

Rocky Mountain Regional Council Meeting, October 3, 2019: NOTES

Host: Light of Christ Facilitator: Jack Wolfe

Scribe: Teri Harroun

Attendees: Jack Wolfe, Teri Harroun, Kae Madden, Greg Yonker, Don Sutton, Jane Reina, Rosean Amaral, Michael Nicosia, Mike Weil.

Absent: Dennis Giblin. Guests: Cynthia Drew, Mary Lu Stenson, Rosemary

Opening Prayer/Regional Prayer – by Teri including regional prayer. Prayers for Dennis.

Regular Business

1. Welcome any guests - noted
2. Agenda approval/additions – Remember, at the bottom of the agenda, where it says what the facilitating community is responsible for, to include having a copy of the RMRC Consensus Document.
3. Personal Connections: What is the best thing that ever happened to you in October?
4. Approval of September 2019 notes – Mike W will have the notes completed by this Saturday.
5. Financial Report - presented by Greg. He sent document earlier today to everyone. Details are in that document.
Financial Report was approved as there were no objections to Greg's report.
6. Vicar's Report – presented by Michael (Appendix B, below). Adding that there is an ordination candidate from LOC who has submitted a Letter of Intent. Michael is excited by this candidate.

There was discussion on the Ecumenical Agreement locally between the ELCA and ECC Communities. There is a planning team in place including Kent Mueller from ELCA. Anyone who has someone who would like to have a role in the Liturgy planned for October 30th at 7pm at St. Paul Church should send information to Don Sutton. Parking is available on the street and at the Colorado Education Alliance for this event. Don will send us all an invitation to be part of music that night that we can pass along to our music ministers.

Watch for Old Catholic Church zoom seminar. It will probably be meeting the 4th Tuesday of the month, led by Bishop Francis, with Bishop Rafe's helpful participation.

See e-mail Michael sent earlier today about Thursdays in Black, initiated by the World Council of Church to raise awareness of sexual and gender-based violence.

Faithful Tuesdays will be Faithful Thursdays in 2020.

Documents have been (hopefully temporarily) misplaced in OPB during transition of administrators. All communities should have sent in Community Surveys earlier this year. Let Michael know if you didn't.

7. Regional Newsletter Deadline – Deadline is November 7th. Include Advent and Christmas schedules. This will allow the newsletter to prominently feature the Liturgy on October 30th and signing of the document created by ELCA/ECC.

ACTION ITEM: Submit for newsletter by November 7th.

New Business:

1. ELCA/ECC Liturgical Relationship Document Affirmation (process, who affirms?)

At this point, COB and LOC have affirmed the document.

ACTION ITEM: Teri will send an e-mail asking each community to affirm the ELCA/ECC document. Please respond once for each community by 10/20. COB and LOC please respond as well so we have one single thread for each community. The vote will need to be included in note for RMRC November 2019 for documentation purposes.

If 4/5 of communities affirm, we consider the document affirmed by our region. If affirmed, we affirm with holy enthusiasm. Guidelines on the national level suggest that the bishop can sign the document but it does not go into effect until affirmed.

2. October 30th, Liturgy with ELCA at St. Paul, 7pm (how to advertise)
Don will write a single paragraph blurb and include a picture and send to RMRC reps for advertising within the ECC communities. He will also pursue publicity, like NPR/CPR, Denver Post, etc. He will ask for the assistance of a member of his community as well as John Kerans from the national ECC publicity team.

3. New Members RMRC:

1. What should they have? (documents, names/emails)

ACTION ITEM: Kae will contact our web master Bill Hanzel and have the appropriate documents placed on our Regional Website and new members will be instructed by their partner representative to familiarize themselves with these documents.

4. Local Polity Team Update

Jack distributed a timeline of what needs to be done, and worked us through that timeline. I have included that as Appendix A at the end of this document.

Discussion on whether we can incorporate the region without a bishop official to sign it. And we don't officially have a bishop until affirmation at 2020 Synod. Let us not treat affirmation as a formality

We have a polity document. OPB and Chancellor have it as well.

ACTION ITEM: St. Paul will invite Polity Team to our gathering on November 7 2019 to go through this document.

ACTION ITEM: Michael will ask OPB and Chancellor for their feedback by October 24th.

ACTION ITEM: All RMRC members will review Polity Document and send changes, suggestions, questions to the Polity Team by October 24th. Send to John Immele at JDI@techsource-inc.com. The Polity Team is not asked to create an updated document at this time, but to come prepared on November 7th for discussion.

Old Business:

1. Local Bishop Call Document: Reminder what is happening in October. How to get feedback to Greg (facilitator). Anything else?

