

**Board for National Mission Meeting  
September 12, 2019  
Hilton St. Louis Airport Hotel  
St. Louis, MO**

**Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order by Rev. Briel at 8:07 am. All members were in attendance except Rev. Dien Taylor who arrived later in the morning.

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

Rev. Briel lead us in opening devotions with Matins.

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Election of Officers:**

Rev. Espinosa nominated Rev. Briel as chair. Rev. Droegemueller seconded. Passed unanimously. Mrs. Milas nominated Rev. Espinosa as Vice-Chair. Rev. Droegemueller seconded. Passed unanimously. Mrs. Sanchez was named as secretary by acclamation.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Discussion on the process of minutes being disseminated to the board. After the meeting, the executive committee will have the minutes within two weeks. The secretary will then disseminate them to the board as a whole. The official approval of the minutes will take place at the following board meeting. The June 2019 minutes were presented. There were three small amendments. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Rev. Bender and seconded by Ms. Claussen. Motion was passed unanimously.

**Chief Mission Officer Report, Rev. Kevin Robson:** See attached report.

Highlights: Rev. Robson expressed thankfulness for 2019 convention. He spoke on resolution 4-03A which made Making Disciples for Life the triennial ministry emphasis and also affirmed the seven mission priorities. He spoke on the restructuring of the RSO program which will happen under the great leadership of Deaconess Krans. The 125th anniversary of overseas mission was celebrated. The financial condition of the Synod continues to be strong, thanks in part to a strong performance from Mission Advancement and the sale of the three Hong Kong properties. The LCMS has no external debt and there is very small borrowing internally. Soli Deo Gloria!

Rev. Robson looks forward to the church worker student recruitment initiative. This will include a quarter of a million dollars in the budget as a push to dramatically increase enrollment for students preparing for church work in Concordia University System and the Seminaries. They are working with a systematic approach to understand why students have entered, how they are doing, and how to keep them holistically healthy.

**Discussion Introduction of Resolution 4-04A:** In the whereases of this resolution, the BNM/BIM receive freedom to express ourselves publicly to the synod at large. Specifically, we have been tasked to produce two resources to be used during the triennium cycle that will be used to identify the ministry emphasis and mission priorities.

First, a report that will be made available by BNM/BIM (to be clear, the boards, not the office) to the district conventions (beginning in January 2021) offering ideas and guidance for proposing triennial mission and ministry emphases to the national convention. How do we wish to do

this? Sub committees? Executive committees working together? This will provide guidance to the District Conventions so that their directives to Synod are helpful.

Secondly, an overture to the National Convention for amendments to the mission emphases and mission priorities of synod.

The two boards will meet jointly tomorrow, with the outcome of that meeting being a process going forward. How do we inspire congregations to participate in carrying out the church's mission right here in the US, right outside their door? Have those congregations actually learn the language of their neighbor and take the risk of putting themselves on the line to intentionally reach out to the unchurched with the Gospel.

**Office of National Mission Unit Executive Report, Rev. Bob Zagore:** See attached report. Highlights: Rev. Zagore expressed the office's efforts to "blur the lines" within the office as well as between the ONM, OIM, and the office of Pastoral Education. There are so many areas where the same work is being done and it does not make sense to do it separately. We don't have the freedom constitutionally or biblically to be building our own kingdoms. We're not different franchises. We have enormous freedom, but that freedom is never to work against each other.

In encouraging this working together, there will be Synod-District Exchanges where District Mission Executives, chair of district boards, and district presidents will be invited to the IC over the next triennium to discuss what is being done within Synod and how we want to accomplish the work together. Rev. Zagore intends for this to be an ongoing process, even past this triennium.

There are some staffing changes that Rev. Zagore made the board aware of.

The outcome of the Worker Wellness focus groups was discussed. Each district will be sending information to the IC in order for the ONM to make plans on implementing beneficial changes. Ultimately, this is an assignment that will be given to the Family and Health Director.

## **Break**

### **Office of National Mission Program Ministry Presentations:**

The BNM heard very quick presentations from the following ministry directors regarding the work they're currently doing in the ONM. Thoughtful questions were asked. Very little discussion took place due to time constraints, but the board was thankful to hear a quick explanation of the work taking place under each ministry.

**Revitalization, and Witness and Outreach - Rev. Mark Wood**

**School Ministry - Mrs. Rebecca Schmidt**

**Campus Ministry - Rev. Marcus Zill**

**Urban and Inner-City Mission - Rev. Dr. Steve Schave**

### **President Report, Rev. Matthew Harrison:**

Highlights: Rev. Peter Lange is now on board as the new 1st Vice President. He will serve on the Concordia St. Louis Board of Regents. The OTP was given over 100 tasks from the convention to complete. Rev. Harrison went over the resolutions that have directives to the ONM, as well as spoke to the ministry emphasis of Making Disciples for Life. He spoke about the new reporting process for RSOs, and church worker recruitment. Demographically, we have 45% of the amount of young people that we did 40 years ago. What will this do to our worker numbers? There are concerning statistics already (50% of pastors will be retired/retirement eligible in the next 15 years; 30% of congregations can't, or almost can't, afford a pastor. We

don't have enough teachers to meet the need.) Rev. Harrison expressed an area of growth he has asked the COP to address: how victims of sexual misconduct cases are dealt with and cared for after the incident.

Discussion: Where does the Koinonia project stand? It has been fruitful and there were resolutions to continue it. The question is, where can the work reasonably fit without overworking anyone?

What is the state of the WELS and LCMS conversations? They'll be meeting for the seventh or eighth time in December. Rev. Harrison reported that the WELS are working to figure out a way to have women representation and service in their synod.

