



Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

MINUTES

71st MEETING OF MNO SYNOD COUNCIL

January 29-30, 2009
Laureate's Landing, Winnipeg, Manitoba

PARTICIPANTS

Officers:

Bishop Elaine Sauer
Brian Lorch – Vice Chairperson
Carol Janke – Secretary
Allan Francis – Treasurer

Staff:

Larry Ulrich – Assistant to Bishop
Debbie Beyer – Executive Assistant
(Fri. only)
Rick Scherger – Communications Coordin.
(Fri. only)

Guests:

Bishop Susan Johnson (ELCIC)
Alice Schultz (Synodical ELW) (Frid. only)
Mark Koenker (NCC) (Thurs. only)
Tom Brook (NCC)

Council Members:

Ken Schmidt - Westman
Diane Rey- Agassiz
(Worship & the Arts, Liaison)
Marilyn Grimeau – Aurora
Rhea Galeschuk – Brokenhead
(Luther Village, Liaison)
Ernie Dojack – Cambrian
Mona Johnson – Interlake
(Christian Ed, Liaison) (absent with excuse)
Wayne Schultz – Metro
(Church & Society, Liaison)
Trudy Thorarinson – At Large
Michael Kurtz – At Large (Mission, Liaison)
(Fri. only)
Ed Mitchler – At Large (LUM, Liaison)

Thursday, January 29, 2009

Opening devotions were led by Bishop Elaine based on Mark 1:14-20, the calling of the first four disciples.

Using Romans 12:1-2, Synod Council engaged in bible study, discussion and reflection.

Meeting recessed at 9:00 p.m.

Friday, February 1, 2009

Ed Mitchler led opening devotions on Romans 16. We sang all verses of "Here I Am, Lord."

Session 1

Adoption of Agenda

MSC SC 71-09-01 that we adopt the amended Agenda.

Approval of Minutes

MSC SC 71-09-02 that we approve the Synod Council minutes of August 2008.

MSC SC 71-09-03 that we approve the Synod Executive minutes of October 3rd, November 21st, and December 19th, 2008.

Business Arising not elsewhere on the Agenda –
No business.

Report of the Bishop (Synod Office Report)

Bishop Elaine provided an extensive written report and answered all questions arising from same. She noted that she reports on behalf of the entire office, and commended the staff who are wonderfully gifted as well as supportive of the ministry to and for the synod.

Report of the Secretary

MSC SC 71-09-04 that Mark Tiefenbach be moved from Temporarily Without Call to On Leave from Call First Year as of May 31, 2009.

Review of Financial Statements.

Allan highlighted our financial picture in a power point presentation and answered all questions arising, particularly those regarding the need to release restrictions on the following internally restricted funds.

2008 Convention Surplus	\$10,751.53
Staff Training	1,269.16
Study Conference Surplus	7,643.61
Office Renovation Fund	115.90
Stewardship Practicum Surplus	941.00
Faith, Geraldton	1,648.97
Holy Cross Latvian, Winnipeg	1,565.00

MSC SC 71-09-05 that Council approve the release of the restrictions on the following internally restricted

funds: 2008 Convention Surplus, Staff Training, Study Conference Surpluses, Stewardship Practicum Surplus and Office Renovations.

- MSC SC 71-09-06** that Council confirm that the following externally restricted funds are now released for General Operations; Faith Geraldton and Holy Cross Latvian.
- MSC SC 71-09-07** that Council delegate to Synod Executive the authority to complete and sign off on the 2008 audited Financial Statements.

Update on 2008 Convention Planning

Two congregations have offered their facilities. It was decided that Gloria Dei would best meet our needs.

- MSC SC 71-09-08** that Gloria Dei Lutheran Church be approved as the site of the April 22nd to 25th, 2010 Convention.

Thanks were expressed to those who planned the last convention, and for the good mix of business and learning, bible study and reflection.

By-Law and Policy Manual Review Update

Bylaws will match the constitutional changes. Many of the motions are now being rewritten as policies, so that they work of the church may happen in a timely fashion.

Undesignated Gifts and Bequests

We are in the process of receiving a bequest that should total approximately \$250,000. Council Executive has struggled with how this information should be shared – eg. amount, name of donor. Therefore we ask the Synod Council to direct the Synod Executive to develop a policy on how we will handle these gifts in the future.

- MSC SC 71-09-09** that the Synod Executive develop a policy on gifts to the synod for approval by Synod Council.

Bishop Elaine read a petition from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 86 "Answer to Prayer."

Session II

Bishop Elaine read Mark 4:30-34 followed by The Apostles Creed as our affirmation of faith.

Mission as Hope funding appeal

Through visioning and discernment, Assistant to the Bishop Larry Ulrich and Bishop Elaine Sauer, have developed an appeal/stewardship package that should help people in the pew learn of the synod's need for the funding of mission; both local and global, and leadership; both lay and rostered, and for ways they could be a part of it. This program depends on modeling and accountability from the leadership of the synod first, then Congregational Councils, and then individual church members. There was good discussion around the need to fund programs of the church through the budget instead of through appeals, versus the need to give many opportunities for God's people to give.

MSC SC 71-09-10 that Synod Council approves the launch of the *Mission as Hope* appeal as presented at its January 2009 meeting.

Electronic meetings

MSC SC 71-09-11 that Synod Council approve the use of the National Church Council's protocols for electronic and email meetings.

First Call

This program is already in place in the Eastern Synod to allow for a newly ordained pastor to choose a mentor for the first three years of their first call. Bishop Elaine's experience with new pastors validates a need for this in our synod. The details of this program include; developing and maintaining a list of pastors able to mentor, and matching gifts with needs. The costs associated with this only happen when a newly ordained is called into the territory.

