

EASTERN WASHINGTON-IDAHO SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
MINUTES OF THE 2017 ASSEMBLY
MAY 19-21, 2017
DOUBLE TREE DOWNTOWN, SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

Friday, May 19, 2017

Bishop Wells officially opened the Assembly following the Gathering Eucharist Service.

BUSINESS SESSION #1
Saturday, May 20, 2017

Bishop Wells called the business session to order at 8:15 a.m.

Matters of the Day: Kathy Gemar, Assembly Chair, welcomed everyone and expressed thanks to all who made the 2017 Synod Assembly possible. She introduced Martin the Moose. Martin the Moose was the brainchild of Shepherd of the Mountains in Wyoming. He is traveling all over the Synod visiting the congregations to learn about the various mission works that are happening.

Bishop Wells introduced the Synod Officers:

Tami McHugh, Treasurer
Gary Gemar, Vice President
Paula Kenney, Secretary

The Rules of the Assembly were presented. The Bishop noted that this year included rules for electing the Bishop.

The Business Agenda Presented

Quizdom voting devices were introduced and instructions were given for operating the devices.

Diana Abken, Registrar, presented a Credentials Report/Quorum Ruling

Total Voting Members: 248
Voting Clergy: 91 - 37%
Voting Lay: 157 - 63%
Voting Lay Male: 51 - 32%
Voting Lay Female: 106 - 68%
A quorum is present.

SA 17.05.01 Moved and seconded to approve the Rules of the Assembly. Discussion: None. Vote via Quizdom: Approved with 232 yes votes.

SA 17.05.02 Moved and seconded to approve the Agenda. Discussion: None. Vote via Quizdom: Approved with 228 yes votes.

Bishop Wells introduced the Synod Staff:

Cathy Steiner, Administrative Assistant
Gib Dominguez, Communications
Helga Jansons, Director for Evangelical Mission

Election:

Bishop Wells introduced Rev. Chris Boerger, ELCA Secretary, who will conduct the election process.

Rev. Boerger commented that we are in the process of calling the Synod's Pastor. Be in constant prayer for guidance by the Holy Spirit. There are 3 Bishops retiring this year and all have served 18 years. September 16, 2017 will be the date for the installation of the new Bishop. Rev. Boerger presented an overview of the process: S9.04 of the Constitution governs the election process which is covered in the Rules of the Assembly. Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod follows a pre-nomination process. No additional names can be added. There is no provision for withdrawal. On the 1st ballot 75% of votes is necessary for an election. If no-one receives the 75% all candidates will move to the 2nd ballot. Prior to 2nd ballot a Q&A session will occur where each candidate will answer 3 questions.

The candidates for the bishop election were introduced. Terri Lindemann offered a prayer prior to voting for the 1st ballot.

Results of the 1st Ballot: 236 votes were cast; 177 votes are needed for election. Peggy Harvey-Marose received 52 votes; Paul Palumbo received 50 votes; Michael B. Sager received 46 votes; Kristen E.M. Kuempel received 31 votes; David Kappus received 29 votes; Matthew L. Erickson received 22 votes; Shelley Bryan Wee received 6 votes. No one received 75% of the vote. No election. Candidates were sequestered for the Q & A session.

The order for the Question and Answer session:

Kristen Kuempel
Peggy Harvey-Marose
David Kappus
Paul Palumbo
Matthew Erickson
Michael Sager

Prior to the second ballot all candidates participated in a Q & A session where 3 questions were presented and they had 90 seconds to answer. Matt Larson offered a prayer prior to voting for the 2nd ballot.

Results of the 2nd Ballot: 235 votes were cast; 155 are needed for election. Paul Palumbo received 55 votes; Michael B. Sager received 48 votes; Kristen E.M. Kuempel received 46 votes; David Kappus received 37 votes; Peggy Harvey-Marose received 31 votes; Matthew L. Erickson received 17 votes; Shelly Bryan Wee received 1 vote. No one received 66.6% of the vote. No election. The top three candidates receiving votes, Paul Palumbo, Michael B. Sager, and Kristen E.M. Kuempel advanced to the 3rd Ballot. Sincere thanks were expressed to Peggy Harvey-Marose, Matthew L. Erickson and David Kappus.

