

Southwest California Synod

Synod Council Meeting – June 19, 2021 @ 9:00A

Saturday, Morning

09:00 AM Opening Devotions – Bishop Finck

09:05 AM Call to Order

09:10 AM Agenda Approval

101 Approve May 15, 2021 Synod Council Meeting Minutes

102 En Bloc

103 Angelica Lutheran Church – Request for Independency (Synod Administration)

09:25 AM 104 Generative Dialogue – “What’s Next?”

- A. Commentary regarding the assembly (things learned, follow-up issues, etc.)
- B. Important transitional matters to list and discuss with the new council
- C. Constitutional issues for follow-up
- D. Budget concerns and strategies
- E. Influence of the Future Church Initiative & the expected shift in emphases related to conference responsibilities

10:20 AM 105 Synod Council Business Session

- Foundry Commercial Property Management Update
- Bloy House Opening Plans

10:30 AM

106 Closing Prayer and Departing Graces – Bishop Elect Bos

**Southwest California Synod - ELCA
Synod Council Report
April 24, 2021
The Rev. Murray D. Finck
Interim Bishop**

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!
Updates and Information since we last met in March ...

Various Involvements

- I have been involved in some pastoral care situations, offering advice and counsel.
- A significant number of documents regarding the impending sale of the property in North Hollywood have required either in-person or electronic review and signatures.
- There are a variety of conversations about the sale of the NoHo property and how that will affect the current individuals and groups leasing and living on that property.
- [There is a roster issue which we must address in this meeting today help the ELCA Office of the Secretary have roster information in line with ELCA policy. Please see attached document.](#)

SWCA Synod Staffing

- Edward Duarte moved to the State of Washington. For the first several weeks after he moved, he continued to work for SWCA remotely for about 30 hours a week. Now Edward has found a new position and will only be doing a few very specific tasks for us on an hourly basis.
- We have continued to have more conversations with Foundry Commercial about property management
- We are looking forward to the hiring of an Accountant who will join the staff and be part of the staff meetings.
- I meet with the whole staff once a month, and with Executive Staff three additional times each month. I meet at least once a week with each member of the Executive Staff and the Synod VP individually by phone or Zoom.

Conference Deans

- I continue to meet with the Conference Deans each month, and they, in turn meet with their collegiums once or twice a month. One of my disappointments is how seldom my calendar allows me to meet with the collegiums.

Spring Gatherings

- The Spring Multi-Conference Assembly met on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. 168 people participated by Zoom. The conferences were successfully separated into 9 breakout rooms. The event was held in four languages, namely ASL,

English, Mandarin, and Spanish. The translation cost was \$534.00, with one less interpreter than planned. An evaluation form is being sent to all participants. There were a couple of minor glitches at the beginning of this first-of-its-kind multi-conference assembly. There have also been some conversations about the processes that put this kind of event together.

- Pre-Synod Assembly Gathering, Sunday, May 16, 2021, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton will be with us. This event will have several important matters for the Synod and will be very helpful for all Voting Members of our upcoming Synod Assembly.

Past and Upcoming Events

- Along with some of the Synod staff members of the five ELCA Synods of Region 2, the five Bishops planned a worship service for April 11th, the Second Sunday of Easter. It was opened in about 1450 digital devices. Many positive responses were received from across the Region and throughout the church.
- There are several ordinations being planned for new pastors beginning their ministry in SWCA.
- There will be a Region 2 Consultation on June 15-16, involving the five Bishops, various Synod Staff, and the Vice Presidents. Two newly elected Bishops will be invited to attend one of the sessions, and three new Vice Presidents will also be invited to join the meeting to be introduced.

Synodical Meetings With Which I Continue to be Connected

- Executive Committee continues to meet frequently
- Synod Assembly Planning Team and Consultation Team
- Transition Team
- Bishop's Election Team
- Finance and Budget Committee
- Mutual Ministry

Other Meetings Once or More Times Each Month

- First Call Theological Education. This week, I was scheduled to be involved with the newest pastors of the five Synods of Region for worship, preaching, and a time of conversation. The agenda of the gathering was re-arranged during to some of the national events that took place this week. I was able to be with the FCTE group one time on Tuesday.
- ELCA Conference of Bishops meet weekly for 60-minute zoom meetings
- Region 2 ELCA Bishops meet weekly in a 60-minute zoom meeting
- Twice a month there are meetings with ELCA Interim Bishops
- Los Angeles Council of Religious Leaders (LACRL) meet monthly for 1 ½ - 2 hours.
- I am an ex-officio member of the Solheim Boards and Lutheran Social Services of Southern California. I am not able to attend all their many meetings.
- While not connected with my SWCA Synod work, I spend one afternoon a month with ELCA Federal Chaplaincy Ministries' Scholarship Endowment Fund Development Team. I chair that effort on behalf of our national church as we are raising funds to provide tuition scholarships for any ELCA seminarian leaning

toward become a Federal Chaplain in the US Armed Force, VA Hospitals, US Department of Defense, and the US Federal Prison System.

Respectfully submitted,

+mdf

Needed Action by the Southwest California Synod (SWCA) Council

Recently I received a phone call from the Office of the Secretary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) alerting me to the fact that a miscue happened seven years ago. It is easily remedied. Here is a brief background: Deacon Jamie Hovland was granted retirement status by the SWCA Synod Council, effective June 15, 2014. This action took place in its September 19-20, 2014 meeting. However, Jamie Hovland, at that time an Associate in Ministry (AIM), was not yet eligible to retire until June 7, 2016, according to ELCA guidelines. We are asked to rescind one decision, and retroactively make two others, and then Jamie's records in Chicago will be in order. NOTE: Several years ago, the ELCA voted to entitle all Associates in Ministry and Diaconal Ministers as "Deacons," which is now Jamie's ecclesiastical title. However, Jamie was an Associate in Ministry in 2014 and the actions we do now must address her in that way.

The current SWCA Synod Council has been requested by the ELCA Office of the Secretary to take the following actions:

1. Rescind the September 19-20, 2014 Synod Council action that granted AIM Jamie Hovland retirement status, effective June 15, 2014.
2. Retroactively, approve AIM Jamie Hovland for On Leave From Call, effective June 15, 2014.
3. Retroactively grant AIM Jamie Hovland retirement status beginning June 7, 2016
4. Request the Synod Staff to notify the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA of this action in a timely manner.

Respectfully submitted,
Bishop Murray D. Finck