





Bulletin of Reports

SA.2021 — Last update: 10 October 2021

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1. WV-WMD Synod 33rd Annual Assembly

Bulletin of Reports

Thirty-Third Annual Assembly
of the
West Virginia – Western Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



16 October 2021

Monongalia County Extension Services & 4-H Center
Mylan Park
270 Mylan Park Lane
Morgantown, WV 26501



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

1.1. Special Announcements

Registration will open at 9:00 AM. Assembly will be called into session at 10:00 AM.

Registration will temporarily close at 10:50 AM (10 minutes before the first ballot for bishop). Those wishing to vote in the first ballot for bishop need to register prior to 10:50 AM. Registration will reopen after balloting is closed.

Registration temporarily close to minutes prior to every ballot.

The assembly worship offering is designated for work in our companion synods in Madagascar.

Masks are required for all indoor activities.

Lunch will not be provided as part of the assembly. Beverage service is.

2. WV-WMD Synod Office Information

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod, ELCA

%St. Paul Lutheran Church
309 Baldwin Street
Morgantown, WV

Telephone: (304) 363-4030

E-Mail: Office@wv-wmd.org

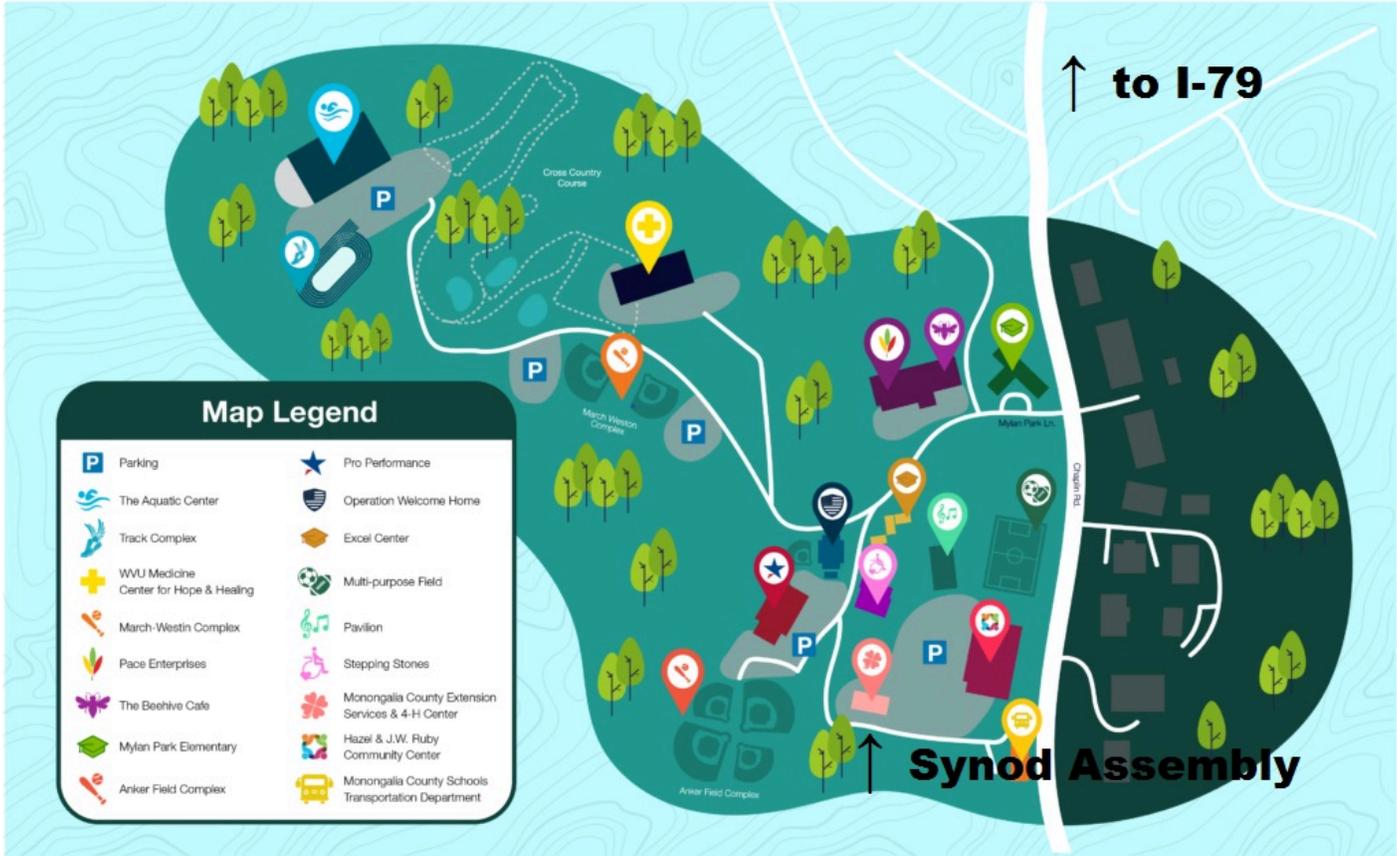
Web Site: www.wv-wmd.org

3. Assembly Venue Information

Monongalia County Extension Services & 4-H Center
Mylan Park
270 Mylan Park Lane
Morgantown, WV 26501

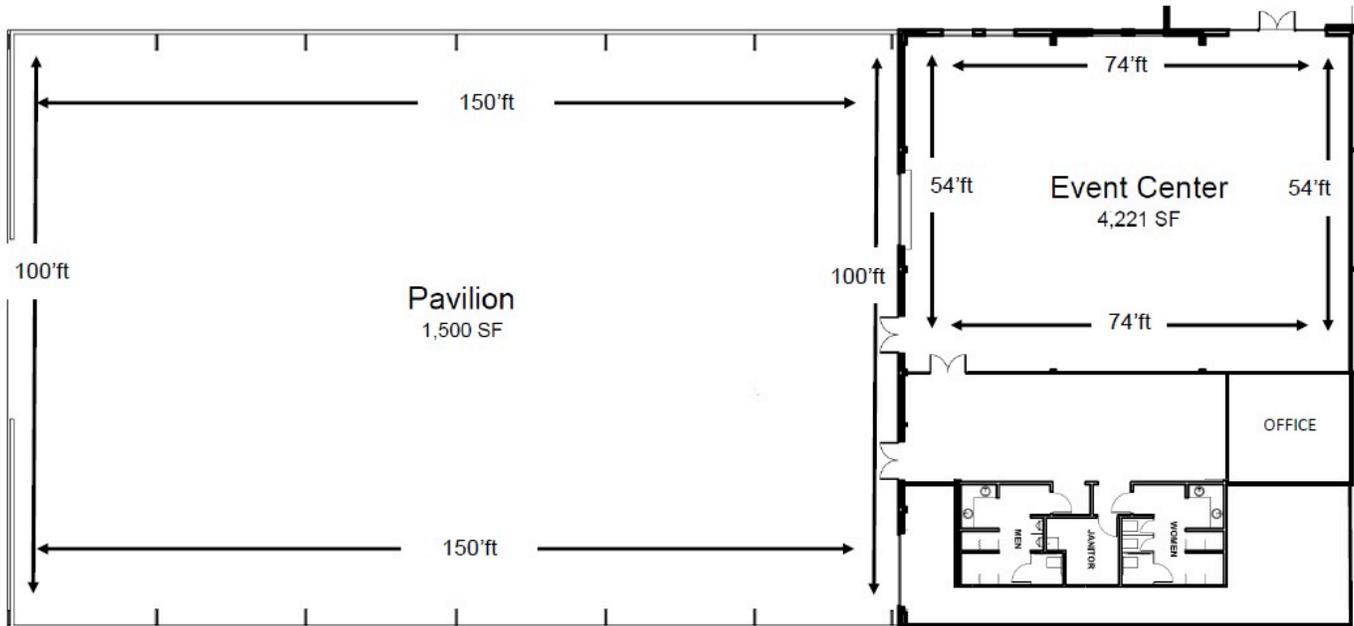
Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/FY7K29sLziuoxjGn8>

Nearest Interstate Exit: I-79, Exit 155 (after exit, head west on Chaplain Road; Mylan Park is 2 miles ahead)



Monongalia County Extension Services & 4H Center and Pavilion

Parking



The primary location for our business meeting are scheduled to be in the “Event Center,” a 4,221 sq. ft. indoor space.

If weather is good, we may move business meetings to the “Pavilion,” a 15,000 sq. ft. space (incorrectly listed on the diagram as 1,500 sq. ft.).

The Synod Assembly Office will be in the room marked, “Office.”

Registration, beverage service, and exhibits will be in the Pavilion.

Restrooms are accessible from both the Event Center and the Pavilion.

Attendees are welcome to picnic on site (in the Pavilion) and throughout most of Mylan Park. Numerous dining options can be found only a short drive away; see the [dining guide](#) for a list of some of the closest options.

The [lodging guide](#) is available for those not wanting to make the trip to and from assembly in the same day.

4. Assembly Organization

4.1. Assembly Program & Agenda

Program for the Synod Assembly

The Program of the assembly is the overarching schedule of events connected with our gathering. The business meetings are part of that overarching schedule. We also gather for worship and meals, and, sometimes, we gather for education, entertainment, and fellowship as well. Because there are many different and interdependent actors involved in providing meals and worship, the program of an assembly is set in advance by the assembly planning team under the oversight of the synod officers and Synod Council.

Saturday, 16 October 2021

10:00—10:05 AM	Opening Devotions
10:05—11:15 PM	Business Meeting I of the Synod Assembly
11:15 AM—1:00 PM	Adjournment for Lunch
1:00—4:30 PM	Business Meeting II of the Synod Assembly
4:30—5:00 PM	Mass

Agenda for the Synod Assembly

The Agenda of the assembly is the schedule that governs the business meetings of the assembly. While the program is set by the assembly planning team (as authorized and within the parameters set by the Synod Council), the agenda, is wholly owned by the assembly, i.e., the assembly sets the order of business and times at which special orders take place within the parameters of the governing documents and the parliamentary authority. Consequently, the assembly is provided with a proposed agenda, but it is free to adopt, amend, or reject the proposed agenda.

An agenda features two classes of orders: (1) the order of business and (2) special orders. The order of business is the sequence in which business is handled. There are no specific times assigned to any of the items in the order of business (except for the call to order). One simply moves from one item to the next as each item is either completed or the assembly chooses to set aside for consideration at a later time. Special orders have assigned times, and a special order may interrupt the flow of business, suspending the flow of regular business until the special order is dispensed with. Once the special order has been dispensed with, the business resumes where it left off. If the chair neglects to proceed to special orders at the time appointed, any member can compel the chair to do so by “calling for the orders of the day.”

Two notes about unscheduled items (i.e., items that do not appear on the agenda):

- Recesses can take place whenever the assembly determines that it needs a break. The chair will, from time to time, order a recess at his/her discretion. A recess can be ordered by the assembly as well.
- The report of the Elections Committee can take place as soon as it is ready. When that report is ready depends upon the time it takes to count ballots. When runoff elections are required, the assembly may set a special order for such if it wishes. Likewise, the assembly may set as a special order the first general ballot after floor nominations have been received.

When the agenda is presented to the assembly, the chair will ask for a motion to adopt the agenda (i.e., the order of business and special orders for the Friday and Saturday). As mentioned, the agenda may be amended (like any other motion) as part of their consideration. Once approved, the agenda may be amended under the same rules as used for amending something previously adopted. New special orders may be created by the assembly throughout the course of the session.

Special Orders

Saturday, 16 October 2021	11:00 AM	First Ballot for Bishop
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Order of Business

Call to Order
Report of the Registration Committee
Organization of the Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcements • Consideration of the Rules of the Assembly • Consideration of the Agenda & Program of the Assembly • Introductions
Report of the Secretary
Report of the Nominating Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations from the Floor
Report of the Bishop
Report of the Vice President
Report of the Treasurer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the Budget
Report of the Churchwide Representative
Report of the Committee on the Bishop's Report
Report of the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Committee on the Bylaws
Report of the Global Missions Committee
Report of the Commission on Synod Lay Worship Leaders

Report of the Committee on Resolutions
Report of the Committee on Reference & Counsel
Unfinished Business
New Business
Adjournment

4.2. Rules of Order for the Assembly

For the consideration of the Synod Assembly

The following are the proposed convention standing rules for the 33rd Annual Synod Assembly of the WV-WMD Synod. In order to have force, the assembly would need to adopt them. The assembly may amend them prior to adoption. The assembly is free to not adopt any or all of them. The assembly may suspend, rescind, or amend them once adopted.

1. Each voting member, or those persons accorded the privilege of seat and voice, when recognized by the chair, shall state his or her name, congregation or the institution or group he or she represents. Persons speaking from the floor shall use the floor microphones (if they are provided) and shall address and speak to the chair.
2. In debate, a speaker shall be limited to five (5) minutes for each question. A speaker may speak to the same question a second time on the same day with a time limit of three (3) minutes provided no one who has not yet spoken wishes to do so. (*Cf. RONR* (12th ed.) 43:12 and 43:8)
3. When three speakers have spoken in a row on one side of a question and no speaker rises on the other side, debate shall be closed.
4. When balloting for elections:
 - a) Registration shall be temporarily closed ten minutes before the appointed time for the election and reopened when the balloting is completed;
 - b) The assembly chamber shall be sealed during balloting unless a ballot box has been ordered with a window for balloting.
5. All amendments to bylaws shall take effect at the end of this session unless specified otherwise.
6. Amendments to the Current Budget for FY2021-2022 or Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023, which create or increase a budget deficit, shall require a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote for passage.

For the information of the Synod Assembly

The following rules for the Synod Assembly have been established in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of this synod. They do not need to be adopted.

- The assembly cannot amend, rescind, or suspend a constitutional provision unless previous notice has been given by Synod Council.
- Bylaws provisions cannot be suspended, but they can be rescinded or amended, following the

procedure outlined in †S18.21.

- Continuing Resolutions may be rescinded or amended, following the procedure outlined in †S18.31. They may also be suspended, following the provision for suspension of rules found in *RONR* (12th ed.) 25:14 or 25:15, depending upon its nature.
1. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of the Synod Assembly. (S7.32)
 2. There shall be a division between the voting members and the others on the assembly floor, which shall be indicated by a marker(s). Voting members and those persons accorded privilege of seat and voice shall seat themselves in the section in front of the marker(s). All others shall be seated behind the marker(s). (B7.06)
 3. A majority of those members registered as attending shall constitute a quorum. (S7.14)
 4. When a voting member is unable to serve, the alternate voting member shall be seated when the Committee on Registration and Attendance has been provided with the necessary information and the alternate has been given a voting member's card. (B7.07)
 5. Voting members shall not absent themselves from any meeting of the assembly without valid excuse. (B7.18)
 6. Duly elected voting members of the Synod Council who are not otherwise voting members of the Synod Assembly shall be granted the privilege of both voice and vote as members of the assembly. (S7.28)
 7. All retired ordained ministers on the roster of the synod in attendance at the Synod Assembly shall be voting members provided that the voting membership of the Assembly is still 60% laypersons. (B7.08)
 8. An ordained minister on leave from call on the roster of this synod shall be granted voting membership in the Synod Assembly upon consent of the Synod Council; such consent shall be applicable to the Synod Assembly in question; such consent may be renewed. (CR2.01)
 9. Prior to each Synod Assembly, the Synod Council shall consider and, at its discretion, seat with voice and vote in the immediate Synod Assembly those Ministers of Word & Sacrament (or the equivalent) who are serving synod congregations and who also belong to church bodies with which the ELCA has full-communion. (CR2.02)
 10. Prior to each Synod Assembly, the Synod Council shall consider and, at its discretion, seat with voice but without vote in the immediate Synod Assembly to those Ministers of Word & Sacrament (or the equivalent) who are serving a synod congregation but have not been otherwise enfranchised. (CR2.03)
 11. Chairs of committees, commissions, and task forces who are not otherwise voting members of the assembly shall be seated with voice but without vote. (CR2.04)
 12. Proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of this synod. (S7.31)
 13. In all elections by the Synod Assembly, other than for the Bishop, additional nominations may be made from the floor. Nominators may provide copies of the completed nomination form (as defined by the nominating committee) to the secretary of the synod for distribution. (B9.07)
 14. The Committee on Elections shall have power to appoint and dismiss tellers for those elections under its oversight. (CR7.01)

15. All motions, resolutions, amendments and nominations shall be submitted in writing and on proper forms available from the secretary of synod or the assembly pages. (B7.10)
16. A resolution of a general character which is not germane to the pending question or report shall be given by the proposer to the Committee on Reference and Counsel, which shall report thereon to the assembly with its recommendations. Other duties of the committee shall be: a) to recommend special orders for the hearing of representatives, b) to grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issuing from the office of the secretary, and c) to give such assistance to the bishop as may be desired in the course of the assembly. (B7.16)
17. Every congregation shall have the right to petition the assembly of this synod on subjects affecting its own welfare and legitimate interests. (B7.05)
18. Memorials and Resolutions not germane to assembly business shall be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel twenty (20) days prior to the assembly. (CR7.02)
19. Resolutions submitted to Reference & Counsel shall be sponsored by at least two voting members of the Synod Assembly. For the purposes of this rule, when submission is in anticipation of the annual meeting of the Synod Assembly, verified registration as a voting member shall delineate standing. (CR7.03)
20. For both resolutions and memorials reviewed by Reference & Counsel under B17.16 or CR7.02,
 - a) When the Reference & Counsel has recommended the adoption of the resolution/memorial, the committee's recommendation and text of the resolution/memorial shall be the main motion before the assembly;
 - b) When Reference & Counsel has recommended the adoption of a substitute for the resolution/memorial, the committee's recommendation, including the committee's text, shall be the main motion before the assembly;
 - c) When Reference & Counsel has recommended referral of the resolution/memorial, the committee's recommendation shall be the main motion before the assembly.
 - d) When Reference & Counsel has recommended that the assembly decline to consider a proposed resolution, the voting member's resolution, if then moved by that voting member and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information.
 - e) When Reference & Counsel has recommended that the assembly decline to consider a proposed memorial, the memorial, if then moved by a voting member who is also a voting member of the memorializing body and seconded, shall be the main motion and the committee's recommendation shall be received as information. (CR7.04)
21. The Committee on Resolutions, except in cases where a report has been assigned to another committee or the committee is ordered otherwise by the assembly or the Synod Council, shall review all published reports and oral reports submitted to this Assembly. The committee may offer at its discretion such resolutions in response as seem appropriate. (CR7.05)
22. All reports published in the bulletin of reports shall be received by the assembly by virtue of that fact without vote. (B7.17)
23. The bishop of the synod shall appoint the following assembly committees:
 - a) Committee on the Bishop's Report
 - b) Committee on Elections
 - c) Committee on Minutes

- d) Committee on Reference and Counsel
- e) Committee on Registration and Attendance
- f) Committee on Resolutions
- g) Committee on Worship (B7.03)

4.3. Assembly Committees and Staff

! Assembly committee membership and staff assignments are subject to change.

Nominations		
Conference	Clergy	Lay Persons
MVMC	The Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle, Chair	Mary Sanders
OKVC	The Rev. Partice Weirick	Lois Broyles
PC	The Rev. Karen Erskine-Valentine	William Ack
UOVC	The Rev. Sean Smith	George Friedline

Committee on the Bishop's Report	
Clergy	Lay Persons
The Rev. Sean Smith, Chair	Paula Mitchell
The Rev. Patrice Weirick	Wayne Stuckey

Committee on Elections	
Clergy	Laity
The Rev. Jessica Felici, Chair	Drew Catrow
The Rev. Ian Reid	Elizabeth Rini
	Nancy Weeks

Tellers Pool: The Rev. Sally Bartling, Marvin Beckman, The Rev. Susan Claytor, Judy Combs, The Rev. Tom Darr, The Rev. Richard Egtvedt, The Rev. Andrea Ernest, Fred Fox, The Rev. Deborah Gable, Paula McDonald, Brenda Morrison, The Rev. Erik Nielsen, The Rev. Nancy Knol, Adam Link, Diane Link, John Perry, The Rev. Randolph Richardson, Richard Ridder, The Rev. Paul Schafer, Patricia Schillings, Thomas Scott Schwing, The Rev. Anthony Setley, Delores Steege, Jerry Steege, Clara Mae Spray, Cheryl Stemple, The Rev. Philip Van Dam, The Rev. Michael Vinson, Rebecca Warntz, The Rev. James Wicker, Stanley Wise, and Karen Wise.

✿ Because of the volume of elections this year, we have set up a teller pool (like a jury pool) from which to draw tellers. The Committee on Elections will select those tellers needed for each count.

Committee on Minutes	
Clergy	Laity
The Rev. Courtney Erzkus	Evan Christensen
The Rev. Emily Harden	Hillary Christensen
The Rev. Linda Muhly	Norma Gensler, Chair
The Rev. Daniel Warntz	

Committee on Reference & Counsel	
Clergy	Lay Persons
The Rev. Jason Felici	Andrea Brock
The Rev. Bill Ridenhour	Pamela Pritt, Chair

Committee on Registration & Attendance		
Clergy	Lay Persons	Staff
The Rev. Jacqueline Campbell	Jerry Boquet	Parr Claytor
	Courtney Solberg, Registrar	The Rev. Matt Kayhart
		Cindy Richardson
		Lynn Schillings

Committee on Resolutions	
Clergy	Lay Persons
The Rev. John Unger	Dorcas Friedline, Chair
	Wendell Beitzel

Committee on Worship
The Rev Matthew Riegel, Chair
The Rev. Tony Setley

Assembly Parliamentarian
The Rev. Jason Felici

Assembly Major Domo
Debra Borrelli

Assembly Office
Tamara Riegel

Tech Team
The Rev. Matt Holbert
Steve Gabbert
Doug Woolley

Ushers & Pages	
Warden	Kenneth Pritt
Ushers	Mary Antonik, Steve Antonik, Bill Bradley, Jennifer Hady, Bill Hady, Diana Knoll, John Knoll, Holly Lieving, and Michael Lieving
Pages	TBA

Many thanks to all Assembly Committee members for their work that makes the annual Assembly possible.

4.4. Churchwide Representative

Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe **Executive for Synod Relations**

Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe is the Executive for Synod Relations and the Natural Systems Coordinator for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. From 2005 to 2014 she served as an assistant to the bishop in the Northeastern Ohio Synod and continues to coordinate that synod's Congregational Systems Team as it promotes well-being in its leaders and congregations through the means of family systems theory.

Prior to her calls to the synod and churchwide staff, she served congregations as a deacon with a focus in church music, religious education, and family ministry. Mary Ann has a Bachelor of Music degree from Houghton College and a Master of Arts in Religion from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. She has studied and applied Bowen family systems theory since 1994, in her own family of origin work and in parish leadership and consultation.



In her call to the Northeastern Ohio Synod staff, she developed a working group committed to congregational systems endeavors in three primary areas: congregational struggle, the call process, and family systems seminars for clergy and church leaders. The development of a systems team and its ongoing task and training has become a vital ministry of the synod. Mary Ann's primary areas of interest are in addressing congregational anxiety and facilitating a view of parish leadership through family process and a natural systems lens.

Mary Ann is a member of the coordinating team of Voyagers, a national colloquy on Bowen theory, is a family systems coach for rostered ministers, and a synod/congregational consultant. In addition to her position as the ELCA Executive for Synod Relations, she is the coordinator of the ELCA Systems Academy and facilitates the formation and training of synod teams which promote a wholistic approach to congregational work with a family systems lens.

Mary Ann and her husband Rick have five adult children, corresponding spouses, and nine grandchildren – an excellent laboratory for family systems work!

5. Reports of Officers

5.1. Report of the Secretary

5.1.1. Synod Council Actions

Synod Council Report for Synod Assembly 2021
Actions since report to Synod Assembly 2019 through 31 July 2021

SEPTEMBER 2019

VOTED SC 19.9.1

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #1— The 2020 Synod Assembly will take place in Flatwoods, WV on 5-6 June 2020, utilizing the Days Inn Conference Center.

VOTED SC 19.9.2

Council approved the following recommendations en bloc.

