

## *Report of Synod Council Actions*

July 2019 – June 2020

### *July 2019*

Upon Motion by Pr. David Bowman, seconded by Andrea Paul

- *SC19.07.01* – that the meeting agenda be adopted as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Marlin Plymette, seconded by Pr. Judy Simonson

- *SC19.07.02* – that the minutes of the May Synod Council meeting be accepted as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Marlin Plymette, seconded by Thom Horn

- *SC 19.07.03* – the Allegheny Synod Council is revoking Susan Mentzer's status as an authorized lay worship leader of the Allegheny Synod, effective July 27, 2019... the motion is adopted by unanimous vote

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Marlin Plymette

- *SC19.07.04* – upon recommendation of Bishop Rhyne, the Allegheny Synod Council is removing St. Paul Lutheran Church (1348 Virginia Ave. Johnstown, PA) from the roster of congregations of this church, as per provision *9.23*. of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, effective July 27, 2019... the motion is adopted by unanimous vote

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- *SC19.07.05* – that the following persons be approved to serve on the Sequanota Board; Crystal Schafer/St Luke-Rockwood, Elizabeth Horner/Laurel Trinity-Jennerstown, Jimmy Fogle/Altoona & Tom Mitchell/St. David's-Davidsville... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Thom Horn

- *SC19.07.06* – Synod Council affirms two ordinations... the motion is adopted
  1. Curt Wingard to serve as pastor at St. John (501214) located in Millheim & Salem (501200) located in Aaronsburg – Nittany Conference
  2. David Wright to serve as pastor at St. Peters (201541) located in Osterburg & Messiah (201538) located in Osterburg – Bedford Conference.

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, second Casey Colledge

- **SC19.07.07** – that the Rev. Susan Winger be granted On-leave-from-call status, effective May 1, 2019... the motion is adopted

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

- **SC19.07.08** – the Synod Council affirms the dissolution of Parish partners; St. Luke (401139) located in Lily & First (401141) located in Portage ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Andrea Paul

- **SC19.08.01**- that the following *Memorandum* is accepted by the Allegheny Synod Council & conveyed to our Auditors, as a valid explanation of the origins of & the difference between Restricted & Non-restricted Mission Support... the motion is adopted (*email*)

*The primary source of income for the Allegheny Synod comes from Mission Support contributions which are received from the congregations of the Synod. As a Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Allegheny Synod shares 50% of all unrestricted Mission Support received from congregations with the ELCA national Church. In 2009, the ELCA had a change in roster policy which allowed pastors who were in publically accountable life-long monogamous same gender relationships to serve on the roster of the ELCA. There were a number of individuals and congregations across the church who did not agree with this policy change.*

*Some congregations across the ELCA chose to leave the church body. In the Allegheny Synod, we had two congregations leave in 2010, and another congregation leave in 2013. There were some congregations who remained that still were opposed to the 2009 ELCA decision. A number of those congregations decided to restrict their mission support in the wake of the 2009 decision.*

*This meant that the congregations would continue to send Mission Support to the Allegheny Synod, but they would restrict their money to use only in the Allegheny Synod. The Synod was, therefore, not allowed to forward a percentage of the Mission Support received to the national church.*

*As a result, there are two categories of Mission Support which is received in the Allegheny Synod. Unrestricted Mission Support is that which is gathered by the Synod and 50% of those funds are shared with the ELCA. Restricted Mission Support are those funds which are sent to the Synod with the instruction that these funds cannot be shared with the ELCA. Currently there are 10 congregations of the Allegheny Synod who restrict all of their Mission Support for Synod use. There are 2 congregations that place a restriction on a portion of their Mission Support. That portion is restricted to the Synod; the remainder may be shared with the ELCA.*

## **September 2019**

Upon Motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Rebecca Horn

- **SC19.09.01** – to adopt the meeting agenda as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Andrea Paul, seconded by Thom Horn

- *SC19.09.02* – to accept the minutes of the July Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Dave Bowman, seconded by Thon Horn...

- *SC19.09.03* – That Bishop Michael Rhyne, the Rev. Paula Schmitt and Michelle Bossler be granted a five-month full salary and benefits severance package (September 1, 2020 thru January 31, 2021) if their call/employment is not continued in the Allegheny Synod Office of the Bishop. This severance package is offered so that these individuals might have time & financial security during their time of securing a new call or new employment. Upon beginning a new call or new employment (within the severance package time period) the severance package will conclude. This severance package will include any & all accrued, unused vacation time & other types of personal time off... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- *SC19.09.04* – that the Rev. Suzanne Morelli be granted retirement status, effective November 1, 2019... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Rebecca Horn

- *SC19.09.05* - To adopt the following memorandum... the motion is adopted

September 21, 2019

Memorandum

Restricted funds of \$105,000

In DED.9120.0 Seminarian Support – Permanent Restriction

Documented History of DED.9120.0

For Adoption by the Allegheny Synod Council

Synod Dedicated Fund – DED.9120.0 Seminarian Support – Permanent Restriction was created in 1999 by an original gift of \$62,889.91 from Jerome Lutheran Church.

