

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
Minutes of the Synod Council Retreat
August 23-24, 2013**

The Synod Council of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod held the annual weekend retreat at Lutherhill Camp and Retreat Center, LaGrange, Texas, beginning at 6:00pm Friday, August 23, 2013 and concluding at 3:02pm Saturday, August 24, 2013.

Present: Bishop Mike Rinehart, Vice President Evan Moilan, Secretary David Hollrah, Treasurer Paul Monroe, and members-at-large Robert Rivera, Elizabeth Menke, John Turnquist, Don Hodde, Brad Otto, Brad Fuerst, Barb Simmers, Eileen Doll, Sara Ray, Sue Beall and Diane Campbell. Also present were Synod staff members Blair Lundborg, Peggy Hahn, Beth Hartfiel and Pedro Suarez.

Absent: Linda Martens

The Friday evening session began after dinner. Council members introduced themselves and provided pertinent biographical information.

Matt Kindsvatter, Executive Director of Lutherhill, brought welcome from the camp and its board of directors. He described projects in hand at the camp, which numbers 14 different activities in process now.

The meeting was called to order by Evan Moilan at 8:15. He described the duties of the Council and the procedures followed, and led the Council in a program of visioning for the future.

The Bishop led a review of the Synod Strategic Plan, which emphasizes in part that the Synod must focus on being a resource to congregations. Council discussed relocation of the Synod office in two years and received information on the configuration of staff and reorganization of certain conferences (geographical clusters of congregations). The Synod is beginning to make more and more use of talents and resources in the congregations. The Bishop's review was supplemented by thoughts and observations from Peggy Hahn and Pedro Suarez.

The Saturday morning session began with a devotion at 8:53 and was called to order at 9:02.

Minutes of the SC meeting of May 16, 2013 were received and approved.

The treasurer's report was discussed and approved.

Council discussed plans and strategies for dealing with most effect with the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017.

MSC: That Council endorse and support a 3 month sabbatical for Bishop Rinehart in summer 2014.

Funding for the sabbatical should be available, at no additional cost to the Synod.

Council received information from the bishop about a new agreement between the ELCA Foundation and the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest, providing for mutual support. By virtue of the membership of the LFSW, both Texas-Louisiana synods and the West Texas synod will participate, along with other agencies and Texas Lutheran University.

Roster management.

Approved retired status of Susan Rippert, Jennie Jones, David Henske and Gay Zimmerman. Approved 1 year synodical call of Beth Marie Halverson as Interim Minister to serve where and as needed.

Seven names were lifted up as suggestions for the next Nominating Committee. The Vice President will contact them to see who would be willing to serve.

Council received the Bishop's report.

Council received the report of Blair Lundborg, Assistant to the Bishop for leadership.

Council received the report of Pedro Suarez, Director for Ecumenical Mission.

Council received an extensive report from Peggy Hahn, Assistant to the Bishop, regarding Synod activities in Peru this year, which are considerable. She also reported regarding the development and goals of LEAD, and provided a detailed booklet thereof.

Next Council meeting date November 23, 2013 in The Woodlands.

The meeting adjourned at 3:02pm, August 24, 2013.