

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

November 7, 2024, 6 PM, via ZOOM

Host: Light of Christ ECC; Facilitator – Chuck; Scribe Tom

Present:

Kae Madden (Regional Bishop)
Michael Nicosia (Vicar for Ecumenical Engagement)
Greg Yonker (Treasurer)
Chuck Howard (LOC)
Rosean Amaral, Tom Moos (MofM)
Alice Bradley, Dennis Giblin (COB)
Jane Reina, Anne Grant (CHF)
Liz Begalla, Don Sutton (St. Paul)

Zoom Details

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82381106642?pwd=XiQ5a9vJCt57OSMGUIUSUyuQefkDU7.1>

Meeting ID: 823 8110 6642 Passcode: 10500

Jane prepared the agenda but Chuck felt well enough to facilitate and opened the meeting at 6:04 with our regional prayer and a prayer from Richard Rohr for political holiness.

Regular Business

1. **Welcome Visitors:** none
2. **Agenda approval/additions**
Two additions: Bishop/regional evaluation form and presentation of Fr Teri's PhD dissertation.
3. **Review and approval of October notes**
Not everyone saw or received Gayle Craun's final draft of the October notes. Jane asked Gayle to resend them and **the Council will do final review and approvals via email.**
4. **Financial report**
Greg presented his financial report: income, expenses and balances. At the Council's request, he added a spreadsheet that shows actuals -vs- budgeted running totals which clarifies our year-to-date financial status against the budget – we're on track. Treasurer report approved as submitted. Greg noted the absence of a Sep tithe from Mary of Magdala. **Tom will check with Yvonne. Greg asked Light of Christ to send checks to his address on Ridgeview Lane.**
5. **Bishop's report**
Kae received few responses from RMRC members to her request for Synod feedback, most from non-RMRC delegates. She collated and distributed those with her Bishop's report. A few other responses were written but didn't get sent to her. Due to scheduling conflicts, the bishop gathering after the Synod didn't happen as usual. In an upcoming meeting, **the bishops will examine the inputs from Rob's visioning exercise and discuss how to proceed forward.** Kae has been on vacation after the Synod. Other topics from her report were discussed as separate agenda items. (See Appendix A)
6. **Vicar's report**

Michael noted that links to Synod recordings on Youtube are posted on the regional website as well as the ECC anti-racism statement that was read by Synod attendees and video-taped by Marisa Werner. Other topics from his report were also covered as separate agenda items. (See Appendix B)

7. Leadership Council Report

Teri Harroun still has some matters to tie up with the Leadership Council, specifically concerning vice-chair for HOL but intends to resume attending RMRC meetings in January 2025. Tom clarified that at the HOL house meeting at Synod, no one had stepped forward to serve as vice-chair but PB Pablo announced Erin and John Duffy-Burke in that role during the Synod closing ceremony. Tom noted that the HOL did not explicitly affirm the HOL leadership as has been done in prior Synods. Dennis believed that no objections raised during the closing implied an implicit affirmation but wondered about 2 persons sharing one leadership role. Ensuing discussion supported a shared leadership role as long as together they have only one vote.

8. Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Jane again expressed appreciation for the RMRC's financial support for the T&R at Synod as well as gratitude for mentions by +Pablo and others. Synod attendees were very supportive of the materials presented at the T&R table and folks signed up for 1619 Project study groups and expressed interest in the pilgrimage to Montgomery in April 2025. The RMRC money covered all the Synod T&R expenses allowing a little to be set aside for future use including possible pilgrimage scholarships. Carol Persons on behalf of a Mary of Magdala Spiritual Reading Group offered a study group of The False White Gospel to anyone in the ECC.

9. Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Michael proposed changing the date because Jan 20, 2025 is Martin Luther King day. Kae proposed switching to Tues, Jan 21. **Kae will initiate a planning sessions with Jane and Tom** who have volunteered to help organize.

10. Regional Synod 2025 Planning Team

Rosean proposed rescheduling the Regional Synod in Oct 2025 to coincide with the month of the National ECC Synod in even years and to allow some extra time for planning. Kae noted that Bp Kedda is scheduling a regional Synod for the Pacific Northwest that will be more retreat-like. Several Council members supported that idea, especially if there is not much business or legislation to address. Don raised the importance and power of praying together. Dennis and others noted that the bishop and regional leadership evaluation may raise issues that should be addressed at a regional Synod. **Kae requested that Council members extend feelers to their respective communities to ask for focus and seek volunteer organizers. The goal is to identify planners by January and follow up with more discussion in our Dec RMRC meeting.**

11. Michael's Relocation

Marc will resume interviewing for new job opportunities in the spring. Jane kept Michael's relocation on the agenda as a reminder that we need replacement for Michael's role as Vicar for Ecumenical Engagement and to stay attuned to moving plans.