- #2 — The 50th anniversary of the ordination of women by the predecessor bodies of the ELCA be set as a celebratory observance for the 2020 Synod Assembly, affirming the bishop's intent to feature the women presbyters of the synod in worship leadership.
- #3 — The bishop invite Camp Luther to present at the 2020 Synod Assembly in observance of Camp Luther's 75th anniversary.
- #8 — **Rick Losh**, **Cammie Menendez**, and **Emmi Martin** be appointed to the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Campus Foundation at WVU.
- #9 — An ad hoc committee on governing documents of **Jason Felici**, **Sally Bartling**, and **Matthew Riegel** be appointed with instructions to review this synod's continuing resolutions and the 2019 Churchwide Assembly's recommended amendments to the Constitution for Synods and make report to Synod Council its recommendations prior to any required deadlines for amendments of this synod's governing documents.
- #10 — The following be adopted as a continuing resolution: Synod Council and all other committees may, at the discretion of the chair, employ absentee voting so long as all members have been notified of the call for vote and have acknowledged that call for vote, a unit veto striking down the question.
- #12 — It be entered in the minutes that the extended service of The Revs. Susan Claytor, Roland Nairn, Philip Van Dam, Wm. "Bill" Ridenhour, and John Unger have been reviewed by the Synod Council as required by the policies of the ELCA.
- #13 — **The Rev. David Twedt** be granted retired status on the roster of the ELCA, retroactively effective 1 July 2019.
- #14 — The Synod Council assent to the appointment of **The Rev. Karen Erskine-Valentine** as the next director of Camp Luther.

VOTED SC 19.9.3

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #4 — An ad hoc committee of **Paul Wangerin, Rev. Christine Olson, and Rev. Linda Muhly** be appointed to assist in matters related to the planning of the 2020 Synod Assembly. Council added the names by unanimous consent.

VOTED SC 19.9.4

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #5 — An ad hoc committee of **Rev. Matt Day, Nancy Weeks, and Pam Pritt** be appointed to identify sites for future synod assemblies consistent with the directives and counsel of SA19.06.10. Council added the names by unanimous consent.

VOTED SC 19.9.5

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #7 — That **Pr. Ruth Bullwinkle and Ms. Pam Pritt** be appointed to the ExComm. Council added the names by unanimous consent.

VOTED SC 19.9.6

The Council approved a motion from the bishop concerning the auditor to move the matter to the Executive Committee granting the committee the authority to act.

VOTED SC 19.9.7

The Council approved the treasurer's recommendation #4: *That Synod Council set the Synod minimum base salary for CY2020 at \$35, 651.*

VOTED SC 19.9.8

A motion on the floor to accept the treasurer's recommendation #3 — *That Synod Council recommends its congregations to set their proportional share at 10.83% in CY2020* – is amended to read *That Synod Council recommends its congregations to set their proportional share at 10.83% to maintain current giving in CY2020.* Amendment carried.

VOTED SC 19.9.9

Council voted to accept the treasurer's recommendation #3 as amended.

VOTED SC 19.9.10

Council voted to accept the treasurer's recommendation #2: That Synod Council approves maintaining the Gold+ Portico plan for its employees in CY2020.

VOTED SC 19.9.11

Council passed by unanimous consent the treasurer's recommendation #1: *That an ad hoc committee of **Joe Solberg, Debbie Borelli, and Jim Nichols** be appointed to make a decision regarding the future of the physical location of the Synod office, and to take the necessary actions to execute that decision. That his committee be empowered to enter the Synod into a contract not exceeding a length of twelve months or an annual cost of \$13,200. That the committee be restricted from authorizing moving expenses greater than \$1000. The names were added by unanimous consent.*

VOTED SC 19.9.12

Council voted to amend the motion *In reference to reconfigure staffing of the Synod office, the Executive Committee be empowered to ~~act on staffing design of the Synod.~~ recommend staffing needs to Synod*

Council.**VOTED SC 19.9.13**

The amended motion carried: In reference to reconfigure staffing of the Synod office, the Executive Committee be empowered to recommend staffing needs to the Synod Council.

VOTED SC 19.9.14

Council approved the treasurer's recommendation of the following folks for the Finance Committee: **Paul Wangerin, Rev. Bill Ridenhour, Bruce Dalton**. The committee includes the bishop and treasurer. The names were added by unanimous consent.

VOTED SC 19.9.15

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #6: That **Rev. Michael Wright** be appointed to fill the unexpired term of Laurel Muhly-Alexander on Synod Council, pending confirmation of resignation. Rev. Wright's name was added by unanimous consent.

In consideration of the bishop's recommendation #11: *That Synod Council, finding the membership of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Upper Flats (Letart), WV, to be "so diminished in numbers as to make it impractical for such a congregation to fulfill the purposes for which it was organized" and "that it is necessary for this synod to protect the congregation's property from waste and deterioration," invoke S13.24 and "take charge and control of the property of the congregation to hold, manage, and convey as seems appropriate to synod, the Executive Committee being empowered to appoint trustees for such purposes".*

Rev. Ridenhour moved the following amendment

- *The Bishop shall assume role of point person in executing recommendation #11.*
- *The Bishop shall be empowered to seek assistance of any other synod member (or non-Synod member) with expertise helpful to resolving the matter.*
- *Synod Council shall be empowered to seek legal counsel as necessary.*
- *Said property shall be disposed of a quickly as possible by way of auction.*

VOTED SC 19.9.16

Riegel moved to amend the third bullet of the Ridenhour amendment to read *Synod Council Synod Executive Committee shall be empowered to seek legal counsel as necessary.* Amendment carried.

VOTED SC 19.9.17

Solberg moved to amend the fourth bullet to read *Said property shall be disposed of a quickly as possible ~~by way of auction.~~* Council approved the amendment.

VOTED SC 19.9.18

Rev. Ridenhour's amendment carried as amended. *The bishop shall assume role of point person in executing recommendation #11.*

- *The bishop shall assume role of point person in executing recommendation #11.*
- *The bishop shall be empowered to seek assistance of any other synod member (or non-Synod member) with expertise helpful to resolving the matter.*
- *Synod Council Executive Committee shall be empowered to seek legal counsel as necessary.*
- *Said property shall be disposed of as quickly as possible ~~by way of auction~~.*

VOTED SC 19.9.19

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #11 as amended.

VOTED SC 19.9.20

The council passed the motion for the bishop to develop curriculum for congregational councils as to their constitutional duties.

VOTED SC 19.9.21

The Council agreed by general consent that the bishop will develop a mailing list of lay council leadership for use of the Council vice-president.

VOTED SC 19.9.22

Council voted to add **Rev. Jason Felici** as a member to the Finance Committee.

VOTED SC 19.9.23

Council voted to add **Elizabeth (Emmi) Martin** to the Finance Committee.

JANUARY 2020

VOTED SC 20.1.1

Council approved the excused absences for Pastor Felici, Pam Pritt, and Nancy Weeks.

VOTED SC 20.1.2

Council approved the bishop's recommendation to authorize the election by Synod Assembly 2020 of one clergy and one laity to the Discipline Committee each for a full six-year term instead of making vacancy appointments.

VOTED SC 20.1.3

Council approved the bishop's recommendation to authorize the bishop to implement the Provisional Guidance for Deans.

VOTED SC 20.1.4

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that Synod Council refer the Provisional Guidance for Deans to the Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee for review with power to recommend any needful amendments to the Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions to the either the Synod Council or the Synod Assembly.

VOTED SC 20.1.5

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the Council may authorize the Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee to report its recommendations related to nonrequired provisions in the Model Constitution to

Synods, as found in its progress report for this meeting, directly to Synod Assembly 2020.

VOTED SC 20.1.6

Council approved the bishop's recommendation, as amended by general consent, that it appoint **Pr. Sean Smith, Pr. Sally Bartling, Stephanie Setly, and Melissa Bannister** to the commission outlined in the Plan for Synodical Lay Worship Leaders to review the Plan for Synodical Lay Worship Leaders, reporting back with recommendations to the Synod Council and to develop those details necessary for implementation as seem reasonable at this time.

VOTED SC 20.1.7

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that **Mike Lieving** (New Haven), **Jim Elias** (Upper Flats), and **Patrice Weirick** with the Executive Committee being empowered to make changes to this appointment in the interim.

VOTED SC 20.1.8

The Council approved the motion to authorize the bishop to appoint statisticians with power to "badger" pastors and congregations to submit their parochial reports for 2019.

VOTED SC 20.1.9

Council approved the treasurer's recommendation to forgive Salem Lutheran of the \$481.44 debt and to remove the same from the financial books at the end of the fiscal year.

VOTED SC 20.1.10

Council voted to authorize the Audit Committee to engage an auditor to audit the 2018 financial books.

VOTED SC 20.1.11

Council approved the motion to authorize the Executive Committee to appoint an Audit Committee.

VOTED SC 20.1.12

Synod Council approved the bishop's recommendation to appoint **Ruth Bullwinkle** (MVMC Clergy), **Karen Erskine-Valentine** (PC Clergy), **Joel Richter** (UOVC Clergy), **Mary Sanders** (MVMC Laity), **Patrice Weirick** (OKVC Clergy), **Joe Bondisky** (PC Laity), **Lois Broyles** (OKVC Laity), and **George Friedline** (UOVC Laity) to the Nominating Committee.

APRIL 2020

VOTED SC 20.4.1

Council approved by general consent the bishop's recommendation, as required by the Manual of Policies and Procedures for Management of the Rosters of the ELCA VI.A(a)(2), the extended ecumenical service of the **Revs. Casey Leineman** (Church of the Covenant, Grafton), **Peter Vial** (Holy Trinity, Elkins), and **Susan Claytor** (St. Luke's, Beckley).

VOTED SC 20.4.2

Council approved by general consent the bishop's recommendation to accept the resignation from Synod Council by Pete Hinkle.

JULY 2020**VOTED SC 20.7.1**

Council approved the absences for Rev. William Ridenhour, Joe Solberg, and Nancy Weeks.

VOTED SC 20.7.2

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that Paul Wangerin, on behalf of Synod Council, send a letter of thanks to Director Phil Hirsch of ELCA DMU for the extension of DEM Schafer's contract.

VOTED SC 20.7.3

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that it be entered into the minutes that Synod Council notes with appreciation and commendation DEM Schafer's work.

VOTED SC 20.7.4

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the Finance Committee be appointed to draft a synod clergy compensation guideline for 2021, reporting back to Synod Council for action.

VOTED SC 20.7.5

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the Finance Committee be appointed to draft a synod mission support formula for 2021, reporting back to Synod Council for action.

VOTED SC 20.7.6

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the \$15,000 gift from the sale of Our Saviour, Ravenswood, be placed in a Synod Council restricted fund to await disbursement at SC's discretion and that a letter of thanks be sent by Synod Secretary Norma Gensler, on behalf of Synod Council, to Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Ravenswood, c/o Marla Jackson.

VOTED SC 20.7.7

Council approved the bishop's recommendation that authorization be granted to **Pastors John "Jack" Jackson** and **Michael Giese** of the NALC to provide altar and pulpit ministry to St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Pt. Pleasant, under CBCR/ELCA 8.64.

VOTED SC 20.7.8

Council approved the bishop's recommendation to appoint **Melody Stevens** (St. Peter Lutheran Church, Shepherdstown) to the Board of Directors of United Lutheran Seminary.

VOTED SC 20.7.9

Council approved the motion to appoint **Elizabeth Rini** to fill the remainder term of the Potomac Conference Lay Synod Council position.

AUGUST 2020**VOTED SC 20.8.1**

The Council approved the Finance Committee's recommendation that the Synod Council ask congregations who are not yet giving 9.39% of their total unrestricted congregational giving to the Synod to increase their giving to this level while asking congregations who are at, or exceeding, this level to not decrease their

nominal contribution.

VOTED SC 20.8.2

The Council approved the Finance Committee's recommendation to adopt the "West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Pastoral Compensation/Expenses/Benefits Package Expectations for 2021," which indicates no change to the minimum base salary for pastors in 2021, but to remind congregations that the tenure modifier (\$400 per year of service in ministry) should still be applied.

OCTOBER 2020

VOTED SC 20.10.1

The Council accepted the bishop's recommendation that **The Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands** be granted on-leave from call status.

VOTED SC 20.10.2

The Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the WV-WMD Synod relinquish its seat on the Board of Directors of Glade Run Lutheran Services, the bishop notifying Glade Run Lutheran Services of the decision.

VOTED SC 20.10.3

The Council approved the bishop's recommendation that the ecumenical service authorizations for **The Rev. Susan Claytor, The Rev. Roland Nairn, The Rev. Philip Van Dam, The Rev. John Unger, The Rev. William Ridenhour, The Rev. Jessica Felici, and The Rev. Jason Felici** be entered into the record as reviewed and affirmed.

VOTED SC 20.10.4

The Council approved Pastor Ruth Bullwinkle's recommendation that the Synod Council recommend the bishop to appoint Mary Sanders as Synod Hunger Lead.

Upon the Council's recommendation, the bishop appointed **Mary Sanders** as the Synod Hunger lead.

VOTED SC 20.10.5

The Council approved the motion to give the treasurer authorization to proceed with a Synod audit for fiscal years 2015-16 and 2016-17.

VOTED SC 20.10.6

The Council approved by consent the Camp Luther Board's recommendation that **Pr. Karen Erskine-Valentine** trains under the current director Pr. Jason Felici the next summer that camp can be held safely, and then begins her solo directorship the following year.

VOTED SC 20.10.7

Synod Council approved provisionally to adopt the original SLWL submission until the next meeting, 6 February 2021.

VOTED SC 20.10.8

The Council approved the treasurer's recommendation for Synod Council to give its office administrator a

severance package of \$12,614 which is to be paid out on a pay schedule of the executive committee's preference starting at the end of her employment and concluding once the designated funds are exhausted.

VOTED SC 20.10.9

The Council approved that the Synod put aside \$970.31 a week, beginning in November 2020 and ending at the end of the fiscal year, into a fund designated for the office administrator's severance package. The treasurer has the authority to discontinue these payments into the designated fund if necessary.

NOVEMBER 2020

VOTED SC 20.11.1

With all Councilors responding to the on-line ballot concerning a motion for the Council *to appoint **Tanya Sell, Delores "Dee" Snyder, Julie Goodnight**, members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Sharpsburg, MD, as trustees, per provision S13.24 of the Constitution of the WV-WMD Synod, to take charge of the administration of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Sharpsburg, with instruction to proceed with the disposition of property, chattel, and all other assets of said congregation, in line with the plan set forward by the remaining congregation members in so far as it is consistent with federal and state law*, the motion carried 16-0.

DECEMBER 2020

VOTED SC 20.12.1

The Synod Council approved the bishop's recommendations concerning clergy roster including **The Rev. Keith Pittsnogle** be granted retired status effective immediately, **The Rev. Andrea Ernest** be granted on-leave from call status effective immediately, and **The Rev. James Wicker** be granted on-leave from call status effective 1 January 2021.

VOTED SC 20.12.2

The Synod Council approved the bishop's recommendation as moved by Rev. William Ridenhour to direct the 2021 Synod Assembly Planning Team to take all necessary steps to plan and prepare for an in-person assembly during the second half of 2021. Synod Council further directs the planning team to constantly assess the status of the pandemic as in regards to the safety of holding an in-person assembly.

FEBRUARY 2021

VOTED SC 21.2.1

The Council approved the contract for the DEM, **Rev. Sherri Schafer**. Bishop Riegel recommended that the purchase of services agreement with Domestic Mission Unit/ELCA be signed, and The Rev. Sherri Schafer continue as DEM through FY2021-2022.

VOTED SC 21.2.2 by General Consent

Council approved by general consent to dispense with reading the bishop's nine recommendations.

VOTED SC 21.2.3

Council approved en bloc the bishop's recommendations two, three, four and seven as follows

- **Recommendation #2** — That the matter of Caroline Furnace be referred to the Synod Finance Committee for consideration during the budgeting process for FY2022-2023.
- **Recommendation #3** — That the bylaws changes for Community Lutheran Partners, Inc., be ratified.
- **Recommendation #4** — That the \$5500 gift from Grace Lutheran Church, Wheeling, be acknowledged and transmitted in memory 20 of Marjorie Wolf to the SWPA Synod for deposit in the Tri-Synod Archives Endowment Fund.
- **Recommendation #7** — That the Synod Council petition the Secretary of the ELCA and the ELCA Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to amend †S11.04 such that it be a non-required provision of The Constitution for Synods of the ELCA.

VOTED SC 21.2.4

Council adopted the bishop's recommendation #5: that a recommendation be provided to a closing congregation during legacy consultation that a distribution to the Tri-Synod Archives Endowment Fund be included in its plan for final disposition of assets.

VOTED SC 21.2.5

Council adopted the bishop's recommendation #6: that this synod remit to the Tri-Synod Archives Endowment Fund, subject to approval by the Synod Council, one percent of residual assets from congregations closed by this Synod.

VOTED SC 21.2.6

Council approved by a vote of 8-7 the bishop's recommendation #8: that the Synod Council petition the Secretary of the ELCA and the ELCA Legal and Constitutional Review Committee to amend †S15.31 such that it be a non-required provision of The Constitution for Synods of the ELCA.

VOTED SC 21.2.7

Council approved the bishop's recommendation #9: that the proposed fee schedule for supply preaching be adopted concerning remote and hybrid services.

VOTED SC 21.2.8

Council adopted the motion to declare that First English Lutheran Church, Wheeling, did not have access to the Synod's financial books prior to entering the Synod chart of accounts into their computer system.

VOTED SC 21.2.9

Council approved the appointment of Nancy Weeks as assistant treasurer for the WV-WMD Synod in order to sign checks when necessary, and Matt Samson will be removed from approved check signatures when next executed.

VOTED SC 21.2.10

The Council approved Rev. Ridenhour's motion that the Executive Committee is directed to appoint and create a Synod Mutual Ministry Committee, based upon the Driesen Model, to promote and foster a collegial atmosphere of accountability to Synod mission priorities. The committee shall make regular reports to Synod Council. This directive explicitly directs that this is a mutual ministry committee focused on the Synod. It may focus on the Office of Bishop as related to Synod ministry.

VOTED SC 21.2.11

Council approved the motion to suspend the rules that interfere with setting aside the original version of the Synodical Lay Worship Leaders (SLWL) and the proposed changes to the same as reported previously by the SLWL Commission and to put before the council the Smith-Riegel compromise SLWL protocol under a main motion for adoption.

VOTED SC 21.2.12

Council adopted the bishop's motion for the Synodical Lay Worship Leaders protocol (Riegel-Smith Compromise) as synod policy through continuing resolution.

APRIL 2021**VOTED SC 21.4.1**

The Council approved to grant **The Rev. Carl Ames** retired status on the roster of minister of Word & Sacrament effective 15 April 2021.

VOTED SC 21.4.2

The Council acknowledged that the bishop has authorized **The Rev. Peter Vial** for extended service to Holy Trinity, Elkins, under CBCR/ELCA 8.63.

VOTED SC 21.4.3

Council approved the use of mail ballots to act upon authorization of **The Rev. Roger Dallman** for altar & pulpit service to congregations on the Mountaintop under CBCR/ELCA 8.64 upon the bishop endorsing the same.

VOTED SC 21.4.4

Council appointed **the Rev. Tim Spence** and **the Rev. Nancy Knol** as members of the Tri-Synod Archives Board of Directors.

VOTED SC 21.4.5

Council approved to dismiss the Ad Hoc Commission on Synodical Lay Worship Leaders with appreciation for service rendered.

VOTED SC 21.4.6

Council appointed the **Rev. Sean Smith**, _____, and _____ to the Commission on Synodical Lay Worship Leaders.

VOTED SC 21.4.7

Council authorized the Executive Committee in consultation with the Rev. Sean Smith to appoint the two vacant positions (SC 21.4.6) on the Commission on Synodical Lay Worship Leaders.

May 2021 absentee vote by signed ballot**VOTED SC 21.5.1**

The Council unanimously approved the motion (16-0) to grant retired status on the roster of ministers of Word & Sacrament to **The Rev. Timothy Spence**. Voting in the affirmative: Bishop Riegel, Norma Gensler,

Paul Wangerin, Abigail Spray, Andrea Brock, Rev. William Ridenhour, Debby Borelli, Elizabeth Rini, Emilie Theobald-Rowlands, Rev. Jason Felici, Joseph Solberg, Mary Sanders, Rev. Michael Wright, Nancy Weeks, Pam Pritt, and Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle.

VOTED SC 21.5.2

The Council failed to pass the motion to grant 8.64 authorization for Altar & Pulpit fellowship on the Mountaintop to The Rev. Roger Dallman, 13-1-2. Per CR5.01, a veto strikes down the motion. The following votes are recorded. Voting in the affirmative: Bishop Riegel, Norma Gensler, Paul Wangerin, Abigail Spray, Andrea Brock, Rev. William Ridenhour, Debby Borelli, Elizabeth Rini, Rev. Emilie Theobald-Rowlands, Joseph Solberg, Nancy Weeks, Pam Pritt, and Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle. Voting in the negative: Mary Sanders. Abstaining: Rev. Jason Felici and Rev. Michael Wright

JUNE 2021

VOTED SC 21.6.1

The Council voted unanimously to accept the Synod Assembly 2021 planning Committee's (SAPComm) recommendation to convene the assembly in regular session at Morgantown, WV, on 16 October 2021 with the following considerations

- 1. That the venue be the Mon County 4H Center at Mylan Park
 - A. that the indoor pavilion be set up as the assembly chamber
 - B. that the outdoor pavilion be set up as a social area (with optional display space)
- 2. That the SAPCOomm continue to work on plans for a second day of SA 2021
 - A. to be held with a least a one-week interval between days
 - B. providing recommendation to SC on venue and date
- 3. That the assembly start no earlier than 1000 and no later than 1100
- 4. That the assembly end no later than 1700
- 5. That with regards to meals
 - A. Lunch will not be provided by the Synod
 - B. That SAPComm consider coffee etc service and provide recommendations to SC
 - C. That a dining guide be produced as part of pre-assembly material
- 6. That with regards to lodging
 - A. Lodging not be provided as part of the SA registration package
 - B. That a lodging guide be produced as part of the pre-assembly material

VOTED SC 21.6.2

The Council voted unanimously to discharge the Synod Assembly 2021 Planning Committee.

VOTED SC 21.6.3

The Council approved the motion to appoint a Synod Assembly 2021 Planning Committee to include **Bishop Riegel, Joe Solberg, and Debra Borrelli.**

VOTED SC 21.6.4

The Council approved the bishop's recommendation to reappointment the following lay and clergy for the

2021 nominating committee: **Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle, Mary Sanders, Rev. Karen Erskine-Valentine, Lois Broyles, George Friedline, Rev. Patrice Weirick, and William Ack**, and the appointment of **Rev. Sean Smith**.

VOTED SC 21.6.5

The Council approved the bishop's recommendation to issue a letter of call to specialized ministry to the **Rev. Sherri Schafer** to serve as Director of Evangelical Mission assigned to the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod effective 1 August 2021, the terms of call being outlined in the DEM agreement and position description.

VOTED SC 21.6.6

The Council approved the bishop's recommendation for it to instruct the Synod Global Mission Team to design an appeal for our partners in Madagascar reporting said design to Synod Council for approval by e-mail vote at its earliest convenience.

JULY 2021

VOTED SC 21.7.1

The Council voted unanimously to approve Bishop Riegel's motion to issue letters of call to specialized ministry to both **The Rev. Courtney Erzkus** and **The Rev. Benjamin Erzkus** to serve as chaplains of the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University.

VOTED SC 21.7.2

The Council approved Rev. Theobald-Rowlands's motion to reset the bishop's housing allowance by an increase of \$9500 over the budgeted amount with an equal amount being a reduction in cash salary. The Council approved by assent to authorize the use of mail ballot for any roster matters that require action prior to next Synod Council meeting.

VOTED 21.7.3

Council approved the bishop's motion to refer the SMMC's recommendation to the Bylaws Committee. The recommendation includes an amendment of the WV-WMD Bylaws by striking reference to the Committee on the Bishop's Report from B7.03 (convention committees appointed by the bishop) and striking B7.15 (the Committee on the Bishop's report make a response) in its entirety.

VOTED SC 21.7.4

Council approved the bishop's motion to refer the SMMC's recommendation to the Bylaws Committee. The recommendation includes an amendment of the WV-WMD Bylaws by striking reference to the Committee on the Bishop's Report from B7.03 (convention committees appointed by the bishop) and striking B7.15 (the Committee on the Bishop's report make a response) in its entirety.

