

TEXAS-LOUISIANA GULF COAST SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
SYNOD COUNCIL MEETING

Date of Meeting: November 5, 2016

Venue: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Bridge City, Texas

Attendees: Bishop Mike, Evan Moilan, John Turnquist, Eileen Doll, Pr. Liz Hanley, Pr. Rod Thom, Pr. Mark Warpmaeker, Robert Rivera,

Absent: Renee Alfaro, Kami Stone, Valerie Lloyd,

Staff: Pr. Blair Lundborg, Peggy Hahn

Minutes of Meeting

1. Evan called the meeting to order at 9:00a.
2. Bishop Mike led us in prayer and devotions. The devotion was premised on the story of Paul's last shipwreck found in *Acts 27:1-28:10*. We each were afforded the opportunity to give our thoughts about this Bible passage. I was particularly moved by this observation: "We may lose the ship, but we will still be OK." Or as we are told in 28:11, God will provide another ship for us to replace the one that was lost.
3. The minutes of the September 24, 2016, meeting required one change, namely, in paragraph 9, line 4, change "with" to "without". With that change, Robert moved approval, Kathy seconded that motion, and the motion passed.
4. Bishop Mike reported on the ongoing Strategic Planning initiative. He also noted that only 25 of our 112 congregations are growing. Said another way, more than 75% of our congregations are static or in decline. He told us that it is common for folks who have a near-death experience to leave the church because too often church people are more interested in budgets than in prayer. He therefore told us that we need to practice a different kind of hospitality, namely, we have to go to them rather than expect them to come to us, all as part of a significant conversation about evangelism, which, of course, is something Lutherans generally do not do well.
5. Evan led us in a discussion of a document containing "Actions of the [2016 Churchwide] Assembly inviting Synods to Action". After a lengthy discussion, we determined that the Synod staff would condense the list to a few items that are of most consequence to us in our synod for subsequent distribution.

6. We discussed the 2016 amendments to the Model Constitution for Synods that are recommended by the 2016 CWA but not required for inclusion. Two of these amendments included blanks. In S8.55, Mike moved and Diane seconded to include “4” in each blank. In S7.11.01, Mike moved and Kathy seconded to include “Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod” and “six”, respectively in the two blanks in that provision. Both motions passed.

I moved that these amendments as modified by the Council’s actions be submitted to the 2017 Synod Assembly with an affirmative recommendation to be included in our Synod Constitution. Kathy seconded that motion. The motion passed.

7. Kathy gave the Treasurer’s Report. She also led a lengthy discussion on the new Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (the “FLSA”) changes that become effective on December 1. These changes will impact some on our Synod staff because of the material increase in the compensation standard required to be an “exempt” or salaried employee under the FLSA. Diane moved and Robert seconded that the Executive Committee would establish an interim FLSA policy that will be effective until the Council meets again next February. The motion passed.

8. Blair gave his report. There was one roster change that required Council action, namely, the requested retirement of Pastor John Boldt. Kathy moved and Diane seconded that this request be approved. The motion passed.

9. In Chris’ absence, Bishop Mike gave his report.

10. Peggy gave the LEAD report. I only will note that LEAD was born four years ago, and, as a true sign of its burgeoning success, it now is working on establishing/maintaining relationships not only throughout our synod, but in five other ELCA synods as well (Delaware/Maryland, SW Texas, SE Iowa, SE Michigan, and SE Minnesota). Kudos to Peggy and her colleagues!

11. Being as there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10p.