

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

**Date of Meeting:** November 11, 2017

**Venue:** Holy Comforter Lutheran Church, Kingwood

**Attendees:** Bishop Mike, Robert Rivera, John Turnquist, Kathy Collins, Eileen Doll, Pr. Liz Hanley, Pr. Rodwell Thom, Pr. Mark Warpmaeker, Pr. Diane Campbell, Tom Wildrick, Shelli Williamson, Ismael Danforth

**Absent:** Renee Alfaro, Paul Antolik, Alex Norden

**Staff:** Pr. Blair, Peggy Hahn (LEAD)

**Minutes of Meeting**

**I. Actions Taken:**

1. Agenda: Motion to accept/John, Second/Kathy, **Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.**
2. Seasonal Members: Under \*C8.02.e of the 2016 ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations, before a Congregation Council can grant seasonal memberships, the Synod Council must approve seasonal members voting on its territory. Motion to approve seasonal members voting in the Gulf Coast Synod/Kathy, Second/Tom, **Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.**
3. Chinese Lutheran Disaffiliation from the ELCA: Because Chinese Lutheran was a former LCA congregation, any such disaffiliation requires Synod Council approval. Motion to approve/Kathy, Second, Mark, **Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.**
4. Reauthorize Umoja as a Synod-Authorized-Worshipping-Community (SAWC): Motion to approve/Kathy, Second/Mark, **Vote: Unanimous in favor of the motion.**

**II. Meeting Notes:**

**A. Bishop's Report.** We were told that Ivon Garcia has left the staff and that we are again looking for a Director of Communication to replace Andrea.

Bishop Mike led a discussion about disaster relief efforts post-Harvey. He noted that Ele Clay, a seminarian awaiting call, has joined the staff as the Disaster Volunteer Coordinator. He noted that Lutheran Disaster Relief (LDR) does not assist congregations but only individuals. The consensus of the Council was that

we need to get information concerning what LDR is doing/does out throughout the Synod.

Those of us who joined Bishop Mike and a host of others at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart for the joint Lutheran/Catholic celebration of the Reformation told him that his homily was spectacularly good!

**B. Strategic Plan.** We reviewed reports from three of the teams, namely, Deepening Faith (Pr. Mindy Roll), Radical Hospitality (Pr. Chris), and Leadership (Peggy). It is clear from these reports that our Plan is in such good hands.

**C. Vice-President's Report.** Robert distributed several bar charts, for instance, showing how income classifications in Harris County have changed in the period 1980-2011 as compared to 1949-1979. For instance, for the period 1980-2011, the top 5% has enjoyed a 63% increase in mean household income, while the bottom 40% has a net loss in mean household income of 1%. Similarly, since 1960, the percentage of Hispanics in Harris County has grown from approximately 6% to almost 41% while the Anglo percentage has dropped from 73+% to 33%. Likewise, Asian and Anglos are much better educated than either Blacks or Hispanics. These are the kinds of data that are most important in future planning efforts.

**D. Treasurer's Report.** Among other matters, Kathy presented information concerning Operating Revenue trends through October which showed a 1.7% decrease in Jan-Oct 2017 from the same period in 2016. Similarly, the projected mission support receipts through January 31, 2018, show a budget short-fall of \$38,814. We are all hopeful that at least some, if not, all, of this shortfall will be eliminated as this year closes. She further suggested that future budget presentations factor in both the LiveOn and Preaching Endowments. It was the sense of the Council that this would be a good idea.

**E. Blair's Report.** We were told that seminary scholarships this year total \$32,000 (normally \$18,000) and that we are about \$5,000 short of reaching 100% for Spring 2018. He also shared that a lot of hard work is ongoing in the area of shared/yoked ministry. Four parishes (Round Top, Shelby, Carmine, and Waldeck) are talking about a parish of four congregations. How exciting!

**F. CWA Voting Members.** The 2018 Synod Assembly will elect the ten folks who will attend the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. That delegation will be 50% laity and divided 50-50 male and female.