VOTED SC 21.7.5

The Council agreed that NOMCOMM has the authority to decide on segmenting the ballot when it is necessary.

VOTED SC 21.7.6

Council approved the bishop's nomination of **Norma Gensler** for Synod Secretary.

VOTED SC 21.7.7

Council approved the commission's recommendation to appoint **Revs. Ian Reid** and **Ruth Bullwinkle** as well as **Paul Wangerin** to the commission.

VOTED SC 21.7.8

Council approved Rev. Jason Felici's motion to accept the Bylaw's Committee recommendation to enact the following as a continuing resolution, numbering to be determined by the secretary: "The Committee on Elections shall have power to appoint and dismiss tellers for those elections under its oversight."

VOTED SC 21.7.9

Council approved Rev. Jason Felici's motion to accept the Bylaw's Committee recommendation that Synod Council enact the following as a continuing resolution, numbering to be determined by the secretary: "Memorials and Resolutions not germane to assembly business shall be submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel twenty (20) days prior to the assembly."

VOTED SC 21.7.10

Council approved Rev. Jason Felici's motion to accept the Bylaw's Committee recommendation to empower the bylaws committee to report directly to the 2021 Synod Assembly.

VOTED SC 21.7.11

Council approved the SAPComm's recommendation that the registration fee for Synod Assembly 2021 be set at \$0.00 (free).

VOTED SC 21.7.12

Council approved the SAPComm's recommendation that 13 November 2021 be set as reserved date for an adjourned meeting of the SA.

VOTED SC 21.7.13

Council approved the recommendation that SAPComm be authorized to handle remaining details related to planning, logistics, registration, and information.

VOTED SC 21.7.14

Council approved the recommendation that the Synod Office issue the formal call of the assembly per the CBCR/WV-WD.

VOTED SC 21.7.15

Council accepted the Global Mission report which includes

- An appeal goal of \$6000;
- To be split 3 ways (with each recipient deciding how best to use the funds): 1/3 for Bezaha; 1/3 for Betioky; 1/3 for Betroka.
- Synod Assembly 2021 offering be designated for the Madagascar appeal;
- Direct appeal to be made to the congregations and people of the synod through the synod's

communications channels;

- Global Mission (Madagascar) be tasked with execution.

Recorded by Norma Gensler, WV-WMD Synod Secretary

5.1.2. Synod Executive Committee Actions

Synod Council Executive Committee Report for Synod Assembly 2021 Actions since report to Synod Assembly 2019

January 2020

VOTED EC 20.1.1

The committee voted to accept the treasurer's motion to disengage the auditing contract with Billy Earp and to engage a new auditor to begin where Earp finished. This will most likely begin with fiscal year 2015. It is noted that Earp lost his WV auditing license.

VOTED EC 20.1.2

The committee agreed to appoint the following to the Audit Committee: Bruce Dalton, Daniel Warntz, and Paul Wangerin. They will meet in conjunction with the treasurer.

January 2021

VOTED via E-Mail EC 21.1.1

The Executive Committee agreed by unanimous consent to approve the contract for the DEM Rev. Sherri Schaffer for the fiscal year beginning 1 Jan 2021 until the Synod Council will meet to take action on 6 February 2021.

Recorded by Norma Gensler, WV-WMD Synod Secretary

5.1.3. Synod Council Recommendations

Recommendations from Synod Council to the Thirty-Third Synod Assembly

Recommendation #1 (concerning the [proposed budget for FY2022-2023](#))

That the Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023 be adopted by the Synod Assembly.

5.2. Report of the Bishop

WV-WMD Synod Assembly 2021

Report of the Bishop

These past nineteen months, it has not been so much of a case of the elephant in the room as the room inside the elephant. The COVID-19 pandemic has consumed us. Every aspect of our lives has been touched by it. Every aspect of our lives has been changed by it. We talk about little else, and, when we do talk about something else, the coronavirus inevitably infects that conversation as well. I suspect that some synod history geek one hundred years from now will read this report—allow me the sweet delusion that there will still be synod history geeks a hundred years from now—and think, “That’s a bit of hyperbole,” but we who live now cannot help but experience it that way. Strangely, a century ago, WV Synod Assembly minutes made scant mention of the Spanish Flu. Those old minutes suggest a synod that was plowing along with business as usual. I honestly do not know how that was possible for them. The Spanish Flu was, statistically, more deadly than COVID-19. Perhaps death was a more present reality in those days, even without the Spanish Flu, than it is now. Perhaps our greater scientific knowledge contributes toward a different state of mind. Perhaps politicization (or a different politicization) and mass communication (or changes in mass communication) has brought this pandemic fully into the naked public square. No matter the cause, we seem to be in a very different place than our synodical assembly ancestors.

To ignore the pandemic and the ways in which it affects our synodical life would be straight up denial. On the other hand, we must ask: In what ways has COVID-19 become our god?

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

—Luther, Small Catechism (Tappert ed.)

Luther expounds in the Large Catechism:

What does “to have a god” mean, or what is God? Answer: A “god” is the term for that to which we look for all good and in which we find refuge in all need. Therefore, to have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe in that one with your whole heart. (Kolb-Wengert ed.)

The mirror image of Luther’s “god” is not merely that which we do not fear, love, and trust in above all things; it is that which we invest with the power of life and death, that which we loathe, that from which we expect nothing but evil, and that from which we would flee, not that we might flee to the One True God, but rather flee in abject terror, counting salvation as nothing more than distance. When that thing becomes the beginning and ending of our thoughts, words, and deeds, we have a religion, but not a religion that holds the Triune God as its object of hope and adoration. Perhaps we have lost the memory of the ancients. Remember: Not every god is friendly; some are out to kill you.

Nevertheless, here we are. We must reckon with the pandemic. May God grant us the wisdom to reckon wisely so that that we accord it consideration no less than it deserves but also no more.

Every congregation and the synod as synod have been challenged by the pandemic. Our routine way of being church has been disrupted. We are creatures with bodies. Would we even be human beings without a body? By consequence, the church made of human beings thrives when bodies are involved. For nineteen months, we have tried to figure out how not to be bodies, how to deal with the fragility of our bodies, and

how to be bodies when it is our bodies (or something our bodies may be carrying) that we fear. If you don't think that this is a serious question of theological anthropology (the theology of what it is to be human) and everything upon which theological anthropology touches (which is pretty much everything), you have missed the bulk of the iceberg. This is huge, and this should occupy a good part of our theological reflection in the future. Congregations and pastors have done an amazing job trying to adapt. How do we worship? How do we preach, teach, administer the sacraments? How do we provide pastoral care? How do we engage in mutual conversation and consolation? How do we fellowship? How do we serve? How do we engage in the governance of the church? If nothing else, the pandemic has shown us just how integral our bodies are to the life of the Christian community. Adapting, we have experimented with Zoom, Facebook, mailings, telephones, masks, hand sanitizers, deep cleanings, physical distancing, and touchless thermometers. We've adapted worship forms, sacramental distribution practices, music, the exchange of peace, and even how we get in and out of the church building. Congregations and pastors accomplished this more quickly than any of us could have imagined possible. Indeed, congregations and pastors deserve praise not only for the rapidity of their response but also the appropriateness of their response. Having comparing notes with those in other synods, it is apparent to me that the congregations and pastors in WV-WMD lead the way in common sense and orthopraxy. In other words, not only were things done to promulgate the gospel among the people in ways that mitigated unnecessary risks, but they were done without indulging heresy and liturgical nitwittery. Could things have been better? Yes. We can always look back and say, "We should have done this," or, "We should have done that," but it is a good day when you can say, "Well, it wasn't perfect, but it got the job done and worked better than we could have hoped."

The pandemic is not over, and the consequences of missteps during the pandemic will remain with us for some time. Some of these consequences we can predict; others will percolate to the surface in the months, years to come. In some cases, we will not even recognize the connection. Each congregation and each pastor will have to navigate treacherous waters. A ship may survive the maelstrom only to be wrecked upon the debris lurking beneath the surface. Congregational leadership, lay and clergy, should be advised to keep a sharp lookout. It is tempting but ill-advised to cry, "All's well!" when the danger is simply no longer apparent. Establishment of mutual ministry committees, but not in the way that has been common among us, may prove helpful. The heretofore dominant models of mutual ministry committees are most likely inadequate for the days ahead. Personnel committee, complaint department, and support group all fall short of a holistic approach. Synod is moving, with its own mutual ministry committee, in a new direction, a direction that focuses upon the health and effectiveness of the ministry as a whole, the pastor being an important player in that ministry but not the sole player. The Synod Mutual Ministry Committee is using the Driesen Manual as the primary informant for its reformation. A mutual ministry committee that functions more as an organ of self-reflection in a congregation may help navigate uncertain seas. Should synod encourage congregations to establish congregational mutual ministry committees with an eye to the health of ministry as a whole and support them in implementation of the same?

The local congregation does not live in an ecclesiastical vacuum. The actions of other ecclesiastical entities, the synod, the Churchwide expression, other ELCA congregations both within and without this synod, and ecumenical entities, can either support or undermine the work within a given congregation. With this in mind, the synod has attempted to offer advice and counsel to congregations and pastors on pandemical matters without overstepping what is within the power of the synod constitutionally. Targeted and private

communications were part of this strategy; what might be good for one congregation (or pastor) might not be good for another. Whenever these matters dealt with non-essentials and matters of congregational freedom under our polity, the synod was careful not to do more damage than good, trusting lay and pastoral congregational leadership to exercise their best judgment within context. Thus, published guidance offered suggestions and parameters within which each congregation could find its own best course. The synod also monitored the changing regulatory landscape, attempting to keep up with the executive orders of two states and one commonwealth. This proved very difficult, but, to the best of the synod's ability, given our human resources, the synod made that information available through the website.

Beyond the synod (and also among our ecumenical counterparts) we have witnessed the rise of sacramental practices which do not conform to our Confessional theology. While we cannot expect our ecumenical counterparts to hew to the Lutheran Confessions, when a Lutheran congregation outside our synod departs from Confessional norms, it is even harder to maintain right practice. "My sister-in-law's congregation in _____ is doing virtual communion, why can't we?" is both a theological and a pastoral challenge. Let me be clear: bad theology is never good pastoral care. Let me be equally clear: virtual communion is not a participation in the Sacrament of the True Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who claim that they offer the True Body and Blood via virtual communion lie to their people. The *Formula of Concord* states that it is not the words of consecration alone that make the sacrament but the whole action, and that action includes distribution of that which has been consecrated. (_FC SD VII_:83-87) Where there is no distribution of that which is consecrated, there is no sacrament. I will happily provide a full exposition should I be asked. Virtual communion, therefore, is not an abuse of the sacrament, as there is no sacrament; it is an abuse of the people, as those who hawk this practice claim to offer the sacrament but instead offer a placebo. It is ecclesiastical malpractice, one which, I give thanks, has not found purchase on our soil. Still, we must be on our guard lest it take root.

Virtual baptism has also come up. Thankfully, this has been much easier to deal with as emergency baptism has never required clergy or even a gathered assembly. The greatest challenge related to baptism has been the misidentification of things that are good with respect to baptism but not necessary. Most of us clergy have been taught that baptism should take place during the principal worship service of the congregation. That is indeed a good, but it is neither absolute nor ordinate necessity and is no factor in the determination of the validity of the formal or the material cause of baptism. It is a pedagogical good in the same way in which baptism by immersion is a pedagogical good. We must be careful under pandemical conditions not to insist upon that which is not necessary when such an insistence becomes an obstacle to doing that which is necessary. Baptism is necessary (*Augsburg Confession IX*); being baptized on Sunday morning is not. Given the real threat to life that the pandemic poses, congregants and pastors are advised not to delay baptism, baptizing sooner rather than later whenever life is in the balance, even if that means baptizing in the hospital or the home. Furthermore, attention should be given first to the protocols that might be established in a congregation for baptism under pandemical conditions (both by clergy and, in case of emergency, by the laity). We may have focused upon Eucharistic protocols because we hold mass on a more frequent basis, but, from the position of necessity, baptism takes priority. As this pandemic is not over, should synod provide further advice and counsel on pandemical baptism?

In the midst of the pandemic, the pious desire of the clergy has been to administer the means of grace to

their congregants. If Eucharistic celebration was suspended, it was not because the clergy wanted to suspend it. They felt compelled to do so out of a right concern for the bodies of their parishioners. At the same time, they struggled mightily, out of right concern for the souls of their parishioners, to figure out how the means of grace might be delivered. In the midst of that struggle, Synod sought to remind all that God is superabundant in his grace towards us in that he gives us the Gospel in more than one way. (*Smalcald Articles III:IV*) In the teaching emphasis over the past few decades on the benefits of frequent Holy Communion, we seem to have forgotten that the Gospel is also communicated through the preached Word, baptism, absolution, and the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren and sistren. It is this last which gets scant attention. It happens. It happens all the time, but we don't often recognize that it is as much a means of grace as Holy Communion. It is not a fallback position, i.e., it is not something we do when we cannot commune and only when we cannot commune. It should be our daily bread, taking place inside and outside the walls of our churches, engaged in with joy and intentionality by clergy and laity alike. Much of the anxiety over whether Holy Communion could be administered in our churches might have been obviated had we rightly understood and appreciated this wonderful means of grace. At the same time, a conversation without the gospel is no more a means of grace than water without the Word is baptism. Should synod inculcate a deeper understanding and greater appreciation for the mutual conversation and consolation of the saints?

Along with not giving sufficient attention to mutual conversation and consolation of the saints, I regret my failure to extol the value of personal piety. Again, for decades, piety has been a dirty word among many, personal piety even more so. Piety, however, does not need to be dour or pharisaic. On the contrary, piety can be joyful and compassionate. We sometimes forget that the Inner Mission Movement that birthed our social ministry organizations was spearheaded by Pietists. Piety is about prayer and conversation with God and neighbor. Piety is about daily vocation. Piety is conviction that things temporal do not trump things eternal and that things eternal change the way we see and interact with things temporal. The "personal" in personal piety does not deny community but recognizes that the community is made up of individuals. During the pandemic, it became much harder to be communal—that bodies thing again. If there is any image that might help us think of the relationship between the communal and the personal, it may be those videos of multiple people playing music or singing together on Youtube. Do we think that each of those musicians did not practice, hour after hour, in private in order to make beautiful communal music? The church as choir, each voice contributing to the harmony, is a venerable image. Personal piety is both the practice of the individual voice in advance of the performance, and it is the individual performer still humming his/her part as the echoes of the other voices reverberate in his/her soul long after company is parted. In truth, personal piety is never really private because we always sing with the saints, for the saints in triumph sing with us even when it appears that we are alone.

It is not lost upon me how missed opportunities have peppered this pandemical season. In some cases, it has only been in hindsight that the opportunity was recognized. In other cases, the opportunity was recognized, but finite human resources devoted to other pressing matters militated against capitalization. In still other cases, it was simply a matter of bad timing. Sometimes synod was too far ahead of the curve, sometimes too far behind. The pandemic, however, is not over. How we move forward remains a question, one which Synod Mutual Ministry Committee should examine.

Let us move on to the nuts and bolts of the synod. Undoubtedly, the financial position of the synod is on the minds of some if not most. Our last assembly was largely devoted to that question. I direct your attention to the report of the Treasurer.

The 2019 Synod Assembly ordered Synod Council to evaluate synod staffing with an eye to reducing some positions to part-time. Synod Council, in adopting the budget for FY2021-2022, reduced the hours of the synod office administrator. Synod Council offered a choice between the reduced hours and a severance package. The severance package was accepted, the administrator's service concluding at the end of January 2021. Since then, Synod Council outsourced bookkeeping operations to a congregation on a trial basis and has recently employed a part-time bookkeeper. We are still sorting through the various tasks formerly assigned to the administrator position, trying to determine what is worth keeping, what is best tossed, and where those things kept are best lodged. As we move forward, codifying the various procedures related to office operations presents itself as a long overdue measure. In every prior handoff, the transitions have been smoother, with one generation teaching the next. We should never have assumed that this would always be the case. More importantly, some tasks simply don't require the same person to do them every year. Well-designed operating manuals would allow greater flexibility in staffing while maintaining continuity of operations. No small part of this has been the back office operations associated with Synod Assembly. We have been able to make some significant changes on the fly, but there is still more to do.

A major challenge already upon us is the recruitment of clergy. The number of clergy available for call has been decreasing for years. Seminaries are graduating one seminarian for every 3-4 calls seeking a first-call pastor. WV-WMD is particularly challenged by its compensation scale in comparison with other synods. There is also a perception out there that central Appalachia is an undesirable place to live and serve. It should also be noted that there has been a change in the assignment process for first-call candidates. It is now closer to a diocesan (think baseball farm school system) than the national assignment. This means we will need to raise more of our own. Remember, candidates for the ministry can be young, old, or somewhere in between. If you see someone with the piety and potential for ordained ministry, talk to them and pray for them. They may be waiting for a sign from God, and you might just be that sign. Synod will need to develop and execute a recruitment strategy, and the participation of the clergy and the parishioners of the synod will have to be a part of it. Synod has also begun to "market" WV-WMD. There are good things about being here. Some of us have been here for a long time, and it is by choice. We do not always highlight those good things, and we should, as they are part of the package.

Synod Clergy Continuing Education is an area where transition in operations had begun before the downsizing of the office. Prior to the pandemic, the clergy had taken ownership of their own events. Improved venue selection, offering of options, and program design had taken root. During the pandemic, the Synod Clergy Continuing Education Event Team diligently set up a series of remote events. This proved much more difficult than the standard event, especially with other pressures on the home front. Exhaustion has forced a pause, but there is already talk of getting things rolling again after a hiatus. Fortunately, other education events can be had remotely, allowing the synodical team to scale back to that which only the synod can offer.

Just prior to the pandemic, work had begun on two major polity projects: the reformation of the office of

dean and the development of a new supply preacher program. The former has already been implemented in phases. The latter is being officially rolled out at this assembly with the recruitment table being run by the Commission on Synodical Lay Worship Leaders. Note well, the Bishop Lay Worship Leaders Program is not being eliminated, but there will be no new accessions into that program. It is hoped that SLWL will increase the number of people available to congregations in need of supply and offer better quality control. Please refer to the report of the Commission on Synodical Lay Worship Leaders for more information.

Prior to the pandemic, synod developed proto-type worship resources related to the opioid crisis. The pandemic derailed that project. When the pandemic begins to wind down, we should remember how the opioid crisis has ravaged our territory before and during the pandemic. The opioid crisis did not go away. It merely got pushed off the front page. That said, we will have continuing work to do with the pandemic as well. A requiem mass has been prepared for that time when we can gather to lament the loss of so many, friends and family among them.

In recent years, we have grieved the closure of congregations and church buildings. Our Saviour, Ravenswood, and Holy Trinity, Sharpsburg, have closed. St. Matthew's, Benwood, has held its last service and is in the final administrative stages of closure. Cross of Grace, Hurricane, has held the last service in its building. St. Mark's, Upper Flats, is under synodical administration. Gifts have been received from the closed congregations, and a gift has also been received from Calvary, Brandywine, a tithe of a bequest. No portion of those gifts has been needed to cover routine operations. Synod Council is still discerning the details of how to best use those gifts to advance the ministry of the Gospel and is doing so with the spirit of the gifts in mind. It should also be noted that St. Matthew's, Benwood, gifted their building to the local Church of God which lost its building in a fire and has not had the resources to rebuild, thus continuing the building's service as a place of worship.

The closure of congregations will become an increasing challenge for the synod. As a congregation comes to the end of its life, it can happen that the liquid assets are so depleted that even insurance and utilities cannot be covered. Synod has stepped in to cover those expenses, when the congregation is already in the process of closing or divesting itself of its building, because an uninsured or deteriorating building is a liability for the synod. If the building is located in WV, for example, a congregation that closes without making final disposition of the real estate and chattel leaves behind an abandoned ecclesiastical property. Such property would come to the synod whether the synod wants it or not. So, synod has subsidized closing churches with the understanding that the synod will be reimbursed upon sale of property. It is only a matter of time, given property values and depopulation, until the synod is in possession of a building the sale value of which is less than the synod has invested in insurance, utilities, and required maintenance. Demolition is not inexpensive, but it may be the best course to cost reduction in some situations. While the synod has been reluctant, throughout its history, to advocate closure and has only once taken administration of a congregation as prelude to closure and sale, it may be unwise to avoid this conversation much longer. Should the synod establish benchmarks that trigger conversation with fiscally imperiled congregations, including conversation about synodical administration?

Synod communications has been an issue for years. There was much weeping and gnashing of teeth over the synod website during the first years of my episcopal tenure. The condition of the website had started to

improve prior to the pandemic, but the need for a common platform for pandemic-related information forced website development and maintenance into high gear. There were near daily updates in the early days of the pandemic, and, since then, most weeks see more than one update. The website is not pretty, but it is loaded with information. Whether that information is as easily accessed as one might hope is debatable, though one pastor in another synod did tell me that he comes to our website for information because he can find what he wants on our site and cannot on his synod's site.

Meanwhile, we are shifting our Facebook usage away from mere announcements to include more human interest. It should be noted that the DEM has her own Facebook page as does the unofficial "WV-WMD Prays." WV-WMD WELCA also has its own page. There is even a page ("Team Wittenberg") just for Lutherans interested in LARCUM (the West Virginia Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic-United Methodist tetralogue).

Email communication encountered a rough patch when Yahoo! stopped supporting Yahoo! Groups, the platform employed by *The Bishop's Roadshow*. *The Roadshow* moved to Mailchimp, in the process losing more than 300 subscribers. While that may sound catastrophic, a review of the Yahoo! Groups-based list included many of our brothers and sisters who are now members of the Church Triumphant. At just over 100 subscribers, the Mailchimp-based list includes neither every pastor nor an officer in every congregation. Of Synod Assembly registrants, 42% indicate (as of the writing of this report) that they subscribe to *The Roadshow*. Subscription is voluntary, and synod is not going to add people to the list without their consent (as cumulative unsubscriptions negatively affects our use of the platform). Repeated messages have gone out asking folks to subscribe, but the list has not grown much in eight months. This is worrisome as *The Roadshow* is the synod's primary email channel. A clergy email list is used for clergy-specific communications. A congregation (vice)president list was attempted several years ago but without success. Trying to set up such a list again was explored more recently (pre-pandemic), but we were advised that the same issues would militate against it. Whether we are in a different situation now is unclear. The easiest and most immediate fix would be to have every congregation designate one person to subscribe to *The Roadshow*. Spam filters are the greatest enemy to mass email communications, and one has to actually open and read the email in order to benefit from its information. Except for Facebook, synod communications intentionally refrain from transmitting gratuitous items. If it is in an email, e.g., it is probably worth opening to, at least, see if it applies to you.

To wrap this up, allow me to turn to matters of polity. The pandemic has been a time of intense passions and conflict. Much of that was outside our congregations, but no small portion of it moved in with us and set up house. Some congregations experienced this with greater intensity than others. Anecdotally, those in which the pastor had served for a longer period of time and built up a high level of trust tended to weather conflict better than those where the pastor's tenure had been significantly shorter or where pre-existing tensions already existed. Inadequately developed polity structures and/or the facility of lay leaders to properly utilize those polity structures frequently exacerbated tensions and militated against conflict navigation. While polity is no guarantee of prudence, and the best systems can fail, poor practice in polity significantly increases the likelihood of destructive conflict. Remedial instruction in congregational polity (i.e., decision-making mechanisms) and politics (i.e., decision-making dynamics) would be a timely addition to synod educational offerings for congregational leaders. On-line sessions on congregational governing

documents have already been offered, but further training on the duties of officers, the running of meetings, and legislative and administrative processes would be salutary.

