

Central States Synod 2023 Synod Assembly

June 3, 2023

2022 Central States Synod Assembly Actions

Number	Subject	Action
SA 22.01	Limitations of Bishops by Gender	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional; synod does not have the authority to limit or dictate election of bishops
SA 22.02	Rules for Retired Pastors	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional; synod does not have authority to override rules for rostered ministers as dictated by Roster Manual of ELCA
SA. 22.03	Congregation disposition of assets	This resolution was not put to a vote as it was deemed unconstitutional given the synod does not have the authority to dictate what congregations do with their assets
SA.22.04	Season of Global Awareness during Epiphany season; September 18, 2022 to remember Lutheran Church in Russia; April 23, 2023 to remember Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea	Communication has gone out through the synod communications encouraging congregations to remember and pray for companion synods
SA.22.05	Memorial Calling for the Just Transition from Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Sent memorial to churchwide for consideration at the assembly; emphasized Creation Care through Lent; worship resources provided; Bishop led Bible study; Lutherans Restoring Creation led retreat and congregations are gathering in cohorts as “cool congregations.”
SA. 22.06	Developing LGBTQIA+ Education and cultural competency	Hearts Across the Heartland has been meeting with synod staff; worked with Reconciling Works to host professional development days offered across the synod in February; providing resources on the synod website
SA.22. 07	Discerning a Path Toward Becoming a Reconciling in Christ Synod	This resolution was withdrawn by the authors.
SA.22.08	Thanksgiving for Ministry	Joined in prayer at the assembly

Resolution SA23.01

Resolution to Encourage Development of Mission Partnership Support “One Body Together in Mission”

WHEREAS:

The Central States Synod Constitution (+S6.03.2.) states *“In planning for, facilitating, and nurturing the mission of this church through congregations, the responsibilities of the synod...include developing new ministries, redevelopment of existing ministries, and support and assistance in the conclusion; if necessary, of a particular ministry”*;

AND WHEREAS:

In order to fulfill the constitutional mandate cited above (+S6.03.02), the Central States Synod Mission Table has primary oversight responsibility for developing new ministries and support for existing Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWC) and SAWCs under exploration including the following communities:

- Gathering Table; Kansas City, MO
- Iglesia Luterana Sagrado Corazon de Jesus – ELCA; Garden City, KS
- Partners Ministry; Wichita, KS
- South Sudanese Congregation; Saint Joseph, MO
- Delmar Loop SAWC Exploration; St. Louis, MO

AND WHEREAS:

The Holy Scriptures admonish us: *“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ”* (I Corinthians 12:12). Thus, we are Church together; and again the Holy Scriptures remind us: *“If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it”* (I Corinthians 12:26); and the Holy Scriptures promise us: *“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work”* (II Corinthians 9:8);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The constituents of the Central States Synod seek to build up the Body of Christ through the development of ways to strengthen their participation in relationships with other mission partners across the synod to support and assist existing SAWCs, as well as other SAWC explorations. Possible ways to encourage the development of Mission Partnership Support could include the following:

- Remembering existing and exploratory SAWCs in congregational and individual prayers;
- Including SAWC developers in your own personal prayers;
- Contacting a specific SAWC and inquiring what their specific ministry needs are;
- Planning a mission trip to a SAWC to learn more about its ministry;
- Inviting a member from a SAWC to speak to your congregation in an effort to learn more about the SAWC’s mission;
- Joining with other individuals and congregations to provide financial support to a SAWC;
- Participating in a synod-wide mission support effort to raise additional mission support of the synod’s SAWCs; and
- Donating funds from Congregational Endowment Funds and Congregational Memorial Gifts to support the mission of SAWCs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod Mission Table will provide resources to congregations and others to assist them with the implementation of plans to develop and strengthen relationships with their mission partners.

The Central States Synod Mission Table:

Rev. Aimée Frye Appell
Rev. Roy Christell
Rev. Robert Dealey

Rev. Varinia Espinosa
Rev. Tina Reyes

Rev. Jill Seagle
Rev. Donna Simon

Resolution SA23.02

A SEASON OF GLOBAL AWARENESS

Remembering our Companion Synods and ELCA ministries around the world

Because it is vitally important for the people, the congregations and the leadership of the Central States Synod to be aware that we are part of a world-wide community of faith, the Companion Synod Team calls upon the Voting members of the Central States Synod Assembly to adopt the following resolution.

Be it resolved that the Epiphany Season be designated as a “Season of Global Awareness” for congregations within the Central States Synod and that congregations intentionally lift up the church around the world through prayer, song, educational events and in any way appropriate to the context of the congregation. The focus would be not only on our Companion Synods in Papua New Guinea and Russia, but also the Global Ministry we share in and through the Global Mission Arm of the ELCA such as Missionary Sponsorship, Young Adults in Global Mission, and our support of Projects that promote the witness of the Gospel, works of compassion and Justice ministry around the world.

Be it also resolved that Sunday, October 8th, 2023 shall be designated as the Sunday to remember, lift up and celebrate our companion church relationship with the “Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Urals, Siberia and Far East” (ELCUSFE) with a special focus on the Far Eastern Deanery. *(This date was chosen because the first Sunday in October is widely observed by the churches in Russia as a harvest Sunday when they give thanks and celebrate the completion of the fall harvest).*

Be it also resolved that Sunday, April 7th, 2024 be designated as the Sunday to remember, lift up and celebrate our companion church relationship with the Kote District of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea (ELCPNG). *We chose this Sunday because the Gospel lesson is John 20:19-31 which includes John’s version of Jesus commissioning the disciples to share the Gospel with everyone, everywhere with the words, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” It also includes the account of Jesus encountering the disciples at a time and place and in a manner that they least expected. This is a common occurrence in our interactions with our companion Siblings in Papua New Guinea and Russia.*

The Central States Synod Companion Synod Team will provide resources for mission education and worship for the Epiphany Season, and additionally, prayer requests, recent news and communications from our Companion Churches prior to the two Companion Synod Sundays to help us to “accompany one another” in our journey as followers, servants and witnesses to Jesus Christ in our respective parts of God’s world.

The Companion Synod Team of the Central States Synod – ELCA

Rebecca Blocksome	Penny Holste
Jon Brudvig	Gary Kallansrud
Jim Cooper	Alex Lang
Daniel Lilienkamp	Emily Greble
Doug Reed.	Keith Holste
Peggy Schaefer	Gary Teske
Andrew Beers	

Resolution SA 23.03
Creation of a Synod Campus Ministry Team

WHEREAS:

In 2020, the Church Council of the ELCA approved the Future Church program to guide our denomination for the next decade in ministry together. A central commitment of this program was to reach 1 million new, young, and diverse people. Today, young adults are increasingly attending higher education in various forms from technical schools and community colleges, to liberal arts colleges, and to the large state regional and flagship universities. We also know that currently we are not reaching all of the young adults we could if we worked more cooperatively with congregations, ecumenical partners, and our own campus ministries. Our hope in creating this ministry team is to provide vision, advocacy, and development of stronger communities of faith with young adults attending higher education institutions in our Synod.

By using our collective resources and interest, we envision development of best practices for the ministries and partner congregations within the Central States Synod. As the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated, campus ministry provides a place of belonging and of faith exploration, which are vital to the development of the whole person. To that end, campus ministry is a part of the greater faith community that we share. The support of parish and campus ministries of and for one another demonstrates a desire to grow faithfully and healthfully with one another in our shared journey.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod take the following actions:

- Approve the creation of the Synod Campus Ministry Team to help provide vision, advocacy, and develop partnerships beneficial for our ministry with young adults.
- Invite the Synod Campus Ministry Team to work cooperatively in finding ecumenical partners and incorporating them into the work of ecumenical campus ministry.
- Empower the Synod Campus Ministry Team to advocate to the congregations the importance of campus ministries to the future of the church
- Encourage the Synod Campus Ministry Team to work with congregations and community partners in finding opportunities for new ministries that reach young adults.

