Minutes from the

**SYNOD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**January 22, 2021**

Via Zoom

Present: Bishop Susan Candea, Nancy Nagel (Vice President), Scott Schulte (Treasurer), Rev. Chad Langdon (Secretary), Rev. Lorna Paulus, Dallas Rakestraw

Absent: Terrance Freeman

**CALL TO ORDER**

Nancy called the meeting to order at 1:05pm.

**DEVOTION**

Bishop Candea led us in a short devotion by Richard Rohr.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT**

Chad presented the minutes from the Synod Council meeting on October 23-24, 2020.

* **SEC 21.01.22.A1 It was MSC to approve the minutes as presented.**

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Scott presented a written treasurer’s report:

**Financial Status as of 12/31/2020, after 11 months of the fiscal year, ending January 31, 2021.**

Income from congregations

* $1,489,672 received
* The amount received is $68,839 more than what was anticipated in our revised spending budget, a 4.6% variance
* The amount received is $36,293 more than received last year, a 2.4% variance

ELCA Churchwide Contribution

* $744,711 contributed to Churchwide
* This is $29,711 more than anticipated in the revised spending budget, a 4.0% variance
* The amount contributed is $9,404 more than last year, a 1.3% variance

Synod Expenditures

* $659,161 spent
* The amount spent is **$112,627 less** than budgeted, a -17.1% variance
* This is also $99,071 less than spent last year, a -15.0% variance

Total Support & Revenue vs. Total Expenditures

* $1,553,307 received in Total Support & Revenue, $66,519 more than anticipated and $17,978 more than last year
* $1,403,872 in Total Expenditures, $82,916 less than anticipated, and $89,667 less than last year
* **Net surplus of $149,435** as compared to a $41,789 surplus last year

Analysis of Financial Status

* The amount of support received from the congregations continues to be a huge surprise. Giving increased with the onset of the pandemic and remained consistent from March through July. Beginning in August, the giving amounts became more irregular. I believe this is consistent with the anecdotal feedback that we have heard from congregations that started to see giving decline after it was strong and consistent earlier in the pandemic. This is the third year in a row we have experienced a tremendous spike in support in December. This is especially remarkable this year.
* Synod expenditures are significantly lower than budgeted and lower than last year. This is due to reductions resulting from the pandemic like the delay of the annual audit, lower usage of supplies, few in-person meetings, and curtailed travel. In addition, we also reduced the staff by 1, experienced staffing changes with two of the campus ministry sites, and had much lower Candidacy costs.
* Our Total Support & Revenue amount is now $66,519 more than budgeted. This is due to the increased congregational support and the great response to the Annual Appeal. As we near the end of the year, we have a healthy surplus. This does not include the PPP loan amount of $167,200. This will allow us to do some things we haven’t been able to do in a while, but we should consider this a one-time event and not the start of a trend. Unless it happens again!

After Scott’s initial presentation, our discussion included the following highlights:

* This surplus does not include any Paycheck Protection Program funds. Once that loan is forgiven, our surplus will look even better.

**REVISED SPENDING BUDGET FOR FYE 1/31/22**

Scott presented the Revised Spending Budget for FYE 1/31/22. Because of our surplus, this is first year in memory where we were able to add spending to the Revised Budget rather than cut spending. Bishop Candea worked with the staff and they came up with a couple proposals to utilize some of these surplus funds. These two proposed initiatives include:

* Leadership Developer Proposal – This plan would be to develop 5-10 Leadership Developers using the Kansas Leadership Center training model. These leadership developers would then guide and teach these leadership concepts to pastors and congregation leaders (councils, transition teams) in order to guide them through transition periods. They are asking for $12,000 in 2021 to get this leadership training started.
* Faithful Innovations – This plan is a similar “train the trainers” model, but this is through the Faith+Lead initiative at Luther Seminary. Four individuals from our synod would attend this 12-month training. At the end of the training, each of them are equipped to then lead a cohort of interested Central States congregations through a 9-month process of faithful innovation and coaching. They are requesting $10,000 to cover the cost of this training.