Greg and Mary Lu presented a time table from the Bishop Call Team. They have created parts for a Visual Board that all communities can use. The timeline shows what we've done so far, and in broad strokes where we are going. The future moves toward a vote around the June time frame just after Pentecost. There are plans for a 2nd vote if necessary, though parts of the process are still being developed.

October will focus on educating communities. Each community, via RMRC members and members on the Bishop Call Team, will bring education including the Bishop Position Description to their communities. Any feedback needed to be considered by Bishop Call Team must be to Greg by November 1st. Mary of Magdala will be assisted by Michael since they have no members on the Bishop Call Team. Church of the Beloved offered to assist Holy Family similarly.

ACTION ITEM: Get feedback to Greg by November 1st.

Let us focus on being church together and in this amazing process. We are ELECTING a bishop. The process allows us to grow together as church. The process is important. Savor the process. Everything in this document came from the process and folks in our region participating and sharing their desires and insights. We are ALL a part of this.

Q: Are we sharing the call outside of our region? Yes.

Q: How to limit the pool if we don't get 2/3 of 4/5 on the first ballot? TBD.

In addition, Michael is working with OPB on vetting candidates, i.e. background checks, psych evals, and who pays for these things?

2. ECC Pins – nothing to report at this time. COB has someone to assist if that is helpful.

3. RMRC Membership: Mike is resigning from the RMRC at this time and words of affirmation were exchanged between Mike and this Council. We bless you Mike, and celebrate all that you have brought to our team.
4. John Head, follow up from discussion with Jane. He may send a clarifying e-mail..

Community Reports

Anyone wanting time with Bishop Denise when she is here in November for Confirmation at COB must contact Kae as soon as possible.

Mary of Magdala is moving toward being a significant member of an Ecumenical Center in Ft. Collins with their host community Trinity Lutheran (ELCA) and St. Paul's Episcopal. All three bishops are affirming of this development and they are starting to reach out to others.

St. Paul is working on a community covenant, and is getting a new roof. Greg and Don are going to Austin for Independent Catholic gathering.

Closing Prayer— led by Teri,

Nov 7: SP; Dec 5: MoM; Jan 2(?): COB; Feb 6: HF; Mar 5: LOC

Remember, when you host to send out the agenda, have a facilitator and scribe, copy of **Consensus Document, bring opening and closing prayer, and bring some snack to share. Send notes in a timely fashion.**

APPENDIX A (Jack's Timeline – Order of Actions):

Call team to finalize "Bishop ministry description." - done

Call team to finalize Bishop Call letter - almost done

Polity team to submit draft Constitution to +Francis, and RMRC for comments- almost done

Polity team to review comments from +Francis and RMRC, and prepare "working draft"

Call team to send out Call with working draft of Constitution (by early 2020 ??)

Call team and ECC to vet response to Call

Region to hold Bishop election, and submit results to +Francis (preferably before Lent)

Polity team to finalize “working draft” of constitution with newly elected bishop

Attend ECC Synod where newly elected bishop will be confirmed. - Fall 2020

(NOTE: This is not where Jack originally had this task. It was moved to this place in time line as per discussion)

RMRC to determine who to invite to Regional Synod (delegates or everyone??)

Polity Team to incorporate Region with simple Articles of Incorporation

Hold Regional Synod to adopt constitution (May or June 2020 ?? before everyone takes off for the summer!)

Appendix B—Vicar Report for RMRC 10 03 2019

FORMATION/RECEPTION

New LOC priest ordination candidate; concerns around choice of M.Div. program shared with candidate, pastor, Bp. Francis and Bp. Rafe. Her pastor subsequently reported that candidate’s discernment is on hold.

New LOC diaconal ordination candidate, anticipating priesthood down the road; began file with her letter of intent and is completing standard forms; aware of M.Div. and Old Catholic Seminar requirements.

Old Catholic Seminar: Sent out poll to get scheduling conflicts for monthly Zoom Conference and informed +Francis that **4th Tuesdays (tentative)** work for those who responded.

REGIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Limited response to Doodle Poll for possible **clergy gathering** in Sept-Oct.

Attended 9/15 **Faith and Access to Justice** Continuing Legal Education presentation **YOUR FAITH INTO**

ACTION with Colorado Supreme Court Gregory Hobbs, Jr. (ret.) sponsored by the Catholic Lawyers Guild, the Christian Legal Aid Society, and the Justice and Mercy Legal Aid Center (JAMLAC)

These various associations encourage pro bono legal work on behalf of the poor. Hope to make introductions with CCC ED Adrian Miller. Fr. Scott also attended.

