

MINUTES

**Nebraska Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Synod Council Minutes
October 14, 2023
Approved**

Voting Members present:

Tanny Akerson	Pr. Mariam Blair	Sharon Bohling	Pr. Sandra Braasch
Fred Bredehoeft	Gwen Edwards	Dan Friedlund	Nancy Hinrichs
Blaine Jelden	Pr. Cara Jensen	Bp. Scott Johnson	Elysia McGill
Pr. Nathan Metzger	Gary Overfield	Pr. Travis Panning	Pr. Steven Peeler
Nathan Peterson	R LaDene Rutt	Judy Stahlecker	Pr. Linda Walz
Anna Woods	Jim Yankech		

Staff and Organizational Presidents present:

Stephanie Lusienksi	Dn. Sunni Richardson	Morgan Tranmer	Pr. Kristen Van Stee
Pr. Heidi Wallace			

Also Present (briefly for a presentations):

Ramona Edwards	Pr. Brad Meyer	David Pinkston
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Absent:

Pr. Liz Dieseth Pearl	Sarah Purcell	Ms. Amy Buch	Pr. Greg Berger
Ms. Michelle Herrick	Pr. Kathy Montira	Dn. Timothy Siburg	

Vice President Elysia McGill called the meeting to order.

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 June 2, 2023, as presented. APPROVED.

David Pinkston, Director of Seeking the Spirit Within, led us in opening prayer and a group discussion, "capacity of connection."

Bishop's Report: A written report was available.

SC23.10.22: 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 2 nd yr, 2023 3rd yr.
Breen Sipes	12/1/20, 2021 2nd yr (Family Leave-6 yrs), 2022 3rd yr, 2023 4th yr.
Juliet Focken	1/1/23 (study leave-6yrs), 2024 2 nd yr.
Rob Garton	2/15/21, 2022 2nd yr, 2023 3rd yr (Family Leave-6yrs), 2024 4th yr.

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

Brad Meyer	07/01/2023
Ann Sundberg	08/01/2023
Lance Ferguson	05/01/2023
DeAnn P. Meyer	07/01/2023

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

Pr. Chris Alexander, to serve as transitional/interim minister, three-year renewable effective October 14, 2023.

Pr. Elizabeth Kocher, to serve at Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries, The Lutheran Center, Lincoln, as Campus Pastor, effective October 14, 2023.

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC23.10.23: EN BLOC

1. CONGREGATIONS:

2. COMMITTEES:

3. AGENCIES & INSTITUTIONS:

RECOMMENDED: To affirm the Nebraska Lutheran Outdoors Ministries (NLOM) Board of Directors' recommendation of the following appointment to the board:

Senator Wendy DeBoer, to complete a first three-year term on the NLOM Board commencing June 1, 2023 expiring in 2026, with the

opportunity for an additional three-year term following. Senator DeBoer is a member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Omaha.

RECOMMENDED: To affirm the Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries (NeLCM) Board of Directors' recommendation of the following appointment to the board:

Pastor Evan Christensen, to begin a first three-year term on the NeLCM Board commencing October 18, 2023 expiring May 31, 2026, with the opportunity for an additional three-year term following. Pastor Christensen serves at Calvary Lutheran, Swede Home, Augustana Lutheran, Genoa, and First English, Rising City.

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

Seeking the Spirit Within Presentation & Update

Program Director David Pinkston, Advisory Board Chair Pr. Brad Meyer, and Advisory Board Secretary/Treasurer Ramona Edwards provided an update on the StSW program. The *Business Plan for the Institute of Spiritual Direction and Formation* was distributed and reviewed.

Reports of Officers and Organizations

Vice President's Report: No written report available. Vice President McGill stated the ELCA recently held a Vice President training and she will be watching it.

Secretary's Report: Written report available in packet beginning on page 9. All Synod Council vacancies have been filled. Secretary Edwards shared the Synod Secretaries Orientation was held October 3, which is held by the ELCA Office of the Secretary.

