

Minutes from the
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING

June 5, 2025
at the Embassy Suites
10401 S. Ridgeview Rd
Olathe, KS

Present: Bishop Susan Candeo, Nancy Nagel (Vice President), Scott Shulte (Treasurer), Rev. Chad Langdon (Secretary), Tullia Hamilton, Logan Simon, Rev. David Frerichs, Rev. Tina Reyes, Alesia Roccia, Rev. Zac Sturm, Julie Barstow, Mindy Tillberg

Absent: Rev. Richard Ashley

Guests: Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton as our representative from ELCA Churchwide, Rev. Dr. Donna Simon (Director of Evangelical Mission)

CALL TO ORDER

Nancy called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

- She acknowledged that we are on the traditional, ancestral homelands of the Osage, Kickapoo and Kaskaskia Nations. We give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.
- Bishop Candeo led us in a devotion, asked us each to introduce ourselves, and finish this sentence, “We are renewed to _____. ” She then led us in prayer.

OASIS SYNOD AUTHORIZED OUTREACH MINISTRY PROPOSAL

Rev. Dr. Donna Simon gave an update about Oasis. The former Gathering Table congregation has taken some time to reorganize after their closure. They have worked on a proposal to become a Synod Authorized Outreach Ministry (SOAM) called Oasis. This proposal was sent to the Synod Council in advance of the meeting. The ROSE Outline has been approved by Churchwide for 3 years of funding.

Discussion included:

- The new location is at Independence Boulevard Christian Church (IBCC), which is about a mile from the former location. Oasis will now be part of a much larger ministry. This location already has security, which is included in the rent.
- They will be sure to have insurance. They are currently working on a written agreement with ICBB.
- This ministry will be led by Sarah Ginter, who is a seminary student. (Sarah is currently an attorney.)
- It is not expected that this ministry will ever be self-sustaining.
- Part of the budget includes money from the “Central States Synod New Start Fund.” This fund does not exist.
- Can a SOAM exist without funding? No.
- Can we approve this as a ministry and figure out funding later?

- We, as a Synod Council, could direct funds from the sale of the previous Gathering Table toward this ministry.
- We currently have some Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities without any way of funding them.
- If we built the Mission Endowment high enough, we could potentially fund this ministry in perpetuity. There are alternate ways to fund operations.
- **SC 25.06.05.A45 It was MSC (Scott, Alesia) that we approve the ROSE Proposal for Oasis and that we take \$25,000 of proceeds from the sale of the Gathering Table building to help fund it and meet their budget.**

SYNOD ASSEMBLY UPDATE

- Resolution SA.25.01 has created a bit of an issue regarding the language of the funding mechanism. The resolution “directs” the Synod Council to establish a New Start Fund. It also “requests” that the Synod Council seed the fund with \$100,000 from the sale of recent buildings. If it gets amended to “direct” funds, it will trigger S10.04 of the Synod Constitution and require. As long as the “request” language is in there, it will not require a 2/3 vote from the Synod Assembly. We had a discussion about the intent of the resolution and talked through possible sticking points, including some possible amendments.
- Bishop Candea remarked how amazing the Synod Staff has been.
- Only Voting Members will be allowed to sit at Voting Member tables. Visitors & volunteers will be seated at separate tables. This will help keep the elections going as smoothly as possible.
- We have 325 Voting Members registered. With visitors, we have 360. We are in good shape with our ratio between lay and rostered voting members.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chad had emailed out a copy of the minutes from the May 16, 2025 Executive Committee meeting.

- **SC 25.06.05.A46 It was MSC to accept the minutes of the May 16, 2025 Executive Committee meeting.**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Scott presented a written treasurer's report:

Financial Status as of 4/30/2025, after 3 months of the fiscal year, ending January 31, 2026.

Income from congregations

- \$279,409 received
- The amount received is \$14,341 less than what was anticipated in our revised spending budget, a -5.1% variance
- The amount received is \$37,191 less than received last year, a 13.3% variance
- The May numbers were solid again and helped to reduce our shortfall compared to the budget and we have now exceeded the amount received last year at this same point by \$16,022.

ELCA Churchwide Contribution

- \$139,705 contributed to Churchwide
- This is \$7,170 less than anticipated in the revised spending budget, a -5.1% variance
- The amount contributed is \$18,595 less than last year, a -13.3% variance

Synod Expenditures

- \$155,185 spent
- The amount spent is \$24,215 less than budgeted, a -15.6% variance
- This is also \$8,549 less than spent last year, an -5.5% variance

Total Support & Revenue vs. Total Expenditures

- \$299,305 received in Total Support & Revenue, \$26,970 less than anticipated and \$42,344 less than last year
- \$294,890 in Total Expenditures, \$31,385 less than anticipated, and \$27,144 less than last year
- Net surplus of \$4,415 as compared to a \$19,652 surplus last year

Analysis of Financial Status

- We ended the 2024 fiscal year with a very loud bang and began the new year with barely a whimper. The giving from the congregations was outstanding, but then the very next month we experienced the worst month of giving that I have seen. This is a tough way to start the year and we are still feeling the effects of that after completing four months of the year. The months of March, April, and May were very similar to last year. They were solid in providing the funds needed to support our budget.
- Synod expenses were lower than budgeted and below last year. This is driven by a greater than expected off-set for the campus ministry pastoral salaries and lower than expected travel expenses. The campus ministry off-set is primarily a timing issue in that the two sites with pastors have caught up with the amounts needed to support the pastor compensation.
- Total Support and Income is lower than expected due primarily to the shortfall in giving from the congregations. Total Expense are lower than expected due to the lower synod expenses as reported previously, plus the decrease in giving to Churchwide also driven by the decrease in giving from the congregations. We did end the quarter with a slight surplus, which is positive, but it was lower than the surplus we saw in 2024. I will also point out that the budget calls for releasing \$90,000 of temporarily restricted funds for the year, which would equal \$22,500 for the quarter. We have released none of these funds thus far.

Discussion included:

- We have some upcoming audits. When we have to pay for those, we will likely have to release some of those temporarily restricted funds.
- Our new bookkeeper, Michelle, and Rich in the office are working really well together.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop Candeo did not present a written report, but will offer a report at the Assembly.

CONGREGATION UPDATES

St. John (Bird City, KS) and Salem (St. Francis, KS) have each taken their second votes to disaffiliate. Their pastor is Rev. Jim Gleason.

ROSTER REPORT

Because his congregations disaffiliated from the ELCA and he wanted to remain their pastor, Rev. Jim Gleason resigned from the ELCA roster, effective May 25, 2025.

CONGREGATION CONSTITUTIONS

Bishop Candea presented one constitution for approval, for Good Shepherd, Manchester, MO. It was in good order.

- **SC 25.06.05.A47 It was MSC to approve the updated constitution of Good Shepherd Lutheran, Manchester, MO.**

ELCA CHURCHWIDE

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton brought greetings from Churchwide and gave us some good words of encouragement.

ADJOURNMENT

Nancy gave a special thank you to Mindy Tillberg & Dallas Rakestraw for their many years serving on Synod Council, as they will be ending their terms on the Council. She adjourned the meeting at 3:15pm. We decided we will work out our next meeting dates via email.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Chad Langdon
Central States Synod Secretary