

**Indiana Kentucky Synod Council Meeting**  
**MINUTES (AMENDED)**  
**Friday, September 13, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Saturday, September 14, 2024, 3:00 p.m. (EST)**  
**Lutheran Hills Camp 6371 Bear Creek Rd.,**  
**Morgantown IN**

**PRESENT:** Bishop Tim Graham, Ted Miller, Vice President, Julie Slavens, Secretary, Harry Albers, Treasurer, Grace Pardun, Mike Hoover, Vicki Garber, Dee Ann Daniels, Chris Walda, Nancy Bennett, Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar (Friday only), Larry Ahlersmeyer, Greg Platt, Laura Nicholson, Jody Winter, Dianna Hunsinger, Ryan Bailey, Ladona Webb, Nicole Lee, Joshua Penumaka

**ABSENT:** Noah Smith, Ella Engelau, Bimen Limbong, Debbie Zehr

Staff: Dan Forehand, Karl Biermann, Region 6 ELCA Foundation representative (Saturday)

Guests: Josh Tatum, Synod Attorney

Meeting chaplains: Rev. Dan Forehand, Bishop Tim Graham

Mission Monitor: Mike Hoover

**FRIDAY**

Prior to the meeting, an orientation session was held for new Council members with the Bishop, the executive committee, and the Synod attorney.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm.

Dan Forehand led the prayer to begin the meeting.

Bishop Tim welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked each individual to introduce themselves and to answer the question: When have you seen God? All present introduced themselves and shared their answers to the question.

Bishop Tim then reviewed and provided a history of the Synod's Mission and Vision statements, and its values, priorities, and principles. He shared these statements have not been changed in 20 years as they were adopted at the 2002 Synod Assembly. He thought it was time to review and update/change these items to reflect the current Synod. He did not expect changes to be

decided at this meeting but wanted to begin the review and discussion. He wanted all Council members to work together to re-work these statements. This would take place over a few of the meetings.

Bishop Tim asked the members to take a few minutes to review the statements and contemplate on them. The text of these statements is included at the end of these minutes.

After a few minutes, Bishop Tim led a discussion of thoughts and comments on the statements. Every person provided thoughts and suggestions on changes they felt needed to be made. Some felt they were too long. Other suggestions were to use more spiritual language, to be more focused on knowing Christ, to use more inclusive language, to be more encouraging of working together, and other similar suggestions. Bishop Tim thanked everyone for their participation and thoughtful suggestions and stated the discussion will continue at the November meeting.

At approximately 8:45 pm, Dan Forehand led the group in Evening Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned until Saturday morning.

## **SATURDAY**

Saturday morning began at 9 a.m. with Holy Communion with Bishop Tim presiding and preaching. After the morning worship service, Council members were divided into groups of three for a Deep Listening exercise. Each person in the group answered three questions while the other two members of the group just listened. They were not allowed to ask questions or comment in any way while the person asking the question was speaking. After the exercise, Bishop Tim asked how it felt to be listened to and to listen without asking questions. The point of the exercise was to show how important just listening is to someone who just needs to share.

The meeting continued with further Reflection on Mission, Vision, Values, Priorities, & Principles. In addition, the council members discussed what is a flourishing congregation vs. a languishing congregation. Discussion included actions of grace and service to the members and its community were signs of a flourishing congregation and a languishing congregation may be one that focuses only on itself and not serving others outside of the congregation.

**Vice President Report:** Ted Miller provided a report including explaining the council would be filling the vacancy left by the election of Tim Graham to the office of Bishop. Ted also pointed out the dates of the future meetings,

which were listed at the end of the agenda. (They are also listed at the end of these minutes.)

**Secretary Report:** Julie Slavens provided a report including the forms of the rostered ministers interested in serving on Synod Council, which were in the Dropbox and copies were also available. The minutes of the August meeting were not yet completed. And the minutes of the Synod Assembly were included in the Dropbox. No action is required by the Council as the Minutes Committee has reviewed and approved the minutes.

