Minutes from the

**CENTRAL STATES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**August 16, 2019**

at the Central States Synod Office

402 W. 14th St., Kansas City, MO 64105

Present: Bishop Roger Gustafson, Dennis Allerheiligen (Synod Vice President), Scott Schulte (Treasurer),

Rev. Chad Langdon (Secretary), Susan Boxberger, Chelsea Deines, Rev. David Strommen

Synod Staff Present: Bishop-Elect Susan Candea

Also Present: Keith Hall from the accounting firm, Ifft and Company

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dennis called the meeting to order at 10:00am

**AUDIT REPORT**

Keith Hall, from Ifft and Company, presented a written Audit Report. Some verbal highlights included:

* The overall financial numbers have stayed similar, although the categories have changed based on the new form that our priority-based budget is taking.
* Some of the General Accounting Principles have changed. Organizations are now expected to report categories called “With Donor Restrictions” and “Without Donor Restrictions.”

Included in the Audit Report were two significant audit matters that they identified:

* Within the last year, the Central States Synod acquired the property for the former Children’s Memorial Lutheran. The conveyance of this building added assets of $847,089 and was not recorded anywhere. This omission has been corrected in our financial statements.
* We have outstanding checks in the amount of $23,702. Some of these checks go back as far as 2002. A list of these will be prepared for the next Synod Council meeting and we will work to address this matter at that time. We hope to correct them individually and by creating some sort of policy to address outstanding checks.

Keith Hall was thanked for his work on this Audit Report. He left the meeting at this point.

**DEVOTION**

Dennis led the Executive Committee in devotion at 10:45. He used an article called, “The Language of our Hearts” that talked about sharing feelings, particularly how to share anger. It was written by Sarah Carson and led to a fruitful discussion.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Chad presented the minutes from the Synod Council meeting on June 6, 2019.

* **SEC 19.08.18A1 It was MSC (Susan B., Chelsea) to approve these minutes without correction.**

Chad presented the minutes from the 2019 Central States Synod Assembly, held June 6-8, 2019.

* **SEC 19.08.18A2 It was MSC (Scott, Chelsea) to approve these minutes without correction.**

**REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF EVANGELICAL MISSION**

Rev. Donna Simon reported about a 2nd campus that Holy Cross Lutheran in Overland Park is pursuing. Pastor Mike Peck and Rev. Donna Simon will co-supervise the mission developer for this new campus. They have identified Rev. Joel Hinck and are calling him to be the mission developer. This will be a true 2nd campus of Holy Cross Lutheran, as Pastor Mike Peck plans to preach there once a month and they will stay closely connected. About thirty families from Holy Cross Lutheran have made a commitment to make this new campus their home for the next year. There was some discussion among the Executive Committee because this new campus will be within 3 miles of Advent Lutheran in Olathe. There have been conversations between the leadership at both congregations to ensure that the proximity of this new location will not cause any problems. Holy Cross Lutheran will be receiving some grant money from the ELCA, which is why Donna Simon, as DEM, will be a co-supervisor and involved in this process.

* **SEC 19.08.18A3 It was MSC (Chad, Chelsea) to grant approval of this 2nd campus site of Holy Cross Lutheran.**

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Scott presented a written Treasurer’s Report. Verbal highlights include:

* The amount we’ve received so far in 2019 is $76,000 less than anticipated.
* We do have a net surplus of $17,469 as compared to a $19,651 deficit last year. This is due to a significant gift of $46,395 from Salem Lutheran in Lenexa.
* Regular giving from congregations has not been good.

We had a discussion about the gift from Salem and how best to use those funds (see the action below).

We also had a discussion about the growing deficit because it is cause for significant concern.

