

**Board for National Mission Meeting
June 5, 2020
Zoom Meeting**

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Briel at 9:04 am. All members (Rev. Peter Bender, Rev. Steve Briel, Ms. Carla Claussen, Rev. Tim Droegemueller, Rev. Dr. Al Espinosa, Mrs. Carol Hack Broome, Mr. Patrick Kyler, Mrs. Janis McDaniels, Mrs. Martha Milas, Mrs. Crysten Sanchez, Rev. Dr. Dien Taylor) were present.

Staff in attendance were Rev. Kevin Robson, Rev. Bob Zagore, Mrs. Jeannie Smithson, Mrs. Barb Below, and Ms. Stacey Egger.

Rev. Bender led opening devotions with a meditation on “Do Not Be Afraid”. We prayed hymn 768.

New Board Member

Mr. Patrick Kyler was introduced to the board. The board and staff took some time to introduce themselves to Mr. Kyler.

Approval of Minutes

The February 2020 minutes were presented. A small amendment was made. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mrs. Milas and seconded by Ms. Claussen. Motion was passed unanimously.

President Report, Rev. Matthew Harrison

Rev. Harrison was unable to join us.

Chief Mission Officer Report, Rev. Kevin Robson

See attached report. Highlights: Rev. Robson gave an overview of the work being done in St. Louis and internationally in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Center has been working from home since March. They are reopening in phases.

From the international front, missionary families are mostly staying in the field. Only nine are repatriating. International schools are distance learning.

From the office of Pastoral Education, they are completed with the research phase of church worker recruitment initiative. A takeaway from that is that the most influential factor and time in someone’s life to bring them into professional church work is through confirmation and catechism classes. There will be a campaign to put resources in the hands of the congregations to effectively engage a wider swath of our young people to consider church work positions. They will be producing Synod 101 videos specifically for pastors in the PALS program, but others as well. The goal of these videos is to define how the Synod actually works for those who may be unfamiliar with the process.

LCMS Communications has done incredible work away from IC. Not only have they continued their typical productions but they have also produced various responses to COVID-19, the George Floyd death and national responses, and more.

Mission Advancement has been responding to the COVID-19 crisis. It is still unclear what the long term effects of the pandemic will be on donor behavior. They’ve seen a decrease in giving across the board. They’ve made an effort to make personal contact with donors, not to ask for money but rather to thank donors and offer conversation. These calls have been well received

and, thanks to COVID, have allowed for more personal interaction with donors who would typically be at work or too busy to take a call.

Budget moratoriums are continuing through September 30th. There is a suppression of normal work and it is far from optimal. But the Lord is disciplining us and training us to think about the abundance of what is actually present. There is a call to work with the first article gifts that we've been given to their utmost. To rely on one another.

The Synod Board of Directors adopted a resolution to hold at least two of their four meetings a year via zoom. They have encouraged all boards/commissions, task forces, etc. to do the same. The BIM resolved another zoom meeting in September. We'll discuss our October meeting this afternoon.

A question from Rev. Dr. Espinosa: how are the the budget cuts impacting marriage and family ministry? Right now there is a hold on hiring new employees. There is encouragement to find a way around a full time staff person so that the work actually does happen. If we don't fix the family, we'll never be able to address an individual on campus, in urban or inner city, rural and small town, or any of the other ministry areas we have in the ONM

Office of National Mission Unit Executive Report, Rev. Bob Zagore

See attached report. Highlights: In response to COVID, Disaster Response has been creating resources for the church because this is very similar to a natural disaster. Suffering is a way that God gives us gifts that we wouldn't allow ourselves to have any other way.

In regards to the situation around George Floyd's death, Rev. Roosevelt Gray said, "The church can't stop being church in the way she responds to this. The way the church responds is through word and sacrament."

Multiple conferences and gatherings have had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. The ONM is looking to virtual options. That is one of the ways they are managing budgeting crunches and considerations.

They are organizing a plan to contact all pastors in the synod. In the midst of this crisis, isolation is a huge issue. Chaplain Daenzer is providing online devotions, pointing people back to their own pastor and congregation. A media campaign was prepared to welcome back to church. "Everything has changed except Jesus. Find Him here." We have seen a whole church body run on adrenaline for months now. That can only go for so long. There are already plans in the works for aftercare with Doxology, Grace Place, and more.

There has been \$2.93M raised from various funds. \$1M has come from people donating in response to President Harrison's appeal. These are given to workers, congregations, and schools who need financial assistance.

Schools are moving to 100% online accreditation. This will significantly reduce costs for individual schools for getting accreditation. RSOs are having tremendous difficulties. We'll have to shift how we work. It won't necessarily be coming out of a central office anymore, but rather where we train volunteers and the like to do the work. Rev. Zagore expressed his thankfulness for the great people in ONM.

These are the current ONM vacancies: Rural and Small Town Ministries, Soldiers of the Cross, Stewardship, Assoc. Director of Schools, Health and Family, Hispanic Ministry, Specialized Pastoral Ministry, and Veterans of the Cross.

