

**Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion**

March 6, 2025, 6 PM, via ZOOM

Host: Church of the Holy Family: Facilitator- Anne; Scribe- Kirsten

Present: Don Sutton, Michael Nicosia, Kae Madden, Kirsten Barnard, Tom Moos, Greg Yonker, Alice Bradley, Anne Grant, Teri Harroun, Rosean Amaral, Guest: Jim DeMuth

Excused:

Dennis Giblin

**Meeting opened with the following
Opening Prayer/Regional Prayer**

Holy One,
Enlivening Spirit,
In the wilderness of new,
Root the Body of Christ
Fully into our "Yes",
Blooming in Your Holy Season. Together,
Amen!

Regular Business:

1. Welcome guests:

Jim DeMuth arrived later but was welcomed upon arrival

2. Agenda approval/additions

Anne asked if we had any changes to agenda. Anne noted she needed to meeting to end by 8:00 pm.

Kae added the following agenda topics: "know our rights," ECC special appeal at Pentecost, In person meetings

Don wants to address his progressive retirement.

Anne asks for prayerful support of her community

Anne or Teri requested housekeeping to keep council up to date with people's duties when they leave council

3. Check-in

Personal check-in offered and conducted

4. Review and approval of February 2025 Minutes

Minutes approved by all in attendance.

5. Financial report

Greg gives financial report.

Tom asks if MoM has paid CCC dues. Rosean said it is in the process of being sent. Gayle is sending CCC community donation and Board Member fundraising obligation. Greg is sending Teri a request for donation.

Budget-Greg explained.

We have one more month of income and expenses in this fiscal year.

Budget Discussion and Questions-

Teri asked where Pride Fest gets the \$500. Greg explained communities pitch in.

He said Longmont pride fest was in LOC area so LOC hadn't donated. Teri asked why interest earned from bank CD account isn't in the budget. Greg said it is just a savings account not to be in the budget. The interest just rolls over at this time. The day to day checking account doesn't accrue interest. Greg asks what needs to happen to approve budget.

Question about if we have money budgeted for synod. Greg explained the people who attend were asked to pay for synod that and that it paid for itself. All voting members voted to approve budget. **Greg will send it out marked Approved.**

Fr. Michael requested that CCC donation could be made early in first quarter so it would help with Easter Sunrise Service.

Also Greg mentioned 3 percent increase in Vicar housing and Bishop stipend he has been doing and will continue.

6. Bishop's report

Teri asks about who is "WE" when hosting bishop ordination. Kae clarified Church of the Beloved is renting space out for an ordination.

Teri asks if the RC can support Kae in her lack of capacity to do two jobs. Kae said there is an assessment and certain events could be delegated out to the communities and other individuals. The assessment will find who should be doing that. Teri asks if Kae needs a gatekeeper for Kae. Kae says initially she's ok without that support. But she's interested in looking at the assessment for answers. She emphasized she doesn't have to and cannot lead everything. Kae reports she's on the upswing now and is taking steps to get things manageable on all levels. She wants to be doing more relationship building with CCC judicators. Kae asks if people want a separate conversation re: "know your rights." This is in reference to how to know a religious institution's rights around immigrant safety in a church setting and other settings. A few members would like to have this conversation. Michael says videos probably exist for info. **Kae will send an invite to anyone who wants to talk about their preparation in their communities for undocumented parishioners.** Kirsten mentioned it doesn't seem anyone undocumented comes to their services at St. Paul.

7. Vicar's report.

USA Today Easter: Bishop Pablo called a committee because another community in ECC in St. Louis was approached by USA today to see if ECC wants to put an ad in the Easter edition. The committee worked to put together ad copy, photos, etc. They got member feedback before finalizing. USA today will develop full page ad and send for review.

Alice asked if communities can use the USA Today text in our own marketing materials in our communities. Michael said yes. Asked when the ad would come out, Michael reported he doesn't know.

Cara from COHF is coordinating how-to videos for rosary making to send to communities so they can make enough for the pride booth.

