

North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
Saturday, May 15, 2021
Virtual Assembly via Zoom

Deuteronomy 30:4 “Even if you are exiled to the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.”

Staff present at University Lutheran Church, East Lansing, Michigan included: Bishop Craig Satterlee, Synod Vice President Ms. Sandy Schlesinger, Synod Secretary Mrs. Christine Allen, and Synod Attorney Ms. Dawn Brackmann. Also present were Parliamentarian Mr. Robert Kamphuis, Synod Office Manager Ms. Ann Stavros, and two representatives from Chase Creative providing technical assistance for the assembly.

Saturday, May 15, 2021

Bishop Satterlee called the Assembly to Order at 9:15 AM by welcoming voting members attending on Zoom and visitors watching on the Synod’s YouTube channel. He introduced those present at University Lutheran and all joined in the Litany for the Opening of Assembly. He declared the Assembly to be in Session at 9:18 AM.

At this point, Bishop Satterlee reviewed general procedures to be followed for communication using the Zoom technology and provided the information necessary for assistance for those who experience technical problems. He also thanked University Lutheran Church for hosting the production team and the Synod Staff and reminded voting members that there have been updates to the Assembly book and throughout the meeting they should check the Synod website for the most current information. He informed the voting members that to cover the necessary business, the Assembly is very tightly packed and requested that they be cognizant of the time when on a break so that business can proceed in a timely manner. He reminded us that once credentials have been verified only voting members are eligible to participate in discussions and voting; therefore, keeping the Zoom call open throughout the meeting is essential.

Since concerns about possible voter fraud arose during the pre-assembly technical orientation meetings, voting members are required to provide their Voter ID and the Session ID at the beginning of each voting session to access the ballot. Any Voter ID’s that appeared multiple times, that did not match a person who was registered and checked in, or that were entered incorrectly were marked as invalid and not counted in the tally of the votes.

The names of additional nominees for any of the 28 positions on the ballot this year were required by noon on May 15 (the day of the synod assembly). Any voting member submitting an additional name must have the permission of the nominee and provide background information as shown on the form found in the assembly book.

Bishop Satterlee introduced the Rev. Christina Bright, chair of the Elections Committee, to lead the Voting Members in an orientation to the Vevox technology voting procedures. After several practice votes the assembly moved forward.

Credentials Committee Report – 9:00 AM Count

The Rev. Kjersten Sulllivan, chair of the Credentials Committee, reported that as of 9:00 AM May 15 the voting members were distributed as follows: 79 Clergy Voting Members and 114 Lay Voting Members. The percentage breakdown was 40% Clergy and 60% Lay. With a total of 191 Voting Members, a quorum of 96 was necessary for transaction of business throughout the remainder of the meeting.

Motion SA21.05.01

To receive the report of the Credentials committee.

Adopted 184-Yes; 1-No

Bishop Satterlee thanked Pastor Sullivan and the Credentials Committee for their work in verifying the credentials of the Voting Members for this first virtual assembly of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.

Assembly Rules and Procedures

Bishop Satterlee introduced Ms. Sandy Schlesinger, Synod Vice President, who presented and reviewed the Assembly Rules of Organization and Procedure found on pages A2-A3 of the Assembly booklet.

Motion SA21.05.02

To adopt the Assembly Rules of Organization and Procedure as presented on pages A2-A3 of the Assembly book.

Adopted 182-Yes; 0-No

Assembly Agenda

Vice President Schlesinger also presented the Assembly Agenda found on pages A5-A6 in the Assembly booklet. She reminded everyone that there have been updates to the Assembly book and the version on the Synod web page reflected the most current agenda.

Motion SA21.05.03

To adopt the Assembly Agenda for the 2021 North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly.

Adopted 181-Yes; 1-No

Bishop Satterlee thanked Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek for preparing the Assembly book.

Constitution Updates

Bishop Satterlee introduced the Rev. Dennis Smith, chair of the Synod Constitution Committee, who presented the recommended updates to the Synod Constitution. These updates included the required and recommended updates approved by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly and the recommended updates from the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Constitution Committee that bring the constitution into compliance with the model and place bylaws and continuing resolutions where they most appropriately belong. These updates were scheduled for presentation at the cancelled 2020 Synod Assembly and require action at this time. Two motions were presented to incorporate these updates.

