

RMRC Notes for 03 07 2019

Host: COB Facilitator: Dennis Notes: Kae M

Present: Michael, Mike W., John, Dennis, Kae, Teri, Jack, Jane, Don, and Greg

Absent: Jim and Cynthia

1. **Opening Prayer**
2. *together we pray*

*Creator God,
We thank you
for the opportunity to gather today.
May everything we do
begin with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
We ask Sophia's guidance throughout this meeting,
that all of our thoughts and actions
would reflect your holy will,
and that you would grant us the grace
to love you and our neighbors more perfectly.
We pray in name of our brother, Jesus. Amen*

3. **and Regional Prayer**
holy One, sweet Guide
reveal Your will; our new "yes"
together. Amen.
4. **Agenda Amendment/Approval:** Consensus to move the Local Bishop Process to the first agenda item as the highest priority.
5. **Approval of February notes:** Jack moved, Greg 2nd
6. **Treasury Report**(Greg): Greg reviewed the report sent out in advance.
 - a. ECC Pins: Communities are requested to turn in funds received, retain a few pins for future use and return the rest for distribution in the ECC. COB submitted \$137. CHF \$30.
 - b. Colorado Council of Churches dues will be paid soon, pending the receipt of the outstanding dues from communities.
 - c. Greg will send out a draft budget (April 2019-Mar 2018) with a line item projection of expenses for electronic approval or the April meeting.
 - d. There may be a bill for a share in the cost of the music licensing. We'll wait and see.
7. **Vicar Report** (*see Appendix A, below*)
Highlights: Interesting conversation on the vicar call about what communities may consider "catholic" and the broad range along a continuum of conservative/traditional to more diverse expressions.
Along with the other action listed, Michael sent out PR regarding CHF Justice for Refugees Mass on March 9. CHF also is hosting Michael to present the workshop on Suicide Awareness on Mar 14.
8. **Local Bishop Process**
 - a. We need to reschedule the Holy Conversation. After discussion about how much advance notice do folks need and some desire to move forward within a reasonable timeframe, we scheduled for March 30th at COB, same time 8:30 gather to 11:30 a.m. Each community bring breakfast snacks to share?

- b. supply list: Dennis will bring projector and screen, laptop. Jack will provide powerpoint. COB will provide name tags, markers, pens/pencils, scratch paper, easel and flip chart, wheelbarrow and trowel, copies of the vacancy letter on each table and one original with signature pages (60 signatures) for signing; Jack will bring the packets for the teams
- c. Suggestion to “purple” the environment in recognition of Lent
- d. Teri and Jack will facilitate along with others doing their parts, i.e. Dennis presenting the vacancy letter, Kae reading the letter from Len, all communities bringing a quart of soil, Michael leading the prayer/song
- e. Teams membership: after the team members are identified during the gathering, the teams will remain “open.” Others may join at a later date. RMRC members will consider the membership of the teams at the April meeting and fill in where necessary for diversity of communities, lay/clergy, gender, etc. Michael N. will serve ex-officio on both teams.

New Business:

9. **Consensus decision making:** The members commented on their experience of consensus decision making.
 - a. We definitely prefer face to face meetings rather than email discussion or conference calls. Zoom visual technology may help but if at all possible, we need to meet in person.
 - b. Much affirmation of the process and outcome of a meeting in which we discussed a sensitive topic with a potential to divide us. With the Holy Spirit’s presence, listening to one voice at a time around the table, prayer, we reached a consensus decision. It was noted that the Love, respect, emotional strength and intelligence, commitment to the common good and foregoing personal agendas, contributed to our consensus outcome.
 - c. Reminder to facilitators to be sure to ask if there are any opposed *on every decision* and wait for a response; to *be sure to call on those not vocal* during issue discussions;
 - d. Recommendation that we develop a process to be utilized if we have a divided group. What are our parameters? Ideas: identify how a problem emerged and if it is local or regional; include Yield. Stop. Listen.; if we can’t reach consensus, hit the pause button and postpone the decision until the next meeting and if we still can’t reach consensus resort to voting; listen to the minority voices. Kae will work on a draft for the next meeting.
 - e. Recognizing the level of trust in the room, it was recommended that the polity team recommend monthly (frequent) meetings of local synod delegates to build relationships and foster trust for our new foundation.
10. **Chrism Mass/Lenten Prayer together:** The Holy Conversation will serve as our Lenten gathering. We did not arrange for a bishop to come for a chrism Mass during Holy Week. We could have a chrism Mass when Bishop Francis comes to town in May or just a gathering with him. **Post-meeting note from Michael is that Bishop Francis will be here May 18th.

