

**SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**\*The Rev. William Baum** 2016  
*The Rev. Rosalind Brathwaite* 2016  
*Ms. Christine Connell, DM* 2014  
**\*Ms. Maria del Toro, Vice President** 2014  
**The Rev. Khader El-Yateem** 2016  
**Dcn Charles Germain** 2014  
*Ms. Hazel Goldstein* 2016  
**Ms. Barbara Hansen** 2014  
**Mr. Eugene Hiigel** 2014  
**\*The Rev. Brenda Irving** 2016  
**\*Ms. Barbara Johnson** 2016  
**Ms. Savanah Lochansingh, Youth** 2014  
*Dr. Carlos Lopez* 2014  
**Dcn. John Malone** 2014  
**Ms. Minerva Melendez** 2014  
**The Rev. Paul Milholland** 2014  
**The Rev. Craig Miller** 2014  
*Mr. Brian Reardon* 2016  
**\*The Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, Bishop** 2014  
**The Rev. Kit Robison** 2014  
**Ms. Terra Rowe** 2016  
**\*The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect.** 2014  
**Ms. Abby Triebel, Young Adult** 2016  
*\*Mr. Frank Suttell, Treas* 2016  
**\*Mr. Christopher Vergara** 2016  
*Ms. Karen Woolley* 2016

**AUXILLIARY MEMBERS**

**STAFF**

*The Rev. Percy Butiku*  
**Ms. Sarah Gioe**  
**The Rev. Kathleen Koran**  
**The Rev. Jonathan Linman**  
**Dcn. Gayle Ruege**  
**Ms. Kathleen Schmidt**  
**Ms. Rebekah Thornhill**

**GUESTS**

**Bold = present**

*Italics = excused absence*

**\*Member of Executive Committee**

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*Devotions: Christopher Vergara*

*Observer: Terra Rowe*

*Call to Order: by VP Del Toro at 5:15pm.*

1. **Adoption of the Agenda:** adopted as presented.
2. **Adoption of the Minutes:** 19 November 2013: adopted as presented.
3. **Strategic Plan**
  - A. Report on the Quadrant 2 Visit (November 22-24)
    - Friday evening dinner for pastors/spouses/partners was well attended (**65**) and well received. Abiding Presence, Fort Salonga provided a lovely space and the catered meal

was delicious. The evening had no program – simply a social gathering, which was clearly appreciated.

- Saturday event at St. Paul’s, East Northport had **120** participants
- Realization that most of the participants at the Saturday event were not familiar (or well informed) with the Strategic Plan.
- Maria reported that several pastors expressed their gratitude for placing Marc Herbst on staff (“now we know you mean business”). Debriefing with staff and Steering Committee confirmed that people are hungry for solid information and “hard facts”.
- Sunday congregation visits were a positive experience. Barbara Hansen, John Malone and Chris Vergara made visits and brought greetings to quadrant congregations.
- Quadrant 4 visit (Jan 10-12). Confirmed SC members to visit congregations to date: John Prosen, Hazel Goldstein.

B. Report of the Steering Committee / Committee Updates

- Steering Committee met with Tom Massey on December 3
- Key Strategy Committees met at Saint Peter’s, Manhattan on Dec 7 for a joint gathering. Productive day for all involved. Maria noted that 50 people are working on the strategic plan on the four committees.
  - a. Proposal for Specific Initiatives (Faith Commitment Team / CLAIMED): presented by Pr. Linman **EXHIBIT A**

VP Del Toro presented the following resolution, brought to the council from the executive committee.

***Resolved***, in order that all may grow deeper in faith through joyful engagement with the Gospel in a Lutheran key, the Metropolitan New York Synod envisions that each and every ministry, program, process, initiative, and event of our synod – even business meetings – regularly and consistently include opportunities and formats for prayerful experiences of the means of grace listed by Luther in the Smalcald Articles: baptism and baptismal living; Eucharist and eucharistic living; preaching and proclamation; confession, forgiveness, reconciliation; and mutual conversation and consolation.

After discussion of the resolution, VP Del Toro invited Pr. Kit Robison to lead the council in prayer before voting.

**ACTION SC13:12/01**

***RESOLVED***, in order that all may grow deeper in faith through joyful engagement with the Gospel in a Lutheran key, the Metropolitan New York Synod envisions that each and every ministry, program, process, initiative, and event of our synod – even business meetings – regularly and consistently include opportunities and formats for prayerful experiences of the means of grace listed by Luther in the Smalcald Articles: baptism and baptismal living; Eucharist and eucharistic living; preaching and proclamation; confession, forgiveness, reconciliation; and mutual conversation and consolation.

