

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod**  
**Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting**  
**April 16, 2010**

The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Council met in the Grand Chenier Room of the Sheraton Hotel, in New Orleans, LA., prior to the 2010 Synod Assembly.

In attendance:

Council Members: Evan Moilan, Bishop Mike Rinehart, Paul Monroe, Grace Taylor, Sue Moehring, Kurt Goedecke, Rev. Robin McCullough-Bade, David Hollrah, Arthur Murphy, Rev. Barbara Simmers, Rev. David Tart; Rev. Pete Lopez, and Don Hodde.  
Synod Staff and Visitors: Don Carlson, Kerry Nelson, David Swartling.

Absent: Karee Viergutz.

**Summary of Actions:**

Evan Moilan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

SC.10.04.01. Evan presented the nomination slate of candidates for SC and synod committees from the Nominating Committee for SA, along with the Churchwide Council nominees for recommendation by SA to Churchwide Council.

SC.10.04.02. Specialized Calls presented by Don Carlson. Motion to adopt Don Carlson's recommendation for calls, which is to issue nonstipendiary calls to Dagfin Magnus and Blair Lundborg as Synod Council specialized calls. Motion by Paul Monroe. Motion passes.

SC.10.04.03. Motion to grant Dorothy Sand on leave from call status at her request. Motion by David Hollrah. Motion passes.

SC.10.04.04. Lura Groen, an ELM pastor serving at Grace in Houston, submitted a letter requesting voice and vote at SA this year. The history of voice and vote at SA's was discussed. A similar request for voice only was granted at the SA last year.

There are 17 ELM's serving ELCA congregations. There are 46 total ELM pastors outside the ELCA ordination process. The door is now open for them to be properly vetted by the ELCA candidacy committees and approved for ELCA ordination. Don will talk with Lura Groen who intends to go through the ELCA candidacy process, as he understands her intention. Don is not sure she has gone through internship, and has not been mentored as an intern at Grace Lutheran in Houston.

Motion that we grant Lura Groen voice but not vote at this synod assembly. Motion by Paul Monroe. Motion passes.

SC.10.04.05. Charles Thielemann letter from his attorney requesting a recorded version of the meeting with his pastor, which he partially recorded, but never provided himself. SC considered denying the request to freeze all action until the SC listens to that recording, and let the process continue between Mr. Thielemann and the congregation. Motion that we deny Mr. Schuester's request to issue a stay to the congregational council in his letter, dated April 12, 2010. Motion by Paul Monroe. Motion passes.

SC.10.04.06. Approval of standing committees for this Synod Assembly as follows:

Elections Committee: Pastor Charles Parnell, Chair; Pastor Fred de Oliveira; Sandra Guthans; Diana Hodde; and Pastor Jim Abbott.

Credentials Committee: Pastor Linda Mosley, Chair; Pastor John David Nedbalek; Pastor Bill Mosley; and Pastor Karen Nelson.

Minutes Committee: Arthur Murphy, Chair.

Reference and Counsel Committee (approved in March 2010 SC meeting): Pastor David Hansen, Chair; Heidi Good; David Hollrah; Jeff Marsh; Sue Moehring; and Linda Mosley.

Motion to accept the committees of elections, credentials, and minutes, as presented by Mandy Faucett. Motion by David Hollrah. Motion passes. [The reference and counsel committee was approved by Synod Council at its last meeting in March 2010.]

[The committees approved today are: Elections Committee: Pastor Charles Parnell, Chair; Pastor Fred de Oliveira; Sandra Guthans; Diana Hodde; and Pastor Jim Abbott. Credentials Committee: Pastor Linda Mosley, Chair; Pastor John David Nedbalek; Pastor Bill Mosley; and Pastor Karen Nelson. Minutes Committee: Arthur Murphy, Chair.]

SC.10.04.07. Kiho Song. SC needs to give a voice to his status today. We have discussed this status several times in the past. Last time, we decided on a time frame of May 2010 and we need to reflect on his progress. Motion that we extend our support of the efforts of Jesus the Friend Korean ministry until December 2010. Motion by Kurt Goedecke. Motion fails.

Barb Simmers stated that the Churchwide body failed him if now he cannot get a position. Others stated that Churchwide and synods and congregations cannot give financial support in all cases. Others noted that the motion was well-intended, but will not get to crux of the matter regarding INS and immigration issues for Kiho Song.

SC.10.04.08. David Swartling, ELCA Churchwide Secretary, on the LIFT Study and the review of changes made at Churchwide by ELCA Church Council. Ministry guideline changes; mission support decline; Pittsburgh is the new selection for next Churchwide Assembly; KALOS initiative—ministry to have a will for all members and for ELCA members to remember the church in it.

Sexuality decisions and statistics discussed. 308 congregations have taken first votes to leave the ELCA. 221 passed; 87 failed. 90 second votes; 89 passed and 1 failed. Process of leaving is section C9.62, and that has worked well as a process. Bishops need your prayers because they are doing the bulk of the work. The bishop and the synod council should consult together with congregations who may go through this process in the future. Churchwide assembly will go one less day and will go paperless in 2013. There will be a paperless pilot project in 2011 with our next synod assembly.

The ELCA as a whole was able to contribute 9 million for Haiti relief. There were 30,000 donations from ELCA churches and individuals totaling 9 million. Living into the Future Together: synods to look at: what does it mean to be Lutheran at the congregational level individually and collaboratively. The website for this is [www.lift.elca.org](http://www.lift.elca.org). David has a fondness for Bishop Mike. Our synod is fortunate to have Mike. He enjoyed meeting and making a presentation on leadership to the SC at Lutherhill 2 years ago as well. After David's remarks, the SC had a question on church property transfer, which was discussed.

SC.10.04.09. Arthur stated that the synod constitution and bylaws need to be updated to account for new ELCA Churchwide changes for youth and young adult positions in all expressions of the church, staggering of SC election years, and to account for congregational name changes and additions and departures of churches in the synod over the last 20 years. This needs to be presented to all congregations several months prior to the 2011 SA.

SC.10.04.10. Motion to specify that the minimum number of lay voting members for all congregations is one, with additional lay voting members added to that one as congregations increase in size as set forth in the synod bylaws, effective June 1, 2010. Motion by Arthur Murphy. Motion passes.

The meeting was adjourned after the Lord's Prayer at 12:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Murphy

TLGC Synod Secretary

(Minutes received as corrected on July 10, 2010.)