

Rocky Mountain Regional Council Notes

August 2, 2018 Meeting

Present: Teri Harroun, Kae Madden, Jack Wolfe, Jim DeMuth, Michael Nicosia, Don Sutton, Dennis Giblin (email: goodgiblin@g.com), Greg Yonker, Kerrie Anderson, Mike Weil.

1. Welcome: Dennis Giblin from COB new delegate.

2. Agenda Approval—No additions.

3. Approval of July notes. July notes, one correction...Kate Giblin not Kate Lehman at the Youth Retreat. Jack will send correction to Bill Hanzel. Greg moved to approve.

3a. Notes sent to Bill Hanzel after notes approved by the scribe of that month, day after they are approved if possible. If you can't make a pdf of minutes plus Vicar report send to Michael who will do it and send to Bill Hanzel.

4. Financial Report: Thank you to Greg for accepting the position as treasurer. He will send his address out in an email.

—Include St. Paul's ECC on the report even though they may not contribute right away.

—RMRC usually sends Northglenn UCC a donation for using the space for our meetings. **Action Item:** As current assets are pretty good, the topic of making a donation this year will be discussed at our September meeting. Not budgeted this year, we need to budget it in the future.

5. Vicar's Report: Please see **Appendix A** below for Vicar notes in full.

—F. Scott Jenkins, invited as a retired pastor to help him maintain a relationship with the ECC. He will calendar the October meeting. Not as a member, as an emeritus pastor who wants to maintain ties with the ECC

—The ELCA/ECC Bishop meeting: will be an article in The Journey Shared.

—Several opportunities coming up...You Are Welcome Here Conference—centered on being interfaith and LGBTQ+ on opportunities for people. Michael may need help in staffing table at conference, especially Oct 5th 9am-5:30pm. **Action Item:** Send volunteer info to Michael.

—Progressive Congregations Network...an Interfaith Alliance of Colorado opportunity **Action Item:** Each church asked to discern participation. They would like two people from each congregation to attend regular monthly meetings from August to May and are looking for Leadership Team members.

—ECC Truth and Reconciliation Commission looking for people to be part of leadership on racism and community, especially looking for African American members.

—Jim D. brought up that it would be nice to have a certificate and letter of faculty for priests/deacons to have for identifying themselves. A business card size would be ideal. Action Item: Jim D. will contact Jen at national. These are especially helpful for credentials when going to jails, interfaith meetings etc.

6. Regional newsletter deadline is August 3rd—tomorrow.

—would be good to have a little about the Synod vote topics/process.

New Business:

1. Formal Approval of Greg as treasurer, Jack made a motion to approve, Dennis seconded. Motion carried. Thank you Greg!

2. Discussion about Vicar's ability to vote at RMRC meetings:

Traditionally Vicar's don't vote. Michael asks us to consider if we move forward in a more synodal model, if we call a bishop. Can we empower the Vicar on certain issues when we need the three legged stool representation now?

Important the Vicar has a voice....as representing the Bishop...we generally operate on consensus basis.

Perhaps if we need third leg we need to wait until the vote on calling a bishop.

—Right now, Vicar has no vote on the RMRC—a voice but no vote.

3. Debriefing on ELCA/ECC gathering:

—Value of relationship over contract, having an office seemed to be key in forming relationship.

—We are one body seemed to be an overall theme...weren't told what we can do or can't do (list of rules).

—some churches have contracts/leases some don't.

—How do we stay true to our individual faith traditions and also be in communion with our shared community?

—Need to have education between shared communities—areas of agreement/areas of disagreement.

Action Item: Don will send link to St. Paul's documents.

—The journey to full polity—interesting and valuable and be careful what you may lose/gain.

—the blurry lines were mostly about sacrament. Relationship talk was all positive.

4. Reordered Constitution and Amendment? Can we just leave that to delegates...yes...and a meeting on Saturday with all regional delegates.

Old Business:

1. Local Bishop Process: Who will be the one person to collect all votes and let each church know result. The Vicar will get the votes and notify pastors. Note shorter video by B. Francis on ECC website. One of the first steps if vote is positive is that we need to have constitution/bylaws. This will be done together as RMRC does all its work. All pertinent documents are available on the Regional website.

