



## Talking Points

from the Eastern Synod Council meeting

April 23, 2020 / E-Meeting

Wendell Caron Grahlman, Secretary

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The Eastern Synod Council met by video-conferencing software for its spring meeting, occurring during the COVID-19 Pandemic state of emergency.

- Outcomes from the meeting included:
  - Confirmation of a \$10,000 Eastern Synod donation to the COVID-19 Appeal from our partner Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.
  - The Synod Council policy for holding E-votes was revised and updated.
  - Approval of a template for a *Policy for Congregational Council E-Meetings*, for Congregational Councils to use with respect to the Model Constitution and Bylaws, Part VII Section 12.
  - The St. Peter's, Kitchener - CTV Television Ministry Appeal is authorized for 2021 (appeals are generally approved a year in advance).
  - Synod Council reviewed feedback from the synod performance review which had been overseen by Vice-Chairperson Laurie Knott.
  - Upon receipt of a call, Sherry Coman was approved for reception onto the roster of diaconal ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.
  - Reception of two new congregations onto the roster of ELCIC congregations: Peace Christian Church – A Lutheran Fellowship in Chatham, Ontario; and Trinity Lutheran Church in Hamilton, Ontario.
  - Approval of constitutions and bylaws (based on new Model) for: St. Peter's, Brant Twp; Grace, Eganville; St. Timothy's, Pembroke; Redeemer, Toronto; St. Paul's, Bridgewater; Faith, Ottawa; Peace, Chatham; Trinity, Hamilton.
  - Calls to specialized ministry were approved to be issued to two diaconal ministers employed in community ministry, and to two individuals to serve as Assistant to the Bishop.
  - Appointments to committees:
    - Ben Cameron as the Eastern Synod representative on the ELCIC's Program Committee for Youth Ministry;
    - Geoff Bellew, Karen Gastmeier, Randy Gondosch, Keith Myra, John Neufeld and Rev. Annette Smith to the Congregational Redevelopment Services Advisory Committee.
  - Bishop Pryse's report to Synod Council included brief notes:
    - Synod Office personnel have shifted into "new" working realities since the pandemic emergency measures closed non-essential organizations.
    - He noted the various resources (human and otherwise) that have been shared with the synod.
    - He expressed his grateful pride for the way in which synodical and rostered leaders have responded to these extraordinary circumstances with grace and creativity, noting also those in the synod and national offices.

- From Keith Myra, Synod Treasurer:
  - 2019 was an amazing year! After providing funding for an impressive list of synodical ministries, the Synod's Operating Fund ended the year in the black. The surplus of approximately \$98,000 that was realized in 2019 negated a worrisome deficit that was incurred in 2018.
  - The fourth and final \$250,000 installment towards the \$1,000,000 commitment made by Assembly 2016 delegates to Luther's Reform Capital Campaign was transferred in March, 2020.
  - Several COVID-19 related financial communications that have been sent to leaders in every ELCIC congregation across Canada. Communications to date have included alternate giving resources and employment-related issues (government wage subsidies, etc.). For details, refer to COVID-19 Updates on the Treasurer/Financial page of the synod website.
  - The 2020 synod budget was reviewed and revised to take the unknown and potentially significant financial challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic into consideration. In spite of these challenges, the revised budget honours all existing commitments to our partners, including the national church, Martin Luther University College, our camps, congregations and leaders.
  - Keith calls on congregations to continue their financial partnership with the Synod in 2020. One of the ways in which you can do this is to review, and where possible increase, your financial support for church-wide ministries. Another way is to communicate your 2020 benevolence commitment to the Synod (via the parochial report).
  
- Reports were received from the standing committees: Candidacy, Examining, Mission, Professional Leadership, and Youth & Young Adults.
  - Mission Committee grants (28 grants totaling approximately \$180,000 to congregations and other organizations)
  - Youth & Young Adults grants (21 grants totaling approximately \$50,000 to congregations and the two synod camps)
  
- Next meeting: November 12-14, 2020, at the Eastern Synod Office, Kitchener, Ontario.