

*Minutes of the 34th Allegheny Synod Assembly
June 11, 2022
Hosted from the Allegheny Synod Office via Zoom
Built on a Rock*

Welcome

Bishop Paula Schmitt opened the 34th Allegheny Synod Assembly at 8:45am via Zoom

Adoption of the 2021 Minutes

Upon motion by Bill Layton, seconded from the floor of the assembly

- SA22.06.03 - to adopt the minutes of the 2021 Synod Assembly as presented... the motion is adopted

Adoption of the Agenda

Upon motion by Bishop, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- SA22.06.04 – to adopt the agenda for the 2022 Synod Assembly... the motion is adopted

Rules of Procedural (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 7 & 8)

Upon motion by Bishop Schmitt, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- SA22.06.05 – to adopt the Rules of Procedure for the Synod Assembly ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Vice President Ann Ferry, seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- SA22.06.06 - To give voice & vote to the UCC pastors & the ELCA Vicars for this Assembly... the motion is adopted

Plenary Session #1

Introductions

- Dr. Ryan Cumming – ELCA representative
- Synod Officers
- Synod Assembly Parliamentarian – Sam Clapper, of counsel
- Asst. to the Bishop/DEM Pr. Kevin Shock
- Assembly Committee Chair Jene Flegel
- Cam Ron Video – Johnstown
- Dr. Pat Savage – R&C Committee chair

Report of the Bishop – (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 36 & 37)

- A Pastoral conversation with the Synod
- Rebuild, reunite & revive
- Matthew 7:24 – built on a rock
- What tools do you have, how will you support our rebuilding project

- An invitation to you, about how your gifts will contribute to our rebuilding project
- With Christ as our foundation, anything is possible

Prayer & 1st ballot

Report of the Vice President – Ann Ferry (*2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 51*)

- Change is a good thing... Bishop Paula & DEM Kevin
- Praying that we use the gifts to be the light of the world to our neighbors

Report of the Synod Secretary – Dave Finney (*2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 52 & 53*)

Report of the Synod Treasurer – Bill Layton (*2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 72*)

- The Audit – an unqualified audit (the highest audit grade available)
 - No evidence of fraud or theft
- Budget Report
 - Total mission support has been a 2% drop per year in mission support
 - Ordained Staff Sabbatical – a new line in the budget
 - Travel expenses are on the rise, our forecast may need to be revised
 - We are returning some of our Partners to pre-COVID levels, owing to a strong year-end increase in mission support
 - We continue to see the need to withdraw \$30,000 annually from our investments, in order to balance our budget
- Compensation & Benefits Manual
 - A 5% increase to the recommended compensation for the next fiscal year
 - Some minor changes in verbiage in the Manual

Report of the 1st ballot – Pr. Glen Foster

Q1 – ***Synod Council*** (lay female) 3-year term, elect 1

- 129 number of valid ballots, 65 minimum to elect
 - Joyce Long – 129 votes
- Joyce Long is re-elected to a second 3-year term on Synod Council

Q2 – ***Synod Council*** (lay male) 3-year term, elect 1

- No election

Q3 – ***Synod Council*** (ordained) 3-year term, elect 1

- 132 number of valid ballots, 67 minimum to elect
 - Rev. Becky Horn – 69 votes
 - Rev. Marth Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – 63 votes
- The Rev. Becky Horn is re-elected to a second 3-year term on Synod Council

