin Krug, and Dan Friberg. It is hoped that future dialogue between the Synod and the Camp board will enhance the relationship between the Synod and camp, and lead to a clearly articulated mission for outdoor ministry at Camp Tomah Shinga.

Gratitude was expressed to Andrew Muller for his leadership of the discussion, and for his work as legal counsel for the Synod.

SC17.3.4F. NEW BUSINESS – PMA TASK FORCE REPORT.

Alan Walter was introduced as a member of the Mission Table on Leadership through the Parish Ministry Associate Program. Referring to a printed report, Alan noted the assigned task for the Mission Table: To start visioning new leadership options for Synod congregations, focusing mainly on development of lay leaders through an energized Parish Ministry Associate program. He reviewed Synod demographics and pastoral availability in light of current trends. He highlighted the need for two kinds of leadership in congregations: Worship leadership and strategic leadership for future direction of congregations. He provided the Council with a summary of the PMA Mission Table to date, including the request that emphasis be placed on the training of leaders through the Kansas Leadership Center. Alan Walter was thanked for his presentation.

SC17.3.3A. SECRETARY’S REPORT.

Loren Mai, Secretary, presented the minutes of the January 28, 2017, meeting of the Synod Executive Committee.

The minutes were corrected in the following way:

SEC.17.1.3B3. It was MSC to allocate \$3,335 of the Kingman, KS, restricted fund for use by the Synod Mission Table, with the stipulation that if there ever is a desire to start a congregation in Kingman, the \$17,209 that was originally in the fund ~~would~~must be made available to support the mission start.

SEC17.3.3A1. It was MSC to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2017, meeting of the Synod Executive Committee, as corrected.

SC17.3.3B. TREASURER’S REPORT – CURRENT YEAR STATUS.

Scott Schulte, Treasurer, gave an overview of the financial status of the Synod for the year just completed (FYE 1/31/2017). Referring to his printed summary, Scott reported that income from congregations totaled \$1,699,683—which was \$50,317 less than what was anticipated in the revised spending budget, a -3.0% variance; the amount received was \$19,337 less than received in the same period of the previous year (a 1.1% decrease). A total of \$853,733 was remitted to ELCA Churchwide--\$28,767 less than anticipated in the revised spending budget (a -3.4% variance), and \$22,068 less than the amount contributed for the same period in the previous year (a -2.6% variance) Synod expenditures for the year totaled \$888,498—which was \$61,749 less than the amount in the revised spending budget (a -6.9% variance), and \$78,372 less than the amount spent in the previous year (a -8.8% variance). The amount of \$1,754,268 was received in total support and revenue (\$78,482 less than anticipated and \$81,096 less than the previous year). Expenditures totaled \$1,742,231 (\$90,517 less than anticipated and \$100,441 less than last year). The end-of-year surplus of \$12,038 compared to a deficit of \$7,310 in the previous year.

Scott commented on the trends, reviewing a graph that compared mission support for the recently-concluded year with the previous year. He noted that December was by far the best month of the year for mission support, while January was disappointing. The “Support and Revenue” income item was significantly below previous year totals, primarily because of smaller

“extra” donations and a reduction in giving to the “Over and Above” Appeal. Total expenses for the year were well below budget levels due to staffing changes, lower travel costs, and reduced Candidacy expenses. In addition, reduced congregational support resulted in less funding of ELCA Churchwide.

Susan Candea reviewed preliminary estimates of congregational mission support for FYE 1/31/2018, based on figures provided in the parochial reports and Statements of Intent submitted by congregations. It was observed that more than 50 of the Synod’s 175 congregations have not submitted intents, or have indicated that no mission support would be forthcoming.

#### SC17.3.3B. TREASURER’S REPORT – DISCUSSION OF BUDGETS.

Scott Schulte and Bishop Gustafson led the Council in a time of budget reflections. The discussion included a probable reduction in synodical support for campus ministry and an ongoing reduction in support for the seminaries of the ELCA. The question was posed: How do we prioritize aspects of our ministry in times of declining mission support from congregations? The discussion would continue on Saturday morning.

