

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Southeastern Synod Council Minutes
September 20-21, 2019**

SESSION I: FRIDAY 1:00 – 6:00 PM

IN ATTENDANCE

Bishop Kevin Strickland
Mr. Imran Siddiqui, Vice President
Rev. Randy Jones, Secretary
Mr. Steve Gehret, Treasurer
Ms. Roxann Thompson
Ms. Elaine Schwartz,
Mr David Haigler
Mr. Stephen Schrader
Ms. Emily Jackson
Mr. Noah Ohsiek
Mr. Ed Ringer
Rev. Beverly Shaw
Rev. Terri Landers
Rev. Mica Koli
Ms. Amanda Spangler
Rev. Tonie Robinson

GUESTS

Rev. Dr. Everett Flanigan, Assistant to the Bishop/Director of LTCA
Dr. Gary Pederson, ELCA Church Council Representative
Rev. Karen Boda, Assistant to the Bishop
Ms. Melissa Fuller, Assistant to the Bishop/Director for Evangelical Mission
Rev. Michael Jannett, Assistant to the Bishop
Rev. Jill Henning, Assistant to the Bishop

I. CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS

Vice President Siddiqui called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

II. ORDER FOR OPENING: BISHOP KEVIN STRICKLAND

The bishop led the council in the liturgy for the opening of a meeting.

III. ELECTION OF NOMINEE FOR THE SYNOD COUNCIL

SC2019.09.01 - Elected The Rev. Antoinette Robinson, as nominated by Bishop Kevin Strickland, to be the Synod Council representative from Conference 8 until the close of the 2020 Southeastern Synod Assembly.

Additional Information: The position of Synod Council representative from Conference 8 became vacant with The Rev. Monica Weber transferred outside the Southeastern Synod. The Rev. Antoinette Robinson was recommended by persons in Conference 8. She is, however, nominated by Bishop Kevin Strickland in accordance with bylaw S10.03.02, which specifies the following procedure for filling such vacancies:

S10.03.02 - When a position on the Synod Council becomes vacant due to the resignation or death of a member or under circumstances not otherwise addressed within the constitution, bylaws, or continuing resolutions, the synod bishop shall nominate an individual to fill the vacant position until the next regular meeting of the Synod Assembly. Such person shall take office immediately upon election by the Synod Council as provided in S10.03.01.e. Such interim service shall not be considered a term for the purposes of bylaw S10.07.22.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

SC2019.09.02 - Approved the agenda as presented.

V. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

SC2019.09.03 - Approve the minutes of the Southeastern Synod Council meetings of May 30 & June 2, 2019 as presented.

VI. REPORT OF THE BISHOP

A. Synod Council Orientation, Part 1

Purpose and responsibilities of the Synod Council; introduction of staff and their responsibilities.

B. Report of Bishop's Activities

“We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your people is our call and choice, and in this mission we, the church, rejoice, alleluia!” (To Be Your Presence)

As I have begun this six-year term to serve as your bishop, I do so, knowing, that we get to do this work and this ministry together and not alone. I do so, knowing, we will walk together faithfully these next years and be Christ hands and voice, serving people, and in that service—we live out God’s mission and all can rejoice. Alleluia!

Staffing

August 31st, we bid farewell to Julian Gordy who served faithfully as bishop of this synod for twelve years. We also bid farewell to Pastor Ben Moravitz who completed his call as Assistant to the Bishop. We pray for both as they transition into retirement. Mr. Wayne Fell completed his work as Director for Evangelical Mission and Assistant to the Bishop on September 13th. Pastor John Mocko completes his work as half-time Director for Evangelical Mission on September 30th. Pastor Dale Sillik, who has been serving as an Interim Assistant to the Bishop ends his work officially on August 31st but has agreed to help two to three congregations on the Georgia coast finish their transition processes. Ms. Melissa Fuller Sims will end her work on staff as the Candidacy Support person as of September

30th. Lastly, Synod Fiscal Advisor, Dr. Sandra Gustavson, will end her work on September 30th and will have a limited role with payroll and limited advising to the bishop. We give thanks for all of these faithful folks who helped this synod in our journey together as disciples of Jesus.

In this transition period, Ms. Carolyn Davis, Ms. Holly Liersch, and Deacon Jeanette Burgess will continue in their roles until December. Then a review will occur by the bishop in consultation with the Personnel Committee as to next directions with support staff. Assistant to the Bishop and Director of LTCA, Pastor Everett Flannigan will also remain in his role, as will Director for Advocacy, Mr. Hilton Austin.

We warmly welcome new staff who begin their work on September 1st: Pastor Jill Henning will serve as the Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership and Administration, Pastor Michael Jannett will serve as the Assistant to the Bishop for Formation and Communication, and Pastor Karen Boda will serve as Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Life. Prior to the Synod Council, I hope to announce the fulltime and halftime Directors for Evangelical Mission and Assistants to the Bishop. Those interviews are currently taking place.

Offices

The bishop's office moved to a new room within the synod office and I am all moved in. The administrative staff will remain in the offices they have had. The assistants to the bishop, Pastors Henning and Boda will share an office and Pastor Jannett with the DEM's will share an office. Where most will still work from home primarily, I wanted them to have a more dedicated space within the synod office.

Lease with St. John's

Along with Synod Vice President Siddiqui and Synod Fiscal Advisor Gustavson, I met with leaders and pastor of St. John's to discuss the lease in late August. The Executive Committee has also met about this. More information will come in reports. The Media Room is being worked on: desks, chairs, and monitors have been purchased and the room is in the process of being outfitted and prepared for use.

More Follow-Up from Churchwide Assembly

Specific Legislative Actions are posted by the day on which they occurred. These are the official motions and amendments and are recorded without commentary. Specific days of prime interest:

- Monday, August 5: election of the presiding bishop, Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton (6 year term)
- Wednesday August 7: reception of the memorial from Metropolitan New York concerning sanctuary (please see below the specific motion as passed)
- Thursday, August 8: adoption of the policy statement: A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment; adoption of Resolution to Commemorate June 17th as a Day of Repentance for the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9; adoption of resolution of the ELCA to Condemn White Supremacy (see full motion below)
- Friday, August 9: adoption of the social statement "Faith, Sexism and Justice; A Call to Action and accompanying implementing resolutions; motions to amend the constitution—most notable being to identify ordination as the entry rite for Ministers of Word and Service (deacons).
- Saturday, August 10: election of secretary, Deacon Sue Rothmeyer. (6 year term)

"Sanctuary Church" and what does that mean? There has been a lot of buzz around this and many congregations and persons are upset. The addendum found on page 4 is the wording of the original memorial that was presented from the Metro-New York Synod and

then amended. The document was subsequently drafted and sent to the congregation of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta from its Senior Pastor, Mark Larson, and is now presented to you as a resource.

Around the Synod

- Participated in a Prayer Vigil against Gun Violence at the GA state capital.
- Met with a host of various pastors and candidates for ministry.
- Presided at the Ordination of Pastor Adam Christian Schultz
- Attended the GA Tech Low Country fundraiser -Preached and Presided around the synod.
- Met with deaneries and spoke specifically about ELCA Sanctuary Church. -Monitored activities of Christ Lutheran Church of Cullman, AL as they are in the process of voting to leave the ELCA.
- Participated in the Candidacy Committee.
- Installed David Hood as Interim Pastor at Advent Lutheran, Murfreesboro, TN.
- Attended the Guatemala Fundraiser.

Installation

October 4, 2019 6:30pm “BBQ with the Bishop” will be at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer and all synod council and spouses are invited to attend.

