

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Leonel E. Avila 2020
***Ms. Cynthia Corley** 2020
***Ms. Maria del Toro, Vice President** 2018
The Rev. Justin Johnson 2018
Ms. Tabitha Johnson (youth) 2018
The Rev. Amy Kienzle 2018
Mr. John Litke 2018
Dr. Carlos Lopez 2018
Synod Dcn. John Malone 2018
Ms. Karen Maulen 2018
The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski 2020
Mr. Walter Nash 2018
***The Rev. Jeanine Owens** 2020
The Rev. Daniel Peter 2018
Synod Dcn. John Prosen 2020
***The Rev. Robert A. Rimbo, Bishop** 2020
Ms. Denise Rutherford-Gill 2020
***The Rev. Harry Schenkel** 2018
***The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect.** 2018
The Rev. Nicole Schwalbe 2020
The Rev. Garry Squire 2020
Ms. Wendy Bean Tannenbaum 2018
Ms. Abby Triebel 2020
Ms. Emma Turner (Young Adult) 2020
***Mr. Christopher Vergara** 2020
Ms. Karen Woolley 2020

AUXILIARY MEMBERS

STAFF

Dcn. Margy Schmitt Ajer
Ms. Susan Brandt
The Rev. Percy Butiku
Ms. Regina Daniels
Mr. Branden Dupree
Mr. Roberto Lara
The Rev. Jonathan Linman
Ms. Maria Rodas
Synod Deacon Gayle Ruege
Ms. Kathleen Schmidt
The Rev. Lamont Wells

GUESTS

Bold = present

Italics = excused absence

*Member of Executive Committee

Devotions: *The Rev. Chris Mietlowski*

Observer: *Denise Rutherford-Gill*

Call to Order: *Ms. Maria del Toro at 5:39 pm.*

- 1. Adoption of the Agenda:** adopted as presented.
- 2. Adoption of the Minutes:** : adopted as presented.

A. Synod Council: 17 October 2017

3. Reformation 500 / November 1 event: Advancing the Unity theme

M. Del Toro asked SC members to share their impressions of the event. She then noted that there is a lot of good will in the Synod right now and asked members how we could use that to promote unity in our Synod. Bishop spoke about efforts being made toward cooperation and continued dialog.

4. Bishop's Report

A. Calls

a. The Rev. Dr. J. Elise Brown: *Executive Minister, Marble Collegiate Church (eff. 29 Sep 2017)*

Bishop Rimbo reported that Pastor Brown has joined the staff of Marble Collegiate Church, Manhattan as the Executive Minister effective Sep 29, 2017, and that Marble Collegiate is a member of the Collegiate Churches of New York – with denominational affiliations with the Reformed Church in America and The United Church of Christ, both of which are full communion partners of the ELCA. Pastor Brown will remain on the ELCA roster – which requires that her call to this position be extended through the Synod Council.

ACTION SC17:12/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Dr. J. Elise Brown as Executive Minister for Marble Collegiate Church, Manhattan, effective 29 September 2017.

ADOPTED

b. The Rev. Kimberly Lile: *Chaplain, St. Mary's Hospital for Children, Bayside, NY (eff. 1 Dec 2017)*

ACTION SC17:12/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Kimberli Lile as Chaplain / Manager of Spiritual Care, St. Mary's Children's Hospital, Bayside, NY, effective 1 December 2017.

ADOPTED

c. The Rev. Thomas E. Taylor: *Interim Pastor, Redeemer, Kingston (eff. 1 Jan 2018)*

ACTION SC17:12/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Thomas E. Taylor as Interim Pastor for Redeemer, Kingston, effective 1 January 2018.

ADOPTED

- d. **The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer: *Interim Pastor, Trinity Lower East Side Parish, Manhattan (1 Dec 2017)***

ACTION SC17:12/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer as Interim Pastor for Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, Manhattan, effective 1 December 2017.

ADOPTED

- e. **The Rev. Susan Nagle: *Retirement status (eff. 1 Dec 2017)***
f. **The Rev. Leigh Pezet: *Retirement status (eff. 1 Jan 2018)***
g. **The Rev. Paul Schmiede: *Retirement status (eff. 1 Mar 2018)***

ACTION SC17:12/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve retirement status for The Rev. Susan Nagle , effective 1 December 2017; The Rev. Leigh Pezet, effective 1 January 2018; and The Rev. Paul Schmiede, effective 1 March 2018.

