

Minutes from the
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
April 24, 2020
via Zoom

Present: Bishop Susan Candea, Nancy Nagel (Vice President), Scott Schulte (Treasurer), Rev. Chad Langdon (Secretary), Rev. David Strommen, Chelsea Deines, and Susan Boxberger.

DEVOTION

For devotion, we participated in the “Prayer Pause” time offered by Bishop Candea via Facebook Live.

CALL TO ORDER

Nancy called the meeting to order at 1:25pm. She opened us with prayer.

INFORMATION AND CONSENT ITEMS

SECRETARY’S REPORT

Chad presented the minutes from the March 28, 2020 Synod Council meeting.

- **SEC 20.04.24.A1** **It was MSC (David, Scott) to approve the minutes.**

TREASURER’S REPORT

Scott presented the Treasurer’s Report through March 31, 2020, which covers the first 2 months of our current fiscal year. Verbal highlights included:

- Income from congregations was \$234,529 which is \$23,804 less than what was anticipated (a -10.1% variance), but is \$7,279 more that we had received last year at this point (a 3.1% variance).
- We have a net surplus of \$10,868 as compared to a \$26,675 deficit last year.
- While the numbers aren’t that high overall, they are unexpectedly nice given that most of our congregations have not been worshipping in person throughout March and that we had a dismal February.
- Our expenses are much lower at this point because of actions that we have taken in response to COVID-19. Our campus ministry expenses are also down because of the pastoral transition in St. Louis (their new pastor starts July 1).
- It is good to have a surplus, but we are still facing a huge unknown in the future based on the situation with COVID-19.
- We have applied for a Paycheck Protection Loan to help with expenses. We do not yet have an update on approval for that.

We had a discussion about the future and our finances. While things are encouraging right now, it was agreed that it is hard to predict what will happen in the next few months. We are not yet at a point where any major decisions need to be made (beyond the cuts/deferments we’ve already made), but we

know that we will likely need to have those discussions at our June Synod Council meeting and reassess our situation at that time.

BISHOP'S REPORT

Bishop Canda presented a written report. Verbal highlights include:

- The staff continues to work from home.
- Rev. Christyn Koschmann's last official day was April 15.
- Synod business is continuing via Zoom and other electronic means, including the Endowment and Candidacy Committee meetings.
- The new St. Louis campus ministry pastor will be starting July 1.
- She has been meeting with other bishops via Zoom.
- One of her biggest concerns is providing wise guidance to leaders and congregations so that they can make the best decisions possible for their context.

NEW BUSINESS

ROSTER REPORT

Rev. Meggan Prosser-Gebhardt resigned from Lord of Life Lutheran, Belton, MO, effective April 12.

- **SEC 20.04.24.A2** **It was MSC (David, Susan B.) to grant Rev. Meggan Prosser-Gebhardt On Leave From Call Status, effective April 13, 2020.**

Rev. Christyn Koschmann resigned from the synod staff, effective April 15.

- **SEC 20.04.24.A3** **It was MSC (Chad, Chelsea) to grant Rev. Christyn Koschmann On Leave From Call Status, effective April 16, 2020.**

COVID-19 RESPONSE APPEAL FROM CHURCHWIDE

ELCA Churchwide is doing a special funding appeal to support ministry throughout the country. They will then be offering block grants to synods who have developed plans to use that money primarily for:

- Care for the people and communities at-risk for impacts from COVID-19, and
- Care for congregations and ministries most vulnerable to impacts from COVID-19, especially those most in need and best positioned to help (as determined by synods).

Susan B. encouraged each of us to make individual donations to this fund appeal.

We decided to have an initial meeting of the Endowment Committee, the Deans, and the Synod staff to lay out the possibility of these grants. The Endowment Committee would likely be the decision makers if and when we receive any grants from Churchwide. Scott & the Bishop will set up that meeting.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY UPDATE

- The hotel would still like for us to have the assembly in St. Louis in 2021. This would require changing some continuing resolutions so that we would not have it at Bethany College. The Synod Council will need to make this decision at our June 2020 meeting. We also discussed the possibility of amending our constitution in 2021 so that we only have an assembly every other year.

- We had a discussion about the upcoming Synod Council meeting in June and the format that this meeting will take. It was decided to do the next Synod Council meeting via Zoom.

OLD BUSINESS

CONTINUING EDUCATION FUNDS POLICY

We had a discussion about continuing education funds for the synod staff and what happens to those funds once the staff member or pastor leaves the position. Bishop Candea and Scott are going to work up a recommendation for the next meeting.

COMPANION SYNOD REQUEST

- The Companion Synod Team has requested that we encourage Sunday schools across the synod to collect offerings that would go to support Sunday school efforts in Papua New Guinea. The original plan was to make this appeal at the Synod Assembly. Although we are not having the Synod Assembly this year, we decided to still encourage congregations to support the Sunday school supplies effort.
- The Companion Synod Team also requested that we invite Bishop Alexander Scheiermann, Bishop of the Synod of the Urals, Siberia and the Far East to visit our synod in 2021 and allow him to be one of our speakers at the assembly. We postponed making any decisions on this until our fall Synod Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Bishop Candea closed us with a benediction and prayer at 3:40pm.

UPCOMING DATES

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| • Saturday, May 16, 2020 | 9:00-11:00am | The Synod Council and the synod staff will be having a Zoom conversation about core values. |
| • Friday, June 5, 2020 | 6:00-8:30pm | Synod Council (via Zoom) |
| • Saturday, June 6, 2020 | 9:00am-12:00pm | Synod Council (via Zoom) |

*Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Chad Langdon
Central States Synod Secretary*