Documentation for this gift comes from a letter dated Sept. 13, 1999. The letter was written by Allegheny Synod Treasurer, Paul Hunter, to Mrs. Patricia Mayak, President of the Jerome Lutheran Church Council. (Letter Attached)

In the letter, Treasurer Hunter thanks Mrs. Mayak for a postal money order sent to the Allegheny Synod for the amount of \$62,889.41. Treasurer Hunter states ‘the income produced by this fund will be used to provide financial assistance to students from the Allegheny Synod who are preparing for the ordained ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’.

Treasurer Hunter also states that the fund, “will be used for the purposes that were discussed at the final meeting of the Council”. Treasurer Hunter does not list in this letter what the purposes which were discussed were in this letter.

At the Allegheny Synod Assembly in 2000, the Assembly adopted SA.00.619. This resolution created the ‘Mission Endowment Fund’ of the Allegheny Synod. The principal \$62,889.41 from Jerome Lutheran Church was the catalyst for the creation of the Fund.

SA.00.619 establishes parameters for the administration of the fund. It states that “Unrestricted gifts and bequests to the fund shall accumulate until a principal in the amount of \$100,000 is achieved, after which the income generated from the investment of the principal shall be expended.”

The original \$62,889.41 was invested and allowed to grow to an amount of \$100,000. Those funds are the first \$100,000 of DED.9120.0.

The other \$5,000 in DED.9120.0 comes from a gift to the Synod which was received in 1995. There is no paperwork or documentation for this gift. We have no record of who provided the gift. However, our audits from the mid 2000s reference this \$5000 gift being received and the proceeds from investment are to be used to support the mission of the Synod. The \$5000 has been added to the \$100,000 to create the \$105,000 in DED.9120.0.

Interest from the investment of this fund can be used for the education of seminarians. The principal must not be touched except in extreme circumstance as outlined by SA.00.619.

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- **SC19.09.06** – upon recommendation of the Finance Committee, to transfer \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Seminary Support Fund, allowing for disbursement to seminarians in November, while maintaining the minimum balance required for investment in the fund... the motion is adopted

### ***November 2019***

Upon Motion by Pr. David Bowman, seconded by Bill Layton

- **SC19.11.01** – to adopt the meeting agenda as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Rebecca Horn, seconded by Pr. Judy Simonson

- **SC19.11.02** – to accept the minutes of the September Synod Council meeting as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. David Bowman, seconded by Pr. Rebecca Horn

- **SC19.11.03** – to grant On Leave from Call status to the Rev. Joshua Rinus effective November 16, 2019... the motion is adopted with two abstentions (Marlin Plymette & Bishop Rhyne)

Upon motion by Lori Dunkle, seconded by Casey Colledge

- **SC19.11.04** - To engage the Allegheny Synod Consultation Committee in a review of the circumstances surrounding Pr. Joshua Rinus dismissal & report back to the Synod Council the Committee's findings & recommendations ... the motion is adopted with two abstentions (Marlin Plymette & Bishop Rhyne)

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Dave Finney

- **SC19.11.05** – to extend a Term-Call<sup>1</sup> to the Rev. Rebecca Ehrlich for an 8-month term, as a part-time Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) in the Allegheny Synod (January 1 thru August 31, 2020)...the motion is adopted (7 in favor, 6 opposed & 2 abstentions – Bishop Rhyne & Marlin Plymette)

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Bill Layton

- **SC19.11.06** – to define this Term-Call of Pr. Ehrlich as 20 to 25 hours per week... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Andrea Paul

- **SC19.11.07** - to change the January meeting date to January 11, 2020... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Lori Dunkle

- **SC19.11.08** - to grant the Rev. Bill Deist retirement status, effective January 1, 2020... the motion is adopted

### ***January 2020***

Upon Motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Thom Horn

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

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

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

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**.

---

<sup>1</sup> Calling a Pastor for a specific term: Allegheny Synod Constitution **+S14.24**.

- 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

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

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

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

## ***February 2020***

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***.)

