

MINUTES

**Nebraska Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Synod Council Minutes
November 19, 2022**

APPROVED

Voting Members present:

Tanny Akerson	Sharon Bohling	Pr. Sandra Braasch	Pr. Sarah Cordray
Gwen Edwards	Dan Friedlund	Blaine Jelden	Bp. Scott Johnson
Pr. Nathan Metzger	Gary Overfield	Pr. Travis Panning	Nathan Peterson
Sarah Purcell			

Staff and Organizational Presidents present:

Pr. Greg Berger	Pr. Juliet Focken	Stephanie Lusienski	Pr. Jon Mapa
Dn. Timothy Siburg	Dn. Sunni Richardson	Morgan Tranmer	Pr. Heidi Wallace

Also Present (briefly for a presentation):

Ramona Edwards

Absent:

Pr. Mariam Blair	Nancy Hinrichs	Pr. Cara Jensen	Elysia McGill
Joel Pedersen	Pr. Steven Peeler	R LaDene Rutt	
Pr. Kristen Van Stee	Anna Woods	Jim Yankech	

Bishop Scott Johnson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

MOVED and SECONDED to approve the agenda as presented and revised. APPROVED.

MOVED and SECONDED to approve the minutes of September 16, 2022, as amended. APPROVED.

Bp. Johnson led the group in a spiritual practice. Asking everyone “what are you thankful for”?

Bishop’s Report: A written report was available.

Bishop Scott was asked how his 2½ months have gone so forth. He shared his experience and next coming months for the staff.

SC22.11.32: ADDITIONS TO BISHOP'S REPORT

RECOMMENDED: That the following rostered persons be approved for On Leave From Call status for one year:

Name	Date
Anna Rudberg Speiser	11/6/21 (Family Leave-6 yrs), 2022 2nd yr
Breen Sipes	12/1/20, 2021 2nd yr (Family Leave-6 yrs), 2022 3rd yr
Samantha Nichols	12/19/20, 2021 2nd yr, 2022 3rd yr (final)
Chris Alexander	1/1/21, 2022 2nd yr, 2023 3rd yr (final)
Juliet Focken	1/1/23 (study leave-6yrs)
Susan Claire Meyer	1/15/21, 2022 2nd yr, 2023 3rd yr (final)
Rob Garton	2/15/21, 2022 2nd yr, 2023 3rd yr (final)

RECOMMENDED: That the following rostered persons be approved for transfer to the retired roster:

Scott Frederickson 11/2/2022

RECOMMENDED: That the existing synod council call to the following rostered person be renewed:

Pr. Peter Jark-Swain to serve as Priest-in-Charge at Trinity Episcopal, Norfolk, three-year renewable call, effective December 3, 2022.

RECOMMENDED: That a synod council call be extended to the following rostered persons:

Pr. Amalia Spruth-Janssen, to serve Immanuel, The Landing, Lincoln, as Pastor, effective October 31, 2022.

Pr. Suzanne How, to serve American Lutheran, Ashland as 6-month Intentional Transitional Minister effective October 2, 2022.

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC22.11.33: EN BLOC

1. CONGREGATIONS

RECOMMENDED: That the constitution for Bethany Lutheran Church, Ord, be approved.

That the constitution for Immanuel Lutheran, Omaha, be approved.

2. COMMITTEES

RECOMMENDED:

3. AGENCIES & INSTITUTIONS

RECOMMENDED:

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

Staff Reports: Written reports were available.

Bishop Scott reported **Pr. Juliet Focken** and **Pr. Jon Mapa** prepared their final reports as staff members and thanked them for this time of service to this organization. Both shared some words. **Dn. Sunni Richardson** and **Dn. Timothy Siburg** indicated no need for verbal reports. **Pr. Greg Berger** shared some words regarding his first couple of weeks. **Bp. Scott Johnson** reported there are sixty-seven rostered openings in Nebraska churches. Reported they are interviewing for a new director of communications, there is a large pool of candidates.