The question of voting membership in congregations has been raised. The required provision in *The Model Constitution for Congregations* states that a voting member is a confirmed member who has made a contribution of record and communed in the congregation during the current or preceding calendar year. Can this be dispensed? Technically, yes, if one can claim that the requirement is impossible to fulfill (*cf. ultra posse nemo obligatur*). Obviously, it is not impossible to make a contribution of record, noting that there is no minimum contribution level. It is the communing in the congregation that becomes the question. Pay close attention to the wording of the provision. If someone communed on Christmas Eve of 2019, they would have satisfied the requirement through the end of calendar year 2020. There were very few congregations that did not hold at least one communion service during 2020; in fact, only one comes to mind. Therefore, one communion in 2020 carries the voting member through the end of calendar year 2021. To absent oneself from the communion and yet attend a congregational meeting is a strange juxtaposition. The standard should not be relaxed as it is unnecessary to deviate, communion being possible even if inconvenient. The standard is pitifully low as is; lowering it exposes the congregation to potential hijacking by those who do not actively participate in its life. This we know from experience; those interested in polity horror stories may attend one of my constitution lectures.

Congregations that have regularly updated their constitutions discovered that they had provision for holding meetings via telecommunications platforms. Those that have not kept up with constitutional changes found themselves, if they bothered to pay attention to their constitutions, without such provision. While all the civil jurisdictions in which our congregations reside have provision for emergency bylaws that, if enacted, would allow congregation councils to meet remotely; congregation meetings are another matter. Though it is unlikely that any judge, in the midst of the pandemic, would rule against a church trying to do the best it can under bad conditions, why provide fodder to the cantankerous and malcontent when it is easy enough just to do it according to Hoyle? Besides, when we do not follow the rules, why should we expect anyone else to follow the rules? Take this as advice to update your constitutions.

I was admonished by a member of the Committee on the Bishop's Report to keep it under twenty pages. This is eight, and this is done (even if it is not exhaustive).

+Riegel

5.3. Report of the Vice President

VICE PRESIDENT REPORT TO 2021 SYNOD ASSEMBLY

Throughout the pandemic, the WV/WMD Synod Council (SC) has carried on the synod's business. Our last in-person meeting was in January of 2020, and all meetings since then have been on zoom.

The SC is currently working on a topic with the Synod Mutual Ministry Committee. The SMMC brought its concept of purpose to the SC in January 2021. This concept considers the word "mutual" as between two parties, with the two parties being the synod (as represented by the SC) and the bishop. The idea is that

mutually, these two parties agree on the primary tasks that the synod and the bishop work to carry out.

The SC first has the responsibility to identify and clarify these primary tasks. The SMMC then has the responsibility to see how well these tasks are being carried out. In so doing, the SMMC considers what the synod and what the bishop may need to do their jobs. Furthermore, the SMMC considers how well the synod and bishop communicate with each other and how well they work together. It is important to keep in mind that the WV/WMD Synod has elected and entrusted the SC to carry out the business of the synod from Synod Assembly to Synod Assembly.

The task facing the SC currently is to identify and clarify the primary responsibilities for the synod. This task is one that will be done when the SC can next meet face to face in a retreat setting. Until that time, the SC is operating with the primary tasks it determined in a September, 2019 retreat.

These seven tasks are: 1. Educate congregations; 2. Educate pastors; 3. Call process facilitator; 4. Consultation and adjudication; 5. Discipline; 6. Intermediary in interdependence; 7. Vacancy supervision.

Finally, I would like to thank all our SC members for their service over these past two years. Attendance at our zoom meetings has been excellent, so that is one benefit for meeting online. And I thank you, the WV/WMD Synod for the opportunity to serve as your Vice President.

Paul Wangerin

5.4. Report of the Treasurer

5.4.1. Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023

If you prefer to download the budget worksheets separately as a PDF, [click here](#).

Synod Council Recommendation: That the proposed budget for FY2022-2023 be adopted by the Synod Assembly. (SC21.9.2)

INCOME	2022
For the Sake of Good Order - The First Use of the Law	
Total Congregational Mission Support	\$380,000.00
Less ELCA Proportional Share - 30.00%	\$114,000.00
Mission Support For Synod	\$266,000.00
Synod Only	\$7,000.00
Miscellaneous	
Interest	\$3,000.00
Total For Synod	\$276,000.00

EXPENSE	2022
For the Sake of Good Order - First Use of the Law	
ELCA Mandates & Collaboration	
Region 8 Collaboration	\$1,600.00
Tri Synod Archives	\$500.00
Planned Giving Officer	\$1,000.00
Synod Office & Support Staff	
Rent, Internet, and Utilities	\$4,224.00
Secretarial	\$5,000.00
Bookkeeping	\$11,400.00
Event Planning	\$5,000.00
Software & Technology	\$6,000.00
Liability Insurance	\$4,000.00
Workers Comp Insurance	\$700.00
Professional Services	\$7,000.00
Synod Assembly & Synod Council	\$1,000.00
Subordinate Committees, Not Otherwise Listed	\$1,500.00
Total	\$48,924.00

Driven to the Gospel - The Second Use of the Law	
Theological Education	
Seminary Support (ULS)	
Seminary Tuition	
First Call Theological Education	
Lay Worship Leaders	
Staff ConEd (Bishop & DEM)	
Pastoral ConEd	
Rostered Leader Debt Reduction	\$2,758.00
Candidacy Committee	
Total	\$21,016.00

A New Obedience - The Third Use of the Law - Care of our Neighbor in Word, Sacrament, and Service	
CLP	\$5,000.00
LCM@WVU	\$22,000.00
Camp Luther	\$8,050.00
WV Council of Churches	\$3,000.00
Total	\$38,050.00

The Office of the Keys - The Office of the Bishop	
Defined Compensation and Benefits	
Base Salary	\$71,680.00
Housing Allowance	\$14,000.00
Social Security	\$7,097.47
Benefits (Portico,	\$55,132.77
Travel	\$15,000.00
Care of Congregations and Pastors	\$4,900.00
Total	\$167,810.24

Total Income for Synod	\$276,000.00
Total Expense	\$275,800.24
Surplus or Deficit	199.76

5.5. Report of the Director of Evangelical Mission

Director of Evangelical Mission Report to the West Virginia – Western Maryland Synod (2021)

From where does the Director of Evangelical Mission (D.E.M.) come?

The position of the D.E.M. is supported through your mission support to the ELCA. In order to coordinate the partnership between the ELCA's churchwide ministries and the 65 synods of this church, directors for evangelical mission serve in positions shared by both of these expressions of this church. They are fully churchwide staff who are fully embraced by synods. My position in the Synod is 0.5FTE.

What is the role of the Director of Evangelical Mission?

As your Director of Evangelical Mission, I serve under the guidance of the Bishop and Synod Council. The 4 areas of focus include, but are not limited to:

- Mission development or “new starts”
- Congregational renewal or “redevelopment”
- Mission Support and stewardship
- Missional vision and planning for the synod

I began serving as the Director of Evangelical Mission for the WV-W MD Synod in April of 2020. Everything about the duties of the position have been affected by the pandemic. Issues of church mission and stewardship had to be viewed through the lens of “We've never done it that way before”.

Following are some of the duties I have performed for the synod in this position:

- Clergy Continuing Education Committee – Working with 3 other pastors we plan the continuing education events for the synod clergy. Ordained pastors are required to complete 50 hours of continuing education each year. We work alongside the Bishop who serves in an advisory capacity.
- Stewardship – I am available to help congregations with all stewardship issues including assisting with Fall stewardship drives.
- Worship leadership – I am available to travel to any congregation in the synod to lead worship.
- Visioning – As congregations look to their future, I work with them on visioning and asset mapping. While my former position as the executive director of Community Lutheran Partners had me working with congregations to develop ministries outside the church doors, as DEM, I help them work on internal issues. In congregations that have pastoral vacancies, I help with the preparation of the Ministry Site Profile. In congregations with declining memberships, I help guide them through the discernment process as they consider their options.
- Mission Support – Part of my role is to keep the synod's congregations connected to the resources of the ELCA. Understanding how their mission support dollars are spent is crucial as we always strive to be good stewards.

- Racial Justice Team – I convened the group and schedule the meetings which bring educational opportunities to help people understand the complex issues which undergird the racial issues facing our country.
- Pastoral care for clergy and congregational leadership – During the pandemic, I worked with Bishop Riegel to provide times for the clergy and the congregational leadership to come together to share joys, frustrations, and sorrows.
- Synod Council Meetings – I am not a member of synod council but report to them.
- Holy Innovations Grant – I provide oversight for the Holy Innovations grant that the Mountain Lutheran Parish has from the Congregational Vitality Unit of the ELCA>
- Coach Level 1 – I became certified as a Level 1 coach and available to offer coaching services to congregations and individuals.

Looking forward:

- Synod Newsletter – Plans are underway to develop an email newsletter which will be sent to congregations and forwarded to members as a way of keeping everyone informed.
- Innovative Leaders Team – I hope to identify 5-8 people under the age of 40 who are willing to serve on a team that will focus on the ways in which the Holy Spirit is working in the life of the church in the WV-W MD Synod.
- Synodical Cooperation – As I work with D.E.M.s from other synods, our hope is that we will be able to offer more ways in which we can collaborate on continuing education events for clergy and laity.

The Congregations of the WV-W MD Synod have exhibited incredible resilience during this difficult time. You have embraced new technologies so that your people can stay connected to the church. As the pandemic unfolded, you made changes to how you worshiped in order to protect the most vulnerable in your midst. You prioritized the continued financial support of your church and the Synod's ministries. For these and so many other reasons, I give thanks to God that I am called to serve as your Director of Evangelical Mission.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Sherri Schafer
 Director of Evangelical Mission
 WV-W MD Synod, ELCA

6. Reports of Standing Committees

6.1. Report of the Nominating Committee (Part 1)

WV-WMD Synod Assembly 2021

Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee reports that the Synod Council has submitted the following nominations:

- per S9.06 of the Synod Constitution, for Synod Secretary, **Norma Gensler**; and
- per S9.07 of the Synod Constitution, for Synod Treasurer, **Brian Crawford**.

Per B9.04 of the Synod Bylaws, the Nominating Committee submits the following nominations:

- for Synod Council Clergy Mon-Valley Mountain Conference, **Ruth Bullwinkle** and **Tony Setley**;
- for Synod Council Laity Ohio-Kanawha Valley Conference, **Andrea Brock** and **Rachel Gensler Hall**;
- for Synod Council Laity Potomac Conference, **Richard Losh** and **Elizabeth Rini**;
- for Synod Council Laity Upper Ohio Valley Conference, **Sue Hoffman** and **Nancy Weeks**;
- for Synod Council Laity At-Large (Male), **Bruce Dalton** and **John Perry**;
- for Synod Council Laity At-Large (Female), **Sara Pemberton** and **Mary Sanders**;
- for Synod Council Youth, **Rachel Shockley** and **Mackenzie Lyons**;
- for Synod Council Young Adult, **Laurel Muhly-Alexander** and **Ethan Stiles**;
- for Consultation Committee Clergy (Veteran), **Thomas Darr** and **Karen Erskine-Valentine**;
- for Consultation Committee Clergy (Synodical Call), **Ben Erzkus** and **Phil Van Dam**;
- for Consultation Committee Clergy (First-Call), **Daniel Warntz** and **Michael Wright**;
- for Consultation Committee Laity (Mountaintop), **Marvin Beckman** and **John Cooper**;
- for Consultation Committee Laity (River Valley), **Brian Felici** and **Lawrence William Springer**;
- for Discipline Committee Clergy (Eastern Female), **Sally Bartling** and **Karen Erskine-Valentine**;
- for Discipline Committee Clergy (Western Female), **Courtney Erzkus** and **Patrice Weirick**;
- for Discipline Committee Clergy (Male), **Matt Holbert** and **Michael Wright**;
- for Discipline Committee Laity (Female), **Heather Ack** and **Pamela Pritt**;
- for Discipline Committee Laity (Male), **Shawn Gilmore** and **Lawrence William Springer**;
- for Churchwide Assembly Clergy, **Linda Muhly** and **Phil Van Dam**;
- for Churchwide Assembly Laity Male, **William Bradley** and **Bruce Dalton**;
- for Churchwide Assembly Laity Female, **Norma Gensler** and **Mary Sanders**;
- for Churchwide Assembly Youth or Young Adult, **Makenzie Hudson** and **Grace Riegel**; and, lastly,
- for Churchwide Assembly Person of Color and/or Primary Language other than English, **Ben Erzkus** and **Tiana Tauber**.

The candidate information required under B9.05 of the Synod Bylaws follows in the Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports as Part 2 of the Report of the Nominating Committee.

The Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle, Chair

6.1.1. Nominee Information (Report of Nominating Committee, Part 2)

Synod Council Nominees

Position: Synod Secretary

Nominee: Norma Gensler

Congregation: St. Paul, Huntington, WV

Residence: Huntington, WV

WV-WMD Synod Secretary since 2013. Active member of St. Paul Lutheran, Huntington — served on Church Council for many terms over a 45 year membership, Chair of the Fellowship Committee, liturgical deacon as well as reader, SPLC quilters guild Office Manager for Camp Luther for 10 years BA and MA from Marshall University in English, French, and Gifted Education Taught High School English for 25 years until retirement in 2012

Position: Synod Treasurer

Nominee: Brian Crawford

Congregation: Grace (Bethlehem), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Wheeling, WV

Active member of Grace (Bethlehem) and, before consolidation, Edgwood. Retired Provost West Liberty University. Former Dean of Liberal Arts and Chair of the Department of social and behavioral sciences. B.A. in Geography, Indiana University of PA; M.S. in Earth Science, California University of PA; Ph.D. in Physical Geography, Indiana State University. Retired USAF captain, 15 years of service.

Nominating Committee Nominees

Position: Synod Council – Mon Valley-Mountain – Clergy

Nominee: Ruth Bullwinkle

Congregation: St. John's, Davis, WV

Residence: Davis, WV

M. Div. from Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Ordained since 2013. Pastor of St. John's, Davis since 2013. Member of Synod Council. Dean of the Mon-Mountain Valley Conference since Dec. 2020.

Nominee: Tony Setley

Congregation: St. Paul, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

MDiv, LTSG 2015

Pastor, Peace Lutheran – Port Clinton OH, 2015-2017

Chaplain, Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU, 2017-2021

Battalion Chaplain, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, 2013-Present

Pastor, St. Paul – Morgantown, 2021-Present

Position: Synod Council – Ohio-Kanawha – Laity

Nominee: Andrea Jane Brock

Congregation: First Lutheran, Parkersburg, WV

Residence: Parkersburg, WV

Lifetime member of First Lutheran, participating in numerous youth, study and fellowship programs, as well as various terms serving on Church Council in various capacities including most recently five years as Council President. Just re-elected to fill a recently vacated seat on the Church Council. Is currently completing first 3-year term on WV-WMD Synod Council.

Was active member of Parkersburg Jr. Women's Club (community service club), various committees and positions. Numerous civic involvements, ie early downtown "Facade Committee", development of Parkersburg entry signs, beautification, etc.

Educational training and/or employment that would be helpful in this responsibility: BS-J from WVU with advertising/marketing major, art and business minors.

Business experience: 45 years in Account Management, Media Director and Vice President of major 4A advertising agency. Involved with account services; provided strategic media planning and implementation for clients involved in manufacturing, retail, fast food, financial services, professional services, hospitality and others, both domestically and internationally. Client experience included years of involvement with McDonalds' promotion, including the early years of Ronald McDonald House(s) promotion

Nominee: Rachel Gensler Hall

Congregation: Trinity, Charleston, WV

Residence: Charleston, WV

MA in education, teaches 6th grade English, as a youth was active in synod-wide LYO, was a youth delegate to the ELCA Assembly when held in Philadelphia (not sure of the year), instituted a children's ministry program at Trinity (pre-COVID years)

Position: Synod Council – Potomac – Laity

Nominee: Richard Losh

Congregation: St John, Martinsburg, WV

Residence: Martinsburg, WV

I have been an active member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Martinsburg, WV for over 42 years. During that time, I have served on the church council for several terms and I am currently serving in that role. I am currently on the Board of Trustees. I served on the Board of Directors for the Mustard Seed which was a learning center sponsored by the church. I have served on several standing committees. I have also served on several temporary committees such as the Constitution Revision, Transition team, and Call committee. When our children were younger, my wife and I assisted with the youth group by going on several trips with

them. In 2019, I attended the Synod Assembly as a voting member and would like to become more involved on the synodical level. I currently am member of the Board of Directors for the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University and have been involved in several pastoral calls. On the professional level, I was a licensed Pharmacist for 40 years. I worked as a community pharmacist and a hospital pharmacist. For the last 25 years of my career, I had the honor to work with our country's veterans at the Veterans Administration hospital at the Martinsburg WV VA. Ten of those years were working as an Oncology Pharmacist. I have been married for 43 wonderful years to Cheryl Agee Losh. We have three children and three grandchildren.

Nominee: Elizabeth Viens Rini

Congregation: St. Peter's, Shepherdstown, WV

Residence: Shepherdstown, WV

Recently retired as nursing professor at Shepherd University 45 years as RN. Active member at St. Peters since moving to WV in 2016 including one term on Congregation Council. Long time member at Grace Evangelical Lutheran in Winchester including multiple terms on Congregation Council and attending VA Synod.

Position: Synod Council – Upper Ohio – Laity

Nominee: Sue Hoffman

Congregation: Messiah, Moundsville, WV

Residence: Wheeling, WV

Has served on church council and served as Treasurer. Has also served as a Synodical Lay Worship Leader for 12 years. Is able to meet in person and by Zoom, and is responsive to email and phone calls.

Nominee: Nancy K. Weeks

Congregation: Grace (Bethlehem), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Wheeling, WV

I am currently employed as a School Psychologist/Special Education Director for Shadyside Local School District. My educational background includes a B.S. Degree in Elementary/Special Education, a Master's Degree in Special Education, and an Ed.S. Degree in School Psychology. I also have certification/endorsements in Educational Leadership with licenses as Elementary Principal, Supervisor, and Asst. Superintendent. I was a member of Edgwood Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wheeling from the age of 8 until that congregation consolidated with Zion Lutheran to become the current Grace Lutheran Church in 2016. I served as a member of Parish Council during the consolidation and have been on Church Council for Grace Lutheran since its beginning. For the past 3 years I have served as President of Church Council and currently co-chair for our call committee. My current involvement includes serving as Worship Assistant, Lector, Leader In Prayer, as well as, Usher when scheduled. I was first elected to Synod Council in 2018 and have grown in knowledge from this experience. I served as co-chair for synod assembly planning in 2019 when it was held in Wheeling. I would welcome the opportunity to continue my service to this synod. I believe strongly in our Lutheran theology and tradition.

Position: Synod Council – At-Large – Laity (Male)

Nominee: Bruce Dalton

Congregation: St John's, Davis

Residence: Davis, WV

Member of St John's, Davis since early 2000's. Former teacher and school administrator in GA. Former member of synod council. Currently serves on synod finance committee.

Nominee: John S Perry

Congregation: Christ the King, Huntington, WV

Residence: Huntington, WV

Education: I graduated from Pocahontas County High School in 1996. While I do not have a Bachelorette I have spent several semesters at Marshall University exploring various degrees. I started with Computer Science in 1996 before it was removed as a course of study in 1998. I returned in 2001 and thought maybe I would go into the medical field as a Radiology Technician, but it wasn't for me. Since then I have concentrated on work and my family.

Church Life: I was raised in the Presbyterian Church and converted over to Lutheranism about 10 years ago after having attend CTK for about five years. While a member of Marlinton Presbyterian I served as Treasurer for my youth group and also served as the youth council member for a couple of years in the late 90s. Since becoming a Lutheran I have served two terms on our church council and attended several WV WMD synod assemblies during my tenure. I have also lead worship for both CTK and St. Paul's in New Haven on occasion.

Training: I have had the privilege of attending many of the Lay Worship Leader weekends within the Synod and also once was able to go to Gettysburg for their week long program about six years ago.

Experience: I will be honest, I have never held an at large position with either the ELCA or WV PCUSA but I feel that with 12 years on the council of both churches I am up to the task.

Employment: I currently work for Directv as they have become their own company again as of 08/26/21. For 6 years prior I worked for AT&T after their original purchase of Directv and for Directv before that going back to March of 2007. Within the company I have done, primarily, customer service functions from billing to customer retention. I spent 4 years as part of their Agent Support Team as well. Prior to that I spent time managing the Hill Billy Hot Dogs location on 3rd Avenue in Huntington, working as an technical support agent for Dell's Inspiron business customers, and also IT for Snowshoe Mountain Ski Resort.

Position: Synod Council – At-Large – Laity (Female)**Nominee: Sara Pemberton**

Congregation: Christ the King, Huntington, WV

Residence: Winfield, WV

Sara grew up in a Presbyterian (PCUSA) congregation. Served on several ministry teams including worship and fellowship, taught Sunday school and helped lead the youth group. She began attending ELCA services in the early 2000's. She and her husband joined Cross of Grace, Hurricane in 2016, where she served on the worship, property, fellowship, and outreach ministry teams and church council, taught Sunday school and served as an assisting minister. She transferred her membership to Christ the King February 14, 2021. She assists the counting team and is looking forward to serving her new church home in other ways. Sara graduated from Bluefield College with a degree in behavioral science. She is an eligibility worker for the

Department of Health and Human resources in Kanawha County, focusing on long term care Medicaid. She has a daughter, stepdaughter and stepson, She and her husband live in Winfield with his son and five rescue cats.

Nominee: Mary Sanders

Congregation: St John's, Red House, MD

Residence: Oakland, MD

Current synod council member. Former congregational council member. Diaconal candidate. Still sings loudly and off key, even if worshipping from home.

Position: Synod Council – Youth

Nominee: Mackenzie Lyons

Congregation: St. John's, Davis, WV

Residence: Davis, WV

Mackenzie is a confirmed member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Davis, WV. She is a senior in high school.

Nominee: Rachel Shockley

Congregation: St. Paul, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Rachel is a senior in high school. She is an active member of St. Paul's in Morgantown. Rachel is very bright and is currently pursuing entrance into college.

Position: Synod Council – Young Adult

Nominee: Laurel Muhly-Alexander

Congregation: St. Mark's, Clarksburg, WV

Residence: Bridgeport, WV

Laurel has served on Synod Council in the youth position. She is currently attending WVU. Laurel is competent and enjoys being involved in the workings of the larger church.

Nominee: Ethan Stiles

Congregation: St. Paul, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Ethan is a young leader on staff at Camp Luther and a thoughtful contributor to conversation. He would offer valuable perspective on life as a Lutheran young adult on our synod territory.

Position: Consultation Committee – Clergy (Not First-Call)

Nominee: Thomas Darr

Congregation: Christ, Vienna, WV

Residence: Vienna, WV

I have served 21 years as an ordained pastor, I have completed the training for intentional interim training in 2016 as well as redevelopment training in 2015. I am currently in a new call at Christ Lutheran Church in

Vienna, WV,

Nominee: Karen Erskine-Valentine

Congregation: St. Peters, Shepherdstown, WV, & St. James, Shenandoah Junction, WV

Residence: Shepherdstown, WV

Pastor Karen serves as Dean of the Potomac Conference and as pastor of St. Peter (Shepherdstown) and St. James (Shenandoah Junction). She is also presently the Director-in-Training for Camp Luther. She has years of experience in church leadership and in helping congregations navigate conflict.

Position: Consultation Committee – Clergy (Synodical Call)

Nominee: Benjamin S. Erzkus

Congregation: Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU

Residence: Morgantown, WV

I am an ordained pastor of six years. During my time in parish ministry I have had the holy moments of having to make difficult decisions with parishioners and other clergy. I think these experiences will help me if I am chosen to serve on the Consultation Committee.

Nominee: Philip Van Dam

Congregation: Grace (Bethlehem), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Wellsburg, WV

Phil has been a pastor for 19 years and has excellent knowledge of theology, church history, family systems, and other relevant fields. Phil has served both Lutheran and Episcopal congregations in a variety of settings and has the diverse experience needed for this committee. Phil holds an MBA and has experience in management and administration. He is a good listener, possesses analytical skills, and is certified in level 1 motivational interviewing.

Position: Consultation Committee – Clergy (First-Call)

Nominee: Daniel Warntz

Congregation: Grace, Petersburg WV

Residence: Petersburg, WV

Pr. Warntz has been involved in the church for almost 50 years. Starting as a church organist when he was sixteen years old, he served as Director of Music and Worship for 32 years and served on the Synod Council in the Allegheny Synod, was a delegate from the Allegheny Synod to the 2013 Churchwide Assembly as a lay male and served as an authorized Supply Worship leader for the Synod before entering Seminary. He is a 2018 graduate of Luther Seminary and served as an Interim Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Pelican Rapids, MN until being called to Grace Lutheran in Petersburg, WV where he is currently serving. He is the Director of the Petersburg Interfaith Food Pantry, the Grant County Hospital Chaplain Coordinator and the Vice-President of the Grant County Ministerium Association.

