

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

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

**December 8-9, 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, December 22, 4:00 p.m.**

**1. DEVOTIONS/BIBLE STUDY**

**Rev. M. Meyer**

Rev. Meyer led the Board in a Devotion, beginning with singing LSB 664, “Fight the Good Fight.” Rev. Meyer used the Order of Worship that was distributed (attached). In his sermon, Rev. Meyer spoke of the season of Advent as a season of anticipation. Yet, most churches, even in this season, consistently talk about the demise of the church. He spoke of a recent report regarding the decline of mainline churches and the difficulties for churches today. In response, Rev. Meyer shared a number of Bible verses pointing to the power of the Gospel, the joy and distinctiveness of the living a Christian life and the hope that the church always has. Amidst all the suffering of those around us who do not know Christ, we have the Good News that is the answer of hope that they need. No matter what we may be going through, we know the power of God’s Word, the hope that God has accomplished for us through His ‘finished’ work on the cross. Christ is with us. And the power of God in His Word is with us today as we go out. He concluded with prayers and the Board sang LSB 828, “We Are Called to Stand Together.”

**2. ROLL CALL/MINUTES**

**Rev. M. Mably**

**a. ROLL CALL**

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

**b. MINUTES – Board of Directors Meeting – Sunday, September 22 - Monday, September 23, 2019 (attached)**

- i. A question of order was addressed concerning the Board’s questions and directives regarding reviewed Church Constitutions and Bylaws.
- ii. **MOVED and SECONDED:** Approve the minutes of the September 22-23, 2019, Board of Directors meeting with minor changes.
- iii. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

3. The Board moved into executive session at approximately 4:40 pm.
  - a. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Move into executive session.
  - b. **ACTION**: Motion carried.
4. At approximately 5:45 pm, the Board exited executive session.
  - a. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Exit executive session.
  - b. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

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**BREAK – Fondow called for a recess and led a prayer for a meal prepared by Rev. Kirk Douglas, his wife and a member of his church, Trinity Lutheran, New York Mills.**

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## **5. PUBLIC POLICY REPORT**

**Rev. F. Hinz**

Rev. Hinz distributed materials that he recently shared with the Public Policy Committee.  
(attached)

- a. He noted that the ministry continues to focus on the following topics: life issues, marriage/family/sexuality, religious liberty, and parental rights. Tangentially, another more recent issue is creation science and evolution.
- b. Rev. Hinz reviewed items from the Public Policy Update.
- c. He noted an article (attached) and a new trend that atheists are beginning to note that Christianity is necessary for society.
- d. He spoke regarding an assisted suicide publication that will be going out to churches in early January. (attached)
- e. He distributed an article (attached) regarding the Democratic party and pro-life members.
- f. Rev. Hinz also spoke to religious liberty and parental choice developments.
- g. Lastly, he spoke to information regarding creation vs. evolution. (attached)

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT**

**Mr. M. Uran**

- a. Mr. Uran shared the "Receipts from Congregations" report, dated 11/15/2019 (attached). He noted that the amount received from congregations continues to trend as in past years.
- b. Mr. Uran presented the "Investment Report," dated 11/15/2019 (attached). He commented that this is not shared regularly with the board because the numbers are consistently stable.
- c. Mr. Uran presented the "Financial Statement," dated 11/15/2019 (attached). He commented that monies from the Lutheran Federal Credit Union Savings account were significantly reduced due to paying off the loan on the Two Harbors property.
- d. Mr. Uran noted that the District recently received a letter from the auditing company saying that they will no longer be serving the District. The District is looking into the reason for this as well as beginning to look for another firm.

- e. The Endowment and Finance committee met earlier on December 8. Mr. Uran presented the staff recommendations for distribution of the Minnesota North District Endowment Fund earnings as follows.
  - i. George Miller – 15% for office technology
  - ii. Rev. Jeff Lee – 25% for new chairs at Breezy Point Chapel
  - iii. Rev. Monte Meyer – 25% for updated audio and visual capacities for the District
  - iv. Pres. Don Fondow – 25%, split evenly between Main Street Living and the Cross Appeal
  - v. **MOVED and SECONDED** Approve distributions as presented.
  - vi. **ACTION:** Motion carried.
- f. Mr. Uran presented recommendations for housing allowances as follows
  - i. Pres. Fondow – 40%
  - ii. Rev. Lee – \$36,000
  - iii. Rev. Meyer - 50%
  - iv. Barb Hertling – has not responded. Mr. Uran put forward for the Board to approve 50% as she typically requests that amount. If, when she responds, her request is different, Mr. Uran will notify the Board and request approval again.
  - v. **MOVED and SECONDED** Approve Housing allowances.
  - vi. **ACTION:** Motion carried.
- g. **MOVED and SECONDED** Approve Treasurers Report as presented.  
**ACTION:** Motion carried.

