

SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Leonel E. Avila	2021
Mr. Adam A.D. Campbell (Youth)	2021
*Ms. Cynthia Corley	2021
The Rev. Chryll Crews	2022
S. Dcn. Steven Daniels	2022
The Rev. George Dietrich	2021
*Bishop Paul Egensteiner	2025
Mr. David Ehlers	2022
Ms. Hazel Goldstein	2022
The Rev. Marva Jenkins	2022
*Mr. John Litke, Treasurer	2022
Mr. Erich Markert	2021
Lily Sage Mathias	2021
Isabel Mendoza-Garcia	2021
*The Rev. Jeanine Owens	2021
The Rev. David Parsons	2022
*The Rev. Daniel Peter	2022
S. Dcn. Denise Rutherford-Gill	2021
Mr. Thomas Sargent	2021
<i>*The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect.</i>	2022
Mr. Cecil Spurlock-Shackelton	2022
*The Rev. Garry Squire	2021
The Rev. Brooke Swertfager	2021
Ms. Wendy Bean Tannenbaum	2022
Ms. Emma Turner (Young Adult)	2021
*Ms. Renee Wicklund, VP	2022
<i>S. Dcn. Anita Martin-Williams</i>	2022

Bold = present

Italics = excused absence

*Member of Executive Committee

STAFF

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

GUESTS

The Rev. Robert Rainis
(only agenda item #3)

MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM CONFERENCE

Opening Devotions / Prayer: Bishop Egensteiner

Observer: Pr. Jeanine Owens

Call to Order: Ms. Renee Wicklund at 9:02 am

- 1. Adoption of the agenda** adopted as presented
- 2. Draft SC minutes 20 June 2020** adopted as corrected

3. Remarks from Pastor Robert Rainis

Pr. Robert Rainis addressed the council for 20 minutes regarding the bishop's recommendation to renew his roster status as "OLFC---restrictions and limitations."

4. Report of the Bishop

A. Visits /Food Distribution Centers / Community resources

It has been a priority of Bp. Egensteiner to be out on the territory of the synod and participate in congregational ministries that serve their communities. During the months of June-August, the Bishop visited the following ministry sites.

- Atonement, Jackson Heights
- Christ, Newburgh (Baby Steps)
- Gloria Dei, Huntington Station (St. Joseph's Storehouse)
- Good Shepherd, Brooklyn
-

B. Lutheran Partners / Ecumenical Conversations

- **Lutheran Social Services NY / Gloria Dei, Huntington Station**
Recent zoom meeting with Dr Damyn Kelly (CEO), Pr. Joel Brandt, Pr. Chris Mietlowski regarding possible collaboration between LSSNY and St. Joseph's Storehouse in Huntington Station. There is a growing need for services in the community.
- **Wagner College:**
Bishop Egensteiner has been confirmed as a member of the Board of Trustees for Wagner College.
- **Episcopal Diocese of Long Island (Latinx ministries)**
Zoom meeting with Bp. Provenzano, Canon Claire Woodly, Pr. Mietlowski, Mo. Gladys regarding shared Latinx ministry on Long Island – particularly in growing Latinx communities .
- **Hudson River Presbytery (Port Jervis congregations)**
Conversation with ecumenical partners in the PCUSA and RCA regarding shared ministry opportunity between St. Peter's, Port Jervis / First Presbyterian / Deer Park Reformed congregations.

C. Congregation Advisory Panels / Consultations

A Bishop's Advisory / Listening Panel is appointed to assist congregations through a time of crisis, conflict or discernment around the congregation's health and future ministry.

Advisory / Listening Panels were appointed to the following congregations. The Panels completed and submitted their report. Recommendations have been made to the congregations of Christ, Saint John, and St. Andrew's. Recommendations to St. Stephen's are forthcoming.