Old business: **Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO)** bill passed last session. Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser will be joining us at a meeting sponsored by CFCU and Colorado Ceasefire to provide an update on plans to implement ERPO in Colorado, scheduled to go into effect on January 1, 2020. **Tuesday, October 15** from 7:00 PM – 8:30 at Temple Emanuel, 51 Grape Street in Denver

RSVP to soakes1219@gmail.com

ECC/ELCA ecumenical agreement about shared liturgical ministries

- Collaborated in RMRC’s response to Bp. Francis.
- Forwarded Bp’s clarifications to RMRC

- Encouraged bringing Lutheran partners into the conversation, while acknowledging that their process of affirmation is at the Synodal level and not by the communities impacted.
- **ELCA/ECC combo liturgy on Oct. 30th at St. Paul** modeling the agreement. **7pm** better for those travelling South. Anticipate regional input in planning the Lutheran liturgy with Catholic participation, particularly utilizing the expertise of St. Paul Music Director/Liturgist Mark Filbert. Kent Mueller will be the point person from Bp. Jim's office for consultation on this service; was instrumental in planning their joint Lutheran-Roman Catholic Reformation services as well as other special worship opportunities and can help provide feedback and guidance as needed from the ELCA side of the equation. Bp. Francis as preacher requests story of Esau and Jacob's reconciliation as first reading: "In their reconciliation he saw the face of God."
- The Bishops may sign the agreement at the service, BUT it wouldn't go into effect without our regional affirmation after our review and input. +Francis available for Zoom conferences with communities to answer any questions.
- Bp. Francis hopes to gather the task force when here.

Participated in discussion on the ECC Clergy Facebook Group about a **gathering of Old/Independent Catholic clergy** in Austin October 24-27. Concerns raised about 3 ECC bishops as presenters, seen as an episcopal over-reach without clergy and lay input. I and others assured group that building such relationships is part of the bishop's position description and that no formal agreements would be made without broad consultation.

Disseminated info re **Thursdays in Black: Towards a world without rape and violence** from the World Council of Churches.

Participated in meetings of **Bishop Call Committee and Polity Team**. Both documents should be ready for broader review presently.

Presided at **MoM 9/15** and **Dignity/Denver 9/22**.

Populated regional **Facebook** page @coloradoecc and augmented **Instagram** and **Twitter** presence.

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES Board meeting 9/25.

Welcomed **new Board members** representing Iliff, UMC, MCC and UCC; board now representing Front Range for CO Springs to Ft. Collins and west to Evergreen.

Reminder that **Judicators expected to contribute or solicit donations** of \$350 annually.

Discussed **Prop CC** forfeiting TABOR limit rebates to benefit schools and transportation infrastructure; general support under CCC's Education policy statement, but need to clarify that the funds will not be redirected to other uses by the legislature. If supported would publish companion statement raising justice issues re funds' use (e.g, under-compensation of teachers and adjunct professors; environmental and social impacts of transportation projects, et al).

~ **ECC Regional polling at liturgies failed to get consensus; hope to provide more education and discussions to prepare for the actual Vote in November.**

~CCC not endorsing Prop CC, not having reached consensus.

Discussed **Prop B** on “sin tax” of 5% on sports gambling; near consensus not to weigh in, not wanting to profit from gambling; also objections to limited funds directed to addiction rehabilitation and issue re lack of employee benefits common to most service industries. Adrian attended numerous community gatherings as part of **CURIOUS Partnership** discussion on faith community attitudes towards vaccinations. **Consider having the discussion in your church.** Interesting tidbit: some at a gathering of Boulder Buddhists consider sickness/suffering as part of one’s journey and not to be avoided.

Multiple grant opportunities are very encouraging.

Adrian wrote article for Colorado Sun: https://coloradosun.com/2019/09/25/faith-based-farming-jewish-christian/?utm_content=buffer5a6dc&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Faithful Thursdays (day change from last year) during 2020 CO Legislative session begins with kick-off Tuesday*, Jan. 7, 11:30am at State Capitol. (*Gov. Polis can make it Tuesday of that week.)

BISHOPS/VICARS CALL 9/18

Only 5 **surveys on community stats** received; some may have been misplaced in transition to new Administrator. **Let Vicar know if your community has yet to submit its survey.**

Regional reports

SW ~ Rev. Elaine Groppenbacher installed as pastor of Guardian Angels. Regional monthly phone conf. ongoing.

EC ~ October regional retreat, 22 participants.

RMR ~ Bp. Francis bragged about how our region does things together; cited Greg’s comment that female leadership tips toward collaboration. Vicar noted relationship-building through Council of Churches was gateway to ELCA/ECC advances.

PNW ~ Multiple ordination candidates. Still doing ecclesiology study once a month. Involved in regional interfaith relationships around social justice and outreach (vs. ecumenical).

M.Div. discussions ongoing; may need to be addressed at Synod.