**Treasurer Report:** Harry Albers reported July was a good month for revenues. He reported that 43% of actual income goes to Churchwide. He reported the Finance Committee had met and had some recommendations for Council. He stated the following people are on the Finance Committee: Paul Trickel, Chair, Becky Daum, Vicki Garber, Alexa Kvande, Chris Walda, David York, Harry Albers, and Julie Walda.

Karl Biermann reported the finance committee is recommending initiating an Endowment Fund for Disasters. There is seed money available in the amount of \$110,400. The recommendation is the money be used for response, coordination, spiritual aid, and related services to congregations which have been hit by disasters.

**SC2024/51: The Finance Committee recommends the establishment of an Endowment Fund for Disasters administered by the ELCA Foundation to be used for response, coordination of services and spiritual aid for synod congregations and their members who have experienced disasters. Vicki Garber moved the establishment of the Fund and Mike Hoover seconded the motion. The Synod Council approved the motion unanimously.**

The Finance Committee also recommended to the Council staff members who choose the Value Plan through Portico, the ELCA insurance company, the Synod pay for the upgrade to have this Plan. The value plan provides better insurance coverage for staff members with dependents.

**SC2024/52: Mike Hoover made the motion to pay the upgrade premium for those staff members who choose the Value Plan. Chris Walda seconded the motion. The Council approved the motion unanimously.**

Elections: The Synod Council was required to fill the vacancy of a Rostered Minister which was created by the election of Tim Graham to Bishop. Names of interested rostered persons were collected during August and asked to fill

out a nomination form. Nine rostered persons from around the Synod submitted forms. The forms were distributed to the Council members prior to the meeting for their review. A written ballot was provided each member to vote on one of the nine rostered ministers.

**SC2024/53: By written ballot tabulated by Dan Forehand and Josh Tatum, Pastor Kristin Rice was elected to fill the rostered minister vacancy.**

Kristin will fill the vacancy until the 2025 IK Synod Assembly.

The Synod Council was also required to elect a rostered minister member to the Executive Committee as Tim Graham was elected to the executive committee at the June Council meeting prior to being elected Bishop. All rostered members of the Council were eligible. A written ballot was provided and resulted in no vote of a majority to elect. The top two were Jody Winter and Ryan Bailey; a second written ballot was conducted.

**SC 2024/54: By a second written ballot, Jody Winter was elected to fill the rostered minister seat on the Synod Executive Committee.**

Dan Forehand stated his report was in Dropbox and did not have anything to add to it. He asked the Council to authorize various ministries per the report from Nancy Nyland as follows:

1. Christ Lutheran Chapel (30943), Elizabethtown, KY–Synod Authorized Worshipping Community; Pastor of Record: Pr. Robert Hetzel
2. So Much More Ministries (31306), Fort Wayne, IN–Synod Authorized Outreach Ministry Leader: Pr. Amy Beitelschees-Albers

The following ministries that are continuing as Strategic Ministries in 2025:

1. Mara Evangelical Church in Indianapolis (31390), Indianapolis, IN; Leader: Pr. Khai Cho
2. Grace & Glory Lutheran Church (30307), Goshen, KY; Leader: currently in transition (grant on hold)
3. The Apple Tree Center a ministry of Mt. Pleasant Lutheran Church (02237), Kendallville, IN; Leader: Kara Quinn, Mission Director
4. Bethel Lutheran Church (02278), Gary, IN; Leader: Pastor Joy Heine
5. Trinity Lutheran Church (02224), Lebanon, IN; Leader: Pr. Joshua Penumaka

**SC2024/55: Bishop Graham recommended the Council approve these ministries as designated. The Synod Council unanimously approved**

**the recommendation.**

Roster Concerns: Bishop Tim reported Pastor Nancy Nyland has requested to be placed On Leave from Call Status until December 1, 2024. She is going to take three months to rest and discern God's call for her chapter of life. He also reported Pastor Steve Flynn resigned as Executive Director of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. He also has requested On Leave from Call status for four months beginning September 8, 2024. Bishop Tim recommends the Council grant both requests.