Old Business:**11. Community Reports**

- a. SP: Mardi Gras gathering, council retreat, roofing claim, Lenten soup supper prayer, building relationship with new Lutheran pastor
- b. MoM: pizza social after Mass March 10, shared the Ash Wednesday services among the 3 traditions, Lenten retreat on March 16th 8-12 noon regarding suffering
- c. LoC: combined soup supper and vespers, adult mission team St. Patrick's day fund-raiser, youth group created a new inclusive sign that is portable and colorful, April 6 invitations for a Homecoming Mass with a chili supper following for those who have been absent for awhile, Lenten prayer Friday a.m., Lenten retreat online with great participation
- d. CHF: Cynthia is networking and enlivening community, the community is in transition with new space, new pastor,
- e. COB: Getting to know the new UCC pastor. Ash Wednesday outreach was good.

12. Newsletter articles were due now. Teri will write an article about the ECC pins.

13. Closing Prayer: Gratitude round-robin!

Next meeting hosts: Apr 4 CHF; May 2 LOC; Jun 6 MoM; NOTE July 4th meeting changed to July 18th SP; Aug 1, COB

Appendix A—Vicar Report for RMRC 03 07 2019**FORMATION/RECEPTION**

2 regional priesthood candidates progressing in their discernment and testing.

CONCERN: Any young vocations coming up? Many of our regional clergy are either already retired or fast approaching it! What is our future?

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Celebrated Mass at Dignity/Denver 2/10.

Participated in RMRC meetings 2/13 and 2/22; developed rituals for 3/2 gathering.

Populated regional Facebook page @coloradoecc

Disseminated announcements for CHF's

"I am for peace"*: The Psalms for Justice-Seekers and Peace-Makers

Friday, March 8, 7-8:30 pm, & Saturday, March 9, 9 am-2 pm

RSVP at free Event link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/i-am-for-peace-the-psalms-for-justice-seekers-and-peace-makers-tickets-55453729598>

Faithful Tuesdays well represented every week by ECC pastors and members.

3/5 Mile High Ministries on the topic of affordable Housing.

You may find **schedule of Tuesdays** at www.faithfultuesdays.org.

HOP Steering Committee launched **NEW closed ECC Clergy Facebook group** as networking tool.

Made numerous pastoral responses via social media to UMC in wake of General Conference intensification of LGBTQ ordination ban and Same-gender marriage ban.
Advised ECC clergy on how to do so via ECC Clergy page.

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES - Board Meeting February 27, 2019

- **Easter Sunrise Service.** \$10,000 Red Rocks deposit due; take out a short-term loan to cover the balance with repayment by April 30th. The Board will have to be mindful about ensuring that reserves are sufficient for the deposit next year.
- **Fundraising.** Adrian has begun fundraising Easter Sunrise Service. He is starting to get requests for the designated seating, which are small dollar amounts. **Board asked to solicit cash donors.**
- **Voices for Justice.** Rev. Marcia Meier is contemplating giving her stipend back to the Council. Adrian will explore the accounting niceties of that decision. Marcia stated that she is thoroughly enjoying the work and is pleased to be able to contribute to the CCC.
- **Vaccination Study Grant.** The grant has been approved. The CCC will be getting \$15,000 in May and begin outreach in June. The goal is to have at least 10 listening circles in churches over the next year to determine people's opinions/convictions on vaccinations.
- **Faithful Tuesdays.** The program is getting good traction and board coalition turnout. Press releases and sent targeted e-mails, but still didn't get media coverage. The Colorado Sun, an on-line news outlet, is covering the issue more carefully.
- **Legislation Report.**
 - Human Sexuality Bill.** Adrian asked if we should take a public position. The Board determined that this bill is a bit afield from the position paper and controversial, so it would not take a position at this point. Marcia and Adrian will continue to monitor the progress of this measure.
 - Denver's Right to Survive Bill.** The Board doesn't have enough information at this point to take a position on the proposed initiative. On surface it looks compassionate, but organizations like Together Colorado oppose it for health and safety issues while many maintain City should focus rather on more affordable housing. (See Forum below.)
- **Right to Survive Forum.** The CCC has been asked to participate with Capitol Hill United Ministries on a forum discussing Denver initiative concerning the current camping ban. Paul Alexander (Episcopal Diocese) has been asked to moderate the event. The planning would ensure that both sides of the issue were presented. As the program is developed, the forum can also be an opportunity to give general information about homelessness.
- **InnovAge Event.** InnovAge is a commercial entity that is one of the providers who receive funding from the PACE program, which allows agencies to get paid for in-home care for seniors. The Board would be amenable to hosting an event as long as InnovAge mentions that they are not the only provider of these services. (Info at www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/program-all-inclusive-care-elderly)
- **National Alliance of Mental Health.** They would like to be on our speaker's bureau. Board agreed.
- **REMERG Program.** This program is exploring hosting a forum on the public policy issue of eliminating life sentences. Mark Mauer, an author working to engage the conversation, is exploring coming to Denver as part of an event. The CCC has been asked to help sponsor the event. Adrian played a snippet of Mark presenting on Noah Trevor show to provide a bit of context. Adrian will investigate the plans and sponsorship opportunities further and report back to the Board.
- **Clergy Council.** Gov. Polis has convened a Clergy Council with same, predominately Evangelical members but is expanding to include others. The Governor wants to have a meeting with faith leaders at the end of the month. CCC Council Chair will represent the CCC at that event.