SA21.05.04

To approve incorporating “en bloc” the 2019 Churchwide Assembly mandated and recommended constitutional amendments into the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Constitution as presented.

Adopted 179-Yes; 5-No

SA21.05.05

To approve “en bloc” the updates to the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Constitution recommended by the Synod Constitution Committee and approved by the Synod Council.

Adopted 175-Yes; 3-No

Bishop Satterlee thanked Pastor Smith and the Constitution Committee for their work.

Report of the Vice President

Bishop Satterlee introduced Ms. Sandy Schlesinger, Synod Vice President, for her pre-recorded report. In her report Sandy reviewed the council member classes (year that their term expires) and explained the reasoning behind the need to rebalance the terms of the council members. The cancellation of the 2020 assembly required the council to take action to provide consistency in the governing body of the synod and resulted in the extension of some terms or the appointment of others. This resulted in a total of 14 council positions appearing on the 2021 assembly ballot. Some of these required the assembly to ratify the council’s previous actions while others were for positions that would normally appear on this assembly ballot.

Adoption of the 2022 Synod Compensation Guidelines

Sandy also presented the 2022 Synod Compensation Guidelines for assembly approval. The council is recommending a base salary increase of 2% within the synod’s compensation models which will maintain the competitive salary positions of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod with other synods in Region 6. The council acted as the approving body for the 1.6% increase in base salary for 2021 since there was no assembly in 2020.

SA21.05.06

To adopt the North/West Lower Michigan Synod 2022 Compensation Guidelines as presented.

Adopted 173-Yes; 6-No

Nominations Committee Report

Bishop Satterlee introduced Ms. Linda Wicander, member of the 2021 Synod Nominations Committee, who presented the slate of nominees for the General Election positions. Prior to her presenting the slate, Bishop Satterlee stated that he would ask for nominations from the floor for each position in turn and act to close nominations at the end of each category of positions – Synod Council, Consultation Committee, Discipline Committee, and Churchwide Assembly Voting Members.

Ms. Wicander presented the following slate of nominees for the Synod Council positions. There are 14 Synod Council positions on the ballot – 6 to ratify Synod Council action; 5 with no opposition; 2 with no nominees; and 1 requiring a choice of nominees.

Synod Council Positions

- A. Secretary** Rev. Dennis Smith
4-year term

- B. Treasurer** Mr. Dan Carter
4-year term (8/31/24) SC action

- C. Lay Male** Mr. Tim Lundgren
3-year term Mr. David Marquette

- D. Lay Male** Mr. Richard Weingartner
3-year term

- E. Lay Male** Mr. Bill Trevarthen
3-year term (8/31/23) SC action

- F. Lay Female** Ms. Sandra Walker
3-year term

- G. Lay Female** Ms. Phyllis Klinger
Unexpired term – 8/31/23

- H. Clergy Male** Rev. Clay Bates
3-year term (8/31/23) SC action

- I. Clergy Female** Rev. Betsy Kamphuis
3-year term

- J. Clergy Female** Rev. Jessica Hahn
Extend 1 year (8/31/22) SC action.

- K. Person of Color/Primary Language not English** Dr. Candy McCorkle
Unexpired Term –(8/31/22) SC action

L. Young Adult Male Mr. Connor Ashley
3-year term (8/31/23) SC action

M. Young Adult Female
3-year term

N. Youth Male or Female
2-year term

No additional nominees were presented from the floor for any of the available positions. Given no nominees for the positions of Young Adult Female and Youth Male or Female, these will be filled by Synod Council appointment with ratification of the action at the 2022 Synod Assembly.

Motion SA21.05.07

To close nominations for Synod Council.

Adopted 168-Yes; 1-No

Consultation Committee – 6-year terms

Ms. Wicander presented the names of the following people who have agreed to serve on the Consultation Committee if elected by the assembly.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| O. Lay Male | Mr. Kirk Hoffman |
| P. Lay Female | Ms. Barbara Marquette |
| Q. Clergy Male | The Rev. Ray Dice
The Rev. Mike Kemper
The Rev. Max Miller |

Bishop Satterlee again asked for additional nominees after each position was announced and none were presented from the floor.

Motion SA21.05.08

To close nominations for the Consultation Committee.

