

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Leonel E. Avila **2020**
Mr. Adam A.D. Campbell (Youth) 2020
***Ms. Cynthia Corley** **2020**
The Rev. Chryll Crews **2022**
S. Dcn. Steven Daniels **2022**
***Bishop Paul Egensteiner** **2025**
Mr. David Ehlers **2022**
Ms. Monica Gavryszewski **2020**
Ms. Hazel Goldstein **2022**
The Rev. Marva Jenkins **2022**
***Mr. John Litke, Treasurer** **2022**
The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski 2020
S. Dcn. John Ogren **2020**
***The Rev. Jeanine Owens** **2020**
The Rev. David Parsons **2022**
***The Rev. Daniel Peter** **2022**
S. Dcn. Denise Rutherford-Gill **2020**
Mr. Thomas Sargent **2020**
***The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect.** **2022**
The Rev. Nicole Schwalbe **2020**
Mr. Cecil Spurlock-Shackelton **2022**
The Rev. Garry Squire **2020**
Ms. Wendy Bean Tannenbaum **2022**
Ms. Emma Turner (Young Adult) **2020**
***Mr. Christopher Vergara** **2020**
***Ms. Renee Wicklund, VP** **2022**
S. Dcn. Anita Martin-Williams **2022**
Ms. Karen Woolley 2020

STAFF

Ms. Susan Brandt
The Rev. Gladys Diaz
Ms. Regina Daniels
Mr. Brandon Dupree
Ms. Karen Falco
Mr. Mark Goodwin
Ms. Kaitlin Kowalec
Mr. Roberto Lara
Ms. Valery Mejia
The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski
Ms. Maria Rodas
S. Dcn. Gayle Ruege
The Rev. Kevin Vandiver

Bold = present

Italics = excused absence

***Member of Executive Committee**

MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE

Opening Devotions: Pr. Christopher Mietlowski

Observer: Christopher Vergara

Call to Order: Ms. Renee Wicklund at 5:22pm.

- 1. Adoption of the agenda:** adopted as presented.

2. **Draft SC minutes 14 January 2020:** adopted as amended.

3. **Report of the Bishop**

Bishop introduced three new staff members, Kaitlin Kowalec, Asst. to Deployed Staff; Valerie Mejia, Asst. for Communications and Events; Karen Falco, Chief Operating Officer.

A. State of the Synod /Communications Report: COVID-19

Decision for synod staff to work remotely as of Mar 16

- Synodwide communications launched by Roberto Lara
- Congregation status / information sheet was sent via targeted email to pastors, deacons and S.Dcns.
 - Many congregations are conducting Sunday worship via livestream or pre-recorded video
 - Financial implications for our congregations / loss of rental revenue / government programs and resources/lower regular giving.
- Communications team is ready to provide guidance and assist pastors / congregation leaders
- Assistants are making contact with Deans / pastors in conferences
- Synod sponsored Zoom accounts for every congregation to enable meetings, bible studies and networking

a. Associated Church Press MNYS Communications awards

Roberto attended The Associated Church Press Awards Ceremony via livestream on March 19.

Our Synod was presented with TWO awards (nominees were from both local and national church bodies and religious media enterprises):

- Award of Excellence: Best In Class | Digital Edition or Mobile Publication for the MNYS Children's App
- Award of Merit: Marketing & Public Relations | Annual Report – Print or Electronic for the MNYS 2019 Communications Report

Also, The Rev. Heidi Neumark, was awarded the "Award of Excellence: Personal Experience (Short Format) | Magazine or Journal" for her article "At the Abortion Clinic" in The Christian Century.

B. Update from ELCA and Conference of Bishops**a. Rescind Visions and Expectations**

The ELCA Church Council voted to remove "Vision and Expectations" from use. Disciplinary standards for rostered ministers are outlined in "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline."

b. Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline with proposed revisions

The ELCA Church Council encourages people to read this document.

c. ELCA Candidacy Procedures: Assignment of candidates

Change to the assignment process for candidates approved for ordination. Approved candidates will remain in their synod of origin unless request for assignment to another synod is made by the candidate and approved by both bishops.

