

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

*Ms. Cynthia Corley	2024
S. Dcn. Steven Daniels	2022
The Rev. George Dietrich	2024
*Bishop Paul Egensteiner	2025
*S. Dcn. David Ehlers	2022
Ms. Hazel Goldstein	2022(1)
The Rev. Marva Jenkins	2022
*Mr. John Litke, Treasurer	2022
Mr. Erich Markert	2024
Ms. Lily Sage Mathias	2024
Mx. Anna Moritz (Young Adult)	2024
*The Rev. Jeanine Owens	2024
The Rev. David Parsons	2022
The Rev. Daniel Peter	2022
Mr. Aiden Sargent (Youth)	2023
Mr. Thomas Sargent	2022
*The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect.	2022
Mr. Cecil (Chip) Spurlock-Shackelton	2022
*The Rev. Gary Squire	2024
The Rev. Brooke Swertfager	2024
Ms. Wendy Bean Tannenbaum	2022
*Ms. Renee Wicklund, VP	2022
S. Dcn. Anita Martin-Williams	2022
The Rev. Dr. Kimberly Wilson	2024

STAFF

Ms. Regina Daniels
The Rev. Gladys Diaz
Mr. Branden Dupree
Ms. Karen Falco
S. Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa
Mr. Mark Goodwin
Ms. Kaitlin Kowalec
Mr. Roberto Lara
Ms. Claire Mazza
The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski
Ms. Maria Rodas
S. Dcn. Gayle Ruege
The Rev. Kevin Vandiver

GUESTS

The Rev. Rich Hill
(departed after presentation
on Koinonia)

(1) Hazel Goldstein joined meeting at agenda item 8B.

Bold = present

Italics = excused absence

*Member of Executive Committee

MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE

Opening Prayer: *Bishop Egensteiner*

Observer: *Pastor Jeanine Owens*

Call to Order: *Ms. Renée Wicklund at 5:08pm.*

1. **Adoption of the agenda:** adopted as amended.
2. **Draft SC minutes 18 January 2022:** adopted as presented.
- 8.C **Koinonia (business item moved here)**
Pr. Rich Hill addressed the council about the programs and need.
VP Wicklund explained to the council that solicitation of congregations is not permitted under the Synod Constitution without Synod Council authorization.

ACTION SC22:03/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council authorize Koinonia to solicit MNYS congregations to participate and contribute to Koinonia's three-year \$1 million dollar capital campaign beginning in 2022.

ADOPTED

3. **Report of the Bishop**

A. **Calls**

- a. **The Rev. Marc Herbst:** *Interim Pastor / Good Shepherd, Plainview eff 1 Feb 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Marc Herbst as Interim Pastor for Good Shepherd, Plainview effective 1 Feb 2022.

ADOPTED

- b. **The Rev. Dr. Frederick Weidmann:** *Pastor / Church in the Gardens (UCC), Forest Hills eff 22 Mar 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Dr. Frederick Weidmann to serve as Pastor for the Church in the Gardens (UCC congregation), Forest Hills, NY effective 22 March 2022.

ADOPTED

- c. **The Rev. Kerstin Weidmann:** *Interim Pastor / Grace, Forest Hills eff 22 Mar 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Kerstin Weidmann to serve as Interim Pastor for Grace, Forest Hills, NY effective 22 March 2022.

ADOPTED

- d. **The Rev. Dr. Harvard Stephens, Jr.:** *On Leave from Call status eff 1 Jan 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend On Leave from Call status to The Rev. Dr. Harvard Stephens, Jr. effective 1 January 2022.

ADOPTED

- e. **The Rev. Elsa Marty:** *Annual Renewal On Leave from Call status (6 yr) effective 1 Dec 2019*

ACTION SC22:03/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council renew On Leave from Call status (for study) to The Rev. Elsa Marty in accordance with ELCA protocol effective 1 Dec 2019 – 1 Dec 2025.

ADOPTED

- f. **The Rev. Scott Adams:** *Resignation from the roster Ministers of Word & Sacrament eff 22 Mar 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of the Rev. Scott Adams, PhD, from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA effective 22 March 2022.

ADOPTED

- g. **The Rev. Terrence Weber:** *Resignation from the roster effective 25 Jan 2022*

ACTION SC22:03/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of Terrence Weber from the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament of the ELCA effective 25 January 2022.

ADOPTED

B. Appointments

a. **The Rev. Dr. Christian Scharen:** *Interim Pastor / Church of Our Saviour, Manhasset*

b. **The Rev. Dr. Charles Vogeley:** *Interim Pastor / Trinity – St. Andrew's, Maspeth*

c. **The Rev. Laurie Cline:** *Interim Pastor / Christ, Islip Terrace*

d. **The Rev. Jeanine Owens:** *Interim Dean / Bronx Conference*

B. Pastoral Care / Ecumenical & Interfaith participation

a. Pastoral calls / meetings / visits with rostered leaders

Bishop reported having made 41 calls/visits.