October 5, 2019 9:00am Southeastern Synod ADLA will host a prayer breakfast in my honor at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer. The Service of Holy Eucharist and Rite of Installation will occur at 2:00pm at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Buckhead. All synod council members are invited and will meet in a private room and then all process in and sit together. I am grateful for the generosity of many individuals and especially for Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, Bishops Guy Erwin and Julian Gordy, St. Paul Lutheran of Maryville and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Nashville, Marietta Deanery, Christus Victor Lutheran Church of Ocean Springs, MS, Pastor Alex Hoffner,

Mr. Mike Franklin, and many more for generously giving to offset the costs of the installation weekend.

Dreaming and Visioning

I would like for us as a synod to do some dreaming and visioning as we step into these next six years together. Thinking about the following things:

- What are obtainable and visionary goals we would like to accomplish in these six years as a synod?
- What areas are we doing well that we would like to continue and strengthen?
- What are areas of ministry that we need to evaluate and decide if it has run its course?
- Where do we believe that God is calling us in these four states of the ELCA to bear witness to the gospel to all people?

Those are just some questions and I know there are more. I would like to start with you as the synod council and then work with the following groups:

- Meet with Synod Council in September
- Possibly form a Strategic Vision Team for the Southeastern Synod
- Meet with Deans in October at Lutheridge during convocation
- Meet with all pastors and deacons at convocation.
- Have conferences and deaneries do some strategic visioning and listening.
- Report back to synod council in winter of 2020.
- Possibly do this type of visioning with the synod assembly.
- Put into place goals and actions in the fall of 2020.

Upcoming major items

- ELCA Conference of Bishops -Installation -Convocation at Lutheridge
- Triennial Central America Global Missions Consultation in Guatemala. Walking together in faith!

Addendum

“Sanctuary Church” and what does it mean?

In terms of “Sanctuary Church” The final motion that was passed with majority

- To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;
- To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy “Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities” (AMMPARO);
- To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and 2019 Churchwide Assembly: Legislative
- To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS, and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;
- To declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body; and
- To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

Let’s take it point by point:

- To receive with gratitude the memorial from the Metropolitan New York Synod concerning sanctuary;

Memorials and resolutions enable this church to address broad policy issues or issues important to God’s mission in the world. Memorials address broad policy issues; resolutions have a narrower focus, requesting consideration or action by individual offices or units, or the Church Council. (A resolution can be the preferred method when an issue requires a timely response.) The churchwide organization and synods of the ELCA use a process to bring forth memorials and resolutions. Memorials and resolutions are one way this church addresses broad policy issues or important issues for God’s mission in the world.

There are three different avenues of communication between the expressions of the ELCA:

1. Synod assemblies to the Churchwide Assembly (12.21.c)
2. Synod councils to the Church Council (14.21.11)
3. Synod councils to a churchwide unit or office, through the Executive Committee of the Church Council. (14.41.01.b)

- To reaffirm the long-term and growing commitment of this church to migrants and refugees and to the policy questions involved, as exemplified most recently in the comprehensive strategy “Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities” (AMMPARO);

AMMPARO is the ELCA strategy to Accompany Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities.

In a holistic, whole church response that connects international and US outcomes, the ELCA has developed this strategy based on the following commitments:

- Uphold and guarantee basic human rights and safety of migrant children and their families;

- Address the root causes of migration in countries from Central America's Northern Triangle and Mexico and the treatment of migrants in transit;
- Work toward just and humane policies affecting migrants in and outside the U.S.; and
- Engage as a church body with all of its companions, affiliates and partners to respond to the migration situation and its causes and to advocate for migrant children and their families.

What's in the strategy?

See the full document at elca.org/Resources/AMMPARO. See the Executive Summary here.

- To recognize that the ELCA in congregations, synods and the churchwide organization are already taking the actions requested by this memorial; and

Currently, the only ministry partner we are actively supporting that focuses on Central America is For the Niños medical mission. In terms of immigration in the wider sense, obviously we partner with Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service through Inspiritus and its Circle of Welcome refugee resettlement program. C2019 Churchwide Assemble

- To request that appropriate staff on the AMMPARO team, LIRS, and the Domestic Mission, Global Mission, and Mission Advancement units review the existing strategies and practices by the five current sanctuary synods and develop a plan for additional tools that provide for education and discernment around sanctuary;

Currently, Southeastern synod is not a "sanctuary synod," but the Southeastern Synod Immigration Task Force relates to AMMPARO.

- To declare the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America a sanctuary church body; and

Here's where things get tricky. The word "sanctuary" means different things to different people. It can mean simply offering a safe gathering place for all people or it can mean actively sheltering someone from prosecution or deportation, or any range of things in between.

Traditionally, "sanctuary" is a term that has been used to describe the protection of individuals in a place of worship. With respect to immigrants, different faith groups may use this term in different ways, but sanctuary is generally considered to involve providing comfort and assistance to immigrants and their family members at risk of apprehension by federal immigration authorities or mistreatment by others.

In recent years, many sanctuary congregations have focused on assisting immigrants who are facing deportation who are in the process of pursuing alternative legal avenues for which they may be eligible, to stop or suspend their removal. In these cases, sanctuary is provided while the immigrant, supported by the congregation and broad community, fights for relief through avenues such as asylum or other humanitarian relief, cancellation of removal, a U or T visa application, or a request for the exercise of prosecutorial discretion.

"Sanctuary" has no legal standing, despite historical tradition. The ancient concept of churches being sanctuaries from the long arm of the law was never as absolute as portrayed in novels and movies, and never made it into the legal precedents of the United States. There are isolated cases in the news where law enforcement authorities tolerated someone staying in a church to avoid deportation, but those situations have nothing to do with police or CIS being legally barred by a claim of "sanctuary." They can, and sometimes do, result in the person being arrested and taken from

the church premises. For church members or pastors, interfering with the authorities in such a situation could become a matter of civil disobedience. They could be arrested and prosecuted.

The federal criminal harboring law prohibits concealing, harboring, or shielding from detection (or attempting to conceal, harbor, or shield) an undocumented immigrant, when done with knowledge or reckless regard of the immigrant's unlawful status. Further, the federal criminal transporting law prohibits transporting or moving (or attempting to transport or move) an undocumented immigrant from one place to another, with knowledge or reckless disregard of the fact of the immigrant's unlawful status, where the transportation helps the immigrant remain in the United States unlawfully. (Source: American Civil Liberties Union Sanctuary FAQ: attached).

In terms of the actions of the ELCA assembly, nothing in this action binds synods, congregations, or any other organizations affiliated with the church; it binds only Churchwide. So, it does not require congregations to do anything.

But if a congregation wishes to live into being a "sanctuary church," there are examples of activities that would avoid potential criminal liability. Some of these activities Lutheran Church of the Redeemer already does or has done in the past as a matter of course (highlighted, again according to the ACLU):

- Adopting a policy of nondiscrimination at your place of worship and of welcoming and helping persons in need, regardless of immigration or citizenship status, race, ethnicity, gender identity, or sexual orientation, etc.; making a public statement regarding such a policy.
- Adopting a policy that respects privacy by not asking members of the congregation, or members of the public who interact with the congregation, about their immigration status, and adhering to a

policy of not recording any information about any individual's immigration status.