This surplus allowed us to add funding to several ministries and line items. These changes and additions to the budget include:

Increased to: from:

* Hollis Center $5,000 $3,500
* Kansas Interfaith Action Coalition $2,500 0
* Missouri Voices of Faith $2,500 0
* Faith Innovations $10,000 0
* Leadership Training $10,000 0
* Campus Ministry Salaries & Benefits $145,000 $130,000
* Bethany College $15,000 $10,000
* Seminaries (LSTC & Wartburg) $30,000 $20,000
* Dean’s Meetings (decreased) ($1000) $5,000
* Tech Enhancements & Communication $10,000 0

($2000/conference)

* Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism $20,000 0

(open to anyone, process for distribution yet to be determined)

In addition, salaries for the staff were adjusted.

* Both Bishop Candea & Dave Whetter’s salaries were adjusted so that they will now be in keeping with the new synod compensation guidelines. We had discovered that Bishop Candea’s salary especially was quite a bit under our new guidelines, which is why her salary increased by a greater amount. Dave Whetter’s salary was also under, but not by as much.
* The rest of the staff were given a 3% increase instead of the 2% increase that had been previously approved.
* The Synod Salaries & Benefits line item was changed to $478,743 from $490,718. It actually decreased because part of a position was eliminated last spring.

All of these revisions to the budget resulted in an increase in budgeted spending totaling $82,068. To pay for these increases, we will use $82,068 out of the surplus and designate this in the budget as Temporary Restricted Funds Released.

* **SEC 21.01.22.A2 It was MSC (Dallas, Lorna) to approve the Revised Spending Budget FYE 1/31/22 as presented.**

**PROPOSED SPENDING BUDGET FOR FYE 1/31/23**

Scott presented a Proposed Spending Budget for FYE 1/31/23. Because we will still be operating with surplus funds, we maintained many of the same funding amounts for the agencies, institutions, campus ministries, etc. Changes from the Revised FYE 1/31/22 include:

* Faith Innovations goes back to $0 because that is a one-time expense in 2021.
* Both Tech Enhancements & Communications and Enhanced Outreach & Evangelism lines were cut in half, hoping that the most significant improvements will have already been made by that time.
* Salaries were adjusted accordingly.
* **SEC 21.01.22.A3 It was MSC (Dallas, Lorna) to recommend this Proposed Budget for FYE 1/31/23 to the Synod Assembly in June 2021.**

**BISHOP’S REPORT**

Bishop Candea presented a written report. She answered any questions.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

* **SEC 21.01.22.A4 It was MSC (Chad, Dallas) to approve the 2021 Nominating Committee consisting of Pat Bjuland (chair), Rhonda Templing, Rev. Phil Hett, Melba Bangert, and Rev. Larry Lehmke.** Bishop Candea serves as an advisor to this committee.

**RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**

* **SEC 21.01.22.A5 It was MSC (Chad, Lorna) to appoint Rev. Phil Vickers and Connie Harris to second terms on the Resolutions Committee.**

**CONGREGATION CONSTITUTIONS**

Resurrection in Haysville & Advent in Olathe have both updated their constitutions and are in good order.

* **SEC 21.01.22.A6 It was MSC (Lorna, Scott) to approve the updated constitutions for Resurrection Lutheran in Haysville, KS and Advent Lutheran in Olathe, KS.**

**ROSTER REPORT**

Bishop Candea presented a written roster report.

