

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Minnesota North District**  
**The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod**  
**Brainerd, Minnesota**

**May 19-20, 2019**

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *“The Minnesota North District exists to further the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and to assist congregations as Great Commission Churches.”*

**Sunday, May 19, 4:00 p.m.**

**1. DEVOTIONS/BIBLE STUDY**

**Rev. Mably**

Rev. Mably led the Board in a devotion using the Early Evening Service of Daily Prayer in the Lutheran Service Book, page 297. The Board sang “Where Charity and Love Prevail” (LSB 845). Pastor Mably read through the First Reading appointed for the 5th Sunday of Easter, Acts 11:1-18. Rev. Mably spoke about how amazing it is to see Jesus still working in the church as he did with Peter and Cornelius. As many churches celebrate Confirmation this time of year, when one sees all that is against them believing and confessing Christ, it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit poured out on Cornelius and his family, that such a confession is possible. Still, Christ works in and through children and parents, pastors and churches, all believers, to carry out His mission of declaring the Good News of Jesus Christ. As we witness His work in and through us, we await the amazing future when Christ returns. The Board continued with the remainder of Early Evening Service of Daily Prayer and singing remaining verses of “Where Charity and Love Prevail.”

**2. ROLL CALL/MINUTES**

**Rev. M. Mably**

**a. ROLL CALL**

- i. **Members Present:** President Fondow; Vice Presidents Finner and Weber; Secretary Mably; Treasurer Uran; Lay Members Browning, Kading, Meyer, and Moldenhauer; Advisory Members Revs. J. Lee and M. Meyer. Vice President Rev. K. Lee joined the meeting on Monday.
- ii. **Members Absent:** Lay Members Gilbertson and Rydberg and Advisory member Miller.

**b. MINUTES – Board of Directors Meeting – Sunday, February 10 - Monday, February 11, 2019 (attached)**

- i. **MOVED and SECONDED:** Approve the Minutes of the February 10-11, 2019, Board of Directors meeting with minor grammatical changes.
- ii. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

### 3. YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT/TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. M. Uran

- a. Mr. Uran shared the "Receipts from Congregations" report, dated 5/15/2019 (attached). He noted that the district is at 30.61% of congregational commitments, which is slightly ahead of last year and within normal expectations.
- b. Mr. Uran presented the "Financial Statement," dated 4/15/2019 (attached). He noted on page 1, that the Bremer Bank account balance is abnormally high due to holding the cash from the sale of land in St. Cloud being in the count. He will work with Staff regarding where to redistribute those moneys.
- c. Mr. Uran directed the Board to page 1, Endowments, particularly "Parochial School." He explained how that fund is currently being managed according to a 2010 Board of Directors directive. Currently, moneys are accruing and not being used because the uses for which they are directed do not currently exist in the District. Mr. Uran asked the Board to reconsider how to use this fund. Discussion followed. The Board will continue considering options for use of the fund.
- d. **MOVED and SECONDED** Accept the Financial Statements as presented.  
**ACTION:** Motion carried.
- e. Mr. Uran encouraged the Board, having studied the new Concordia Plan Services Compensation Guidelines tool, to decide whether or not to move forward with the tool for the District Congregations.
- f. **MOVED and SECONDED** Accept the Concordia Plan Services Compensation Guidelines tool as the District Salary Guidelines tool for congregations.  
**ACTION:** Motion carried.

### 4. LCEF

Mr. Uran on behalf of Mr. G. Miller

- a. **Status Report**
  - i. Mr. Uran shared the 7.1.18 to 4.30.19 LCEF Financial Report (attached).
  - ii. Mr. Uran shared the May 2019 LCEF Investment Interest Rates & Loan Interest (attached).
  - iii. Mr. Uran shared a memo to the Board regarding the 2018 Minnesota North District LCEF Earnings Distributions (attached.)
  - iv. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve the District LCEF 2018 Earnings Distributions as presented.  
**ACTION:** Motion carried.
- b. **Mr. Miller presented one loan for ratification.**
  - i. Lord of Glory, Elk River - \$88,000 (\$50,687 new \$ + \$37,313 current loan balance)
  - ii. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Ratify the loan as presented.
  - iii. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

## 5. OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

Rev. J. Lee for Mr. G. Miller

Rev. J. Lee reported for Mr. Miller that the District will be assessed for city road work. Also, there will likely be some work on the driveway this summer.

