

Minutes from the
SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
January 14, 2022
Via Zoom

Present: Bishop Susan Candea, Nancy Nagel (Vice President), Scott Schulte (Treasurer), Rev. Chad Langdon (Secretary), Rev. David Frerichs, Dallas Rakestraw, Joanie Saltzman

CALL TO ORDER

Nancy called the meeting to order at 12:455pm.

- Bishop Candea led us in a devotion from *All Creation Sings*, the new hymnal, and used John 2:1-11 as a text.
- Bishop Candea acknowledged that we are meeting on the traditional, ancestral lands of the Osage, Kickapoo, and Kaskaskia Nations.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chad presented the minutes from the Synod Council meeting on October 22-23, 2021.

- **SEC 22.01.14.A1** **It was MSC to approve the minutes as presented (with one corrected typo).**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Scott presented a written treasurer's report:

Financial Status as of 12/31/2021, after 11 months of the fiscal year, ending January 31, 2022.

Income from congregations

- \$1,430,393 received
- The amount received is \$9,560 more than what was anticipated in our revised spending budget, a 0.7% variance
- The amount received is \$59,279 less than received last year, a -4.1% variance

ELCA Churchwide Contribution

- \$715,196 contributed to Churchwide
- This is \$196 more than anticipated in the revised spending budget, a 0.0% variance
- The amount contributed is \$29,515 less than last year, a -4.1% variance

Synod Expenditures

- \$771,529 spent
- The amount spent is \$64,992 less than budgeted, an -8.4% variance
- This is also \$112,869 more than spent last year, a 14.6% variance

Total Support & Revenue vs. Total Expenditures

- \$1,571,958 received in Total Support & Revenue, \$20,437 more than anticipated and \$18,482 more than last year
- This includes \$80,000 of the forgiven PPP loan
- \$1,486,725 in Total Expenditures, \$64,796 less than anticipated, and \$83,354 more than last year
- Net surplus of \$85,234 as compared to a \$150,105 surplus last year
- With inclusion of full forgiven PPP loan, net surplus of \$167,200.

Analysis of Financial Status

- Over the last 3 months, we have returned to exceeding the expected amount in congregational support for the year, but we still trail last year's amount by almost \$60,000. As you can see in the following graphs, we had a better than average month in October and a strong month in December, but our worst month of the year in November. Even though December was a good month it pales in comparison to the great December we experienced in 2020.
- Synod expenditures remain lower than expected by 8.4%. That is primarily due to Travel, Operations, and Candidacy expenses being lower than budgeted and we still need to allocate the Bishop Transition Set Aside. Synod expenditures are significantly greater than last year by \$113,000 due to the new expense items that we added to share last year's surplus and due to salaries and agency grants being higher.
- Our Total Support & Revenue amount is greater than budgeted by \$20,437. This includes \$80,000 of the PPP funds that were forgiven in this fiscal year. Because the forgiven PPP loan will be included as income for 2021, we will use those funds to supplement our income this year, instead of releasing a portion of last year's surplus that we had set aside, as originally planned. With a surplus of \$85,000, we should consider scaling back the amount released from temporarily restricted funds once the year is complete.

Other discussion included:

- We are a bit behind on the audits because of COVID. The firm is currently working on them and should be caught up by the end of the year.

FYE 1/31/23 REVISED BUDGET

Scott presented the FYE 1/31/23 Revised Budget. Proposed changes from the Approved Budget include:

- Under *Support and Revenue*, we kept the congregation support the same. But we did adjust the following:
 - *Annual Appeal* from \$10,000 to \$15,000 based on historical trends.
 - We clarified that the total amount of Annual Appeal gifts should be kept entirely in the Synod (as opposed to sending half of it to Churchwide). This is based on the wording of the Annual Appeal letter, which implies that the end-of-year gifts will be kept within the Synod.
 - *Temporarily Restricted Funds Released* from \$63,634 to \$65,116 to primarily pay for the audits that we did not have to pay for in 2021.
- Under *Expenditures*, we adjusted:
 - *Candidacy* from \$8,000 to \$7,000 because our expenses in this area seemed to have gone down recently.
 - *Synod Salaries & Benefits* from \$485,709 to \$498,491 because we have added Rev. Aimee Appell as a half time DEM and made some other minor salary adjustments. We will be facing some staffing changes this coming year.
 - *Travel* from \$45,000 to \$40,000 based on expected expenses.
 - *Operations* from \$46,000 to \$55,000 to prepare to pay for extra audits we will have to pay for in 2022.
 - *Meetings* from \$3,500 to \$2,000 because we anticipate meeting more by Zoom, even after the pandemic is over.
- This gives us a balanced budget.
- **SEC 22.01.14.A2 It was MSC (Scott, Dallas) to approve the FYE 1/31/23 Revised Budget.**

FYE 1/31/24 PROPOSED BUDGET

Scott presented the FYE 1/31/24 Proposed Budget. Changes from the previous year's budget include:

- *Temporarily Restricted Funds Released* was reduced to wean ourselves off of using these surplus funds.
- *Parish Ministry Associates, Leadership Training and Teams & TF Expenses* were all reduced because the totality of these funds are not being used each year.
- *Synod Salaries & Benefits* was increased to reflect a 2% raise. It also includes a change to reflect how Churchwide is paying their half of the DEM positions. The bishop's health insurance cost was reduced because of access to Medicare.
- *Travel* was increased slightly because we are hopeful the pandemic will allow for the staff to travel more.
- *Bethany College and Seminaries* were reduced to reflect the "normal" amount we were giving before we had this past year's surplus.
- *Operations* was reduced because we will be back on our normal audit schedule.
- *Conference Grants and Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism* were zeroed out because those programs will have finished.
- This gives us a balanced budget to recommend to the Synod Council in March.
- **SEC 22.01.14.A3 It was MSC to recommend the FYE 1/31/24 Proposed Budget to Synod Council at the March 2022 meeting.**

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop Candeia presented a written report. Discussion highlights included:

- Rev. Aimee Appell has started as part-time DEM.
- The synod staff had a good planning session recently.
- Hillside Community in Springhill, KS has taken the first vote to disaffiliate.
- Zion Lutheran in Beloit, KS has some concerns about the direction of the ELCA and is cutting their mission support.
- Trinity Lutheran in Great Bend, KS has taken the first vote to disaffiliate.
- Upcoming boundary & diversity trainings will now be online events due to the pandemic.

OLD BUSINESS

CONGREGATION UPDATES

In addition to the congregations listed above, Bishop Candeia gave an update on:

- Resurrection Lutheran in St. Louis is closing at the end of January and their property will be transferred to the Synod. The building currently has a mold problem that we will probably have to deal with before we are able to sell it.

NEW BUSINESS

COMMITTEE MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

- Resolutions Committee:
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A4 It was MSC (Scott, Joanie) to appoint John Heerboth to a 2nd term on the Resolutions Committee.**

CONSTITUTIONS

Bishop Candea presented the updated constitution for Kent Memorial Lutheran in Sunrise Beach, MO. It has no issues and is in order.

- **SEC 22.01.14.A5** **It was MSC to approve the updated constitution for Kent Memorial Lutheran in Sunrise Beach, MO.**

ROSTER REPORT

Bishop Candea presented a written roster report.

- On Leave From Call
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A6** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Kimberly Knowle-Zeller another year of On Leave From Call status, effective January 1, 2022.** This is her 7th year of OLFC and was approved by the Conference of Bishops.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A7** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Keith Hohly On Leave From Call status, effective January 1, 2022.** This is his first year of OLFC status.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A8** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Jennifer Thomas On Leave From Call status, effective January 1, 2022.** This is her first year of OLFC status.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A9** **It was MSC to grant Deacon Eva Schulte another year of On Leave From Call status, effective January 1, 2022.** This is her 3rd and final year of OLFC status.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A10** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Shelly Klingensmith another year of On Leave From Call status, effective January 1, 2022.** This is her 3rd and final year of OLFC status.
- Specialized Ministry
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A11** **It was MSC to grant Pastor Melaku Tizazu a 6-month term Synod Council call to specialized ministry to serve as mission developer, effective January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022.** This will then conclude the ministry of the Immanuel Oromo Christian Church.
- Retirements
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A12** **It was MSC to grant Deacon Suzie Everingham retirement status, effective January 1, 2022.** She has been serving Good Shepherd Lutheran, Manchester, MO.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A13** **It was MSC to grant Rev. John Reigstad retirement status, effective January 31, 2022.** He has been serving Resurrection Lutheran, St. Louis, MO.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A14** **It was MSC to grant Deacon Mary Aire retirement status, effective February 1, 2022.** She has been serving St. Marks, Waterville, KS and Trinity, Greenleaf, KS.

MINISTRY REVIEW: IMMANUEL OROMO CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Based on previous action from the Synod Council (**SC 21.10.23.A6**), a ministry review was completed by a ministry review team. This team included Rev. Tina Reyes, Rev. Dan McKnight, Susan Boxberger, and Bishop Susan Candea. They presented a written report to Synod Executive Committee with a recommendation to close this Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, effective June 30, 2022.

- **SEC 22.01.14.A15** It was MSC (David, Dallas) to close the Immanuel Oromo Christian Church by June 30, 2022.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY UPDATES

- Chad presented an updated election grid for the positions that will need to be elected at the 2022 Central States Synod Assembly. These are the positions that will need to be elected:
 - Synod Council (3-year terms)
 - Female POC (incumbent not eligible for re-election)
 - Deacon (incumbent eligible for re-election)
 - Young Adult (incumbent eligible for re-election)
 - At Large Male (incumbent eligible for re-election)
 - It was also noted that there are several open positions on various committees and 2 open Synod Council positions (Lay Male from Western Conference and Lay Female Youth) that could use appointments.
- It was recommended by the Synod Assembly Team to set the registration cost for Synod Assembly at \$185.
 - **SEC 22.01.14.A16** It was MSC to set the registration cost for the 2022 Central States Synod Assembly at \$185.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

- **SEC 22.01.14.A17** It was MSC to designate \$15,000 of Rev. Aimee Appell’s salary as Housing Allowance for 2022.

UPCOMING DATES

- Synod Council March 11-12, 2022 via Zoom
- Executive Committee May 13, 2022 location TBD
- Synod Council June 9, 2022 Kansas City, KS
- Synod Assembly June 9-11, 2022 Kansas City, KS

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BISHOP

At 3:10pm it was MSC to move into Executive Session for 35 minutes to do the Bishop’s Annual Review. We came out of Executive Session at 3:40pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Nancy closed with a devotion from Diana Butler Bass and we adjourned at 3:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Chad Langdon
Central States Synod Secretary