2. Rapid Response Request: It is important to give Michael fast feedback on signing off on statements/legislation.

3. Bishop travel compensation: What if it is the region and not a community that requests a Bishop visit..or on Bishops own initiative...Who pays? IF the bishop comes on own initiative, he will pay expenses, and can be reimbursed for saying mass at any particular community.

—It would be good for communities to co-ordinate Bishop visits so expenses can be shared.

Community Reports:

COB—Community is good...but it is tricky to do all the things going on at the same time. Youth did a service experience in downtown Denver which was quite positive. Rice and Beans Project coming up—may work on seeing if it can be a youth project time.

CHF—hired a pastor from North Carolina, Cynthia Drew. Will be ordained as a deacon in NC. then later ordained a priest (November). OCT 21st will be her first mass as deacon. Mass in the Park coming up. Still working on deciding on a church space to share. Doing well and incredibly busy.

LOC—summer quiet, July picnic well attended. Looking forward to a lot of youth programming. Preparing 8 adults to take safe church info so they can work with the youth. Youth went on a mission trip to Wind River, went to not be noticed, but to serve. Trying to figure out how to navigate a celebration with a local Hispanic church community.

Vicar—has been involved with ICE demonstrations.

SP—things going well, challenges arise and taken care of. Working on bylaws together with the Lutheran community. As an urban location working on challenges of people without homes—many rich who don't seem to care a lot, and many in need. In the process of calling a Lutheran pastor, quite involved. SP has space that youth have come to stay and do Urban Plunge—they have showers, kitchens, floor sleeping space.

MoM—Summer quiet, did celebrate our patron saints feast day in July. Have a joint service being planned for the Feast of St. Francis. Jim D's new email is demuth321@gmail.com

Next meeting: Sept. 6th hosted by St. Paul's.

Appendix A—Vicar Report for RMRC 08/02/2018

FORMATION/RECEPTION

More files submitted for ordination candidate Jane (Wagner) Reina of MoM.

Dcn. David Dunn has begun preliminary organization and contacts for ECC Deacons Association.

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Regularly posted to **regional Facebook page** at <https://www.facebook.com/Coloradoecc/>.

Celebrated Mass at MoM 7/15 and participated in their gathering to address bishop question.

Fr. Scott invitation stands

Emailed Scott 8/1/18: Scott, a real pleasure seeing you in action at the Celtic Way service. Are you available to join us tomorrow night at the RMRC meeting to help expand our ECC focus? Hopefully we can come up with ways to ground your ministry in our regional relationships. 6:30 at COB.

His response: Greetings Michael, I want to be grounded within the ECC that is for sure. I cannot make the meeting tomorrow night but I will put them on my calendar beginning in October. I will be in the UK for September. Thank you for thinking of me in this way. It gets a little lonely out here on the margins.

In Christ, Scott Jenkins, Director Celtic Way

ELCA/ECC gathering July 19, 2018 with Bp. Jim Gonia, Bp. Francis Krebs and ELCA Ecumenical Officer

Follow-up: Bp. Jim shared photos, notes and participants' contact list; waiting on Note-taker's report.

Article needed for *The Journey Shared*.

Saw on Facebook that +Karen Oliveto, Resident Bishop of the Mountain Sky Area of The United Methodist Church, was in St. Louis the weekend of 7/27 for the Reconciling Ministries Network convo at the airport Hilton. Tried to arrange a meeting or phone call with Bp. Francis but schedules conflicted. Both hope to connect in the future.

OPPORTUNITY: You Are Welcome Here (YAWH) Conference

Oct 4 at 9 AM to Oct 5 at 5:30 PM <https://welcomeyawh.org/>

Turnhalle Ballroom At The Tivoli, 900 Auraria Pkwy, Denver, Colorado 80204

Conference is centered on being interfaith and LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming. Our speakers will share from their own lived experiences with faith spaces, coming out, mental health, and a variety of other experiences. This two-day conference will also feature dozens of LGBTQ+ inclusive and affirming faith spaces, organizations, and movements located in Denver and around the country. Attendees will have the chance to meet with folks from these organizations during our resource fair taking place throughout the two days.

Founder and Event Planning Lead, Jazz Fitzgerald, responded to inquiry:

Hi Fr. Michael! It's so great to hear from you!

We would absolutely love to have the ECC take part in our conference! There is no fee involved at all in taking part in the conference or partnering with us. We've been doing everything donation-based, so if the ECC cannot provide any kind of donation that is no issue at all.