Michael met Jason McBride at a Gun Violence Prevention event where it was shared how much black youth are affected by gun violence. Suicides among black youth has risen 80 percent in last few years. Michael forwarded Jason's information to Adrian Miller at CCC. **Put on your radar if you'd like Jason to speak at your community about this issue.**

St. Paul was contacted by Wall St. Journal. Michael was interviewed as the progressive catholic perspective.

We need to review regional website to clean it up. What should be deleted, updated, etc. Please contact Michael with this feedback.

CCC meetings moved to 9 am on 4th Tuesdays. They run one hour. Reminder to submit our financial donations to CCC earlier in year. CCC is planning an event on 100th day of Trump administration for our communities. It would be a panel discussion. Could we provide someone? **There's maybe a video that needs to be submitted for Pentecost. Who could do that?** Michael may not have bandwidth to do that.

8. Leadership Council Report.

Rosean reported House of Pastors will meet about what direction they need to be heading. Michael said topic of spiritual support of clergy came up and he gave example of our region meeting every Friday. He said bishop Pablo is trying to recreate this clergy support in other dioceses. Teri said synod leadership will be spread out more in future. She also reported pastors talked about supporting each other.

9. Community Updates

- STP:
Community is processing Fr. Don stepping away from leadership and Fr. Michael is supported in pastoring the community but his time here is unknown. The St. Paul council will look at other examples of how pastor searches have gone. Holy conversations will happen in community to create STP ideal job description. UCC accessibility update: lift delivered. Kitchen is going to get renovated. AC will be installed. Easter Holy Week will include an Easter Vigil service in addition to joint service with UCC.
- MoM:
Taizè services and suppers each Wed. in lent. Rick Klein centering prayer workshop from 9-noon. March 29th. Tom added 301 faith partners are trying to protect immigrant community. One of the churches is opening doors for the immigrants to meet and discuss issues. MOM is helping with food and parking lot monitoring. They fundraised for ISSAC which is an immigrant support organization. All was virtual for immigrant safety.

- COB:
They had Ash Wednesday services and had ashes on the go at a park. Not a lot of people but meaningful. After the services people wanted ashes and counseling. This felt good. 3 people going to pilgrimage to Montgomery, AL. There will be a spiritual pilgrimage first before the trip. **For more info contact Alice to attend the spiritual pilgrimage.** Also Tom pointed out people from the region going might want to meet in advance. Social Justice project for lent is for Project Angel Heart.
- LOC:
Online retreat for lent. Soup supper and prayer service with Lutherans. Deacon Mike (intern there) led a workshop for adults and one for kids for his class. They are highlighting a new ministry. They visit ICE detention in Aurora. This ministry will deliver the homily this week to share their experiences. Adult mission team goes to a reservation in AZ with Tipi Raisers. There will be a fundraiser for St. Patrick's Day to support the adult mission trips.
- COHF:
No programs for lent due to current situation. They are having mass regularly. They will have a mass with Bishop Kae and community potluck and meeting about their way forward in March. They feel like they missed getting input from the whole group when they decided to close the parish. Regarding the situation at COHF Kae added not to publish what is happening. Just say please pray for Holy Family and St. Paul in transition if you want to publish anything. And this can be in the prayers of the faithful. Jim added to pray to the Holy Spirit for Holy Family.
ANNE PLEASE REVIEW AND TELL ME WHAT TO DELETE as items will appear on REGIONAL WEBSITE

Old Business

1. Regional Synod 2025 Planning Team.

Could each community come up with a person to serve on that planning team? This had been asked at the last meeting but folks didn't get this yet. It was suggested knowing where it will be will help in getting committee members. Discussion on which church should host it. **Kae asks that we try to each find someone for the planning team. Maybe a separate meeting is needed to see if a facilitator could plan the synod. May 8 was suggested as best meeting date for most people. 6 pm was suggested. Kae will schedule and send out meeting invite. We need to invite our reps who can help.**

2. Holy Week Schedules.

Kae asked if she needs to bless oils on Holy Thursday?

