

MINUTES
of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

May 4, 2020, 9:00 am

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

1. DEVOTION/BIBLE STUDY

Mr. R. Rydberg

Mr. Rydberg led the Board in the opening devotion, entitled “For the Love of God...,” using Daily Prayer, Morning, on page 295. He spoke about how Easter and our relationship with God is based on God’s love for us. Love is a dominant topic across the world, mainly eros (romantic) love. He reviewed different types of love and went through 1 John 4:7-21, verse by verse, exploring the passages teaching on love, especially God’s love for us in Christ Jesus. He also reviewed Jesus’ words in Mark 12:29-31, focusing on love of God and love of neighbor and 1 John 5:1-5. He concluded by discussing how love is seen in our lives, well and poorly. We always ‘miss the mark’ by our sin, but God’s love for us is what will maintain our status before God. The devotion was concluded by singing a hymn.

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 Browning, Kading, Meyer, Moldenhauer and Rydberg; Advisory members Rev. J. Lee, Rev. M. Meyer, A. Ringstrom.
- ii. **Members Absent:** Lay member Gilbertson and advisory member Miller.

b. MINUTES – Board of Directors Meeting – Sunday, February 16 - Monday, February 17, 2020 (attached)

- i. **MOVED and SECONDED:** Approve the minutes of the February 16-17, 2020, Board of Directors meeting amended with minor changes, noting Lay member Meyer’s name missing as absent and one spelling correction.
- ii. **ACTION:** Motion carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT **Mr. M. Uran**

- a. Mr. Uran shared the "Receipts from Congregations" report, dated 04/15/2020 (attached). Amounts are down, slightly, but it is expected that numbers will trend down as congregations see lower giving amounts.
- b. Mr. Uran presented and went through the "Balance Sheet," dated 04/15/2021 (attached) with the Board. He noted that the District applied for and received the Payroll Protection Act Funds. There are still questions as to whether the funds will continue as a loan (1% interest) or will transition into a grant. There was also money received from LCEF for the "Soldiers of the Cross" fund that is intended for church workers experiencing financial difficulties. The District is required to contribute 20% for each grant given.
- c. **MOVED and SECONDED** Approve Treasurer's Report as presented.
ACTION: Motion carried
- d. Mr. Uran reviewed a memo regarding the 2019 Minnesota North District LCEF Earnings Distribution (attached), dated May 4, 2020.
- e. **MOVED and SECONDED** Approve Earnings Distribution memo as presented.
ACTION: Motion carried
- f. Property Discussions
 - i. Mr. Uran presented a motion to transfer the District's property on Pine Cone Road in St. Cloud to Prince of Peace Lutheran School Association with minimal consideration.
 1. **MOVED and SECONDED** Authorize Treasurer Uran, President Fondow and Secretary Mably to negotiate transfer of District's property on Pine Cone Road in St. Cloud, MN to the Prince of Peace (St. Cloud, MN) Lutheran School Association for no or minimal consideration.
 2. **ACTION:** Motion carried
 - ii. Ratification of email approval for sale of property of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, St. Cloud.
 1. **MOVED and SECONDED** Ratify email vote to approve sale of Our Savior's Lutheran Church property, St. Cloud
 2. **ACTION:** Motion carried
 3. **MOVED and SECONDED (attached)** the Memo of Understanding between the Minnesota North District – LCMS and Prince of Peace Lutheran School Association, St. Cloud regarding the transfer of the gifted District property on Pinecone Road, St. Cloud. (attached).
 4. **ACTION:** Motion carried
 5. **MOVED and SECONDED (attached)** that the Minnesota North District – LCMS will retain \$13,678 of the net proceeds from the sale of the Our Savior's Lutheran Church property to cover expenses incurred and deposit the remaining balance in the Our Savior's Lutheran of St. Cloud Endowment Fund as outlined in the June 2006 agreement (attached).
 6. **ACTION:** Motion carried

iii. Two Harbors

1. **MOVED and SECONDED** that \$13,678 of the funds the District retains as reimbursement of expenses from the Our Savior's Lutheran Church property sale be added to the Site Management temporarily restricted fund and authorized for use in the preparation and marketing of the Two Harbors property at the discretion of the District Treasurer and President. The remaining funds from the sale will be deposited into the general fund of the District.
2. **ACTION**: Motion carried

- g. Mr. Uran notified the Board that the District recently received a little over \$108,000 from an estate with no restrictions. He proposed that the Board approve taking these funds and funds from the site management fund to repay the funds borrowed from the Two Harbors Temporary Restricted Funds account.
- i. **MOVED and SECONDED** apply the recent estate gift to the Two Harbors Temporary Restricted Funds account and that the remaining balance be paid off using funds from the Site Management fund.
 - ii. **ACTION**: Motion carried
 - iii. President Fondow shared with the Board information on the deceased, Evelyn Berk, whose estate money the District received.
 - iv. Mr. Uran noted that adjustments as a result of the sale of the Our Savior's property and transfer of the Pinecone Road property currently listed in the "property assets" section of the District's Balance Sheet will have a negative impact on the District's operating results since the sale was for less than the stated value and the transfer will result in no increase in assets.

