

EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2018

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cheektowaga, New York

REGULAR MEETING

Directors Present: Cyndi Alviani; Susan Bell; Jim Carr; Mark Erbelding; Melissa Fultz; Secretary Karl W. Haeussler; Pastor Dan Hahn; Pastor Fred Hoover; Terry Miller; Garrett Nash; Pastor John Pingel; Pastor Carl Prostka; and, President Chris Wicher.

Directors Absent: None.

Special Guests: Rick Porter; and, Barbara Williams

Meeting Called to Order. After the President and the Secretary had determined that a quorum had been established, in the absence of a Chair the meeting was Called to Order by the President at 1:03 p.m. who is going to chair this meeting until the Board elects a new Chair.

Opening Devotion. The opening devotion was given by President Wicher. He began focusing upon Acts 9, the conversion of Saul, and Acts 10, Peter's encounter with Cornelius when he realized that since Jesus lived and died and rose again for all people that the Kingdom is for all people of all nations and cultures. This was a huge paradigm shift. Another one is taking place today. In "Canoing the Mountain," author Todd Hollinger references the journey of Louis and Clark. They were operating under the misguided assumption that they could canoe their way to the Pacific Ocean. They learned the hard way that you "can't canoe the mountains." In the same way, the church is learning that we are to find new ways to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament to the world in different ways. This is not easy, yet the Lord of the Church is with us!

Board Business.

* Approval of the Agenda. A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended by the President. The Motion passed unanimously.

* Approval of Minutes. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the Special Conference Call of the Board of Directors on August 7, 2018. It was noted that Jay Pohlman's name was misspelled. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

* Election of Officers.

A Chair needed to be elected. The President asked for any nominations. Pastor John Pingel nominated Mark Erbelding who accepted. The Secretary spoke in favor of Mark. Seeing that there were no other nominations a motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Chair. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made and seconded to elected Mark Erbelding as Chair of the Eastern District Board of Directors. The motion passed unanimously.

A Vice Chair needed to be elected. The President shared that, in the past, the Vice Chair was groomed to serve as the next Chair. This could not happen in this instance as former Vice Chair Claire Carlson moved out of the District. The Chair asked for nominations. Susan Bell nominated Jim Carr who accepted. A motion was made and seconded to close nominations. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made and seconded to elect Jim Carr as Vice Chair of the Eastern District Board of Directors. The motion passed unanimously.

As required per New York State law, we must have an Audit Committee, a Whistleblower Committee, and an Anti-Harassment Committee. In this past, this Committee has been comprised of the Chair and the Vice Chair. A motion was made and seconded that the Chair and the Vice Chair serve as the Audit Committee, the Whistleblower Committee, and the Anti-Harassment Committee. During the discussion it was moved and seconded that Cyndi Alviani be added to these Committees. The amended motion passed unanimously.

As per section 2.3 of the District Regulations the President is charged to make appointments to certain Committees and positions with the District.

The President recommended Pastor Bill Dorrow, Alan Strauss, Attorney Dan Joyce and Brian Makey to comprise the Constitution Review Committee. A motion was made and seconded to approve this. The motion passed unanimously.

The President recommended Jim Brese to serve as District Archivist. A motion was made and seconded to approve this. The motion passed unanimously.

The President recommended Sean Walters to serve as District Disaster Relief Coordinator. A motion was made and seconded to approve this. The motion passed unanimously.

The President recommended that Pastor Galen Purpua, Ray Pratt, and Rebecca Bessell compromise the Pre Seminary Interview Committee. A motion was made and seconded to approve this. The motion passed unanimously.

The President shared that at a Special Conference meeting on August 7, the previous Pioneer Owners approved the following to serve on the Pioneer Board of Directors: Attorney Jay Pohlman; Rick Porter; Kathy Pavelock; Rich Paul; Tom Marzano; Dee Grzyb; Attorney Nick Gatto; Pastor Ben Bahr; Holly Bowser; and, Pastor Ron Bright (nonvoting representative for the District President).