12. Continuing Education for Clergy

Fr Scott Jenkins will own managing the status of clergy education and safety training. Kae has not spoken to him on this topic recently. Rosean will continue to keep records.

13. Community Updates

- MofM: Fr Teri has announced to the community that she will no longer be presiding at MofM come January to focus on her healing. We'll celebrate her and express appreciation for her 13 years of service at her last Mass on the first Sunday in December. We celebrated a combined liturgy and adult ed focused on immigration on Oct 20. Jane continues to lead prayer for peace on Monday mornings which now also integrates silent reflection.
- LOC: Jack Wolfe's widow recently passed away and a Celebration of her Life is scheduled Nov 15.
- COB: Completed annual hat, scarves and mittens collection for Samaritan House and Precious Child. Kae and Gregg Madden coordinated prayer times during election days. On the two Saturdays after Synod, delegates offered reflections. Julia Halaby will facilitate a presentation with a member of the Jewish community on the history that has led to the current reality in Palestine followed by guided table discussions. **Kae will send out the Zoom link for anyone interested.**
- STP: Participated in a prayer service by UCC before the election. Pastor Chris did exceptional job. Sense of unity. Celebrated the building's 100th anniversary gala. Prayer group meets daily and Don would like this to become a regional prayer group. A book group has been discussing Trish Vanni's Reconstructing Catholicism. Fundraising cabaret and silent auction Dec 15.
- CHF: Jane mentioned impacts of Regina's son-in-laws's death - liturgy committee is working through liturgical changes as a result. Mike Weil's Mass on Nov 24 precedes his internship at LOC – all are invited to attend.

New Business

1. Updates Debrief on Holy Synod

Kae opened the discussion to whatever people wanted to do to review the Synod. Dennis was an observer but felt like a delegate. He thought the Sunday Mass was amazing, enjoyed shared connections with other delegates, and felt great to be there. Liz loved it but is overwhelmed right now with political holiness – discussion went a bit off-topic. Jane offered that the younger communities with Trish Vanni and Mir Plemmons had different perspectives and suggested that they be seriously considered and carry a different weight. She added that Fr Rickey's presentation on virtual attendance and changing trends warrant more thought and reflection. Rosean liked Bishop Pablo's setting the stage with the "Saint Buddy" exercise which built an ongoing friendship that deepened during the rest of Synod. The multi-building venue and landscape proved tough with her walker and she appreciated Dennis providing rides. **Chuck asked about seeking more written responses. Kae would welcome other community/delegate inputs. When compiled, we should include these comments as an appendix to meeting notes.**

2. Introduction to Rev. Dr. Jenny Whitcher, Minister of Prophetic Formation

Michael emailed out Jenny's pitch which describes what the conference will be like and elicits needs and desires from partnering organizations. The conference will be in Denver with a remote participation option. Sponsorship pledges are needed by end of the year to enable conference planning and keep registrations at \$100. Michael informed her that we are small with limited financial resources but may be able to provide some volunteers. Michael has also raised the possibility of workshops on virtual communities. She is interested in coming to RMRC meeting in Dec to discuss all of this. Jane hopes the conference may identify

marginalized people who, post-election, might need ECC help. The group consensus was to **proceed with inviting her to December's RMRC meeting at 6:15.**

3. Bishop/Vicar/RMRC Evaluation Form

Appreciation expressed to Chuck for his great work at developing draft evaluation, particularly how the cover letter concisely but informatively describes key bishop responsibilities. Some didn't have time to read and reflect on the draft. The scope has broadened from a bishop evaluation to now also assess the vicar and RMRC roles. Chuck suggested we kick this around a little more via email and need a due date. Ensuing discussion focused on scope and then heavily on who will complete the evaluation. How many will have a real critique? People who are uninformed should not complete it. The conversation also challenged each community to examine how we communicate the work of the bishop, vicar and council. **We agreed to discuss this further via emails and make it a priority after the holidays.**

4. Fr Teri Presents Her Dissertation

Growing interest in reading the dissertation or hearing her present it. **Kae will check with Teri about presenting it only to members of the region, on Zoom, Nov 21**

Closing Prayer – Dennis closed meeting with a prayer at 8:20.

Lead Rotation of RMRC Meetings:

Dec. 5 —STP; Jan 2 – MoM; Feb 6 – COB; Mar 6 – CoHF; Apr 3 – LOC; May 1 – STP; Jun 5 – MoM; Jul 3 – COB; Aug 7 – CoHF; Sep 4 -- LOC; Oct 2 – STP; Nov 6 – MoM; Dec 4 – COB

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Moos, Mary of Magdala, for Light of Christ

Bishop Notes: Activity in October 2024

+Kae

Personal: I was present at Synod and with the Council of Bishops from Thursday, October 10 through Monday, October 14 (the scheduled post synod bishop meeting fell through). Then I enjoyed some vacation and retreat time, returning to "active ministry" on October 29th.