Bishop Gustafson recessed the meeting of the Synod Council with prayer at 8:40 p.m. The meeting was scheduled to resume on Saturday, March 18, at 8:30 a.m.

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2017

The Saturday session of the Central States Synod Council meeting was called to order by Bishop Roger Gustafson at 8:35 a.m. on Saturday, March 18, 2017. Council members present included: Bishop Roger Gustafson, Loren Mai, Scott Schulte, David Strommen, Chad Langdon, Linda Lockhart, Daniel Lilienkamp, Lorna Paulus, Austin Krug, Mindy Tillberg, Tom Nelson, Valorie Bratcher, Daniel Friberg, and Jeanie Schuler. Susan Candea, Bishop’s Associate, was also present. Council members absent included: Dennis Allerheiligen, Doug Reed, Jill Hayden, Janis Hutchinson, Lois Viebrock, and Jack King.

Dan Friberg led the group in a time of Dwelling in the Word. Reflections focused on Ephesians 2: 8-10 and James 2: 14-26. The Council discussed the Word in small groups and then in plenary session. The devotional time concluded with prayer by Dan Friberg.

Jack King was now present by speaker phone.

#### SC17.3.3B. TREASURER’S REPORT – SPENDING BUDGET FOR FYE 1/31/2018.

Scott Schulte led the Council in a review of the spending budget for FYE 1/31/2018, as that spending budget was proposed by the Mission Budget Team in January and approved by the Synod Executive Committee on January 20, 2017. He noted the following significant changes in the spending budget, compared to the original budget passed by the Synod Assembly in June 2016: on the income side, a reduction of \$40,000 (to \$1,710,000) in the anticipated mission support from the congregations, a decrease of \$5,000 in anticipated receipts from the Annual Appeal, and a reduction of \$5,000 in expected reimbursements; and on the expense side, a \$5,000 reduction in staff travel, a \$5,000 decrease in the support of seminaries, a \$4,552 reduction in operations and janitorial services, as well as a \$500 increase in Call Process

Ministers. It was also observed that the line item for Mission Fund Appeal expenses has been removed (\$5,000). The changes to the budget were discussed.

SC17.3.3B1. It was MSC to approve the revised spending budget in the amount of \$1,780,806 for FYE 1/31/2018. This represents a decrease of approximately \$52,000 from the original budget.

SC17.3.3B. TREASURER'S REPORT – BUDGET FOR FYE 1/31/2019.

Scott Schulte presented to the Council the proposed budget for FYE 1/31/2019—as drafted by the Mission Budget Team and approved by the Synod Executive Committee. Comparing the FYE 2019 Budget with the current year spending budget, Scott remarked that the mission support from congregations for FYE 2019 was set at \$1,660,000—a reduction of \$50,000 from the current spending budget. On the expense side, a reduction in Churchwide support of \$25,000 is anticipated (figured at 50% of congregational support). Other reductions in anticipated expenses from the FYE 2018 spending budget include \$1,000 in Teams and Task Force expenses; \$30,000 in grants to Campus Ministry; \$6,000 in staff travel; \$1,000 in Bethany College support, \$5,000 in Seminary support; \$1,000 in Synod Council meetings. Synod salaries and benefits increase by \$20,000—primarily to expand the Communicator's position; otherwise, no salary increases are projected (health care increases are uncertain at this time). Projected expenses for FYE 1/31/2019 are \$1,730,806.

SC17.3.3B2. It was moved and seconded to approve the proposed budget for FYE 1/31/2019.

SC17.3.3B2(A). It was MSC to amend the proposed budget for FYE 2019 in the following manner:

Adding \$23,000 to the Reimbursements/Other Income Line item, to reflect the receipt of anticipated rebate of money paid to Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska for care of adoption records;

Adding \$10,000 to the amount of support of Campus Ministry;

Adding \$1,000 to the support of Bethany College;

Adding \$989 to the Operations line item;

Adding \$11,011 to the Contingency line item.

SC17.3.3B2. It was MSC to approve the proposed budget for FYE 1/31/2019 in the amount of \$1,753,806 and forward the proposal to the Synod Assembly for action in June.