Nominee: Michael Wright

Congregation: St. John's, Red House, MD

Residence: Oakland., MD

M. Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH. Pastor of Aurora-Red House Parrish. Former young adult member of Synod Council.

Position: Consultation Committee – Laity (Mountaintop)

Nominee: Marvin E. Beckman

Congregation: St. John's (Meadow Mountain), Swanton, MD

Residence: Swanton, MD

BS and MBA Degrees, Frostburg State University

Retired, State of Md., Finance Officer/Asst. Director for Administration, Anne Arundel County Dept. Social Services

Completed variety of training sessions, workshops and seminars during career with State of Maryland including a 13-week Leadership Development Program

Worked several part-time jobs following retirement including Office Manager at Bartlett House (a homeless shelter in Morgantown) and Program Coordinator for After School Programs in Garrett County.

Church council member, served in all offices of council and presently council president

Board of Directors, Community Lutheran Partners, completed 2 terms, served as secretary, currently contact person for STUFF closet in Mountaintop area for CLP

Served 12 years as church secretary for Bittering Lutheran Parish and Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Teacher Sunday School and Vacation Bible School many years

Many community activities, including Maryland 4-H All Stars, County fair photography department superintendent

Election judge since 2008, and Garrett County Extension Advisory Committee

Vietnam-era veteran, U. S. Army 1970-1973

Nominee: John Cooper

Congregation: St. John's, Davis, WV

Residence: Davis, WV

John is a mostly retired lawyer. He is very knowledgeable in legal matters and has contacts, if he needs information beyond his expertise. John is very sensitive to issues of equality and justice. He is a lay worship leader at St. John's in Davis and an active member of the congregation.

Position: Consultation Committee – Laity (River Valley)

Nominee: Brian Felici

Congregation: St. Mark (Elm Grove), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Wheeling, WV

Education: BS from West Virginia University, Master in Healthcare Administration for George Washington University

Employment: Retired after many years as a Hospital Administrator / CEO

Church Life: Past Congregational President of St. Mark, Wheeling and Good Shepherd, New Martinsville;

Served two terms on Synod Council; Past Treasurer of Community Lutheran Partners, Inc.

Experience: The candidate is experienced in conflict resolution through his work and congregational experiences.

He brings a wealth of congregational and synodical leadership that would be helpful when the committee is called upon in a conflict situation.

Nominee: Lawrence William Springer

Congregation: St. Pual, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Veteran (US Army 8 years)

Bachelors Degree in Business Administration WVU

Retired from Monongalia County Emergency Medical Services as Executive Director

Currently work part time with Monongalia County Sheriffs Department

Past President and Vice President of Church Council

Current Chairperson of parking committee and property committee Active with St Paul Lutheran Church for approximately 30 years.

Position: Discipline Committee – Clergy (Eastern Female)

Nominee: Sally Bartling

Congregation: Trinity, Keyser, WV

Residence: Keyser, WV

Camden County College Blackwood, NJ, Associate of Science Degree 1973. Dickinson College Carlisle, PA, Bachelor of Arts Degree 1983.

Nominee: Karen Erskine-Valentine

Congregation: St. Peters, Shepherdstown, WV, & St. James, Shenandoah Junction, WV

Residence: Shepherdstown, WV

Pastor Karen serves as Dean of the Potomac Conference and as pastor of St. Peter (Shepherdstown) and St. James (Shenandoah Junction). She is also presently the Director-in-Training for Camp Luther. She has years of experience in church leadership and in helping congregations navigate conflict.

Position: Discipline Committee – Clergy (Western Female)

Nominee: Courtney Erzkus

Congregation: Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Pastor Courtney is a gifted clergywoman who offers a breadth of experience in the Church. She would be a valuable member on the discipline committee. Pastor Courtney brings with her the gift of listening deeply and a desire for justice.

Nominee: Patrice Weirick

Congregation: St. Paul, New Haven, WV

Residence: New Haven, WV

Bachelor of Science degree – Fairmont State University 1977

Master of Science degree – WVU 1979

Master of Divinity degree – Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Capital University 2005

WV State Worker's Compensation (Rehabilitation Counselor) 1979-1981

WV Division of Rehabilitation Services (Huntington Branch Office) 1981-1984

WV Division of Rehabilitation Service (WV Rehabilitation Center) 1984-2001

Center Township Lutheran Parish – Monaca, PA (Faith & Van Kirk Lutheran Churches) 2005-2017

St. Paul Lutheran Church, New Haven, WV 2017 – present

While pastor in SWPA Synod I served in the following: Education Committee, Board member for Pittsburgh Campus Ministry, Pastoral Convocation Committee (Worship Planner), Dean of Conference, Board member for Lutheran Social Services, Board Member and Interim Director for Crossroads Men's Shelter, Lead pastor of local Monaca Area Ministerium

Since coming to WV-WMD Synod I have served in the following: Board member for Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU, Synod Mutual Ministry Committee, Mason County Ministerium, Bend Area Ministerium, Worship team for Pastor Convocation.

Position: Discipline Committee – Clergy (Male)

Nominee: Matt holbert

Congregation: Grace, Fairmont, WV

Residence: Fairmont, WV

Previous service on said committee. 15+ years ordination. Kinda scary...

Nominee: Michael Wright

Congregation: St. John's, Red House, MD

Residence: Oakland., MD

M. Div. from Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH. Pastor of Aurora-Red House Parrish. Former young adult member of Synod Council.

Position: Discipline Committee – Laity (Female)

Nominee: Heather Ack

Congregation: Trinity, Keyser, WV

Residence: Keyser, WV

HR director at Northrup Grumman

Nominee: Pamela Pritt

Congregation: New Hope, Minnehaha Springs, WV

Residence: Minnehaha Springs, WV

Having served on both Synod Council and the ELCA Church Council, Pam Pritt offers a breadth of experience that is a rare gem! In approaching any disciplinary situation, Pam brings with her many years of her professional experience as well as a deep rootedness in Lutheran polity and theology. She would be a valuable voice on the Disciplinary Committee.

Position: Discipline Committee – Laity (Male)

Nominee: Shawn Gilmore

Congregation: Grace (Bethlehem), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Bellaire, OH

Treasurer at Grace Lutheran Church and also serves on the Building Committee. Served in the military on numerous disciplinary boards determining the appropriate action to be taken on service members on their actions taken, that were not up to military standards – and is willing to offer his gifts for our synod's ministries.

Nominee: Lawrence William Springer

Congregation: St. Paul, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Veteran (US Army 8 years). Bachelors Degree WVU in Business Administration. Retired from Monongalia Emergency Medical Services as Executive Director. Currently work part time for Monongalia County Sheriffs Department. Active Member St Paul Lutheran Church for approximately 30 years. Past President and Vice President of Church Council. Currently Chairperson Parking Committee and Property Committee.

Position: Churchwide Assembly – Clergy**Nominee: Linda Muhly**

Congregation: St. Mark's, Clarksburg, WV

Residence: Clarksburg, WV

Master of Divinity from Vanderbilt Divinity School 1992; served St. Johannes for 16 years, St. Mark's for 13 years as Pastor; Past Member of Synod Council, Consultation Committee, Dean of MVMC; teacher in Senior Camp of Camp Luther; trained Recovery Coach; Chair and board member of various community entities, 4-H leader for 20 years

Nominee: Philip Van Dam

Congregation: Grace (Bethlehem), Wheeling, WV

Residence: Wellsburg, WV

Phil has excellent knowledge of the church-wide structure and keeps abreast of current issues facing the ELCA and other church bodies. Phil currently serves an Episcopal parish but has served Lutheran parishes in the past. This give him an excellent perspective. He has been a pastor for 19 years.

Position: Churchwide Assembly – Lay Male**Nominee: William Bradley**

Congregation: Grace, Fairmont, WV

Residence: Fairmont, WV

Nominee is a Novice in the Order of Lutheran Franciscans and active in Congregational and Street ministry. Nominee has published in Living Lutheran and is very knowledgeable about the ELCA as an organization. Nominee would well represent the Synod due to his experience in other church wide groups (OLF).

Nominee: Bruce Dalton

Congregation: St. John's, Davis, WV

Residence: Davis, WV

Bruce is a retired school principal/administrator. He and his wife moved to Canaan Valley about 20 years

ago, because they fell in love with the area on their honeymoon almost 40 years ago. Bruce is an active member of St. John's in Davis. He is a worship assistant and one of the lay worship leaders. He has taught confirmation. He has served on Synod Council in the past and is running again this year. Bruce is very passionate about his faith and the ELCA.

Position: Churchwide Assembly – Lay Female

Nominee: Norma Gensler

Congregation: St. Paul, Huntington, WV

Residence: Huntington, WV

WV-WMD Synod Secretary since 2013

Active member of St. Paul Lutheran, Huntington — served on Church Council for many terms over a 45 year membership, Chair of the Fellowship Committee, liturgical deacon as well as reader, SPLC quilters guild Office Manager for Camp Luther for 10 years BA and MA from Marshall University in English, French, and Gifted Education Taught High School English for 25 years until retirement in 2012

Nominee: Mary Sanders

Congregation: St John's, Red House, MD

Residence: Oakland, MD

Church avoider, pew warmer, seminarian: I have experienced multiple levels of church. This is a level I haven't unlocked yet.

Position: Churchwide Assembly – Youth or Young Adult

Nominee: Makenzie Hudson

Congregation: Faith, Franklin, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

I have a bachelors in English, with a minor in communication. Currently, I am working as a graduate assistant for the WVU Libraries in Morgantown. Previously, I've been the secretary and vice president of a youth organization. I have also been a church member since I was 8-years-old.

Nominee: Grace Riegel

Congregation: St. Paul, Morgantown, WV

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Undergrad college student majoring in Russian and international studies. Regular church attendee both at home and at college. Active in church service: acolyte, teaching VBS, various other volunteering.

Position: Churchwide Assembly – Person of Color and/or Primary Language Other than English

Nominee: Benjamin S. Erzkus

Congregation: Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU

Residence: Morgantown, WV

Ben brings the perspective of a young adult, Appalachian, Korean pastor with a deep appreciation of our Lutheran theological heritage. He is thoughtful and intentional with his words and actions. Ben currently serves as chaplain at the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University, having previously served in

rural, small town, and suburban congregations in Nebraska and Pennsylvania. He graduated from Frostburg State University (BSW '10) and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (MDiv '15). Among the most important gifts he would bring to the role of Churchwide Assembly delegate are his desire to faithfully and intentionally discern the call of the Holy Spirit and a recognition of the surprising things that can mean for the Church. Also, he really likes drinking coffee and talking with people, and that's gotta be important for Churchwide, right?

Nominee: Tiana Tauber

Congregation: First, Parkersburg, WV

Residence: Parkersburg, WV

Tiana Tauber has participated in Camp Luther and is involved at First Lutheran Church Parkersburg as a reader. She is a junior in High School at Parkersburg Catholic and plays volleyball and basketball.

6.1.2. Floor Nominations

Floor nominations are allowed under the synod's rules. Those wishing to make a floor nomination should review the Report of the Nominating Committee (which contains the list of positions to be elected and the names of those being nominating by the Nominating Committee) and also the information found on the [Nominations & Elections webpage](#) prior to the assembly.

Nominator is responsible for producing and providing 125 copies for distribution to Synod Assembly voting members at the time the nomination is made on the floor. When the nomination is made on the floor, present the copies to the chair.

Submit to the chair, at the time the nomination is made, one copy of this form, with the addition of your (nominator's) phone number, email address, and congregation of membership and, also, the nominee's phone number and email address

You may nominate yourself.

Downloads

[Floor Nominee Information Form](#) (PDF)

[Floor Nominee Information Form](#) (MS-Word)

If unable to download,

If you are unable to download a Floor Nominee Information Form, ask your congregation office for help or complete a sheet with the following information, making the copies explained above.

- Position for which the person is nominated'
- Nominee's name
- Nominee's congregation of membership

- Church service and/or experience, training, and education

6.2. Audit Committee

Report of the Audit Committee to the Synod Assembly 2021

The report of the independent auditor, Hollifield & Associates, CPAs, was delivered to the Audit Committee on 6 August 2021. It was subsequently reviewed by the Audit Committee which in turn delivered the report of the independent auditor to the Synod Council with recommendation to accept the report, there being no material deficiencies discovered. The Synod Council, at its 15 September 2021 meeting, accepted the report of the audit committee by action (SA21.9.11).

An explanation is helpful to understand why this audit is from several years back. When our auditor was performing this FY 2015 audit, he got sick and was out of commission for more than 6 months. When he got back to work, he delayed as he was not fully recovered from his medical issue. Then we lost contact with him. He essentially abandoned us and would not return and emails or phone calls. After another year we attempted to work with another auditor, but that auditor indicated that, as we had a contract with this previous auditor, we needed to get out of that legal contract. We were finally able to determine this auditor lost his license, thus allowing us to go ahead. Our new auditor indicated audits of previous years needed to be done. We are now in the process of catching up, completing audits as quickly as possible.

Paul Wangerin
Bruce Dalton
Daniel Warntz

Audit for fiscal year ending 31 January 2016

The independent auditor's report may be reviewed [by downloading the PDF here](#).

6.3. Report of Reference & Counsel

WV-WMD Synod Assembly Report of Reference & Counsel

The Committee on Reference & Counsel received ten resolutions submitted by Voting Members Phil Van Dam and Pete Suwak. These are the sum total of the resolutions received by the September 26, 2021, deadline.

Reference & Counsel gave due and fair consideration to each and every one of the Van Dam / Suwak Ten in a committee meeting held September 27, 2021.

Rather than rule it an illegal resolution, Reference & Counsel corrected an error in the Resolution concerning the Age of Ordination by replacing "Southern Ohio Synod" with "West Virginia-Western Maryland

Synod.”

Reference & Counsel concludes that the Synod Assembly’s deliberative decision-making process will be best served by seeking more information. It is the unanimous opinion of Reference & Council that the submitted resolutions will be enhanced by taking the time to seek the advice, counsel, and expertise of others who can provide a fuller and more complete explanation of the issues raised.

Reference & Counsel recommends that the Synod Assembly refer all ten resolutions as follows:

1. ASSYRIANS: That the resolution on dialog with the Assyrian Church of the East be referred to the Ecumenical Officer who is requested to report the cost of human and financial resources to carry out the proposed action to the Synod Council.
2. BAPTISM: That the resolution on ecumenical recognition of baptisms be referred to the Ecumenical Officer who is requested to report the cost of human and financial resources to carry out the proposed action to the Synod Council.
3. CREDAL: That the resolution on credal status and full-communion agreements be referred to the Ecumenical Officer for more information to be reported to the Synod Council.
4. ORIENTAL: That the resolution on dialog with the Oriental Orthodox be referred to the Ecumenical Officer who is requested to report the cost of human and financial resources to carry out the proposed action to the Synod Council.
5. BARMEN: That the resolution on the Barmen Declaration be referred to the Bishop for more information to be reported to the Synod Council.
6. ORDINATION AGE: That the resolution on a minimum age for ordination (as amended by Reference & Counsel) be referred to the Bishop for more information. The Bishop is requested to make a report to the Synod Council.
7. ORDINATION VOWS: That the resolution on ordination vows be referred to the Bishop for more information. The Bishop is requested to make a report to the Synod Council.
8. BISHOP: That the resolution on the constitutionally required roles of bishops be referred to Synod Council.
9. FEDERATED SYNOD: That the resolution on federated synods/judicatories be referred to Synod Council.
10. VOTING MEMBERSHIP: That the resolution on frequency of communion [and voting membership] be referred to the Bylaws Committee for study, followed by a report recommending action to the Synod Council.

Reference & Counsel encourages all parties affected by its referral recommendations to seek any and all assistance they may need to accomplish the requested tasks.

In addition, Reference & Counsel acknowledges and affirms the right of Pastors Van Dam and Suwak to submit ten non-germane resolutions for the Synod Assembly’s consideration; however, Reference & Counsel is compelled to remind the assembly that it is meeting in the midst of a continuing pandemic that requires appropriate and prudent accommodations for the health and well-being of our neighbors. One of those safety measures is to spend only as much time in one place as is absolutely necessary. Reference & Counsel believes it appropriate to remind the assembly that the mechanics of parliamentary procedure in

adjudicating ten resolutions is a time consuming process. Synod Council, in planning this assembly, has attempted to limit our time in our meeting space by conducting only the business that is specifically required. The report of the Committee on Reference & Counsel is a required piece of business; a full debate on each and every resolution is not.

Reference & Counsel unanimously finds the submission of ten resolutions to this particular Assembly, while legal under the Synod Assembly's rules, to be poor form and lacking in consideration for those present at this assembly.

Pamela Pritt
 Andrea Brock
 Jason Felici
 William Ridenhour

Implementing Resolution: **To adopt the recommendations of the Committee on Reference & Counsel, referring the ten Van Dam/Suwak resolutions as indicated in its report.**

6.3.1. Resolution: Assyrians

Memorial regarding dialog with the Assyrian Church of the East submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the ELCA has had dialog with many of the older churches; and

Whereas the Assyrian Church of the East is in dialog with some of our dialog partners; and

Whereas our current status with the Assyrian Church of the East is mutual intercommunion, where members of each are free to commune in the churches of the other, which is greater fellowship than with any of the other ancient churches, and

Whereas the chief objection to dialog with the Assyrians is that they do not call Mary Theotokos (Mother of God) when some of our full communion partners also do not call Mary Theotokos, and

Whereas there are a large number of Assyrians in this country, be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to instruct our presiding bishop to enter into dialog with the Assyrians.

6.3.2. Resolution: Baptism

Memorial regarding ecumenical recognition of baptisms submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas there is an agreement in Germany between several different denominations, (specifically the following:

Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Germany

Catholic Diocese of Old Catholics in Germany
 Ethiopian Orthodox Church
 Fellowship of Anglican-Episcopal Congregations in Germany
 Evangelical Church in Germany
 Evangelical Old Reformed Church in Lower Saxony
 Evangelical Methodist Church
 Evangelical Unity of Brethren (Herrnhut Brethren)
 Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Orthodox Church in Germany
 Roman Catholic Church.)
 whereby they recognize each others baptism; and

Whereas there is no such agreement in the US, and

Whereas, since this agreement has already been examined, and approved by the above bodies, be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod, in Assmeby memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly with the appropriate parallel bodies in the United States, with the express aim of adopting the same agreement here.

6.3.3. Resolution: Credal

Memorial regarding our credal status
 submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

WHEREAS, the ELCA has engaged in many ecumenical dialogues; and

WHEREAS, many of these dialogues seem to be directed towards “full communion” agreements; and

WHEREAS, some of our ecumenical partners are not as credal as the ELCA, to wit the United Church of Christ has congregations that are federated with congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and some Methodist pastors say that they are not required to believe in the Trinity; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to make the necessary constitutional changes so that future “full communion” agreements cannot be presented to the Churchwide Assembly unless the denomination with which we would be in full communion in said agreement already requires their pastors to accept the doctrine of the Trinity, or that said agreement requires the other denomination in the agreement of “full communion” to make such a requirement of their pastors. Such an amendment is also to apply to partial communion, or pulpit, altar fellowship, agreements.

6.3.4. Resolution: Oriental

Memorial regarding dialog with the Oriental Orthodox
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the ELCA has had dialog with many of the older churches; and

Whereas many of our dialog partners (i.e. Roman Catholics, Reformed, Anglican and Eastern Orthodox) have dialog with the Oriental Orthodox; and

Whereas the main objection to our undertaking such dialog, that is that the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox would soon be merging, has not materialized, and indeed seems less likely now than ten years ago; be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Synod in Assembly memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to enter into dialog with the Oriental Orthodox as soon as is practicable.

6.3.5. Resolution: Barmen

Memorial regarding Barmen Declaration
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the Lutheran Church has long followed the teaching on the two kingdoms, namely that God acts both through the Church, and through secular organs, like government, and

Whereas this has often been twisted to say that if the government illegalizes something, then it is sinful to do, and if the government legalizes something, then it is at least morally neutral, and

Whereas the Lutheran Church has been divided how to respond to recent circumstances where the government has been changing its stand on issues such as same sex marriage, and

Whereas the Barmen Declaration was not adopted after World War 2 because it supposedly contradicted the two kingdoms teaching, be it therefore

Resolved the the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in assembly memorialize the Church wide assembly to adopt the Barmen Declaration as a confession of this Church, and that the ELCA reject and anathematize any use of the two kingdoms teaching that simply endorses whatever any particular government happens to be supporting at a particular point in time.

6.3.6. Resolution: Ordination Age

Resolution and memorial concerning a minimum age for ordination
Submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the ELCA does not have a minimum age for ordination; and

Whereas an increasing number of young people finish college and even graduate degrees before they are adults; and

Whereas it is our job to anticipate issues before they arise, and not just react as problems appear; and

Whereas since it is possible, under current rules, for minors to be ordained, it is also possible, under current rules for such a pastor to be defrocked for sexual relations with a minor who is older than the pastor; and

Whereas some branches of the early church had a minimum age for ordination as a priest of 35; and

Whereas the Episcopal Church has a minimum age for ordination to the priesthood of 25; and

Whereas current research suggests that judgement and decision making ability does not mature until 25; and

Whereas life experience increases with age, and thus enlightens ones decisions; and

Whereas many social gatherings of clergy involve alcohol; and

Whereas the normal duties of a pastor includes carrying an open container of wine for communion in one's car; therefore be it

Resolved that the Southern Ohio Synod set a minimum age for ordination of pastors at age 25; and be it further

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to set a minimum age for ordination as a pastor at age 25.

6.3.6.1. Substitute Resolution: Ordination Age

 The Committee on Reference & Counsel offers this substitute to the Van Dam / Suwak resolution on a minimum age for ordination, correcting misidentification of synod in the first operative and also correcting general form.

Resolution On a Minimum Age for Ordination

A substitute by Reference & Counsel to a resolution submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas, The ELCA does not have a minimum age for ordination;

Whereas, An increasing number of young people finish college and even graduate degrees before they are adults;

Whereas, It is our job to anticipate issues before they arise, and not just react as problems appear;

Whereas, It is possible, under current rules, for minors to be ordained, it is also possible, under current rules for such a pastor, to be defrocked for sexual relations with a minor who is older than the pastor;

Whereas, Some branches of the early church had a minimum age for ordination as a priest of 35;

Whereas, The Episcopal Church has a minimum age for ordination to the priesthood of 25;

Whereas, Current research suggests that judgement and decision making ability does not mature until 25;

Whereas, Life experience increases with age, and thus enlightens ones decisions;

Whereas, Many social gatherings of clergy involve alcohol; and

Whereas, The normal duties of a pastor includes carrying an open container of wine for communion in one's car; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod set a minimum age for ordination of pastors at age 25; and

Resolved, That the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to set a minimum age for ordination as a pastor at age 25.

6.3.7. Resolution: Ordination Vows

Memorial regarding ordination vows
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas ordinands are asked to preach and teach according to the scriptures, the creeds and the confessions, and

Whereas they are not asked whether they actually believe the essential tenets contained in these documents, and

Whereas at least some of our ecumenical partners ask ordinands whether they accept the teachings of their church, be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod, in assembly memorialize the ELCA to amend the ordination service to ask ordinands whether they actually believe the essential tenets of the Lutheran faith.

6.3.8. Resolution: Bishop

Memorial regarding the constitutionally required roles of Bishops
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the office of the Bishop is an ancient office, and is mentioned in Holy Scripture; and

Whereas the office of Bishop, and the historic episcopate is an asset when we dialog with certain churches (such as the Orthodox, the Anglicans, the Moravians etc.); and

Whereas some parts of the ELCA have a distrust of what they perceive to be an accumulation of power in the office of the Bishop; and

Whereas the office of Bishop is given too many jobs for it to reasonably handle; and

Whereas the office of the Bishop is an obstacle to dialog with certain churches, such as the UCC, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, etc.; therefore be it

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to study the role of Bishops; and

Whereas there are models of Bishop that remove the Bishop from the role of governance (such as with the Moravians); therefore be it further

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod memorialize the ELCA Churchwide Assembly to adopt an alternative in the model constitution for synods that would allow synods to separate the office of the president and the office of the Bishop. Such a decision would be left to the individual synod.

