

**Southern Ohio Synod – ELCA
Synod Council Electronic Meeting
June 2, 2022**

Call to Order:

Vice President Ellis called the Synod Council meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Secretary Fischer took a roll call vote and confirmed a quorum was present.

Roll Call:

Members present: Rev. Mark Combs, Bishop Suzanne D. Dillahun, Mr. David Drumm, Ms. Marjorie Ellis, Ms. Holly Fischer, Rev. Bonnie Gerber, Ms. Jeni Gray, Mr. Roy Hart, Mr. Matthew Hazzard, Rev. Stephen Kimm, Rev. Laura Leach-Shreffler, Mr. Imanuel Lyatuu, Ms. Abbie McCandlish, Mr. Kevin Pyle, Mr. Ethan Roberts, Ms. Michelle Riesbeck, Ms. Laura Schmidt, Ms. Cindy Schrader, Rev. Cheryl Siegenthaler, Ms. Kathie Skamfer, Ms. Marcia Ward, Mr. Doug Ware, Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Witt, Ms. Susan Wyckoff.

Members excused: Rev. Matt Byrd, Mr. Rick Davila, Mr. David Miser.

Members absent: None.

Also present for some or all of the electronic meeting were staff members including Rev. Katie Kerrigan, Rev. Robert Abrams and Ms. Kim Uemura.

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

Review and Approval of Agenda of the 6/22/2022 Meeting:

The Agenda for the day was reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.22.06.01 To approve the 6/2/2022 Agenda. (Gerber /Kimm) APPROVED.

Laura Schmidt opened with devotions.

Review and Approval of Minutes of the April 23, 2022 Meeting:

The Minutes of the above Council meeting were reviewed.

VOTED:

SC.22.06.02 To approve the Minutes of the 04/23/2022 meeting as submitted. (Schmidt / Hazzard) APPROVED.

Reports of the Officers and Executive Committee:

<u>Vice President</u>	Vice President Ellis provided a verbal report and shared that she continues to participate in monthly ELCA Vice-Presidents meetings; the upcoming Assembly in Columbus has been a recent topic of discussion. Ms. Ellis shared that visitors are welcome to attend the Assembly with a registration fee (Covid-19 vaccination cards are required for entrance).
<u>Secretary</u>	No report.
<u>Treasurer</u>	Treasurer Pyle provided a General Fund Budget Comparison February to April 2022. He noted that revenues are up approximately 21.5% from last year, however, expenses are down approximately 25%, so the overall financial position is good. Increases in revenues may be related to increases in fuel costs for travel. Ms. Schmidt asked if the Synod is taking advantage of the IRC Employee Retention Credit offered to nonprofits? Mr. Pyle indicated he would consult with Joy Hacker.
<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 Bishop asked that Pastor Donner and his wife Joyce be included in our prayers due to a very difficult recent health situation.2. The Bishop shared that Pastor Rebecca Grate has been selected to serve as the new Synod Media Ambassador & Storyteller.3. The Bishop noted that the Synod is now working with Attorney David Ball, who will be compensated by the Synod but at a lower rate than his customary rate. Attorney Ball is working on a background check policy for laypersons as well as a real estate matter related to the closing of St. Paul – Pleasant City.4. The Bishop has been attending the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly this week in Bowling Green, Ohio and will be attending the Indiana Kentucky Synod meeting later in June – both Synods are electing Bishops.5. On May 31, 2022, the Bishop and Reverend Robert Abrams were among five ecumenical guests who had the opportunity to attend the ordination of Rev. Earl K. Fernandes as bishop of the Columbus Diocese.

