

Minutes from the
SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
August 26, 2022
Via Zoom

Present: Bishop Susan Candea, Nancy Nagel (Vice President), Scott Schulte (Treasurer), Rev. Chad Langdon, Chelsea Deines, Terrance Freeman

Absent: Rev. Janice Hawley

CALL TO ORDER

Nancy called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and started with a land acknowledgement. She then read the hymn, "Gather Us In," and led us in prayer.

AUDIT REPORT

The audit for FYE Jan 2020 has been completed, which covers all of 2019. They are now working on the FYE Jan 2021 audit, which covers 2020. They should've completed in July but are behind schedule. They will still need to complete the FYE Jan 2022 audit after that.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Chad presented the minutes from June 9 Synod Council meeting, the 2022 Synod Assembly, July 19 special Executive Committee meeting, and the August 1 special Synod Council meeting.

- **SEC 22.08.26.A66** **It was MSC (Chelsea, Scott) to approve the minutes as presented for the following meetings:**
 - **June 9, 2022 Synod Council meeting**
 - **2022 Synod Assembly**
 - **July 19, 2022 special Executive Committee meeting**
 - **August 1, 2022 special Synod Council meeting**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Scott presented a written treasurer's report:

Financial Status as of 7/31/2022, after 6 months of the fiscal year, ending January 31, 2023.

Income from congregations

- \$741,023 received
- The amount received is \$33,977 less than what was anticipated in our revised spending budget, a -4.6% variance
- The amount received is also \$7,165 less than received last year, a -1.0% variance

ELCA Churchwide Contribution

- \$370,512 contributed to Churchwide
- This is \$16,988 less than anticipated in the revised spending budget, a -4.6% variance
- The amount contributed is \$3,582 less than last year, a -1.0% variance

Synod Expenditures

- \$443,311 spent
- The amount spent is \$9,347 less than budgeted, an -2.1% variance
- This is also \$20,315 more than spent last year, a 4.6% variance

Total Support & Revenue vs. Total Expenditures

- \$798,394 received in Total Support & Revenue, \$41,764 less than anticipated but

\$14,754 more than last year

- \$813,823 in Total Expenditures, \$26,335 less than anticipated, but \$16,633 more than last year
- Net deficit of \$15,429 as compared to a \$13,550 deficit last year (disregarding the PPP loan forgiveness)

Analysis of Financial Status

- As you can see in the graph on the next page for the 2022 fiscal year, congregational support for March, April, June, and July were below average. Unfortunately, this means the only two months were above average, but I would still classify them as mediocre. This has pushed our variance to the budget and to last year to 4.6% and 1.0 respectively. We are still trailing the anticipated amount for the year to date, but we have gained on last year's giving, reducing that deficit from 3.5% to 1.0%.
- Synod expenditures are lower than budgeted in several areas, which is causing overall expenses to be lower. These areas are Travel, Technology Enhancements and Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism. While expenses were lower than budgeted, they were higher than our expenses for the same period last year by \$20,000. This was primarily driven by the compensation arrangement for DEM Aimee Appell that was not part of the budget last year.
- Our Total Support & Revenue amount is greater than last year due to the reimbursements we are receiving from Churchwide for the DEM purchase of services arrangement mentioned above. We currently are showing a deficit of \$15,429, but we have budgeted to release \$32,500 of temporarily restricted funds to support the budget. We haven't released those funds yet, but when we do that will flip the deficit to a surplus of about the same amount.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop Canda presented a written report and briefly discussed it.

2022 SYNOD ASSEMBLY FOLLOW-UP

Bishop Canda presented a chart containing the Synod Assembly actions and what is being done toward each action items. There are three primary resolutions to address coming out of the Assembly, including:

- Season of Global Awareness from the Synod Companion Team
- Working toward a "Just transition from Greenhouse Gas Emissions"
- Working on "Developing LGBTQIA+ Education and Cultural Competency as a Synod"

UPCOMING SYNOD ASSEMBLIES

- We discussed the dates for the 2023 Synod Assembly, which will be on online assembly. We settled on a date of Saturday, June 3, and are going to try to do the entire Assembly in one day. We probably won't have a keynote speaker, and make it primarily a business meeting. We will have elections for the officers (Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) and some Synod Council members.
- The 2024 Synod Assembly will be on June 6 – 8 (Thursday through Saturday). We will need to elect voting members for the 2025 Churchwide Assembly at this Assembly. This will be an in-person assembly.
- The 2025 Synod Assembly, which will have a Bishop's election, will be on June 5 – 7 (Thursday through Saturday). This will be an in-person assembly.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE 2022 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Bishop Candeia gave a written report from the recent 2022 Churchwide Assembly, highlighting five key things that happened, including:

- An apology was issued to Santa Maria Peregrina, a congregation in Stockton, CA.
- Imran Siddiqui was elected as the new Vice President of the ELCA.
- Support was approved for the #Landback movement.
- The ELCA will be reviewing and suggesting possible changes to the social statement, “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” which was adopted in 2009.
- A commission will be formed to make recommendations to restructure the governance of the ELCA in preparation for a reconstituting convention.

HILLSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH

We have established an agreement with Hillside Community Lutheran Church in Spring Hill, KS. This agreement will soon be signed by all parties. The details of the agreement were shared in the minutes from the August 1, 2022 Synod Council meeting and was acted upon by the Synod Council at that meeting (SC 22.08.01.A64).

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH

The situation with Bethan Lutheran Church in Webster Groves, MO continues to deteriorate. Most of the church has stopped communicating with anyone in the ELCA, including the pastor, but they have gone to their local newspaper. The mayor of Webster Groves has contacted Bishop Candeia to inquire about the person living in the basement. Bishop Candeia will be in St. Louis on September 11 to meet with whoever wants to show up from the congregation. They are to let us know by October 1, 2022, if they plan to appeal the decision to come under synodical administration at the 2023 Synod Assembly (per their constitution). If they choose not to appeal, we will begin synodical administration immediately. If they do choose to appeal, then we will have to deal with the ramifications of that. In either case, Pastor Starr’s call will end on October 1, 2022. He will have 45 days to apply for on leave from call, retirement, or disability status. It was suggested that we work with local resources to help provide housing for the person who is currently living the church basement.

RESURRECTION LUTHERAN

There are groups that have been using the property from Resurrection Lutheran Church, St. Louis, MO. Rev. Aimee Appel will have a report by the next Synod Council meeting with all the details of how it is going.

ROSTER REPORT

Bishop Candeia presented a written roster report.

- On Leave From Call
 - **SEC 22.08.26.A67** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Emily McQuillan On Leave From Call status, effective August 16, 2022, contingent upon receipt of her On Leave From Call request form.** This will be her third year of OLFC status.
 - **SEC 22.0826.A68** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Bethany Ann Rutten Kempes On Leave From Call status, effective September 10, 2022.** This will be her third year of OLFC status.
- Disability

- **SEC 22.08.26.A69** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Tim Carey Disability status, effective August 22, 2022.**
- Retirements
 - **SEC 22.08.26.A70** **It was MSC to grant Marlene Hallstrom, deacon, Retirement status, effective July 1, 2022.**
 - **SEC 22.08.26.A71** **It was MSC to grant Rev. Austra Reines, Retirement status, effective August 1, 2022.**
- Congregation Transitions
 - Zion Lutheran in Hollenburg, KS, closed on July 10, 2022.
 - Blue Ridge Trinity in Raytown, MO, ceased worship in March of 2021, but was dealing with some insurance issues. They have now officially closed as of July 21, 2022.
 - Peace Lutheran in Sullivan, MO sent a letter indicating their intention to take a first vote on September 11, 2022 to disaffiliate from the ELCA. Bishop Candea will consult with them on September 10.

CONGREGATION CONSTITUTIONS

- **SEC 22.08.26.A72** **It was MSC to approve the constitutional changes for St. John’s Lutheran in Salina, KS.**

SYNOD CONSTITUTION

- There were some changes to the model Synod Constitution that were approved by the recent ELCA Churchwide Assembly. As we make these required changes, it is also a good time to review other parts of our constitution. Chad will get together with Dallas Rakestraw to review our current constitution and make any recommendations at our October Synod Council meeting.
 - It was suggested to especially look at travel equalization (7.11.B.18), quorum requirements, and update the list of congregations in each conference.

ADJOURNMENT

Nancy closed by reading the hymn, “Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song”. We adjourned at 2:45pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Synod Council October 7-8 in-person in Kansas City
- Executive Committee January 13, 2023 TBD

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Chad Langdon
Central States Synod Secretary