## 7. LCEF

**Rev. Fondow on behalf of Mr. G. Miller**

### a. Status Report

- i. Rev. Fondow shared the 7.1.19 to 9.30.19 LCEF Financial Report (attached).
- ii. Rev. Fondow shared the December 2019 LCEF Investment Interest Rates & Loan Interest Rates sheet (attached). He spoke regarding LCEF's recent conference, that it has now reached nearly \$2 billion in assets and is looking at furthering work overseas. Rev. Fondow also spoke regarding a number of the great speakers at the Conference.

## 8. OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

**Mr. G. Miller**

No Report

## 9. GIFT PLANNING REPORT

**Mr. G. Miller**

No Report

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

Rev. J. Lee

Rev. J. Lee distributed and went through a report on MaCO's recent meeting on December 2 (attached).

### RECESS:

Rev. Fondow spoke of God's encouragement to give thanks in all things and have pure joy in trials. At Christmas time, the season of joy, so many do not have joy. He read a piece, "Why me, Lord?" He spoke how God uses pain to lead us closer to Him and to trust Him. Rev. Fondow also talked about how, as we come together, in trials and at Christmas, the devil seeks to divide. However, the Savior comes into the world to bring us together with Him and with one another. In the meantime, we ought to consider our trials as pure joy.

Rev. Fondow led the board in prayer. The Board concluded by singing LSB 735 "Have No Fear, Little Flock."

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**Monday, December 9, 8:30 a.m.**

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### RECONVENE:

President Fondow led those in attendance in the morning devotion, "A Day of Repentance and Prayer" (attached).

In his homily, based on 1 John 1:1-10, he talked about the book, "How the Mighty Fall" and quoted from CFW Walther's Day of Repentance sermon from the 1870's in which he spoke to the need for repentance and that its purpose is to make us hunger and thirst for mercy. Through Christ we have that. Rev Fondow, spoke of Luther's and God's directive to live a life of repentance, mourning for our sins and trusting in Christ for forgiveness. God does the turning in our repentance, from sin to Christ. We too often live our life of repentance 'on the run' and room for God's ways can become sparse. Saying "I was wrong" is very hard. Motivation for repentance comes from the cross, where Jesus is saddled with our sins, pays the price for those sins and turns us back to Him. Therefore, now, the Christian life is one of repentance and faith.

## 11. LUTHERAN ISLAND CAMP REPORT

Rev. K. Lee

- a. Rev. Lee reported that from the last Board meeting, two new board members were elected, Art Bolland was replaced by Susan Borglum and Dick Buech was replaced by Tim Stroming.
- b. Finances continue to be a challenge. The recent audit spoke to concerns regarding this while praising the camp for its accounting accuracy.
- c. The Camp is studying the new wage theft law and how it will impact the Camp.

- d. Training for Building New Bridges continues and they are exploring new ways to encourage churches to participate in the campaign.
- e. The Sweere Foundation has been a blessing to Camp through annual grants, ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000. In their grant this past year, \$10,000 was designated for staff development and other related areas of study. The Board received the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the Camp's Human Resources study results and are looking more into those, especially upcoming successions in Staff.

## 9. MINISTERIAL HEALTH COMMISSION REPORT

**Rev. D. Fondow**

Rev. Fondow distributed Minutes from the most recent meeting on October 28, 2019. (attached)

He noted a recent article from Concordia Theological Seminary on Emotional Intelligence.

The current proposed theme for the Spring pastor's conference is "Soul Care" with the main presenter being Doxology.

## 10. Congregation Care Coordinator Report

**Rev. L. Harvala**

is Rev. Harvala noted that it has been quiet for him in his role for the District recently with no incidences in 2019. He noted that the two in 2018 did not have the most positive outcomes. This is not uncommon. He noted that in each incident and report, two things always come up, the need for more reporting AND more evaluation.

He is currently serving a Vacancy. He has attended some Winkel Conferences with Pres. Fondow. Rev. Harvala also speaks at the Circuit Visitor conferences and works with them as is possible. He also connects with the New Workers each year.

