



Allegheny Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Allegheny Synod – ELCA Council Meeting September 10, 2022

MISSION: *Called by God to be one in Christ: we worship, grow in faith, and serve all people.*

VISION: *Because Christ is here, we are actively engaging in God's work and sharing the Gospel as the Holy Spirit increases the followers of Jesus Christ*

1. The September Synod Council meeting was called to order by Ann Ferry at 9:05 am
2. Presentation and adoption of the agenda
 1. Upon motion by Pr. Ralph Hamer, second by Bill Layton
 - a) **SC22.09.01** – to adopt the agenda for today's meeting...the motion is adopted
3. Approve or amend minutes of July 2022 meeting
 1. Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmidt second by Michele Peese
 - a) **SC22.09.02** – to adopt SC22.07. minutes as presented...the motion is adopted
4. Bishop Paula Schmidt led us in devotions – from a book *Making Room for God*
 1. What do you feel called to give up to make room for God, for a time or a season?
5. Report of the Treasurer
 1. Review of Revenue and Expenses
 2. Checking on set up of Sabbatical Account
 3. Audit is winding down
6. Discussion Points
 - a) Disaffiliation Processes
 1. Upon motion by Bishop Paula Schmidt, second by Gary Gable
 - a) **SC22.09.03** – the Allegheny Synod Council affirms both Central Bedford Parish (7-0, 6-0, and 6-0) and Mt. Zion, Bakersville's (16-1) first votes for disaffiliation process as submitted through letters to the Allegheny Synod office...the motion is adopted
 2. Christ, Dubois will take their first vote to disaffiliate on September 18. The consultation is September 14.
 3. Grace Lutheran, Stoystown completing their transfer.
 4. Trinity, Johnstown's second vote to disaffiliate is scheduled for late October
 - b) Welcome in the church
 1. How do we show welcome, how can council members show welcome throughout the synod, what can we do to support congregations and people?
 2. The feeling of acceptance, at congregation and the community
 - c) Constitutional Update
 1. The model constitutions for Synods and Congregations have been distributed from the ELCA Secretary
 - a) Secretary David Finney can look at the new model constitution compared to congregation's current constitution

- b) Review of chapter 11 of Allegheny Synod constitution; make suggestions for constitutional change for 2023 Synod Assembly, at the next meeting (November 2023)
 - d) Churchwide Assembly reflections
 - a. Committee to renew processes found in Constitution
 - b. Informative, exhausting, educational, emotionally draining
 - e) Congregational Vitality and Innovation Grant Process – no update at this time, hope to have application ready by October
- 7. Ministry Updates
 - Congregational visits and worship
 - Bishop Paula visited with three congregations since our last meeting and attended the Churchwide Assembly. She led worship at the Synod Day at Delgrosso's Park and planned and led Pr. Startzel's funeral.
 - Pastor Kevin visited with five congregations in worship since our last meeting.
 - Support partners and their ministries
 - ALSM
 - Camp Sequanota
 - Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State
 - KELC
 - Drought relief needed
 - Synod Women's Organization
 - Supporting Lutheran Campus Ministry in phone drive
 - Preparing for annual convention
 - Gloria De Dios
 - In need of a Spanish-speaking mission developer
 - Grace Delivered
 - Trailer being used in Somerset – was in parade, going to WV, then will be in northern Somerset
 - Other
 - Worship resources for congregations without called pastors – trying to make a higher priority this fall
 - Leadership and Congregational Support and Development
 - Clergy update/moves/calls/retirements
Pastor Walter Startzel died August 27, 2022
Pastors Lee and Dena Gable move to NE Iowa Synod, effective 9/6/22
 - Congregational updates (not mentioned above during discussion)
 - Reconciliation processes are underway at Good Shepherd, Windber; Mt. Zion, Bakersville.
 - A presentation was made to St. David's, Davidsville
 - Pastor Kevin met with a congregation council for a planning discussion.
 - Strategic planning retreats coming up with various congregations.
 - Seminarian updates
Laura Waltermire – Internship has ended Minocqua, WI
Jennifer Bobolsky Sherbine- ULS M.Div track
Regina Holliday (TEEM Candidate serving JIF, Endorsement March 2022)
Penny Koontz (TEEM program, Mt Olive, Fairhope and Christ, Madley)
Christy Harford (TEEM, Trinity, Sidman)
Allen Stump (TEEM, Christ Trinity Parish, LH Conference)
Steve Koths (TEEM, Shiloh in State College)
Ruth Williamson (Awaiting internship information)

Erik Briggs and Branston Peese have contacted the Synod office about candidacy.

Also Lindsay Hammaker, but not ready yet.

- First Call Group
Book study on *The Pastor* by Gordon Lathrop began 7/26. Next meeting September 14.
- Conference Deans
Conversation at last meeting about greater role in congregational transitions.
 - Being able to do installation, meeting with congregations to transition into call committee after a pastor leaves, etc.
 - Updating the Deans' Manual

D. Faith Formation (*Provide lifelong Christian nurturing and development*)

a) Ignite Ministry

First class in tri-synodical configuration begins September 10.

We have 5 or 6 people in the class from Allegheny Synod with Upper Susquehanna and NEPA

Next class likely start January 2023

E. Planning and Resources (*Provide strategic planning and resources to guide the Synod*)

a) Building a Culture of Generosity

Fall Cohort is underway. 7 congregations + 1 clergy person from Allegheny Synod participating.

b) Synod Assembly

Synod Assembly Committee meets on September 15 to begin planning for 2023. The Blair County Convention Center has been secured for June 17, 2023.

- Met with a different electronic ballot company that is about half the cost as Eballot with a representative on site during the assembly
- Scott Casey with VPoll from vistacom – going to be the recommendation for electronic balloting for Synod Assembly, additionally can use surveying for year.
- Once we are trained, following years would only cost licensing and not a representative.

c) Synod-wide workshop

Registration is open for day of learning and fellowship on September 24. 10am-3pm

d) ELCA Coaching

Pastor Kevin is currently participating in ELCA Level I Coaching Training.

This training will help him work with congregations planning for the future.

Upon motion by Nancy Hoover, seconded by Bishop Paula Schmidt

SC22.09.04 – to adjourn the Allegheny Synod Council meeting...the motion is adopted.

Vice President Ann Ferry adjourned the meeting at 10:55 am.

The next Synod Council meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2022

Synod Council members in attendance... 9 of 14

- Executive Committee (*1-ordained, 4-lay*)
 - Bishop Paula Schmitt - present
 - VP Ann Ferry – present
 - Secretary Dave Finney – absent
 - Treasurer Bill Layton – present

- Vicar Allen Stump – absent
- Council Members (*5-ordained, 4-lay*)
 - Gary Gable – present
 - Pr. Ralph Hamer – present
 - Pr. Nancy Hoover – present
 - Pr. Rebecca Horn – present
 - Pr. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – absent
 - Joyce Long – absent
 - Pr. Amanda McCaffery – absent
 - Andrea Paul – present
 - Michele Peese – present
- Synod Staff
 - DEM Pr. Kevin Shock – present
- Guests
 - none