

Allegheny Synod – ELCA  
Synod Council Meeting  
January 11, 2020

Interim Vice President Gary Gable called the meeting to order at 9:00 am

Upon Motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Thom Horn

- *SC20.01.01* – to adopt the meeting agenda... the motion is adopted

Devotions: Pr. Paula Schmitt – Colossians 3:1-17

Upon motion by Pr. David Bowman, seconded by Lori Dunkel

- *SC20.01.02* – to grant retroactive family leave to the Rev. Suzanna Morelli effective November 1, 2019... the motion is adopted

### ***Synod Officers Comments***

Upon motion by Dave Finney, seconded by Pr. Judy Simonson

- *SC20.01.03* – to accept the minutes of the November Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

### ***Old Business***

Trinity Lutheran in Bedford continues to move toward leaving the ELCA. See *ELCA constitutional provision 9.62*. or *Model Constitution for Congregations provision \*C6.05*. for more details on a congregation terminating its relationship with this church.

### **Transition Task Force**

- Several meetings were held to date
- A letter was sent to congregations in mid-December, requesting congregations to rate the Synod's performance with respect to our core ministries

Upon motion by the Transition Task Force

- *SC20.01.04* – The *Transition Task Force* moves that the Synod Council follow these proposed recommendations & adopt the following procedures for the election of a new Bishop during the 2020 Synod Assembly:
  - 1) Use of the Ecclesiastical Ballot as defined in the Synod Constitution *S9.04*.
  - 2) The Discerning process:
    - a) Congregational voting members for Synod Assembly are encouraged to be selected by the end of February 2020
    - b) Prayers shall be provided to congregations for use in worship beginning in Lent (February 26, 2020)
    - c) The Task Force will provide the existing Bishop Profile and Synod Profile that were developed in 2014 – we feel that these profiles are still valid

- d) The Task Force will develop the rules of procedure for election of a Bishop at Synod Assembly (April 2020)
  - e) Caucuses to be held; (to include all rostered leaders and congregational voting members); prayers will be offered; the Ecclesiastical Ballot will be explained; existing Synod and Bishop profiles will be distributed; further conversation and discussion will be encouraged; (April/May 2020)
- 3) Election at Synod Assembly, June 5 & 6, 2020... the motion is adopted

### ***New Business***

Simpson Temple update – the building has been purchased by **ArtsAltoona** (A Project of the Altoona Renaissance Team, Inc.) & the existing congregation has been invited to continue using the building for worship services

The Consultation Committee has been formed with respect to the matter of the Rev. Joshua Rinus (former DEM of the Allegheny Synod)

Position Descriptions are being drafted to clarify the “job specs” of Synod officers & council members - for future reference

The Synod Council received a request for funding from Pr. Susan Winger for use during the Women’s Retreat at Sequanota in April 2020.

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Dave Bowman

- **SC20.01.05** – at the request of the Rev. Susan Winger (Women’s Retreat @ Sequanota April 2020) - to approve a \$2,000 designated ministry gift from the estate of the late Rev. Chris Ramsey... the motion is adopted

### Worship and Service

Ecumenical Worship Services are planned for February 9<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>

Installations are pending for Evelyn Wald (St. Stephen’s), John Barichivich (Friedens) & Mark Fischer (First Portage)

### Leadership & Congregation Support & Development

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Thom Horn,

- **SC20.01.06** - To grant the Rev. Susan Winger retirement status, effective November 16, 2019... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Judy Simonson

- **SC20.01.07** – to approve the Rev. Katie Maul-McCullough for an extension of on-leave-from-call status, effective January 11, 2020... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Dave Bowman

- **SC20.01.08** – to extend to the Rev. Doug Knupp a call to serve Trinity Somerset as Interim Pastor, effective January 6, 2020... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- **SC20.01.09** – to affirm the calls of the Rev. Evelyn Wall (November 10, 2019), the Rev. John Barichivich (November 3, 2019) & the Rev. Mark Fischer (September 22, 2109)... the motion is adopted

### Faith Formation

The Allegheny Synod Youth Gathering was considered a great success – we are in the planning stages for future events

### Financial Management

Our financials thru 11 months of the current fiscal year (February 2019 thru January 2020) are about 5-8% behind where we thought we would be with respect to the budget

The Audit for 2018 is finally closed

- The audit was designated as *unqualified*. In an unqualified report, the auditors conclude that the financial statements of your organization present fairly its affairs in all material aspects.
- The *cash position* is very healthy, compared to the 8-year average, the year-end 2018 cash level was approximately 20% above average.
- *Investments* – growth in our portfolio over the 8-year period was approximately 2.5%
- The *balance sheet* is strong, with a valuation of approximately \$1,250,000.

Upon motion by Casey Colledge, seconded by Thom Horn

- **SC20.01.10** – to distribute an additional \$11,000 from the First Summit account to the list of currently eligible Seminarians as per **S15.40.A18**... the motion is adopted

The meeting was adjourned at 11am.

### ***Subsequent actions of Synod Council...***

Upon motion of Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC20.02.01** - that Barb Debski be appointed to the Board of Trustees of Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries... the motion is adopted (abstaining; Lori Dunkle, Pr. Judy Simonson) (email voting permitted as per **S10.03.B18** & **S10.08.01**.)

Upon motion of Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- **SC20.02.02** - that the Allegheny Synod Council approve the request for the Exploration Grant and, pending approval for the grant from the ELCA, form a Latinx SAWC Exploration in Pine Grove Mills/State College area... the motion is adopted. (email voting permitted as per **S10.03.B18** & **S10.08.01**.)

Synod Council members in attendance... 14 of 16

- Executive Committee
  - Bishop Rhyne – present
  - Gary Gable – present
  - Dave Finney – present
  - Bill Layton – present
  - Pr. Sharron Erb - absent
- Council Members
  - Pr. David Bowman – present
  - Casey Colledge – present
  - Olivia Day - absent
  - Lori Dunkle – present
  - Pr. Rebecca Horn - present
  - Thom Horn – present
  - Joyce Long - present
  - Andrea Paul – present
  - Marlin Plymette – present
  - Pr. Judy Simonson – present
  - Pr. Jennifer Soltis – present
- Synod Staff
  - Pr. Paula Schmitt – present
  - Pr. Rebecca Ehrlich, Interim DEM – present