Listening and Relationship building:

Regional gathering in 2025 = Synod? Retreat? Inviting another bishop to be with us. Once we know what we want to do, then we can create a planning team. I'm sensitive to those who gave their "all" for our ECC synod. Let's breathe. Restore. And at the same time, not lose momentum.

Administration

Mid-term feedback: Thanks to Chuck for taking the lead on an invitation to our community leadership regarding the bishop and vicar work so far.

Ongoing:

- Clergy Ethics/Safety Training:
- Continuing Education: Fr. Scott is willing to assist us by holding this expectation, assisting and conversation with clergy. Rosean would still retain the official records.

Advocacy/Presence/Consultation

Together Colorado – I have not taken any action.

Colorado Council of Churches: Did you all send out the voter's guide? Any feedback?

Clergy support:

Praying with many...

Clergy meetings and phone calls

Weekly Friday clergy gatherings:

Community support:

Liturgies/Sacraments

* Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is Jan 18 -25. We agreed to gather on Monday, Jan 20th. Jane and Tom and I will set a time to plan :)

Ordination:

Formation

Continuing discernment with Jim.

Mike's discernment team will continue as support.

Support of Christy as she completes her third year of study.

ECC

Regional Delegate meetings: Do we want a post-synod meeting of delegates and observers? I will attach the few take-aways I received...What's next?

Council of Bishops

- Meetings: Call on Nov 11th
- Follow up to process review team presentation
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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 11 07 2024

submitted 11/05/2024 by Fr. Michael Nicosia

KEY POINTS and ACTION ITEMS in red below

REGIONAL & NATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Participated in ECC Synod 2024 a little.

Participated in Regional Pastors' Friday prayers.

Coordinated with Tom Moos to add music files to Synod videos.

Posted Synod video links on Regional website.

Sent Retired Clergy Association materials to interested party.

10/29 Michael met with Juniper Formation founder, Rev. Dr. Jenny Whitcher.

- More info under CCC report below.
- The conference will be held in Denver; still determining at which facility, a couple options already made available. There will be a digital participation option for participants.
- (My initial interest was discussing inclusion of Conference workshops on creating on-line communities.)

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES—10/23 meeting

CALL TO ORDER/ shared “Bless Our Way” and led discussion about passing the torch.

- refraining “church” for nones and the younger generation;
- focus on peacemaking and relationship-building that crosses divides

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

- received a private donation to sponsor event re ANTI-WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM (vs. Black Church Christian Nationalism which led to the civil rights movement)
 - Subsidize Denver series
 - Hold Event Or Series in October outside of Denver Metro Area
- ENERGY EFFICIENCY OUTREACH WITH DENVER CHURCHES
- EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE
 - EACH BOARD MEMBER DEVELOP 5 ITEM CONTACT LIST
(Thank you to 2 private ECC contributors)

PRESENTATION FROM [JUNIPER FORMATION](#) by Rev. Dr. Jenny Whitcher

- On-line ecumenical faith community and formation tool “prophetically reimagining the church” developed 2 yrs ago by UCC. Centering the margins of the church, focus is on expanding inclusivity (race, gender, orientation, immigrations status, neuro-diversity ,et al.)
When considering voices on the margins, how might our visioning transform church structures, liturgy, ministry, et al?
- Resource: Daily Ripple app for Monday through Friday daily devotional/faith teaser by one of 20+ authors; 100-150 word droplets exploring their experiences as it relates to a scripture passage; authors share through the vulnerability of their experience what it means to question, struggle, believe, and act on the scripture passage they’re writing about. (Sponsored by 6thAveUCC.)
- **PROPHETICALLY REIMAGINING THE CHURCH**, Conference scheduled for Sept 19-20, 2025
 - **PDF Pitch sent to RMRC**
 - **Looking for ecumenical participation and asking what workshops/presentations/resources would benefit our communities.**
 - Looking for sponsorships to keep registration at \$100; commitments to level of sponsorship sought before year's end so they can plan a budget for the event.
(In my private meeting with Jenny, I made it clear to her that the RMR-ECC is small with limited resources, help by providing volunteers for the event.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ACTIVITIES

- BLAXPLANATION Black Church Event on Sept. 14th
- Theology of Soul Food Presentation at Plymouth UCC in Fort Collins on Sept. 22nd
- Present at Denver Presbytery Meeting on Oct. 22nd

ANTI-WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

- Denver Presbytery live-stream event has wide viewership

COLORADO FAITHFUL VOTER GUIDE highlight particular CCC public policy priorities; statewide ballot initiative recommendations; voter information; election worker care
(Of note, American Baptists and Campbell Chapel AME Church are two CCC members not on board with the marriage equality amendment.)

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2025—NICOSIA REPORT: Zoom event Monday, January 20, 2025

RECONSIDER DATE—that Monday is MLKjrDay and Inauguration Day;
maybe Sunday or **Tuesday night 1/21**