

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

**Date of Meeting:** September 25, 2021

**Venue:** Zoom (Electronic)

**Attendees:** Bishop Mike, Robert Rivera, Paul Antolik, Tom Wildrick, Deirde Hayes, Rev. Chris Michaelis, Caleb Parks, Julie Peltier, Adan Plata, Rev. Chon Pugh, Rev. Rodwell Thom, William Walker, Shelli Williamson (joined at 10:24), Calea Wirtley; youth

**Absent:** Rev. Ariel Otterstad, Taylor Rivera

**Staff:** Rev. Tracey Breashears-Schultz, Rev. Chris Markert

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 by Robert Rivera, opening prayer/devotions were led by Rev. Rodwell Thom.

**Actions Taken**

1. Approved the Consent Agenda. [Motion: Caleb ; Second: Julie ]
  - The consent agenda included the Sept. 25 agenda, May 20, 2021 Council Minutes, on leave from call requests Chris Christopher and Karin Liebster; retirement requests for Duane Larson, Marcia Kifer, Pat Keen, Craig Borchardt, and Charlene Cox.
  - Changes to the agenda included:
    - Add to other business a discussion a resolution on ELCA advocacy support for the energy innovation and carbon dividend act.
    - Add to the Bishop's Associate for Mission a vote on disposition of funds from the sale of All Saints Stafford
2. Received the Bishop's Associate for Mission report and approved calling Jay Shailer as redevelopment pastor at Joyful Life Lutheran Church in Magnolia, Texas.  
[Motion: Paul ; Second: Rodwell ]
3. Approve the allocation of the proceeds from the sale of All Saints Stafford to go 100% toward new mission starts.  
[Motion: Rodwell ; Second: Caleb ]
4. Deferred until the November Synod Council meeting consideration of the resolution on ELCA Advocacy support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. Caleb, Robert and Paul will meet with Lisa Brenskelle and a member who expressed opposition to the resolution, and then they will report back to Council in November for action on the proposed resolution.

## Discussion

1. Bishop's Report:
  - a. Purpose of Council: Insight, Oversight, Foresight
    - i. Links for Council responsibilities are in his report
  - b. Synod office is moving to the former Holy Trinity church location about six miles from the current office.
  - c. What are synod trends for giving and worship attendance?
    - i. Attendance is generally about half, but it varies. Giving is done just a bit. From church to church logistics are wildly different. But most congregations are effectively in redevelopment.
    - ii. Hoping that vaccine approval for children will change things. All are struggling with how to interact with youth.
    - iii. Problem is how to vision what the future will like.
2. Vice President's Report - Robert
  - a. Churchwide Assembly delegates
    - i. Possible Lay Male and Lay Female delegates for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly were identified. Deidre and Tom will check.
  - b. Executive Committee Report – No report
  - c. Nominating Committee
    - i. Caleb is not sure if he can chair, but can serve on the committee. Paul, Taylor, Julie, Adan, Shelli, Ariel
  - d. Guardian Angel Training was mentioned as a way to help with the influx of immigrants in the area.
3. Secretary's Report – Paul
  - a. Paul reviewed highlights of the Synod Secretary training he attended earlier in September.
  - b. He also noted preparations that Council members need to take to be active and knowledgeable participant at Council meetings.
  - c. Reviewed the process used for email voting.
4. Treasurer's Report - Tom
  - a. Year-to-date shows \$646,000 received. \$623,000 is from congregations, the rest of interest and special gifts. Expenses of \$724,000 year-to-date.
    - i. The deficit is a little higher than usual for this time of year.
    - ii. The numbers don't reflect the PPP loan received last year. It will be booked later this year.
  - b. Work has begun on the next year's budget.
  - c. Audit summary letter was received and says that the books are in order with no discrepancies.
5. Bishop's Associate for Mission Report:

- a. Reviewed his responsibilities and areas of activity.
  - b. Presented call of Jay Shailer to Joy of Life
  - c. Presented motion on disposition of funds from sale of All Saints Stafford property.
  - d. Discussed ways to change and improve disaster relief
    - i. Best idea is to hire a staff person dedicated to planning and coordinating disaster relief.
    - ii. This will be sent out to congregations to increase giving for next year to fund this position.
6. Bishop's Associate for Leadership Report:
- a. Candidacy
    - 1. Six candidates, of which four are just starting (Entrance stage) and two are near the end (Endorsement stage).
  - b. Calls
    - i. Currently there are 14 open calls, two more will begin the call process by October.
7. Policy Discussion:
- a. Conflict of Interest Policy
    - i. Bishop read through the Conflict of Interest form that Council members need to sign, and requested that Council members need to sign and send to the Synod.
  - b. Guidelines for Addiction
    - i. Bishop read through the Guidelines for Addiction.
8. Other Business
- a. Proposed Meeting schedule
    - i. Devotions: November: Rev. Chon Pugh, January: Caleb, March: William
  - b. Giving to the Synod – Bishop reviewed the ways to give
  - c. Consideration on the proposed resolution on ELCA Advocacy support for the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act
    - i. Caleb, Paul, Robert will meet with Lisa and a member who was identified as being skeptical. Then they will report back to the Council in November.
  - d. Meeting feedback was solicited.

Meeting adjourned at 11:52 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Antolik  
Secretary