

**SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Mr. Daquan Baker (Youth) 2016  
**The Rev. William Baum 2016**  
**The Rev. Rosalind Brathwaite 2016**  
**\*Ms. Maria del Toro, Vice President 2018**  
**The Rev. Khader El-Yateem 2016**  
**\*Ms. Hazel Goldstein 2016**  
**The Rev. Brenda Irving 2016**  
**Ms. Barbara Johnson 2016**  
The Rev. Amy Kienzle 2018  
**Mr. John Litke 2018**  
**Dr. Carlos Lopez 2018**  
**Dcn. John Malone 2018**  
**Ms. Karen Maulen 2018**  
**The Rev. Craig Miller 2018**  
*Mr. Walter Nash 2018*  
**Dcn. Lulu Paolini 2018**  
**The Rev. Daniel Peter 2018**  
**Dcn. John Prosen 2016**  
**Mr. Brian Reardon 2016**  
**\*The Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, Bishop 2020**  
*Ms. Terra Rowe 2016*  
**\*The Rev. Harry Schenkel 2018**  
**\*The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect. 2018**  
**\*Mr. Frank Suttell, Treasurer 2016**  
**Ms. Wendy Bean Tannenbaum 2018**  
**Ms. Abby Triebel (Young Adult) 2016**  
**\*Mr. Christopher Vergara 2016**  
*\*Ms. Karen Woolley 2016*

**AUXILIARY MEMBERS**

**STAFF**

**Ms. Susan Brandt**  
*The Rev. Percy Butiku*  
**The Rev. Kathleen Koran**  
**The Rev. Jonathan Linman**  
**Dcn. Gayle Ruege**  
**Ms. Kathleen Schmidt**  
**Ms. Rebekah Thornhill**  
**The Rev. Lamont Wells**

**GUESTS**

**The Rev. Edward Barnett, Conf. of Deans**

**Bold = present**

*Italics = excused absence*

\*Member of Executive Committee

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**Opening Devotions:** John Litke

**Observer:** The Rev. Brenda Irving

**Call to Order:** Ms. Maria del Toro at 5:20pm

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda:** adopted as presented.
- 2. Adoption of the Minutes:** 19 January 2016; 16 February 2016; 20 February 2016: adopted as presented.
- 3. Bishop's Report**

A. Calls

- a. The Rev. John Jurik: *Intentional Interim Pastor / Ascension, Franklin Square*

**ACTION SC16:03/01**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council call the Rev. John Jurik for a six-month term as Intentional Interim Pastor, Ascension Lutheran Church, Franklin Square effective 4 January 2016.**

**ADOPTED**

- b. The Rev. Benjamin McKelahan: *OLFC effective 31 January 2016*  
c. The Rev. Michael Thomas: *OLFC effective 1 March 2016*  
d. Ms. Jacquelyn Mize-Baker, AiM: *OLFC effective 1 January 2016*

**ACTION SC16:03/02**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve On Leave from Call Status to the Rev. Benjamin McKelahan effective 31 January 2016; the Rev. Michael Thomas effective 1 March 2016; Ms. Jacquelyn Mize-Baker, AiM effective 1 January 2016.**

**ADOPTED**

- e. The Rev. Samuel A.K. Silaban: *OLFC extension May 2016 – May 2018*

**ACTION SC16:03/03**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant an On Leave from Call extension to the Rev. Samuel A.K. Silaban through May 2018.**

**ADOPTED**

- f. The Rev. Dennis L. Eichelberger: *Retirement status effective 1 April 2016*  
g. The Rev. William Eggers: *Retirement status effective 1 April 2016*  
h. The Rev. Richard Mueller: *Retirement status effective 1 March 2016*  
i. The Rev. ElizaBeth Nebrasky: *Retirement status effective 1 February 2016*  
j. The Rev. Paul Johnsen: *Retirement status effective 1 August 2016*  
k. The Rev. Daniel Ward: *Retirement status effective 1 December 2016*

**ACTION SC16:03/04**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council acknowledge retirement status for The Rev. Dennis Eichelberger effective 1 April 2016; The Rev. William Eggers effective 1 April 2016; The Rev. Richard Mueller effective 1 March 2016; The Rev. Elizabeth Nebrasky effective 1 February 2016; The Rev. Paul Johnsen effective 1 August 2016; The Rev. Daniel Ward effective 1 Dec 2016.**

**ADOPTED**

B. Appointments

- a. The Rev. Jeanne Warfield: *Reference & Counsel*  
b. Mr. Eugene Hiigel: *Audit Committee*  
c. The Rev. Lucille Mills; The Rev. Kathleen Koran; Dcn. Carlos Lopez: *Advisory Panel Abiding Presence, Brx*

C. Staff

a. Susan Brandt: Executive Administrator

Bp. Rimbo announced that Sue began to assist the synod staff in October 2014 when it became evident that we needed assistance in the coordination of the synod grant process. She skillfully took that task and has developed an organized, thorough process that is managed from the application phase through to completion.