ADOPTED

- h. **Synod Deacon Frank Ali: *Resignation from the Synodical Diaconate (eff. 6 Oct 2017)***

ACTION SC17:12/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council accept the resignation of Frank Ali from the roster of Synodical Deacons effective 6 October 2017.

ADOPTED

C. Appointments

Bishop Rimbo reported that he has made the following appointments.

- a. **The Rev. Aaron Baughman: *Environmental Stewardship Committee***
- b. **Patty Longenecker Baughman: *Stewardship Table***
- c. **Madelyn Soussoudis: *Vice-Chair Candidacy Committee***
- d. **Mr. Lee Welch: *Candidacy Committee***
- e. **Advisory Panel: St. James – St. Matthew’s, Ozone Park**
- **The Rev. Romeo Dabee**
 - **Mr. Eugene Hiigel**
 - **Deacon Margy Schmitt Ajer**

f. Congregation Consultation Panel: Lutheran Church of Our Saviour, Mineola

- **Bishop Robert Rimbo**
- **The Rev. Richard Ajer**
- **The Rev. Mary Lou Baumgartner**
- **Ms. Janet Siry**

Bishop Rimbo spoke to the council about the reason for appointing the Consultation Panel, and the work it has done thus far.

5. Financial Report

A. Mission Support Report (Oct 31, 2017) EXHIBIT A

Ms. Kathleen Schmidt reported that mission support received in the month of October was about \$42,000 below the budget for the month, so we are continuing this year's trend of budget deficits in this line.

Year-to-date mission support received is \$704,479, which is \$86,032 below the budgeted amount of \$790,511. Last year as of October 31, 2017, our mission support budget deficit was only about \$20,000 below budget, so the \$86,000 deficit this year is a very significant change.

B. Financials as of 31 October 2017 EXHIBIT B

6. Strategic Plan

A. Report of the Strategic Plan Working Group

M. Del Toro reported that the Working Group met on December 5.

a. Building Bridges – Not Walls

M. Del Toro reported that as we retired the Reformation 500 Theme : Faith Not Fear – and are now looking forward with Unity in Christ Theme of the Nov 1 event – we will use the tag line Building Bridges – Not Walls in the priorities of our strategic plan and ecumenical emphasis

b. Strategy Committee Priorities

M. Del Toro reported on the following priorities:

- **CLAIMED: FIRST THIRDS MINISTRY (0-30 yrs) IS THE PRIORITY**
 - Formation of five networks / roundtables of leaders with successful Youth ministries : region 7, congregations, camps, schools, campus (LMHE)
 - Development of First Thirds Online (with resources, models, forums)
 - Promotion of events for First Third participants

- **GATHERED: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IS THE PRIORITY**
 - Collaboration with other strategy committees to identify leadership development needs that support their priorities
 - Build on the growing awareness, application and approval of leadership development grants by both lay leaders and clergy – particularly those in under resourced congregations and communities.

- **SENT: IMMIGRATION EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY IS THE PRIORITY**
 - Develop a network of congregations with successful Immigration ministries to share best practices, joint programming and provide assistance to congregations who want to start or improve their immigration ministry.
 - Develop online resources for use by congregations
 - Provide advocacy on immigration issues

- **ANTI-RACISM STRATEGY ENABLER: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**
 - Continue to offer Anti-racism training 101 and follow-up trainings
 - Provide trainings in Spanish
 - Develop resources and a network of leaders that can engage congregations in adult forums.
 - Develop resource for use in Diakonia and with congregation call committees.

- **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE / STRATEGY ENABLER**
 - Continue to engage the Ten Year Plan with the goal of reaching financial sustainability by the year 2024.

c. 2018 Synod events

M. Del Toro announced that we are looking at 2-3 synod training events (for clergy & lay leaders) that will focus on stewardship of life: both the spiritual and the practical. The morning session will focus on stewardship.

The afternoon session will offer specific informative workshops that will help identify persons that can contribute and participate in the Strategy Committee priorities.

B. Gathered Strategy Committee

a. Leadership Development Grants EXHIBIT C

ACTION SC17:12/07

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

ADOPTED

b. Trexler Grant: The Rev. Flora Hartford

ACTION SC17:12/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve a Trexler Grant in the amount of \$1000 to the Rev. Flora Hartford to assist with travel for a group study trip to the Holy Land.