* Retirements
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A7 It was MSC to grant Rev. Randy Gibbs retirement status effective January 1, 2021.**
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A8 It was MSC to grant Rev. Russ Glaser retirement status effective February 1, 2021.** He will continue serving Grace Lutheran in Osage, KS under covenant as a retired pastor.
* Specialized Ministry – Per synod constitution 7.44.A19.b5.1, rostered ministers are eligible for Synod Council calls to specialized ministry.
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A9 It was MSC to grant Rev. Dinah Dutta a Synod Council call to specialized ministry to serve as a chaplain for Presbyterian Manor in Lawrence, KS effective January 1, 2021.**
* On Leave From Call
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A10 It was MSC to grant Rev. Laura Smith one year of On Leave From Call status effective January 23, 2021.** This is her first year of OLFC.
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A11 It was MSC to grant Rev. Kris Ross one year of On Leave From Call status effective January 11, 2021.** This is her first year of OLFC.
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A12 It was MSC to grant Rev. Kim Knowle-Zeller one year of On Leave From Call status effective January 1, 2021.** This is her 6th year of OLFC.
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A13 It was MSC to grant Rev. Shelly Klingensmith one year of On Leave From Call status effective January 1, 2021.** This is her 2nd year of OLFC.
  + **SEC 21.01.22.A14 It was MSC to grant Eva Creydt-Schulte, deacon, one year of On Leave From Call status effective January 1, 2021 contingent upon her returning her OLFC paperwork by February 28, 2021.** This would be her 2nd year of OLFC.

**NOMINATION GRID FOR SYNOD ASSEMBLY**

Chad presented the Nomination Grid for the 2021 Synod Assembly. In order to satisfy demographic and geographic requirements, we will need to elect:

* For Synod Council:
  + A male layperson to represent the Western Kansas Conference
  + A male clergy to represent the Osage Conference
  + A female clergy to represent the Eastern Missouri Conference
  + A male person of color to fill an at-large position
  + A female youth
  + A female layperson to fill an at-large position
* For the Consultation Committee:
  + 2 lay people
* For the Discipline Committee:
  + 2 lay people
  + 2 clergy
* For the 2022 Churchwide Assembly:
  + - A female clergy from the Eastern Missouri Conference
    - A male layperson from the Osage Conference
    - A male clergy from the Border Conference
    - A male clergy from the Central Kansas Conference
    - A male layperson from the Western Kansas Conference
    - A male layperson of color (at-large)
    - A female youth/young adult (at-large)
    - A female or non-binary layperson (at-large)
    - A female layperson of color (at-large)
    - A male youth/young adult (at-large)
    - In addition to these 10 elected positions, we will be sending Bishop Candea (female clergy) and Synod Vice President Nancy Nagel (female lay)
  + For the 2022 Churchwide Assembly, we will have a total of 12 voting members. We must meet the following requirements:
    - 60% must be lay, 40% shall be clergy
    - About 45% should be female, about 45% should be male
    - 10% must be POC
    - 10% must be youth or young adult
  + By allocating our voting members listed above, we will have the following demographics:
    - Total Male 6/12 50%
    - Total Female at least 5/12 42%
    - Total Lay 8/12 66%
    - Total Clergy 4/12 33%
    - Total POC at least 2/12 16%
    - Total Y/YA at least 2/12 16%
* **SEC 21.01.22.A15 It was MSC (Dallas, Scott) to approve the 2021 Synod Assembly Nomination Grid as presented.**

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY UPDATE**

We will be doing a virtual assembly this year, but we will still have some expenses. These expenses include things like using a production company, software upgrades, and honorariums for the speakers. The Assembly will meet on Friday, June 4 and Saturday, June 6. The officers, speakers and parliamentarian will all be in one location at Kaw Prairie in Lenexa, KS.

* **SEC 21.01.22.A16 It was MSC (Lorna, Scott) to set the registration cost at $65/voting member.**

**BISHOP’S ANNUAL EVALUATION**

* **SEC 21.01.22.A17 It was MSC (Dallas, Lorna) to move into Executive Session for 1 hour at 3:35pm.**

We came out of executive session at 4:25pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Nancy closed us in prayer at 4:30pm and we adjourned.

**UPCOMING DATES**

* March 19-20, 2021 Synod Council
* May 14, 2021 Executive Committee
* June 4, 2021 Synod Council
* June 4-5, 2021 Synod Assembly

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Rev. Chad Langdon*

*Central States Synod Secretary*