Member Sharing. Each member was asked to bring something by which they could share something about themselves and their life.

President's Report.

We had a great District Convention this past June. 80 evaluations have been received and discussed. Letters were sent to those congregations (about 15% of the District) that were not represented. Letters of thanks have been sent out to all who helped in the planning and execution of the Convention. The amount that congregations are sending in for Convention assessments continues to decline. If this continues changes may have to be made in the future concerning how we go about Conventions and other required District conferences and events.

The new Pioneer Board of Directors recently had their first meeting. Attorney Nick Gatto was reelected as their Chair, Attorney Jay Pohlman was elected as Vice Chair, and Rich Paul was elected as Secretary. The Pioneer Board did receive the resolution passed by the prior District Board of Directors regarding how their new LCEF line of credit will be managed. We will ask for an update on this at our Annual Meeting of the Pioneer Owners in January of 2019.

In May of 2017, the Board of Directors of the Northwest District passed Workers for His Harvest: Expression of Theological Dissent Regarding 2016 LCMS Convention Resolution 1302A. The prior Eastern District Board of Directors sent a letter of support to them. They recently wrote back thanking us for this action. Much of our Synod is responding as well.

We have 16 Visitation Circuits and only 9 of them meet the requirements to be an Electoral Circuit. After our Regular May meeting, we asked for exceptions to be granted by our Synod for the following Circuits: Pittsburgh Northwest; Pittsburgh Northeast; Philadelphia; and, Susquehanna. Exceptions for Philadelphia and Susquehanna were approved while exceptions for Pittsburgh Northwest and Pittsburgh Northeast were not approved. As a result, these latter two Visitation Circuits were combined as one Electoral Circuit.

We received both good news and bad news from Synod's Commission on Constitutional Matters. The good news is that all of our Bylaw and Regulation changes passed at the District Convention were approved. The bad news is that they questioned our District Policy Governance manual. While they questioned policy governance, in general, they expressed a specific concern that the District President's role as ecclesiastical supervisor was not adequately stated. The President requested that a committee be appointed to take a closer look at this and bring recommendations to the regular January meeting. A consensus was given to move ahead with this.

An update was given concerning the transitions of Deacons to Pastors in the District.

John Rushton	SMP Colloquy	In Process
James Burch	SMP Colloquy	October 22
Antwan Diggs, Sr.	Exempt	Through 2019
Jeffrey Keefe	Non Word and Sacrament	District
Eugene Keiter	Exempt	Through 2019
James Seybert	Exempt	Through 2019
Bob Crane	SMP Colloquy	In Process
Charles Madison	SMP Colloquy	October 22
Tim Klahn	SMP Colloquy	October 22
Jon Hofmeister	General Pastor	Ordination on Nov 4
Carl Emberger	General Pastor	Ordination on Nov 4
Larry Hoyt	Non Word and Sacrament	District
John Babbitts	SMP Colloquy	October 22
Dennis Gurnett	Non Word and Sacrament	District
Alan Boezi	Non Word and Sacrament	District

There are also 3 SMP Vicars: Peter Johnson at Faith, Penfield, New York; Brian Bochen from St. Luke, Cabot, Pennsylvania; and, Jason Christ from First Trinity, Tonawanda, New York.

New York State has made Anti-Harassment Training mandatory. All paid employees of any organization, including churches and religious organizations are required to be trained by October 1. The state has specific materials for this which the District Office has made available online.

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund makes generous grants to specific ministry programs. This past year, out of hundreds of applicants, 42 were invited to submit very detailed presentations. 8 awards were made including 2 within our District: a \$237,500 grant to Hope Lutheran Church, Rochester, New York, for expanding their food distribution ministry; and, \$400,000 to Faith Lutheran Church, Penfield, New York, for their chaplain ministry regarding first responders.

Section 3 Lay Director Nominees, Phone Interviews.