## 11. PALS Coordinator Report

**Rev. G. Roberts**

Rev. Roberts spoke about his work regarding the PALS program. The PALS Program comes from the Synod to help Pastors recently entering the Ministry. He distributed and went through a typical agenda for a typical PALS gathering.

12. The Board moved into executive session at 11:03 am.

- a. **MOVED and SECONDED:** Move into executive session.
- b. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

13. At 11:56 am, the Board exited executive session.

- a. **MOVED and SECONDED:** Exit executive session.
- b. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

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

Rev. M. Meyer

Rev. Meyer is working on a “Bring It Home 3.0”, going through the entire life of Christ. He is talking with other Districts about the program and working with CPH for Arch book resources.

He updated the Board on “Someone You Know”. He encouraged members to talk to their pastors, if their churches are not currently doing it.

Regarding healthychurchworkers.com, he spoke to the disappointing participation so far. Discussion followed about taking time at the Spring Pastors Conference for Pastors to complete the online surveys.

He updated work with District Schools and spoke about a District Youth Gathering in November 2020 in St. Cloud.

Rev. Meyer is encouraged with the Campus Ministries being more present on Campus. Plans are proceeding regarding Barbara Hertling’s retirement. A church in St. Cloud is exploring their role in potentially calling a Candidate for Campus Ministry.

#### 12. CONSTITUTIONS TO BE ACTED UPON

Rev. M. Mably

Three sets of Constitutions and Bylaws have been recommended for approval to the Board by the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District Membership (Rev. Carnicorn, chairman): St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Henning, MN; Trinity Lutheran Church, Odessa, MN; and Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, New York Mills, MN.

Regarding St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Henning, MN, the Board had the following suggestions:

- a. On page 9, The Secretary, point 4 is an incomplete sentence.
- b. There were some concerns regarding punctuation throughout the document.
- c. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Henning, MN, upon satisfactory resolution of the suggestion from the Board.
- d. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

Regarding Trinity Lutheran Church, Odessa, MN, the Board had the following suggestions:

- a. On page 6, point 9.3.1, at the end of the first line, ‘which’ should be ‘who.’
- b. It was noted that there are two page 1’s in the document.
- c. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for Trinity Lutheran Church, Odessa, MN, upon satisfactory resolution of the suggestion from the Board.
- d. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

Regarding Trinity Lutheran Church, New York Mills, MN, the Board had the following questions and concerns:

- a. On page 4, point 10.0 , strike the ‘s’ on ‘Boards.’
- b. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for Trinity Lutheran Church, New York Mills, MN, upon satisfactory resolution of the suggestion from the Board.
- c. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

### 13. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Rev. D. Fondow**

Rev. Fondow shared slides showing current work and updates in the District and Synod, including information on the "Making Disciples for Life" program by the Synod.

He also highlighted upcoming District events. On January 22, there will be a March for Life at the State Capitol and a Life Chapel Service at Concordia University, St. Paul that morning.

The District is looking at a bus to take to the January 2021 Right to Life March in Washington, DC.

In closing, Rev. Fondow spoke regarding the closing hymn, LSB 920 "Forth in the Peace of Christ We Go." He mentioned that this is the title and hymn he is proposing as the theme of the 2021 District Convention, based on John 16:33. Details for the Convention will be finalized at the next Board meeting in February.

In his Closing Devotion, Rev. Fondow spoke about how the Christmas account is filled with fear and joy. A woman, who in the 1950s tried and failed to swim from Catalina Island to the California coast said that she was not defeated by fatigue, but by fog. In her second attempt, she succeeded despite fog by picturing in her mind the coast. Rev. Fondow used this to draw attention to how we are afraid and our vision obscured in life, but we know and remember Christ as the greatest gift we have ever received. The 'fog' of life comes in, threatening us, causing us to forget he is in control. Rev. Fondow encouraged the Board to again hear the words of the angel from Luke 2:10-11, <sup>10</sup> "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." In our Savior, we have the antidote to all fears, God's assurance.

He wished everyone a "Merry Christmas", believing that Jesus is with us, even as the world will do its best to make 2020 fearful.

Rev. Fondow closed in prayer.

### 14. ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING:

- a. **DATE:** February 16-17, 2020
- b. **TIME:** 4:00 pm & 8:30 am
- c. **DEVOTION/BIBLE STUDY LEADER:** George Miller

### 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