Rev. Zagore commented on the letter that has been circulated from the Black Clergy Caucus. There is great pain and great passion. Rev. Gray is currently working to put resources together and get supplies and support out there.

Foundation Board Report, Mrs. Hack Broome

Foundation applied for the PPP Federal loans and were approved in the second round of funding. However, since they have emergency funds available, and since the stated intent of the loans was to rescue companies that would not survive without them, they chose not to accept.

The Foundation assists the Church through gift planning, primarily of legacy type gifts, and hence usually involving the donors' estate lawyers. There was great financial response leading into the first quarter, but it dropped considerably through the first quarter due to the shut-downs. During the last quarter, charitable estate plans were much more difficult to set in place, due to estate lawyers being unavailable for such work due to COVID related restrictions.

Mrs. Hack Broome is the chair the membership committee. No openings are projected this year but there is expectation in the future and it would be helpful to have names of individuals with financial or business skills, particularly pastors, to consider nominating for board positions in the future.

The Foundation is in the process of rebranding, which is progressing very well.

Break for Lunch

Theological Presentation

Rev. Dr. Benjamin Mayes

Chairman and Asst. Professor of Historical Theology at CTS, Fort Wayne, IN

“Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description: LCMS Constitution VI.2 historically illumined and practically applied”

Rev. Dr. Mayes led us in a study of the Syncretistic Controversy from the mid 1600s in Germany, and the Prussian Union from the 1800s in Germany, and why they matter today.

Life Ministry Director Introduction

Deaconess Tiffany Manor was introduced to the board. She is settling into her role nicely, even after having spent only ten minutes at the International Center since she began working. She requests prayers for her daughter and grandchild, and that those serving in LCMS Life Ministry would be encouraged as well. Share contact information with other folks willing to help with life ministry. Prayers for the wellness of our workers who are working harder than ever on work that is more difficult than ever.

Office of National Mission Program Ministry Reports Monitoring:

The board reviewed the program ministry reports presented in the docket, the first round using the reporting template. It seemed helpful to the ministry directors that followed it. The board was encouraged by the amount of information we received in the midst of COVID.

Due to the difficulty of managing the work we have to do, it was suggested that the BNM add another Zoom day meeting throughout the year (three zoom and one in-person). This has been tasked to the Executive Committee.

Rev. Dr. Taylor referenced the movement occurring nationally after the murder of George Floyd, including the statement made by President Harrison and the Black Clergy Caucus. He suggested that we review our ends policies with respect to racism, social injustice, and other is-

sues along those lines. We will not produce a statement (Rev. Harrison has already done so), we won't micromanage the ONM, but will make a point to say that we have determined as a board that we realize this can not be relegated to one specific ministry (Black Ministry), but that we need to systematically review our policies in this light. It will allow other ministry areas to work with those policies in their systematic response. We discussed that our policies are a living document and this is an appropriate response for our board.

Rev. Dr. Espinosa suggested that a review of our ends policies also be done regarding cultural influences impacting the marriage and family in relation to all ONM ministries (as this contributes to racism and other societal maladies). Rev. Briel pointed out that doing this now might result in the first review taking too long. Rev. Dr. Espinosa acquiesced.

Rev. Bender moved that the chairman appoint a committee of three to take up the issues with racism and injustice, reviewing our ends policies and informing policies to address these issues. Rev. Droegemueller seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Rev. Briel appointed Rev. Dr. Taylor to chair the committee, and Mrs. Sanchez and Mrs. Milas to fill the committee. Rev. Bender offered his assistance as well.

The ministry directors provided feedback for the board in regards to the ends policies. The executive committee and Rev. Bender will look into them. One piece of feedback came from Youth Ministry, specifically, do young people who skip going to college fall under the jurisdiction of youth ministry or campus ministry? The board determined that this is an operational question and it will be directed to Rev. Zagore, and Rev. Robson if necessary.

The question was raised by Rev. Dr. Taylor as to whether we should systematically review what is being addressed by the template. Should that change so that we can accomplish our goal of seeing how the policies are being enacted? Yes. We should also systematically review the scope of the whole policy document to see if there are any policies inadvertently ignored. We will also review each mission area's report and see how their work is happening within the policies. Does this work reflect what the board wants done? If not, we have the freedom to change language.

Rev. Rob Jarvis Letter

A letter from Rev. Rob Jarvis from the Confessional Lutherans for Christ's Commission was sent to Rev. Dr. Espinosa and presented to the board. The board discussed that it was not an issue appropriate for the Board for National Mission, but rather the Office of National Mission. Rev. Dr. Taylor moved that the letter presented be commended to the Office of Nation Mission, Mrs. McDaniels seconded. Passed unanimously.

Scheduling

The board discussed adding in another Zoom day meeting in this summer to deal with current business. Ms. Claussen moved that both the October 2020 and February 2021 meetings be conducted via Zoom due to budgetary and pandemic concerns. Mrs. Milas seconded. Passed unanimously.

Our next meeting will be October 15 or 16, 2020; Rev. Dr. Espinosa will be the Chaplain.

We closed with prayer, a litany highlighting the work of each ONM ministry area led by Rev. Bender.

Rev. Dr. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. McDaniels seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.