

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod  
Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting  
April 1-2, 2011**

The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Council met at First Lutheran in Lafayette, Louisiana, on April 1-2, 2011.

In attendance:

Council Members: Evan Moilan; Bishop Mike Rinehart; Kurt Goedecke; Don Hodde; Gregory Goedecke; Pastor Sue Beall; Sue Moehring; Grace Banks; Corey Heidt; Pastor Barb Simmers; Diane Campbell; Dudley Piland; Pastor Bradley Fuerst (Saturday only); and Arthur Murphy (Saturday only).

Synod Staff: Pastor Don Carlson; Peggy Hahn.

Absent: Paul Monroe; Pastor Pete Lopez; and Director of Evangelical Mission Raymond LeBlanc.

We were welcomed by Pastor Burke and members of First Lutheran Church, and were invited to lunch with their leaders. Evan Moilan, Bishop Mike, and the rest of the Synod Council thanked them very much for their excellent hospitality.

Vice President Evan Moilan called the meeting to order on Friday, April 1 at 9:30 p.m.

Bishop Mike led a devotion on John 9 with reading in parts by 12 people in the story of the man born blind. The Synod Council (SC) discussed the passage as part of the devotion.

**SC.11.04.01** Motion to receive minutes of SC meeting from November 2010 as corrected. Motion by Dudley Piland. Motion passed.

**SC.11.04.02** Peggy Hahn gave an overview of this year's Synod Assembly.

**SC.11.04.03** Evan addressed Nominating Committee issues. There was a discussion of the youth position on synod council. Evan said that we had many highly qualified candidates for SC, and in fact, more than usual.

**SC.11.04.04** We moved into a Committee of the Whole to have an informal discussion about the request of Joy, Richmond to disaffiliate from the ELCA.

**Meeting recessed at approximately 10:00 p.m., to be reconvened on Saturday, April 2, 2011.**

**Saturday, April 2, 2011**

Vice President Evan Moilan called the meeting to order on Saturday, April 2, at 8:30 a.m.

**SC.11.04.05** Keith Magnuson of Kairos presented a proposal to engage their consultants in a strategic planning process, potentially followed by a synod capital campaign, on behalf of the SC. Kairos calls this vision and mission discernment.

**SC.11.04.06** Dave Brunkow of GSB Consulting presented a proposal to engage their consultants in a strategic planning process, potentially followed by a synod capital campaign, on behalf of the SC. GSB was the consultant for the Lutherhill campaign for phased development of the camp.

The SC would be asked to choose between Kairos and GSB at some point if we decide to move forward with a vision consultant and potential capital campaign for the synod.

After the proposals from both Kairos and GSB, the SC discussed both presentations, synod and pastoral and lay leadership concerns, long-term strategic planning and visioning, and institutional needs for outside perspectives on vision and mission.

Lunch Break at 12:15 p.m.

Evan called the SC back to order after lunch.

Additional discussion of strategic planning and outside consultants' presentations.

**SC.11.04.07** Motion to authorize Evan Moilan and Bishop Mike Rinehart to procure a final bid from Kairos for the development of a strategic plan and feasibility study to be funded by financial resources to be determined, but not to exceed \$35,000. Motion by Kurt Goedecke. Motion passed.

**SC.11.04.08 Financial report by Evan Moilan.** Discussion of synod finances, and congregational giving.

**SC.11.04.09** Motion to receive the financial report as presented. Motion by Don Hodde. Motion passed.

**Bishop's Report.** Bishop Mike shared good news from Pastor Brad Otto at Messiah with high worship attendance. Same at Faith and First in Galveston. Kinsmen giving is up over last year. Chris Markert has broken 100 in worship at Celebration. Living Word's worship attendance is back up and thinking of adding a satellite site in the west Houston area.