Sue provided administrative support to Pr. Marc Herbst in his role as Director for the Strategic Plan, and to our consultant, Tom Massey in preparation of the 2015 Quadrant workshops.

With Rebekah Thornhill's transition to Assistant to the Bishop for Communications & Events and Gayle Ruege's transition to Senior Assistant, several former portfolio responsibilities are now being shared between Branden Dicks and Sue Brandt.

The Executive Committee offered Sue a full time position and Bp. Rimbo expressed his pleasure at having her on staff.

**4. Strategic Plan Implementation**

A. Leadership Development Grants **EXHIBIT A**

The Leadership Development grants have been reviewed by the Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.

**ACTION SC16:03/05**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the Leadership Development Grants proposed by the Leadership Development Grant Review Team and recommended by the Executive Committee.**

**ADOPTED**

B. Sower's Grant

Pr. Wells reported that Sower's Grant applications were reviewed by the Innovation Team and presented to the Bishop for approval.

A Sower's Initiative Grant of \$10,000 has been awarded to Pr. Danielle Miller / Oceanside Lutheran Church for the Expressive Art Nights Project.

C. Fiscal Year 2015 (1 Feb 2015 – 31 Jan 2016) Grant Distributions

VP Del Toro reported that our synod distributed grants to congregations and individuals totaling more than \$1.1M in this past fiscal year. [This is our strategic plan at work!](#)

D. Anti-Racism Initiative

a. RACE Forward event

Synod Council members shared their reactions to the event.

b. Anti-Racism Task Force update

The Anti-racism Task Force met on March 5. Ms. Barbara Johnson provided a brief update.

E. FMC: Asset Protection Proposal

Mr. Suttell reported that the FMC met with synod attorneys to explore the creation of an asset protection structure for our synod assets. A resolution on this will be brought to the Synod Council at its April meeting.

He also reported that proposed budgets for 2016 and 2017 will be presented to the Synod Council at its April meeting.

**5. Treasurer's Report EXHIBIT B**

A. Mission Support (through the end of the fiscal year: 31 January 2016)

Mr. Suttell reported that for the month of December, we received \$138,898 vs. a budgeted amount of \$170,111, a shortfall of \$31,213 for the month.

He also reported that total Mission Support received for the year ending 1/31/16 was \$1,173,857, which is \$26,143 short of our budgeted amount of \$1,200,000. But, although we did fall short of budget for the year, Mission Support was almost \$10,000 higher than the total amount received in the prior year.

It was suggested that synod should do a better job of communicating how mission support is used by the synod.

B. Nominations for Synod Treasurer (2016-2020)

Secretary Schoepflin nominated Frank Suttell for reelection as synod treasurer

**ACTION SC16:03/06**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Synod Council nominate Frank Suttell for reelection as synod treasurer by the Synod Assembly as Treasurer.**

**ADOPTED**

**6. New Business**

A. St. Luke's, Woodhaven

Kathleen Schmidt reported that St. Luke's closed and is part of the SW Queens redevelopment. Sale of this property is part of the All Saints – Todos Los Santos strategy.

**ACTION SC16:03/07**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council ratify the decision of the Executive Committee to list the property located at 87-34 85<sup>th</sup> Street, Woodhaven, NY for sale.**

**ADOPTED [23 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions]**

B. Redeemer, Flushing Heights

The Synod Council placed the congregation under synod administration in April 2015. The congregation is officially closed. The Gathered Strategy explored options for the property and has recommended to the EC that the property be listed for sale. The EC concurred.

Pr. Miller led the council in prayer before it voted

**ACTION SC16:03/08**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council ratify the decision of the Executive Committee to list the property located 157-16 65<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flushing Heights, NY for sale.**  
**ADOPTED [22 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions]**

C. Eltingville, Staten Island

Bp. Rimbo reported that in response to numerous concerns expressed regarding the governance, viability and ministry at Eltingville, he appointed an Advisory Panel to assist in the evaluating the ministry.

The report of the Advisory Panel confirmed several areas of concern and a consultation with Congregation leaders was held on Feb 8. Bp. Rimbo recommended the congregation seek synod administration. The congregation declined to do so.

The EC recommends the Synod Council impose Synod Administration for Eltingville Lutheran Church, while allowing the school to continue to operate.

**WHEREAS**, ELTINGVILLE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL (Eltingville) located at 300 Genesee Avenue, Staten Island, New York is a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In America (ELCA) rostered with the METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD (SYNOD) and

**WHEREAS**, it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of the congregation of ELTINGVILLE has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for the congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized; the declining membership and resources of ELTINGVILLE has prevented the congregation's ability to call a pastor and have affected the congregation's ability to self-govern; credible allegations of financial malfeasance have made it necessary for the SYNOD to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration and have produced division between the church and the school and conflict between the members, which add to the impracticality of ELTINGVILLE to fulfilling the purposes for which it was organized, and

**WHEREAS**, the Constitution of the SYNOD, Section 13.24 provides that if it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of a congregation has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such a congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized or that it is necessary for the SYNOD to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration, the Synod Council, itself or through trustees appointed by it, may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the Synod;

**WHEREAS**, it is the opinion of the Synod Council that the membership of ELTINGVILLE has become so scattered or so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for ELTINGVILLE 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 take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of the SYNOD;

**NOW THEREFORE**, it is:

**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 does hereby impose synodical administration over the property of ELTINGVILLE to take charge and control of

the property of ELTINGVILLE and to hold, manage, and convey on behalf of the 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 ELTINGVILLE on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of ELTINGVILLE and in holding, managing and conveying such property of ELTINGVILLE on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Jennifer Richards, Mr. John Litke and the Rev. Kathleen Koran and it is further

**RESOLVED**, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of ELTINGVILLE and to hold, manage, and convey the property of ELTINGVILLE 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.