It was recommended that the \$20,000 reduction in the Campus Ministry budgetary allocation be divided in an equitable manner. It was suggested that movement be made to equally divide the Synodical support of Campus Ministry among the three sites.

SC17.3.3C. REPORT OF THE BISHOP.

Bishop Gustafson gave a report of his ministry, spanning the dates from January 19 to March 17, 2017. His verbal report supplemented a printed document. Highlights follow:

(1) The Synod staff continues to make visits to Area Ministries; this year's visits emphasize the theme of Stewardship.

(2) A staff retreat was held January 24.

(3) The Synod's involvement with The Kansas Leadership Center continues to evolve and bear fruit.

(4) The Bishop continues to cultivate ecumenical relationships and connections with Islam leaders.

(5) He attended a Conference of Bishops meeting.

(6) Worship opportunities took him to three congregations.

Bishop Gustafson was thanked for his report and his ministry.

#### SC17.3.3D. REVIEW OF REPORTS.

The Council reviewed reports from Area Ministries. Printed reports were received from Areas 1-2 (Pastor Roger Dennis, Dean); Area 5 (Pastor Elizabeth Cummings, Dean); Area 6 (Pastor Roger Lenander, Dean); Area 7 (Pastor Ashley Huber, Dean); Area 9.

Printed reports were also received from the Companion Synod Team, the Candidacy Committee, and the Church in Society Committee.

#### SC17.3.4A. NEW BUSINESS – ROSTER OF MINISTERS REPORT.

Bishop Gustafson presented the Roster of Ministers report.

SC17.3.4A1. With the Bishop's endorsement, it was MSC to approve the endorsement and grant "On Leave From Call" status to Steve Evans, effective February 12, 2017.

It was noted that Eva Creydt-Schulte, Deacon, is currently considering applying for "On Leave from Call" status.

In other roster news, Tom Gear (seminarian) and Odir Flores (serving as mission developer) have been assigned to the Synod. Trudy Cretsinger, OLFC, was removed from the roster effective 3/12/17. Transferring into the Synod was Kristin Ross, OLFC, coming from the Northeast Minnesota Synod. Transferring out of the Synod were Donald Kruger, retired, to Northeastern Ohio Synod; and Katharine Redpath, retired, to Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod. It was noted that Zion Lutheran Church, Everest, KS, voted to leave the ELCA effective 2/12/17; and Trinity Lutheran Church, Abilene, KS, would take a first vote on 4/2/17 to withdraw from the ELCA.

#### SC17.3.4B. NEW BUSINESS – UPDATE ON SYNOD ASSEMBLY.

Reminder was given that the Synod Assembly offering will be divided equally among the following: Synod Youth Ministry, Campus Ministry Programming; and the Campaign for the ELCA.

#### SC17.3.4B. NEW BUSINESS – APPROVAL OF SYNOD ASSEMBLY WAIVER REQUESTS.

The Council considered the requests of 12 congregations that waivers be granted for the purpose of Synod Assembly representation, allowing the congregations to send two voting members of one gender.

SC17.3.4B1. It was MSC to grant waivers to the following congregations for the purpose of Synod Assembly representation, allowing those congregations to each send two voting members of one gender: First, Topeka, KS; Living Christ, Florissant, MO; Redeemer, Salina, KS; Emmanuel, Stuttgart, KS; Zion, Phillipsburg, KS; Trinity, Hays, KS; Zion, Ferguson, MO; Hebron, Burdick, KS; First, Dorrance, KS; Trinity, Otis, KS; Trinity, Chesterfield, MO; and Good Shepherd, Manchester, MO.

SC17.3.4B. NEW BUSINESS – COMPENSATION GUIDELINES 2018.

Susan Candeia presented the proposed Compensation Guidelines for 2018, as prepared by the Synod Compensation Guidelines Task Force. She remarked that the guidelines for Ministers of Word and Service are the same as those for Pastors, except that Pastors have the benefit of housing allowance tax advantages and Pastors are self-employed for Social Security purposes.

