

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

Date of Meeting: March 18, 2023

Venue: Covenant Lutheran Church, Houston

Attendees: Bishop Mike, Robert Rivera, Paul Antolik, Tom Wildrick, Rev. Anthony Chapman, Rev. Ariel Otterstad, Caleb Parks, Rev. Chon Pugh, Taylor Rivera, Rev. Sergio Rodriguez, Calea Wirtley

Absent: Irene del Arco, Deidre Hayes, Adele Montgomery, Adan Plata, William Walker

Staff: Rev. Ele Clay, Rev. Chris Markert

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 am by Robert Rivera, opening prayer/devotions were led by Rev. Chris Markert. Pastor

Actions Taken

1. Approved the Consent Agenda. Motion: Sergio; Second: Paul
 - The consent agenda included the agenda, Jan. 21, 2023 Council Minutes, on leave from call request for Rev. Karen Buck, and the March 1, 2023 email meeting minutes.
2. Authorized the Holy Trinity new mission and the new mission out of Redeemer-Houston as Synod Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs) with oversight to be provided by the Mission Table.
Motion: Caleb; Second: Anthony
3. Approved renewing the Synod Council calls for Intentional Interim Ministers.
Motion: Sergio; Second: Taylor
4. Approved Brother Chris Markert to be Mission Developer at Redeemer - Houston
Motion: Anthony; Second: Ariel
5. Approved the Personnel Handbook – Motion: Caleb; Second: Sergio
6. Approved buying flood insurance for the 4722 Northline Dr property, in the amount of \$500,000 for the building and \$150,000 for contents.
Motion: Paul; Second: Ariel

Discussion

7. Bishop's Associate for Mission Report - Brother Chris
7. Mission Table \$536K in grants to 14 ministries
 - a. Q Coalition (RIC Synod)
 - b. Held three regional meetings and place resources on the Synod website
 - c. Conducted an anti-racism retreat at Lutherhill
8. Bishop's Associate for Leadership Report: Rev. Tracey
 - a. At the next Candidacy Committee meeting later this month, we expect to have panels for three approvals and one entrance.
 - b. There are currently 16 calls open, down from 18 in January.
 - c. Compensation guidelines are still in process and will be presented to Synod Council in May for recommendation to the Synod Assembly.
9. Vice President's Report - Robert
 - a. Nominating Committee is making progress on a slate for the Synod Assembly in May.
 - b. Reminded board members that a gift to the Synod, for any reason, is requested from them.
 - c. Noted that St. James Apostol is having a 10th anniversary celebration April 29. Council is invited to attend.
10. Policy Discussion
 - a. Compensation Guidelines review was deferred to the May Council meeting.
 - b. The Personnel Handbook was reviewed. It was noted that Juneteenth was added as a paid holiday. No changes were offered.
 - c. The need for flood insurance and the appropriate amounts were discussed.
11. Secretary's Report - Paul
 - a. The revised Synod constitution will be brought to the next meeting for review before presenting it to the Synod Assembly.
12. Treasurer's Report - Tom
 - a. The budget ended with a \$33,000 deficit, the lowest in three years. The deficit will be covered by the contingency fund.
 - b. The 2024 budget reflects an increase of only \$1,000 from the 2023 budget, and totals \$1,389,000 budget.
13. Bishop's Report:
 - a. The listening phase of the strategic plan is nearing completion. Diversification and growing the church are the two main focus areas. A report will be out by March 31, and the plan is due by May 30.

- b. The pastor at Living Word has resigned without another call. Normal procedures will be followed, and the congregation will begin the call process for a new senior pastor.
- c. Synod Assembly preparation are underway and are the primary focus of Synod staff currently.
- d. Thanked Council for the flexibility to complete his Doctoral Degree given the impact of Covid.

The next Synod Council meeting will be at 4:00 on May 18. It will be a hybrid format for those members are unable to attend in person. UPDATE: Meeting time was changed to be at 7:00.

Meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm. Motion: Caleb; Second: Sergio

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Antolik
Secretary