

**Northwest Washington Synod
Synod Council Meeting Minutes 15 November 2025
Camp Lutherwood, Bellingham, WA**

- Present:** Luke Allgeyer, Andy Arnold, Shelley Bryan Wee, Dan Clements, Salvador Cossio, Kay Edgerton, Paul Eldred, Sara Funkhouser, Netsie Griffith, Shane Lambing, Sam Martinez, Sherianne Molzahn Caldwell, Cindy Shultz, Dan Squires, and Elly Stitt
- Staff:** Tabetha Myatt
- Absent:** David Kinner, Sam Sseba

Call to Order and Land Acknowledgment

Vice President Kay called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m. and shared the following land acknowledgment:

- We acknowledge the original inhabitants of this area, specifically, the Lummi, Nooksak, and Semiahmoo, the Coast Salish people. Since time immemorial, they have hunted, fished, gathered, and taken care of these lands. We respect their sovereignty, their right to self-determination, and honor their sacred spiritual connection with the land and water. We will strive to be honest about our past mistakes and bring about a future that includes their people, stories, and voices to form a more just and equitable society.

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

The Meeting Agenda was approved by acclamation.

Moved, Seconded and Carried (MSC)

SC2025.11.15.01 to approve the consent agenda consisting of:

- Approval of the minutes of the September 20 Synod Council Meeting
- Receipt of the following written staff reports as presented, including any addendums:
 - Report of Bishop – Shelley Bryan Wee
 - Report of the Assistant to the Bishop – Andy Yee
 - Report of the DEM – Judy Brennan
- Receipt of the Policy Review Committee Report
- Approval of the following roster actions:
 - Extended a Synod Call to:
 - Rev. Mia Baumgartner - Manager of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing at University of Washington Medical Center, Seattle
 - Dcn. Susan Franke – Specialty Chaplain at Swedish Medical Center
 - Retired:
 - Rev. Mary Lindberg
- Receipt of the following notifications of roster changes (Spreadsheet in Teams):
 - Death:
 - Rev. Donald Cornell – 9/28/2025
 - Called
 - Rev. Heidi Fish – 11/1/2025 – Pastor, Term Call, Bethesda
 - Rev. Martin Eldred - 10/12/2025 - Bethany, Bainbridge
 - Rev. Jill Nichols Hicks - 9/2/2025 - Northlake, Kenmore
 - Ordinations:
 - Rev. Jill Nichols Hicks - 9/12/2025
 - Dcn. Arlene Smith – 11/22/2025
 - Transfer In:
 - Rev. Bruce Kuenzel – 10/14/2025 – Minneapolis Area Synod
 - Rev. Martin Eldred – 10/12/2025 – Metro DC Synod

- Transfer Out:
 - Rev. Callie Moothart – 11/19/2025 – Southwestern Washington Synod
 - Rev. Joshua J Stormberg-Wojcik – 7/18/2025 – Oregon Synod
 - Rev. Phyllis D Anderson – 9/3/2025 – Sierra Pacific Synod

UPDATES SINCE THE LAST MEETING

Sale of Property in Concrete

- The synod finally closed the sale of the property in Concrete and ended up receiving more money than was originally offered. [See bishop's report for further details]

Equity Team Work with the Organizing for Mission Network (OFMN)

- Members of the Equity Team are continuing their listening sessions.
- Council members yet needing to have one-on-one listening sessions scheduled with them are: **Sherianne, Dan Clements, Dan Squires, Andy Arnold, Elly, and Netsie.**

Candidacy Committee Applicant Letters

- At the June meeting of the Synod Candidacy Committee it was decided to delay a candidate's entrance into candidacy for two years with recommendations of what they might work on before reapplying.
- This resulted in a series of conversations and letters protesting this decision from the candidate's pastor, the candidate, the candidate's friend who had accompanied him to his meeting with the committee, and members of the candidate's congregation's leadership.
- These letters were sent over the past four months to the Candidacy Committee, the Bishop, the Executive Committee, Presiding Bp. Eaton, and members of the Synod Council.
- The following has taken place in response to these letters:
 - The bishop has had conversations/meetings with the candidate's pastor, the candidate and Bp. Eaton.
 - The Candidacy Committee met again after the June meeting to review their decision and decided to stay true to their original decision.
 - The letters and reasons for them were discussed at the October Executive Committee (EC) meeting.
- It was the consensus of the EC to support the decision of the Candidacy Committee (CC), and VP Kay will be responding to the letters which were received prior to the EC October meeting.
- A subgroup of the CC will be meeting again with the candidate to further discuss his concerns.

NEW BUSINESS

Designation of Bishop Emeritus Status

MSC

SC2025.11.15.02

to resolve that the Rev. Wm. Chris Boerger and the Rev. Kirby Unti be named Bishop Emeriti of our Synod, and be it further resolved that the title of Bishop Emeritus is an honorary title of thanksgiving and respect for past service and that it confers no authority or responsibility for present or future service.

Region 1 Continuing Resolution

MC

SC2025.11.15.03

to add the following Continuing Resolution to the Synod Constitution: S15.12.25A. The NWWA Synod is committed to supporting the common work of the six synods in Region 1 and to funding the work of the Region 1 financial services office at the rate specified by the formula adopted by the Region 1 Governing Board.

Appointment of Generosity Team

MSC

SC2025.11.15.04

To establish a Generosity Team to facilitate generosity in all three expressions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – congregations, synods and churchwide.

All Expressions

- Bp. Shelley referenced the **All Expressions** document which encourages giving simultaneously to all three expressions of the ELCA.
- We are the pilot synod for the ELCA for this stewardship emphasis.
- When the Generosity Team meets with people, they will be discussing all three expressions of the church.
- There will also be a Capital Campaign in the future which is part of **All Expressions**. It will include five areas in addition to camps and campus ministry.
- There will be an additional document for the Capital Campaign.

FOR DISCUSSION

Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Team

- We were asked by Reconciling Works (RW) about having a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Team.
- Open Door Ministries used to do this kind of work in the synod; the money that Open Door Ministries had has been used to advocate for RIC activities (i.e. organizing involvement in Pride Parades)
- We need to consider establishing such a team, especially to help take some of the load off Susan for publicizing and encouraging participation in Pride Parades throughout the synod.
- **Synod Council members are asked to look at the following information from Reconciling Works provided in the link below about synod commitments and ways to live this out in our synod.**
[A Synod's Guide to Being RIC](#)
- Based on these suggestions **Luke will bring some recommendations** to our next meeting.

Budget Planning Process and Timeline

Dan was called on to share the current iteration of this process and timeline.

- He would like to make the process open and transparent; he and Tabetha are working to clean-up line items in the budget that either need further clarity, combining with other items or changing.
- The budget is very tight right now; Finance Committee meets on 11/20 and will roll out opportunities for input.
- For questions directed to Dan, please use his synod email address: treasurer@lutheransnw.org

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meeting Dates

- The next Executive Committee meeting is via Zoom, December 11, 4:30 pm.
- Synod Council: January 17, 2026 tentatively scheduled at the Synod Office; people from Central Lutheran are being invited to come and share about expansive language.
 - Judy is asked to report about SAWCs filing reports.

The meeting was adjourned by VP Kay at 3:51 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Netsie Griffith,
Synod Council Secretary