

**MINUTES OF THE SYNOD COUNCIL, SOUTHWESTERN TEXAS SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
February 11-12, 2005
(Corrected May 19, 2005)**

Mark Helmke, vice president, at Lutheran Campus Ministry Center, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, called the meeting to order at 7:24 p.m. The meeting was opened by Bishop Tiemann with a prayer and a devotion on the book of 1 John.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Bishop Ray Tiemann	Mark Helmke	Gayle Gordon Bouzard
Bill Maddox	Tom Winn	Linda Zander
Alice Schnelle	The Rev. Don Taylor	The Rev. Wayne Walther
Alton Luedke	The Rev. James Wilken	Baldemar Cano, Jr.
The Rev. Anne Kolmeier	The Rev. Paul Zwarich	Gerry Hornstein
Ronald Riske		

Advisory Members:

Jenny Peterson	The Rev. James Bouzard	John Dellis
Carl Teinert	Donna Shurley	The Rev. Joe Garcia

Absent:

The Rev. Michael Ensruide	Laurie Hartman	David Houston
Karl Vermace	Charlene Spillmann	Margaret Reus
The Rev. Michael Gabby	The Rev. Stephen Kanouse	
The Rev. Michael Robinson		

Staff:

Anne Jones Hilbert	The Rev. Daryl Koenig
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The secretary determined that a quorum was present

Greetings from the Austin Conference are received from The Rev. Morgan-Gohlke, Dean

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mark Helmke presented a Proposed Agenda.

VOTED

SC05.2.01 That the proposed agenda be adopted.

Letters of resignation from Synod Council members received: Ted Gaskamp, San Antonio Conference, Lay male; Mary Amburn, Hill Country conference, Lay female; Dorothy Hernandez, Rio Grande Valley, Lay female.

VOTED

SC05.2.02 To accept with thanks the resignations of those Synod Council members listed above.

A letter from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson in appreciation of the Southwestern Texas Synod's support in ministry is received.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

VOTED

SC05.2.03 To approve the minutes of the September 10-11, 2004 meeting of the Southwestern Synod Council, the minutes of the Executive Committee for August 21, 2004 and January 5, 2005 as written.

TREASURER'S REPORT

VOTED

SC05.2.04

To approve the letter of engagement with the auditing firm of Canerio, Chumney and Associates to conduct the audit for Fiscal Year 2004

Interim treasurer, Bill Maddox presented the written financial reports (Exhibits A-1 through A-3). It was pointed out that the end of fiscal year 2004 shows an excess by \$4,418.00, not due to additional congregational giving but because the statement is based on the Spending Plan, a revision of the originally adopted budget; that the debt on the Lutheran Ministry Center has been reduced by \$57,000.00; that a 2.3% increase in giving for 2005-06 and 2006-07 will meet the Spending Plans for those fiscal years. The treasurer's reports are received and filed for audit.

REPORTS OF MISSION DIRECTORS

Rev. Joe Garcia elaborated his report (Exhibit B).

Presentation by Lutherans Concerned/North America

Representatives from the Austin Chapter of Lutherans Concerned/North America, a national organization providing sanctuary, support, and welcoming of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Trans-gendered persons and their allies, asks for the Synod Council to reinstate the Hospitality Task Force made possible by the 1998 Synod Assembly resolution approved by the Assembly to promote hospitality, support, and education.

Closing devotions are provided by Bishop Tiemann.
The meeting is adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

The meeting is reconvened at 9:05 a.m. on February 12, 2005. A devotion on 1 John is presented by Bishop Tiemann.

Evangelism Strategy Task Force Presentation

Whitney Myers of the Evangelism Strategy Task Force presents her faith story and other examples of creative ways to do evangelism. She also reports on the work of the task force.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mark Helmke presents the report to the Synod Council. The following items were discussed and voted upon:

1. Lutherans Concerned North America's request for display space at the 2005 Synod Assembly.

VOTED

SC.05.2.05

To approve the request for display space for LC/NA for the 2005 Synod Assembly.

VOTED

SC.05.2.06

To approve the request from Via De Cristo for display space for the 2005 Synod Assembly.

For administration purposes, it is noted in the minutes that both Via De Cristo and LC/NA will be notified that they will need to request display space every year.