## ***March 2020***

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.01*** – to adopt the meeting agenda as amended... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.02*** – to accept the minutes of the January Synod Council meeting as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Becky Horn, seconded by a member of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.03*** – that the twelve recommended constitutional changes received from the 2019 CWA be accepted & conveyed to the 2020 Allegheny Synod Assembly, along with the recommendation to adopt... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.04*** – that Synod Assembly originally scheduled for June 5 & 6, 2020 be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a new date to be announced when determined... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.05*** – that the newly elected Bishop take office on January 4, 2021... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- ***SC20.03.06*** – that the severance package adopted for Bishop Rhyne, Pr. Paula & Micelle Bossler (***SC19.09.03***) will have new effective dates; beginning January 1, 2021 thru May 31, 2021... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. David Bowman, seconded by Thom Horn

- **SC20.03.07** – that Bishop Rhyne engage in conversation with fellow Region 8 Bishops, exploring options to join together in cooperative ventures & or merger ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Judy Simonson, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC20.03.08** - to accept the recommendation of the Allegheny Synod Consultation Committee & convey this information to Pr. Rinas... the motion is adopted, with Bishop Rhyne abstaining from the vote.

Upon motion & second by members of Synod Council

- **SC20.03.09** - That the \$2,000 distribution from the Ramsey Estate originally designated for use by the planned *Women's Retreat @ Sequanota in April 2020*, (**SC20.01.05**) now be designated for use by Camp Sequanota... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion & second by members of Synod Council

- **SC20.03.10** – to affirm the call of Tyler Graham on March 1, 2020, to serve as pastor of the Salisbury Parish (Laurel Highlands Conference) ... the motion is adopted

### ***April 2020***

Upon motion by Marlin Plymette, seconded by Pr. Sharon Erb

- **SC20.04.01** – that the Synod Assembly & Bishop's election be held on September 11 & 12, 2020 at the Blair County Convention Center... the motion is adopted

Upon motion & second by Synod Council

- **SC20.04.02** – to rescind Synod Council motion **SC20.04.01**... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Dave Finney, seconded by Thom Horn

- **SC20.04.03** - that the following two Continuing Resolution be adopted... the motion is adopted by a greater than 2/3 vote.
  - **S7.11.A20**. - This Allegheny Synod may hold the Allegheny Synod Assembly by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.
  - **S7.11.B20**. - The Allegheny Synod Assembly and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous



aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

### **May 2020**

Upon Motion by Marlin Plymette & second by Casey Colledge

- **SC20.05.01** – to adopt the meeting agenda... the motion is adopted

Upon Motion by Dave Finney, second Thom Horn

- **SC20.05.02** – to accept the minutes of the March & April Synod Council meetings as presented... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Marlin Plymette, second by Thom Horn

- **SC20.05.03** - to adopt & implement the *Covenant of Understanding*... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Rebecca Horn, seconded by Bishop Rhyne

- **SC20.05.04** – that the Rev. Hans-Peter Helmers be granted retired status on the roster of Ministers of Word & Sacrament, effective May 31, 2020... the motion is adopted.

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

- **SC20.05.05** – that the Rev. Karen Ward be appointed as part-time interim to Christ Lutheran/Buffalo Mills (Madley) effective June 21, 2020 ... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Thom Horne, seconded by Joyce Long

- **SC20.05.06** – that the \$7,500 COVID-19 grant received from the ELCA be distributed as follows; \$5,000 to *Sequanota*, \$1,500 to *PSU Campus Ministries* & \$1,000 to *Gloria de Dios*, a Synodically Authorized Worshiping Community exploration, within the Latinx community in Centre County... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Dave Bowman, seconded by Pr. Sharon Erb

- **SC20.05.07** – That the budget as amended by Synod Council on May 20, 2020 (for the remainder of 2020-21 fiscal year) be adopted... the motion is adopted by majority vote (two nay votes – V.P. Gary Gable, Pr. Judy Simonson)

### **June 2020**

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Pr. Sharon Erb

- **SC20.06.01** – that Synod Council hereby grants approval for the congregation of Trinity – Bedford to terminate its relationship with the ELCA pursuant to

the terms laid out in *9.60*, *9.61.d* & *9.62* of the Constitution, Bylaws & Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Thom Horn

- *SC20.06.02* – that Synod Council acknowledges receipt of the written resignations of the Rev. David M. Weinhold & the Rev. Raymond E. Short from the Roster of Ministers of Word & Sacrament of the Allegheny Synod & the ELCA effective June 15, 2020... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Bishop Rhyne, seconded by Casey Colledge

- *SC20.06.03* – that Synod Council expresses our thanks to Lori Dunkle for her service as a Lay Worship Leader & Synod Council Member. Lori will continue as a member of Trinity – Bedford (a non-ELCA congregation), we therefore offer her continued blessings & bid her farewell... the motion is adopted

Upon motion by Pr. Judy Simonson, seconded by Pr. David Bowman

- *SC20.06.04* – that we maintain Pr. Paula Schmitt's full-time status on the staff of the Allegheny Synod thru September 2020 & Synod Assembly. Toward the end of the third quarter 2020 the Synod Council will reassess the Synod's financial status & evaluate options to continue full-time status for Pr. Paula thru December 2020. Funding for this continuation of full-time status to be appropriated from ELCA Mission Support as needed... the motion is adopted