- Christ, Fresh Meadows
- Saint John, Bellmore
- St. Andrew's, Smithtown
- St. Stephen's, Brooklyn

D. Pastoral Care

a. Pastoral calls / check-in

Bishop and staff continue to make regular contact with pastors and deacons

b. Conference ministeriums

Our conference Deans are gathering the ministeriums on a regular basis, with an invitation to the Bishop and Assistants to join them if schedules allow.

c. Christ, Suffern / holy closure

With the retirement of Pr. Michael Dickson this past November, the small group of congregational members discerned (with much prayer and conversation) that their ministry had come to completion. The closing service is scheduled for Sunday, Sep 27.

d. Monthly BET meeting

The Bishop meets monthly with pastors on the Black Equity Table

E. Calls

- a. The Rev. Gregory Sutterlin: retirement status effective 1 Oct 2020**
- b. The Rev. Ronald Klose: retirement status effective 1 Oct 2020**
- c. The Rev. Martin Nale: retirement status effective 1 Nov 2020**
- d. The Rev. Dr. Rosalind Brathwaite: retirement status effective 1 Aug 2020**
- e. The Rev. Bruce Kaifler: retirement status effective 1 Oct 2020**

ACTION SC20:09/01

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant retirement status to The Rev. Gregory Sutterlin effective 1 Oct 2020; The Rev. Ronald Klose effective 1 Oct 2020; The Rev. Martin Nale effective 1 Nov 2020; The Rev. Dr. Rosalind Brathwaite effective 1 Aug 2020; The Rev. Bruce Kaifler effective 1 Oct 2020.

ADOPTED

- f. The Rev. Robert Rainis: OLFC w/ restrictions renewal effective 11 Mar 2018**

ACTION SC20:09/02

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council renew On Leave from Call with restrictions and limitations for the Rev. Robert Rainis effective 11 Mar 2018.

ADOPTED

g. The Rev. Scott Adams: OLFC effective 1 September 2020

ACTION SC20:09/03

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status to the Rev. Scott Adams effective 1 September 2020

ADOPTED

h. The Rev. Elsa Marty: OLFC (graduate study) effective 1 Dec 2019

ACTION SC20:09/04

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status for graduate study to the Rev. Elsa Marty effective 1 Dec 2019

ADOPTED

i. The Rev. Nancy Rakoczy: OLFC effective September 1, 2020

ACTION SC20:09/05

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status to the Rev. Nancy Rakoczy effective 1 September 2020.

ADOPTED

j. S.Dcn. Gloria Taylor: retirement status effective 1 Jul 2020

k. S.Dcn. Gale Capone: retirement status effective 1 Oct 2020

ACTION SC20:09/06

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant retirement status to S.Dcn. Gloria Taylor effective 1 July 2020; and S.Dcn. Gale Capone effective 1 Oct 2020

ADOPTED

F. Appointments

a. MNYS Candidacy Committee

+ The Rev. L. B. Tatum

b. MNYS Diaconate Council

+ The Rev. Evelyn (Patty) Avila

+ S.Dcn. Dr. Carlos Lopez

+ Peter Teichmann

c. Bishop's Listening / Advisory Panel: Saint John, Bellmore

• The Rev. Micah Stumme (Dean, Eastern Nassau Conference)

• Emma Turner (Synod Council)

• The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski (Deployed Assistant)

d. Bishop's Listening / Advisory Panel: St. Andrew's, Smithtown

• The Rev. Paul Downing (Peconic Conference)

• Emma Turner (Synod Council)

• The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski (Deployed Assistant)

e. Bishop's Listening / Advisory Panel: St. Stephen's, Brooklyn

- The Rev. Harriet Wieber (Dean, South Shore Brooklyn Conference)
- S. Dcn. Denise Rutherford-Gill (Synod Council)
- The Rev. Kevin Vandiver (Deployed Assistant)

G. Communications / 2Q 2020 Metrics Review

Roberto Lara, Assistant to the Bishop for Communications and Development, presented to the Council on the following topics:

- a. MNYS Pastoral messages and videos
- b. Media: WPIX and ABC (GMA 3)
- c. Twitter / Instagram accounts
- d. Upcoming monthly ministeriums and webinars
- e. Update: Microsites and Sales Force conversion
- f. Congregation re-opening stats

H. Staff

a. S.Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa: Director of Finance, Administration and Grant Management

S.Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa joined the Bishop's staff on August 31. She is a member of Good Shepherd, Plainview, and currently serves on the MNYS Diaconate Council. Donna-Mari is licensed as a CPA and brings with her 18+ years of accounting experience with

- Girl Scouts USA
- National September 11 Memorial & Museum
- Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

S.Dcn. Fieldsa's appointment was approved by the executive committee at its September 10 meeting..

b. Monthly sessions with LCC

Lutheran Counseling Center continues to offer the staff a monthly group session with Pr. Tom Taylor.

c. Annual Sexual Harassment Prevention Training completed

The Bishop and staff have completed the NYS required Sexual Harassment Prevention Training for 2020. All employers in NYS are required to complete this training annually. A targeted email to rostered leaders in addition to eletter announcements with information about upcoming NYS and local webinars has been provided to congregations.

d. Anti-racism / Anti-bias workshops

In accordance with the 2015 Synod Assembly action for our synod's *"Continued Commitment for Addressing Racism in Church and Society"* all elected and volunteer synodical leaders, synodical boards, committees, teams, rostered leaders, candidates in the call process, congregation call committees and the staff of the synod need to participate in Anti-racism / Anti-bias education / trainings / workshops. Congregation councils and call committees in congregations in transition are participating in these workshops in accordance with

the Guidelines for Pastoral Transition and Call Process. The staff is currently engaged in a three-day workshop with Pr. Linda Manson, Good Shepherd Roosevelt who has served on the ELCA Anti-racism Network since 1996.

e. 2021 Compensation Guidelines

The delayed release of the COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) until October will bring the Compensation Guidelines to the SC at the October meeting.

f: The Rev. Becca Seely: LMHE Letter of appreciation

A letter of appreciation addressed to the Synod Council from Pr. Becca Seely, Executive Director for Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education was shared.

5. Report of the Vice President

A. Weekly meetings

VP Wicklund has returned to making weekly visits to the Synod Office to meet with Bp. Egensteiner and Pr. William Baum / Chair of Vision 2025.

B. Orientation of newly appointed interim Synod Council members

VP Wicklund and S.Dcn. Ruege conducted an orientation with the interim appointed council members on Sep 17, 2020

C. Rostering

The Synod Council will begin the review of the MNYS rosters beginning at the October SC meeting.

D. Congregation Visits

VP Wicklund is tracking re-openings for in-person worship and hopes to recommence in-person worship visits to congregations this month.

6. Strategic Plan Report

A. Vision 2025 : Evangelism / Leadership / Congregations / Advocacy & Assistance

- a. Bishop has weekly meetings with Pr. William Baum and Renee Wicklund
- b. Regular conversations / meetings with consultant Tom Massey
- c. Meeting: Vision 2025 Team and Task Force chairs 8 Sep 20

Working Groups:

- + For the Sake of the World / K. Vandiver & B. Irving
Task Force Chairs: P. Millholand (E) and C. Vergara (A)
- + For the Sake of the Church / C. Mietlowski & M. Herbst
Task Force Chairs: S. Maclary (C) and I. Compton (L)

B. COVID-19 Related Responses / Resources

The 2020 approved budget allocated funding for Covid-19 assistance to congregations and ministries directly affected by the crisis. Loan applications have been received, reviewed and approved. Christ, Fresh Meadows is the fourth congregation approved for a loan by the Vision 2025 Team.

a. Congregation Disaster Assistance Loans

- Christ, Fresh Meadows: \$20,000

7. Treasurer's Report

Due to staff transitions, the mission support report and monthly financials will be presented at the October Synod Council meeting.