4. **DIVISION OF PARISH LIFE and Nurture [PLaN]**

Rev. M. Meyer

- a. Rev. Meyer updated the Board on the District's COVID 19 response and its assistance to congregations, noting that many of these efforts will continue beyond the current pandemic.
- b. He has been meeting with the Lutheran Schools in the District and reports that the schools have done and are doing well.
- c. Someone You Know efforts continue.
- d. The District Youth Gathering scheduled for November 2020 has been postponed to 2021.
- e. Bring It Home: The Life of Christ will debut in January 2021.
- f. Rev. Meyer updated the Board regarding Campus Ministry, noting that the request for a seminary candidate for St. Cloud was not filled. Also, the District's partner, Our Redeemer, St. Cloud is rethinking its efforts given the COVID 19 impact on the congregation. Caleb Kunze, a Lay Minister with Love Of Christ, St. Cloud is in discussions with the church and District about the possibility of serving on a part-time basis with the St. Cloud State campus ministry. He will be revisiting other campus ministry sites and how they operate and are funded.

Finally, he is in discussion regarding the future with St. Cloud University ministry site.

5. Office Manager's Update

Mr. G. Miller

- a. No Report

6. LCEF

Mr. G. Miller

- a. **Status Report** - No Report
- b. **Loan Application (if any)** - None

7. LUTHERAN ISLAND CAMP REPORT

Rev. K. Lee

- a. Rev. Lee distributed and reviewed the report (attached).

8. MINISTERIAL HEALTH COMMISSION REPORT

Rev. D. Fondow

- a. Rev. Fondow noted that the commission met recently. Since the State Pastors Conference was cancelled, so was the health screening. The book that was going to be distributed at the conference, "The Care of Souls: Cultivating a Pastor's Heart" will likely be distributed at the Fall Pastor's Conference. The Commission will meet again on June 18.

BREAK – President Fondow called for a recess and led a prayer for the luncheon meal.

9. Division of Mission and Congregational Outreach [MaCO] Report

Rev. J. Lee

- a. Rev. J. Lee shared that the Committee was scheduled to meet during the Spring Pastor's Conference. It plans to meet at the end of May or the beginning of June.
- b. Rev. Lee attended the Synod's Stewardship Conference in January.
- c. The District is planning to again offer stewardship materials online.
- d. He attended the March FORO meeting in Puerto Rico. They had recently experienced earthquakes. There was some damage to recently purchased buildings but no significant damage. They experienced another earthquake after the conference. Missionaries have done a great job ministering to community members.
- e. Breezy Point Chapel is waiting to see when it can open.
- f. Rev. Lee shared that outreach opportunities have increased with the demand for online and other unique ministry tools are being utilized.
- g. The Parish Nurse Conference for June has been cancelled.

10. Constitutions to be Acted Upon

- a. Two sets of Constitutions and Bylaws were recommended for approval to the Board by the Committee on Congregational Constitutions and District

Membership (Rev. Carnicom, chairman): St. Paul Lutheran Church, Granite Falls, MN and Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Prairie, MN.

i. Regarding St. Paul Lutheran Church, Granite Falls, MN:

1. One minor change is requested, on page 1, 3.0 Confessional Standard, 3.4, 'conforms' should be changed to 'conform.'
2. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve the Constitution and Bylaws for St. Paul Lutheran Church, Granite Falls, MN, upon satisfactory resolution of the suggestion from the Board.
3. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

b. Regarding Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Prairie, MN:

- i. **MOVED and SECONDED**: Approve Constitution and Bylaws for Trinity Lutheran Church, Long Prairie, MN as presented.
- ii. **ACTION**: Motion carried.

11. MOVED and SECONDED to move into Executive Session at 1:21 pm

12. MOVED and SECONDED to move out of Executive Session at 1:42 pm

13. President's Report

Rev. D. Fondow

- a. Rev. Fondow reported that the District received gift cards from LCEF for relief efforts during the Corona virus crisis.
- b. There was a recent Zoom meeting with Circuit Visitors.
- c. The Circuit Visitors also participated in a recent Zoom meeting with Alliance Defending Freedom regarding potential religious liberty infringements during the States' quarantine efforts.
- d. On May 14, Dr. Bev Yahnke will address the Circuit Visitors regarding the toll the pandemic has on church workers and moving forward.
- e. The State Pastors' Conference was cancelled due to the Corona virus quarantine.
- f. Regarding the recent Seminary Call services, the District requested 7 graduates and received 5 candidates, all to dual parishes.
- g. Rev. Fondow noted that the Call processes of our congregations are on hold, as well as Installations.
- h. He shared updated current numbers for the District and Synod, noting how well the pastors and churches have adapted to the needs of the COVID crisis.
- i. The Cross Appeal has raised over \$88,000 to date.
- j. Rev. Fondow and Rev. Woodford of the MN South District wrote a letter to Governor Walz encouraging him to designate churches as essential.
- k. The MN North and South Districts are exploring starting a coalition with Roman Catholic bishops to write a similar letter under the direction of Rev. Hinz.
- l. Mainstreet Living has been a blessing during this time.
- m. The current balance in the Sower's Fund is \$26,112.
- n. He updated the Board on current international mission partnerships.

- o. LCEF has done a great job during the crisis.
- p. He also highlighted several upcoming events related to the District, many of which have been canceled.
- q. Rev. Fondow shared that the Synod and others are being sued by HotChalk regarding the recent closing of Concordia University, Portland.
- r. He closed, citing Romans 5:8, and how it is hard to be optimistic these days. Paul Gerhardt, who lived in the 1600's in Germany, suffered many losses as a child, an adult, and in his church which were far greater than the disappointment most are suffering from today. Are we disappointed? Should God be disappointed in us? What helped Gerhardt was to know that God loved him anyway, in Jesus. God loves us and sent His Son for us. Therefore, we have reason for hope and optimism these days.

14. ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING:

- a. **DATE:** September 27-28, 2020
- b. **TIME:** 4:00 pm
- c. **DEVOTION/BIBLE STUDY LEADER:** Mr. M. Uran

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