After her reelection, Becky “Maureen” Grunder moved out of the Eastern District. In preparation for this regular meeting, the President nominated six candidates. Each one responded to an information and question sheet that was sent them. They were made available for all Board members to review prior to the meeting. Each one will be interviewed for 5 minutes via telephone. The primary question they will be ask: “What can you contribute to the District Board of Directors?” The first two to be interviewed were Jon Allen and Carolyn Krause.

President’s Report.

The Pastors’ Fall Conference held at Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center went very well. There were about 90 in attendance. The theme was “An Always God for an Always

Changing Ministry Context.” The evaluations revealed that the most appreciated topic was clergy confidentiality.

A Circuit Visitor/Vice President Orientation was held before the Pastors’ Fall Conference. The regular yearly conference will be held in January at the Notre Dame Retreat Center in Canandaigua, New York.

Kathy Fretthold is holding two separate Educators’ Gatherings. The first one for the Buffalo and Rochester regions was already held with 70+ in attendance. The second one for the Pittsburgh region was being held as we were meeting. 20+ had registered for this conference.

The New Work Orientation packet and video have been updated. Since the District has switch from meeting in person to this method participation has skyrocketed from 40% to 100%!

Section 3 Lay Director Nominees, Phone Interviews.

The following nominees were interviewed via phone: Donna Kaser; and, Sue Dietrich.

Break.

2019 Proposed District Budget.

Barb Sigafos of the District Office joined the meeting via telephone.

Overall, the proposed 2019 District Budget is very similar to the 2018 District Budget.

Between now and the end of the year, Commitment letters will be sent to the congregations. We will most likely receive responses from about 50% of them. Educated guesses will be made concerning the other 50%. A general breakdown of congregational giving: 1 congregation gives more than \$25,000; 10 congregations give between \$10,000 and \$25,000; 87 congregations give less than \$10,000 a year; and, 27 give nothing at all for the year.

Congregational Convention assessment not only cover expenses for the District Convention but for all other events required by Synod and the District. This past year we essentially broke even.

As of the end of September, the District is \$52,800 off from what was pledged from congregations. And while we have seen this before, it’s never been quite this low. A year end appeal will be sent out. Congregations often get caught up on their pledges during this time. A separate letter concerning all of this was recently sent to Circuit Visitors.

Our pledge to Synod is 10% of our budget. If congregational giving drops then so does our giving to Synod.

Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center still has not reimbursed the District for the \$13,000 regarding insurance coverage from March to October.

Four Called workers are receiving educational debt retirement assistance.

Concerning the St. Matthew, Rochester, lean, a final balloon payment is due on April 1, 2020. As they have paid consistently, we are considering talking with them about how to avoid this balloon payment. We really want to avoid having to take care of this property ourselves again.

While there is no raise for the President, there are raises for the remainder of the part time staff. This was done as they did not receive raises the previous year.

Rick Porter's salary includes money received from Lutheran Church Extension Fund. The same is also true, to a much lesser degree, with Lutheran Foundation.

There are no increases for the Eastern District Mission Organizations. Along with this, the District Staff has been instructed to keep travel expenses down. The President thanked the Vice Presidents for their increased travel on behalf of the District.

Overall, the budget totals \$869,998.00 which is down from the \$912,480 of the previous year.

No vote needed to be taken on this preliminary budget. A vote will be taken on the actual budget that is presented at the next regular meeting in January.

Policy Work.

The Chair turned the meeting over to Rick Porter.

In the Special Orientation meeting while looking at 2.2.12 the question was raised if we had done away with the Executive Committee. In view of this, it was proposed that this section be written as follows: "A member of the Board who violates any policy shall be counseled by the Chairman. Should violations continue, the member shall be counseled by the Chairman and two additional directors, and then the Board as a whole. Decisions concerning continued service to the Board by any member who continues to violate policy after such counseling shall require a 2/3 majority vote of the Board." ("Chairman and two additional directors" replaced "Executive Committee.") A consensus was given supporting this revision.

Section 3.1 - MANNER OF DELEGATING - was reviewed.