Q4 – ***Synod Council*** (youth) 2-year term, elect 1

- No election

- Q5 – **Consultation Committee** (clergy male) 6-year term, elect 1
- No election
- Q6 – **Consultation Committee** (clergy female) 4-year term, elect 1
- No election
- Q7 – **Discipline Committee** (lay male) 6-year term, elect 1
- 120 number of valid ballots, 61 minimum number to elect
 - Tom Horn – 120 votes
 - Tom Horn is re-elected to a second 6-year term on the Discipline Committee¹
- Q8 – **Discipline Committee** (lay female) 6-year term, elect 1
- No election
- Q9 – **Discipline Committee** (clergy female) 4-year term, elect 1
- No election
- Q10 – **Mission Endowment Fund Committee**, 3-year term, elect 1
- 125 number of valid ballots, 63 minimum number to elect
 - Allan Ilgen – 125 votes
 - Allen Ilgen is elected to a 3-year term on the MEF Committee
- Q11 – **Mission Endowment Fund Committee**, 2-year term, elect 1
- 126 number of valid ballots, 64 minimum number to elect
 - William Lonsinger – 126 votes
 - William Lonsinger is elected to a 2-year term on the MEF Committee
- Q12 – **Mission Endowment Fund Committee**, 1-year term, elect 1
- 130 number of valid ballots, 66 minimum number to elect
 - Edward Jenkins – 130 votes
 - Edward Jenkins is elected to a 1-year term on the MEF Committee
- Q13 – **Synod Council** (ordained) 2-year term, elect 1
- 137 number of valid ballots, 69 minimum number to elect
 - Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – 137 votes
 - Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte is elected to a 2-year term on Synod Council
- Q 14 – **Synod Council** (ordained) 1-year term, elect 1
- 136 number of valid ballots, 69 minimum number to elect
 - Rev. Ralph Hamer – 136 votes
 - Rev. Ralph Hamer is elected to a 1-year term on Synod Council

¹ This election was disallowed as per provision **+S11.03**. of the Allegheny Synod Constitution, which prohibits consecutive re-election to the Discipline Committee. Mr. Horn was subsequently appointed to a 6-year term of service on the Consultation Committee as per **SC22.07.05**.

ELCA Churchwide Representative Report - Dr. Ryan Cumming²

Acts 2:1-6, 41-47 – the Day of Pentecost

Your ministry in the Allegheny Synod empowers this church, in 2021 the Allegheny Synod forwarded \$303,293.00 to the ELCA

- *Gloria de Dios* – a path to a new Spanish speaking congregation in our Synod
- *ELCA Fund for Leaders* scholarship program supports students of tremendous promise attending ELCA seminaries.
- *ELCA World Hunger* - \$2.3 million in food, clean water, education, public policy advocating & more
- *ELCA Public Policy Advocacy*... <https://www.elca.org/advocacy>
- *AMMPARO* is a holistic, whole church commitment by the ELCA, as a church in the world, to accompany children today and in the future... <https://www.elca.org/ammparo>

Churchwide Synod Assembly Video – Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Virtual Worship - video from First Lutheran, Altoona PA

Plenary Session #2

Report off Reference & Counsel – Dr. Pat Savage

Presentation of three items for consideration of the 2022 Synod Assembly

- **SA21.06.01** – Allegheny Synod Bishop’s Sabbatical
- **SA22.06.01** – Memorial to Restructure the Governance of the ELCA
- **SA22.06.02** – Memorial to Recommend a Structured Process for the Pre-Assembly Identification of Nominees for the Election of a Presiding Bishop

ELCA Churchwide Representative Report of Home Area (World Hunger) - Dr. Ryan Cumming

- Providing tools, seed, protection of rights & other resources
- Hunger is a symptom of much deeper inequities
- Food alone will not resolve inequities
- The war in Ukraine is having a rippling effect on the global food system
- Everyone needs to have food to eat & a seat at the table
- We can’t end hunger with food
- Holistic, transformative work at ELCA World Hunger
- Food is a symbol of hope
- An interlocking crisis around the world
- ELCA World Hunger... <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/ELCA-World-Hunger>

Clergy Anniversary Recognition

² Ryan P. Cumming, Ph.D., is the program director for hunger education with ELCA World Hunger. In this role, he directs the development of ELCA World Hunger’s educational resources, research trends in hunger and poverty and supports communications with partners and congregations. In addition, Ryan teaches courses on theological ethics and religious studies at Central Michigan University and Loyola University Chicago. Ryan is a former interim editor of the Journal of Lutheran Ethics and was a member of the ELCA’s criminal justice social statement task force.