* **SEC 19.08.18A4 Regarding the $46,395 gift from Salem Lutheran, it was MSC (Scott, Susan B.) to have 45% of the gift go to the Shared Mission Challenge, 45% of the gift to go to the Endowment, and 10% of the gift to be passed along to Churchwide.**
* **SEC 19.08.18A5 It was MSC (David, Chelsea) to approve the Audit Report that was presented at the beginning of the meeting.**

**BISHOP’S REPORT**

Bishop Roger Gustafson presented a written report and read it aloud because not everyone had received it yet. This was his final Bishop’s Report. Highlights included:

* We learned some things from the most recent Synod Assembly regarding communicating presenter expectations.
* We have two newly ordained pastors that have been called to our synod: Rev. Melissa Woeppel and Rev. Andrew Baumgartner.
* He has been busy doing some speaking engagements, attending the Conference of Bishops and the ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS REPORT**

We talked about what we need to do to follow up on the resolutions that were passed at Synod Assembly. At this time there is no immediate action needed by the Synod Council. However, in light of Resolution SA19.05 “Memorial for Increased Accountability in Cases of Sexual Misconduct”, Bishop-Elect Candea suggested that this might be a good time to review our sexual harassment policy. She will bring to our next meeting a list of potential committee members to address this.

**MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE**

* **SEC 19.08.18A6 It was MSC (Susan B., Chelsea) to approve Callista Isabelle, Barb Jones, and Dennis Allerheiligen as new members of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee.**

**CONGREGATION CONSTITUTIONS**

St. John’s Lutheran in Pittsburg, KS and Redeemer Lutheran in Salina, KS both requested approval for some constitution changes. Each congregation needed to make some small revisions, but they were both in good order according to the review.

* **SEC 19.08.18A7 It was MSC (David, Chelsea) to approve St. John’s constitution changes with some small revisions.**
* **SEC 19.08.18A8 It was MSC (Susan B., Chelsea) to approve Redeemer’s constitution changes with some small revisions.**

Holy Trinity in St. Louis has submitted a revised constitution, but there is no indication that the changes have been approved by the congregation. Chad will write a letter to the congregation president asking for congregation approval so that the Synod Council can do the final approval. Other than congregation approval, everything seems to be in order.

**ROSTER REPORT**

Bishop Gustafson presented a written roster report.

On Leave From Call:

* **SEC 19.08.18A9 It was MSC (David, Scott) to approve:**
  + **Rev. Carrie McElfresh for a second year of on leave from call status, effective June 6, 2019.**
  + **Anne Chida, deacon, for a second year of on leave from call status, effective June 21, 2019.**
  + **Rev. Keith Hohly (Bishop’s Associate) for a first year of on leave from call status, effective September 1, 2019.**

Retirements:

* **SEC 19.08.18A10 It was MSC (Susan B., Chelsea) to approve:**
  + **Rev. Roy Christell (from Living Lord Lutheran in Lake St. Louis, MO) for retirement status, effective July 1, 2019.**
  + **Rev. Harry Grinstad (from New Gottland Lutheran in McPherson, KS) for retirement status, effective July 1, 2019.** He has also transferred to the Northwest Washington Synod.
  + **Rev. Jim Erdman (from Living Lord Lutheran in Lake St. Louis, MO) for retirement status, effective August 1, 2019.**
  + **Rev. Roger Gustafson (Synodical Bishop) for retirement status, effective September 1, 2019.**
  + **Elizabeth Schmitt, deacon (serving as a teacher at Atonement Lutheran in Florissant, MO), for retirement status, effective September 1, 2019.**
  + **Ruth Blundell, deacon (serving as a teacher at Atonement Lutheran in Florissant, MO), for retirement status, effective September 1, 2019.**

Synod Council Calls:

* **SEC 19.08.18A11 It was MSC (Scott, Chelsea) to issue the following calls from the Synod Council:**
  + **Rev. Lanny Westfall to serve as the interim pastor at Living Lord Lutheran in Lake St. Louis, MO from September 7, 2019 through December 31, 2020.** This is in accordance with ELCA constitution, sections 7.44.A.16 and b.1.5.
  + **Rev. Dave Whetter to serve as the Bishop’s Associate from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2025.** This is in accordance with ELCA constitution, sections 7.44.A.16 and b.2.2. He will be resigning his call from Salem Lutheran in Lenexa, KS, effective August 31, 2019.
  + **Rev. Christyn Koschmann to serve part time as the Bishop’s Associate from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2025**. This is in accordance with ELCA constitution, sections 7.44A.16 and b.2.2. She will be going part time in her call from Martin Luther Lutheran in Lee’s Summit, MO.