Adopted 178-Yes; 0-No

Discipline Committee – 6-year terms

Four open positions are available on the Discipline Committee and Ms. Wicander presented the following names.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| R. Lay Male | Mr. Connor Ashley |
| S. Lay Female | Ms. Cynthia Nelson |
| T. Clergy Female | The Rev. Kara Shaw |

- U. Clergy Female** The Rev. Julie Bailey
 The Rev. Kate Schroeder

No additional nominees were presented from the floor.

Motion SA21.05.09

To close nominations for the Discipline Committee.

Adopted 174-Yes; 0-No; 2-Invalid (No Voter ID)

Churchwide Assembly Voting Members

North/West Lower Michigan Synod is allowed 7 formula positions with an additional 2 positions if specific formula positions are filled. Ms. Wicander presented the following names of those who are willing to serve as Voting Members at the 2022 Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio. Two of the formula positions are filled by the synod bishop and the synod vice president so only 5 formula positions and the extra 2 positions appear on the ballot.

Ms. Wicander presented the following names for the 7 positions to be filled by assembly vote.

- V. Clergy Male** The Rev. Alex Aivars
 The Rev. Clay Bates
 The Rev. Jonathan Reid
 The Rev. Justin Walker

- W. Clergy Female** The Rev. Julie Bailey
 The Rev. Betsy Kamphuis
 The Rev. Jennifer Michael
 The Rev. Joan Oleson
 The Rev. Jessica Rivera-Walker
 The Rev. Sherry McGuffin-Bays

- X. Lay Male or Female** Ms. Debra Berkey
 Mr. Robert Kamphuis
 Ms. Karen Ketola
 Ms. Barbara Marquette
 Mr. Richard Weingartner

- Y. Youth or Young Adult** Mr. Connor Ashley

- Z. Person of Color/Primary Language not English, Lay Female**
 Ms. Benita Muganza
 Ms. Jacquelyn Williams-Armstrong

- BA. Young Adult, Clergy Female** The Rev. Kate Van Valkenburg

No additional nominees were presented from the floor.

Motion SA21.05.10**To close nominations for Churchwide Assembly Voting Members.****Adopted 170-Yes; 0-No; 2-Invalid.**

A Point of Order was raised by the Rev. Andreas Teich asking whether we would be casting a single vote for those on the ballot with no opposition. The answer was in the affirmative; there would be two types of single-issue votes covering the nominees with no opposition. A Yes/No vote would be taken to affirm the action taken by the Synod Council during the pandemic in 2020 in appointing members to the council or extending the terms of current members. An additional Yes/No vote for each group – Synod Council, Consultation Committee, Discipline Committee and Churchwide Assembly Voting Members— would be taken to elect all those positions having only a single nominee. Individual votes would be required for all positions having more than one nominee.

A question was raised concerning the distribution of nominees across the seven conferences – three conferences account for 35 of the nominees on the ballot. The Nominating Committee was intentional in working with synod staff, conference deans, and pastors across the synod to identify possible candidates and extend invitations to serve. While efforts are made to have a representative distribution across all our conferences it does not always result in a balanced slate of candidates from a conference perspective. Efforts will continue to seek candidates from all conferences in the future.

At this point Voting Members were reminded to keep the Zoom session open since they would not be able to rejoin the assembly once they close their session. The Rev. David Sprang led the assembly in prayer prior to a 30-minute lunch break.

Upon return from lunch, Bishop Satterlee announced that there would be an adjustment to the agenda unless there was an objection from the Voting Members – the Report of the Bishop would be moved to between the first and second ballots to allow preparation time for the second ballot. No objection to this change was received. In accordance with the Point of Order request, the single vote positions were the first five votes cast in the First Ballot for General Election.

First Ballot for General Election

Bishop Satterlee asked for a motion to ratify Synod Council action appointing members who were unopposed on the ballot at the time of the 2020 pandemic shutdown. These positions include Synod Treasurer, Lay Male, Rostered Minister – Male, Rostered Minister – Female, Person of Color/Primary Language Other than English, and Young Adult Male.

Motion SA21.05.11**To cast a single vote to ratify Synod Council action appointing members to fill the positions that were unopposed on the ballot at the time of the pandemic shutdown in 2020.****Adopted 155-Yes; 1-No; 11-Invalid.**

Five Synod Council positions are unopposed on the 2021 ballot – Synod Secretary, Lay Male, Lay Female, Lay Female (unexpired term), and Rostered Minister – Female. Bishop Satterlee requested a motion to cast a single vote approving those nominees.