3.1 - MANNER OF DELEGATING - this describes the relationship between the Board and the President concerning delegating.

It was proposed that 3.1.1 be revised as follows: “The District President is empowered to take all actions and make all administrative decisions he deems necessary to attain organizational results, except actions which are first, unchristian or inconsistent with Biblical and confessional standards; second, in violation of law or applicable regulations or commonly accepted professional ethics; third, in violation of stated Board policies. (“He deems” replaces “are.”) A consensus was given supporting this revision.

The remainder of section 3.1 was left unchanged.

Section 1.5 - DESIRED OUTCOMES OF EASTERN DISTRICT MINISTRY - was reviewed.

These are the six present specific outcomes for our Eastern District.

1.5.1 - “Because of the work of the Eastern District and its staff on behalf of its congregations and Synod . . . ”

1.5.1.1 - “Congregations have outreach as their primary focus. They pray for, plan and implement ministries to make disciples of a growing number of people locally and beyond. (Making disciples)”

1.5.1.2 - “Networking and sharing of information between congregations and staff and entities of the District occur regularly in order to match resources with God-given opportunities and to enhance working together. (Linking disciples)”

1.5.1.3 - “Congregational leaders and church workers are equipped, empowered, and enabled to pursue Christ’s mission locally and beyond. (Equipping disciples.)”

1.5.1.4 - “Physical, emotional, intellectual, financial, and spiritual support systems exist to demonstrate concern and provide care for professional church workers. (Care of Church professionals)”

1.5.1.5 - “Congregational leaders and church workers are Christ-like in their compassion and care in serving others. (Serving disciples)”

1.5.1.6 - “Congregations and leaders are inter-connected, walking together in Synod and, where appropriate, with the Church-at-large. (Connecting congregations)”

Rick stated that, according to Carver, these are not proper outcome statements as they do not address the cost need. A Board should not write specific statements until they know how to execute and carry them out. Should we work on changing them now or leave them alone? The consensus was to leave them the same for now and perhaps review them later during this triennium.

Section 2.6 - ACTIONS REQUIRED OF THE BOARD - was reviewed.

2.6.1 through 2.6.5 - Fiscal Responsibilities - were discussed and left unchanged.

Discussion arose concerning 2.6.6 under Official Acts. 2.6.6 - “The Board will approve congregation constitutions per the Consent Agenda [LCMS Bylaws 2.3.1 and 2.4.1].” Is this an act that should properly belong to the President or to the Board? 2.6.6 was not approved and will be brought back for further review.

Discussion also arose concerning 2.6.7 under Official Acts. 2.6.7 - “The Board will issue calls and/or ratify contracts for personnel per the Consent Agenda.” Likewise, 2.6.7 was not approved and will be brought back for further review.

Section 4.7 - EXIGENT MATTERS OF PRECEDENT - was reviewed and left unchanged.

Section 4.1 - EXECUTIVE LIMITATION POLICIES - Financial - was reviewed.

Discussion arose concerning 4.1.2.1 - “The District President shall not expend more funds in the year than received or made available by the Board of Directors.” The question arose as to how or how not such funds would be made available. 4.1.2.1 was not approved and will be brought back for further review.

4.1.2.2 through 4.1.2.8 were all reviewed and left unchanged.

Discussion arose concerning 4.1.2.9 - “The District President shall not borrow funds for operating expenses in an amount greater than \$133,000 and which can be repaid in one year.” This number was set by Lutheran Church Extension Fund. Should “one year” be replaced by “fiscal year”? 4.1.2.9 was not approved and will be brought back for further review.

The motion was made and seconded to approve all actions taken to all of the specific policies just reviewed in sections 1 - 4. The motion passed unanimously.

The motion was made and seconded to form a special committee that will review sections 2.6.6, 2.6.7, 4.1.2.1, and 4.1.2.9 and bring recommendations to the next regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Section 3 Lay Director Nominees, Phone Interviews.

The following nominee was interviewed via phone: Kristen Waterstram-Rich. Beth Ambrosio was traveling and was unavailable for a phone interview.