Central States Synod, Lutheran Campus Ministry:

Rev. Dan Baldwin, Campus Pastor, LCM-KU, Lawrence, KS

Rev. Kevin Clark, Campus Pastor, LCM-K-State, Manhattan, KS

Rev. Andrew Patty, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Topeka, KS

Rev. Tina Reyes, Campus Pastor, LCM-St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Rev. Melissa Woeppel, Campus Pastor, Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS

Resolution SA23.04
Bethany Village Chaplaincy Endowment Support

WHEREAS:

Bethany Home Association, dba Bethany Village, is a social ministry of the Central States Synod. As a residential facility which has provided elder care since 1911, Bethany is committed to providing elder care that empowers the gifts of our residents, including providing a Chaplain who offers pastoral care, leads worship, leads Bible Studies, offers venues for residents to share their gifts. Bethany Village seeks to meet the spiritual and social needs of our residents and their families even through end-of-life events.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Central States Synod designates the second Sunday in November as Bethany Village Sunday, requesting that each congregation collect an offering to strengthen and support the Chaplaincy Endowment funds of Bethany Village to ensure the ongoing spiritual care of our residents. Congregations will send their offerings to Bethany Village: Chaplaincy Endowment, 321 N. Chestnut St, Lindsborg, KS 67456.

Submitted by:

Bethany Village Board of Directors:

Rev. Amy Truhe	Galen Swenson	Karen Carlson
Rev. Chris Deines	Connie Dorf	Monette Johnson
Rev. Tim Leaf	Eric Anderson	Judy Murphy
Rev. Dean Apel	Ryan Biegert	Jim Ruble

Resolution SA23.05

Thanksgiving for Ministry

Baptized, we welcome one another as fellow members of the Body of Christ and workers with us in the reign of God. Our merciful God gives us particular companions to know and to love in our pilgrimage here on earth. Since the last assembly, the following rostered ministers, whom we remember with thanksgiving and reverence, have died:

The Rev. Paul Bauermeister, St. Louis, MO (9/11 2022)
Marianne Wilkinson, Deacon, Lawrence, KS (11/18/2022)
The Rev. Bill Horn, Wichita, KS (1/21/2023)
The Rev. Steve Little, Blanchard, OK (4/17/2023)

The following persons have served the Church faithfully, using their gifts and abilities to build up the Body of Christ, and have now retired from active ministry on the roster of the Church since the last Central States Synod Assembly:

The Rev. James Brandt, from specialized ministry, Lenexa, KS (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Barry Hong, from specialized ministry, St. Louis, MO (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Noni Strand, from specialized ministry, Salina, KS (7/1/2022)
The Rev. Austrá Reines, from synod council call, Springfield, MO (8/1/2022)
The Rev. Dinah Dutta, from specialized ministry, Lawrence, KS. (10/1/2022)
The Rev. Jerry Reynolds, from On Leave from Call, Manhattan, KS (10/1/2022)
The Rev. Keith Hohly, from on leave from call, Overland Park, KS (1/1/2023)
The Rev. Susan Langhauser, from Advent Lutheran Church, Olathe, KS (1/1/2023)
The Rev. William Neuman, from Good Neighbor Parish, Herrington/Hebron, KS (1/1/2023)

The body of Christ gathers as congregations to proclaim the gospel, share the means of grace, and empowered to carry out God's mission in the world. The following congregation(s) disaffiliated from the ELCA, discerning that they were called to participate in God's mission through other denominations:

Hillside Community Lutheran Church, Spring Hill, KS took their second vote to disaffiliate on 9/1/2022.
Peace Lutheran, Sullivan, MO took their second vote to disaffiliate on 12/11/2022.
Friends Home Lutheran Church, Savonburg, KS took their second vote to disaffiliate on 2/19/2023.

After many years of faithful ministry, the following congregation(s) closed, trusting that in the midst of death, there is always resurrection, and the mission of the church continues:

Immanuel Oromo Christian Church, Kansas City, MO (6/30/2022)
Zion Lutheran Church, Hollenburg, KS (7/10/2022)
Blue Ridge Trinity Lutheran Church, Raytown, MO (7/21/2022)
Bethany Lutheran Church, Webster Groves, MO (10/1/2022)
United Lutheran Church in Cole Camp, MO (12/31/2022)
Our Redeemer, Ness City, KS (4/30/2023)

Therefore, be it resolved that this Assembly recognizes and gives thanks for the ministry of these ministers and these congregations.