ADOPTED

c. Bronx Strategy update

Pr. Wells reported on Fordham, Resurrection, St. Paul's. Gathered Committee has received the Mission plans and the financial plans from these congregations. The financial plans were provided to the FMC for review. He also reported on the proposed redevelopment of Transfiguration / All Saints.

C. Financial Management Committee

a. Investment Policy Statement (revised)

K. Schmidt presented the revised statement which would replace the IPS previously adopted by the SC on June 27, 2013.

The updated statement includes an approach to asset allocation and a sustainable spending rate through the implementation of a "spending reserve" – that will result in higher long term overall returns while maintaining minimum risk in a fluctuating market.

The update will also allow for a properly balanced portfolio which includes international Securities.

ACTION SC17:12/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council adopt the 2017 Investment Policy Statement developed by the Financial Management Committee and recommended by the Executive Committee.

ADOPTED

M. Del Toro thanked Kathleen Schmidt for her faithful service to the Synod.

b. 2018 revised budget / 2019 proposed budget update

K. Schmidt reported that the FMC is currently working on the budgets, and they will be brought to the Synod Council at the March meeting for approval – for presentation to the Synod Assembly in May.

7. New Business

A. 2018 Synod Assembly Rate Schedule EXHIBIT D

ACTION SC17:12/10

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the proposed rate schedule for the 2018 Synod Assembly.

ADOPTED

B. Housing Allowances EXHIBIT E

ACTION SC17:12/11

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the 2018 staff housing allowances as presented.

ADOPTED

C. New York Finnish: sale of parsonage

ACTION SC17:12/12

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council take no exception to the request of New York Finnish Lutheran Church, Manhattan to list the property located at 661 41st Street, Apartment 3B, Brooklyn, NY for sale.

ADOPTED

D. Redeemer, Chappaqua: congregation vote to close

Whereas, the members of the congregation of the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Chappaqua, NY have agreed that it is no longer possible for it to function as a congregation and have voted to conclude its ministry on December 31, 2017, it is:

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Chappaqua, NY, be removed from the roster of congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA.

ACTION SC17:12/13

RESOLVED, that the Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, Chappaqua, NY, be removed from the roster of congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA.

ADOPTED

M. Del Toro next asked Secretary Schoepflin to review for the council the revised language that will be used from this point forward when the Synod Council acts under constitutional provisions S13.25 and S13.24. This Summary was provided to the Conference of Bishops at the October meeting in Chicago. The term for action under S13.25 will be “synodical administration.” The term for action under S13.24 will be “synodical preservation.”

E. Church of the Holy Redeemer, Brooklyn: congregation vote to close / mission development

Pastor Wells reviewed the plan for redevelopment of this mission site. On November 19, the congregation voted to close and enter into Synod Preservation (S13.24) in order to become a mission development in partnership with the Synod and ELCA.

WHEREAS, the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE HOLY REDEEMER (HOLY REDEEMER) located at 2424 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York is a member congregation of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church In America (ELCA)** rostered with the **METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD (SYNOD)** and

WHEREAS, the membership of HOLY REDEEMER has declined and dwindled to so few, and become so scattered and diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for **HOLY REDEEMER** to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized, and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the SYNOD, Section 13.24 provides that if the members of a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or 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 its mission and ministry for which it is organized, the Synod Council may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of this **SYNOD**, and

WHEREAS, such charge and control of the property by the SYNOD, as provided in Section 13.24, may be through the appointment by Synod Council of trustees, and

WHEREAS, the members of the congregation of HOLY REDEEMER have agreed that it is no longer possible for it to function as a congregation and have voted to conclude its ministry and requested the Synod Council to take charge and control of its property pursuant to Section 13.24 of the Constitution of the Synod and

WHEREAS, by virtue of the authority granted it by Section 13.24 of its Constitution, the SYNOD has requested Synod Council to consider applying the terms and provisions of Section 13.24 and to take charge and control of the property of **HOLY REDEEMER**, through the appointment of three trustees, and to hold, manage and convey such property 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 take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER to hold, manage, and convey it 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 HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and in holding, managing and conveying such property of HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Harriet Wieber; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and The Rev. Robert Schoepflin.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and to hold, manage, and convey the property of HOLY REDEEMER 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 SC17:12/14

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 take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER to hold, manage, and convey it 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 HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and in holding, managing and conveying such property of HOLY REDEEMER on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Harriet Wieber; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and The Rev. Robert Schoepflin.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of HOLY REDEEMER and to hold, manage, and convey the property of HOLY REDEEMER 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 (17 for, 0 against, 1 abstention)

F. Transfiguration, Bronx: congregation vote to close / mission development

Pastor Wells reviewed the plan for redevelopment of this mission at Transfiguration and All Saints, Bronx. On December 3, Transfiguration voted to close and enter into Synod Preservation (S13.24) in order to become a mission development in partnership with the Synod and ELCA.

