

**TEXAS-LOUISIANA GULF COAST SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING**

Date of Meeting: January 23, 2021

Venue: Zoom (Electronic)

Attendees: Bishop Mike, Robert Rivera, Paul Antolik, Deirde Hayes, Carol Flores, Rev. Marcia Kifer, Rev. Chris Michaelis, Rev. Rodwell Thom, Caleb Parks, Julie Peltier, Adan Plata, Tom Wildrick, Shelli Williamson

Absent: Adelaide Herman

Staff: Rev. Tracey Breashears-Schultz

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 by Robert Rivera

Opening prayer/devotions were led by Rev. Marcia Kifer.

Actions Taken

1. Approved the Consent Agenda. [Motion: Rodwell Second: Paul]
 - The consent agenda included the agenda, Nov. 14, 2020 Council Minutes, on leave from call requests, retirement requests, and affirmation of the Jan. 11, 2021 email vote to approve the retirement of Rev. Sharon G. Kapsch.

2. Affirms the draft strategic plan from GSB and approved the \$9,000.00 contract with GSB as documented in the ongoing support document included in the Council meeting documents.
[Motion: Tom; Second: Caleb]

3. Approved housing allowances for Bishop Mike (\$40,000) and Prs. Chris and Tracey (\$30,000 each) for FY 2021 budget.
[Motion: Marcia; Second: Julie]

4. Approved extending a specialized call to Pr. John Van Haneghan for interim ministry in the Gulf Coast Synod.
[Motion: Caleb; Second: Marcia]

5. Approved the sabbatical request for Pr. Ashley Dellagiacoma as described in the Council meeting documents.

[Motion: Carol; Second: Julie]

Discussion

1. Bishop's Report: Bishop Mike said that staff reviews were completed. Office staff continue to work mostly remotely with two staff going in periodically to check mail and make deposits. The staff will meet to develop goals for 2021. It was noted that this is the first anniversary of LEAD becoming a separate organization. Details of how the electronic Synod Assembly were discussed. The staff have done a remarkable job assembling the software streaming tools that will make the assembly go smoothly.

Bishop Mike plans to assemble a small group to imagine what post-pandemic rebuilding of congregations will look like. The property of St. Paul Lutheran church in Freeport was sold. The price, though lower than hoped for, did net a profit of \$33,307.55, which, per Synod Council approval, will be given to the new mission at Holy Trinity.

2. Treasurer's Report: Tom presented a near final 2020 Treasurer's report, a proposed 2021 budget, and a notional 2022 budget all of which will be presented to the Synod Assembly in May. A refined 2022 budget will be presented to Council in March. The 2021 and 2022 budgets are essentially flat with the 2020 budget and the actual spending in 2019. The 2020 Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan is shown as an expense at this time. Once the forgiveness process has been completed the amount will be moved to revenue. The Synod does not meet the requirements for a second draw PPP loan in 2021.
3. Bishop's Associate for Leadership Report: Tracey noted that six candidacy panels have been held since November 2020, and a virtual candidacy retreat was held in December. There are currently eight full time calls open with the Synod. Tracey noted that she has spent a lot of time looking for interim ministers and that they are a significant resource for the Synod to fill positions until a full time call can be completed. Tracey is taking Interim Ministry Training to better understand the role and work of our interim ministers.
4. Nominating Committee: Caleb noted that four positions on the Council will need to be filled, though all of the current incumbents are eligible for a second term. The committee will bring a full slate to the March Council meeting.

5. The Insurance Policy was reviewed. Bishop noted that Church Mutual underwent a reorganization under Wisconsin law, but the change was not significant for the Synod. The key provisions of the Auto, General Liability, Umbrella Liability and Workers Compensation policies were reviewed. There were no significant changes from past policies. Paul noted that the provisions were similar to those for his congregation's policies.

Bishop reviewed the Installation Guidelines.

- a. No changes were noted for the guidelines for pastors.
 - b. The guidelines for deacons indicated that they were for interim use through August 2019. Bishop will check to see if there are any changes needed and make them. A date will be added to the document.
 - c. No changes were noted for the guidelines for interim pastor, save to add a review date to the document.
6. Executive Session: Bishop Mike left the meeting and Robert solicited feedback from the Council for Bishop Mike's annual review.

The meeting adjourned at 12:25 pm. [Motion: Paul; Second: Tom]

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Antolik
Secretary