C. MNYS Conference of Deans

Deans met via Zoom on March 17. The Deans were on the front line contacting the pastors in their conferences and were the first to bring the Bishop's office a snapshot of what was happening around the synod.

D. Visits, Meetings, Updates since January SC meeting**a. Conference Visits**

- Eastern Nassau (Jan 26-28)
- Western Nassau (Feb 6,9)
- Peconic (Mar 13)

E. Calls

- a. The Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter: *Renewal of Invitation to Extended Service effective 1 Mar 2020 First Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie*

ACTION SC20:03/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council renew the Invitation to Extended Service to the Rev. Dr. Deborah DeWinter serving First Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie effective 1 March 2020 – 28 February 2021.

ADOPTED

b. Ms. Kelsey Brown: *Mission Developer / Jehu's Table, Brooklyn*

ACTION SC20:03/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend a call to Kelsey Brown as Pastor / Mission Developer for Jehu's Table, Brooklyn, NY, effective when her current call in SE Pennsylvania is completed soon after Easter.

ADOPTED

F. Appointments

a. Committee on Reference & Counsel

- + The Rev. Joel Brandt, Chair
- + The Rev. Harry Schenkel
- + The Rev. Chryll Crews
- + Mr. Eugene Hiigel
- + Dcn. Judy Hinsch
- + The Rev. John Jurik
- + Mr. Rob Sinanan

ACTION SC20:03/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council consents to the appointment of the Rev. Joel Brandt, the Rev. Harry Schenkel, the Rev. Chryll Crews, Mr. Eugene Hiigel, Dcn. Judy Hinsch, the Rev. John Jurik, Mr. Rob Sinanan, to serve on the 2020 Committee on Reference & Counsel effective 1 February 2020.

ADOPTED

b. Nominations and Elections Committee

- + The Rev. Kevin O'Hara, Chair
- + S.Dcn. Jasmine Downer
- + Ms. Louise Litke
- + S.Dcn. Karen Nurmi

ACTION SC20:03/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council consents to the appointment of the Rev. Kevin O'Hara, S Dcn. Jasmine Downer, Ms. Louise Litke, S. Dcn. Karen Nurmi, to serve on the 2020 Nominations and Elections Committee effective 1 February 2020.

ADOPTED

- c. Audit Committee**
- + **Ms. Tanya Behnke**

ACTION SC20:03/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint Ms. Tanya Behnke to serve on the MNYS Audit Committee effective 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023.

ADOPTED

- d. Conference of Deans (FOR REPORT ONLY)**
- + **The Rev. David Parsons, Interim Dean / Brooklyn Bridges Conference**

- e. Synod Trend Analysis: Task Force (FOR REPORT ONLY)**

- + **Ms. Tanya Behnke**
- + **Pr. William Baum**
- + **Ms. Marret Arsten**
- + **Pr. Deborah DeWinter**
- + **Pr. Elsa Marty**
- + **Pr. Marc Herbst**
- + **Pr. Danielle Miller**
- + **Mr. Roberto Lara**
- + **Mr. Matt O’Rear**
- + **Mr. Anthony Jordan**
- + **Mr. John Litke, Convener**

E. Staff (FOR REPORT)

- a. New staff**

- + **Kaitlin Kowalec / Administrative Assistant**
- + **Valery Mejia / Assistant for Communications and Events**
- + **Karen Falco / Chief Operating Officer**

F. Tanzania – 20th anniversary of KEMPS School (Feb 10-20)

- a. MNYS delegation / visit**

Bishop reported on his trip with members of our synod.

- b. ELCT Bukoba Hotel / Proposal for Construction**

Bishop proposed loan of \$45,000 for construction of 10 additional rooms and gift of \$5,000 for renovation of dormitory bathrooms at KEMPS, both from the Tanzania Fund, subject to approval of Tanzania committee. If approved by committee it will be brought to synod council.

G. Report by Roberto Lara on Resources being shared on Coronavirus.

Roberto spoke of communications that are being updated and sent daily. Many of these resources are being translated and shared in Spanish.