SC17.3.4B2. It was MSC to approve the 2018 Synod Compensation Guidelines as presented, and to recommend them to the 2017 Synod Assembly for consideration and final approval.

SC17.3.4B. NEW BUSINESS – REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

Susan Candeia presented the report of the Synod Nominating Committee; the report listed the names of those who would be considered for election at the Synod Assembly. The nominees follow:

SYNOD COUNCIL (3-year term except where noted)

Area 3 – Male Clergy	*Rev. David Strommen; Salina, KS
Area 6 – Female Layperson	*Jeanie Schuler; Topeka, KS
Area 7 - Female Layperson	Pending
At Large – Female Clergy	Rev. Anita Strommen; Salina, KS
At Large – Female Layperson, youth (2-year term)	Pending

CONSULTATION COMMITTEE (6-year term; no re-election)

Male Clergy	Rev. Gordon Peterson; Overland Park, KS
Female Layperson	Pending

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE (6-year term; no re-election)

Female Clergy	Rev. Mari Larson; Wichita, KS
Male Layperson	Kevin Boatright; Lawrence, KS
Male Layperson	Pending
Female Layperson	Pending
Female Layperson (2-year unexpired term)	Pending

It is hoped that the nominating slate will soon be completed.

SC17.3.4B. NEW BUSINESS – REQUESTS FOR SYNOD ASSEMBLY DISPLAY TABLES.

The Council considered the requests of four organizations to have display tables at the 2017 Synod Assembly.

SC17.3.4B3. It was MSC to approve the requests of the following organizations to each have a display table at the 2017 Synod Assembly:

Kansas City For Refugees  
 Bishop Kemper School for Ministry  
 Thrivent Financial  
 Healthy Church.org

SC17.3.4C. NEW BUSINESS – CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT TO PERMIT SEASONAL MEMBERS.

It was pointed out that the 2016 Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA has made provision for “seasonal members” in congregations whose synods have approved such a status.

SC17.3.4C1. It was MSC to approve the provision of seasonal members, as outlined in the 2016 Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA:

*Seasonal members are voting members of other ELCA congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, including exercising limited voting rights in this congregation. **The Congregation Council may grant seasonal membership to such persons provided that this congregation is a member of a synod where the Synod Council has approved seasonal member voting on its territory.** Such seasonal members shall have all the privileges and duties of voting members except that:*

- (1) They shall not be eligible for elected office in, or for membership on the Congregation Council or on a call committee of this congregation;*
- (2) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the call or termination of call of any minister of this congregation;*
- (3) they shall not have the right to vote on any matter concerning or affecting the affiliation of this congregation with the ELCA;*
- (4) they shall not be eligible to serve as voting members from this congregation of the Synod Assembly or the Churchwide Assembly;*
- (5) they shall not, even if otherwise permitted by this congregation, vote by proxy or by absentee ballot; and*
- (6) they shall not, within any two calendar month period, exercise voting rights in this congregation and in the congregation where they remain voting members.*

SC17.3.4C. NEW BUSINESS – APPROVAL OF CONGREGATIONAL CONSTITUTIONS.

The Council considered the approval of Congregational Constitutions.

SC17.3.4C2. It was MSC to approve the Congregational Constitutions of the following congregations: Trinity, McPherson, KS; Christ, Wichita, KS; Bethany, Lindsborg, KS; and Hosanna, Liberty, MO.

SC17.3.4E. NEW BUSINESS – REVIEW OF SYNOD CONSTITUTION.

The Council discussed provisions of the Synod Constitution that could be changed to reflect a new vision of ministry in the Synod. Specifically, those changes could include the reconfiguration of Area Ministries; a reduction in the size of the Synod Council, and a consideration of biennial (rather than annual) Synod Assemblies. These and other topics will be considered in the year ahead. The question was raised, “How are we Church together for the sake of the world?”

The business of the meeting of the concluded, members of the Synod Council provided individual reflections on the meeting.

A schedule of upcoming meetings follows:

Executive Committee	May 12, 2017
Synod Council	June 8, 2017 (prior to Synod Assembly)
Synod Assembly	June 8-10, 2017

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Loren D. Mai  
Secretary, Central States Synod