

**Southern Ohio Synod – ELCA
Synod Council Hybrid/In Person and Electronic Meeting
December 3, 2022**

Mr. Matthew Hazzard opened with devotions. Matt read from the book “Refuge”, one of the books that has been distributed to families and children as part of a Holy Innovations pilot project. Research has demonstrated that faith building begins in the home environment.

Call to Order:

Vice President Ellis called the Synod Council meeting to order at 9:52 am. Secretary Fischer took a roll call vote and confirmed a quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members present: Rev. Matt Byrd, Rev. Mark Combs, Mr. Rick Davila, Bishop Suzanne D. Dillahun, Mr. David Drumm, Ms. Marjorie Ellis, Ms. Holly Fischer, Rev. Bonnie Gerber, Mr. Roy Hart, Ms. Jeni Gray, Mr. Matthew Hazzard, Ms. Robin Kaelin, Rev. Stephen Kimm, Rev. Laura Leach-Shreffler, Mr. Imanuel Lyatuu, Ms. Abbie McCandlish, Mr. David Miser, Mr. Kevin Pyle, Ms. Michelle Riesbeck, Mr. Ethan Roberts, Ms. Laura Schmidt, Ms. Cindy Schrader, Ms. Kathie Skamfer, Ms. Marcia Ward, Mr. Doug Ware.

Members excused: Rev. Cheryl Siegenthaler, Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Witt.

Members absent: None.

Also present for some or all of the meeting were staff members including Rev. Katie Kerrigan, Rev. Robert Abrams, Mr. Josh Brodbeck, and Ms. Kim Uemura. Guests present for some or all of the meeting included Ms. Rebecca Witt, Mr. Chris Clothier and Attorney David Ball.

Vice-President Ellis asked that participants identify themselves before speaking.

Review and Approval of Agenda of the 12/03/2022 Meeting:

The Agenda for the day was reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.22.12.01 To approve the 12/03/2022 Agenda. (Schmidt/Kaelin) APPROVED.

Vice-President Ellis introduced new Council member Robin Kaelin. Robin will be the new WELCA representative, and this is her second time of service on Synod Council.

Review and Approval of Minutes of the September 10, 2022 Meeting:

The Minutes of the above Council meeting were reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.22.12.02

To approve the Minutes of the 09/10/2022 meeting as submitted. (Hazzard /Kimm) APPROVED.

The Bishop invited guest Attorney David Ball to present information on the development of the proposed Southern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Church of America Background Check Policy for Synod Staff and Leadership (Policy). This Policy is on the agenda for discussion and potential vote. Attorney Ball reviewed the Policy and the rationale behind the two-tiered structure which requires criminal history checks for certain roles and a national sex offender registry check for a broader group. Discussion ensued with many Council members providing perspectives on the draft Policy and asking questions on the structure and implementation of the Policy, including Mr. Pyle, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hazzard, Mr. Hart, Mr. Lyatuu, Ms. Skamfer, Ms. Schmidt, Ms. Ellis, Pastor Combs, Pastor Kimm. Various options for revisions were presented.

Mr. Roberts moved to approve the Policy as amended by discussion. Prior to a member seconding this motion, Mr. Kimm pointed out that if we vote on the Policy as amended, we would not have an opportunity to vote on the Policy as submitted.

The Bishop called a recess at 10:52 am.

Ms. Ellis reconvened the meeting at 11:01 am.

Secretary Fischer reviewed that Mr. Robert's motion would need to be considered if seconded. Ms. Fischer discussed that prior to considering Mr. Robert's motion clarity would be needed on the wording of the Policy upon which Council would be voting. One option would be to table this to allow Attorney Ball to work on language to be circulated following the meeting and voted upon via email before the January 2023 meeting. Mr. Hart proposed that in lieu of this, Council consider the Policy as recommended by Executive Committee, and then consider revisions at a later meeting.

Mr. Roberts withdrew his motion.

VOTED:

SC.22.12.03

To approve the "THE SOUTHERN OHIO SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF AMERICA BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY FOR SYNOD STAFF AND LEADERSHIP" as recommended by the Executive Committee. (Hart) APPROVED.

VOTED:

SC.22.12.04

To go into Executive Session. (Leach-Shreffler/Schrader) APPROVED.

The Council entered Executive Session at 11:15 am.

Council reported out of Executive Session at 11:43 am.

Reports of the Officers and Executive Committee:

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| <u>Vice President</u> | Vice President Ellis provided a verbal report. She asked Pastor Bonnie Gerber to share information regarding a workshop that Ms. Ellis, Pastor Gerber and other members of All Saints Lutheran, Worthington attended recently (Building an Inclusive Church – Reconciling Works). Ms. Gerber indicated the training was excellent and recommended it to other congregations. |
| <u>Secretary</u> | Ms. Fischer reported that Capital University has reviewed a number of applicants for the Region 6 Archivist position but at this time position remains posted. |
| <u>Treasurer</u> | Treasurer Pyle asked that Rebecca Witt provide a report on his behalf. Ms. Witt provided a review of the General Fund Budget Comparison February to October 2022. She noted that revenues are at about 68 % of the budget and expenditures are at approximately 69% of the planned budget. Ms. Witt reviewed the SOS Finance Team recommended action regarding cash and investment accounts in order to maximize investment earnings. |

Ms. Ellis called for a lunch recess at 12:02 pm.

Mr. Doug Ware offered a luncheon prayer.

The meeting resumed at 12:35 pm.

