

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod**  
**Minutes of the 27<sup>th</sup> Synod Assembly**  
**May 8-10, 2014**

The 2014 Synod Assembly of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge, La.

**Thursday, May 8, 2014.**

Pr. Mike Button welcomed attendees to the Assembly and introduced the mayor of Baton Rouge, Hon. Kip Holden. The mayor welcomed the Assembly to Baton Rouge and presented a token proclamation to the Bishop dedicating May 8-10 as TLGCS days in Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish.

Pr. Button led the Assembly's opening devotion.

The 2014 Synod Assembly of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod was called to order by Bishop Mike Rinehart at 1:55pm. He proceeded with introductions of the ELCA representative, visiting rabbis who would later serve as keynote speakers, Synod staff, Synod Council and local volunteers.

A credentials report was presented by Paul Monroe. A quorum was present. See attached.

MSC: to adopt the standing rules as proposed.

MSC: to adopt the agenda as proposed.

A nominating committee report and list of nominees was presented to the Assembly by Kurt Goedecke. See agenda for nominees.

Robin McCullough-Bade presented the first keynote speakers, who were three rabbis from the Baton Rouge area: Rabbi Gardner, Rabbi Goldson and Rabbi Weinstein. Their presentation focused on the Jewish Shemah, found in Deuteronomy 6.

After the keynote, the Bishop introduced Vice President Evan Moilan, who spoke about the duties of the Synod Council and led the Assembly in voting for new Council members. Lura Gruen and Dylan Murphy (youth member) were elected to their initial terms, John Turnquist and Peter Warmanen were re-elected.

The Assembly viewed a video on the Mission Endowment Fund. Afterwards, Bishop Rinehart encouraged members to contribute to the Fund's scholarship program, supporting development of future leaders and servants of the Church.

30 minute break.

The Bishop delivered the State of the Synod address, which included detailed presentations by each of the conference deans about activities and congregations in their respective jurisdictions. The deans were:

Mike Button, South Louisiana  
Scott Cigich, North Houston  
Marsha Kifer, Colorado River  
Brian Gige, Coastal Bay  
Charles Parnell, Brazos Valley  
Kerry Nelson, Central Houston  
Brad Otto, Southwest Houston

Pr Pedro Suarez, assistant to the Bishop, made a presentation about his responsibilities, including mission support, new starts and redevelopment.

Evening devotion was led by Robin McCullough-Bade and Everett Parker, an extraordinary musician who enthused and enthralled the Assembly with gospel songs.

### **Friday, May 9, 2014**

The Assembly began the day at 8:07am. The Bishop welcomed the attendees and reviewed Thursday's activities and described those for Friday.

Morning prayer, "Waging Peace", was led by members of Baton Rouge congregations and by Robin, who then introduced the group to the second keynote speaker, Dr. Michael Pasquier. His theme was Claiming Our Biblical Story in Today's Context and Culture.

A report was presented by Pr. Blake Lundborg, Asst. to the Bishop for Leadership, on the pastoral call process, candidacy for the pastorate and compensation guidelines for pastors and rostered lay leaders.

A report was presented by Peggy Hahn on status and progress of LEAD programs in the Synod, programs for coaching, training and providing resources for Christian leaders.

30 minute break

MIF video, followed by greeting from Pr. Pam Dorman.

Campus Ministry video, followed by brief greeting from Pr. Mindy Roll, campus pastor.

Amy Gulliksen spoke about Young Adults in Global Mission.

Jay Alanis spoke about Lutheran Seminary Programs for the Southwest.

Vonda Drees reported on the synod's relationship with the partner synod in Peru.

The Assembly received greetings and news from the Central African Republic, brought by Pres. Andre Golike of the Lutheran Church in the CAR, who addressed the Assembly in French, with translation by Carolyn Jacobs, a member of Christ the King Church in Houston.

After the address, the Assembly gathered around Pres. Golike and laid hands on him, while Pr. Emmanuel Jackson offered a prayer, first in French and then in English.

The Assembly recessed and members spent the rest of the day in various “immersion” programs around the city of Baton Rouge, all developed and coordinated by pastors and lay persons in Baton Rouge.

### **Saturday, May 10, 2014**

Bishop greeted the Assembly at 8:15am and reviewed Friday’s events and previewed those of Saturday.

Pr. Rick Nelson led morning prayer. The Assembly was invited to engage in the exercise of centering prayer.

Peggy Hahn led a discussion in which the Assembly processed the immersion experiences from Friday.

A credentials report was presented by Paul Monroe and adopted by the Assembly.

The 2015 Compensation Guidelines were brought forward and adopted by the Assembly.

Paul Monroe provided the Treasurer’s Report, presented the 2013 financials and moved the proposed 2014 budget. An amendment to the budget was offered

MSC that the Synod increase benevolence by \$3000 to Lutherhill.

The proposed budget was approved as amended.

Blair Lundborg reported on pastoral leadership changes over the past year.

Pedro Suarez recognized pastors who were celebrating anniversaries of their ordination.

The Assembly recessed in favor of Camp Lutherhill, which then held its annual meeting with all of the voting members of the Synod Assembly.

Pr. Brenda Smith brought greetings from the ELCA and shared with the Assembly a video *Faith in Action*, which presented and illustrated activities of the members and congregations of the ELCA worldwide. She finished with a special thank you for the Synod’s companion relationships with the synods in Peru and the CAR.

The Assembly concluded with a liturgy for the closing of an assembly, which featured an great performance by the Heritage Chorus, an extraordinary African-American gospel choir.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50am.