BISHOPS/VICARS CALL February 20, 2019

1. Lively discussion around Bp. Francis's question:

How do people in your region/diocese feel about the Communion and your place in it?

- a. California feels like they are different from the others, in that they are very clear about their "Catholic" identity. Assumption that others are not. +Francis shared St. Matthew's letter re concerns, e.g.,
 - i. Gender-neutral liturgical language dilutes and diminishes Catholic identity, especially re Trinitarian formula.
 - ii. Real Presence in the Eucharist.
 - iii. Use of Nicene Creed.
Clarification from Constitution: believe the Creed but are not restricted from deepening/broadening our understanding of the symbol of our faith. E.g., Immigrants' Creed may be appropriate for a particular focus, but not assuming all Christians hold it in common.
 - iv. Traditional format of the Catholic liturgy.
 - v. 7 Sacraments
 - vi. Ordination, who does and doesn't lay on of hands.
 - vii. Historic structure of diocese.
 - viii. [Hispanic "Catholic" tradition: parents blessing children when leaving the home.]

- b. Discussion
 - i. ECC parameters take lead from Old Catholics acceptance of 1st 7 Ecumenical Councils of the church.
 - ii. Well-established "Catholic" norms, e.g., vestments for liturgy, are a public expectation, but may not essentials. Discussion open.
 - iii. Other communities would be up in arms if told not to use gender-inclusive language.
 - iv. People are used to their own understanding.
 - v. One could identify exclusion from the Communion table as "Catholic."
 - vi. Many would say we're too Catholic.
 - vii. No secret the Rocky Mountain Region likes being different. ;)

Michael shared about ECC/ ELCA participation at St. Paul and in the regional conversations about developing a process for calling a local bishop; they're relationship is different from other ECC communities that are nested in Lutheran churches. Consensus agreed that St. Paul Lutherans, as equal members of the one community, have voice but no vote in the regional Holy Conversation.
 - viii. +Francis impressed by Lutherans having a better appreciation of sometimes differing perspectives of local and national church and embrace the tensions.
 - ix. Guardian Angels AZ considered by some as pushing the boundaries liturgically (their Synod closing Mass was the impetus for St. Matthew's letter); others in Southwest Region more traditional.
 - x. Need to find a way to dialogue about our differences; look to experiences of other large, liturgically-varied denominations.
 - xi. ECC does have a Liturgical Advisory Board (+Francis to fill Michael in off-call).

- xii. Concern may be that some might be forced to do it one way or another. +Francis sees providing options as workable/valuable.
- xiii. St. Matthew's letter seen by them as an exercise in self-identity exploration/articulation; Their perspective is to be affirmed but also challenged to more nuanced understanding that embraces other's Catholicity.
- xiv. Identity two realities: unique/individual and communal/collaborative.

2. Regional Check Ins

a. East Coast

- i. March 30th will be the regional Chrism Mass celebrated by Bishop Denise Donato at Mary Magdalene in Rochester. Rotating location in subsequent years.
- ii. Regional calls for the past year.
- iii. Working on regional retreat.
- iv.great job building community across large geographic region.

b. Rocky Mountain Region

- i. Michael in communication with Episcopal Diocese, affirmed bishops of other denomination to be invited to upcoming consecration of Bishop-elect Kimberly Lucas in Denver.
- ii. St. Paul Lutheran Co-pastor Barbara Berry-Bailey is a good friend of ECUSA Presiding Bishop Curry, and hopes to invite him to their church when in town for the consecration.