

**SYNOD COUNCIL MEMBERS**

<i>The Rev. E. Patricia Avila</i>	2026
<b>Dr. Raymond Cheung</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Ms. Monique Davis</b>	<b>2026</b>
<i>The Rev. George Dietrich</i>	2024
<b>*Bishop Paul Egensteiner</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>*S. Dcn. David Ehlers</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>S.Dcn. Philip Jenks</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>*Mr. John Litke, Treasurer</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Mr. Erich Markert</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>Ms. Lily Sage Mathias</b>	<b>2024</b>
<i>The Rev. Ernst Mossl</i>	2026
<b>The Rev. David Parsons</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>Mr. Thomas Sargent</b>	<b>2026</b>
<i>*The Rev. Robert Schoepflin, Sect</i>	2026
<b>Mr. Cecil (Chip) Spurlock-Shackelton</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>*The Rev. Gary Squire</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>The Rev. Brooke Swertfager</b>	<b>2024</b>
<b>*Mr. Christopher Vergara, VP</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>The Rev. Dr. Kimberly Wilson</b>	<b>2024</b>

**STAFF**

**Ms. Regina Daniels**  
**The Rev. Gladys Diaz**  
**Mr. Branden Dupree**  
**Ms. Karen Falco**  
**S. Dcn. Donna-Mari Fieldsa**  
**Mr. Mark Goodwin**  
**Mr. Roberto Lara**  
**The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski**  
**Ms. Maria Rodas**  
**S.Dcn. Gayle Ruege**  
**Ms. Leticia Silva**

**Bold = present**

*Italics = excused absence*

\*Member of Executive Committee

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**Opening Devotions:** *Bishop Egensteiner: Fifth Mark of the Church*

**Observer:** *S.Dcn. Philip Jenks*

**Call to Order:** *VP Vergara at 9:10 am*

**1. Adoption of the agenda.**

Adopted as amended. *Item 3.C.b will be deferred to the Nov 18 meeting.*

**2. Adoption of the Synod Council minutes 10 June 2023**

Adopted as presented

**3. New Business**

**A. Cost of Living Adjustment (3.2% COLA): 2024 Compensation Calculations**

**B. 2024 Minimum Expectations for Clergy Compensation**

**ACTION SC23:09/01**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council approve the 3.2% COLA as reflected in the 2024 Minimum Expectations for clergy compensation.

**ADOPTED**

- C. Synod Council unexpired terms**
  - a. Clergy woman / Lay woman

**ACTION SC23:09/02**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council appoint the Rev. Kristin Wuerffel to complete the Synod Council unexpired term of the Rev. Jeanine Owens and S.Dcn. Denise Rutherford Gill to complete the Synod Council unexpired term of Cynthia Corley through May 2024 effective immediately.

**ADOPTED**

- b. Executive Committee**

Elections will be held at the November 18 meeting

**D. Grace, Forest Hills: Sale of Property**

**ACTION SC23:09/03**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council take no exception to the sale of property located at 89-74 Cooper Avenue, Rego Park, NY 11374 by the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church, Forest Hills, NY.

**ADOPTED**

**4. Old Business**

**A. Benevolence Opportunity Proposal**

Constructive discussion regarding the revised proposal ensued. Suggestions for revision were offered. It was determined that the Exec Committee prepare and present guidelines that will serve as policy for the distribution of funds from the sale of synod owned properties and that the proposal for the benevolence distribution be a separate document for consideration.

**B. (Former) Fordham congregation update**

Bishop Egensteiner will schedule a meeting with the members of the former Fordham congregation regarding their written request for a congregation meeting.

**C. Northwest Diocese / Tanzania: 3<sup>rd</sup> installment (update)**

The Executive Committee authorized the release of the third installment for the construction project at the Bukoba Hotel in accordance with the MNYS-ELCT loan agreement.

**5. Report of the Bishop**

**A. Calls**

- a. The Rev. Robert Fritch: *Retirement status effective 1 Dec 2023*
- b. The Rev. Nancy Rakoczy: *Retirement status effective 1 Sep 2023*

**ACTION SC23:09/04**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant retirement status to The Rev. Robert Fritch effective 1 December 2023 and The Rev. Nancy Rakoczy effective 1 September 2023.