Five years

- Pr. Christine Roe, Faith First Cooperative
- Pr. Vicki Beilfuss, Holy Shepherd Parish

Ten years

- Pr. Brandon Cian, St. James, Huntingdon
- Pr. David Bowmen, Zion, Hollidaysburg
- Pr. Kevin McNamara, St. Paul, Mundy's Corner
- Pr. Traci Marriot, St. Matthew, Martinsburg

Fifteen years

- Pr. Nathan Pile, Camp Sequanota
- Pr. Susan Williamson, Ferguson Township Lutheran Ministry
- Pr. Tiffany Marvich, Williamsburg Parish

Twenty years

- Pr. Elisa Osman, ALSM, The Oaks
- Pr. Will Osman, St. John, Bellefonte

Twenty-five years

- Pr. Eli Hess, Trinity, Altoona
- Pr. Susan Haas Yatta, retired

Thirty years

- Deacon Alicia Anderson, Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State

Thirty-five years

- Pr. Denise Arpino, retired

Forty years

- Pr. P. Stevens Lynn, retired
- Pr. Ron Miller, Trinity, State College

Forty-five years

- Pr. Barry Folmar, First, Altoona

Sixty years

- Pr. Norman Gindelsperger, retired

Congregational Anniversary Recognition

125 years

- Mount Olivet Lutheran Church, Altoona
- Benscreek Lutheran Church, Hollsopple

150 years

- First English Lutheran Church, Tyrone
- First Lutheran Church, Portage
- Graef's Lutheran Church, Cairnbrook

Compensation & Benefits Manual

Upon motion by Susan Younkin (New Centerville Parish), seconded from the floor of the Assembly

- **SA22.06.07** - That we increase compensation for rostered ministers to 8% (the proposed base rate of inflation)... the motion is lost
 - 141 total votes: 49 yes votes, 90 no votes, 2 abstentions

Report of Pr. Nathan Pile & Camp Sequanota (2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 114)

- A Word of Thanks – In the summer of 2022 Sequanota is preparing to begin the 75th summer of camping
- Together – Sequanota began in 1947 (just after WW2) when people came together to live out the mission of God’s Church,
- Celebrating - the lives & the impact our ministry has had

Report from Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State (2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 108)

- Video presentation by Vicar Alisha Anderson
- Campus ministry during & post COVID

Report from ALSM (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 101 - 103)

- Video presentation by Dr. Pat Savage
- The ability to provide care for those whose resources are depleted

Report of Asst to the Bishop/DEM – Rev. Kevin Shock (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 38 - 39)

- Built on a Rock in times of war
- Christ’s evidence of new life
- Tell the story of what God is already doing thru you
- New life does not come without death
- We are not without hope!
- Built on a rock the church shall stand, even when most pews are empty. Working with less than what was planned, God’s people still are proclaiming: exploring how to serve & bless, speaking of hope amid distress, sharing our new life in Jesus.

Prayer & 2nd ballot

Resolution **SA21.06.01** – Ordained Synod Staff Sabbatical³

- (2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 118)
- 138 number of valid ballots, 70 minimum number to pass
 - 115 Yes votes, 23 No votes... the Resolution is adopted

³ Upon motion by Gary Gable, seconded by Andrea Paul - **SC22.05.06** –to convey to the 2022 Synod Assembly resolution **SA21.06.01**. Funding for this resolution will include establishment of an annual \$1,000 transfer of funds to the *Ordained Synod Staff Sabbatical Fund*, capped & maintained at \$5,000, along with a recommendation to adopt the Resolution... the motion is adopted

SA22.06.08 – Motion to adopt the 2023-24 Synod Operating Spending Plan (Budget)⁴

- (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 73 - 76)
- 135 number of valid ballots, 68 minimum number to pass
 - 131 Yes votes, 4 No votes... the motion is adopted

SA22.06.09 – To adopt the 2023 Allegheny Synod Compensation & Benefits Manual⁵

- (2022 Bulletin of Reports, pages 77 - 94)
- 137 number of valid ballots, 69 minimum number to pass
 - 125 Yes votes, 12 No votes... the motion is adopted

Memorial **SA22.06.01** – Memorial to Restructure the Governance of the ELCA⁶

- (2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 119)
- 129 number of valid ballots, 65 minimum number to pass
 - 88 Yes votes, 41 No votes... the Memorial is adopted & conveyed to the Office of the Secretary ELCA

Memorial **SA22.06.02** – Memorial to Recommend a Structured Process for the Pre-Assembly Identification of Nominees for the Election of a Presiding Bishop⁷