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| <u>Bishop</u> | <p>The Bishop's Report is attached to these minutes for review. In addition to her written report, the Bishop provided information, and invited staff members to provide verbal reports as discussed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Synod will host a "Longest Night" service on December 21, 2022 at 6:30 pm. Look for information online.2. The Synod Assembly will occur on June 3, 2022 at Peace Lutheran Church in Beavercreek, Ohio. The event will be one day. Pastor Kimm has been very welcoming and enthusiastic about serving as a host.3. The Bishop reviewed new appointments for Synod Authorized Ministers.4. The Bishop shared that she will be attending the ELCA Bishop's Academy in Minneapolis in January.5. The Bishop discussed her travel to Germany in mid-October in order to sign a new covenant with the North Church and German |
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government. Pastor Abrams also attended and conveyed the German church's thanks to the Synod.

6. The Bishop asked Pastor Kerrigan to provide an update on Cultivate. Pastor Kerrigan shared a slide deck starting with "MomenToUs". This initiative is a Holy Experiment that is a hybrid virtual and in person ministry in Delaware county. The ELCA has provided a three-year grant for this new ministry (with the first year being \$30,000) which is dependent on matching funds from the Synod (via Thrive!) and Synod partners. The ELCA has approved of MomenToUs as a Synod Authorized Worshipping Community subject to Council vote. Pastor Kerrigan addressed questions.

VOTED:

SC.22.12.05

To approve of MomenToUs as a Synod Authorized Worshipping Community. (Byrd /Kaelin) APPROVED.

7. Pastor Kerrigan continued her presentation with an interim update on the 2022 Mission Appeal. She noted that the goal of \$1,828,800 was established at Synod Assembly, and the response has been positive. She reviewed the Mission Support Appeal Response noting that 59% of congregations responding indicated a plan to increase support in 2022. She emphasized the importance of congregations submitting their statements of intent (which will be accepted even if received in 2023).
8. The Bishop asked Pastor Abrams to discuss the Model Constitution for Synods revisions as implemented at the Churchwide Assembly in August 2022. Pastor Abrams has recruited Ms. Marge Ellis and Mr. Roy Hart to work on revising the Southern Ohio Synod documents to conform to the changes. Pastor Abrams also reviewed, at the Bishop's request, changes in the Southern Ohio Synod liability insurance policy. Church Mutual has replaced our current insurance policy with a new version. The good news is the coverage is better, with only a minor cost increase, and allows for some additional options for insurance riders. We have purchased key person coverage at a cost of \$30 per year, which covers the cost of loss and replacement of three key staff: the Bishop, Chief Operations Officer and Assistant to the Bishop.
9. The Bishop asked for renewed prayers for raising up leaders; for MomenToUS; and for identification of the new second Assistant to the Bishop. The Bishop expressed her appreciation for all Council members' service.

Report of Auxiliaries

Mr. Drumm provided a written report from the Lutheran Men in Mission. Mr. Drumm shared that the group recently completed a study of Mike Weaver's book "Unstuck: Amazing Momentum for Christian Leaders through Improv."

Ms. Kaelin provided a verbal report from WELCA. She noted that next September the national meeting will most likely be held in Phoenix in person.

The Reports of the Officers and the Lutheran Men in Mission and Women of the ELCA were then received by the Synod Council.

The Bishop provided information concerning the legal and governance agenda items.

EN BLOC

VOTED:

SC.22.12.06 To approve the En Bloc Recommendations. (Schmidt /Roberts)

APPROVED

Rostered Ministers Status

On Leave from Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- Rev. Lisa Bernheisel, 1st yr (12/1/2022)
- Deacon Jennifer Frantz, 1st yr (1/1/2023)
- Rev. Christena J. Lutz, 2nd yr (1/1/2022)
- Rev. Anne Pairan, 1st yr (11/5/2022)
- Deacon Julija Volfa, 2nd yr (11/18/2021)

Retired Status

RECOMMENDATION:

- Rev. Charla Grieves (2/1/2023)
- Rev. Peter Kruse (1/1/2023)
- Rev. Ann Marie Winters (11/1/2022)

Disability Status

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Extension of Call

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Affirmation and Renewal of Appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers

RECOMMENDATION:

- To affirm the appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers: Mr. Danny Jordan, Mr. Wilbert Lapp, Mr. John Meister, Ms. Patti Morrow, Mr. John Rushmeyer and Mr. Norm Staker.

Affirmation and Renewal of Synod Council Calls

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Removal/ Resignation from the ELCA Roster

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Legal and Governance

RECOMMENDATION:

- To appoint Rev. Carey Hovland as a Southern Ohio Synod representative to the Candidacy Committee, for a second, 5-year term, beginning January 1, 2023 thru December 31, 2027.
- To affirm and accept the merger of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Columbus with Reformation Lutheran Church, Columbus effective September 18, 2022.

Information:

No news from St. Peter Lutheran Church, New Lebanon OH

Other Business:

Ms. Ellis reviewed the Synod Council Roster 2022-23 and requested that members provide any updates to Kim Uemura.

New Business: Mr. Hazzard shared his perspective on the Synod website and consideration of how we could provide additional security regarding posting of personal information of Council members. The Bishop indicated we will remove addresses, and review how to modify the information provided.

SC.22.12.07 To adjourn the meeting (Kaelin /Schrader) APPROVED.

The meeting was then adjourned at 1:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Holly R. Fischer
Synod Council Secretary