Reports of Officers and Organizations

Vice President's Report:

Secretary's Report: Gwen Edwards reported the executive committee is still working synod council vacancies.

Treasurer's Report: Dan Friedlund reported FY 2022 had a deficient through August of \$25K. The "150 Campaign" exceeded \$150K. The Bishop Maas Leadership exceeded \$40K. 97.5% of congregations participated in Mission Share. Fall Campaign will be Nebraska Mission Field, a discussion was held. Nebraska Synod is one of the synods leading Mission Share to the ELCA.

Nebraska Synod Women's Organization: Gwen Edwards reported the women recently held their Autumn Renewal and there was 75+ ladies in attendance, they are ready to be back in-person. The draw to the event was the new Bishop leading the Bible study and the main speaker from Oklahoma, who many women already knew from their travels to Triennial Gatherings. Next event is Winter Retreat, and Bp. Scott is leading the Bible study.

Seeking the Spirit Within Report – Ramona Edwards, Advisory Board Member, shared the advisory board's membership has changed. There have been conversations with four interested persons for director. The full advisory board interviewed one candidate, Rev. David Pinkston, an offer was made in early October, he begins March 1, 2023. Plans deficient will shift to 2023 and 2024 with the new business plan being displayed.

SC22.11.34 RECOMMENDED: To approve the following rostered synod staff housing allowance requests, effective January 1, 2023, until changed by future action of the Synod Council.

Gok Kuany Badeng	\$20,000
Greg Berger	\$24,000
Robert Corum	\$50,000
Kristin Van Stee	\$ 6,000
Omar Sadi Vila	\$12,060
William Voss	\$36,400
Heidi Wallace	\$18,000

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC22.11.35 RECOMMENDED: That Eide Bailly be appointed auditors of the Nebraska Synod ELCA for the Year Ending January 31, 2023 (FY2022).

SPONSOR: Dan Friedlund on behalf of the Synod Audit Committee

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC22.11.36 RECOMMENDED: To extend a Synod Council call to Rev. Greg Berger to serve as Assistant to the Bishop

SPONSOR: Bishop Scott Alan Johnson

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC22.11.37 RECOMMENDED: To extend a Synod Council call to Rev. Heidi Wallace to serve as Assistant to the Bishop

SPONSOR: Bishop Scott Alan Johnson

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC22.11.38 RECOMMENDED: To authorize changes to the authorized signers on the Synod's Wells Fargo checking account from Diane Harpster, Juliet Focken and Dan Friedlund to Timothy Siburg, Greg Berger and Dan Friedlund.

SPONSOR: Dan Friedlund on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC22.11.39 RECOMMENDED: Pursuant to Section *C.9.07, the Synod Council of the Nebraska Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America does hereby authorize Rev. Suzanne How to be available for a call as Pastor at American Lutheran Church in Ashland, Nebraska, should the congregation seek to consider her for a call following the conclusion of her term as interim pastor there.

SPONSOR: Bishop Scott Alan Johnson

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC22.11.40 RECOMMENDED: For Synod Council to invite interested persons, particularly the Synod Council justice committees and working groups to join the March 2023 Synod Council meeting for diversity training led by the organization INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES.

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

Discussion Held APPROVED

Old Business:

- The executive committee reported the executive committee needed to be restructured as the ratio between lay persons and rostered leaders was not correct. Two ballots were casts: one for one additional roster leader between Pr. Nathan and Pr. Cara and the other for one additional lay person. Pr. Nathan Metzger and Tanny Akerson were elected.

- Discussion was held regarding upcoming Synod Council meetings dates and what to do in the future. It was noted the 2023 dates need to be set as soon as possible as other groups within the Synod set their dates around the Synod Council meetings.

New Business:

Open Comments/Feedback:

- There was a question regarding Faith Formation and going forward.
- Those speaking need to sit closer to the camera/mic so those online can hear.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Edwards
Secretary