- (2022 Bulletin of Reports, page 120)
- 130 number of valid ballots, 66 minimum number to pass
 - 77 Yes votes, 53 No votes... the Memorial is adopted & conveyed to the Office of the Secretary ELCA

⁴ Upon motion by Pr. Nancy Hoover, seconded by Allen Stump - **SC22.05.08** – to accept the fiscal-year 2023-24 budget as presented by the Finance Committee & convey this budget to the 2022 Synod Assembly, along with a recommendation to adopt... the motion is adopted

⁵ Upon motion by Pr. Amanda McCaffrey, seconded by Pr. Beck Horn - **SC22.03.03** - to receive the updated 2023 Compensation Manual from the Finance Committee & to convey this document to the 2022 Allegheny Synod Assembly, along with the recommendation to adopt... the motion is adopted

⁶ The Synod Council considered the **Memorial to Restructure the Governance of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America** submitted by Bp. James Dunlop, Lower Susquehanna Synod – ELCA. This Memorial will be placed in the 2022 Bulletin of Reports as motion **SA22.06.01** for consideration by the 2022 Allegheny Synod Assembly.

⁷ Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, seconded by Andrea Paul - **SC.22.05.02** – received the Memorial to Recommend a Structured Process for the Pre- Assembly Identification of Nominees for the Election of a Presiding Bishop (**SA22.06.02**) & to convey this Memorial to the Committee on Reference & Counsel for their recommendation & to the 2022 Allegheny Synod Assembly for deliberation... the motion is adopted

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION 2022

WHEREAS, the Allegheny Synod has met in Assembly and fulfilled its business;

WHEREAS, the Holy Spirit has enabled the Assembly in its action to fulfill its theme to be “Built on a Rock” in our Allegheny Synod and in all of the world;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Allegheny Synod Assembly convening via Zoom on June 11 expresses its gratitude:

- to the synod assembly planning committee for arranging the agenda of the “Brady Bunch” format to address business, education, and worship;
- to Bishop Paula for her calm demeanor and her leadership of our beloved synod during turbulent times and for her encouragement to celebrate abundance and provide more support for our congregations and ministries as we move toward a culture of generosity;
- to Camp Sequanota staff for opening our Assembly with joyous music;
- to Pastor Kevin Shock for reminding us we need to point to the future and the coming of Jesus;
- to Bill Layton for his financial expertise and for his thorough explanation of the budget proposal;
- to our synod partners for their ministries among us and for sharing their stories of how they touch lives;
- to Ann Ferry who calls on us to meld together all of our talents and skills to serve our mission;
- to David Finney, our synod secretary, for keeping our records organized;
- to the technology crew for dealing with technological challenges of a virtual synod assembly;
- to the Help Team for responding to our questions;
- to Ryan Cumming, the ELCA Program Director of Hunger Education, for his informative report on the status of World Hunger and Advocacy in the ELCA. Every one of us should have a place at the table;
- to the rostered persons and congregations celebrating anniversaries of ministry;
- to all the faithful servants who serve on synod committees and synod council;
- to Pastor Glenn Foster for overseeing the elections of important synod offices;
- to the pastors who will serve as conference deans. Thank you for your leadership;
- to Bishop Eaton for her message of encouragement to move forward to rebuild; and
- to some behind the scenes assistants among us (to name a few)....Michelle Bossler for distribution of needed materials for our Zoom assembly; to the Caffeine Addiction Counselor, Bruno Moore; to the clock watcher, Colette O’Day; to the Chief Information Officer, Otto Delupe; to the Long-Range Planning Director, Kay Sera; to the philosopher, Wanda Y. Datso; to the prayer coach, Denise Hurt; to the proofreader, Erin Spelling; to the self-esteem coach, Mia Culpa; to the solicitor of new ideas, Obie Quiet, to the staff chaplain, Neil Down : and to all those persons who once again enabled us to conduct a successful and prayerful assembly filled with “Zoom” fellowship.

This Assembly called upon us to remember that we are built on a rock. May we remember the strength we share in the promise of Christ with all believers as we move forward together to fulfill our mission to serve in the world.

Bishop Paula Schmitt declared the 34th Allegheny Synod Assembly closed at 3:47pm