Treasurer's Report: Written report begins on page 14. Mission Share has been declining. There is a savings in our operational plan with staffing; we want to make sure we have the right people on staff and the right number of staff.

Nebraska Synod Women's Organization: Elysia McGill reported in the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention and Gathering held in Phoenix last month. Nebraska had nine traveled for the convention, which included the election of the 2023-2026 Executive Board. She was able to share the Gathering experience with her daughter. The NSWOC Convention was held in the beginning of October. She shared a concern brought forth from a board member that a pastor is telling their ladies not to be involved in W/ELCA. How do we meet them where they are and get them back?

SC23.10.24 RECOMMENDED: To approve the transfer of \$20,000 from the Equity in Synod Properties Fund in support of Seeking the Spirit Within for the next year.

SPONSOR: Dan Friedlund, Treasurer

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

SC23.10.25 RECOMMENDED: To approve the following rostered synod staff housing allowance requests, effective January 1, 2024, until changed by future action of the Synod Council.

Gok Kuany Badeng	\$20,000
Greg Berger	\$24,000
Robert Corum	\$50,000
Scott Johnson	\$36,000
Kristin Van Stee	\$ 6,500
Omar Sadi Vila	\$12,060
William Voss	\$19,500
Heidi Wallace	\$21,000

SPONSOR: Executive Committee

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC23.10.26 RECOMMENDED: To create the role of a 17th dean to serve as the Dean of Retired Rostered Ministers.

SPONSOR: Bishop Scott Alan Johnson

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC23.10.27 RECOMMENDED: To approve the recommended changes to the Nebraska Synod Constitution as recommended by the Nebraska Synod Constitution Review Committee.

SPONSOR: Executive Committee of the Nebraska Synod Council

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC23.10.28 RECOMMENDED: To release Salem Lutheran Church of Ponca, Nebraska, from the roster of congregations of the Nebraska Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

SPONSOR: Gwen Edwards, Synod Council Secretary

MOVED with regret – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC23.10.29 RECOMMENDED: To approve the following dates for the 2024 Synod Council meeting calendar:

March 16, 2024	Online via ZOOM
June 1-2, 2024	Nebraska Synod Assembly (No Council Meeting)
August 10, 2024	Synod Office with ZOOM Option
November 22-23, 2024	Friday Evening through Saturday (Location TBD)

SPONSOR: Executive Committee of the Nebraska Synod Council

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

SC23.10.30 RECOMMENDED: That the Synod Council authorize the Executive Committee to act as set forth in the following background discussion.

SPONSOR: Executive Committee of the Nebraska Synod Council

MOVED – SECONDED Discussion Held APPROVED

Election of Executive Committee At-Large Members

First ballot was cast.

Quality of Call-Collaboration Grant, page 47, Bishop Johnson shared information.

Recess for lunch.

Election of Executive Committee At-Large Members Results

The person receiving the majority votes was:

Tanny Akerson, 13 votes

A second ballot was cast.

Staff Reports: Written reports were available.

Pr. Heidi Wallace shared information regarding the ELCA Systems Academy.

Election of Executive Committee At-Large Members Results

The person receiving the majority votes was:

Fred Bredehoeft, 9 votes

A third ballot was cast.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Synod Council's Role in the Nomination Process – discussion held.

SC23.10.31: To appoint Tanny Akerson as the Synod Council liaison to the nominating committee.

MOVED – SECONDED – APPROVED

Election of Executive Committee At-Large Members Results

The person receiving the majority votes was:

Pr. Steven Peeler, 10 votes

Open Comments/Feedback

Discussion held regarding congregational roster, specifically pastor changes/congregations seeking pastors list. How do we answer questions regarding why some churches get a second/third pastor while some are needing a pastor. Additional discussions held.

Large Group Learning & Development, lead by Dn. Sunni Richardson

Fred Bredehoeft closed the meeting in prayer.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Edwards
Secretary