I've included the resource fair sign-up sheet below that you can fill out for the ECC. If you need anything else from me, just let me know! Thank you for reaching out!

YAWH Resource Fair Sign-Up: <https://goo.gl/forms/UjnlzR2MQFvREGFg1>

NOTE: Would need staffing help, especially at close of conference on 10/5 as it conflicts with Michael's Gateway to the Rockies Art Show opening awards ceremony.

OPPORTUNITY: Progressive Congregations Network reorganization

Hello friends-

Please take a few minutes to read this email. I realize it is a bit long- and- we are in a time where our voices and our presence is needed. We have been thinking through how to best lead in this time, and we need *you*.

After the 2016 election we at The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado invited people from more outwardly 'progressive' congregations to come together in order to build strength and take action in a unified way for human rights and equality issues in our state. We have called this gathering the 'Progressive Congregation Network', or PCN. Thanks to all who have joined us!

We have met quarterly for the past year and a half and have had opportunities to speak out when a Muslim community was experiencing discrimination, to explore ways we can confront and dismantle racism, to explore paths to economic justice, to make our voices heard at the Colorado legislature to protect GLBTQ rights and equality, to participate in the sanctuary movement, and to better understand 'reproductive justice' and threats to reproductive health and freedom.

Over the past couple months the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado team took the opportunity to step back and evaluate our goals and effectiveness with the Progressive Congregation Network.

The continuing needs are great. We see increasing threats to rights and equity, systemic violence based on race, religious discrimination, economic systems that are grounded in greed and scarcity rather than community and compassion, and deep ideological divides. We believe it is important to have intentional space for people from progressive leaning congregations to network, gain tools for advocacy, receive education on current issues, and to take action to build movements for real change.

Here are a few of the changes we are making as we dig into and deepen the above goals:

1. We will be reaching out to congregations and asking them to **commit to sending at least two people to attend regular meetings monthly from August to May**. Meetings will typically be held on the last Thursday of the month from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. It is our aim to have a consistent group of people who are educated, empowered and ready to act as needs arise. This requires regular meeting attendance and commitment to action.

2. In addition to the important work of relationship building, each gathering will include:

- a) Intentional skill building for advocacy (utilizing our Advocacy Tool Kit)
- b) Education on current events connected to rights and equity
- c) Opportunities for action

3. **We will be forming a PCN Leadership** team to help with planning, implementation & communication. Please email me if you are interested. (amanda@interfaithallianceco.org)

Our hope is that representatives from each congregation will bring their learnings back to their congregation and will be seeds for justice and advocacy in each congregation.

We will meet on the **last Thursday of each month from 1:30 to 3:30**.

Our kick off for the Progressive Congregation Network 2.0 will be on **Thursday, August 30th from 1:30 to 3:30 pm**. Our primary topic for discussion and action will be the Supreme Court nomination and the midterm elections.

We will gather at Park Hill United Church of Christ, at 2600 Leyden St, Denver, CO 80207.

Please RSVP HERE. Your RSVP is vital for our planning.

Also- PLEASE INVITE YOUR FRIENDS from other progressive leaning congregations. We need to build a strong Progressive Network to stand together and support the values we share. Feel free to forward this email, or send me an email with people you think I should reach out to.

Thanks so much. While it seems the days are daunting, I know we are stronger together. I find hope in the people who are working each day to be a force for good in congregations and communities across the state!

Rev. Amanda Henderson, Executive Director, Interfaith Alliance of Colorado

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES—ED on sabbatical during July; no meetings.

ADVOCACY

Attended 7/13 #RoadToChange event at Shorter Community AME Church.

Will be attending 8/4 **March on the NRA** at the Capitol.

Will be in collar at **Aurora PrideFest** 8/4 with ECC brochures.

BISHOPS/VICARS CALL

Recruiting members for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Jennifer spoke about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and asked all vicars and bishops to invite any African American members of their region/churches to participate if they are interested.

Vicar for SW Region

Rev. Sue mentioned she is stepping down as vicar of the Southwest Region and is stepping down from Guardian Angels as pastor in October. She is unable to both pastor the community of GA and work full time in her job and she needs to keep the full time salary and healthcare benefits. GA will have two other clergy co-pastor the community during the transition time.