**YEAR END FINANCIAL APPEAL**

The Executive Committee overwhelming agreed that we need to do a year-end financial appeal to support the mission and ministry of the Central States Synod.

**THE INSTALLATION OF BISHOP CANDEA**

Everything seems to be moving forward and is on track for the Installation Service, which will happen on Sunday, October 20, 2019 at Atonement Lutheran in Overland Park, KS. The reception will begin at 3:00pm. The Installation Service will begin at 5:00pm. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will do the installation. Rev. Linda Anderson-Little will be preaching. There will be an invitation-only catered dinner afterwards. The offering will go towards International Women’s Leadership through the ELCA. There is a team that is currently working out all the details and making final preparations.

**NEW STAFF TRANSITIONS, SALARIES, AND BENEFITS**

The new staff, salaries, & benefits packages were discussed.

Bishop Susan Candea full time

Bishop’s Associate Dave Whetter full time

Bishop’s Associate Christyn Koschmann half time

Dawne Bockelmann full time

Tim Anderson full time

Barbara Beadle Bookkeeper

Rev. Donna Simon part time Director for Evangelical Mission (salary paid by Churchwide)

Rev. Kendra Nolde part time Director for Evangelical Mission (salary paid by Churchwide)

Total for new staff configuration: $439,213 (savings from current staffing $53,081)

* **SEC 19.08.18A12 It was MSC (Chad, Chelsea) to approve the salaries and benefits packages that were discussed.**

**LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE**

Lutheran Disaster Response-US (LDR-US) has offered a grant to the Central States Synod to support the work of a Central States Synod Lutheran Disaster Response Coordinator (LDR Coordinator).

* LDR-US will provide funding for the LDR Coordinator position, including salary, benefits, travel and other related costs that are expressed in a mutually agreed upon budget. The Central States Synod will incorporate the salary and benefits, and make payments in keeping with the agreement. The job description, responsibilities and expectations are outlined in a memorandum of understanding.
* This partnership and grant would be for a two-year period from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2021. Both parties may agree to continue it on a year-to-year basis after that.
* The LDR Coordinator would become part of the Central States Synod staff and be responsible both to the bishop and LDR-US. This position will hopefully raise the visibility and work of LDR within our Synod. The net costs to the Central States Synod should be negligible.
* LDR-US has identified a candidate for this position. His name is Benjamin Perrin. He would be based out of St. Louis and be responsible for work throughout the Synod.
* **SEC 19.08.18A13 It was MSC (Chelsea, Susan B.) to approve acceptance of this grant, engage in this partnership with LDR-US, and hire Ben Perrin as the LDR-Coordinator.**

**BISHOP’S PECTORAL CROSS**

The current pectoral cross will be engraved and passed down to Bishop-Elect Candea.

* **SEC 19.08.18A14 It was MSC (David, Susan B.) to purchase Bishop Roger Gustafson a replica of the Bishop’s pectoral cross as a retirement gift.**
* The funding for this cross will come out of the transition funds. Dennis is taking care of these arrangements.

**BISHOP EMERITUS**

* **SEC. 19.08.18A15 It was MSC (David, Chelsea) to highly recommend to the Synod Council to confer the title “Bishop Emeritus” upon Roger Gustafson after his retirement.**

**FUTURE MEETINGS & IMPORTANT DATES**

* October 11-12, 2019 Synod Council
* October 20, 2019 Bishop Candea’s Installation
* January 9, 2020 Budget Team
* January 10, 2020 Executive Committee
* March 27-28, 2020 Synod Council
* June 4, 2020 Synod Council
* June 4-6, 2020 Synod Assembly in St. Louis

**ADJOURNMENT**

Dennis Allerheiligen adjourned his final Synod Council meeting at 2:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Chad Langdon

Central States Synod Secretary