**ACTION SC16:03/09**

**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 does hereby impose synodical administration over the property of ELTINGVILLE to take charge and control of the property of ELTINGVILLE and to hold, manage, and convey on behalf of the 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 ELTINGVILLE on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of ELTINGVILLE and in holding, managing and conveying such property of ELTINGVILLE on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Jennifer Richards, Mr. John Litke and the Rev. Kathleen Koran and it is further

**RESOLVED**, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of ELTINGVILLE and to hold, manage, and convey the property of ELTINGVILLE 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 signatures of such Trustees 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 signatures of such Trustees.

**ADOPTED [23 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions]**

D. Amendment to the Synod Constitution / Conference Structure

Pr. Koran reported that the Conference Re-alignment Task Force (a sub-group of the Conference of Deans) recommends a reduction in the number of conferences in the synod. The Conference of Deans presented to the EC a proposed amendment to S12.01.01 A2003 of the synod constitution.

**ACTION SC16:03/10**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council present to the Synod Assembly that S12.01.01 A2003 of the synod constitution be amended to read: *"The synod shall be composed of*

***conferences, grouped in four quadrants. The Synod Council shall assign each congregation to a conference."***

**ADOPTED**

E. Tanzania churches (appeal)

Bp. Rimbo reported that several church buildings of congregations in the Northwest Diocese of Tanzania were the target of radical non-Christian arsonists. The Tanzania Companionship Committee has been in contact with General Secretary Rev. Elmerck Kigembe regarding the damages and the cost of rebuilding.

Bishop Keshomshahara and General Secretary Kigembe will be in attendance at our Synod Assembly for the celebration of our partnership and the renewal of our companionship covenant.

The EC recommends that the Synod Council authorize a synod wide congregational appeal requesting a donation to the rebuilding fund for these congregations. Congregations will be asked to bring their donation to the synod assembly as a special offering – a presentation will be made to Bp. Keshomshahara on site.

**ACTION SC16:03/11**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council authorize the Tanzania Companionship Committee to launch a congregational appeal to provide funding for the rebuilding of damaged church properties in the Northwest Diocese of Tanzania.**

**ADOPTED**

**7. Old Business**

A. Congregations / properties under synod administration **EXHIBIT C**

a. Incarnation, Cedarhurst: Appeal process

Bp. Rimbo reported that the Bishop's consultation with the congregation leadership and the Trustees was held on Feb 28. The consultation confirmed active and productive conversations between Incarnation and St. John's, Lynbrook regarding shared / collaborative ministry over the last several months.

The congregations and their pastors (Pr. Alex Kennedy and Pr. Mary Chang) are requesting the opportunity to explore the prospect for merger in accordance with the guidelines (and timeline) outlined in: *Practical Steps and Expectations for Congregations to Consider when Contemplating Congregational Mergers / Consolidations*.

The EC recommends that Incarnation, Cedarhurst be removed from synod administration to allow for the exploration of the opportunity for merger with St. John's, Lynbrook.

**ACTION SC16:03/12**

**RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council remove Incarnation, Cedarhurst from synod administration.**

**ADOPTED**

b. St. Paul's, Coney Island

Kathleen Schmidt reported that St. Paul's has taken a congregational vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA, retained legal counsel, obtained a temporary restraining order preventing us from taking possession of the property and filed a formal request for appeal. A court date is scheduled for April 8.

c. St. Peter's, 140<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx

Kathleen Schmidt reported that the congregation was officially closed in August 2015. Parish Property Management arranged for the locks to be changed and an architect to assess the condition of the building. A press release was prepared and disseminated.

An injunction was filed and the congregation was allowed to re-occupy the property until an order to vacate is secured.

B. ELCA / MNYS Campaigns

Pr. Lamont Wells reported that he is obtaining Request(s) for Proposal from three firms to conduct a feasibility study for this.

C. 2016 Synod Assembly Update

Ms. Thornhill gave an update on registration and agenda planning.

D. SA Actions (Pending)

- SA2015:05.08 / MNYS Disaster Response Task Force

E. Pending

- MNYS Committee structure
- Report Process for election of a Bishop

**8. Observer's Evaluation**

**Next Synod Council Meeting: Saturday, April 23, 2016 9:30 am – 3 :00 pm (location TBD)**

Meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm by VP Del Toro.

Closing prayer was led by Bishop Rimbo.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Robert P. Schoepflin, Secretary