6.3.9. Resolution: Federated Synod

Memorial proposing federated synods/judicatories
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas the ELCA has congregations federated with congregations of other denominations, and

Whereas one of our full communion partners, the Presbyterians, have in their constitution the provision for federated presbyteries with other reformed bodies, and

Whereas the Anglican Church in Wales had proposed an ecumenical bishop for Wales to be shared with the United Reformed Church, the Methodists and the Baptists, and

Whereas the borders of our synods may be identical, or nearly identical with the borders of judicatories of some of our full communion partners, and

Whereas one of the new mission fields where new congregations are being planted is in prisons, and such plants would be helped by starting them as ecumenical in nature, and

Whereas for the sake of stewardship of limited resources, consolidation has been considered between synods, be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod, in assembly, memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to add to the model constitution for synods the option to allow for the formation of federated/ ecumenical synods/districts/judicatories with our ecumenical partners.

6.3.10. Resolution: Voting Membership

Memorial regarding frequency of communion
submitted by Philip Van Dam / Peter Suwak

Whereas our congregations are formed by gathering around the Gospel proclaimed in word and sacrament, and not around an offering basket, and

Whereas Luther said that if a person did not commune at least four times a year that person was no Christian, and

Whereas when people have greater requirements for membership, they value that membership more, be it therefore

Resolved that the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to alter the model constitution so that in order to be considered active, a member would have to have communed four times in the previous twelve months, and that at least one of those would be at their home congregation. Clergy who are not serving in the congregation where they are members would not be required to commune in their congregation of membership in order to maintain active status.

6.4. Report of the Synod Lay Worship Leaders Commission

West Virginia Western Maryland Synod Assembly, 2021 The Synod Lay Worship Leaders Commission

There is an important need in our synod for lay worship leaders to lead worship and fill pulpits for those congregations without a pastor or when a pastor may be on vacation. For this reason, the Synod Council has developed a Synod Lay Worship Leaders Commission (SLWL).

The SLWL has been meeting as it develops the program. This program will have four classes of license – 1. Reader; 2. Apprentice Preacher; 3. Jour Preacher; and 4. Master Preacher.

The SLWL is currently developing competencies for each of these classes, beginning with the first class of Reader. At the time of our Synod Assembly, we will have opened applications for the Reader level and have begun to grant approvals for Readers who have met competency. We will also have a library for those Readers.

Applications for the reader level were opened on September 13. Applications may be obtained from the synod website or from any SLWL Commission member.

The SLWL will continue to develop the competencies for the other three levels and intends to have full competency resources by January 31, 2022.

It is important to keep in mind that those currently serving as Lay Worship Leaders can continue serving as Lay Worship Leaders as they have been doing while the program is being developed. Furthermore, the current Lay Worship Leaders will be able to move immediately into whichever of the four levels for which they are able to show competency. The SLWL Commission members will contact the current Lay Worship Leaders to address any questions and to encourage them to apply for their appropriate level of licensure.

The Rev. Sean Smith

The Rev. Ruth Bullwinkle

The Rec. Ian Reid

Paul Wangerin

7. Reports of Special Committees

7.1. Ad Hoc Committee on Bylaws

Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws to the 2021 Synod Assembly

Amendments to Bylaws

Set I

The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws recommends the following amendments to the Bylaws of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to take effect immediately:

B9.09. All terms of office, except as otherwise provided in the constitution and bylaws of the Synod, shall begin *the first day of the second month* ~~September 1~~ following election.

B10.08. *Synod Council and all other committees may, at the discretion of the chair, employ mail (including asynchronous telecommunications) voting so long as all members have been notified of the call for vote and have acknowledged that call for vote, a unit veto striking down the question.*

Set II

The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws recommends the following amendment to the Bylaws of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to take effect immediately:

~~B7.12. Holy Communion shall be administered at each regular synod assembly.~~

Set III

The *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws recommends the following amendment to the Bylaws of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod to take, per our rules, at the end of this session:

B7.03. The bishop of synod shall appoint the following convention committees:

- ~~Committee on the Bishop's Report~~
- Committee on Elections
- Committee on Minutes
- Committee on Reference and Counsel
- Committee on Registration and Attendance
- Committee on Resolutions
- Committee on Worship

~~B7.15. The report of the bishop to each regular synod assembly shall be referred to the Committee on the~~

~~Bishop's Report, which shall study the same, make the appropriate comment thereon and transmit to the assembly the recommendations of the bishop together with any additional relevant recommendations of its own that it may deem desirable.~~

B9.02. Ninety days prior to the Synod Assembly, the Nominating Committee *shall post on the synod website, shall post on The Bishop's Roadshow, and shall send to the pastors of the Synod* a list of the offices and positions to be filled by election ~~and a list of positions to be filled by appointment to the pastors of the Synod and to the presidents/vice presidents of the congregational councils and to the Conference officers~~ and shall invite nominations for these offices and positions.

B9.03. Nominations by pastors, ~~and congregational councils, conferences, and voting members of synod congregations,~~ along with the necessary vita information requested by the Nominating Committee, shall be sent to the Nominating Committee within thirty days.

B9.04. The Nominating Committee shall nominate a minimum of two persons for each office and position to be filled by election, *with the exception of those positions assigned to young adults, youth, or persons of color and/or primary language other than English.*

~~B9.06. The Nominating Committee shall suggest to the Synod Council one nominee for each position to be filled by appointment. The Synod Council will make necessary appointments after its meeting held during the Synod Assembly.~~

B10.01. The Synod Council shall consist of the four officers of the synod, four pastors, six lay members, and one youth member and one young adult.

a) Four pastors shall be elected, one from each of the four conferences.

b) Six lay members shall be elected, one from each of the four conferences and two members at large. ~~As far as possible, 50% of the lay members shall be male and 50% shall be female.~~

c) The youth member shall be elected at large. The youth member shall not have reached the age of 18 at the time of election.

d) The young adult member shall be elected at large. The young adult member shall be between (and inclusive of) the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election.

B10.03. The Synod Council shall meet *in regular session* at least three times a year. Any additional meeting(s) shall be *by call of the vice president, the bishop, the presiding bishop of the ELCA, or petition by 1/3 of the voting members of the council* ~~as the council deems necessary.~~

~~B10.06. From within its membership, and also including other members of the synod as it desires, the Synod Council shall appoint a Mutual Ministry Committee. The committee shall seek to give encouragement by its concern for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the synod bishop and of assistants to the bishop. It will offer support when they are experiencing personal or pastoral stress. It will allow for open communication concerning attitudes and conditions within this synod.~~

B10.07. From within its membership, ~~and also~~ including *such* other members of the synod as *desired* it ~~desires,~~ the Synod Council shall appoint a Budget and Finance Committee.

~~B11.11. The Synod Council shall appoint the chairpersons of committees and commissions from among the membership of the committees and commissions.~~

~~B11.16. The Synod Council shall appoint the Synod's representatives to the West Virginia Council of Churches. Each appointment shall be for a two-year term. The West Virginia Council of Churches shall indicate how many representatives shall be appointed.~~

B12.01. There shall be four conferences designated as follows:

B12.01. There shall be four conferences designated as follows:

a). Monongahela Valley – Mountain Conference

1. Bittinger MD, Emmanuel
2. Jennings MD, Zion
3. Swanton MD, St. John's (Meadow Mountain)
4. Clarksburg WV, St. Mark
5. Davis WV, St. John
6. Elkins WV, Holy Trinity
7. Fairmont WV, Grace
8. Grafton WV, Church of the Covenant
9. McHenry MD, Shepherd of the Hills
10. Morgantown WV, St. Paul
11. New Milton WV, St. Johannes
12. Oakland MD, St. Mark's
13. Accident MD, St. Paul's
14. Accident MD, St. John's (Cove)
15. Friendsville MD, Grace
16. Aurora WV, St. Paul
17. Red House MD, St. John's

b). Ohio – Kanawha Valley Conference

1. Beckley WV, St. Luke
2. Charleston WV, Trinity
3. Huntington WV, Christ the King (*Barboursville*)
4. Huntington WV, St. Paul
5. Hurricane, WV, Cross of Grace
6. Letart WV, St Mark (Upper Flats)
7. New Haven WV, St. Paul
8. Point Pleasant WV, St. Peter
9. ~~Ravenswood WV, Our Saviour~~
10. Parkersburg WV, First
11. Vienna WV, Christ

c). Potomac Conference

1. Martinsburg WV, St. John
2. Martinsburg WV, Trinity

3. Charles Town WV, St Thomas
4. Harpers Ferry WV, St John
5. ~~Sharpsburg MD, Holy Trinity Memorial Evangelical~~
6. Petersburg WV, Grace
7. Baker WV, Zion
8. Moorefield WV, Mt. Olive (Peru)
9. Gore VA, Fairview
10. Rio WV, Ebenezer
11. Wardensville WV, St. Peter
12. Yellow Spring WV, Hebron
13. Franklin WV, Faith
14. Minnehaha Springs WV, New Hope
15. Moyers WV, St. John
16. Upper Tract WV, Mt. Hope
17. Brandywine WV, Calvary
18. Keyser WV, Trinity
19. Westernport MD, Mt. Calvary
20. Shepherdstown WV, St. Peter
21. Uvilla WV, St. James
- d). Upper Ohio Valley Conference
 1. Wheeling WV, First English
 2. Wheeling WV, Christ (Mozart)
 3. Wheeling WV, Grace (Bethlehem)
 4. Wheeling WV, St. James
 5. Wheeling WV, St. Mark (Elm Grove)
 6. Weirton WV, Trinity
 7. ~~Wheeling WV, St. Matthew (Benwood)~~
 8. Wheeling WV, Trinity
 9. Moundsville WV, Messiah
 10. New Martinsville WV, Good Shepherd

Jason Felici
 Sally Bartling
 Matthew Riegel

Implementing Resolution #1: To adopt the recommendation set forth in Set I in the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws.

Implementing Resolution #2: To adopt the recommendation set forth in Set II in the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws.

Implementing Resolution #3: To adopt the recommendation set forth in Set III in the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Bylaws.

8. Reports from the ELCA

8.1. Report of the Churchwide Representative

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod Assembly

October 16, 2021

Churchwide representative report

Deacon Mary Ann Schwabe, Executive for Synod Relations

As a person whose roots are in this synod from the days of the Western Pennsylvania/West Virginia Synod of the LCA, I am particularly delighted to be with you on the day of your synod assembly. This will be an assembly with much to be done and at the top of the priority list is the bishop's election process.

Your assembly has been intentionally designed with Covid realities in mind. In light of that caution, I will submit this report in writing rather than occupy extended time at the microphone.

I begin with a word of thanks for the generosity of this synod. Thanks to your tenacity and faithfulness in the midst of a pandemic, the congregations of this synod made it possible for the synod to share \$105,000 with the churchwide organization to support our ministry together. Altogether, synods shared a total of over \$40 million in Mission Support which the churchwide organization uses to support ministries in the country and around the world. Synods use Mission Support dollars for ministry such as new starts, congregation vitality, leadership development, call process, candidacy, AND supporting partner ministries such as campus ministry, outdoor ministry, ELCA colleges and seminaries, and Lutheran social services.

Another sign of this church's tenacity and faithfulness in the midst of this pandemic year is the generous support of the Covid-19 Response Fund. More than \$1.8 million was raised with over \$1.5 million given to synods who applied for grants. More than 387,000 people have been served and more than 830 ministries have been funded.

Thank you for extraordinary support in what was an extraordinary year. The individuals and congregations of your synod gave \$46,000 to ELCA World Hunger and over \$11,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response. In 2020, these gifts to ELCA World Hunger supported a variety of projects and programs around the world and across the ELCA, including work in food security, agriculture, income generation, health, housing, education, peace and reconciliation and more – all touched by the impact of COVID-19.

In 2020, Lutheran Disaster Response responded in the United States and around the world, walking alongside communities as they were impacted by various disasters from flooding to tornadoes, hurricanes to earthquakes, wildfires to conflict and needs of people on the move – and the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Internationally, LDR responded to disasters in 49 countries, providing 132 grants totaling over \$4.9 million. 88 of these grants, totaling \$2.4 million, were in response to COVID-19, reaching nearly 800,000 people around the world.
- Domestically, LDR responded to the pandemic by supporting 32 synods and three Lutheran social

service agencies in 40 states with grants totaling over \$920,000. An additional \$3+ million was provided in response to other disasters that occurred in 2020, long-term recovery efforts, and community resilience programs.

This synod demonstrates its faithfulness not only at home but around the world by accompanying your international companions in Madagascar. You support missionaries Anne and Willie Langdji in West and Central Africa and Pastor Themba Mkhabela and Kwena Mkhabela in Madagascar and West Africa.

As we look toward 2022, the ELCA Youth Gathering which was originally scheduled to occur this past summer, will be held this coming July in Minneapolis. For the latest on registration information and other details, go to www.elca.org.

Just a few weeks after the Youth Gathering, we will meet in Columbus, Ohio, for the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Much thanks is extended to the members of this synod who will serve as voting members of that assembly.

Finally, on behalf of Bishop Eaton I am deeply grateful for the faithful partnership of Bishop Matthew Riegel, your DEM Sherri Schafer, the rostered ministers of this synod, and each of you as you live out your baptismal call daily.

9. Reports from Separately Incorporated Ministries of the ELCA

9.1. ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planning Partnership

REPORT OF THE ELCA FOUNDATION & REGIONAL GIFT PLANNING PARTNERSHIP (2021)

Kathy F. Summers, President and CEO

It is important to begin this report by thanking ELCA synod bishops for your incredible leadership during a year of unprecedented events; the pandemic, racial tension, wildfires, floods, and political divisiveness. When everything seemed to go wrong, your ability to direct the work of the church was one of the things that was right about 2020. Through it all, this church body supported the work of this denomination in ministering to the world with the love of Jesus Christ.

As of December 31, 2020, the Foundation crossed a major milestone and now oversees more than \$1 billion in gifts, endowments and other investments for this denomination. This landmark accomplishment was achieved primarily because Foundation staff understood the need for increased communication during a year of unparalleled difficulties.

As a separately incorporated ministry, with a network of 23 regional gift planners, working in 21 partnerships, across the United States, Foundation staff recognized early on that communication was critical. Throughout the year, despite limited travel and in-person meetings, gift planners engaged with nearly 900 congregations, synods and ELCA related organizations. They spent time with over 1500 individuals working on gift plans, logged over 5500 interactions and continued to maintain partnership relationships with over 150 ELCA related entities, including 54 synods. Gift levels remained high throughout the year.

The Gift Administration and Financial Services (accounting and investment administration) teams continued to support donors, beneficiaries and Fund A investors. Despite limited access to the building, no distributions were changed or eliminated and withdrawals from Fund A did not increase.

The Foundation staff continued to work with donors and beneficiaries to create individual gift plans, administer life income and endowment gifts, distribute terminated gifts and facilitate the sale of marketable assets such as land, homes, and other assets.

- Regional Gift Planners remained available to:
 - Guide individuals in discerning how to be faithful stewards of their estates and invite them to support ministries, congregations, and synods through charitable estate gifts.
 - Help synods, congregations and related entities invest endowment funds and other assets in the Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (Fund A) which is structured to provide distributions to support ministry today and into the future utilizing investments that adhere to the ELCA's social

purpose guidelines.

- Advise church leaders in the development of gift acceptance policies for congregations, which often include gifts to synods.
- The Gift Administration team worked with individuals to initially establish and ultimately distribute proceeds from charitable gift annuities, charitable trusts and named endowment funds. Financial Services handled operations and administration for all life-income gifts, endowments and investments in Fund A.
- The gift planning network, including affiliates, posted solid results during throughout 2020, with \$118.2 million in total gifts and endowment assets. Of that, \$78.5 million was written in future planned gifts, \$20.3 million in current gifts (including funded trusts, gift annuities and individual endowments) and \$19.4 million in new outside investor assets.
- New gift plans written during the year totaled 249. In addition, gift planners stewarded over \$60.2 million in previously written plans, in some cases increasing the estimated gift to ministry.
- As of December 31, 2020, the value of participant accounts invested in Fund A was \$904.2 million, compared to \$817.6 million on December 31, 2019. There are 1,155 investing participants in Fund A, including 938 congregations and 54 synods. Throughout the year, 53 new endowment accounts were opened, totaling \$7.1 million, and 14 accounts were closed, totaling \$3.0 million. Contributions from outside participants to new and existing endowment accounts totaled \$31.1 million; withdrawals totaled \$18.6 million.
- Throughout the year, approximately \$62.4 million was distributed to ministry.

Thank you for your continued partnership with the ELCA Foundation.

Contact your gift planner today for more information on working with the ELCA Foundation, investing in Fund A, promoting gift planning in your congregation, or writing our own gift plan.

Ryan Ebner
Regional Gift Planner
ryan.ebner@elca.org
814.823.3285

ELCA Regional Partners

ELCA Churchwide
NWPA Synod
SWPA Synod
WV-WMD Synod
Bethesda Lutheran Services
Lutheran Home at Kane
Lutheran SeniorLife
Lutherlyn
Camp Luther
Camp Agape
Community Lutheran Partners

Lutheran University Center, Pittsburgh
 Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU
 United Lutheran Seminary

9.2. Mission Investment Fund

Report of the Mission Investment Fund, 2021

Partnering in faith

The Mission Investment Fund, a financial services ministry of the ELCA, provides a strong, stable, faith-based way for individuals, congregations and ministries to achieve their financial goals.

MIF provides a range of investments for individuals, congregations and ministries. We put those investments to work to fund building and renovation loans for congregations and ministries.

The result? Impact investments, with a transformative impact on our communities: Expanded worship spaces ... new space for education and youth ministry ... much-needed day care centers for working families ... industrial-grade kitchens and fellowship halls for community meals.

During the year-long pandemic, MIF provided assistance to investors who needed immediate access to their funds and to borrowers who needed flexibility with their loan payments. We collaborated with our ministry partner, the ELCA Federal Credit Union, to offer expedited loans for congregations, ministries and individuals, as well as Paycheck Protection Program loans for congregations and ministries to keep employees on the payroll and continue operations.

Our capabilities and capacity have never been stronger. At year-end 2020, MIF had 883 loans outstanding, totaling \$596.4 million. Investment obligations totaled \$543.1 million. With total assets of \$773.8 million and net assets of \$218.2 million at year-end 2020, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.20 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds.

Our steadfast support continues for the members, congregations and ministries of the ELCA and the many ways you care for a world in need. We are honored and humbled to walk alongside you as a trusted partner.

For more information about MIF capabilities, please visit our website, mif.elca.org.

MIF at work in the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod (as of December 31, 2020):

- \$2,088,333 in Mission Investment Fund investment obligations

MIF representative The Rev. Kent Peterson, Regional Manager, Tel: 276-698-7970; email: kent.peterson@elca.org

Mission Investment Fund | 8765 West Higgins Road | Chicago, Illinois 60631 | Tel: 877-886-3522 | Web:

mif.elca.org

9.3. Portico

Portico Benefit Services | A Ministry of the ELCA (2021)

The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, President & CEO

Supporting Those Who Serve Now More Than Ever

Portico Benefit Services is a holistic benefits ministry serving those who serve — from rostered ministers and their families to staff at social ministry organizations. We strive to help our members grow their overall well-being.

We could not have predicted this pandemic. But the virtual benefits we've introduced before and after its arrival, the benefit adjustments we've made since, our successful navigation of volatile financial markets, and the consistency of our customer service have made a powerful difference.

During this pandemic, ELCA benefits are helping to lower stress levels, create safer access to health care, and increase financial flexibility — all to strengthen the resilience of those who serve and, by extension, the resilience of this church.

Building Resilience in 2020

26%	More Calls to Our Financial Planners During last year's market volatility and our introduction of target date funds.
559	Took a Penalty-Free Distribution Thanks to quick modification of our retirement plan rules for 2020.
49%	Sought Student Loan Help Through no-cost counseling via our partner, LSS of Minnesota Financial Counseling.
3,230	Medical Visits Via Text Through 98point6, our new virtual 24/7 primary health care service – with \$0 copay.
98%	Satisfaction With New Mental Health Option Our self-directed online program, Learn to Live.
10%	Of Members Streamed a Course On topics like resilience, mindfulness, and beating burnout via Being, our new wellness video platform.
90%	Very Satisfied With our Customer Care service — delivered by Portico employees working remotely.
22	Target Date Funds Introduced To help members maintain an age-appropriate asset mix over time — and better weather volatility.
3.1%	Annuity Payment Increase Received, in these difficult times, by ELCA annuitants during 2021.

Data as of Dec. 31, 2020; sources available upon request. Availability of and eligibility for benefits will vary.

9.4. West Virginia-Western Maryland Women

of the ELCA

WEST VIRGINIA-WESTERN MARYLAND WOMEN OF THE ELCA (2021)

Mission Statement: As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

No convention was held in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The year before, our women met August 8-10, 2019 at Bishop Hodges Catholic Pastoral Center in Huttonsville, WV for our annual convention. Lois Broyles coordinated our 32nd convention using the theme, "Take Joy." The Churchwide representative was Becky Shurson from Eugene, Oregon. Pastor Linda Muhly led the Bible Study and presided over the Eucharist Service. Pastor Sherri Shafer presented a program on Community Lutheran Partners. Officers and Board Members installed during this convention were asked to serve an extra year (2020) because no convention was held to hold elections. The Churchwide WELCA constitution has since been amended to permit online conventions and elections.

Our in-person Convention for 2021 is planned for September 27-28 at Canaan Valley Resort in Davis, WV.

Each unit continues to work on their outreach ministries. Clusters and Units have not been able to hold meetings in many locations due to COVID but meetings are planned for Fall 2021. Our goals for 2020-2021 year are:

- Goal 1: Share love with our units through outreach by cards, letters and email
- Goal 2: Continue the mission of WELCA
- Goal 3: Continue to support Community Lutheran Partners, Lutheran Campus Ministry at WVU, and Lutheran World Relief.

We will also continue to pray our prayer for all of our Christian sisters this year.

Oh, Lord, hear our prayer. Come close to us so we can feel your presence. You are a gracious and a loving God. Help us and our sisters and brothers deal with the diversity in our communities. Oh, Lord, our differences are many. Help us see you in our neighbors. And help them see you in us. Help us turn away from violence and learn to honor you together as peacemakers. May we learn to share your love with each other and truly forgive when occurrences are out of control around us. We need your comfort and peace. We need you Lord. Please help us make our communities safe. You are awesome and we praise you. You are a blessing to us. We pray this in your Son's name, Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen

Our women continue to keep in contact with our synodical newsletter, *Lutheran Lines*, which is published twice a year and is available (free) by mail or email. We encourage and support one another in ministry, share ideas for activities and resources, share happenings in our units, and share our joys and sorrow. We are Christian women working together as God's hands.

Officers

Gail Kohlhorst, *President

Priscilla Horner, *Vice President

Denise Porter, Treasurer

Barbie Chewning, Secretary

Board of Directors

Ellen Bragg

Jane Hazer

Patricia Schillings

Linda Buckle

Stephanie Setley

Lois Broyles

Jonalee Young

Cluster Coordinators

Monongahela Valley Mountain: Vacant

Ohio-Kanawha Valley: Lois Broyles

Potomac: Priscilla Horner

Upper Ohio Valley: Karen Yoders

Lutheran Lines

Gail Kohlhorst

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Kohlhorst, President

West Virginia-Western Maryland Women of the ELCA

*Serve as Co-Presidents for the term 2020-2022

10. Reports from Affiliates

10.1. Camp Luther

Camp Luther – Synod Assembly 2021 Report

Camp Luther 2019 was held on June 16-22 at Camp Caesar in Cowen, WV. This was our 74th year and we met under the theme “Transformed Community: God’s Agent of C.H.A.N.G.E.” We were blessed to welcome 247 campers and 90 staff members for our week of camp.

During our class sessions and throughout each day at camp, we talked about how God’s beloved community is transformed by generosity, inclusivity, compassion, justice, and forgiveness. Campers faith lives were strengthened and they were able to see friends from previous years as well as make new friends with first-time campers. Some fresh ideas and new activities were incorporated into our afternoons and were well received by many of our long-time campers.