**ADOPTED**

b. Daxko proposal (New & Renewed Ministries / GATHERED) **EXHIBIT B**

VP Del Toro presented the following resolution, brought to the council from the executive committee.

**Resolved**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod contract with Daxko / T2 Consulting in a Facility Portfolio Assessment & Re-positioning Initiative of the Bronx Conference as defined in the Facility Development Services proposal (29 October 2013).

Bp. Rimbo invited Dcn. John Malone to lead the council in prayer before voting.

**ACTION SC13:12/02**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod contract with Daxko / T2 Consulting in a Facility Portfolio Assessment & Re-positioning Initiative of the Bronx Conference as defined in the Facility Development Services proposal (29 October 2013).

**ADOPTED**

19 in favor, 1 opposed.

c. Communications strategy : Pr. Marc Herbst to report RFP was sent out to consultants to Provide Advocacy, Communications and Media Support for the Synod.

d. Financial Management Committee: resolution:  
Pr. Craig Miller reported that the FMC discussed growing concern about declining / stagnant mission support. Macedonia Grant requests synods have a stewardship/mission support plan in place. Stewardship Table to prepare a plan for review in February and adoption by the SC in March.

VP Del Toro presented the following resolution, brought to the council from the executive committee.

**Resolved**, the synod council will develop a Mission Support and Stewardship Plan for the synod, to be included in the synod strategic plan implementation. The synod council requests the Stewardship and Mission Support Table draft a plan for review and adoption at the March 2014 meeting of the Synod Council.

**ACTION SC13:12/03**

**RESOLVED**, the synod council will develop a Mission Support and Stewardship Plan for the synod, to be included in the synod strategic plan implementation. The synod council requests the Stewardship and Mission Support Table draft a plan for review and adoption at the March 2014 meeting of the Synod Council.

**ADOPTED**

#### 4. Bishop's Report

##### A. Calls:

- a. Marlene Lund, AiM: *Executive Director for the Center for Urban Education Ministries LSSNY*

#### **ACTION SC13:12/04**

**RESOLVED, that Marlene Lund, AiM be called to serve as Executive Director for the Center for Urban Ministries, LSSNY.**

#### **ADOPTED**

##### B. Appointments

- a. Delores Gray: *St. Thomas House Advisory Board*
- b. Rev. Heidi Neumark: *St. Thomas House Advisory Board*
- c. Rev. Dr. Fernando Otero: *St. Thomas House Advisory Board*
- d. Marc Stutzel: *MNYS Outreach Table*

Bp. Rimbo informed the council that these appointments had been made.

##### C. Congregations:

- a. First, Poughkeepsie

Following report by Pr. Kathleen Koran and Ms. Kathleen Schmidt, VP Del Toro presented the following resolution, brought to the council from the executive committee.

***Resolved**, that the Synod Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$33,333 from the Mission Redevelopment Fund for the purpose of providing a 2:1 matching grant to First Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie to assist them in needed capital repairs. The synod will grant two dollars for every dollar the congregation raises. The Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration will work with the pastor and leaders of the congregation to ensure proper accountability of the grant proceeds.*

#### **ACTION SC13:12/05**

**RESOLVED, that the Synod Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$33,333 from the Mission Redevelopment Fund for the purpose of providing a 2:1 matching grant to First Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie to assist them in needed capital repairs. The synod will grant two dollars for every dollar the congregation raises. The Assistant to the Bishop for Finance and Administration will work with the pastor and leaders of the congregation to ensure proper accountability of the grant proceeds.**

#### **ADOPTED**

#### 5. Treasurer's Report : **EXHIBIT C**

- A. Mission Support update
- B. Ms. Kathleen Schmidt reported that November's mission support gifts were **ABOVE** budget by \$705 (\$108,779 actual vs. a budget of \$108,074). Last year we received \$101,968 in November, so we received about \$6,000 more in November this year than last. However, we are still significantly behind budget for the year (\$61,466). December and January have always been our best months.
- C. Financial Report

**6. New Business**

A. MNYS Staff Housing Allowances – 2014

Marc Herbst	\$50,000
Jonathan Linman	\$27,500
Kathleen Koran	\$38,000
Benjamin McKelahan	\$ 3,000
Robert Rimbo	\$54,000
Emily Scott	\$21,600

**ACTION SC13:12/06**

**RESOLVED**, that the housing allowances listed above are adopted.

**ADOPTED**

B. MNYS Wider Church Fund Policy :

**Ms. Kathleen Schmidt reviewed ACTION SC04:11/01 for the council:**

**RESOLVED**, that when real property assets owned by the Synod and under the care of the Mission Development Board are sold, 10% of the net proceeds to the Synod after expenses will be tithed to support the work of the wider church outside the Metropolitan New York Synod, and 10% of the net proceeds will be tithed to the Metropolitan New York Synod Fund.