6. The Bishop shared that the Amazing Grace Day Camps have been cancelled for this year due to a lack of counselors. On a brighter note, HopeWood Pines (LOMO) will be continuing this summer.
7. Next week the Synod will release a video providing a report of Synod activities since the 2021 Southern Ohio Synod Assembly to provide the kind of information that would have typically been shared at the Synod Assembly, which is not occurring in 2022 due to 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly being hosted by the Southern Ohio Synod. Regarding the Churchwide Assembly, the Bishop indicated that we need volunteers to welcome bishops, presidents and council members at the Columbus airport and drive them to their buses on Saturday August 6, 2022.
8. The Bishop asked Reverend Kerrigan to provide an update on the Delaware County mission development “Momentum” project. Pastor Kerrigan indicated that we have provided a mission plan to the ELCA Churchwide Expression, which offered the SOS \$30,000 on the condition that the Synod and congregations in the Synod will dedicate \$30,000 from Thrive! This project is one of the Thrive! goals so that use of resources is appropriate. The mission developer, who will be appointed by a Synod Council call, will be identified once funding is in place.
9. The Bishop led Council in a prayer for the state of our society. This prayer is also posted on the Southern Ohio Synod Facebook page today. The Bishop shared information regarding the events in the Sierra Pacific Synod (Millbrae, California) that have occurred since December 12, 2021, culminating in an ELCA investigation of concerning Bishop Megan Rohrer. Presiding Bishop Eaton convened a Listening Panel to hear all sides of the matter. On May 27, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton issued a report detailing her response to the Listening Panel Report. On May 28th, the Asociación de Ministerios Latinos de la ELCA, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries, and European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice issued a statement in response calling for a release of the full Listening Panel Report. On the same day, the ELCA Listening Panel issued a statement. On June 1, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton issued a statement regarding why the entire Listening Panel Report was not released. In that statement, the entirety of the Listening Panel Report was released which contains a more detailed background of the events of the past six months. The Sierra Pacific Synod is currently meeting to review this matter.

The Bishop expressed that these events are very distressing and unprecedented. Mr. Hazzard expressed gratitude that the Southern Ohio Synod is blessed with a culture of trust. Rev. Abrams indicated

that when the Sierra Pacific Synod turmoil and its impact has been brought up in conversation, he has responded that the Southern Ohio Synod is focused upon the proclamation of Jesus Christ in mission, ministry and the Gospel. Rev. Combs asked whether this matter will be discussed at the Churchwide Assembly? The Bishop indicated it would be discussed. Mr. Hart echoed the sentiment of other Council members that our Synod should be a place of peace and joy to perform the mission of God's work. Mr. Roberts shared the perspective that younger people are interested in diversity, and although this matter is upsetting it does provide an opportunity for conversation. Pastor Kimm offered a reminder that we need to retain a sense of joyfulness in our mission work together. Rev. Siegenthaler, and other Council members, expressed their appreciation and support for Bishop Dillahunt and the work of the Southern Ohio Synod. Bishop Dillahunt expressed her gratitude for the Council's support.

Report of Auxiliaries

There was no report from the Lutheran Men in Mission.

The Council received a verbal report from Ms. Wykoff regarding the Women of the ELCA. She indicated that the biennial gathering is being planned for September 2022.

The Reports of the Officers and the 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.22.06.03 To approve the En Bloc Recommendations. (Hazzard/Kimm)

APPROVED

Rostered Ministers Status

On Leave from Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- Rev. Mark Nodo (5/23/22)

Retired Status

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Disability Status

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Extension of Call

RECOMMENDATION:

- To extend a Synod Council Call to Rev. Susan Masters to serve as Intentional Interim Pastor, at North Riverdale Lutheran Church, in Dayton OH, beginning July 1, 2022.

Affirmation and Renewal of Appointment of Synod Authorized Ministers

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Affirmation and Renewal of Synod Council Calls

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Removal/ Resignation from the ELCA Roster

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Legal and Governance

RECOMMENDATION: N/A

Information: N/A

Other Business: None.

SC.22.06.04 To adjourn the meeting (Drumm/Skamfer) APPROVED.

The meeting was then adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Holly R. Fischer
Synod Council Secretary