Motion SA21.05.12

To cast a single vote to elect those running unopposed for a Synod Council position.

Adopted 162-Yes; 0-No; 11-Invalid.

Two positions on the Consultation Committee are unopposed on the ballot and Bishop Satterlee asked for a motion to cast a single Yes/No vote for them. These positions are Lay Male and Lay Female.

Motion SA21.05.13

To cast a single vote to elect those running unopposed for a Consultation Committee position.

Adopted 174-Yes; 0-No

Three positions on the Discipline Committee are unopposed on the ballot and Bishop Satterlee asked for a motion to cast a single Yes/No vote for them. These positions are Lay Male, Lay Female, and Rostered Female.

Motion SA21.05.14

To cast a single vote to elect those running unopposed for a Discipline Committee position.

Adopted 179-Yes; 0-No

Three Churchwide Assembly Voting Member positions are unopposed on the ballot and Bishop Satterlee asked for a motion to cast a single Yes/No vote for them. These positions are Youth or Young Adult – Lay Male, Young Adult – Rostered Leader Female, and Person of Color/Primary Language Other than English – Lay Male.

Motion SA21.05.15

To cast a single vote to elect those running unopposed for a Churchwide Assembly Voting Member position.

Adopted 180-Yes; 0-No

Following these votes, voting proceeded through the remaining ballot positions with multiple nominees for each position. The results are as follows:

Synod Council Position – 3-year term:

Lay Male	Mr. Tim Lundgren	106
	Mr. David Marquette	70

Mr. Tim Lundgren is elected.

Consultation Committee – 6-year term:

Rostered Male	The Rev. Ray Dice	33
	The Rev. Mike Kemper	86
	The Rev. Max Miller	62

The Rev. Mike Kemper and the Rev. Max Miller will appear on the second ballot.

Discipline Committee – 6-year term:

Clergy Female	The Rev. Julie Bailey	97
	The Rev. Kate Schroeder	78

The Rev. Julie Bailey is elected.

Churchwide Assembly:

Clergy Male	The Rev. Alex Aivars	50
	The Rev. Clay Bates	35
	The Rev. Jonathan Reid	42
	The Rev. Justin Walker	52

The Rev Alex Aivars and the Rev Justin Walker will appear on the second ballot.

Clergy Female	The Rev. Julie Bailey	26
	The Rev. Betsy Kamphuis	22
	The Rev. Jennifer Michael	28
	The Rev. Joan Oleson	36
	The Rev. Jessica Rivera-Walker	24
	The Rev. Sherry McGuffin-Bays	45

The Rev. Joan Oleson and the Rev. Sherry McGuffin-Bays will appear on the second ballot.

Lay Male or Female	Ms. Debra Berkey	28
	Mr. Robert Kamphuis	34
	Ms. Karen Ketola	35
	Ms. Barbara Marquette	20
	Mr. Richard Weingartner	60

Ms. Karen Ketola and Mr. Richard Weingartner will appear on the second ballot.

Person of Color/Primary Language not English, Lay Female

	Ms. Benita Muganza	95
	Ms. Jacquelyn Williams-Armstrong	80

Ms. Benita Muganza is elected.

Report of the Bishop

Bishop Satterlee began his report by thanking the staff for their patience and faithfulness through the trying times of the pandemic year.

He highlighted the following items “by the numbers”:

- 25 congregations received Covid Grants used mostly to provide food and shelter to members of the community

- 21 congregations reported increases in worship attendance. It will be a challenge returning to in-person worship after experiencing on-line worship.
- 60 pastors and congregational leaders participated in the Introduction to Social Justice six-session program.
- 1 congregation completed its ministry – St. John’s, Saginaw held its last service on November 1, 2020.
- The ELCA has approved a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community Explore at Grand Valley State University beginning July 1, 2021.

As we emerge from the pandemic restrictions, the Bishop reflected on the following – noting that all things have a life span and change is inevitable.

- Beloved members of congregations have died.
- Some members may decide not to return to the same congregation.
- The call to family is strong – some rostered pastors may decide to move after more than a year of pandemic stress.
- He meets with the conference deans every two weeks via Zoom rather than in-person once a month. He acknowledged the deans and thanked them for their service.
- The staff meets weekly via Zoom. In-person meetings will begin in October.
- He can meet with 2 or 3 Congregation Councils in a single evening via Zoom rather than travelling to attend a single Congregation Council meeting.