- **Congregation visits / Councils**

- **Our Saviour's Atonement, Manhattan**
- **Trinity-St Andrew's, Maspeth**
- **Trinity, 46th St, Brooklyn**
- **Redeemer, Kingston**
- **Christ, Little Neck**

b. Koinonia annual meeting

c. United Lutheran Seminary @ Gettysburg / Bishops visit

d. Memorial Service: Archbishop Desmond Tutu / Cathedral of Saint John the Divine

e. Prayer for Ukraine / Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral

f. ELCA Conference of Bishops (weekly) conference met in person in March

g. ELCA Region 7 Bishops (weekly)

h. Latinx TEEM MDiv meeting / Pr. Ruben Duran and Pr. Javier Goitia

i. Black Equity Table (monthly)

C. MNYS Deans

a. Quadrant Deans gatherings

- **Q1 Deans (28 Feb): *Del – Hudson, Hudson, Tappan Zee***
- **Q2 Deans (22 Feb): *E Nassau, W Nassau, SW Nassau, Peconic, W Suffolk***
- **Q3 Deans (21 Mar): *NE/SE/Western Queens; Brooklyn Bridges; So Shore & SW Brooklyn***
- **Q4 Deans (7 Mar): *Bronx, Manhattan, Staten Island***

D. Communications / Events

Roberto Lara reported

a. Black History Month Series

Bishop's office led a month-long series.

b. Women's History Month

Special testimonials presented via social media.

c. Special Meeting of the Synod Assembly

E. Staff / Updates

Karen Falco reported

a. Synod Owned Properties

Four properties currently listed for sale.

b. Legal updates

4. Report of the Vice-President

VP Wicklund reported on visits with congregations and leaders.

A. End of Term

B. Succession Plan

C. Remaining Goals

5. Strategic Plan Report

A. 2025 Vision

a. Bishop / weekly meetings with Pr. William Baum and Renee Wicklund

b. Vision Team meeting: 19 Feb 2022 (via zoom) / 19 Mar 2022 (in person)

c. Ministry Legacy Project Manager

VP Wicklund reported that this position is not yet filled.

6. Treasurer's Report

A. Mission Support Report

a. Fiscal Year (Feb 1 2021 – Jan 31 2022)

b. \$0 giving (Feb 1 2021 – Jan 31, 2022)

J. Litke reported that January 2022 Mission Support offerings totaled \$103,911.57. YTD Mission Support actuals through January 31, 2022, are \$999,900.10 which is \$122,215.29 more than YTD (pandemic giving) of January 2021.

There were 36 congregations that gave \$0 mission support in the fiscal year ending Jan 31 2022.

B. Financials (31 January 2022)

C. Annual audit

7. Old Business

A. The Park Church Co-op / Response to Core Team

VP Wicklund reported that a letter was sent to the PCC Core Team (Mar 7) in response to their request for further clarification regarding the termination of funding.

B. Property sale: 750 Kelly Street, Bronx

ACTION SC22:03/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the sale of the property located at 750 Kelly Street, Bronx to Christopher Curmi-Hall and Daeshawn Curmi-Hall in the amount of \$815,000.

ADOPTED (18 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions)

C. Property sale: 435 E 140th Street, Bronx

ACTION SC22:03/10

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the sale of the property located at 435 E 140th Street, Bronx to Steven Westreich in the amount of \$1,200,000.

ADOPTED (19 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention)

8. New Business

A. Christ Lutheran Church, Little Neck

WHEREAS, the congregation of Christ Evangelical acknowledged that it was no longer possible for it to function as such and voted to disband, pursuant to section 13.24 of the Constitution of the Synod. In addition, the Synod Council is of the opinion that the membership of the congregation of Christ Evangelical has become so scattered and so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for that congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized and that it is necessary for the Synod to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration, and therefore it is in best interests of the Synod to take charge and control of the property of Christ Evangelical and to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, title to the real and personal property of Christ Evangelical shall pass to the Synod (and/or the Property shall pass or be transferred to the Synod LLC to insulate the Synod from liability and for other reasons); and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of that purpose, the Synod may (but is not obligated to) form a limited liability company organized under the laws of the State of New York, in which the Synod shall be the sole member and manager ("Synod LLC") and transfer the Property to the Synod LLC. The sole purpose of Synod LLC is and shall continue to be to hold, manage, and convey title to the real property formerly of Evangelical Lutheran for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the Synod. No other assets shall be placed in the Synod LLC and the Synod LLC shall have no liabilities.

NOW THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the Synod, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution and New York Religious Corporations Law section 17-c(2), does hereby

take charge and control of the real and personal property (including the Property) of Christ Evangelical to hold, manage, and convey it on behalf of the Synod; and it is further

RESOLVED, that based upon the facts recited and for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth here, the Synod Council hereby approves of the formation of the Synod LLC and the transfer of the Property to the Synod LLC (if applicable and desired by the Synod); and it is further

RESOLVED, if the Synod LLC is formed, the sole purpose shall be to hold, manage, and convey title to the Property for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the real and personal property of Christ Evangelical to the Synod and upon the formation and transfer the Property (if applicable) to the Synod LLC.