Kae wants to post schedules on social media and website **so those should be shared with Michael.**

3. Plans for PRIDE Weekend in June – parade and booth.

Kae reported her community would fund Denver parade fee. They will not take full coordination responsibility. Application for parade is further out than booth. Alice said

they have 3 people who could help. She said there needs to be a commitment from others to be able to make it happen. Kirsten asked who leads it. Michael said he has done a lot, and Greg has helped. Greg said he could help again to set up. Kirsten suggested maybe just do a booth due to unknown volunteer commitment. Alice also wants to do the Adams County pride event. Alice said she has three people who can help and wonders if we should commit without booth worker commitments. **Consensus was to get booth paid for. Michael will do that. Michael will see if ECC could participate in CCC group.** A few people said this is not the year to pull out of the booth and alluded to the unfriendly/unsavory political actions towards the LGBTQ community.

4. **Michael's Relocation (place holder).** No updates.

5. **Regional Assessments of Bishop/Vicar/RMRC.**

Kae asks us to go through the data and look for patterns, needs, ways forward, etc. This should be on next meeting's agenda and we should skim through to see what pops up for us. Michael asks for us to address that the people in the pews don't know what we, the RC, does. We need a link in our respective newsletters to the website's documents page. Community leadership councils need to read those documents. Rosean says they do give the minutes to their leadership council and they post link. Alice says having available is important for transparency.

Wrap up

Kae asked if we want to do the Pentecost donation for ECC now. Consensus reached that **most communities will give at this time.**

Postponed in-person meetings discussion to next month agenda.

6. **Flexibility to make space for board member needs**

Meeting ended with prayer provided by Holy Family

Lead Rotation of 2025 RMRC Meetings: Apr 3— LOC; May 1—STP; Jun 5—MoM; Jul 3—COB; Aug 7 CHF; Sep 4—LOC; Oct 2—STP; Nov 6—MoM; Dec 4—COB

Remember, when you host, send out the agenda, have a facilitator and scribe, bring opening and closing prayer, bring Consensus Document, and send notes in a timely fashion.

Appendix A—Bishop Notes: Activity in February 2025

Personal: Due to a variety of circumstances, I am still not functioning at my usual capacity.

Listening and Relationship building:

Administration

Ongoing: Recommendation that the continuing education for clergy working in communities be determined mutually and monitored by the leadership council of the community. The leadership

councils also hold responsibility for the Safe Church requirements with accountability to the bishop.

Advocacy/Presence/Consultation:

- Consultation and support for with engaged laity and clergy with Church of the Holy Family in their transition. I will facilitate a CHF community potluck and discussion on March 30 to listen to all voices and discover next steps.
- Consultation in St. Paul's transition :)
- "Know Your Rights" – in follow up to the presentations, how is your community addressing this challenge at your sites?

Clergy support:

Praying with many...

Clergy meetings and phone calls

Weekly Friday clergy gatherings:

Community support:

We are hosting an ordination of an individual from the Orthodox Catholic Church of America on March 22nd.

Consulted with COB's Anawim group and they are willing to "sponsor" and organize our participation in the PRIDE parade. More discussion will be needed at the regional council meeting to coordinate the booth.

Liturgies/Sacraments

Presided and engaged in a Q and A with members of MoM on February 9th.

Ordination:

Formation

Continuing discernment with Jim. Dory has begun discernment for the permanent diaconate at Mary of Magdala

Mike's discernment team will continue as support. Support of Christy as she completes her third year of study. Both Mike and Christy will graduate on May 17th – Hooray! (Due to his circumstances, Mike will have 4 classes remaining and then receive his certificate of presbyteral ministry.)

ECC

Council of Bishops

- Meetings: Next meeting March 10th.
- USA Today ad – thank you Michael for your contributions. I attended the first meeting on Feb 12 and concluded that there were many participating whose skill set would be more beneficial than mine.

Consulting with Pablo: Phone calls and meetings to discuss the current climate and functioning of the ECC, perspectives.

Appendix B—Ecumenical Engagement Report for RMRC 03 06 2025

submitted 3/3/2025 by Fr. Michael Nicosia

KEY POINTS and ACTION ITEMS in red

REGIONAL & NATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Edited Regional website, and forwarded visitor message to Kae.

