

Special Informational Congregation Meeting June 8, 2023

Minutes Approved

20 June 2023

Marlene Kiser

Meeting started at: 6:10pm

Welcome to Special Informational Congregation Meeting: Chet Madison

Opening Prayer: Bishop Claire Burkat

Guests: Interim Bishop Claire Burkat, Synod VP Simon Wong & Pastor Carl Hoppman.

Guests Introductions made:

Interim Bishop Claire Burkat – Bishop came out of retirement to assist the Sierra Pacific Synod with the departure of previous Sierra Pacific Bishop and to help with rebuilding trust with all 9 Conferences that compose the Sierra Pacific Synod.

Synod VP Simon Wong – Mr. Wong is working alongside Interim Bishop Burkat to bring confidence, trust, and structure back in the Sierra Pacific Synod.

New Synod Procedure:

Policy 23-001 Policy Procedure for the Sierra Pacific Synod of the ELCA for Discipline of a Rostered Minister when a Complaint is Reported, Adopted by the Synod Council April 15, 2023 (SC23.04.54).

- Handouts of this procedure are available to all congregates upon request to either Chet Madison or from the church office.

To comply with this new procedure for the synod the following special congregational meeting was called for St. Luke Lutheran Church of Sacramento, California by the Bishop to take place on June 8th, 2023:

- Complaint was disclosed about Pastor Brian Hiortdahl on May 19th, 2023, and findings of complaint read by Bishop at the Special Congregational Meeting on June 8th, 2023.
- Timeline of events of the complaint was disclosed and the actions taken by Bishop as required by the new procedure in place for: Discipline of a Rostered Minister when a complaint is reported.
- Bishop reported that Pastor Brian Hiortdahl had officially resigned from St Luke Lutheran Church of Sacramento, California on Friday, June 9th, 2023. Pastor Brain Hiortdahl was not requested at this time to be removed from the Roster of Minister for the Sierra Pacific Synod of ELCA by Bishop Burkat.
- Bishop Burkat request if anyone has any information to share with the Bishop that they are to email her at Bishop@SPSELCA.org. NO Anonymous email will be accepted, and all information provided will be fully vetted by the synod.
- Bishop asked for any questions or comments from the congregates present after the complaint was read.

- 1.) Clarence Korhonen – question about resignation
- 2.) Faith Thomas – question about pulpit supply. Bishop Burkat stated that Pastor Carl Hoppman was going to come out of retirement to assist St. Luke's with this function. This is hoped to provide stability and trust back for many congregates at the church. Pastor Carl Hoppman will be the Term Pastor and provide ministry support until a new pastor is obtained for St. Luke's.
- 3.) Pauline Arndt & Jack Fenske – question on "What is the next steps for the church to get a new Pastor"? Bishop Burkat and Synod VP Simon Wong outlined that steps and help that will be coming from the Synod. There will not be a need to recreate a MSP (Ministry Site Profile) again, unless it needs to be updated for any reason. Bishop Burkat and Mr Wong will convey to the Deans of the Sierra Pacific Conferences how important it is for St. Luke's to be provided candidates for a future pastor. Chet Madison indicated he will start the Call process again for St. Luke's church.
- 4.) Pauline Arndt – Is the information that was provided tonight confidential? Bishop Burkat indicated it is private but not confidential. What should be communicated if it is shared is that this was an internet addiction and finical responsibility to his family issue.

Next Sierra Pacific Synod Assembly:

The Synod Assembly will be September 15-17, 2023, in Burlingame, California. At this synod meeting there will be the election of a new Sierra Pacific Bishop.

Pastoral coverage for St. Luke Lutheran Church of Sacramento, California:

Interim Bishop Claire Burkat has recommended to Synod that Pastor Carl Hoppman be the Term Pastor starting July 1st until a new pastor can be "Called to St. Luke Lutheran Church of Sacramento, California".

Closing Prayer: Interim Bishop Claire Burkat & Term Pastor Carl Hoppman

Term Pastor Carl Hoppman encouraged all congregates present to take the needed time for healing and wholeness, than begin the Call for a new pastor.

Meeting closed: 7:15PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marlene Kiser
Council Secretary
Marlenek8626@outlook.com