He thanked everyone for prayers after his eye surgery by stating that science is a gift from God. We should be grateful for the knowledge and abilities of those using science to provide the advances in medicine and medical procedures that we have seen. Faith and science are the two hands of God.

Second Ballot for General Election

Bishop Satterlee called upon the Rev. Christina Bright to again oversee the voting for those positions that required a second vote due to not receiving a majority of votes cast on the first ballot. Four positions fall into this category.

Consultation Committee – 6-year term:

Rostered Male	The Rev. Mike Kemper	92
	The Rev. Max Miller	81

The Rev. Mike Kemper is elected.

Churchwide Assembly:

Clergy Male	The Rev. Alex Aivars	82
	The Rev. Justin Walker	90

The Rev. Justin Walker is elected.

Clergy Female	The Rev. Joan Oleson	83
	The Rev. Sherry McGuffin-Bays	88

The Rev. Sherry McGuffin-Bays is elected.

Lay Male or Female	Ms. Karen Ketola	74
	Mr. Richard Weingartner	100

Mr. Richard Weingartner is elected.

At this point an unscheduled 20-minute afternoon break was instituted when the internet at University Lutheran (the "hub" site for the meeting) failed. The on-site technical staff was able to restore service and the assembly continued with the remaining business.

Report of the Treasurer and Presentation of the 2022-2023 Budget

Bishop Satterlee introduced Mr. Dan Carter, Treasurer of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, who provided a review of the fiscal year 2020-21 finances; and, as constitutionally required, presented the fiscal year 2022-23 budget for approval by the assembly.

Dan reported that:

- Mission Support was down but the synod came through the pandemic year in a sound financial position.
- Travel expenses were greatly reduced due to pandemic restrictions.
- The Synod received a Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan of \$84,547 which has been forgiven and will be recorded as income in 2021. We also applied for and received a second PPP loan which we anticipate will be forgiven later this year.
- The synod received an "unqualified opinion" from the auditors. This is the highest (most positive) opinion that we can receive.
- The synod continues to maintain an 88% level of Mission Support revenue used for Programs.
- We continue to maintain a 50% Mission Revenue contribution to Churchwide.

The proposed budget for the 2022-23 fiscal year reflects a realistic decrease in both revenue and expenses based on the adjustments approved by the Synod Council in the budgets for both the current and prior fiscal years.

Motion SA21.05.16

To receive the report of the Treasurer as presented.

Adopted 162-Yes; 0-No

Motion SA21.05.17

To approve the 2022-2023 budget as presented

Adopted 169-Yes; 1- No

Report of the Reference & Resolution Committee

Bishop Satterlee introduced the Rev. Betsy Kamphuis, chair of the Reference and Resolution Committee, who led the assembly through discussion and voting on the two resolutions before the assembly. Zoom discussion sessions were held prior to the assembly to allow in depth discussion

and to have any questions answered. Discussion today was limited to 2-minutes for each person who wished to speak.

Resolution A – Toward a Creative, Dedicated Reduction of Disposable Plastics – was submitted by the Environmental Stewardship Task Force of the Publicly Engaged Church Table. One Voting Member spoke to the assembly in favor of this resolution. With no other requests to speak, the motion to approve the resolution was placed before the assembly.

RESOLUTION A

Toward a Creative, Dedicated Reduction of Disposable Plastics

Whereas, there is a growing mindfulness of the degradation of the earth with the ubiquitous presence of plastics (an estimated 86 million tons of plastic packaging produced annually), especially of single-use plastics which are not or cannot be recycled properly, polluting our oceans, waterways, and communities, negatively impacting our health as well as the health of land- and marine-based ecosystems; and

Whereas, as members of the Body of Christ, and specifically of the ELCA since the adoption in 1993 of the social statement, Caring for Creation, we have challenged each other to steadfastly care for creation with vision, hope, and justice, praying for the creativity and dedication “to live more gently with the earth”; and

Whereas, every congregation and every member of our synod can be a bearer of hope and a courageous witness to God’s profound involvement with and love for this increasingly despoiled world; therefore be it

Resolved, that we, as voting members of this Synod Assembly, commit to a sustained awareness of the urgency to radically reduce our own use of disposable plastics, finding and creatively using sustainable, reusable alternatives; and be it further

Resolved, that we ask the Synod Council, our Bishop, and every rostered leader to assist us in urging our congregations to likewise adopt creative and dedicated alternative practices; and be it further

Resolved that we, as the North/West Lower Michigan Synod and as individual members and as congregations pray for the courage and fluency to publicly share our concerns and our hopes with local, national, and international businesses urging them to move quickly and rigorously in utilizing and promoting reusable and/or biodegradable products.