2. Bishop Tiemann's sabbatical information is received. (EC/SC 05.01)
3. Mission and Ministry Grant information is received. Eleven of twenty-two grant requests were funded for a total of \$23,500.00.
4. Policy for selecting clergy Churchwide Assembly Voting Members. (EC/SC05.02)

VOTED
SC.05.2.07 **To approve the policy for selecting clergy Churchwide Assembly Voting Members as it appears in EC/SC05.02.**

VOTED
SC.05.08 **To ratify the action of the Executive Committee to schedule the 2006 Synod Assembly for May 19-20 in Corpus Christi, Texas.**

5. Discussion of nominees for treasurer and qualifications needed for the person in that role.

VOTED
SC.05.09 **To refer to the Executive Committee the nominating task for treasurer of the Southwestern Texas Synod and to authorize the Executive Committee to bring those nominations forward to the Synod Assembly.**

Conferences to be excluded each Churchwide Assembly year for clergy voting members are chosen according to the policy in SC.05.07 as follows: Austin 2007, San Antonio 2009, Victoria 2011, Rio Grande 2013, Coastal Bend 2015, Hill Country 2017.

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP REPORTS

Bishop Tiemann gives his report (Exhibit C). Highlights from his report include the recommendations from the ELCA Sexuality Task Force along with his response to the recommendations and the process used to inform clergy in the synod about the report; a professional boundaries seminar for all rostered members of the synod to address issues of inappropriate behavior between rostered members and others; the Bishop's visit to our companion synod in Costa Rica Feb. 18-28, 2005.

ACTION ITEMS (Exhibit D-revised SC05.02)

Mark Helmke presented action items to be acted upon by the Synod Council.

VOTED
SC05.2.10 **To approve on-leave from call status for**
Pastor Victor Andersen for a third year beginning 07/31/05.
Pastor Edwina Baethge for a second year beginning 04/01/05.
Pastor Tim Brunn for a third year beginning 05/15/05.
Pastor Russell Campbell for a second year beginning 07/01/05.
Pastor William Goff for a third year beginning 02/21/05.
Pastor Heide Harris for a third year beginning 07/01/05.
Pastor Zachariah Harris III for a first year which started 11/07/04.
Pastor Mary Kaiser for a second year of the 2 year extension which started 09/01/04.
Pastor James Wilken for a first year beginning 01/01/05

VOTED
SC05.2.11 **To call Pastor Alan Watt, Interim Minister for an additional two years, ending 2/2006.**

VOTED
SC05.2.12 **To approve retired status for Pastor Charles Eckert as of 11/01/04..**

VOTED
SC05.2.13 **To ratify the appointments of Kevin Benz to the Board of Directors, Lutheran Social Services, 1/1/05-12/31/07, Pastor Steve Rode to the Board of Directors, Wartburg Seminary, 10/1/05-12/31/10, and Pastor Richard Dahlke and Rita Carlson to the board of Directors, TexasImpact, 2005.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.14 **To certify the By-Law change of St. Andrew Lutheran, Canyon Lake as being consistent with the ELCA Constitution.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.15 **To certify the revised Constitution of Grace Lutheran, Sinton as being consistent with the ELCA Constitution.**

Bishop Tiemann reports that TEEM – Theological Education for Emerging Ministries provides a process for persons in specific circumstances as outlined by the TEEM document to become Rostered members. (Exhibit D-1)

VOTED
SC.05.2.16 **To approve the appointments of those listed in Exhibit D-2 SC05.02 to the Board of Directors of the Tri-County Cooperative Ministries.**

COMMISSION REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

Commission for Communications (Exhibit E) – Report received.

VOTED
SC.05.2.17 **To approve the appointments to the Commission of Belinda Kincade (Victoria Conference) and Claudia Teinert (Austin Conference) for terms 9/1/04-8/31/06; Rev. Carl Fredrickson as advisor with an open-ended term; Pastor Kathryn Cox (Rio Grande Valley) for a term ending 8/31/05; and Lisa Schaffer as member-at large with a term expiring 1/31/07.**

Commission for Congregational Life (Exhibit F) – Report received.

VOTED
SC.05.2.18 **To approve the following appointments to the Commission for Congregational Life: Pastor Danielle Casey (Hill Country Conference), Ted Kniker (San Antonio Conference), Sophie Rainville (San Antonio Conference), and Pastor Norman Sulaica (Coastal Bend Conference) for terms to expire 8/31/05; Esther DeHaven (San Antonio Conference), Laurie Pohluda (Victoria Conference), Pastor Susan Schnelle (Austin Conference), and Ken Schroeder (Austin Conference) for terms to expire 8/31/06.**

Youth Ministries Resource Consultant (Exhibit F-1) – Report received.