WHEREAS, TRANSFIGURATION LUTHERAN CHURCH (TRANSFIGURATION) located at 763 Prospect Avenue, Bronx, New York is a member congregation of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church In America (ELCA)** rostered with the **METROPOLITAN NEW YORK SYNOD (SYNOD)** and

WHEREAS, the membership of **TRANSFIGURATION** has declined and dwindled to so few, and become so scattered and diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for **TRANSFIGURATION** to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized, and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the **SYNOD**, Section 13.24 provides that if the members of a congregation agree that it is no longer possible for it to function as such, or 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 its mission and ministry for which it is organized, the Synod Council may take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of this **SYNOD**, and

WHEREAS, such charge and control of the property by the **SYNOD**, as provided in Section 13.24, may be through the appointment by Synod Council of trustees, and

WHEREAS, the members of the congregation of **TRANSFIGURATION** have agreed that it is no longer possible for it to function as a congregation and have voted to conclude its ministry and requested the Synod Council to take charge and control of its property pursuant to Section 13.24 of the Constitution of the Synod and

WHEREAS, by virtue of the authority granted it by Section 13.24 of its Constitution, the **SYNOD** has requested Synod Council to consider applying the terms and provisions of Section 13.24 and to take charge and control of the property of **TRANSFIGURATION**, through the appointment of three trustees, and to hold, protect, preserve, manage and convey such property 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 take charge and control of the property of **TRANSFIGURATION** to hold, manage, and convey it 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 TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and in holding, managing and conveying such property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Dr. Fernando Otero; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and John Litke.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and to hold, manage, and convey the property of TRANSFIGURATION 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 SC17:12/15

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 take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION to hold, manage, and convey it 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 TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD in all regards relating directly or indirectly to the taking charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and in holding, managing and conveying such property of TRANSFIGURATION on behalf of the SYNOD, to wit: The Rev. Dr. Fernando Otero; The Rev. Lamont Anthony Wells; and John Litke.

RESOLVED, that the signature of any two of the Trustees acting to take charge and control of the property of TRANSFIGURATION and to hold, manage, and convey the property of TRANSFIGURATION 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 (18 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

8. Old Business

A. Synod Properties / Congregations under synod administration

K. Schmidt gave report.

B. Property formerly Zion, Brooklyn – formal extension

K. Schmidt spoke of need for extension.

ACTION SC17:12/16

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend the contract with FAC 6309 Fourth Avenue LP for the property located at 6307 Fourth Avenue, Brooklyn through September 1, 2018 in accordance with the terms of the Second Amendment to the Purchase and Sale Agreement.
ADOPTED (18 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions)

C. Property formerly First, Jeffersonville

K. Schmidt reported on efforts to sell this property.

D. Property proposal: Christ Center @ Transfiguration, Harlem

K. Schmidt reported on work.

E. Supporting Organization (Evangelical Lutheran, Inc.) documents

Secretary Schoepflin reviewed amendments to COI and Bylaws.

- a. Bylaws
- b. Conflict of Interest Policy
- c. Certificate of Incorporation
- d. Whistleblower Policy
- e. Board of Directors

It was determined that our synod attorneys should attend the next council meeting to explain the supporting organization and speak to concerns.

F. SA Actions (Pending)

- SA2015:05.08 / MNYS Disaster Response Task Force
- 2016 SA Actions
 1. SA2016:05.4 On Mission Partnerships
 2. SA2016:05.11 On Advocacy and Justice for Refugees

9. Observers' Evaluation

Meeting was adjourned at 8:11pm with prayer by Bishop Rimbo.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: January 11, 2018 *

Next Synod Council Meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2018 (TBD)

*Proposed items for the Synod Council agenda should be submitted to Gayle Ruege (gruege@mnys.org) for consideration by the Executive Committee on or before Jan 5.

All committees are to provide a digital copy of meeting minutes to Regina Daniels

rdaniels@mny.org) for the synod files.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Secretary