- Providing shelter, food, or other services to a broad set of people, including citizens and noncitizens, regardless of immigration status.
- Speaking out on behalf of immigrants' rights, and expressing support for keeping families together and reforming the immigration laws to make it possible for undocumented immigrants to adjust to a lawful status. Supporting or working with local and state governmental authorities to adopt legislation and regulations that protect immigrants and refugees.
- Referring undocumented immigrants (or all persons your congregation is serving) to legal assistance resources, including pro bono immigration legal help. Holding legal information (or "know your rights") sessions, hosting legal clinics, and making referrals for social services.
- Exercising the right to refuse to consent to law enforcement officers coming into or searching non-public areas of the church, and demanding to see a lawful warrant signed by a federal judge.
- Creating a rapid response team to document what happened in a raid, gathering information to support legal or public education efforts.
- Accompanying a person to an ICE check-in or immigration court.

One of the statements being made in the media is that the ELCA is encouraging its members to break the law. As you see in the motion, there is no call in the action for civil disobedience or any illegal actions. The specific actions mentioned are all legal. Whether any person or organization chooses to engage in civil disobedience (and therefore accept the consequences) is up to them. Churchwide does not understand this action as calling for any illegal actions.

Perhaps most confusing is that the motion does not answer the question, "What does this mean?" Instead, the action specifically requests ELCA Church Council provide guidance as to what it

means to be a sanctuary denomination, as stated in the last point of the motion:

- To request the ELCA Church Council, in consultation with the appropriate churchwide units and offices, provide guidance for the three expressions of this church about what it means to be a sanctuary church body and provide a report to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

VII. REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

A. Synod Council Orientation, Part 2

Structure of meetings, including: availability of exhibits, structure of the agenda, devotions and prayers, the role of special guests, purpose of the “en bloc” motion, and executive sessions; legal responsibilities of Synod Council members; and consensus decision making.

B. Report of Vice President’s Activities

Blessing and Peace to all of you. I hope everyone has been well since we last met at our Synod Assembly in June of this year. I have had quite the busy summer since our Assembly. The election of a new Bishop requires quite a bit of work in the transition process, especially as staff retires and new staff needs to be selected and brought on and up to speed. As a result, we required a number of Executive Committee actions approving housing allowances and salaries for the Bishop and his new staff. In this work, I am grateful for the extensive work of our new Bishop Strickland, Synod Fiscal Advisor Dr. Sandra Gustavson, and Staff Liaison Melissa Fuller Sims. They made the work of transition easy and seamless. At least on my end. I am also grateful for the Executive Committee for being available to take the time to discuss these important decisions, especially as many of them required quick action. I look forward to the installation of our Bishop in October and hope that all of you can attend.

In addition, I was honored to attend the Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee from August 5-10. I am always in awe when I am in presence of ELCA Lutherans all over our country. It gives me a small view of the breadth of our Church and all the work we are doing together. The daily worship services were amazing and considering our new Bishop was the director of those worship services (as one of his last roles with his job with Churchwide), I am looking forward to what our future Synod Assembly worships will bring. No pressure, Bishop. At Churchwide Assembly we re-elected Presiding Bishop Eaton for another 6 year term and elected Sue Rothmeyer as Secretary of the ELCA. We also approved the Social Statement on "Faith, Sexism and Justice", the Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment, a Resolution that condemned White Supremacy, a Resolution to commemorate the martyrdom of the Emanuel 9, and a Memorial which, in part, declared the ELCA a Sanctuary Church Body. We also voted to make ordination the entrance rite for Deacons in our Church. In addition, on the Wednesday of the Churchwide Assembly, I joined a number of voting members as we marched to the ICE facility in Milwaukee as we prayed for justice regarding our country's immigration policy. It was a powerful week which strengthened my faith and made me ready to get down to work.

In the last few months, I also attended the Grace House Low Country Boil fundraiser, to benefit our Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Ministry at Georgia Tech, and the MILAGRO Gala and fundraiser, to benefit our partners in Guatemala. I have also been on the Atlanta Pride Planning Team and we have been working hard to have a strong Lutheran presence at this year's Pride March and Festival.

We have also finalized our Synod office lease with St. John's Lutheran Church in Atlanta, which was approved by the Executive Committee and St. John's Congregational Council. As a member of St. John's and our Synod's Vice President, I was sure to keep plenty of distance in the discussions (at times being more an observer), but

I am very happy that we were finally able to get our lease signed to the satisfaction of both parties. I am very thankful for the exhaustive work of Dr. Sandra Gustavson on working on this on behalf of the Synod.

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation for Bishop Julian Gordy, Treasurer Lee Smith, Exhibit A.2 and Synod Fiscal Advisor Sandra Gustavson for all their work and guidance. At the same time, I have strong faith that Bishop Kevin Strickland and Treasurer Steve Gehret will be able to continue the good work they have done. I am also excited for those of you who are new to our Synod Council. I look forward to the new perspectives and gifts you will bring to our gatherings.

Thank all of you for your work on behalf of the Southeastern Synod. I pray for safe travels and a productive meeting and I look forward to our time together.

C. Report of the Executive Committee

Appointed the following to the Mutual Ministry Committee for the terms specified:

Rev. Dan Pharr, Christ Lutheran, Prattville AL,
unexpired term to June 2020

Ms. Jeannie Ingram, Holy Trinity, Nashville TN,
unexpired term to June 2020

Ms. Connie Pearson, St. Andrew's, Franklin TN,
second two-year term to June 2021

VIII. REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

A. Synod Council Orientation, Part 3

Purpose and structure of meeting minutes; importance of synod's governing documents; and differences among provisions of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions

B. Report of Secretary's Activities

It has been a very busy time for me since Synod Assembly. I left Synod Assembly, closed on my new home, moved into my new home, and took my wife to have her left knee replaced; all of this in the two weeks after Synod Assembly. Kelly is recovering nicely and has now had her right knee replaced as well.

This has been a very busy summer. Since Synod Assembly I finished the minutes for the Executive Committee meeting, the Synod Council meeting, Synod Assembly, and an Executive Committee meeting that was held in August. All of the minutes have been submitted to the Synod Offices for recording and archiving.

At Churchwide Assembly this year there were many changes made to both the Synod Constitution and the Model Constitution for Congregations which are required changes. There are also suggested changes for both. Many of the changes that have been made are a result of the vote to make the Deacon's roster an ordained roster. I personally am grateful that the Churchwide Assembly made this positive decision.

I will be incorporating the required changes into the Synod Constitution and then in consultation with the bishop I will incorporate those suggested changes that make sense. I will have this done in time for the January meeting so the Synod Council can review the changes.

I will have Carolyn publish the link to the changes made at Churchwide Assembly to the Model Constitution for Congregations. I will also write a short blurb to go with the link. The link to the changes is: <https://www.elca.org/About/Churchwide/Office-of-the-Secretary/Constitutions> . There is also a “Guide for the Use of the Model Constitution for Congregations” which is very helpful to those who will be making the updates to their constitutions.

IX. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

A. Synod Council Orientation, Part 4

Synod financial policies; annual audit; and financial reporting, focusing on the August 2019 financial statements.

B. Status of Synod-Owned Real Estate

Doraville, Georgia

It is anticipated that this property will be sold to the Interfaith Outreach Home by the end of September 2019. A history of the synod’s involvement with this property and the status of its sale is included in the background material section of Exhibit D.6.