In the months following our camp week in 2019, it was announced that Pastor Karen Erskine Valentine would be the next director of Camp Luther. Preparations began for her training the following year at camp. In addition to this exciting news, planning was underway for a grand 75th Anniversary celebration to take place at Camp Luther 2020.

As the COVID situation became clear in April of 2020, the difficult decision was made to cancel in-person camp for the first time in our history. This also postponed all of the 75th anniversary celebrations.

Thanks to the hard working staff members and friends of Camp Luther, many events were moved online in 2020. Many thanks to our amazing staff members who gave of their time to put together Camp Luther favorites for our Facebook Page, and for the work to honor the class of 2020 over Zoom.

One of the ways we marked our 75th Anniversary virtually was through an online fundraiser to support Camp Caesar during their lost season in 2020. A sincere THANK YOU to everyone who donated to this effort. Camp Luther was thrilled to donate over \$27,700 to Camp Caesar to support them as they seek to come out of the pandemic strong and ready to host us once again.

A full report of our 2021 in-person day camps will be reported to Synod Assembly 2022.

We are tremendously blessed to have support from all across our synod: individuals, congregations, and friends throughout our territory. We thank you for your prayers and monetary support throughout the pandemic. And we look forward to welcoming campers back for a FULL week on the mountain next June!

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Jason Felici
Director

10.2. Caroline Furnace

Caroline Furnace Lutheran Camp & Retreat Center | Synod Update

September 2021

Faith, Education, and Renewal in God's creation for all God's people

2239 Camp Roosevelt Rd Fort Valley VA 22652 | (540) 449-0012 | www.CarolineFurnace.org

WHO ARE WE? Caroline Furnace is a place to encounter God in God's creation and through an intentional Christian community. We believe this experience has the power to permanently change lives. Caroline Furnace is committed to remaining a special place apart, with a focus on God's grace and presence, and on positive community building.

DID YOU KNOW that Caroline Furnace's property is only an hour drive away from Martinsburg, West Virginia? We not only provide an 8-week summer camp program but we are open to welcome and host individual and retreat groups all year long.

As a MINISTRY PARTNER of the West VA-Western MD Synod, we are able to live out our mission of providing unforgettable faith, education, and renewal experiences in God's creation for all God's people.

LEARN MORE ABOUT Caroline Furnace on our website, www.carolinefurnace.org or contact our office 540-449-0012 to plan your next retreat!

We are excited for the coming fall and spring retreat season where we look forward to safely welcoming your retreat group.

Upcoming Retreats & Events

10/8-11 – Adventure Weekend

10/15-17 – Work Weekend

10/21-22 – Pre-Advent Retreat

1/14-17 – Wild Women Retreat

1/28-30 – BeerReformation Retreat

We continue to host our retreats and events with adaptations with your health and safety in mind. Current practices include small group sizes, social distancing among separate households, enhanced cleaning and sanitation, and health pre-screening for all overnight guests. Lodging includes The Farmhouse for groups of 15 or less, eight heated cabins surrounding the modern bathhouse in Cabin Village, six sukkahs: rustic screened cabins on platforms, and family tent or RV camping nearby the Sukkah Village. Our spacious, 257 acre property is ready for you to space out and explore. Contact us for more info about an upcoming event by emailing sarah@carolinefurnace.org.

Summer 2021 Update | Theme: Purpose

Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them. (Matthew 18:20)

Summer Camp is a place that supports new experiences, close friendships, limitless fun, and faith made tangible. 300 campers, volunteers, and volunteer chaplains experienced Summer Camp in 2021! Cabin group cohorts traveled, ate, and played together for the week. They got to swim, canoe, fish, creekwalk, play small group games, hike, cook over a campfire, create crafts, and so much more! This summer, we are thankful to have gathered campers for safely distanced activities throughout each week of camp. We could not have done this without our 16 summer camp staff members and countless volunteers and volunteer chaplains. We give thanks for those who gave their time and energy to this ministry!

After a summer of finding purpose through LIVING, CONNECTING, AFFIRMING, and safely GATHERING, we are humbled to reflect on this year of generosity and grace. The collective work of many supporters, campers, retreat guests, and people like you, keeps us on a path of optimism and gives opportunities for the future.

Thank You for your Continued Support!

The Lord has provided us with wonderful gifts, that we may proclaim the gospel boldly through Caroline Furnace. Perhaps the most important gift as we seek to minister to a world in need is YOU. We respectfully ask for your donations and that you continue to support the incredible work done here. By providing, participating, and praying for Caroline Furnace, you share Christ's love with a world in need and provide a sacred space for all. You could even use your skills and experience to give back to your outdoor ministry by serving on our Board of Directors or one of its committees. Learn more and share your interest at CarolineFurnace.org/board. As always, we are so grateful for the continued support of our three Synods. We are one as the body of Christ, and we are so very blessed by your abundant generosity. Support Caroline Furnace Online at www.CarolineFurnace.org/Donate

Tom Powell, Executive Director

Rev. Sarah Lyon Hess, Director of Sales, Marketing & Communications

Rev. Heidi David-Young, Director of Resource & Program Development

Lee Ann Powell, Director of Food Service Operations

Bryan Hepner, Director of Facilities & Maintenance

LuAnn Woodard, Bookkeeper & Housekeeping

10.3. Lutheran Campus Foundation WVU

THE LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY at WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY

Synod Assembly Report, October 2021

Like you, the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University (LCM@WVU) experienced an array of challenges put forth by a global pandemic, but not without the overwhelming blessings of God's continual redemption and renewal. In addition to adapting campus ministry within various stages of physical distancing, we had the bittersweet transition of wishing Godspeed to our former chaplain, The Rev. Tony Setley, as he was called to serve St. Paul in Morgantown. Yet, God is always faithful and as we journey forward with our two (!) new chaplains, we rest in the confidence that the Holy Spirit is up to something wonderful among and through campus ministry in the West Virginia – Western Maryland Synod.

NEW LEADERSHIP

On August 1, 2021 we welcomed the Revs. Courtney & Ben Erzkus as our new chaplain duo! With a strong sense of call to serve as a family, they fill this one full-time chaplain role together, along with the creative and spontaneous inspiration of their two young children, Alice and Charlie. You can learn more about the Erzkus family in our “About Us” section of our website (listed below), but if there is one thing you should know now it is that God has given them a deep appreciation and love for serving alongside our amazing young adults, and that they feel right at home in these mountains and valleys.

ANCHORED IN WORSHIP

Life for those connected with the LCM@WVU is anchored around worship. On Sunday evenings we gather for Mass, followed by a free dinner and then Compline. Currently we also gather for Morning Prayer, Vespers, and Compline during the week, and anticipate offering worship using Holden Evening Prayer, as well as begin a Facebook live-streamed Compline liturgy later this month. Earlier in the semester we enjoyed learning and praying Vespers, which sometimes brought us guests from around the Synod! You are always welcome to join us for worship, and we look forward to hosting you, your Women’s or Men’s groups, and your Confirmation classes. Our worship brings together students, faculty, staff, and community members—thanks be to God!

SPIRITUAL CARE & CONNECTION

One of the high privileges of campus ministry is walking alongside young adults as they embark on one of the biggest transitions of their life. The intersection of new experiences, ideas, and people provides rich soil for diving deeper into their beliefs, and further discerning and developing their sense of vocation. This may take the shape of a scheduled one-on-one conversation at the Chapel, but more often it looks like getting together for a cup of coffee, chatting on the way to and from class, or talking over a shared meal. These holy conversations aren’t only reserved for students, though – we also are continuing to build relationships and serve faculty and staff through both formal and informal meetings.

Our plans this year include continuing efforts to reach out to new and returning students (you can help us by asking the student’s permission and then sharing their info with us!), as well as expanding these outreach efforts to faculty and staff. We also enjoy getting to travel throughout our beautiful Synod and visit congregations on formal LCM@WVU visits or as pulpit supply.

PARTNER & SUPPORT

There are many ways you can partner with and support the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University! Here are just a few:

- Include the LCM@WVU in your personal prayers and weekly Prayers of Intercession!
- Sponsor one of our Sunday meals (send a gift card or join us and bring/make a dish)!
- Connect us with your new or returning students at WVU!
- Visit and join us for worship; or,
- Invite us to visit your congregation (in a formal LCM@WVU visit or as pulpit supply)
- Become one of our donors by giving a regular financial gift!

CONTACT US

Visit www.LutheranMountaineer.org for information on worship, current program offerings, and how to set up online giving. You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram @LCMWVU

Chaplain Ben

ben@lutheranmountaineer.org

717-881-4631

Chaplain Courtney

Courtney@lutheranmountaineer.org

717-881-4621

10.4. United Lutheran Seminary

United Lutheran Seminary (2021)

Unifying, Learning, Serving

Psalm 46 reminds us that “God is our strength, a very present help in trouble. We will not fear, though the earth be moved.” Since the beginning of the pandemic, it seems as if the ground moves under our feet every day. The seminary has adapted quickly to this new reality, using our pre-existing technology that used to join real classrooms in Philadelphia and Gettysburg to a now-totally virtual learning environment. Also, we encounter the risen Christ together as a community through our zoom worship services, a blessing that has truly unified our students, staff, and faculty across the miles.

President Guy Erwin arrived in last August to begin a new chapter in the seminary’s story, introducing a fresh perspective on the needs of the church during such a time as this. Along with Dean Sebastian and the faculty, he welcomed 85 new members to the ULS student body. In January, we welcomed an additional 39 new students. Our overall enrollment is strong: 360 students, including 177 in the Master of Divinity Program (Word and Sacrament), 19 Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership (Word and Service), and 82 Doctor of Ministry Candidates. Other students are enrolled in the MA, MAPL, STM, and PhD programs. Currently, 56 of our students are concluding their internships. Seventy-five students received diplomas this Spring, enabling them to continue servant leadership in the church. We also celebrate the gifts and service of non-degree students including 24 Affiliates and 33 Certificate course enrollees (CTS, TEEM, CCFF, UTI, and Anglican Studies). We welcomed the regional Bishops to a virtual visit this past February where they met with members of the seminary community and spend time in worship and prayer. We will hopefully return to in-person learning in this coming fall, with events featuring convocation, colloquy, and Dr. Erwin’s inauguration (go to www.uls.edu for more information). We strive to be a community that celebrates God’s diverse Creation, with intentional focus on [inclusivity and equity for all](#). Last Fall, we created the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in keeping with a Board of Trustees mandate. Our own Brother Ed Henry was promoted to become VP in this new office.

We are grateful to the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA, our [partner congregations](#), [alumni](#), individual donors, and synodical support. Thanks to all of our donors, we continue to offer up to full tuition for our degree-seeking students with plans to prayerfully provide in decades to come. As a higher educational

institution, we were able to receive federal PPP loans/grants which have helped to sustain us despite the economic hardships in our midst. We strive to be faithful stewards of our resources, looking to guidance from the Board of Trustees and the Endowment Board to help with sound fiscal and resource advice. We welcomed Buff Carlson, the Chief Financial Officer, who began working at the seminary in February of 2020, a few days before the pandemic upended our patterns and routines. He continues to work with Advancement team to forge a sustainable financial strategy for faithful ministry to our students now and in the future. In March, we thanked the Rev. Dr. Zimmann for her years of faithful leadership as she departed for a new position as VP of Advancement at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

We are thankful for the ELCA synods of Regions 7 & 8 for their faithful accompaniment during these times. Though the earth is always moving, we will not fear, because our partners continue to remind us that God is present amid the challenges we face as we equip the saints for the work of ministry. May God bless you in this moment and strengthen you in the days to come as we continue to encounter Christ when and where we least expect him, but always where he is most-needed.

Rev. Dr. Martin Otto-Zimmann, Director of Church Relations

Video greetings from President Erwin can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/uu5mA6foipl>.

10.5. Camp Agapé

Camp Agape' Report – 2021

Looking Back – Reaching Forward:

Honoring the Past and moving into the Future

I began my time here at Camp Agapé on January 1st, 2020, looking forward to a year that would be full of meeting new friends, developing new ideas, and adding new energy to a wonderful ministry. During the first months I was excited to begin meeting with different groups of pastors and sharing the board and association's dream for Camp Agapé moving into the future. I met with Ryan Ebner of the ELCA Foundation, David Hummel at Theil College, Pastor Chris Rotella with Abiding Mission in Pittsburgh, and Pastor Christine Hough with Glade Run, along with multiple non-Lutheran ministers. Bishop Kusserow carved out some time to meet with me and listen to my hopes and dreams for Camp Agapé. In our discussions there was considerable interest in finding new ways to use the camp and to work with Lutherlyn to provide a wider variety of opportunities for ministry together. During these first months we broke ground for the new kitchen addition to the Retreat and Learning Center and a duplex cabin. We added additional staff in the areas of programming, food service, and property care. Everything was going according to plan! Then Covid-19 shut down the opportunity to meet with fellow supporters and ministry partners, do camp programming, and host rental groups for nearly 8 months. The staff and I continued to work on creative ways that the site could host groups, attended a multitude of zoom meetings, and dreamed up new ways to market the camp to the community. Another area of growth for Camp Agapé was the rounding out of the year-round staff: Program Director – Karen Reardon; Office Manager Catherine McClelland; Marketing Assistant/Hospitality – Erica D'Amico; Property Manager – Mike Ward; Food Service – Shari Dami; and Mechanic – Gary French.

In July we teamed up with the Salvation Army to host a Super-Hero Drive Through to help them raise donations for their Back-to-School Ministry. Over 100 cars drove through the camp and learned a little bit about Camp Agapé, many said they had never been on our property and were awed by the beauty of the camp. In September we held the Service of Dedication and Installation with Bishop Kusserow providing a sermon of hope and inspiration for this new adventure. In October, several groups used us for day events and a weekend event. In November, we had a United Methodist youth group do an all-day event which rounded out our use for the fall. The addition of the new kitchen made all these new events possible. In just one month we doubled the revenue we made in all of 2019. I am excited about the growth potential as we begin to dream of moving into a more “normal” situation in 2021. We were disappointed that several family events and program events were canceled due to new COVID-19 restriction later in November, December, and January.

Even with all the changes that have been happening at Camp Agapé we continue to lift up the legacy of what makes Camp Agapé so unique. Camp Agapé helped two families with temporary housing while going through some major life transitions, we assisted the Salvation Army to raise resources and awareness for children who cannot afford school supplies, and we are in the planning stages of working with an AME church in Pittsburgh, that host a Summer Learning Academy, with a possible special summer week soon. This event would renew the commitment of providing for children who need additional educational support outside of school. We also supplied a large amount of food from our garden to several local food pantries. Beginning in April of 2021 we will be hosting an annual Appreciation event to honor past supporters of Camp Agapé and current volunteers. The COVID-19 slowdown has given me an opportunity to find treasures from the past. We will be creating artwork using past pictures for the wall art in our cabins and the RLC.

What does the future hold for Camp Agapé? God has a plan! Some of the new areas that I would like to explore include:

- Week for Intellectually Disabled individuals
- Week for at-risk Foster children
- Weekend Confirmation Retreats
- Wounded Warriors Weekends
- Host educational events for Senior adults (day usage)

The addition of the year-round kitchen and duplex cabin to our site, will help us to expand who we serve in the coming years. This year we had 23 volunteers from 8 congregations for over 1,400 hours of volunteer service! In January 2021, we lost our Board President, Jill Shook, to complications from COVID-19. Camp Agapé will miss her support and vision. In 2021 we are encouraging congregation and individuals to prayerfully consider giving a special gift in her memory to Camp Agapé to be used to support our Scholarship Fund.

In closing we all need to give thanks to the foresight of previous boards and leaders to create the Endowment Fund with the gas revenue money. This safety net has made it possible for us to complete construction, pay bills, and keep staff on board through this nationwide crisis. I believe we will emerge from this stronger and ready to do exceptional ministry into the future.

Peace,
Deacon Rick Frederick
Executive Director, Camp Agapé

10.6. National Lutheran Association on Scouting

National Lutheran Association on Scouting (2021)

The National Lutheran Association on Scouting (NLAS) is very active within the Synod, especially due to the presence of The Summit Bechtel Reserve, a high adventure base of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and permanent home of the BSA National Jamboree, and several NLAS officers who reside within our boundaries. The NLAS is an all-volunteer membership organization that is dedicated to promoting Duty to God in the programs of the Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the USA (GS-USA), and American Heritage Girls (AHG), and to promoting use of the youth serving agency (BSA, GS-USA, AHG, 4H, and Camp Fire) programs as a ministry of outreach to youth and their families by Lutheran congregations. NLAS serves as the official liaison between the youth ministry programs of ELCA and LCMS and various youth serving agencies (e.g. BSA, GS-USA, and AHG).

As with Lutheran congregations everywhere, the COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges to the programs of the youth serving partners. NLAS recruits, approves and provides chaplains to the BSA National Jamboree. The Rev Richard Egtvedt, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills in McHenry, MD is NLAS Chief Chaplain. He developed a recruiting program and had already obtained commitments from more Lutheran (both ELCA and LCMS) volunteers than had been seen since the 2013 National Jamboree and which represented a 500% increase in Lutheran chaplains (to include two LCMS chaplains) for the then upcoming, 2021 National Jamboree. After obtaining appropriate synodical approvals and approving Lutheran Chaplain Candidates according to the Jamboree staffing approval process, he was still working with six additional candidates before the 2021 National Jamboree was indefinitely postponed. Recruitment and approvals were immediately put on hold, pending announcement of a new Jamboree date. The Jamboree Chaplaincy Committee is still awaiting notification for a new National Jamboree schedule.

Similarly, the NLAS sponsored, "Scouting in the Lutheran Church" conference at the BSA Philmont Training Center in Cimarron, NM for 2020 was canceled. In response, the BSA National Religious Relationships Committee swung into virtual mode and presented a virtual interfaith week to which NLAS Secretary and former President Wayne Stuckey (Oakland, MD) contributed three video sessions (<https://youtu.be/rNvqp7ga-vY>, <https://youtu.be/BXFEBJedaMo>, <https://youtu.be/tAnIFaQBCCm>) Wayne facilitated a session with the Girl Scout National Interfaith Committee, to bring a Girl Scout Troop leader to represent the Lutheran faith in the virtual Girls of Faith seminar, in which girls could earn their GS-USA "My Promise, My Faith" award (<https://youtu.be/tAnIFaQBCCm>). Finally, the Philmont Training Center was permitted to open in 2021. Wayne Stuckey served on faculty for the "Scouting in the Lutheran Church" conference from July 11-17, 2021. The "Scouting in the Lutheran Church" conference is designed for Lutheran chartered organization representatives, clergy, youth ministers, congregational leaders and Lutheran Scout Leaders

who want to learn about using Scouting as an outreach ministry to boys and girls in their community, and how Scouting can support building for the future. (<https://www.facebook.com/dutytogodbsa/photos/pcb.2944871555725418/2944867375725836/>) Wayne presented sessions on “NLAS: Who we are and what we do”, “Duty to God in Scouting Advancement”, and “Duty to God in Your Council”. The 2021 conference included two retired LCMS pastors, an LCMS Specific Minister Pastor who expects to be ordained in November, plus nine ELCA and LCMS lay Scout leaders.

For more information on NLAS, please see our web site (<https://nlas.org>) and follow our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/NLASyouth>).

The Rev. Rick Egtvedt

10.7. Tri-Synod Archives

Tri-Synod Archives (2021)

Grace and peace,

I am delighted to report that the Tri Synod Archives is in the process of re-organizing. The Tri-Synod Archives Board of Directors convened in a re-organizational meeting by Zoom at 7:00 PM EDT, on Monday, 26 July 2021, Bishop Riegel served as chair pro tem, with Denise Hegemann, Brian Riddle, Curtis Thompson, Samantha Travis, and Nancy Knol, voting members present, Sally Roth (archivist), and Bishop Kusserow.

After a brief update of the current status of the archives, the new board elected officers. The Officers for the transition period until the Board’s first official meeting in September are as follows: Rev. Brian Riddle will serve as President, Samantha Travis will serve as Vice President, and Denise Hegemann will serve as Secretary.

A meeting date was set for the archive’s first organizational meeting on Saturday September 25th at 10:30am, on site at Thiel College. At that meeting, items to be discussed include: orientation to and status of the current archives, developing contact information to provide to people requesting assistance from the archives, choosing a Thiel liaison to the Board, issues around re-location, preservation and securing the Archive’s documents and artifacts, and dealing with the backlog of requests for information from the archives.

In August, Pr. Riddle met with Tressa Snyder, director of Thiel’s Langenheim Memorial Library, and John Hauser, Thiel’s Archivist, to discuss a possible move to a newly cleared portion of the Library basement where periodicals were once stored. As Thiel is re-structuring their library facilities in preparation for construction which will take place in the spring of 2022, the possibility of the archives moving to a new location in the former periodicals section was discussed and agreed upon. The space will need to be set up for the needs of the Tri-Synod archives, and a wall separating the Archives from the other materials in the library for order and security will need to be constructed. Although the final move will depend on available manpower and the timing of construction, boxes that were previously stored outside the door of the current

space have already been moved to the new location. Further work is ongoing.

We hope to have the Archives re-organized and restored to capacity soon. In the meantime, the Board will continue to process the backlog of requests as expediently as possible. We thank the Northwest, Southwest, and West Virginia/West Maryland synods for their patience and continuing support as we move, update, and modernize our archives.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Rev. Brian Riddle,
 Campus Pastor, Thiel College
 President, Tri-Synod Archive Board of Trustees

10.8. West Virginia Council of Churches

Report to the West Virginia-Western Maryland ELCA Synod August 30, 2021

Greetings from the West Virginia Council of Churches!

One of the highlights of this past year has been our ministry to support foster, adoptive, and kinship children through our sponsorship of the West Virginia Foster, Adoptive, and Kinship Parents Network (WVFAKPN). This year saw the first WVFAKPN conference called, "Caring for our Kids in Care." The conference included webinars on Resources for Foster & Adoptive Families, The Science of Biological Connection, Understanding Attachment Issues, and Parenting Techniques for Children Who Have Experienced Trauma. In addition to the conference, a number of foster, adoptive, and kinship family trainings are being planned including Connections Matter and a series of videos concerning Parenting: ACES, Trauma, and Attachment Focus.

WVFAKPN now has 10 peer support established covering grief support, a foster care book club, fostering teens, being new to foster parenting, LGBTQ+ families, parenting kids with disabilities, adoptive parents, changes that are happening or will happen in West Virginia's child welfare system, Ritchie County (and surrounding areas) support, and Kanawha County (and surrounding areas) support.

Through a grant, the West Virginia Council of Churches was able to resource a total of 31 foster/kinship closets and to provide a mechanism for those closets to network with one another. Those closets provided 955 children, 20% of whom were Persons of Color, with 496 household items, such as strollers and beds; 2,779 articles of clothing; and 429 educational items. These goods helped to meet some very real needs that foster and kinship children were experiencing during the pandemic.

We expanded our foster and kinship camp program by partnering with Step by Step to provide support to three new camps in Kanawha, Lincoln, and McDowell Counties. We are shared a VISTA member with the Highlands Educational Project (HEP) who we partnered with in 2020 to do the first foster and kinship camp program.

We have contracted with Loretta Young to lead our faith-based and African American community outreach for the Faith, Scouting, and Foster Care program. Through Ms. Young's efforts, we have established a new Girl Scout Troop at Walden United Methodist Church in Piedmont, West Virginia, and have two new Girl Scout Troops starting at Laughlin Chapel in Wheeling in the fall. We also hope to establish troops in Bluefield, Charleston, and McDowell County.

The Faith and Dementia Initiative conducted listening sessions with laity, clergy, health professionals, and caretakers. Dementia trainings are being scheduled for the fall, including Dementia 101, which will be presented at the WVCC Annual Assembly.

The 2021 Days of Hope: A Celebration of Prevention and Recovery will be held the weekend of September 17 – 19, 2021. Our theme this year is "Pathways to Recovery."

As part of our Interfaith efforts, the West Virginia Council of Churches Interfaith Program Unit hosted a webinar on Ramadan with Ibtesam Barazi, Vice President of the West Virginia Islamic Association. The Program Unit hopes to do more webinars on different faiths in the future.