Collaborations throughout the month with the ECC Ecumenical Advisory Committee.

Participated in various advocacy campaigns and disseminated info about them on social media (bills re affordable housing, education, DEI, gun violence prevention, Feb. 28 Buying Blackout, et al.).

Began coordinating with Cara at CHF about pride rosary making. We hope to circulate how-to video links to the communities; she may also hold an in-person/Zoom workshop and record it as an additional resource.

Participated in Gun Violence Prevention Lobby Day on 2/6;

I met Jason McBride of McBride Impact <https://www.mcbrideimpact.org/> who spoke passionately about **Black youth challenges including increased rates of violence and suicide, and access to guns via social media.** Forwarded his contact info to Adrian Miller (CCC) as possible guest to speak with the Board (and Judicators). **Any interest in our communities?**

Participated in CCC gathering of denominational Communications directors 2/11.

Participated in OPB ad hoc committee composing **full page ECC ad in USA Today's inaugural Easter Edition** 2/17, 25, 28, 3/3. **(Private benefactor covering \$30K cost of the ad!)**

Participated in Regional Pastors' Friday prayers.

Presided at MoM 2/16; StP 2/22.

Coming up: Fr. Stan's non-churched faith sharing group invited to join StP for Ash Wed service.

NOTE: Council needs to review Regional website to determine what dated material needs to be deleted, what needs updating, what needs prioritizing.

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES Board Meeting—February 27, 2025

Meetings now moved to 4th Tuesdays at 9 a.m.

GATHERING THOUGHTS: Opened with reflection based on last week's Homily: *In these challenging times, maybe the greatest challenge before us is to speak truth to power with love.*

COMMUNITY UPDATES

- One member shared about her being in Germany last week and about how people around the world are struggling with and resisting our current Administration.
- DenvPres working on partnerships on immigration; Coloradans For the Common Good very active.
- Methodists held immigration summit across 3 states.
- Adrian lost lots of Black History Month engagements due to DEI bans; next book coming out May 8th on Asian chefs.

FINANCIAL NOTE

- **Submitting member contributions early in calendar year help fund Easter Sunrise Service.**
- Adrian delaying compensation until after Easter.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

- Rev. Dr. Steve Van Ostran, American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains will preach
- Bishop Meghan Aboulani (RMSELCA) and Bishop Kristin Stoneking (Mtn Sky UMC) on program
- C2 Mass Choir and Father Nicosia will provide music

VOICES FOR JUSTICE UPDATE—More testifying happening

JUDICATORY LEADER FEEDBACK ON CCC DIRECTION—only 8 of 13 active/responsive.

- Believe CCC should be more active & proactive; interested in press conferences & issuing statements.
- Hybrid event planned marking 100th day of Administration. **(Will +Kae participate?)**
Also planning a Pentecost video compilation again.
(Michael produced our 2021 ECC video segment. This year?)
- Empowerment of CCC Board members varies denomination by denomination; more active rather than solely advisory is the hope.
- Sub- committee of Board to tweak/expand Public Policy Statements, asking for volunteers.
- Hope to get Judicatories to fund interdenominational Advocacy Director.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS WEBINAR (for Churches) on Jan. 28th well viewed.

- Positive feedback, particularly about 1) Churches creating “private spaces” that ICE doesn’t have access to, and 2) how to discern validity of warrants.

CCC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTIVITIES

- Absalom Jones events—Adrian’s participation was regional and national for the ECUSA
- 2/9 preaching at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Centennial
- Presbyterian Foundation podcast

ELECT 2025 OFFICERS

- Chair: Michael until he moves
- Vice Chair: Roland until someone steps up
- Treasurer: VACANT
- Secretary: If AI notes good, may not need one. Include recap at end with action items.

Closed with Prayer leading into Lent:

Loving God, as a mother comforts her children, comfort us and grant us peace in our day. In your compassion, mold us into a people of compassion as we address the injustices and frustrations of life. Let each stumbling be a teachable moment as we journey through this holy season, for now is the day of salvation, through Christ our Lord. Amen.