

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod  
Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting  
April 20, 2013**

In attendance:

Council Members: Evan Moilan, VP ; Bishop Mike Rinehart; David Hollrah, Secretary; Paul Monroe, Treasurer; John Turnquist; Don Hodde; Dudley Piland, Sr.; Sarah Ray; Diane Campbell; Elaine Doll; and Sara Witte.

Synod Staff: Don Carlson, Assistant to the Bishop; Pedro Suárez, Director of Evangelical Mission; and Peggy Hahn, Assistant to the Bishop.

Not present: Brad Fuerst; Sarah Flores; Sue Beall; and Barb Simmers.

We began the morning with a tour of the facilities of 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran in Galveston, led by Pr. Doug Gauthier of 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran, followed by a devotion led by Bishop Mike Rinehart.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-President Moilan at 9:20. Council members and others attending introduced themselves.

Minutes from the Council telephone conference on January 20 were approved.

Financial statements for the current year-to-date were received. Paul Monroe presented the Treasurer's report and subsequently presented the report for the last fiscal year. He noted that the Synod had net income for the year, a significant improvement over several prior years. The report was received.

Council approved appointment of Pr. Brad Otto to the Wartburg Seminary Board of Directors.

Churchwide Assembly Voting Member Caitlin Moen, earlier approved by Council, has advised the Bishop that she is moving from the Synod and will not be able to attend the Assembly. The Council appointed Christine Donahue as her replacement.

Council approved extension of on leave from call status for those on the attached list.

Council approved extension of specialized call status for those on the attached list.

Council approved the addition to the retired roster of those on the attached list.

Council set the housing allowance for Blair Lundborg, Assistant to the Bishop, at \$25,000, as he had requested.

Council approved nominations of members to the Brazos Valley Campus Ministry according to the attached list, starting with Lawrence Bade.

The Bishop reviewed the Strategic Plan to Help Churches Grow, earlier adopted by Council. Council discussed follow up on the survey for the Synod conducted by Kairos over the past several months. They collected input from over 400 pastors and Congregational Council members around the Synod. Peggy Hahn reported on the function of the LEAD program as part of the Strategic Plan. Pedro Suarez presented a report on actions of Synod leadership as part of LEAD to start at least one new worshipping community every year. He will focus on use of more lay people to lead congregations; devoting more attention to ethnic groups, especially Hispanics; and encouraging development of more bi-lingual pastors and lay leaders. He has helped enable the start-up of 4 communities in the Synod in the 3 years of his service.

Paul Monroe presented a proposed budget for the fiscal year ending in January 2015. It was approved.

Assistant to the Bishop Don Carlson presented his last report prior to retirement. He discussed his activities as part of LEAD, and attention to 1<sup>st</sup> call theological education. He also presented a list of pastors and rostered lay leaders he placed or dealt with during the term of his service to the Synod. He concluded by presenting 2014 Compensation Guidelines for pastors and rostered lay leaders of the Synod. Council provided its okey dokey to the Guidelines.

Council received a report by Peggy Hahn, who advised that most of her time was spent with LEAD. In other matters, she advised that offering for Global Ministry had exceeded the goal of \$150,000 and was now at \$200,000 and climbing.

She reported that the Lutheran Church in Peru was experiencing considerable unrest. The ELCA for now is suspending sending further money to Peru and the Synod will do likewise. Congregations that send money directly are asked to withhold the money for now.

Likewise, the situation in Central African Republic was also unstable, for political reasons. All Lutheran missionaries in the country have been withdrawn. The local Lutheran Church leadership has asked the ELCA to hold funds for the CAR until the situation stabilizes.

Pedro Suarez also supplemented his report and reviewed the struggles of congregations of African descent in New Orleans.

The next Council meeting is at 10:00am in Lutherhill, immediately prior to the Synod Assembly.

Future agreed Council meetings:  
August 23 (evening)- 24 at Lutherhill  
November 23 in Baton Rouge

Respectfully presented,

David Hollrah  
Synod Secretary