Jackson, Mississippi

The Southeastern Lutheran Holding Corporation (a separately incorporated, fully owned subsidiary of the Southeastern Synod) was given the church building and surrounding land used by the former Trinity Lutheran Church, Jackson, MS when that congregation ceased operations in 2011. The congregation hoped that the building would eventually be used to help develop a Lutheran congregation with a multicultural focus in that location. Consultation with the ELCA Domestic Mission unit has indicated that no such future development is anticipated. Since 2011, the property has been rented to two different non-Lutheran congregations, with limited success in collecting rent specified in written leases. Major expenditures on this property have included the complete replacement of the HVAC equipment and the roof. In June 2018 the Holding Corporation listed the property for sale at a price of \$385,000. A current letter of intent to

purchase the property for \$275,000, is being seriously considered by the Holding Corporation's board of directors.

Nashville, Tennessee

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Nashville officially dissolved in December 2017. At that time, a quitclaim deed was executed to convey ownership of its church building, a separate building used for social ministry programs, and a stand-alone storage shed to the Southeastern Synod. The social ministry programs continue to operate from this location and various groups still use the sanctuary for worship. At its meeting in May 2019, the Synod Council authorized Bishop Gordy to accept the letter of intent proffered by Inspiritus (formerly Lutheran Services of Georgia and Lutheran Services in Tennessee), in which the synod will work toward formalizing an agreement granting Inspiritus a 99-year ground lease of the Nashville property for \$1 per year in rent. Inspiritus plans to develop the property as a transformational campus with program and service components, as well as limited commercial and retail components.

Other

The Synod may also own cemetery properties in Smith County, Mississippi and Andersonville, Georgia. These properties have been carried as land valued at a total of \$5,500 within the synod financial statements since before the formation of the ELCA. Attempts to discover additional information about these properties have been unsuccessful, but synod auditors have not been interested in removing the property from the synod's financial records.

X. SYNOD COUNCIL ORIENTATION, PART 5: LOGISTICAL MATTERS

Communications; lodging; meals; expense reimbursements

To receive a reimbursement, one only needs to fill out an expense form and send it to the synod offices.

XI. CONVERSATIONS ABOUT THE 2019 AND 2020 SYNOD ASSEMBLIES

A. Evaluations of 2019 Assembly *(Exhibit E 2.0, 2.1 & 2.2)*

- **Discussion of Potential Changes for 2020**
The Guidebook is doing the intended task. Food lines were long and the food was merely adequate.

B. Appointment of Task Force to Review Bishop Election Procedures

SC2019.09.04 - Appoint the Rev. Rick Ohsiek to approach the following persons to serve on a Bishop Election Procedures Task Force, to review existing procedures as specified in the Rules of Organization and Procedure for the 2019 Southeastern Synod Assembly and to make recommendations for possible changes and report his recruiting efforts to the Synod Council in January 2020.

**Name: Rev. Rick Ohsiek
Congregation: St. Paul, Maryville, TN**

**Name: Rev. Karen Boda
Congregation: Synod Staff**

**Name: Ms. Elaine Schwartz
Congregation: Amazing Grace, ATL**

**Name: Rev. Tonie Robinson
Congregation: Peace, Memphis**

**Name: Deacon Mary Hauck
Congregation: Redeemer, ATL**

1. **The task force will seek input from several sources, such as:**

- **Voting members of the 2019 Southeastern Synod Assembly**
- **Bishop nominees during the 2019 election**
- **Other synods**

2. Rev. Rick Ohsiek will serve as the initial convener of the task force and that he (she) notify the synod staff when a chairperson has been selected by the committee members.

3. A progress report on task force activities will be provided to the Synod Council for its January 2020 meeting, and that a final report with recommendations be provided for the May 2020 Synod Council meeting.

4. One hundred dollars of the Synod Council budget for 2019-20 and \$100 of the Synod Council budget for 2020-21 may be used to facilitate activities by this task force.

c. Positions to be Elected in 2020

**Exhibit E.1
September 2019**

Elections to be Held at the 2020 Synod Assembly

Position	Nominating Group	Number to be Elected, plus Inclusivity Designations	Length of term	Incumbents Eligible for Re-Election
Synod Council Young Adult	Nominating Committee	1 lay (male or female), must be under age 31 at time of election	2 years (to 2022)	None
Synod Council Members at Large	Synod Council (Nominating Committee may solicit potential nominees)	2 lay (gender to be determined following election results for the young adult member and conference representatives)	2 years (to 2022)	Roxann Thompson if a position is designated for a female; Ed Ringer if a position is designated for a male
Synod Council representative from Conference 6	Conference 6	1 clergy (male or female)	2 years (to 2022)	None
Synod Council representative from Conference 7	Conference 7	1 clergy (male or female)	2 years (to 2022)	None
Synod Council representative from Conference 8	Conference 8	1 lay (male or female)	2 years (to 2022)	None
Synod Council representative from Conference 9	Conference 9	1 clergy (male or female)	2 years (to 2022)	Rev. Cuttino Alexander
Consultation Committee member	Nominating Committee	1 female clergy	1 year unexpired (to 2021)	None
Discipline Committee member *	Nominating Committee	1 clergy (male or female)	3 years unexpired (to 2023)	None
Discipline Committee member *	Nominating Committee	1 clergy (male or female)	5 years unexpired (to 2025)	None

* CONTINUING clergy members of the Discipline Committee who are therefore not eligible for renomination in 2020: Rev. Nathan Hilker, Rev. Ann Bassett, Rev. Dee Donnelly, Rev. Deryck Durston

D. Proposed Guidance for Nominating Committee

SC2019.09.05 – Rev. Randy Jones and Rev. Dr. Delmer Chilton will consult with the Office of the Secretary to consider the use of language for use in the nomination process. The use of the term clergy is the term in question. Direction for the nominating committee will be given at the January 2020 Synod Council meeting.

XII. Greetings from the Church Council Representative

Dr. Gary Pederson talked about the need for assistance with the grant review for World Hunger grants. He has Rev. Todd Cutter and Mr. Hilton Austin on the team for the past year. Mr. Austin will not serve in the future. Dr. Roland Bernard Welmaker was suggested by Rev. Beverly Shaw.

XIII. Synod Vision Strategy – Part 1

Bishop Strickland will share his plan for developing a Vision for the Southeastern ELCA Synod.

A. Bishop Strickland will share the current state of the Synod.

The bishop will lead the council in a brief presentation and then break the council up into small groups. The council will do a SWOT analysis. The bishop will also do this with the deans and then with the rest of the synod.

XIV. . REGION 9 BISHOPS' RELATIONAL AGREEMENT for boundaries, candidacy and call process.

- This agreement is being shared as information only. It is an agreement among the Offices of the Bishop in each synod in Region 9 and will be reviewed and reaffirmed annually. No decision is required.

REGION 9 BISHOPS' RELATIONAL AGREEMENT for boundaries, candidacy and call process

Committed to always reforming for the health of leaders, vitality of congregations, and the flourishing of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we agree to work together as a region to address systemic issues facing rostered ministers who are women. Together, we will work to create a culture change in our region through deepening trust and relationship – creating authentic avenues for reporting, responding, training, advocacy and care.

1. All rostered ministers in Region 9 are expected to be current on boundary training. Records of up to-date boundary training will be required in order to:
 - a. activate an RMP
 - b. transfer into a synod
 - c. be available for any call or appointment, including interim work
 - d. serve as a synod-recommended supply preacher
2. All candidates for rostered ministry in Region 9 are expected to be current on boundary training. Candidacy committees will:
 - a. expect all of our candidates to participate in boundary training during their candidacy process.
 - b. require a signed FERPA release from all candidates that gives the bishop and their designee permission to discuss the candidate's performance with seminary faculty.
3. Region 9 candidates will be held to the same standard as all rostered ministers. The process we will follow for candidates with boundary violations will be:
 - a. if/when a report of a boundary violation is made against a candidate, the bishop from the candidate's home synod will initiate an investigation into the allegation.
 - b. the bishop (or their designee) will share the results of the investigation with the candidacy committee and make a recommendation to the candidacy committee regarding the candidate's status.
 - c. the candidacy committee will make a decision regarding the candidate's status.