4. Report of the Vice President

Activities and Visits

Wednesday Jan 15 — Zion German church council meeting

Tuesday Jan 21 — Western Queens Roundtable

Saturday Jan 25 — strategic plan launch date

Sunday Jan 26 — Holy Cross Lutheran, Ronkonkoma (Pr. Claudia Raggie)

Sunday Feb 2 — Our Savior Lutheran, Jamaica (Pr. Bob Fritch)

Sunday Feb 9 — St. Andrew's West Hempstead (Pr. John Jurik, Interim; Bishop preaching; Fred McElderry in attendance)

Monday February 10 – Thursday February 20 — Tanzania

-liked visiting our churches, gives idea of what the endowment and relationship mean

Tuesday February 25 — second Western Queens roundtable; then met with Sue Brandt, Treasurer John Litke, and FMC chair Ed Wagner to discuss budgeting

Monday March 1—lunch with Pr. Justin Johnson

Tuesday March 2 — 10:00 budget with John, Tom, Bill; 12:00 Vision Leadership Table; afternoon coffee Pr. Mark Erson

Sunday March 8 — spoke at Our Savior Manhasset on religious intolerance (Pr. Marc Herbst)

Tuesday March 10 — meeting with Tom Sargent; Pastor Fred McElderry's funeral; Western Queens property visits

Thursday March 12 — Executive Committee

March 22— Bishop's service of Word; Pr. Katrina Foster (St. John's, Greenpoint); prayer with Pr. James Smith (Bethlehem, Baldwin); then Trinity Lower East Side at 11:00

5. Strategic Plan Report (VISION 2025)

A. 2025 Vision Team (Bishop and Pr. William Baum are co-chairs)

Bishop reported that since the last SC meeting on January 14, the Vision 2025 kick-off event was held at the Wartburg on January 25. The Working Group and Task Force chairs were in attendance to meet with persons from across the synod that expressed an interest in participating in the effort. There were 50+ in attendance.

The Vision Team met March 3 (via Zoom) to set a calendar and develop the strategy. The next meeting of the Vision Team is scheduled for April 6 to determine budgets and next steps in light of our new reality.

B. Leadership Development Grants EXHIBIT A

S. Brandt presented 7 applications for approval, even though some events have been postponed due to the coronavirus.

ACTION SC20:03/06

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

6. Treasurer's Report

A. Mission Support Report (Feb 29, 2020) EXHIBIT B

John Litke reported that February's 2020 Mission Support offerings were \$53,059.76, which is \$9,971.95 more than February 2019. He noted that a number of congregations have not submitted a mission support commitment.

B. Annual Audit completed (Mar 2-5)

John Litke reported that the auditors have completed the review but have not yet submitted report.

C. Update Development of Budgets: Proposed revised 2020 / Proposed 2021

John Litke reported that a final review is scheduled in the coming weeks for presentation at the April SC meeting.

D. Resolution to Adopt Ten-year Financial Plan for 2020-2029 EXHIBIT C

John Litke reported that plan would call for reduction of 5% in proposed 2020 budget, and for 10% reductions in future budgets to bring spending in line with benevolence.

ACTION SC20:03/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council Ten-Year Plan for 2020-2029 be adopted as presented and approved by FMC.

ADOPTED

7. Old Business

A. Update: Western Queens / Todos los Santos

R. Wicklund reported on March 10 visits to possible ministry site visits.

8. New Business

A. 2020 Synod Assembly postponement / option

Discussion about having a virtual assembly. Proposal will be brought forward at April SC meeting.

B. Otisville property: list for sale

- Property approximately 85 miles north of the city (owned by congregation formerly known as Transfiguration, Harlem) consists of 7 acres, barn and a cottage in extremely bad condition.

- Our synod came into possession of property when congregation was placed under synod preservation.
- Recommendation from local realtor is that property be sold as a summer cottage. Recommend that SC authorize listing of property with realtor for best offer over \$50,000.
- Decision was made to table until April SC meeting.

9. Afterthoughts

10. Observers' Evaluation

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm with prayer by Bishop.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: April 23, 2020*

Synod Council Meeting: April 28, 2020

***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 April 15, 2020.**

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Schoepflin,
Secretary