

# Synod Council Meeting Highlights September 18, 2015 Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Red Deer Synod of Alberta and the Territories

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## Worship and Prayer

Chaplain at our Synod Council meeting, The Rev. Dr. Marc Jerry, led Council in the Gathering, Word (Dwelling on the Word using John 6:35-41), Meal and Sending (Affirmation of Christian Vocation) during the course of the agenda.

## Guests – National Church Council members (NCC)

Guests to our Synod Council meeting were the three Synod representatives on our National Church Council (NCC): Judy Wry (Holy Spirit, Edmonton), The Rev. Dr. Marc Jerry (Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Red Deer) and newly-elected NCC member, Les Pearson (Unity, Medicine Hat).

Highlights of the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial ELCIC National Convention, *Liberated by God's Grace*, Edmonton, were shared: re-election of National Bishop Susan Johnson to a Third Term, keynote presentation by Dr. Marie Wilson (Commissioner –TRC), resolutions related to Finances, Constitution, Welcoming the Stranger, Climate Justice, Doctrine of Discovery, Criminal Justice and Correctional Systems, the approval of the Authorized Lay Ministries policy and Reformation Challenge. NCC will meet next in November in a joint meeting with the Anglican Church of Canada's Council of General Synod.

## Spirit-Led Leadership – Mission Priority

### *Participating in Hope*

A significant part of Synod Council's agenda time was focussed on reviewing the material heard and gathered at the April/May 2015 *Participating in Hope* gatherings across the Synod (Synod Council and Executive members and Deans facilitated geographically close church councils gatherings for the purpose of: listening to their stories of mission - of God at work, fostering the faith and ministry of the congregational leaders, thanking them for their past partnership in ministry, and inviting them to participate in God's hope-filled future, in partnership with the Synod and each other). Listening and discerning together led to the identifying of common themes heard and a desire to meet again. These common themes and an invitation to gather for *Participating in Hope 2.0* in February 2016 will be sent via a letter to each rostered leader and congregational chairs.

## Hope-filled Discipleship – Mission Priority

### *Missional Formation*

The Assistant to the Bishop for Mission, The Rev. Dr. Julianne Barlow, reported on the beginning of the second iteration of the missional formation in the Southern Conference of our Synod. The first iteration continues with clergy cohorts and congregational guiding teams continuing to gather in Edmonton and in Calgary.

## Innovative Tradition – Mission Priority

### *Creative Initiatives*

Each Synod has received funds (\$200K for use through June 2018) through the National Church Extension and Capital Fund (CECF) to support or create learning opportunities as people join in the work God is already doing in our neighbourhoods and communities. Information is available on the Synod website under the Missional Formation tab or you may contact The Rev. Dr. Julianne Barlow for further information and an application form.

## **Collaborative Partnerships – Mission Priority**

### **Promoting and Renewing Right Relations between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Peoples.**

Bishop Larry has endorsed the formation of a Ministry Team (A.I.R.R. – Abiding in Right Relations) made up of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples (rostered and non-rostered) and ecumenical partners, to encourage education, advocacy, and service so that all of the synod's members and congregations can be involved in the process of building right relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. A learning event is planned for Airdrie, Friday evening November 20-Saturday, November 21, which will include participants from The Montana Synod (ELCA), The Episcopal Diocese of Montana, The Anglican Diocese of Calgary and The Synod of Alberta and the Territories. A "Save the Date" poster has been distributed through the Synod e-list and further information will be forthcoming.

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### ***Synod Convention***

Synod Council approved several matters related to next year's Synod Convention (June 16-18, 2016, Camrose) including the theme: *Liberated by God's Grace* and draft budget and agenda.

### ***Synod Budget***

Synod Treasurer, Stephen Wildfang, reviewed our Synod's financial health at the end of August 2015. To the end of August 2015 benevolence (excluding one-time gift from Augustana) is up 1.4% from 2014. Thanks was expressed to congregations and individuals for their generous giving to Synod benevolence.

### ***Synod Staffing***

We are thankful that our financial position has enabled expanding the position of Executive Assistant, Darla Wildfang, to a full-time position effective September 1, 2015.

### ***2016 Compensation Guidelines***

2016 Compensation Guidelines were approved by Synod Council and are now available on the Synod website under the Administration tab.

### ***Nominations and Election of Synod Delegates to National Convention***

At the 2015 National Convention a new governance structure was adopted that included provisions to reduce the size of national conventions. Each synod was tasked with the responsibility of determining how it would elect its delegates. Synod Council approved a process for selecting synod delegates which will come before next year's Synod Convention as an amendment to Synod bylaws. The process is available on the Synod website under the Administration – Documents tab and will be reviewed at upcoming conference conventions.

### ***Procedure for Revising the Terms of Call***

Synod Council approved a procedure which outlines steps needing to be taken where local conditions challenge sustaining a fulltime rostered ministry. The procedure is available on the Synod website under the Administration – Document tab.

### ***Call Process Manual***

Synod Council reviewed and approved an updated Call Process Manual procedure available on the Synod website.

### ***Next Synod Council meeting***

Synod Council will meet in retreat next March, gathering on Thursday evening (March 10) and meeting Friday and Saturday (March 11-12) at Mulhurst Lutheran Camp, Pigeon Lake. In preparation for the meeting Councillors are reading *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World: The New Shape of the Church in Our Time*, Alan J. Roxburgh, ©2015.