8. Old Business

A. The Rev. George Dietrich (Peconic Conference): One Year Interim SC appointment through SA 2021

At the June SC meeting, a one- year interim SC appointment was extended to Pr. Paul Downing as Peconic Conference Clergy. A change by the conference has been requested. Pr. George Dietrich that will serve in this capacity,.

ACTION SC20:09/07

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint the Rev. George Dietrich to a one year interim term to the Synod Council through the 2021 Synod Assembly.

ADOPTED

B. Pending Items: No Updates

A description of each pending item was provided for the benefit of new council members.

a. Western Queens / Todos los Santos

b. Otisville Property

9. New Business

A. Christ, Suffern: closure

The congregation of Christ, Suffern has discerned the completion of their ministry and will hold a service of Holy Closure on Sep 27.

ACTION SC20:09/08

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council remove Christ Lutheran Church, 3 Church Road, Airmont, NY from the roster of congregations of the Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA effective 27 September 2020.

ADOPTED

B. Congregation Capital Improvement Grants: One-year extension on work / documentation

In accordance with the established procedures and timelines for Congregation Capital Improvement Grants, the Synod Council is asked to approve one year extensions to the 2020 deadlines (until 2021) for the completion of work and the required end of project documentation (report and receipts).

ACTION SC20:09/09

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant one- year extensions to the established deadlines for project start dates and /or submittal of final project completion documentation for the congregations currently engaged in the 2019-2020 Congregation Capital Improvement Grant process.

ADOPTED

C. Change signatories: Chase Bank; Boston Trust Walden; ELCA Credit Union

In response to the recent staff transitions, the Synod Council is asked to approve signatory changes on the following MNYS accounts.

- JP Morgan Chase checking accounts
- MNYS LLC JP Morgan Chase accounts

ACTION:09/10

RESOLVED, that Margaret Schmitt Ajer and Susan Brandt, be removed as authorized signatories on the MNYS accounts with JP Morgan Chase Bank and that Donna-Mari Fieldsa, Karen Falco and Roberto Lara be added as authorized signatories on MNYS JP Morgan Chase Bank accounts.

ADOPTED

- Boston Trust Walden

ACTION:09/11

RESOLVED, that Margaret Schmitt Ajer and Susan Brandt, be removed as authorized signatories on the Boston Trust Walden account and that Donna-Mari Fieldsa and Karen Falco be added as authorized signatories on the Boston Trust Walden account.

ADOPTED

- ELCA Credit Union

ACTION:09/12

RESOLVED, that Susan Brandt be removed as an authorized signatory on the ELCA Credit Union account, and that Donna-Mari Fieldsa and Karen Falco be added as authorized signatories on the ELCA Credit Union account.

ADOPTED

D. 2021 Synod Assembly – August 12-14, 2021

In an attempt to anticipate what 2021 will offer for large group gatherings and events, the Executive Committee approved a recommendation to move the 2021 synod assembly from May to August 12-14. After learning that the proposed dates conflict with Pinecrest week, the council amended the proposal to provide for moving to August 12-14 or another date between August and October.

ACTION:09/13

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council reschedule the date of the 2021 Synod Assembly to a date within the months of August – October 2021.

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council extend the one-year interim appointment to the Synod Council of the Rev. Jeanine Owens, the Rev. Brooke Swertfager, the Rev. Garry Squire, Lily Sage Mathias, S.Dcn. Denise Rutherford Gill, Cynthia Corley, Isabel Mendoza-Garcia, Lionel Avila, Erich Markert, Emma Turner and Adam Campbell through the 2021 Synod Assembly.

ADOPTED

10. Afterthoughts

11. Observers' Evaluation

Next Executive Committee Meeting: October 8, 2020

Synod Council Meeting: October 20, 2020

***Proposed items for the Synod Council agenda should be submitted to Gayle Ruege (gruege@mnys.org) for consideration by the Executive Committee by: October 2, 2020**

Prepared and Submitted:

S.Dcn. Gayle Ruege / Executive Assistant to the Bishop