VOTED
SC.05.19 **To approve the appointments to the Synod Youth Ministry Committee of: Pastor James Wilken (Rio Grande Valley Conference), Amanda Ramirez (Rio Grande Valley Conference), Amanda Schnelle (Austin Conference), and Amanda Green (San Antonio Conference).**

Commission for Mission (Exhibit G) - Report received.

VOTED
SC05.2.20 **To approve the appointment of Pastor Peter Manfred, Abiding Presence, San Antonio to the Outreach Committee of the Commission for Mission (term expires 8/31/06).**

Commission for Professional Leadership (Exhibit H) - Report received.

VOTED
SC05.2.21 **To approve the appointments of Jan Niemic as chair of the Leadership Support Team; Pastors Tim Bauerkemper and Nathan Blom as members of the Leadership Support Committee; and Pastor Craig Gabriel to the Invitation to Service Committee all for two year terms expiring 8/31/06.**

Proposed Spending Plan 2006-2007 (Exhibit A-3)

Discussion of the 2006-07 Spending Plan ensued.

VOTED
SC.05.2.22 **To recommend the proposed 2006-07 ~~spending Plan~~ budget for adoption by the 2005 Southwestern Texas Synod Assembly.**

2005 Synod Assembly

Anne Hilbert gives a report on the plans for the upcoming Synod Assembly. A letter from Pastor Lori Ruge-Jones is read concerning Reference and Counsel processes for submitted resolutions. Mark Helmke presents the 2005 Synod Assembly proposed Standing Rules.

VOTED
SC.05.2.23 **That the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texan Synod recommend to Reference and Counsel to pay particular attention to Implication C of the Synod resolution form and specifically discern and make clear the action(s) each resolution would mandate for the synod or congregations in consultation with proponents of the resolution if necessary; and for the Reference and Counsel Committee to distinguish non-action resolutions as expressing the sense and opinion(s) of the Assembly.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.24 **To designate the 2005 Synod Assembly offering to Lutheran Social Services of the South.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.25 **To recommend to the 2005 Synod Assembly adoption of the proposed Standing Rules as found in Exhibit I.**

Discussion of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force Recommendations (Exhibit R)

Comments, concerns, letters, and resolutions concerning the Task Force recommendations are received and discussed. A motion was made and seconded to: **Communicate to the Church Council of the ELCA that the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texas Synod supports recommendations 1 and 2 of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force, but has reservations concerning recommendation 3.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.26 **To amend the motion to read: To communicate to the Church Council of the ELCA that the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texas Synod supports recommendations 1 and 2 of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force, but has reservations concerning recommendation 3 based on procedural reasons.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.27 **To amend the amendment to the original motion to read: To communicate to the Church Council of the ELCA that the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texas Synod supports recommendations 1 and 2 of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force, but has reservations concerning recommendation 3 based on procedural reasons that do not create uniform practices for Rostered persons in this church.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.28 **To communicate to the Church Council of the ELCA that the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texas Synod supports recommendations 1 and 2 of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force, but has reservations concerning recommendation 3 based on procedural reasons that do not create uniform practices for Rostered persons in this church.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.29

To further communicate to the Church Council of the ELCA that the Synod Council of the Southwestern Texas Synod has its own divisions on the moral issues involved in the recommendations of the ELCA Sexuality Task Force.

Bishop Tiemann will communicate to those in the synod who responded to the ELCA Sexuality Task Force recommendations the Synod Council's thanks, and he will forward the above actions to them.

Further discussion is had concerning the request from Lutherans Concerned/North America – Austin Chapter to reinstate the Synod Task Force on Hospitality.

A motion is made and seconded **to request that Bishop Tiemann have further discussion with the Austin Chapter concerning specific tasks intended for the Hospitality Task Force and report back to the Synod Council at the September 2005 meeting.**

VOTED
SC.05.2.30

To amend the motion to read: That Bishop Tiemann have further discussion with the Austin Chapter of Lutherans Concerned/North America concerning specific tasks intended for the Hospitality Task Force and report back to the Synod Council at the May 2005 meeting.

VOTED
SC.05.2.31

That Bishop Tiemann have further discussion with the Austin Chapter of Lutherans Concerned/North America concerning specific tasks intended for the Hospitality Task Force and report back to the Synod Council at the May 2005 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned for dinner with the members of Lutheran Campus Ministry and a presentation by the group.

Closing devotions were offered by Bishop Tiemann. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m. and closed with prayer.

Respectively submitted,
Gayle Gordon Bouzard, Secretary of the Southwestern Texas Synod