

Board for International Mission
January 29, 2021
Via Zoom Videoconference

Board Members Present: Kristine Bruss, John Edson, Rev. Magdiel Fajardo, Terence Lung, Rev. David Stechholz, Allan Voss, James Wolf, and Rev. William Zwick.

Rev. Roberto Rojas joined the meeting in progress.

Board Members Absent: Bernie Seter

Staff Members Present: Barbara Below, Rev. Dan McMiller, Deaconess Pam Nielsen, Rev. Kevin Robson and Jeannie Smithson.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by the vice chairman, John Edson, at 9:00 a.m. and was opened with a devotion led by Rev. David Stechholz.

New Board Member Introduction: Rev. William Zwick was introduced as a newly appointed member of the board.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the September 24, 2020 meeting.

Chief Mission Officer Report: Kevin Robson reviewed his written report highlighting a number of issues. The joint report with the BNM (*LCMS Triennial Mission and Ministry Emphases and Priorities: Ideas and Guidance for Walking Together*) has been published. The Synod is doing quite well financially. Revenues have been strong. OIM is in the black as of the end of December. Network Supported Missionary (NSM) funding has remained strong. Mission Advancement has done a great job of remaining in contact with donors.

Unit Executive's Report: Dan McMiller noted a number of items in his report. Staffing at the International Center is a priority, especially the need for a Recruitment Director. Missionary retention is a grave concern, and missionary care remains a top priority. Safety issues are increasing around the world. Missionary isolation is a challenge. Nine new missionaries have been called and placed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil through the Alliance Missionary Program.

St. Louis Operations Report. Christian Boehlke, Director of Missionary Services, joined the meeting to report on St. Louis Operations. The LCMS has maintained missionaries in the field during the COVID-19 pandemic. Not being able to travel and other restrictions have taken their toll. Deploying new missionaries and building their networks have been challenging. The pandemic has required changes in how we engage the church at large. "Mission Unpacked" was recently launched, and 225 participants are currently enrolled. 56 volunteers are participating in the new online conversational partners program.

Calls/Appointments: The board went into executive session to discuss missionary calls. After returning from executive session, the board issued the following calls and appointments:

Career Missionaries:

Ms. Johanna Heidorn	Appointment	Latin America
Rev. Nathaniel Jensen	Call	Eurasia
Ms. Emma Ledford	Solemn Appointment	
Ms. Ashely Lehr	Appointment	Latin America
Mr. Anton Lutz	Appointment	Asia
Mrs. Ruth Maita	Call	Latin America
Gustavo Arturo Maita Espinoza	Solemn Appointment	
Rev. Tyler McMiller	Call	Eurasia
Cruz Melba Contreras Quevedo	Solemn Appointment	
Rev. Paul Nelson	Call	Asia
Mrs. Genevieve Nelson	Solemn Appointment	
Rev. Dr. Christian Tiews	Call	Eurasia
Mrs. Gadula Tiews		

International Educator:

Mrs. Gayle Renken	Call	Asia
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It was then reported that the following calls were accepted:

Career Missionaries:

Rev. Jonah Burakowski	Called	Latin America
Rev. Andrew Fedder	Called	Eurasia
Mr. John Tape	Appointed	Dominican Republic

The were no regional field transitions to report.

The Board also approved the following peaceful releases:

John Loum	Career	Africa
Sarah Kanoy	Career	Africa
Anthony DiLiberto	Career	Latin America

Benjamin Vanderhyde	GEO	Asia
David Warner	Career	Latin America
Roger James	Career	Asia

International Schools: Following lunch, the board went into executive session to discuss the International Schools. After returning from executive session, the board issued a call to Alan Freeman to serve as Head of School of Concordia International School Hanoi. Pastor Robson then reported on the current status of all three international schools.

Bylaws 3.8.2.2 and 3.8.3.2: John Edson noted the requirement of Bylaws 3.8.2.2 and 3.8.3.2 that the Board for National Mission and the Board for International Mission “gather pertinent and sufficient information from the Synod’s members that will facilitate the boards’ assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Synod’s triennial mission and ministry,” and that they “develop accordingly a joint overture to the national convention for beneficial amendments thereto.” Rev. David Stechholz and Kristine Bruss were appointed to work with representatives of the Board for National Mission to gather the necessary information and draft a proposed joint overture.

John Edson noted a request from the Board for National Mission that we appoint one or more representatives to serve on a joint subcommittee on the working relationship and authority of the mission boards. After discussion, the board appointed John Edson as the BIM’s representative to the subcommittee.

Resolution 4-05 – Synod 175th Anniversary. Barb Below noted that 2019 Resolution 4-05 requires the President’s office to coordinate with the Council of Presidents and the Boards for National and International Mission to designate a date for the synod-wide celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the LCMS and determine how to facilitate the celebration. She reported on tentative dates and the plans being made for celebrating the anniversary throughout 2022.

Ends Policies: John Edson led the board in a review of the current Ends Policies and how they correspond with the 2019 LCMS Mission Priorities. After a lengthy discussion regarding the Ends Policies, Rev. William Zwick, John Edson, James Wolf and Allan Voss were appointed to a committee chaired by James Wolf to develop new proposed Ends Policies in consultation with the Chief Mission Officer and Executive Director and input from the Regional Directors.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m. and was closed with a closing devotion led by Pastor Stechholz.

K. Allan Voss
Secretary