Bishop asks to keep the Africa trip by four synod members in our prayers. Bishop Mike Rinehart, Charles Short from St. Paul, Baton Rouge, Lucky Sahualla from Christ the King, Houston, and Emmanuel Jackson from Living Word, Katy are going on the trip. They will be visiting the Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Liberia.

Bishop updated the SC on pastoral issues at Zion Lutheran, Houston. Bishop asked Zion to take on an intentional interim pastor, and he has a meeting scheduled with lay leaders for April 5.

Bishop updates the SC on Joy, Richmond, and their request to disaffiliate from the ELCA and synod. Additional discussion of a new mission start.

**SC.11.04.10** Motion to release Joy, Richmond from the ELCA and wish them Godspeed and farewell. Motion by Kurt Goedecke. Motion passed.

Bishop reports on interview process for Director of Evangelical Mission position for the synod. Good candidates have been interviewed and a second round of interviews are being scheduled. A hiring decision and acceptance may happen by Synod Assembly if all goes according to plan.

Bishop reports on synod congregations that are struggling with the ELCA sexuality decisions in 2009. He has met three times with St. Paul, Brenham. St. Matthew, Sandy Hill has left the ELCA and synod. Pastor Jim Abbott has left his two-point call there and has been called to the other parish now, Immanuel, Wiedeville. He is monitoring St. Paul, Shelby, but has no additional information at this time.

The Bishop and synod are looking at new starts. We are looking at Richmond/Fulshear and Cleveland, Texas. Don is looking at a redevelopment at Gethsemane, Chalmette.

**Pastor Don Carlson's Report.** Pastor Don discussed Gethsemane, Chalmette and is doing a ministry review there in the next month. Don has done a ministry review at St. James, Houston, and they may be more interested in redevelopment, rather than closing their doors, after that review.

Don is working on intentional interim ministry training for all kinds of interim ministers. We now have 12 people doing interim ministry at 12 synod congregations of one kind or another.

The Synod Assembly needs to adopt the synod compensation guidelines once again. Don recommends that the SC approve the same compensation guidelines that were approved last year.

**SC.11.04.11** Motion to present the compensation guidelines for 2011 to the Synod Assembly as recommended by Don Carlson.

Motion to table. Motion by Kurt Goedecke. Motion to table passed.

**SC.11.04.12** Nancy Andrews lives in Baton Rouge and is taking the intentional interim training. She was previously on the roster some years ago and is seeking to be added to the roster of the synod again. Motion for the SC to issue a synod call to Nancy Andrews as an intentional interim minister. Motion by Barb Simmers. Motion passed.

Don and Bishop Mike have talked about placing interims rather than having several interim ministers interview for each interim call. The interviewing process for interims really slows the placement of interim ministers. Congregations typically look for the wrong skill sets for interim ministers. ELCA Churchwide prefers an interviewing process for synod liability reasons, but the disadvantages of interviewing are also unsatisfying. Bishop Mike states that the Model Constitution requires the Bishop to appoint interims with the consent of the congregation or congregational council. Bishop Mike may begin to appoint interims in lieu of the interviewing process in certain cases, as a result.

**Peggy Hahn's Report.** Companion synods are discussed. Changes in staffing and strategic planning are important new realities in our synod, especially with regard to growing Christian leaders. They are forming a new LYO in the synod. A pilot project will be LYO action teams for high school youth to join one of four LYO action teams. The teams are Global Mission; Hurricane Preparedness and Response; Day Camps; and one more to be determined.

We need to figure out a way to fund this. We need scholarship money for the Discipleship Project. We need money to fund the Synod Assembly projects. Our congregations do not jump up and fund this, so the synod needs to help encourage congregations to help with this project for our youth.

Next SC meeting will be prior to the Synod Assembly on May 20, 2011, in Galveston, Texas. The Synod Assembly will be held on May 20-22, 2011, in Galveston.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m. for worship and Communion in the First Lutheran sanctuary.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arthur Murphy  
TLGC Synod Secretary

Minutes received on May 20, 2011.