Rev. Fondow reported that the District received a letter of thank you from the Synod, regarding the donations from the District. The letter was passed around for review.

Rev. Fondow gave a report on the recent State Pastors Conference.

## 6. GIFT PLANNING REPORT

Mr. G. Miller

No Report

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**BREAK – Fondow called for a recess and led a prayer for a meal prepared by Angie Ringstrom. --**

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## 7. Division of Mission and Congregational Outreach [MaCO] Report

Rev. J. Lee

Rev. J. Lee reported that the cCmmittee met at the recent State Pastors Conference.

- a. Everyone His Witness continues to be used throughout the District.
- b. Parish Nurses have two conferences planned this summer, the second one focusing Alzheimer's. Pastors are welcome to attend.
- c. Breezy Point Chapel opens for the summer on May 26.
- d. Rev. Lee reported that he has Re:Vitality session schedules.
- e. Rev. Lee spoke regarding LCEF's Vision Path and its recent restructuring.
- f. The District continues to offer Consecrated Stewards and online stewardship materials to District congregations
- g. There are still efforts looking at church planting in the Esko/West Duluth area. St. Matthews, Esko is planning to hire someone for 10 hours/week, devoted to this effort.
- h. Rev. Lee reported that there are two mission teams going to Puerto Rico this year, in July and November.
- i. The Rural & Small Town Ministry Conference will be in Minneapolis this fall.
- j. Rev. Lee spoke regarding a recent article, "Why You are Not a Welcoming Church," where the emphasis is on going out of the congregation and inviting people in rather than changing programs and worship and waiting for people to attend.
- k. September 15 is Welcome Back to church Week. The District will be providing materials.

## 8. DIVISION OF PARISH LIFE and Nurture [PLaN]

Rev. M. Meyer

Rev. Meyer went through PLaN notes that were distributed before the Board meeting.

- c. Rev. Meyer has been working with Bethlehem Lutheran in Frazee, which is in the process of restarting a preschool.
- d. The District Technology Conference at Good Shepherd Lutheran in Alexandria will be on June 8. Rev. Meyer highlighted various sessions.
- e. The Lutheran schools at Zion, Alexandria and in Perham recently completed their accreditation process.
- f. Rev. Meyer stated that he continues to work with and encourage church schools and preschools to capitalize on opportunities to reach the unchurched in their schools and communities.
- g. He recently visited St. John's, Thief River Falls, who is working to expand into the community.
- h. On June 3, there will a Minnesota Principals meeting and marketing seminar.
- i. Rev. Meyer continues his work in addressing pay issues in the schools.
- j. Rev. Meyer briefly described Bring it Home 2.0 which will present five books of the Bible each week. A new emphasis is that each study is stand alone.
- k. He spoke regarding a mission emphasis where, on the first Sunday of the month, churches pray for missional opportunities. This also includes other tools, including videos.
- l. He presented a year's worth of community engagement ideas for churches (attached).
- m. He is working on a concept of periodic preaching workshop for small groups of pastors.
- n. Rev. Meyer presented a Campus Ministry Reassessment (attached). The board will review it again in September.
- o. Mr. Uran and Rev. Meyer spoke to the the rental property in St. Cloud. They have been advised that this is a difficult situation to continue to because of city and tax issues.
- p. Rev. Meyer is working to address compassion fatigue amongst church workers with Jim Otremba. An online tool has been developed and will be released in September.

## RECESS:

President Fondow noted that due to Circuit realignment from many years ago and the handbook never being updated to reflect the change, the Pine City Circuit is still listed rather than the Rum River Circuit. He, then, read James 1:12. Rev. Fondow spoke regarding this season of graduations that we are in, where people receive a reward for labors, often a diploma. The writer of James speaks about the rigors and trials of life and how those which test us take our focus off of Christ. Although not graded, we are observed by family and friends when trials come into our lives. When we persevere, God blesses us and through faith in Christ, we are given strength and hope. He told a story of a time when people were asked what Bible verse meant the most to them when they faced times of discouragement. Many of the expected ones were listed, Psalm 23:1, Psalm 46:1, John 16:23. An elderly man feebly stood up and said that him for him it was "and it came to pass" which is found 85 times in the Bible. He went on to say that, recounting crises in his life, when he was want to ask "Where is God?" and "Why?" the phrase "and it came to pass" reminded him that he would get through that difficult time with God's help and this, too, would pass. It is this hope in Christ that keeps us going. Romans 8:35-37, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your

sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.'" No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." And this too will pass. Our reward is not a diploma but the crown of life.