**SC2024/56: Bishop Tim recommended the Council grant Pastor Nancy Nyland On Leave from Call status for one year. The Council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

**SC2024/57: Bishop Tim recommended the Council grant Pastor Steve Flynn On Leave from Call status for one year beginning September 8, 2024. The Council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

Bishop Tim reported a rostered member of the Synod Council was needed to be the Council liaison to the Constitution Committee. Bishop Tim recommended the Council appoint Pastor Grace Pardun to the committee. Bishop Tim indicated Pastor Grace has agreed to be appointed.

**SC2024/58: Bishop Tim recommended the appointment of Pastor Grace Pardun to the Constitution Committee as the Synod Council liaison. The Synod Council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

Bishop Tim recommended to the Council that New Hope in Reynolds, IN be removed from Synod Administration under Section S13.25 of the Synod Constitution as the congregation has completed the required actions of addressing its financial procedures and controls.

**SC2024/59: Bishop Tim recommended to the Council the congregation of New Hope in Reynolds, IN be removed from Synod Administration under S13.25 of the Synod Constitution. The Synod Council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

Bishop Tim reported the Synod Council needs to vote on his housing allowance. He is recommending the amount of \$21,448 for the year.

**SC2024/60: Bishop Tim recommended to the Synod Council to approve the amount of \$21,448 for housing allowance on an annual**

**basis. The Synod Council unanimously approved the recommendation.**

Evansville Resolution: Bishop Tim reminded the Council of its task in the Evansville Resolution passed by the 2024 Synod Assembly requiring the Council to investigate changes to increase the time congregations have to consider resolutions prior to the Synod Assembly. In addition to set rules for virtual assemblies for adequate and meaningful decisions of resolutions. This task will be undertaken by the Constitution Committee. The topic will be vetted at future meetings.

Racial Justice Task Force: Bishop Tim reported the task force will be meeting soon but no date had been set.

Mike Hoover provided a Mission Monitor report.

Rev. Dan Forehand led the Council in closing prayer.

The meeting ended at approximately 3 pm.

Future meeting dates

- November 8-9, 2024 (Friday-Saturday) + INKY Lutheran Center
- January 11, 2025 (Saturday morning Zoom, 9:30am-12:30pm)
- April 4-5, 2025 (Friday-Saturday) + INKY Lutheran Center
- Tentative: Thursday, June 5, 2025, 9:00am-12pm, First Day of Synod Assembly, Location TBD

## **INDIANA-KENTUCKY SYNOD, ELCA**

### **OUR MISSION:**

Empower, equip and encourage the people of God to make Christ known.

### **OUR VISION:**

Every person a Missionary

Every leader a Mission Director

Every Congregation, Conference and Ministry a Mission Center.

### **OUR CORE VALUES:**

Christ Centered Collaboration/Trust/Risk taking

Communication/Interconnected Compassion

Commitment and Faithfulness

### **FOUR PRIORITIES FOR SYNOD MINISTRY:**

- + Cultivate faith communities as centers for mission
- + Form and send faith-filled disciples for the daily baptismal vocations
- + Deepen and expand collaboration and communication
- + Identify, develop, and support missionary leaders

### **OUR OPERATING PRINCIPLES:**

- 1. Christ centered:** We pray together to determine God's will for us.
- 2. Mission focused:** Everything we do contributes to the mission of the church.
- 3. Ministry focused:** God has gifted each person for ministry.
- 4. Committed to collaboration:** Working together for the good of all and for mission.
- 5. Open to taking risks:** We encourage ourselves and each other to try new things.
- 6. Committed to excellence:** What we are called to do we do well.
- 7. People focused:** We respond to others with care and compassion.
- 8. Open to resources:** We want to use all the gifts God sends us.
- 9. Sharing decisions:** We use each person's knowledge/wisdom/experience.
- 10. Sharing accountability:** We are accountable to God, each other and the Wider Church.