Break

Business Session #2

Credentials Report

Diana Abken, Registrar, presented a Credentials Report/Quorum Ruling

Total Voting Members: 249
Voting Clergy: 91 – 37%
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Vice President's Report:

Gary Gemar reported that much of his time was spent on the bishop election process. He expressed thanks to the Cluster Deans and the Bishop Election Committee for their work in the election process.

Estate Planning for the Heart: Six (6) Modules have been completed. Central Lutheran hosted a pilot in November 2016 and Emmanuel in Ritzville hosted a pilot in April 2017. Three more pilots are being planned. The final touches will then be put on the videos and they will be ready for distribution to the congregations. Ratings have been consistently 4.55 on the modules. He expressed thanks to the Task Force members.

In 2013 The Way Forward Recommendations: Phase I: Redefined the functions of ministry partners in the Synod and establishing the Net-Worker positions. Phase II recommended the Synod plan for the future as changes occur in our ministry environment: 1) adopt recommended changes form Churchwide; 2) investigate how boundaries and partnerships of all Synods in Region 1 need to change; 3) determine how the theological preparation for candidacy and call for rostered and lay leaders need to evolve as new recommendations are made regionally and by Churchwide. The Region 1 Consultation conducted on December 10, 2016 reviewed Phase 2 recommendations and identified strengths, challenges, opportunities but didn't have time to consider ways to strengthen our ministries together.

He encouraged all congregations and councils to read the Called Forward Together in Christ Goals developed by Churchwide. 1) A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people 2) A church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church 3) An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings 4) A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace and reconciliation in communities and around the world 5) A well-governed, connected and sustainable church. The Conference of Bishops, Church Council and Churchwide Organization have affirmed that the two main focus areas for the next few years are: congregational vitality and leadership development.

He expressed thanks to Bishop Wells for his dedicated and caring ministry the past 18 years to the pastors and congregations in our synod, the Bishops in Region I and for his work at Churchwide. He also thanked Helga Jansons for her work as DEM. He asked everyone to be patient during the transition for the new Bishop. Our goal is to work to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Election:

Prior to the 3rd Ballot, each candidate will be given the opportunity to speak for five minutes. The order for the speakers is as follows:

Kristen Kuempel
Paul Palumbo
Mike Sager

Kimmy Meinecke offered a prayer prior to voting for the 3rd Ballot.

Results of the 3rd Ballot: 245 votes cast; 147 votes needed for an election. Kristen Kuempel received 103 votes; Mike Sager received 91 votes; Paul Palumbo received 51 votes. No one received 60% of the vote. No election. The top two candidates receiving votes, Kristen Kuempel and Mike Sager moved to the next ballot. Thanks were expressed to Paul Palumbo.

Each candidate was allowed three minutes to answer a specific question

Marlene Rogers offered a prayer prior to voting for the 4th Ballot.

Results of the 4th Ballot: 244 votes cast; 123 votes needed. Mike Sager received 111 votes; Kristen Kuempel received 133 votes. Kristen Kuempel received a majority of the votes.

SA 17.05.03 Rev. Kristen E.M. Kuempel is elected Bishop of Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod.

Guest Presentations:

Andrea Arey, PORTICO Benefits Services

Daniel Lee, Pacific Lutheran University

Paul Benz, Faith Action Network

Lunch Break

Business Session #3

Bishop Wells welcomed Mike Ingram, Whitworth University, who is serving as Parliamentarian

Introductions:

Ladd Bjerneby, Lutheran Community Services

Sara Wilson, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary

Beth Adams, ELCA Foundation

Beth Lewis, 1517 Media

Joel Wudel, Mission Investment Fund

Nomination Committee Report – Patty Cowan

Patty Cowan, Chair of the Nomination Committee introduced the following nominees for the various open positions.