Synod 2018

Reminder to everyone to make sure their delegates are registered and have hotel rooms reserved for Synod. We are still missing a number of anticipated delegates.

Fr. Michael asked a clarifying question about St. Paul and if they need to make a pledge/tithe before Synod to have voting delegates. Jennifer asked the Leadership Council about this earlier this month and they said no, for new communities that were just recently received they are still in good standing while they get their finances and tithe set up.

If anyone has **table reservations** they want to make for their community or region, let Jennifer know **ASAP**. Rev. Sue can help coordinate purchasing tri-fold boards for communities so they don't have to travel with one.

Regional Updates/Check Ins

Rocky Mountain Region

Fr. Michael shared he is currently looking for a new job as well as carrying for his mother and fulfilling vicar responsibilities. He also might need to re-think his ability to continue serving as vicar depending on what he is able to find for a job. (FYI: he hasn't heard back from any of the recent interviews.)

Church of the Holy Family called Cynthia Drew to be their new pastor. She will be ordained a deacon in North Carolina in September and beginning in CO in November with a priest ordination in December.

Big meeting between ECC and ELCA in the CO region is tomorrow. Bishops from both denominations will be present and ecumenical officers. They will be engaging conversation about closer communion on a local level.

Rocky Mountain Regional Council has been doing work over the past couple years around what a bishop is to aid in discernment about calling a regional/diocesan bishop. There will be a vote in September to see if they should proceed with the process of calling a local bishop in 2019.

East Coast Region

East Coast conference calls continue to go well. They include relationship building, prayer, and are now planning a regional retreat. They will continue this work at the Synod.

The Region has also been discussing the re-ordering of the Constitution.

There are members of Mary Magdalene who will attend a memorial at Holy Spirit for a member who passed away a year ago.

Benedictines of Holy Wisdom are finalizing their documentation to be officially received as a canonical order of the ECC at the Synod. Rev. Kate Lehman who was in the order of grey robe Benedictines and will be joining the ECC Benedictines. They are excited to have a table and share more at Synod.

Rev. Denise Roberts is doing well in her new community of Healing Shepherd. She's had a lot of media exposure around the Easter service.

All Souls in Redding, PA, is housed in a Lutheran church as well. There is good relationship-building happening there as well.

Pacific Northwest

They are close to electing a diocesan bishop. The candidates for bishop were able to visit a new ECC mission in Cour de lene. The four women in leadership at that church as Benedictine oblates and are excited to learn more about the Benedictine order in the ECC. Fr. Jim Murphy has been leading Mass for that community. August 12th ballots will be sent out for the episcopal election.

Bishop Rafe asked if a document he sent to Kedda has been sent out more widely and she said no, just to the candidates and the leadership because one of the requirements would negatively prejudice one of the candidates.

Mid-America Diocese

New deacon symposium will be starting up soon, hopefully in August. There are 3 from San Damiano, 1 in St. Jerome, 2 from Mary Magdalene, 1 from Rocky Mountain, 1 from St. Matthew, 1 from St. Stanislaus who will be participating.

The Diocesan Synod is looking at revising the current diocesan constitution to correct things that were missing in the original.

Little Rock continues their ministry to the poor and homeless.

St. Jerome is moving forward with their growing Hispanic Ministry and just had their first Spanish mass. They have grown 70% in the last year due to outreach to both the Hispanic community and families in the surrounding neighborhoods. They also are now registered as a site for a co-ed Scout Troop which would be the first in Tulsa.

Oshkosh has an upcoming ordination of Jake Czarnik to the transitional diaconate. They are also looking how to include the local ELCA bishop who is a close friend.

St. Stanislaus continues to sojourn with the ECC. They will have a deacon in the new symposium and representatives as Synod.

Suzanne Schloemann who is a priestly candidate from SCF will be ordained to the transitional diaconate and work with All Saints mission in Belleville on becoming their own stand alone ECC community.

Fr. John Boylan is in Nashville looking to start a mission community.

Epiphany continues as a mission. Bishop Rafe isn't able to get there as often as he would like. He is also trying to support Our Lady of Guadalupe mission when he's in town.

Southwest

Everything is focused on Synod right now. Looking forward to having everyone come to sunny Arizona! Bring your swimsuits to cool off at the pool.