- d. bishops will be fully transparent with one another about issues concerning candidates from their synods.
4. Because the church is the Body of Christ, grounded in the gospel, boundary training is framed in the covenant promises of baptism and vows of ordination. Therefore, we commit as a region to establish clear objectives, outcomes, and pedagogy for boundary training across the region. The training will include an expanded boundary conversation to include racial and gender justice. We will pay particular attention to a variety of vehicles and congregational resources.
- a. The synods of Region 9 will appoint a diverse Boundary Training Team to create a more robust three-year boundary training rotation.
 - b. The intention is to have Boundary Training every year.
5. A complicating factor for all our boundary work is the exploration of the question, 'Who is the pastor to the pastor?'. We are committed to exploring avenues to provide pastoral care and mental health services for our rostered ministers.
6. The bishops commit to finding new ways to raise the profile of rostered ministers who are women as leaders in the synod and in congregations, including:
- a. relying upon rostered ministers who are women in mock interviews in synods in which mock interviews are used
 - b. encouraging the use of rostered ministers who are women as supply preachers and interim pastors
 - c. regularly inviting rostered ministers who are women to preach at synodical gatherings, especially synod assembly
 - d. striving for gender parity in appointments as deans and other public leadership roles.
 - e. identifying, encouraging, and fostering the leadership gifts of rostered ministers who are women for congregational and synodical leadership roles.
7. The bishops agree to work together through the sharing of resources to improve the pay equity for rostered ministers who are women.

a. We will develop and utilize a regional worksheet to guide conversations with congregations around rostered minister compensation for use during call processes.

8. When a call committee makes it clear that they will not interview or call a woman, the bishops agree that they will require a congregation council vote to ensure this is a council decision rather than the reflection of the prejudices of one or more members of the call committee.

This agreement is made among the Offices of the Bishop in each synod in Region 9 and will be reviewed and reaffirmed annually. – July 1, 2019 9A, Virginia Synod—Bishop Bob Humphrey 9D, Southeastern Synod—Bishop Julian Gordy 9B, NC Synod—Bishop Tim Smith 9E, Florida-Bahamas Synod—Bishop Pedro Suarez 9C, SC Synod—Bishop Herman Yoos 9F, Caribbean Synod—Bishop Idalia Negrón

Bishop Strickland will be the bishop representation on the continued efforts for this initiative.

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

SC2019.09.06 - Approved the following 2019-20 annual rates for salary and housing totals for the assistants to the bishop listed below, to be effective September 1, 2019:

The Rev. Michael Jannett - \$81,000

The Rev. Karen Boda - \$82,000

The Rev. Jill Henning - \$84,000

ADDITIONAL DETAILS: In a teleconference meeting on August 28, 2019, the Executive Committee approved the housing allowances requested by each of the new assistants to the bishop. That meeting took place so that those housing allowances would be officially in place prior to the assistants' September 1 start date. If the proposed totals are approved, then each

assistant's salary rate will be the total shown above minus the previously approved housing allowance rate.

SC2019.09.07 - Specified that effective October 1, 2019, the Southeastern Synod will sponsor The Rev. Esther Ngomuo, for benefits through Portico Benefits Services and that her compensation rate shall be:

Annual rate for salary:	\$18,212.05
Annual rate for housing allowance:	\$13,000.08

ADDITIONAL DETAILS: Pastor Ngomuo is the mission developer for the two Kiswahili Lutheran sites in Nashville. She was on the synod's payroll in this capacity for about a year until the churchwide organization determined that it would serve as the fiscal agent for all ELCA mission developers who did not have permanent resident status in the United States. During her time on the churchwide organization's payroll, the Southeastern Synod contributed between \$800 and \$2,100 per month (whatever was invoiced to us) for Pastor Ngomuo's compensation, including sponsorship with Portico.

Earlier this year, Pastor Ngomuo was approved for permanent residence in the U.S. and has now received her green card. Thus, the responsibility for fiscal agency for the Kiswahili congregations is being transferred back to the synod. The proposed salary and housing allowance rates are the same being paid to Pastor Ngomuo this year by the churchwide organization. Beginning in October, the ELCA will be transmitting to the synod some funding every month to fulfill their commitment for Pastor Ngomuo's compensation. The remainder needed for her salary, housing, and Portico benefits will be paid using monies from the synod's Planting Fund.

SC2019.09.08 - Approved a payment of \$2,200 to Bishop Kevin Strickland to reimburse him for relocation expenses in excess of the \$6,500 allowance approved by the Synod Council at its meeting in May 2019, with payment to be charged to the Staff Travel & Expense budget line of the Operating Fund.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION During an executive session at the May 2019 meeting of the Synod Council, a compensation package was

approved for the at-that-time-unknown bishop-elect. The package included a moving allowance of \$6,500. At that time, it was anticipated that the \$20,000 Bishop Transition Reserve Fund would fund the bishop-elect's salary, housing, and Portico benefits during August 2019, plus his or her relocation expenses. Important unknowns when the compensation package was approved were the age and family status of the new bishop, since that person had not yet been elected. Those factors would determine the cost of Portico benefits. The relocation allowance was set at \$6,500 so that \$20,000 would be adequate to cover August salary, housing, relocation, and family Portico benefits for a new bishop age 60 or younger at the time of election.

Bishop Strickland's actual moving expenses totaled \$8,700. Of that total, \$7,730 was paid to the moving company. Other expenses included air fare for a house hunting trip to Atlanta, packing supplies, hotel expenses during the move, and other miscellaneous expenditures. The bishop has been paid the approved \$6,500 allowance, leaving him with \$2,200 of unreimbursed relocation expenses.

If it had been known in advance that the new bishop would be moving from Chicago and would be able to waive Portico health benefits at no cost to himself, the compensation package could have shifted \$2,980 out of the amount reserved for August health benefits and into an increase in the moving allowance. Such an amount would have been more than adequate to cover the \$2,200 in actual expenses that exceeded the allowance of \$6,500.

DINNER BREAK

Rev. Terri Landers offered a blessing for the meal.

SESSION II: FRIDAY 7:00 – 9:00 PM

XVI. Synod Vision Strategy – Part 2

- The Synod Council divided into groups to participate in a Visioning Session. Each group did a SWOT analysis for the Synod and then gathered returned and reported their findings.