Synod Council Representatives:

Mt Spokane Cluster: Patty Cowan

Palouse Cluster: Wayne Beebe

Youth Representative: Gwen McQuaig

At Large Position – Lay Female:

Norfilia Tijerina

Robyn Lunsford

Carol Olsen

Consultation Committee:

Rev. Wes Howell

Discipline Committee:

Rev. Betty Kraft

Melvin Martin

Resolution Committee Report

Rev. Ladd Bjerneby introduced Resolution I to bring us into harmony with Churchwide Constitution. This will be voted on in a later business session.

Credentials Report

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Bishop's Report (pages 1-4)

Bishop Wells called attention to his written report and asked for questions regarding his report. He will have more comments later in the day.

Mission Campaign: Achieved 25% of the total amount (\$320,000) has been achieved at this point. Hopefully by fall we can report that we are at the half way mark on the goal. We are anticipating some special gifts. He expressed praise and thanks to Pr. David Dawgs whose congregation gave receipts of their endowment (\$20,000+) to the Campaign. Congregations are invited to find a creative way to contribute to the campaign. There are campaign statements and pledge cards available at this Assembly. A PowerPoint presentation from Marj Nishek was shared showing the progress of the Tumaini School. Rainer Schackt and Marj Nishek will be at Assembly Saturday morning. The Bishop read a letter from Bishop Nintenzi from Ulanga Kilombaro Diocese.

Lutheran Community Services Report from Ladd Bjorneby

Where is the healing? This is a vital organization that is growing rapidly. It is a wraparound program, providing help that is needed to families. They are focusing on unaccompanied refugees who are minors and work to find folks who are ready to be foster families. LCS is about help, justice & hope.

Mission Investment Fund Report from Joel Wudel

Shared a story about Immanuel Lutheran Church in Boise. MIF lends money to churches.

Greeting from Bishop Emeritus, Rev. Bill Skylstad of the Spokane Diocese

Bishop Emeritus Skylstad shared greetings, prayers and best wishes and expressed deep appreciation and gratitude for Martin Wells who has been a brother in Christ. They have served together in the common cause of stewardship of the Columbia River watershed. They are working together on commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. From Conflict to Communion document led to a historic gathering in Sweden last fall. The world needs a revolution of tenderness.

Director for Evangelical Mission Report from Helga Jansons

Rev. Jansons stated that it is a blessing to do what you love and care about. Her main message is one of gratitude for being called to this position, for what she has learned along the way the opportunity to work with wonderful people, especially Martin Wells whose pastoral care is amazing. Expressed joy in working with Cathy Steiner who cares deeply about the Synod and is grace incarnate. Thanks were expressed to staff and to the volunteer officers, Gary Gemar and Tami McHugh and the Synod Council members, Cluster Deans, specialized Ministers, the Mission Developers, especially Misael Fajardo Perez and Gina Herman and thanks to the Stewardship and Mission Interpreter Teams. Transformation can happen many times in our lives and it can happen every day.

Churchwide Report and Video from Rev. Chris Boerger

Greetings from Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the Churchwide organization. We are Called Forward Together in Christ to identify the priorities of the church. We are one church made up of three expressions. We are interdependent and working together. He emphasized the importance of sending in parochial reports. We are observing the commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation; healing our past and looking for ways we can show we are called together in Christ. He shared five aspirations: 1) to be a thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people; 2) to be a church equipping people for their baptismal vocations in the world and this church; 3) to be an inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings; 4) to be committed to working ecumenically for justice 5) to be a well-grounded sustainable church, with two main focuses over the next few years: congregational vitality and leadership development.

A video message was shared from Bishop Eaton: Studying the Catechism.

Rev. Boerger recognized John Lohrmann as a member of ELCA Church Council, representing Eastern Washington-Idaho and Montana Synods. Bishop Eaton's Leadership Initiative is beginning: 60 more full scholarships over the next years which is on top of the Fund for Leaders.