MSC SC 71-09-12 that we approve in principle the creation of a First Call program for rostered ministry in partnership with the other western synods.

Policy for covering costs of the Bishop's spouse when attending events

MSC SC 71-09-13 that we direct the Synod Executive to develop a policy covering the cost of travel for the bishop's spouse.

Chair Brian Lorch led us in the singing of "Johnny Appleseed" as table grace.

Session III

Bishop Elaine prayed "The Serenity Prayer" attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Review of Standing Committee/Board Reports: Christian Education, Church and Society, Theological Education and Leadership, Mission, Worship and the Arts, Youth Ministry, Lutheran Urban Ministry, Luther Village and Evangelical Lutheran Women.

These committee's reports were reviewed and questions answered-.

National Office Report

Bishop Susan Johnson thanked us for our partnership. She then reported on the realities of doing ministry as the National Church with increasingly diminishing benevolence receipts. Part of their response has been to cut staff and to increase the work they do with their external partners, ie. ACC, ELCA, CLWR. With the reality that funding both national and synod has one offering plate, it is necessary to begin discussions on how we will together use the resources of that offering plate to do the ministry and mission of the church. Although we are continually being pushed to change, and it is scary, we can be confident. For in the end we know that this is God's church, and that it is God that is challenging us to change and grow and become the church that God wants us to be. We don't know how it will all turn out, but we know that with God it will be good, very good.

Bishop Elaine read Paul's letter to Philemon.

Session IV

Bishop Elaine prayed a petition from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, found on p. 86 entitled "Commitment."

National Synodical Consultation

There was discussion about:

- the size of, and who participates in, the National Convention, and the dissonance between our polity and our decision making process.
- whether we need to change the size and formation of the synods?
- whether we need a synodical structure, or could we operate with a national church having a local presence through an assistant to the bishop.
- whether there might the three territories with six bishops being the local presence.
- whether we keep our synods and not have a national office at all?
- whether we need to look at the overlap of ministry, ie mission consultants in each synod?

There is also a suggestion that the National Church would look at challenging congregations and synods to designate a pre-determined proportion of their (budget) offerings to them.

Seminary Capital Campaign

Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon is asking permission to run a Capital Campaign on our territory. They would like to contact all congregations in the synod.

MSC SC 71-09-14 that we give approval to the Lutheran Theology Seminary in Saskatoon to conduct a capital campaign in the MNO Synod not to commence before September 2009.

Recommendations re major gift from Faith, Winnipeg

The following areas that would meet the criteria of new initiatives, beyond the regular synod operation, as set out by Faith are:

Volunteer in Mission for LUM	\$5,000
Mission as Hope expenses	5,000
Technology ie Webinars	5,000
Synod-wide Renewal Event(s)	5,000
Youth travel to the ELCOC Youth Conf.	5,000.

This leaves \$5,000 in the fund, which will be allocated by Synod Council at a later date.

The Council sang all three verses of "You Are Holy."

MSC SC 71-09-15 that Synod Council approve the following uses for the Faith, Winnipeg donation: Volunteer in Mission for LUM – \$5,000; Mission as Hope expenses, 2008 and 2009 - \$5,000; Technology i.e. Webinars – \$5,000; Synod-wide Renewal Event(s) - \$5,000; Youth travel to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon Youth Conference 2009 – \$5,000.

Introduction of 2009 Draft Budget

Bishop Elaine prayed a petition from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, found on p. 87 entitled "A Prayer of Catherine of Siena."

MSC SC 71-09-16 that the Synod Council move in camera to consider staff salaries.

MSC SC 71-09-17 that the Synod Council move into an open session.

MSC SC 71-09-18 that the Synod Council approve the 2009 salary plan as presented.

- MSC SC 71-09-19** that we move to approve the consolidation of the following funds: Youth Work Project, Youth Training Team, Youth Project North, Bursaries, Youth Retreats, Rural Youth Project, and Youth Leaders Training Event ,into one fund entitled “Youth Ministry.”

Appointment of Synod Committee Members

- MSC SC 71-09-20** that the Synod Executive be given the authority to appoint members to the Standing Committees, between now and the next Council meeting.

Bishop Elaine prayed a petition from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, found on p. 82 entitled “Vocation in Daily Life.”

The Council sang the “Old One Hundredth.”

Session V

Approval of 2009 Revised Budget

- MSC SC 71-09-21** that we approve the 2009-2011 revised budget as presented.
- MSC SC 71-09-22** that Synod Executive be authorized to pay the first \$29,000. of Column B Congregational Benevolence to the National Church.

Appointment of Foundation Grants Committee

- MSC SC 71-09-23** that the following persons be appointed to the Foundation Grants Committee: Brian Lorch, Chris Buffie, Susan Pearce, Shirley Barrow .

Other business

- MSC SC 71-09-24** that for 2009 the Synod Executive be empowered to act on the Synod Council’s behalf to deal with any Examining Committee recommendations.
- MSC SC 71-09-25** that the Synod Council authorize the Synod Executive to re-categorize the Faith, Winnipeg donation from Internally Restricted to Externally

**Restricted, and re-state the 2007 Financial
Statements accordingly.**

Arrangements for next council meeting

November 12th and 13th, 2009 at Laureate's Landing, if available.

Bishop Elaine asked for volunteers for our November meeting. Michael Kurtz agreed to be the spiritual leader, Trudy Thorarinson and Wayne Schultz agreed to lead the devotions.

Diane Rey led the closing devotions

Bishop Elaine, Wayne Schultz and Michael Kurtz prayed the petitions arising from the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Carol Janke, Secretary