XVII. Status of Property Owned in Doraville, GA

SC2019.09.09 - With thanksgiving to God for the ministry and generosity of the former Lutheran Church of the Advent in Doraville, Georgia, the subsequent ministry of Iglesia Luterana Sagrada Familia in that location, and now the new ministry that will occur as Sagrada Familia joins with Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in Lawrenceville, Georgia:

The proceeds from the sale of the synod's property in Doraville, Georgia shall be used as follows:

- **Disburse 10 percent of the sales proceeds, net of any closing costs payable by the Synod, as a tithe to the wider church, with the recipients of this tithe to be approved by the Synod Council Executive Committee;**
- **Set aside the remainder of the proceeds (corpus) to be used as designated in the future by the Synod Council for the purposes of mission, planning, outreach, and strategic visioning;**
- **Acknowledge that future disbursements may include but are not limited to the following possibilities:**
 - **Additions to the Synod's New & Renewing Congregations Fund (Planting Fund)**
 - **Additions to the Gordy Scholarship Fund with the ELCA's Fund for Leaders**
 - **Additions to the principal of the synod's Candidacy Fund**
 - **Additions to the synod's Ministry Enhancement account**
 - **Additions to the synod's Staff Development account**

- **Additions to the synod's Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry accounts**
- **Support of efforts to increase multicultural ministries within the synod**
- **Support of racial justice training and cultural awareness**
- **Teaching evangelism, communication, formation, and technology tools to all synod congregations**
- **Long-term planning of future ministries**
- **Legacy gift planning**
- **Support when needed for annual ministry funding plans**
- **Mortgage reduction payments associated with synod office space**
- **Specify that expenditures from the new fund may include disbursements of both principal and accumulated investment income, without limitation, with the approval of the Synod Council;**
- **Specify that the sales proceeds added to the new fund are to be invested similarly to current synod funds that are treated as endowment funds, including the commingling of monies invested in individual investment products, provided that accounting for investment returns is allocated proportionately to each synod fund and until such time as the Synod Council may specify otherwise;**
- **Request that the Budget and Finance Committee annually review the new fund and make any recommendations to the Synod Council that the Committee deems appropriate.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & RATIONALE:

In September 1989, The Lutheran Church of the Advent in Doraville, Georgia entered into a 20-year agreement to lease approximately 1 acre of its land to a not-for-profit corporation now known as the Interfaith Outreach Home (IOH). A consortium of about 30 churches and synagogues in North Atlanta cooperated in establishing and building an apartment building on this property to provide transitional housing for families with children who would otherwise be homeless. There are 10 small apartments in the IOH building, with each apartment being about 440 square feet in size.

Although Advent owned the land on which the IOH building was constructed, IOH owns the building. Advent ceased functioning as a congregation in January 2000, though it has been continued as a legal entity. As one of its final actions, Advent's Congregation Council approved the transfer of ownership of all of its property to the Southeastern Synod. The Council also made it clear that they wished for the IOH ministry to continue in its current location. The Latino mission congregation known as Iglesia Luterana Sagrada Familia began sharing Advent's worship space while Advent was still there. Sagrada Familia eventually became the sole occupant of the building formerly occupied by Advent and for a couple of years recently shared that space with another mission group (Hope International); the \$2,000/month rent paid by IOH under its ground lease has been used primarily to pay expenses on the building and maintain the property as needed.

When the original 20-year land lease expired, the Synod Council approved its renewal; the current term will expire in 2030, though early termination by either the Synod or IOH may occur as early as August 31, 2020 with a three-year advance notice. About three years ago, IOH notified Bishop Gordy that it would like to buy the land upon which its building is located, as well as some or all of the other property owned by the synod at that location. Director of Evangelical Mission Wayne Fell began meeting with the IOH Board on this topic, culminating in Synod Council approval in January 2019 of an option for IOH to buy the entire property at a sales price of \$1.6 million, with any sale to be completed by September 30, 2019. IOH has notified the synod of its intent to exercise its option to buy the property, and the sale is expected to close by the end of September.

The potential possible uses for the sales proceeds were provided to the Budget and Finance Committee by Bishop Strickland. The Committee added some additional operating language to the proposed actions under consideration. The intent of both the bishop and the Budget and Finance Committee is to assure that the proceeds are not squandered, but rather are used in a thoughtful manner consistent with the vision and priorities for mission that will be developed over the next several months.

PRAYER BEFORE EVENING RECESS

Ms. Roxann Thompson offered a closing prayer.

SESSION III: SATURDAY 9:00 AM – 1 PM

MORNING PRAYER: MR. DAVID HAIGLER

Mr. Haigler opened the meeting with prayer.

XVII. OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. Proposed Budget Amendments for 2019-20 and 2020-21

SC2019.09.10 -

- 1. Approved the following budget amendments for the 2019-20 fiscal year:**

Decrease the Salaries & Housing budget by \$8,733

Decrease the Staff Benefits budget by \$18,000

Decrease the Staff/Deans/Officers Travel & Expense budget by \$20,000

Increase the Accounting Fees budget by \$5,733

Increase the Overtime Salaries & FICA budget by \$2,000

Increase the Bishop Transition Reserve budget by \$39,000

- 2. Approved the following budget amendments for the 2020-21 fiscal year:**

Add a new Funding Source entitled, “Transfers from Bishop Transition Fund” and set its budget at \$47,300

Decrease the New Initiatives budget by \$30,000

Increase the Salaries & Housing budget by \$33,450

Increase the Accounting Fees budget by \$13,000

Increase the Staff Benefits budget by \$30,850

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & RATIONALE: During its conference call meeting on September 10, 2019, the Budget and Finance Committee reviewed the status of the Operating Fund, including staff salary and benefits projections for the remainder of the current fiscal year, as well as during the next fiscal year. It was noted that while some of the salary and benefits budgets will not be fully utilized in 2019-20, there would be substantial shortfalls in those budgets during 2020-21. Page 2 of Exhibit D.5 presents the summary of projections that the Budget & Finance Committee reviewed in making the recommendations shown above.

In addition to addressing the budgetary issues regarding salaries and benefits, the proposed actions also: (1) Move much of the money used to compensate the synod’s fiscal advisor out of salaries and benefits and into the category of Accounting Fees, in recognition of the advisor’s changed status as of October 1; (2) Recognize the likelihood that the Staff/Deans/Officers Travel & Expense budget is more than will be required this year; and (3) Increase the Staff Overtime budget for the current year, in recognition of the extra staff time that has been required this Fall during the overall staffing transition.

B. Principles for the 2021-22 Ministry Funding Plan

2019.09.11 - Approved the following guidelines for use by the Budget and Finance Committee in formulating a proposed 2021-22 Ministry Funding Plan:

- a. Assume mission support from congregations should be estimated using a conservative philosophy.**
- b. Propose income and expenses should be equal, to yield a balanced budget proposal.**

- c. Designate giving as a planned source of revenue should be used sparingly.**
- d. A transfer from one or more designated accounts as a planned source of revenue is acceptable if consistent with the purpose of the designated accounts.**
- e. Synod assembly registration fees should be set so that they fully fund assembly expenses.**
- f. A 2-level budget is requested, with the two levels functioning as follows: Level 1 should be the primary mission funding plan, based on a conservative increase in mission support contributions. Level 2 should contain expenditures that do not impact synod operations throughout the year; expenditures within Level 2 may be made at year-end only if funding is sufficient.**
- g. ELCA churchwide mission support should be 50 percent of all undesignated mission support from congregations, contributions to the synod's Planting & Renewing Congregations Fund should be 3 percent of undesignated mission support, and support of Region 9 should be 0.5 percent of undesignated mission support.**
- h. Funding for committees and task forces should be stated on a lump-sum basis, with allocation to specific groups to be determined at the January 2021 Synod Council meeting.**
- i. Strong support for staff salaries and benefits should be a priority.**
- j. Funding for institutions and agencies should be at least equal to the amounts approved for 2020-21.**
- k. Allocations for operating expenses should be at levels that will maintain essential operations.**

Additional Information: Continuing Resolution S10.03.B94 directs the Synod Council at each fall meeting to offer guidance to the Budget and Finance Committee in formulating the next budget proposal. All of the specific lettered proposals except item (i) are the same or similar to guidance offered for the 2020-21 funding plan. Proposal (i) specifically indicates that strong support of staff salaries and benefits is a Synod Council priority.

