

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

Date of Meeting: November 18, 2023

Venue: Synod Office 7822 Northline Drive, Houston

Attendees: Bishop Mike, Robert Rivera, Paul Antolik, Rev. Anthony Chapman, Irene del Arco, Adele Montgomery, Rev. Ariel Otterstad, Caleb Parks, Rev. Chon Pugh, Taylor Rivera (Zoom), Calea Wirtley

Absent: Deirde Hayes, Rev. Sergio Rodriguez

Staff: Rev. Tracey Breashears-Schultz, Rev. Jose Luis Escalera, Rev. Ele Clay

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 by Robert Rivera, opening prayer/devotions were led by Bishop Mike

Actions Taken

1. Approved the Consent Agenda. Motion: Rev. Anthony, Second: Adele.
 - The consent agenda included:
 - the agenda,
 - Sept. 23, 2023 Council Minutes,
 - The retirement requests for Robert Moore and Jill Vivroux.

Follow-up Actions

- Council will be asked to commit to working on some part of the Strategic Plan at the January 2024 meeting.
- Council will review the Bishop Succession Plan for discussion and approval at the January 2024 meeting.
- Council will review the LGBTQIA Coalition Continuing Resolution and be prepared to vote at the January 2024 meeting.

Discussion

7. Strategic Plan Review
 - a. Objective 1 - Include Pastor Ele
 - b. Objective 3 – Ties to objective 5
 - c. Objective 6 – only 66 have signed up for the Youth Assembly to date.

- d. At the January meeting, Council members will be asked to commit to working on some part of the plan.
- 8. Bishop's Associate for Ministry Report – Rev. Escalera
 - a. No report as Pr. Luis is onboarding now.
- 9. Bishop's Associate for Leadership Report: Rev. Tracey
 - a. Candidacy retreat will be held in December in Galveston. Candidates want training in administration, staffing, and records.
 - b. There are currently 18 open calls.
 - c. The synod needs to be intentional by letting people know the diversity statistics for bishops and pastors. And to encourage diversity on call committees.
- 10. Vice President's Report - Robert
 - a. Succession Plan Outline draft was presented
 - i. There was some discussion and Council agreed to review it in detail and vote on the plan at the January 2024 meeting.
- 11. Governance Tune-up: Robert Rivera
 - a. Processes for onboarding staff will be reviewed and updated as needed.
- 12. Policy Review
 - a. Sexual Misconduct Policy – need to update dates and the list of contacts on the last page.
 - b. Addiction Guidelines – No changes
 - c. Sabbatical Policy – no changes
- 13. Secretary's Report - Paul
 - a. Constitution Changes – at the request of the ELCA secretary, minor changes were made to the Synod constitution to bring it into alignment with the model constitution.
 - b. Presented the draft continuing resolution, S11.06.A23, for the creation of the LGBTQIA Coalition as an organization unit of the Synod. Council will vote at the January 2024 meeting, to recommend the continuing resolution to the Synod Assembly.
- 14. Treasurer's Report – Bishop Mike
 - a. Synod is still looking for a replacement for Tom Wildrick as Treasurer.
 - b. Bishop Mike briefly went over the submitted Treasurer's report.
 - c. The final audit report has yet to be received by the Synod office.
- 15. Bishop's Report:
 - a. Noted that Bishop Easton is taking a leave of absence.
 - b. Stewardship – will solicit gifts for lay school funding
 - c. Noted staff changes since the last meeting
 - d. Gave a summary of his visit to the Central African Republic (CAR). The people were very gracious and accommodating. They were very appreciative of the bishops coming there to celebrate their anniversary in spite of the dangers. The enthusiasm of the people was amazing.

Meeting adjourned at 2:38 pm. Motion: Paul, Second: Rev. Anthony.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Antolik
Secretary