The West Virginia Council of Churches Community Reentry Council Initiative made its goal of establishing 20 Community Reentry Councils in 2020. The Community Reentry Councils continue to help persons leaving incarceration to make the transition back into community. The Council also helped to provide a capacity building training with formerly incarcerated persons. We had a good cohort and hope to repeat the training. We partnered with Jobs and Hope to provide asbestos training in Logan County. Eleven persons completed the training.

Rev. Darick Biondi, Co-Chair of the West Virginia Council of Churches Government Concerns Program Unit, produced four videos on the Council's public policy positions in lieu of an in-person Compassion Calls Us Day at the Legislature. The videos cover the topics of the death penalty, water, food insecurity, and criminal justice reform. The videos can be found on the West Virginia Council of Churches Facebook page and on our website. We also produced the 2021 Public Policy issues Priorities booklet.

The 140th Annual Assembly of the West Virginia Council of Churches will be held online beginning on October 11 with worship and followed by webinars on October 14 (Digital Worship), October 21 (Interfaith Session TBD), October 28 (Dementia 101), and November 4 (Bible Study on Matthew 22: 37 – 40).

Thank you again for all your support of the West Virginia Council of Churches!

Peace,
Jeffrey S. Allen
Executive Director

11. Communications from Others

11.1. Lutheran World Relief

Lutheran World Relief (2021)

As many of you are preparing for your annual assembly this spring, we hope you will consider sharing this update and expression of gratitude from Lutheran World Relief. For 75 years Lutheran congregations have been a light in the darkness for suffering families around the world. This brief video celebrates this milestone and urges us to persist together ... until your love reaches every neighbor.

Video link: <https://photos.lwr.org/pages/view.php?ref=31511&k=2a04d10342>

On YouTube: https://youtu.be/L4oKvk_CAjo

God's peace and blessing,
John

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FARMERS MARKET BRANDS

12. Parliamentary Aids

12.1. Parliamentary Procedure – Common Motions

During the course of an assembly, one may hear different motions and terms. Here is a list of common motions and terms with brief explanations. In no way is this list exhaustive or detailed. The motions are divided into three categories: 1) those motions dealing with the rules, 2) those motions dealing with the flow of business, and 3) motions that deal with words.

The parliamentarian usually has a spare copy of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, which can be borrowed. The parliamentarian is willing to explain technicalities and/or research questions about the rules. If a voting member is not sure how to make a motion or even what motion to make in order to accomplish what the member wants to accomplish, the member may ask the parliamentarian for assistance. It is also the right of a voting member to formally make a Parliamentary Inquiry of the chair.

Dealing with the Rules

Parliamentary Inquiry

A question directed to the chair which asks for an explanation of procedure or rules related to the business at hand. A member may use this device to find out what the proper motion is to accomplish some goal.

Form: "Rev. Chair, a Parliamentary Inquiry:..."

Point of Information

Nearly identical to parliamentary inquiry, this allows the member to ask a question for the sake of clarification or more information. It may be directed to the chair or to another. It may even be asked of a speaker (so long as it does not interrupt). Form: "Rev. Chair, will the speaker yield to a question?" The speaker is under no obligation to do so.

Point of Order

Through this device, a member asks the chair to enforce the rules of the assembly. E.g., it can be used to silence excessive and loud chatter between members while another is speaking. It can be used to call the chair's attention to the fact that the speaker has exhausted his/her time, has spoken more times than the rules permit, etc.. It is one of the rare devices which is order when another has the floor so long as the point must be dealt with immediately. Form: the member rises and says, "Point of Order!"

Suspend the Rules

Let's face it, sometimes parliamentary procedures does get in the way. Suspending the rules allows the assembly to take action which is not normally permitted under the rules of order. It can never be applied to provisions of the constitution or bylaws, unless a suspension is provided for in the provisions themselves.

Form: "Rev. Chair, I move to suspend the rules which interfere with..."

Appeal

A member, believing that the chair has ruled incorrectly on a matter of order, may ask the assembly to overturn the decision. It must be moved immediately. Form: “Rev.nChair, I appeal from the decision of the chair.”

Unanimous Consent

A.k.a., “general consent,” this functions as prefix to other motions. It helps to expedite business when the motion being made faces little or no opposition. E.g., unanimous consent can be used to approve the minutes. It requires no second, and the chair does not call for a vote. Instead the chair asks if there is any objection. If you do object to the motion, speak up quickly! One objection vetoes unanimous consent. The mover can then make the motion normally. Form: “Rev. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to approve the minutes.”

Dealing with the Flow

Postpone Indefinitely

The effect is to bury the main motion without it coming to a ye or nay vote. In short, it kills the main motion. Can be applied only to the main motion.

Postpone Definitely

The effect is to delay further consideration of the pending motion until a specific time or condition has been met.

Lay on the Table

This motion is used to temporarily lay aside the pending question so that more pressing business can be handled. There is no appointed time for return of the question to consideration, but assembly may at will return it to the floor through the motion To Take from the Table.

Refer

Sends the pending motion (and all motions to which it adheres) to a committee. The committee is specified, and instructions may be given to the committee which either constrain or empower it. If it is an ad hoc committee (i.e., a committee specially created to consider the matter), the number, members, and/or method of appointment of the committee may be specified by the mover but need not be.

Recess

To take a break without adjourning the meeting or session. This can be used for the obvious benefits that a break offers. It can also be used, e.g., to suspend business to allow for caucuses and other conversations between members to work out compromises on pending business.

Limit (or extend limits) of Debate

A truly versatile motion, this device allows the assembly to specify the length of speeches, the number of speeches a given member may make, to total amount of time that debate can take place, etc..

Previous Question

The effect is to immediately close debate on the pending question (and other questions specified), thus bringing it to an immediate vote in most cases. Form: “Rev. Chair, I move the previous question.”

Reconsider

The effect is to of the motion is to return to consideration of the assembly a question that had been decided earlier in the same session. In most cases, the motion to reconsider may only be moved by a member of the prevailing side when the question was first considered.

Dealing with the Words

Amend

This motion attempts to modify the language of the pending question by striking (deleting), adding, or substituting (a combination of both) words. If an amendment to a main motion is pending, one may move to amend the amendment—this is called an amendment in the second degree. Amendments in the third degree (i.e., an amendment to an amendment to an amendment) is not permitted.

Substitute

This motion is a form of amendment whereby the entire content of a pending question is replaced with new content. This motion is also employed to allow debate on the merits of two different questions at the same time.

Accept the Report / Adopt the Report

This is only used when a report proposes some action or states some opinion which requires the assembly’s agreement or adoption in its entirety. Reports that merely provide information are never “accepted.” They are merely received, which requires no formal action in most cases. When a report does contain recommendations for action, it is normally best to only move adoption of those specific actions.

—*Prepared for the WV-WMD Synod Assembly 2006; revised 2019*

12.2. Guide to Assembly Committees

You will find in the next subsections descriptions of the following committees of the assembly:

- Committee on Elections
- Committee on Minutes
- Committee on Reference & Counsel
- Committee on Resolutions
- Ushers

12.2.1. Committee on Elections

Until 2019, our Committee on Elections (Elections Committee) had been what *Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, refers to as the tellers. In 2019, we made a change.

The members of the Elections Committee function as overseers of the elections process and as judges of the election. As election judges, it is the Elections Committee that will take the lead in the adjudication of questionable ballots, bringing unresolved issues to the floor of the assembly with recommendation. The Elections Committee will prepare the ballots. It will also oversee the voting process and the work of the tellers and the ushers. Per the synod's Bylaws, the Elections Committee is appointed by the bishop. Per the synod's continuing resolutions, the Elections Committee appoints, assigns, and dismisses tellers.

The tellers are those folks assigned the task of counting the ballots. They also collect the ballots during the balloting phase. This year, we are establishing a tellers pool (like a jury pool) from which the Elections Committee draws tellers for individual counts. It is hoped that most tellers will not have to count more than once.

12.2.2. Committee on Minutes

Our Committee on Minutes (Minutes Committee) is a work group not a deliberative body. It is a legacy of the days when there were no recording devices other than the human being frenetically taking notes with pen on paper. While seeing to the recording of the business of the assembly is the responsibility of the secretary, it has been deemed prudent to have a team of people taking notes so as not to miss something and ensure accuracy by comparison. In 2015, we introduced videography and live streaming of the assembly. The saving of the video allowed for review of the action, increasing the accuracy of the minutes. One would think that a team of human recorders is now obsolete. In 2017, we learned not to be so complacent. Our videographer was unable to attend because of injury. Fortunately, we were able to make an audio recording. Nevertheless, over dependence on technology could put us in a precarious position. Having a team of humans seems a salutary redundancy.

Taking minutes is not as onerous as most seem to imagine. One does not take a verbatim (a word for word transcript of everything that is said) when taking minutes unless a special order is made to do so—this is very rare! When this happens—which it never has in WV-WMD—it usually entails a narrow set of statements and not the entire proceedings. It is also customary that a person, who desires his/her words be entered into the record, present a written copy of his/her speech to the secretary.

According to *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, §48,

In an ordinary society, unless the minutes are to be published, they should contain mainly a record of what was done at the meeting, not what was said by the members. The minutes should never reflect the secretary's opinion, favorable or otherwise, on anything said or done.

The secretary will provide Minutes Committee members with detailed instructions on the recording of the action.

Minutes Committee members work in shifts. No one, except the secretary, is taking minutes the entire session. When committee members are recording, they do so alongside others. Usually 2-3 committee members are recording at one time. When action is heavier, more members are recording. This allows for breaks. There are often long spans in which no action is taking place, e.g., during a keynote address.

During these times, committee members may be told by the secretary that they can relax and even leave their post for a short time. When looking at the assembly program, Minutes Committee members do not take minutes outside of the “business meetings,” meaning committee members have no obligations at worship, workshops, etc..

Minutes Committee members should be able to use a laptop or mobile device on which they can engage in simple typing. Most committee members prefer to provide their own device because of familiarity. A few laptops are kept handy for those members who do not have their own. Basic typing skills are helpful—hunt & peck will not serve well.

It is also important that a Minutes Committee member have hearing sufficient to understand what is said by the speakers at the mics. Being able to pay attention is also important.

It is not necessary that the Minutes Committee members know everyone in the synod. Speakers and those making motions are required to announce their names whenever they come to the mic for their benefit.

12.2.3. Committee on Reference & Counsel

Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, (RONR) assumes one committee handles both the review of submitted resolutions and the drafting of resolutions. Our assembly distributes those two functions to different committees. Our Committee on Reference and Council (usually referred to as, “Reference & Counsel”) performs most of the functions described under the heading, “Resolutions Committee,” in *RONR* §59. Those functions which belong to a “drafting committee” are assigned, in our Bylaws, to our “Committee on Resolutions.”

Our Reference & Counsel is charged, under our Bylaws, as follows:

B7.16. A resolution of a general character which is not germane to the pending question or report shall be given by the proposer to a Committee of Reference and Counsel, which shall report thereon to the assembly with its recommendations. Other duties of the committee shall be (a) to recommend special orders for the hearing or representatives, (b) to grant or deny permission to distribute printed matter not issuing from the office of the secretary and © to give such assistance to the bishop as may be desired in the course of the assembly.

Review Resolutions

The primary duty is the review of all resolutions and memorials submitted to the Synod Assembly that are “of a general character which is not germane to the pending question.” What’s that mean?

Matters introduce on the floor

If a member rises immediately after a report and offers a resolution in response to the report, the resolution is germane, *i.e.*, it relates to the report. Such a resolution does not go to Reference & Counsel (unless

ordered by the assembly). If member offers a resolution that has nothing to do with a report or other action taking place on the floor, the resolution is, most likely, not germane. These automatically go to Reference & Counsel.

Reference & Counsel reviews each resolution thus introduced on the floor and reports back to the assembly. In that report, Reference & Counsel may, at its discretion, recommend adoption or rejection. It may also recommend amendment. It may recommend any course of action allowable to a committee advising the assembly (*i.e.*, to set consideration as a special order, to refer, to lay on the table, to postpone, to postpone indefinitely, *etc.*). It may also report on a resolution with “no recommendation.” Unless overruled by the assembly, Reference & Counsel may determine the order in which it reports on the resolutions and is free to request consideration *en bloc*, *seriatim*, *etc.*. When reporting on resolutions, the resolution in question, as it has already been introduced on the floor is the main motion with the report of Reference & Counsel functioning either as a subsidiary motion or mere information, depending upon the content of the report.

Matters introduced in advance of the assembly or appropriately to Reference & Counsel

Most of the time, resolutions and memorials (petitions from congregations and conferences) are submitted in advance of the Synod Assembly. If a member writes a resolution while Synod Assembly is in session, and that resolution is not germane to pending business, it should be given to Reference & Counsel and not moved on the floor by the member. Even if the member does move it on the floor, if chair rules it as nongermane, it is immediately order its referral to Reference & Counsel.

Procedure is slightly different for resolutions and memorials submitted directly to Reference & Counsel. Reference & Counsel can recommend adoption, offer a substitute, recommend referral, or recommend declination of consideration.

Recommend Special Orders

Reference & Counsel may propose special orders for the hearing of representatives, members, *etc.*. This provision is a hedge against episcopal tyranny. While members have defined rights under parliamentary law, non-members do not. It is possible that a representative of a synod-affiliated agency (or some other person) requests time on the agenda and the bishop (who drafts the agenda) refuses to provide it. That agency rep may approach Reference & Counsel, petitioning for time to address the assembly. Reference & Counsel, if it so chooses, may propose special orders for the hearing of that representative, and the assembly would have the right to adopt or reject the proposal. A member too might want to address the assembly on some topic, and the member could petition Reference & Counsel for the privilege.

It should be kept in mind that the entity protected is not the representative. The entity protected is the assembly. Only members have rights in the assembly (unless certain rights are accorded through the governing docs or the will of the assembly), and a fundamental right of the assembly is to hear from those the assembly believes it would benefit from hearing. Reference & Counsel protected this prerogative on

behalf of the assembly. Reference & Counsel also protects the assembly from abuse of the podium/mic by not recommending special orders when the speaker would not assist the assembly in its deliberations.

Distribute Printed Material

As the preceding section protects people from the bishop, this provision addresses tyranny by the secretary. If the secretary refuses to allow distribution of some specific printed material, the sponsor of that material may approach Reference & Counsel as something akin to a court of appeals. Reference & Counsel can order such distribution without interference by the secretary or the chair.

Assist the Bishop

Reference & Counsel may be enlisted by the bishop to assist as needed. Typically, this assistance is around matters of consequence before the assembly. Reference & Counsel, next to the parliamentarian, is the bishop's place to seek advice and counsel during the assembly.

12.2.4. Committee on Resolutions

For the purposes of the WV-WMD Synod Assembly, a distinction is made between the Committee on Resolutions (Resolutions Committee) and the Committee on Reference and Counsel (Reference & Counsel). In addition to the rules that govern committees in general, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, (RONR) describes the work of the Resolutions Committee, as we intend the term, in RONR §53. RONR §59 relates to the work of Reference & Counsel and is not applicable to our Resolutions Committee.

Our Resolutions Committee serves as the drafting committee of the assembly. If you remember the musical *1776*, you will remember the Continental Congress assigning to Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, *etc.* the task of drafting a resolution declaring independence for the consideration of the assembly. That is a good representation of the work of a drafting committee, the difference being that our Resolutions Committee is not *ad hoc*, *i.e.*, only assigned to one particular topic. As a standing committee of the assembly, our Resolutions Committee handles the drafting of all resolutions ordered by the assembly and not otherwise assigned to an *ad hoc* committee. Keep in mind, any member of the assembly may prepare his/her own resolution, but a resolution presented by an individual member is handled under our rules for Reference & Counsel.

As a standing committee of the assembly, the assembly may refer any matter as a topic to the Resolutions Committee with instructions to draft a resolution for the consideration of the assembly. For example, should it come to pass during the course of the assembly's deliberations that a member of the assembly believes there should be a resolution before the assembly on the purchase of pink flamingo law ornaments by the synod for distribution to all congregations, that member makes a motion on the assembly floor to instruct the Resolutions Committee to draft such a resolution. The member making such a motion may include further instructions for the committee. That motion from the floor would be itself debated by the assembly and possibly amended. If it is adopted, the instructions are referred to the resolutions committee with orders to

draft a resolution to that effect. The Resolutions Committee would then meet, at the call of the committee chair, and set about the task of drafting such a resolution. The committee would have the freedom, within the limits of the instructions provided by the assembly, to draft the resolution as it sees fit. It also has the duty to report that it cannot comply if it deems such a resolution would be illegal. Once it has completed the drafting process, the Resolutions Committee reports to the assembly, presenting the resolution it has drafted. A minority report is possible. That would be an example of a referral to the resolutions committee. That has rarely happened, but it can. It can also happen at any point during the assembly's session.

The Resolutions Committee may, at its discretion, draft any resolution which it believes would further the work of the assembly. For example, if, in the course of debate, there seems to be a mood in the assembly favoring a specific change in the logistics of Synod Assembly, the Resolutions Committee may draft a resolution (without being ordered to do so) to that effect and put it before the assembly for consideration. Such proactive work on the part of the Resolutions Committee can help the assembly (which is often short of members skilled in parliamentary deliberation) find its voice.

The other task of the resolutions committee is the review of reports submitted to the assembly and the generation of such resolutions as may seem appropriate in response. For example, the 2007 Synod Assembly Resolutions Committee drafted a resolution that admonished then Chap. Riegel for the use of too much Latin in his reports, instructing that he include translation aids in the future.

Resolutions Committee is free to draft a "closing resolution," *i.e.*, a resolution that thanks folks or makes some final comment upon the proceedings of the assembly, but there is no requirement that it do so.

The Resolutions Committee can be one of the most important committees in an assembly. Proper composition of such a committee should include a mix of people. There should be at least one parliamentary geek. There should be at least one person with the sense of the overall working of the synod in relationship to its congregations and a larger Church. There should be at least one word smith. The rest should be people of common sense and ability to listen to what is happening on the floor, sense the mood of the assembly, and put it into words.

12.2.5. Ushers & Pages

Ushers

This is not wedding ushering; an assembly usher doesn't have to escort folks to their seats while wearing a tux. Ushers do, however, provide important support to the assembly's work.

It should also be noted that the ushers form a team. It is often not necessary that all the ushers do everything together. The Ushers' Chair (The Warden) may divide the work up so that ushers are not on duty at all times.

During elections

When the Chair announces the sealing of the chamber, the ushers seal the chamber. If there are doors, the ushers close them and stand guard. If there are no doors, the ushers stand in the portals (or other obvious points of egress). The ushers may let people leave, but they do not let people enter until the Chair orders the chamber unsealed.

The ushers make sure that voting members are before the bar of the assembly and non-voting members are behind the bar. The bar is a line that separates the two. This is important because the tellers have to know who to give ballots to.

At the request of the Elections Committee Chair, the ushers assist in the distribution and collection of ballots.

Distributing printed material

When necessary, ushers distribute written material to the attendees. This can either involve walking through the chamber and leaving stuff at people's spots, giving a sufficient number to the folks at the ends of the pews, or standing at a portal and handing papers to those entering the chamber. It depends on what it is and when it is.

Herding cats

Prior to each meeting of the assembly, one or two ushers will be needed to direct voting members to sit before the bar and visitors behind the bar (unless an individual is granted a dispensation by the Chair or the Ushers' Chair).

At the beginning of each meeting or whenever the assembly is about to resume business, the ushers direct people back to the chamber. This needs to be done after meals, breaks, and recesses.

At any point the assembly is in movement, *e.g.*, breaking up for workshops, going to meals, going to worship, *etc.*, the ushers position themselves such that they can direct people.

Safety and Security

Ushers also keep an eye open for dangers, be it a chair in doorway or a fire in the lobby. If it is a simple safety fix, *e.g.*, moving that chair out of the path of egress so that no one trips over it, the usher takes care of it. Major problems should be brought to the attention of the the Ushers' Chair.

If an emergency takes place, ushers help clear the area and any egresses so that emergency personnel can gain access quickly.

Other duties as assigned

The catchall! Ushers may be called upon to assist with all manner of things.

Pages

We don't always have pages, but we sometimes get lucky. Pages are assembly staff (not voting members) who assists the officers, committee chairs, and office with communications, *i.e.*, they deliver messages and documents.

12.3. Governing Documents, Policies, and Guidelines

Click on the link to access the desired document.

Governing Documents

- [Articles of Incorporation of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod](#)
- [Constitution of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod](#)
- [Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod](#)
- [Continuing Resolutions of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod](#)

Policies

- [Synodical Lay Worship Leaders Policy](#)

Guidelines

- [Pastoral Compensation Package 2021](#)
- [Sabbaticals](#)
- [Family Leave](#)

13. Addenda

Stuff always comes in late and changes to registration take place right up the first gavel (sometimes after). In past years, the *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* would get published, and that was that. Anything additional would have to wait until Synod Assembly for distribution of hard copies. With this new platform, we have the technical ability to post late items. Whether we have the spare human resources in the days between publication of the *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* and the opening of the assembly is another matter. We'll do what we can do, but there are no guarantees. We realize, however, that some folks might want to print their *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* several days in advance of the assembly (and we encourage this). So, this is what we do: As late items come in our errors are discovered, we add the item or make the correction and list that action in the "[Errata & Additions](#)" section. You can then check the "[Errata & Additions](#)" chart to see what has changed since you accessed and printed your copy of *The Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports*. This means that you can print your *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* as a PDF download now without having the table of contents messed up if items are added. Then, when you check back in, you don't have to print the entire PDF over again. Just print the appendices and add them to your binder.

 **Download Tip:** If you download and print your *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* now and additions are added to the report afterwards, you do not have to reprint the entire bulletin. Print only the pages you need direct from the Manula platform.

13.1. Errata & Additions

 **Errata and additions as of 10/10/21, 12:04 PM.**

Here follows a list of errata, corrective actions, and late additions since initial publication of *The Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* on 10/6/21. This list covers the time since initial publication until the time listed in the banner above. This might be helpful to assembly attendees and others. With Manula (the on-line platform) it is possible to fix errors as they are reported and evaluated. On-going fixes, however, create incongruency between the Manula version and any PDF versions you may have already saved and/or printed.

The matrix below will include the follow:

- Date the error was addressed;
- The error, its nature, the corrective action, and any consequences of note; and
- A quick link to its page in this on-line *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports*.

Those items that should probably be printed/downloaded to either replace what is in your already printed/downloaded copy are marked in bold. Of course, if you are using the on-line edition, you are good to go.

Even if you downloaded an earlier version of the PDF, you can go to the specific page in the on-line *Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports* and print that one page by clicking on the print icon in the upper right of the page.

Date	Error/Action	Link
10/ 7/21	Corrected switched candidate information for Synod Secretary and Synod Treasurer	Nominee Information
10/ 8/21	Added "Parliamentary Aids" as top level section	Parliamentary Aids
10/ 8/21	Added "Guide to Assembly Committees (including Committee on Elections, Committee on Minutes, Committee on Reference & Counsel, Committee on Resolutions, and Ushers & Pages) to Parliamentary Aids section	Guide to Assembly Committees
10/ 8/21	Moved "Parliamentary Procedure—Common Motions" to Parliamentary Aids section in the <i>Pre-Assembly Bulletin of Reports</i>	Parliamentary Procedure—Common Motions
10/ 8/21	Added "Governing Documents, Policies, and Guidelines" to Parliamentary Aids section (and changed title)	Governing Documents, Policies, and Guidelines
10/ 9/21	Added "Assembly Committees and Staff" To Assembly Organization section	Assembly Committees and Staff
10/ 9/21	Corrected subtitle on Secretary's Report of Synod Council Actions	Synod Council Actions
10/ 9/21	Added Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023	Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023
10/ 10/ 21	Added Report of the Audit Committee	Audit Committee
10/ 10/ 21	Corrected wording on recommendation of Synod Council	Proposed Budget for FY2022-2023
10/ 10/ 21	Added Synod Council Recommendations	Synod Council Recommendations
10/ 10/ 21	Updated floor nomination information with downloadable nominee information forms	Floor Nominations
10/ 10/ 21	Corrected formatting at end report	Report of the Synod Lay Worship Leaders Commission
10/ 10/ 21	Special announcements page added	Special Announcements