VP Del Toro noted that it was the recommendation of the executive committee that this action be rescinded.

**ACTION SC13:12/07**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council rescind SC04:11/01

**ADOPTED**

The following resolution was moved and seconded.

**Resolved**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod grants from the Wider Church Fund support the work of the wider church outside of the operating budget of the Metropolitan New York Synod, according to the guidelines already adopted.

**ACTION SC13:12/08**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod grants from the Wider Church Fund support the work of the wider church outside of the operating budget of the Metropolitan New York Synod, according to the guidelines already adopted. *[Grant criteria: 1) Must be a 501(c)3 organization in existence for three or more years 2) the grant cannot be used for capital needs 3) Hunger programs are not eligible 4) Individuals may not apply for these grants 5) Congregations may not apply for these grants]*

**ADOPTED**

## 7. Old Business

### A. Congregations under synod administration/Synod properties :

- Reformation, Brooklyn: Ms. Kathleen Schmidt reported that written request was received from Reformation requesting that the SC apply permanent synodical administration dated 19 Nov 2013.
- Zion, Brooklyn: Request to reschedule the closing date for the congregation was sent to VP del Toro / Synod Council via email. Mr. Eugene Hiigel, a trustee, reported on meetings with the members of Zion, and spoke of the difficulty and pain experienced by the trustees and the members over the decision to close the congregation on January 26, 2014. He indicated that the trustees believe it is in everyone's best interest to close and not grant a requested extension.

A motion was made and seconded to affirm the trustees' decision to close the congregation on January 26, 2014.

VP Del Toro invited Pr. K. El-Yateem to lead council in prayer prior to vote.

### **ACTION SC13:12/09**

***RESOLVED*, that the synod council affirms the decision of the trustees to close Zion Lutheran Church on January 26, 2014.**

### **ADOPTED**

**20 in favor, 0 opposed.**

Ms. Kathleen Schmidt noted that the trustees will work to help relocate the feeding program of the congregation, and also to fund it for a period of time. She also noted that the congregation has identified a retired Episcopal priest to assist them in grief counseling.

### B. Congregational Loan Status:

Kathy Schmidt noted Attorney General has approved the sale of St. Thomas, Bronx

### C. Pending:

- a. MNYS Committee structure analysis
- b. Process for the Election of the synodical bishop.

VP Del Toro reported that she and Ms. Rebekah Thornhill had participated in a conference call with ELCA secretary's office on election procedures. Ms. Thornhill noted that nominations are open until January 1, 2014.

## 8. Other Reports

### A. Dcn. Charles Germain gave the following reported from Child, Youth and Family:

- ELCA Extravaganza Scholarships: For the past 4 years the Child Youth & Family Network has award two \$1,000 scholarships to attend the ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza. For 2014, the scholarships are awarded to Kathryn Pocalyko, from Advent, Manhattan and Rowan El-Yateem, from Salam Arabic Lutheran Church, Brooklyn.

In her application, Rowan wrote: *As a young adult I have been helping out a great deal in the church for many years. However, I have never been given any training and I feel this is so important.*"

And Kathryn wrote: *In seminary I got very good at Biblical interpretation and preaching. Yet as Vicar and now working in youth ministry, I find that I require a whole different set of skills to make the Bible and Gospel live for children and teenagers.*"

- B. Pr. Brenda Irving announced that on January 12, 2014, at 4pm, the Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration will be hosted by the African Descent Lutheran Association at St. Paul's International Lutheran Church, Floral Park.

#### **9. Announcements/Events**

- A. Quadrant 4 Leaders Retreat (11 January 2014): Our Saviour's Atonement, Manhattan (8:30 am – 3 pm)  
B. February 7 – 9 (Quadrant 1: Delaware- Hudson / Hudson / Tappan Zee)  
C. March 7-9 (Quadrant 3: Queens, Brooklyn)

VP Del Toro reminded members of the council to be sensitive and judicious when they communicate on facebook about council actions.

#### **10. Observer's Evaluation**

VP Del Toro wished all members of the council a blessed and peaceful Christmas.

**Meeting was adjourned at 7:49 pm, with prayer by Bp. Rimbo.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Schoepflin, Secretary