The Board concluded by singing verses 7 and 8 of "At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing" LSB 633.

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**Monday, May 20, 8:30 a.m.**

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## **RECONVENE:**

President Fondow led those in attendance in the morning devotion (attached). President Fondow read John 21:1-11. Rev. Fondow spoke regarding how vividly we remember seemingly every detail of significant events in our life. In this light, John reports that 153 fish were caught the day they encountered the risen Christ. Reflecting on 40 years of ministry, Rev. Fondow remembered times where great effort was put forth and the 'net was empty.' The good news is that Jesus is always there, ready to give us what we need, to provide for us. When we go to the Lord's Supper, we receive the forgiveness of sins and the sure and certain hope of eternal life. Jesus continues to comfort us when our "nets are empty." He shepherds us, giving us consolation and peace. Therefore, we can comfort others. Jesus gives us an example in the reading by serving the disciples. He sets a table before us and our cups that were empty now overflow (Psalm 23). It is God who fills the nets and calls the people. Included in the prayers were Delores Kading, Mr. George Miller and Synod 1st Vice President Herb Mueller. The devotions concluded with singing "Alleluia! Jesus is Risen" LSB 474.

## **9. LUTHERAN ISLAND CAMP REPORT**

**Rev. K. Lee**

- a. Rev. Lee reported that the Camp Board met last Friday, which included the retirement celebration of camp cook Deb Keierleber.
- b. He spoke regarding staffing.
- c. Rev. Lee noted that the registrations are slightly behind last year which is normal given that it is a National Youth Gathering year.
- d. Finances continue to be tight.
- e. Rev. Lee shared that the Fund Campaign is at \$2.5 million. They had hoped to be at \$6 million by the time of the public launch. Even though that is unlikely, they still are planning the public launch for September. At the suggestion of the Campaign Director, they are extending the Campaign for one year.
- f. They continue to look at the building at Christ Serve Ranch, given financial concerns. He shared the latest drawing for the building at Christ Serve Ranch with the Board. The Camp has received bids for doing it in phases. The estimate for phase one was slightly over \$2 million.
- g. Rev. Lee invited the Board to attend the public Campaign launch on September 8.
- h. Rev. Fondow reported that the depositions will begin in June regarding the lawsuit against the Camp.

## **10. MINISTERIAL HEALTH COMMISSION REPORT**

**Rev. D. Fondow**

Rev. Fondow reported that the Commission has not met since the last Board meeting. A free health screening was offered at the recent State Pastors Conference. The committee is looking ahead at the possibility of a Mental Health Conference, in addition to working with Jim Otremba to offer online health assessments.

## 11. PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT      **Rev. D. Fondow for Rev. Fred Hinz**

Rev. Fondow reported on the current efforts and legislation being considered at the State Capital.

## 12. CONSTITUTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON      **Rev. M. Mably**

Three Constitutions and sets of Bylaws have been recommended for approval to the Board by the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership (Rev. Carnicorn, chairman): First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, MN; Lord of Glory Lutheran Church, Elk River, MN; and Peace Lutheran Church, Finlayson, MN

Regarding First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, MN, the Board had the following questions and concerns.

- a. Within 2.0, several grammatical changes were recommended.
- b. In 5.1.2, it was noted that “of” before “*Luther’s Small Catechism*” should not be italicized.
- c. In 7.4, it was noted that “such” before “real estate” is not necessary.
- d. In 8.3, the Board questioned the use of absentee ballots.
- e. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Grand Rapids, MN, upon satisfactory resolution of the questions and concerns raised by the Board.
- f. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

Regarding Lord of Glory Lutheran Church, Elk River, MN, the Board had no questions or concerns.

- a. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for Lord of Glory Lutheran Church, Elk River, MN, as presented.
- b. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

Regarding Peace Lutheran Church, Finlayson, MN, the Board had the following questions and concerns.