Positions for which candidates are needed

The following committees need positions filled as follows:

Consultation Committee

Lay Female for Pos 1

Lay Female for Pos 2

Lay Male

Discipline Committee

Lay Female

Announcements and Break

Business Session #4

ELCA Foundation, Beth Adams:

Greetings from ELCA Foundation. The Foundation supports ministry by way of helping to create funding streams by way of endowments. Beth Adams is helping to set up the Campus Ministry Endowment. Beth.adams@elca.org

Resolution I

Rev. Ladd Bjerneby read the Resolveds. Synod Council amended the Resolution as follows: S11.11.01 is struck and S8.55 was amended to insert the number 4 where there were blank on the addendum. Synod Council amendments do not need a second. An opportunity was offered to speak to the Resolution. No one spoke. Vote was taken and the Amended Resolution I was approved by the showing of green voting cards.

SA 17.05.04 Amended Resolution I to bring the Eastern Washington-Idaho Synod into harmony with the ELCA Constitution is approved.

Elections

Synod Council Positions:

Patty Cowan, Mt. Spokane Cluster and Wayne Beebe, Palouse Cluster Representative were elected by acclamation.

SA 17.05.05 Patty Cowan is elected to Synod Council as the Mt. Spokane Cluster Representative.

SA 17.05.06 Wayne Beebe is elected to Synod Council as the Palouse Cluster Representative.

Gwen McQuaig, Youth Representative was elected by acclamation.

SA 17.05.07 Gwen McQuaig is elected to Synod Council as the Youth Representative.

At Large Position – Lay Female:

1st Vote: Norfilia Tijerina received 88 votes; Robyn Lunsford received 77 votes; Carol Olson received 54 votes. Norfilia Tijerina and Robyn Lunsford moved to the 2nd Ballot.

2nd Vote: Norfilia Tijerina received 120 votes; Robyn Lunsford received 102 votes.

SA 17.05.08 Norfilia Tijerina is elected to Synod Council At Large Female Position.

Consultation Committee: Rev. Wes Howell was elected by acclamation.

SA 17.05.09 Rev. Wes Howell is elected to the Consultation Committee.

Discipline Committee: Rev. Betty Kraft and Melvin Martin were elected by acclamation.

SA 17.05.10 Rev. Betty Kraft is elected to the Clergy Position on the Discipline Committee

SA 17.05.11 Melvin Martin is elected to the Lay Male Position on the Discipline Committee.

The positions for which additional nominee forms were submitted will be appointed by the Synod Council at the September 2017 meeting.

Budget Report from Rev. David Kappus

Rev. Kappus expressed thanks to Tami McHugh for her work along with the help of many over the last decades. The document presented is our commitment to be congregation together.

Procession of Mission Support Commitments took place prior to voting on the proposed Budget for the Fiscal Year ending 01/31/2019.

Bishop Wells called for the vote on the proposed motion from Synod Council which doesn't need a second. An opportunity was offered to speak to the Resolution. No one spoke. Vote was taken and the results were 218 votes in favor, 3 votes opposed, and 4 abstentions. The proposed Budget is approved.

SA 17.05.12 The Proposed Budget for the fiscal year ending 1/31209 is approved.

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary Greeting from Sara Wilson

Today is Graduation Day. Graduates include Kevin Beebe from EWAID Synod. Sara expressed thanks to alums from the Synod including Martin Wells. The Seminary has a new curriculum that includes teaching social issues and looks to include immersion. They are moving from North Berkley Hills to the heart of the city, downtown Berkley. They are excited about calling a new Rector who will start on June 1, 2017. Thank you for lifting up the leaders of the school.

Announcements:

Sunday the meeting starts at 9:00 a.m. to share Synod Shorts. Worship will be at 10:30 a.m.

Meeting recessed at 3:20 p.m.

Sunday, May 21, 2017

Synod Assembly gathered at 9:00 a.m. to provide an opportunity to share Synod Shorts that showcases mission work being done in congregations in the EWAID Synod.

Kathy Gemar: Final announcements and thanks were expressed to the Assembly Planning Committee.

Closing Eucharist Service and Closing of the Assembly took place at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula J. Kenney, Synod Secretary