The Chair called for discussion of all of the candidates. Following the discussion, a vote was taken by ballot. Before the vote a prayer was offered by Pastor John Pingel. The vote was as follows:

Jon Allen - 1
Beth Ambrosio - 0
Sue Dietrich - 2
Donna Kaser - 0
Carolyn Krause - 1
Kristen Waterstram-Rich - 9

There was an election. Kristen Waterstram-Rich is the new Lay Director from Section 3 of the Eastern District.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:21 p.m. A closing prayer was given by the President.

EASTERN DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2018

St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cheektowaga, New York

REGULAR MEETING

Directors Present: Cyndi Alviani; Susan Bell; Jim Carr; Mark Erbelding; Melissa Fultz; Secretary Karl W. Haeussler; Pastor Dan Hahn; Pastor Fred Hoover; Terry Miller; Garrett Nash; Pastor John Pingel; Pastor Carl Prostka; and, President Chris Wicher.

Directors Absent: None.

Meeting Called to Order. After the Chair and the Secretary had determined that a quorum had been established, the meeting was Called to Order by the Chair at 8:32 a.m.

Opening Devotion. The opening devotion was given by Melissa Fultz. After sharing some of her personal experiences concerning death and dying, she played “I Can Only Imagine.” She asked each member to think about what Heaven will be like. Afterwards she exhorted us that Heaven will be all that we imagine and far more in the presence of our glorious and victorious Lord and Savior!

Miscellaneous Board Business.

* Convention Resolutions, status.

The previous District Board of Directors submitted three resolutions to the District Convention all of which were passed with strong majorities. The first one deals with ecclesiastical supervision and the roles played by District Presidents and the Synodical

President. The second one deals with how the manner in which congregations are to support mission work. The third one is our suggestion for Synodical emphasis: Outreach; Partnerships; and, Blessings.

Once each of these are signed by the District President and the District Secretary, they will be sent to the Synodical Secretary who will then pass them on to the Synodical President. Prayerfully, he will pass them on to the appropriate Synodical Convention Floor Committee which will decide how they are placed in the Convention Workbook and then in one the Convention's Today's Business. This can happen in one of three ways: it can be brought out as is; it can be combined with other similar resolutions; or, it can be omnibused out.

* District Board of Directors 2019 Synod Convention Representative Selection.

The Chair asked if any of the members was willing to attend. Both Cyndi Alviani and Melissa Fultz expressed their willingness to do so. A vote was taken by ballot. An election was reached with Cyndi Alviani serving as our representative to the Synodical Convention with Melissa available as an alternate, if needed.

* District Staff 2019 Synod Convention Representative Approval.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Lyle Heggemeier as the District Staff Representative to the 2019 Synodical Convention. The motion passed unanimously.

* Calendar.

Our next regular meeting will take place on Friday, January 25 and Saturday, January 26 of 2019 in the Rochester Region. If the weather does not cooperate our plans may change. This will also include our Annual Meeting of the Pioneer Owners.

The following meeting will take place on Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4 of 2019 in the Pittsburgh Region. The Secretary asked if it was possible to change these dates due to a conflict with Confirmation activities at his congregation. The Board graciously consented to move this meeting back a week to Friday, May 10 and Saturday, May 11. (The Secretary and members of his congregation, especially their Associate Pastor, are most appreciative.)

The following meeting will take place on Friday, October 4 and Saturday, October 5 of 2019 in the Buffalo Region.

The members were asked to begin looking at their calendars and schedules for 2020 so meetings dates can be set for that year.

* Other Business.

The question was asked if any other Districts received letters from Synod about their use of policy governance. Apparently, 32 other Districts are doing this as well. The committee that is being formed to respond to the letter we receive was advised to contact some of our sister Districts concerning this matter.

* Meeting Evaluation.

After a brief and positive discussion, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn this regular meeting of the District Board of Directions. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:31 a.m.

* Closing Prayer.

A closing prayer was offered by Melissa Fultz.