Submitted by the following members of the Environmental Stewardship Task Force of the Publicly Engaged Church Table and other members of the synod:

ESTF Members: John Burow, Ellen Schoepf, Erick Johnson, Linn Kracht, John Schleicher, Kim Winchell, and Laurie Swanson

Others: Kimberly O’Brien, Adell Dingleline, Brielle Bowers (all Faith, Okemos); Paul Schmidt, Hunter Whitman, Matthew Smith (all Bethlehem, Lansing); Haley Vay Beaman, Stephanie Hall (both University Lutheran); Alex Aivars (St. Stephen, Lansing) ; C.J. & Amanda Clark, John & Barbara Wyns, Roy Field, Lisa Payne, David A Dietrich, Mary Jo Thies-Dietrich from Trinity New Era; Wayne Shearier, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Niles; Natalie Dingleline, Jack Dingleline, Cecelia Kramer, Warren Heilman, Rick Beaderstadt, Tammy Heilman, Gwynne Kadrofske, Ellen Holste, Tula Ngasala from Faith Lutheran, Okemos. Marcia Schultz, Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Edmore, MI; Barbara Paff, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran; Susan Callahan, Cheryl Tsuchiyama, Ken Tsuchiyama, Colleen Kracht, St. Peter Lutheran, Battle Creek; Kris Burow, Bethlehem, Lansing; Richard A. Moe, St. Paul Lutheran, East Lansing; Michael Anton, rostered pastor of Synod; Miriam

Bunge, University Lutheran, Lansing; Chuck Forester, Immanuel, Grand Ledge; Karla Chamberlain, Judy Salminen, Luanne Beaudry, Robin Bosgraaf, Nancy Yeager, James Domine, Juan Velasquez, Meredith Hines, Charlene Crebo, and Robert Myers, all of Grace in Lansing; Richard D. McKenzie, Immanuel, Grand Ledge; Kathryn Griffin, St. Paul, East Lansing; Church Council from Peace Lutheran, Holland; Jake Lehman, Trinity Lutheran, Kalamazoo.

Motion SA21.05.18

To approve Resolution A – Toward a Creative, Dedicated Reduction of Disposable Plastics.

Adopted 167-Yes; 7-No

Rev. Kamphuis presented Resolution B – Responding to the Climate Emergency – which was also submitted by the Environmental Stewardship Task Force. This resolution generated more discussion with four members of the task force speaking in favor. No opposition was presented from other Voting Members and the motion to adopt the resolution was placed before the assembly.

RESOLUTION B

Responding to the Climate Emergency

Whereas, in 1993 with the Caring for Creation¹ social statement, we, in the ELCA realized the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children”; and

Whereas, the most recent report by the 2019 U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change claims continued greenhouse gas emissions will cause “long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts for people and ecosystems”; and

Whereas, while actions of individuals and congregations responding to the climate emergency may well serve as significant prophetic and anticipatory symbols; only bioregional, national and international regulations, policies and corporate commitments could adequately reduce the pace of climate change and lead to equitable means of adaptation; therefore be it

Resolved, that this Synod declares that the climate emergency is a spiritual and moral crisis that calls for an urgent, faith-rooted response similar to the demands for justice and mercy voiced by the Hebrew prophets, by Jesus and the New Testament writers; and be it further

Resolved, that this Synod through the office of the Bishop, the Publicly Engaged Church Table, the Environmental Stewardship Task Force and its rostered leaders be encouraged to publicly and consistently advocate for those policies, corporate practices and governmental cooperation that would slow the pace of climate change and promote equitable adaptations; and be it further

Resolved that the congregations of this Synod be encouraged to commit themselves to learning, prayer and repentance leading to faithful environmental stewardship and care for those most affected by climate change.