ACTION SC22:03/11

RESOLVED, that for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth, the Synod, pursuant to Section 13.24 of its constitution and New York Religious Corporations Law section 17-c(2), does hereby take charge and control of the real and personal property (including the Property) of Christ Evangelical to hold, manage, and convey it on behalf of the Synod; and it is further

RESOLVED, that based upon the facts recited and for the reasons set forth above, all of which are included and incorporated herein and made a part hereof as if fully set forth here, the Synod Council hereby approves of the formation of the Synod LLC and the transfer of the Property to the Synod LLC (if applicable and desired by the Synod); and it is further

RESOLVED, if the Synod LLC is formed, the sole purpose shall be to hold, manage, and convey title to the Property for, on behalf of, and at the direction and convenience of the Synod, its sole member and manager; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the dissolution of the Synod is not contemplated following the transfer of the real and personal property of Christ Evangelical to the Synod and upon the formation and transfer the Property (if applicable) to the Synod LLC.

ADOPTED (20 in favor, 0 opposed)

B. Epiphany, Brooklyn

VP Wicklund reported that Pastor Bob Gahagen sent a letter to the Synod Council requesting the balance of a grant approved by the SC in 2016. The EC has responded to

Pr. Gahagen asking some clarifying questions while taking the request under consideration. Pastor Gahagen responded to VP Wicklund.

Pr. Vandiver provided further information on the development project and the support the Synod has given the congregation.

ACTION SC22:12

RESOLVED, that the balance of the \$500,000 grant awarded in _____, in the amount of \$50,000, be given to Epiphany, with money coming from the Legacy Fund.

ADOPTED (13 in favor, 8 opposed)

C. Koinonia: Communication to MNYS congregations *this item moved before Report of Bishop.*

D. Trinity / Our Saviour, Staten Island: Proposal for merger

Branden Durpre and Pr. Mietlowski reported that the congregations have engaged in collaborative ministry for more than a decade. The congregations began exploring a formal merger for the past five years. Branden Dupree and Pr. Chris Mietlowski noted that they have been working with and guiding congregational leaders in developing a proposal for merger.

ACTION SC22:03/13

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council consider and approve the proposal for merger submitted by the congregations of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Staten Island, NY (ELCA ID #03894) "Trinity" with Our Saviour Lutheran Church (ELCA ID #10515) "Our Saviour" with the following provisions:

- 1. The congregation of Our Saviour will be merged with and into Trinity**
- 2. The merged congregation's financial plan include a stewardship plan that supports mission and ministry in partnership with the Metropolitan New York Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**
- 3. The merged congregation gift a portion from the proceeds of the sale of property to the Metropolitan New York Synod.**

ADOPTED

E. Cemetery Conveyance (former Christ, Suffern)

ACTION SC22:03/14

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council consider and approve conveyance of the cemetery parcel located at 51A Airmont Rd, So. Suffern, NY in "as is" condition to Virgin Mary & St. Pakhomious Coptic Orthodox Church, Inc.

ADOPTED (18 in favor, 0 opposed)

F. Immanuel, Manhattan

Bishop reported on the history of the congregation and its attempt to leave ELCA and join NALC and that both pastors had resigned from the ELCA roster and joined the roster of the NALC.

ACTION SC22:03/15

RESOLVED by the Synod Council to apply section 13.24 of the Constitution of the Synod to Immanuel Lutheran Church, 122 E 88TH Street, New York, NY (IMMANUEL) and to take charge and control of the property of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Manhattan, to hold, manage, and convey the same on behalf of this synod, and it is further

RESOLVED, that the following are hereby appointed as trustees, with the with full power to hold and manage the property of IMMANUEL on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of IMMANUEL and in holding, managing and conveying such property of IMMANUEL on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Kevin Vandiver, The Rev. William Kroeze / The Rev. Danielle Miller and S. Dcn. David Ehlers, and it is further

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of IMMANUEL and to hold, manage, and convey the property of IMMANUEL on behalf of the SYNOD shall be binding upon and considered as the act of all of the Trustees. No person or party acting in reliance of the signature of one such Trustee as binding upon all Trustees shall be charged with notice of any revocation or change of such authority unless he, she or it shall have received actual written notice thereof. No person or party shall be required to look behind the signature of such Trustee.

ADOPTED (20 in favor, 0 opposed)

9. Afterthoughts

- A. Devotions April:** Pr. Daniel Peter
- B. Observer April:** Pr. David Parsons

10. Observer's Evaluation

Executive Committee Meeting: April 7, 2022 via zoom

Synod Council Meeting: April 23, 2022 via zoom

***Proposed items for the Synod Council agenda should be submitted to Gayle Ruege (gruege@mnys.org) for consideration by the Executive Committee by April 4 2022**