C. Status of Synod Lease with St. John's

Exhibit B.3
January 2019

Summary of Expected Major Provisions of the Synod's Lease with St. John's, as of 1/17/2019

1. The Lease is to begin on either February 1, 2019 or March 1, 2019. Initial rent will be \$3,800/month for 12 years.
2. Included in the rent will be the following operating expenses: janitorial services five days a week, electricity, HVAC, water, sewer, pest control, security alarm, and garbage collection. The synod will pay for its internet and telephone service in addition to the rent paid to St. John's.
3. At no additional expense, the synod may use rooms and areas at St. John's other than the rooms the synod is specifically renting, subject to advance reservation and approval by St. John's.
4. Of the \$3,800/month rent, approximately \$1,000 is for services noted in #2 above and approximately \$2,800 is for mortgage amortization. The \$1,000 portion can be increased as the cost of these expenses increases, with no more than a \$50 increase per month in any one year.
5. The \$2,800 amortization part of the rent can decrease after total payments from the synod and from campaign donors reach some dollar threshold X. (Rent payments are not included in this calculation.) There is not yet agreement on what X will be. The latest estimate from St. John's has X = \$632,837. Past or soon-to-be-made payments to or on behalf of St. John's that would count toward meeting a \$632,837 threshold currently total \$532,339, consisting of:
 - \$354,222 paid by the synod for the building contractor
 - \$43,295 paid by the synod for the architect, surveyor, and other small expenses
 - \$59,822 cash currently in LLL Building Fund, expected to be paid out to the contractor
 - \$70,000 committed by the Southeastern Lutheran Holding Corporation
 - \$5,000 of voluntary rent paid by the Synod in Fall 2018

If X=\$632,837, then after the above payments an additional \$100,498 would have to be contributed for mortgage amortization before the synod would be eligible to begin receiving reductions in the \$2,800 portion of its monthly rent. Current pledges that have been made but not yet paid total \$156,547, which will likely not be fully satisfied prior to 2 or 3 years.
6. Once mortgage reduction payments exceed the dollar threshold X, additional contributions will be the catalyst for St. John's to request re-amortization of its mortgage. The resultant savings in monthly mortgage payments will be shared equally between the congregation and the synod (through lower rent). Once the mortgage is fully amortized, rent charged to the synod will be limited to the amount needed to cover the operating expenses noted in #2 above.
7. St. John's may terminate the lease with a six-month notice to the synod. If St. John's sells its building, the buyer may continue the lease, in which case all provisions will remain in effect. If the lease is not continued, then the synod may be eligible for a partial refund of its donors' contributions, subject to:
 - a. Contributions made by donors affiliated with St. John's are not subject to refund. This total is currently \$238,063.
 - b. The total eligible for refund will be multiplied by the ratio of the number of days remaining on the lease at the time of termination divided by the total number of days in the 12-year lease period.
8. St. John's may also terminate the lease if the building is destroyed by a natural disaster. If substantial insurance proceeds are collectible, then the rebuilding is to include space for the synod office. Other technical details of such contingencies are still being discussed.

D. Mental Health Task Force

SC2019.09.12 - Established a Mental Health Taskforce with Mr. Adam Renner serving as the chairperson. The term of the taskforce shall be 21 September 2019 til 20 September 2020. The taskforce should have materials installed on the Synod website by 21 January 2020, report its progress at the January 2020 Synod Council meeting, and present its findings at the 2020 Synod Assembly.

Background: 2019-2 A Resolution Regarding Mental Health Awareness within the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA was submitted by SESLYO at the 2019 Synod Assembly. The resolution passed as S2019.05.04 – Resolved that we ask the Southeastern Synod Council to establish a Mental Health taskforce to gather resources in each of the four states of our synod to assist pastors and lay members in referring those in need of mental health treatment.

XVIII. *EN BLOC* RESOLUTION

SC2019.09.13 - Approved the following actions, as specified below:

A. Roster Status Changes

Approved the following roster status changes:

1. **Ministers of Word and Sacrament On-Leave-From-Call:**
Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament listed be granted On-Leave-From-Call status in accordance with the terms stated:

The Rev. Pauline Farrington – first year, beginning 9/1/19

2. **Ministers of Word and Service On-Leave-From-Call:**
Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Service listed be granted On-Leave-From-Call status in accordance with the terms stated:

Deacon Ellen K. Koester – third year, beginning 10/10/19

3. **Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Expiration of On-Leave-From-Call:**

Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament listed be removed from the ELCA roster as of the date stated, due to expiration of On-Leave-From-Call status:

The Rev. Jennifer P. Weetman – start 10/21/19

4. **Ministers of Word and Service Expiration of On-Leave-From-Call**

5. **Ministers of Word and Sacrament Resignation from Roster:**

Ministers of Word and Service Resignation from Roster:

7. **Letter(s) of Call (Ministers of Word and Sacrament):**

Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament listed be granted calls in accordance with the terms stated:

- **The Rev Tiffany C. Chaney**, Mission Developer, Gathered by Grace, Montgomery, AL (Note: Original 1/5/16, SCA – 5/26/16; Extension 1/5/17, SCA – 9/16/16; Extension 1/5/19-1/5/20, SCA – 5/30/19): Action: Retroactive Extension of One-year Term Call; Start – 1/5/18
- **The Rev. Karen M. Boda**, Assistant to the Bishop for Congregational Life, Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, GA: Start 9/1/19
- **The Rev. Michael L. Jannett**, Assistant to the Bishop for Formation and Communication, Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, GA: Start - 9/1/19
- **The Rev. Jill J. Henning**, Assistant to the Bishop for Leadership and Administration, Southeastern Synod, Atlanta, GA: Start - 9/1/19
- **The Rev. Esther Ngomuo**, Mission Developer, Christ Kiswahili Lutheran Mission, Nashville, TN: Start – Contingent upon her

assignment to the Southeastern Synod and beginning on the date of reception onto the Word and Sacrament roster of the ELCA

8. **Letter(s) of Call (Ministers of Word and Service):**

9. **Letter(s) of Call – Interim Pr Term Calls (Ministers of Word and Sacrament):**

Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament listed be granted calls to serve as Synod Interim pastors in accordance with the terms stated and with all income and benefits to be paid by the congregations served:

The Rev. Erik W. Feig – October 1, 2019 through
September 30, 2020

10. **Letter(s) of Call - Term Calls (Ministers of Word and Service):**

11. **Non-Stipendiary Calls:**

12. **Ministers of Word and Sacrament Retirements:**

Resolved, that the ELCA-Southeastern Synod Ministers of Word and Sacrament listed be granted retirement status as of the dates stated:

The Rev. H. Julian Gordy – September 1, 2019

12. **Ministers of Word and Service Retirements:**

13. **Disability Status:**

15. **Synod Authorized Ministers:**

Resolved, that the following Synod Authorized Minister appointment by the Bishop of the Southeastern Synod be affirmed:

Ms. Claressa Dais – Martin Luther, Mobile, AL
as of September 1, 2019

16. **Deaths:** (no need for action; FYI only)

The Rev. Donald E. Vollenweider,
Valdosta, GA - July 22, 2019

B. Appointments to Committees, Task Forces, and Boards

Appointed the following persons as specified:

Personnel Committee

**Rev. Matt Steinhauer, Faith, Lebanon TN,
unexpired term to June 2021**

Candidacy Committee

**Dr. Winton King, St. Paul, Decatur GA,
six-year term to June 2025**

Disaster Ministry Committee

**Rev. Katherine Pasch, Retired,
three-year term to June 2022**

Advocacy Policy Council

**Ms. Dawn Bennett, Christ, Nashville TN,
second two-year term to June 2021
Deacon Melanie Johnson, Rock of Ages, Stone Mountain
GA,
second two-year term to June 2021**

C. Bishop Emeritus Status

With thanksgiving for his 12 years of faithful service as Bishop of the ELCA-Southeastern Synod, the Synod Council grants the title of Bishop Emeritus to the Rev. H. Julian Gordy, effective September 1, 2019.