**ADOPTED**

- c. The Rev. Marc Herbst: *On Leave from call status effective 10 Jul 2023*

**ACTION SC23:09/05**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status to the Rev. Marc Herbst effective 10 July 2023.

**ADOPTED**

- d. The Rev. Austin Newberry: *On Leave from Call status effective 30 April 2023*

**ACTION SC23:09/06**

**RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Council grant On Leave from Call status to the Rev. Austin Newberry effective 30 April 2023.

**ADOPTED**

**B. Appointments**

- a. The Rev. Zachary Dean: *Worship Committee, Chair effective 25 Aug 2023*
- b. The Rev. Khader Khalilia: *New York State Conference of Churches: MNYS Rep*

**C. Staff**

**a. Executive Staff Reports (May-Aug 2023)**

Executive staff (written) reports for May – Aug 2023 were provided to the Synod Council for review. S.Dcn. Fieldsa gave an oral report.

**b. Property / Legal Updates**

K. Falco presented updates

**c. Kaitlin Kowalec / Lori Scaffidi**

Bp. Egensteiner reported that Kaitlin Kowalec left the staff as the Administrative Assistant for Communications and Events in June and Lori Scaffidi joined the staff as the Communications and Events manager on August 1.

**d. Staff Reviews**

Bp. Egensteiner reported that staff reviews were conducted during the month of August.

**D. Pastoral Care / Ecumenical & Interfaith participation**

**a. Pastoral calls / meetings / visits with rostered & lay leaders (35) \***

**• Congregation visits / Councils**

- Messiah, Staten Island
- Atonement, Jackson Heights
- Gloria Dei, Huntington Station / St. Peter's, Huntington Station / King of Kings, Melville
- St. Paul's, Liberty
- Dobbs Ferry
- Epiphany, Brooklyn
- First, Poughkeepsie
- Redeemer, Queens Village
- St. John's – Incarnation, Lynbrook
- St. Paul's International, Floral Park

**b. MNYS Committees & Groups / Lutheran Partners**

- Koinonia 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary events
- Long Island Lutheran Middle and High School Annual Golf Open
- United Lutheran Seminary: Martin Zimman and Conor Brooks
- Pinecrest Lutheran Leadership Ministry
- Tappan Zee Conference \* (1:1 meetings with 12 pastors) / Jun 12 & 13)
- Western Nassau Conference \* (1:1 meetings with 10 pastors / Jun 15)
- Eastern Nassau Conference \* (1:1 meetings with 11 pastors / Jun 20)
- Southwest Nassau Conference \* (1:1 meetings with 8 pastors / Jun 22)
- BET (monthly)
- Region 7 Bishops (weekly)
- Conference of Bishops (semi-monthly)
- Lutheran Transitional Ministry Association

**c. Ecumenical Meetings**

- The Rev. Dr. Cheryl Dudley / American Baptist
- The Rev. Dr. Dien Taylor / LCMS

**E. Vision Team**

- a. Meeting: September 16

**6. Report of the Vice-President**

- VP Vergara has had the opportunity to visit and worship with many of our congregations during the Summer months.
- Attends regular meetings with the ELCA Vice Presidents
- Invited Roberto Lara to report on the recent meetings of the Commission for Renewal of the Lutheran Church

**7. Treasurer's Report**

**A. Mission Support (August 2023)**

The August 31, 2023, Mission Support offerings totaled \$71,025.12. YTD Mission Support actuals through August 31, 2023, are \$480,696.65 which is \$20,124.15 more than YTD August 2022.

**B. Financials (July 2023)**

**8. Afterthoughts (as necessary)**

**A. Observer:**

Observer be selected and notified by S.Dcn. Ruege for the November meeting.

**9. Observer's Evaluation**

S.Dcn. Jenks provide his observations and evaluation of the meeting's flow and productivity.

**Executive Committee Meeting: October 12, 2023 (if necessary) / November 9, 2023**

**Synod Council meeting: November 18, 2023**

**\*Proposed items for the Synod Council agenda should be submitted to Gayle Ruege for consideration by the Executive Committee by Oct 5, 2023 / November 2**