What would Rev. Harrison would like to see from us and how can we pray for you? An aggressive, happy determination to call our congregations to mission, church planting, and loving our neighbors. Hold up those places where it's done well, and do it. Recognize where the LCMS should be according to the demographics of the place and yet isn't. We will need strong suburban churches in the future for financial support to do the rest of the work.

### **Break for Lunch**

#### **Office of National Mission Program Ministry Presentations, continued:**

**Black Ministry - Rev. Dr. Roosevelt Gray**

**Rural and Small Town Ministry - Mrs. Amy Gerdts**

**Recognized Service Organizations - Deaconess Dorothy Krans**

**Stewardship Ministry - Rev. Heath Curtis**

**Youth Ministry - Rev. Mark Kiessling**

**Disaster Response - Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson**

**Deaconess Ministry - Deaconess Grace Rao**

**Disaster Response Training - Rev. Michael Meyer Director. Rev. Zagore in absentia**

**Worship Ministry - Vacant, Rev. Bob Zagore**

### **Break**

#### **2019 Convention Resolutions impacting ONM/BNM, Rev. Bob Zagore:**

1-02 - Making Disciples for Life was referenced in the resolution. We are to give a report in partnership with districts to the 2022 national convention. Work with congregations to plant other congregations in a faithful way. Mother congregation plant a daughter congregation.

1-03 - What kinds of things can we reasonably do to help small congregations to work together, form another community out of the several communities. Rev. Zagore expressed the desire for some members of this board to meet with the COP to support this issue.

1-06A - Life Ministry, and Family and Health Ministry positions coming onboard after the new year. We need to meet people where they're at, siting the candy bar factory in Ohio.

1-07A - A resolution on child abuse and domestic abuse will bring about a task force with people who are church workers and secular experts who are Lutherans. Legal issues make this extremely difficult. What of the Seal of Confession? Churches need to have both volunteers screening and volunteer training on what needs to be reported and how. The ONM will work with COP to make sure this happens effectively.

3-01 - Disaster Response - we will continue with transparency.

4-03A - Making Disciples for Life. The ONM is treating the church as the church, not telling Synod what to do. The church can use resources from place to place to do even the most basic things.

4-04A Discussion:

- We have the ability to drive the agenda of Synod, which hasn't been exercised to the fullest extent. We will review the relationship between the OTP and the boards.
- Task: Members of the board should think through this topic and share ideas for the next meeting's agenda.
- Task: Exec committee keep the conversation alive these months between now and February. The balance: BNM should not be worried about strategies or tactics except when it comes to the ends policies of the board. The ends policies give a good set of boundaries for the ONM work in. Now we will create goals for what we want the final picture to look like. The ONM works to achieve that end.
- Should we create general policies outside of the seven mission priorities? Should we create policies that direct the CMO or UE? We will slowly turn the ship so that the board is guiding the staff, not looking for guidance from the staff.
- Step back. Look at a big picture of what the church should be doing, and what are we missing? What do we want the next child born in the LCMS to receive from birth to death?
- There are jobs that don't belong to the pastor but, if no one else does them, the pastor will do them. There are jobs that don't belong to the CMO/UE, but if the board doesn't do them, the CMO/UE will do them. Let's Free them up from working on policy so they can actually do what they're called to do.
- How to monitor policy, have oversight.

4-06A - RSOs. What do we do when we have an RSO organization who doesn't fit under the church? We now have leveled options. Mission Sending organizations often go across district lines. We need to prepare policies in regards to that.

Ov 1-07 - We should direct the ONM to provide resources to support people who are doing SPM work.

11-01A - We must surround our new Life/Family and Health Ministries directors with prayer!

Went quickly through the rest. Discussion on tearing down the walls within the ministry programs in working with youth/young adult retention. (Youth Ministry, Districts, Congregations, Family Dynamic, etc)

**Regional Life Conference Report, Rev. Dr. Al Espinosa:** Rev. Espinosa gave a presentation on the Southern California Defending Life Conference that took place in early September. The plan was to grow off of the Washington DC Life Conference with the blessing of the local District President. It went very well, thanks be to God! Anything taught to theologially equip the hearers was taught by ordained pastors. Rev. Espinosa expressed the hope to offer this conference biennially under the theme of marriage, family, and life.

## **Board Business Items**

### **Board member/ministry alignments:**

The Board separated out the different ministry program areas to be a liaison for the board to the director/staff for each program. We will offer our support, attempt to attend any conferences, and ask for feedback regarding our policies. The assignments are:

Rev. Bender: Revitalization; Witness and Outreach; Black Ministry

Rev. Briel: School Ministry; Specialized Pastoral Ministry  
Ms. Claussen: Rural and Small Town Ministry; Hispanic Ministry  
Rev. Droegemueller: Church Planting; Mission Field USA  
Rev. Espinosa: Life Ministry; Family and Health Ministry  
Ms. Hack Broome: Worship Ministry; The LCMS Foundation  
Mrs. McDaniels: Youth Ministry; Veterans of the Cross  
Mrs. Milas: Campus Ministry; Recognized Service Organizations; Deaconess Ministry  
Mrs. Sanchez: Disaster Response; Disaster Response Training; Worker Wellness  
Rev. Taylor: Urban and Inner-City Mission; Stewardship Ministry

Domestic Grants and Soldiers of the Cross will go to the new Central Region Lay member.

**Meeting calendar approval:**

Thursday/Friday Meetings

February 6-7, 2020

June 4-5, 2020

October 15-16, 2020

February 25-26, 2021

June 10-11, 2021

October 14-15, 2021

February 10-11, 2022

June 16-17, 2022

October 13-14, 2022

**Central Lay region Board Member Nomination:** The Board shall send any nominations to Rev. Briel by October 1.

We adjourned for the evening with closing prayer at 5:05 pm.