The Synod Council further requests Vice President Imran Siddiqui and Secretary Randy Jones to take appropriate actions to publicize this action; such actions may include a letter to Bishop Emeritus Gordy, an article in the Synod's E-News, and recommendation of a proclamation regarding this status during the 2020 Southeastern Synod Assembly.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – The title of Bishop Emeritus is an honorary title that bestows no authority, responsibilities, or official privileges beyond what former Bishop Gordy has as a retired pastor in the ELCA. Granting this title is simply a courtesy. The title was previously approved by the Southeastern Synod Council for both Harold C. Skillrud and Ronald B. Warren. The second paragraph of the recommended action requests that follow-up to publicize the action be done by the two current synod officers who served on the Synod Council with Bishop Gordy.

D. Gordy Scholarship Fund

Approved the establishment of the “H. Julian Gordy Scholarship Fund for Advocacy and Social Justice in the Southeastern Synod” within the ELCA Fund for Leaders and specify that priority for scholarship awards from this fund be given to candidates in the Southeastern Synod who have an interest in advocacy work and social justice issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – The ELCA Fund for Leaders requires a minimum of \$25,000 to endow a separate named fund. Several congregations have already indicated their interest in contributing to a seminary scholarship fund named for former synod bishop Julian Gordy. It is not anticipated that it will be a problem meeting the \$25,000 minimum entirely through donor designated gifts.

E. Update of Signatory Policy for Financial Assets

PROPOSALS:

(1) Approved the following restatement of the Southeastern Synod’s Signature Authorization Policy:

- **The term “Authorized Individuals” is defined to be those persons who are authorized to sign checks or otherwise approve purchases or payment of expenses. Authorized Individuals shall be the synod bishop, synod treasurer, and two additional persons nominated by the bishop and approved by the Synod Council or Synod Council Executive Committee.**

- **Purchases and payment of expenses exceeding \$10,000 shall require approval by two of the Authorized Individuals.**
- **Fund transfers among the synod's bank and investment accounts are authorized as deemed appropriate by one or more of the Authorized Individuals, without a specific dollar limitation.**
- **The synod office manager (or the person functioning in that capacity) may authorize and electronically execute transfers between the synod's checking and money market accounts within BB&T Bank and its successors, subject to review by at least one of the Authorized Individuals.**

(2) Approved the following persons as authorized individuals as specified in the Signature Authorization Policy:

Kevin L. Strickland, Bishop

Stephen J. Gehret, Treasurer

Jill J. Henning, nominee by Bishop

Sandra G. Gustavson, nominee by Bishop

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & RATIONALE – The proposed restatement of the synod's Signature Authorization Policy differs from the current policy in two ways. First, it removes individual names from the policy itself, so that a complete re-approval of the policy is not required every time there is turnover among the persons involved. The second difference is the existing policy specifies that the following positions may authorize expenditures: bishop, treasurer, fiscal advisor, and two assistants to the bishop. The proposed restatement includes only the bishop and treasurer as specifically authorized positions, with two additional persons to be included as nominated by the bishop and approved by the Synod Council or Executive Committee. As personnel changes occur, the names shown in the second proposal may be changed more readily than is possible under the current policy.

F. Affirmation of Gold+ Health Benefits

(a) Affirmed that the Southeastern Synod will continue to provide health care benefits to its eligible staff at the Gold+ level through Portico Benefit Services for 2020 and subsequent years until otherwise modified by the Synod Council.

(b) Specified that the decision to provide Gold+ benefits is to be reviewed by the Personnel Committee and Budget & Finance Committee at least every three years, with committee recommendations provided to the Synod Council at least every three years at its September meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – The Southeastern Synod has provided ELCA-Primary health care benefits at the Gold+ level ever since the various Gold, Silver, Bronze, and Platinum options became available in 2014.

Each Fall, the synod must specify to Portico which of the various options will be provided during the following calendar year. When these options were introduced, the Gold+ option was the one recommended by the churchwide office and was the one implemented for Southeastern Synod staff. It is the option most similar in cost structure to what was in effect prior to the introduction of the four options. The Synod Council has not been asked to reaffirm this decision annually, but with the staff and officer transitions taking place, now is perhaps an appropriate time to review the original decision.

In general, Bronze+ plans have the lowest premiums for employers and the highest cost sharing provisions for employees. The Platinum+ plan has the highest premiums and the lowest cost sharing for employees. As an example, 2019 health premiums for a 50-year-old single employee in the Southeastern Synod would be:

Portico Plan	Health Premium %	Minimum Monthly Premium	Maximum Monthly Premium	2019 In-Network Deductible
Platinum+	19.2%	\$785	\$1,064	\$550
Gold+	17.0%	\$698	\$946	\$1,300
Silver+	15.3%	\$628	\$851	\$2,500
Bronze+	13.6%	\$559	\$757	\$5,000

G. Youth Ministry Financial Assistance Fund

Approved the establishment of a donor designated account entitled “Southeastern Synod Youth Ministry Financial Assistance Fund,” with the following characteristics:

- a. The purpose of the account shall be to help youth attend synod and churchwide events that they would not otherwise be able to afford.**
- b. Disbursements from the account shall be approved by the Assistant to the Bishop for Formation and Communication, in coordination with the Synod Bishop.**
- c. It is desirable that a minimum account balance of \$250 be maintained at all times.**
- d. The account shall be set up within the synod’s Donor Designated Fund, which is invested entirely in high quality, highly liquid fixed income products, according to the synod’s investment policy guidelines for this type of account.**
- e. Although the account is not to be endowed, the estimated interest earnings associated with it shall be allocated to the account near the end of each fiscal year.**
- f. Additional guidelines for this account may be developed by the synod’s Youth Ministry Team and should then be reported to the Synod Council as information.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – If approved, this new account will be operated and managed in the same way as the synod’s AFFIRM Founders Scholarship Fund, which has been in effect for many years but can only be used to help defray the cost of attending AFFIRM. The Youth Ministry

Financial Assistance Fund will be broader in scope and able to be used for any synod or churchwide event.

H. Offering at the Installation of Bishop Strickland

The offering at the October 5, 2019 installation service for Bishop Kevin L. Strickland shall be allocated as follows:

- One-half shall be donated to the H. Julian Gordy Scholarship Fund for Advocacy and Social Justice in the Southeastern Synod.
- One-half shall be donated to the Southeastern Synod Youth Ministry Financial Assistance Fund.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – The funds specified in the proposed action have been suggested by Bishop Strickland. If approved, the allocation will apply not only to offerings received at the installation service itself, but also to gifts received at other times if designated for “installation offering” or something similar.

END OF EN-BLOC ITEMS

FUTURE MEETINGS

SC2019.09.14 – The Synod Council will meet on the following dates at the indicated locations:

**January 10-11, 2020 at the Synod Offices
September 25-26, 2020 at First United Lutheran
Church, Kennesaw, GA**

CLOSING PRAYER: REV. MICA KOLI

Pr. Mica Koli closed the meeting with prayer.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Siddiqui adjourned the meeting.