

**The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod
Minutes of the Synod Council Meeting
September 23-24, 2011**

The Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod Council met at Lutherhill, La Grange, Texas, on September 23-24, 2011. This SC meeting was the Council's annual two-day retreat for the ongoing orientation of newly elected members and staff.

In attendance:

Council Members: Evan Moilan; Bishop Mike Rinehart; Stephanie Wehring; John Turnquist; Don Hodde; Paul Monroe; Pastor Sue Beall; Pastor Barb Simmers; Diane Campbell; Pastor Bradley Fuerst; Pastor Brad Otto; and Arthur Murphy.

Synod Staff: Pastor Don Carlson; Assistant to the Bishop Peggy Hahn; Pastor Pedro Suárez.

Guests: Keith Magnusson of Kairos and Associates; and Russ Crabtree of Holy Cow! Consulting. (Saturday only.)

Absent: Dudley Piland; Grace Banks; Corey Heidt; and Gregory Goedecke.

Evan Moilan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. on Friday, September 23, 2011.

We were welcomed to the Lutherhill Camp and Retreat Center by Lutherhill Director Matt Kindsvatter and Lutherhill Interim Executive Director Laurence Bade. The new SC members and new Synod Office staff introduced themselves, followed by the returning SC members and synod staff. Bishop Mike led the SC in a brief worship service and Bible study devotion, centered on Philippians Chapter 2.

SC.11.09.01 Motion to receive the May 2011 SC minutes (SC.11.05). Motion by Evan Moilan. Motion passes.

SC.11.09.02 Motion to receive the synod treasurer's report. Motion by Evan Moilan. Motion passes.

SC.11.09.03 Introduction to the Lay Leadership Challenge by Paul Monroe.

Roster changes and on leave from call requests presented by Assistant to the Bishop Don Carlson:

SC.11.09.04 Motion to approve on leave from call status for Pastor James Echols, effective June 9, 2011, and Pastor Amy Zeitlow, effective June 15, 2011. Motion by Don Carlson. Motion passes.

SC.11.09.05 Motion to approve retired status for Pastor Kathy Haueisen, effective September 1, 2011, and Pastor Fred deOliveira, effective August 1, 2011. Motion by Don Carlson. Motion passes.

SC.11.09.06 Motion to regretfully decline the request of Pastor Don Cole for a Synod Council call. Motion by Paul Monroe. Motion passes.

The SC meeting recessed for the evening at 10:05 p.m.

Saturday, September 24, 2011

Evan Moilan called the meeting to order at 8:20 a.m.

Bishop Mike and Pedro Suárez led the SC in a song of praise for the morning devotion.

SC.11.09.07 Arthur presented the synod constitution changes required/suggested by the 2011 Churchwide Assembly. Without objection, the SC agreed to have the EC review all changes and recommend a draft for the SC to approve at its next meeting in November 2011. Thereafter, the draft will be sent to synod congregations in anticipation of a vote at the 2012 Synod Assembly to finalize the synod constitution.

SC.11.09.08 Keith Magnusson and Russ Crabtree presented a consulting view of the synod based on lay leader and rostered leader surveys, face-to-face conversations, and research in the synod's history and ministries for visioning and strategic planning. This presentation is the beginning of a conversation on strategic planning. Survey data is always the beginning of a conversation, and never the end. This is a system-wide symbolic representation of the survey data.

Russ has prepared a one or two-page Executive Summary Report for the SC to consider publishing to the synod congregations. Keith suggests a personal letter from Bishop Mike to leaders to communicate the high level of participation and celebrate some good things and introduce the growing edges that the synod may need to incorporate in its visioning and strategic planning.

Suggested Next Steps:

- Thank and report back to those who participated in the process.
- Organize "Bishop's Gatherings" with key leaders in October/November or early 2012 to begin charting a course and developing the Strategic Plan.
- Create a draft vision statement at the conclusion of the Bishop's Gatherings, in order to present it to the 2012 Synod Assembly.
- Report back to the entire synod.

Recess for lunch at 11:45 a.m.

Executive Board meeting to propose SC meeting dates:

Nov. 12, Augustana, Houston

Jan. 28, 2012, Golden Triangle, Port Arthur

SC.11.09

April 21, Baton Rouge, LA.

May 10, Houston

Synod Assembly, May 11 and 12, Houston (Lakewood UMC Church)

Sept. 14-15, Lutherhill

Nov. 10 Brenham

Evan called the meeting back to order from lunch recess at 1:00 p.m.

SC.11.09.09 Bishop's Report. Bishop Mike reviews the history, activity, congregations, and staff of the synod for the benefit of new SC members. Synod mission and vision priorities are currently WISE, which stands for Worship, Intergenerational Ministry, Spiritual Growth, and Evangelism.

SC.11.09.10 Motion to hold the 2013 Synod Assembly at Camp Allen, near Navasota, Texas, on Thursday-Saturday, May 16-18, 2013. Motion by Diane Campbell. Motion passes.

SC.11.09.11 Peggy Hahn's report. Report on youth and family ministry activities and justice ministries in Peru and El Salvador. Additional report on Bastrop, Lutherhill, and Smithville wildfires.

SC.11.09.12 Additional report by Pastor Don Carlson on SALM and TEEM ministries and candidacy issues.

SC.11.09.13 Report by Pastor Pedro Suárez, Director for Evangelical Mission, on the mission table concept and progress, and on other mission support and stewardship issues for evangelical mission.

Additional comments by Evan Moilan: Nominations committee to be appointed by SC email vote, prior to November SC meeting, in order to get the Nominating Committee started soon. SC member assignments to synod congregations also will be coming by email from Evan.

Additional discussion of Kairos Consulting statistical results and initial report on survey data and key leader interviews.

SC.11.09.14 Motion to adjourn. Motion by Diane Campbell. Motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arthur Murphy
TLGC Synod Secretary