Submitted by: John Burow, John Schleicher, Ellen Schoepf, Erick Johnson, Laurie Swanson, Kim Winchell, & Linn Kracht

Supporting resolution: C.J. and Amanda Clark, John & Barbara Wyns, Roy Field, Lisa Payne, David A. Dietrich, Mary Jo Thies-Dietrich, Trinity in New Era; Marcia Schultz, Our Savior's Lutheran, Edmore; Wayne Shearier, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Niles; Matt Smith, Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran, Lansing; Barbara Paff, St. Paul, Lutheran, East Lansing; Susan Callahan, Cheryl Tsuchiyama, Ken Tsuchiyama, St. Peter Lutheran, Battle Creek; Richard A. Moe, St. Paul Lutheran, East Lansing; Pastor Michael Anton, Rostered pastor; Miriam Bunge, University Lutheran, Lansing; Tula Ngasala, Jack and Nataline Dinledine, Cecelia Kramer, Rick Belderstadt, Gwynn Kadrofake all from Faith, Okemos; Chuck Foreste, Immanuel, Grand Ledge; Richard D. McKenzie, Immanuel, Grand Ledge; Kathryn Griffin & Pat Cramer St. Paul, East Lansing; Church Council from Peace Lutheran, Holland; Jake Lehman, Trinity, Kalamazoo.

Motion SA21.05.19

To approve Resolution B – Responding to the Climate Emergency.

Adopted 167-Yes; 7-No

ELCA Churchwide Reports

With the completion of the necessary assembly business recorded reports from ELCA Churchwide were presented.

The Rev. Kjersten Sullivan introduced Ms. Jodi Slattery, Executive for Governance in the ELCA, who works directly with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in preparing the agendas for the ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Assembly. She is also responsible for facilitating public announcements on behalf of the presiding bishop. In her prepared remarks she noted:

- \$653,582 Mission Support from North/West Lower Michigan which is divided among the U.S. (41%), Worldwide (22%) and Current/Future ELCA Leaders (37%)
- More than 2,100 people are touched weekly by COVID-19 Grants in North/West Lower Michigan
- In 2020 the Lutheran Disaster Fund assisted those affected by the Midland area flood
- Grand Valley State University now has a Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community
- The ELCA Fund for Leaders supports Mr. Christopher (C. J.) Clark, Ms. Mary Hughes, and Mr. Edward Ruble

Bishop Eaton's short, recorded message focused on the future of the ELCA. The ELCA has listened, learned, and tried new things during this past year – all necessitated by the pandemic and the restrictions that were in place. By working together we have managed to keep programs alive as focus shifted from in-person to virtual contact. The "Future Church" initiative focuses on reaching out and collaborating with others to have a larger impact in our neighborhoods. As we move forward, she stated that "God's Church has a Plan; God's Plan has a Church."

Announcements

Bishop Satterlee announced that the 2022 Synod Assembly will be held at the Comfort Inn and Suites in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan Thursday – Saturday, May 12-14, 2022. The theme will be focused on Racial Justice.

The Synod Office will be closed on Monday, May 17, 2021, and the Synod Staff will be taking the day off.

He thanked all who contributed to planning and executing the first virtual assembly for the North/West Lower Michigan Synod.

Ms. Chelsey Satterlee, Director of Communication, coordinated and led the efforts.

Ms. Rebecca Bossenbroek prepared the Assembly book

Ms. Ann Stavros, Office Manager, provided on-site support

The Rev. Jessica Hahn and Ms. Linda Wicander – Nominations Committee

The Rev. Christina Bright – Elections Committee

The Rev. Justin Walker – Resolutions Committee

The Rev Betsy Kamphuis – Reference and Resolutions Committee

Mr. Dan Carter, Synod Treasurer

University Lutheran Church provided space for onsite synod staff and the technical support staff

Chase Creative provided technical support

Mr. Bob Kamphuis served as Parliamentarian for the Assembly

Ms. Dawn Brackmann, Synod Attorney, provided interface between Bishop Satterlee and the vote tally reporting and questions raised by Voting Members on Zoom

Ms. Sandy Schlesinger, Synod Vice President, coordinated and led activities during the year

The Rev. Kjersten Sullivan – Credentials Committee

Mr. Richard Weingartner – technology coordinator

Bishop Satterlee led the voting members in the “Litany for Closing of the Assembly”.

The Assembly closed at 3:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Allen

Secretary, North/West Lower Michigan Synod