- a. Regarding 5.1.3, the Board had several questions regarding the logistics of how this is implemented.
- b. Regarding, 7.2, there were questions regarding other references in the constitution to percentage votes needed.
- c. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for Peace Lutheran Church, Finlayson, MN, upon satisfactory resolution between Rev. Carnicom and the congregation to the questions raised by the Board.
- d. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

Rev. Fondow shared that a dual parrish in Sandstone and Geise, MN, as well as its pastor, have applied for Reinstatement into the Synod. They have submitted their Constitution and Bylaws and Rev. Carnicom is working with them.

St. Paul's Lutheran in East Friberg, MN voted to leave the Synod. Rev. Fondow shared the letter that he sent to the congregation acknowledging their decision.

### **13. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

#### **Rev. D. Fondow**

- a. Rev. Fondow shared the current statistics for the Minnesota North District.
- b. He shared information on the District's current military chaplains, including Rev. Noah Rogness, who though not technically a chaplain, is serving a special assignment in Washington, DC.
- c. Rev. Fondow shared the current statistics for the Synod.
- d. He updated the Board on the District's Calling congregations.
- e. Rev. Fondow shared information on the recent Candidates assigned to the District. He reported that 15 applications for Vicars to the Seminaries were not filled. There were 148 requests for Candidates and there were 126 Calls filled, including SMP and Alternate Route Candidates.
- f. He also shared assignments of Vicars and a Deaconess Intern from the District.
- g. Rev. Fondow shared the Calls and changes in the District since February 2019, as well as Rostered Church Worker changes since September 2018.
- h. The Deaf ministry continues with the Knaacks, as well as the Anyuak ministry with Rev. Bakou.
- i. Rev. Fondow reported that the new Church Worker Care Coordinator is Rev. Paul Cloeter.
- j. In speaking about the District Life Coordinator, Rev. Fondow shared that there are plans to send a group from the District to the 2021 Life Conference in Washington.
- k. The District Investigative Team will be meeting soon.
- l. He informed the the Board that Main Street Living Program is now available throughout the District.
- m. Rev. Fondow reported that the Sower's Fund has over \$20,000.
- n. Rev. Fondow gave updates on current District Mission Partnerships
  - i. Rev. James Kollie is currently working on a Doctorate at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, with the intent to train Pastors in Liberia.
  - ii. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and School, Cotton Tree, Liberia
  - iii. Jamesetta and Gifty Kollie are receiving support for their education.
  - iv. Project 24, Kenya
  - v. Christ Care for Children: Kenya
  - vi. LCMS Missions in Puerto Rico
  - vii. Rev. James Cerdenola, Professor at Lutheran Theological Seminary and Training Center, Baguio City, Philippines
- o. He listed Missionaries with MN North Connections

President Fondow highlighted the following upcoming events

- a. June 3, 2019 - School Marketing Conference, District Office
- b. June 15, 2019- Synodical Convention Delegates meeting, District Office
- c. June 7, 2019 - Parish Nurse Conference, District Office

- d. June 8, 2019 - Church Technology Workshop, Good Shepherd, Alexandria
- e. June 20-23, 2019 - LWML National Convention, Mobile, AL
- f. July 11-15, 2019 – National Youth Gathering, Minneapolis, MN
- g. July 21-25, 2019 – LCMS National Convention, Tampa, FL
- h. August 7-8, 2019 - New Workers Orientation, District Office
- i. August 15, 2019 - MN North Teachers Conference, Prince of Peace, St. Cloud
- j. August 26-27, 2019 - Circuit Visitors Conference, District Office

Rev. Fondow reported that Mr. George Miller is currently working on options for the 2021 District Convention.

#### **14. ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING:**

- a. **DATE:** September 22 - 23, 2019
- b. **TIME:** 4:00 pm & 8:30 am
- c. **DEVOTION/BIBLE STUDY LEADER:** Mr. Delano Meyer

Delano Meyer spoke regarding his efforts in agricultural education in Africa, specifically regarding the use of test plots.

In closing, after reading Habakkuk 3:19, Rev. Fondow asked whether Board Members, when looking at our feet, were reminded of strength of faith. Through faith in Christ we are and these are truths that are important to remember in difficult times. We find strength in the sovereign Lord, as His redeemed. He led the Board in a Closing Prayer.

#### **15. ADJOURNMENT**

- a. **MOVED & SECONDED:** Adjournment
- b. **ACTION: CARRIED.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Marty Mably, M.A., M.Div., Secretary  
Minnesota North District  
The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod