

African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA) Los Angeles Chapter
General Session Meeting – August 24, 2024
Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Meeting Minutes

Approved – October 26, 2024

Present: Rev. Scott H. Adams, Jeanne Armstrong, Kathleen Elliott Chillison, Gavin Curry, Marquita Curry, President Carolyn Foster, Randall Foster, Teem Pastor MaryAnn Harrison, Rev. Roderick Hines, Dorothy Moore, Phoebus Lee, Rita Lee, Mary Shipp, Judith-Tutt Starr, Lurlean Towns, Rev. Tracy Williams

Excused: Jeff Brandt, Renee Brandt, Willa Glover, DN Gwen Jackson, Aundrea Johnson, Huandre Johnson, Mayomey Lawson, Enid McGraw, Kenisa McKee, Thomas McKee

- I. **Call to Order** – President Foster called meeting to order at 9:14A.
- II. **Devotions and Prayer** – Marquita Curry offered the devotions prefaced by a series of leading questions: “What do we do when we feel like ‘throwing’ in the towel?” Luke 22:39-42 – Jesus travels to the Mount of Olives to pray... ‘not my will but your will be done!’ Theme: Resist the temptation to quit!
- III. **Self-Introductions and Welcome** – self-introductions and Houses of Faith were announced.
- IV. **Approval of the Agenda** – MSC with a correction regarding the next meeting date of October 26, 2024.
- V. **Approval of the June 2024 Meeting Minutes** – MSC approving the meeting minutes of June 22, 2024
- VI. **Treasurer’s Report** – Thomas McKee submitted his written report in his absence, indicating the Beginning Balance of \$2580.26 with an ending Balance of \$1,289.93. It was noted that an additional \$100 collected in support of ADLA’s gift to The Rev. Dr. Pat Davenport is to be deposited, bringing the ending balance to \$1,389.93. The \$300 identified in the June meeting from members for Dr. Davenport’s program ad book and gift were received.
- VII. **Region 2 Representative’s Report** – Deferred
- VIII. **President’s Report** – President Foster began by sharing her reflections as well as the program booklet and pictures of the ‘medallion’ given to Bishop Davenport. As members perused the materials, she commented on her presentation of the medallion, the ADLA Chapters present and the number of Bishops on-site. She indicated the presence of Former Bishop, now President R. Guy Erwin and Rob and the fact that the festivities took place on the campus of Unity Seminary. She mentioned the worship service on Friday and Bishop Davenport’s delight to see that LA was in the house, the BBQ on Saturday and the banquet on Sunday evening. Lastly, she indicated her pleasure in meeting Bishop Phyllis Walton, Bishop, Virginia Synod and her husband, Nat. Dr. Walton was familiar with ADLA but seemed to have some misgivings but was open to hearing more about Los Angeles. An informational packet was e-mailed to her and she responded with gratitude and interest.
- IX. **ADSPT** – the kickoff meeting for Year 3 will commence the 3rd week in October with a focus on the Advent and Christmas Seasons.

Old Business Highlights

1. **Synod Assembly Responsibilities** – a review of the Assembly registration process was held between ADLA and Bishop Bos, identifying those practices and procedures that should be reconsidered for 2025. A detailed report was submitted with recommendations. Among the recommendations was the use of voting by acclamation whenever a ballot is uncontested. The 2025 Synod Assembly will likely be held at a hotel rather than the Synod Sanctuary.
2. **NAG** – no change

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3. **Trout Endowment Goal** – the funding goal for the ELCA Trout Endowment remains at \$25,000. ADLA has been investigating ways in which these funds might be secured. Proceeds from the incoming trip to Viejas are to be directed to the endowment.
4. **ADLA's 2023-24 membership drive** concluded with 133 members. Two additional long-term members confirmed their annual participation raising the campaign total from 131 to 133.
5. **Eyeglasses Recycle** – ADLA continues its partnership with the Inglewood Lions Club through the recycling of eyeglasses. These eyeglasses are repurposed and given to those in need.
6. **Pull Tabs** – ADLA continues steadfastly providing pull-tabs to the Ronald McDonald House, Long Beach in support of Miller's Children's Memorial Hospital. Pull Tab aluminum is reused and its value converted to cash. The cash serves as an offset to family expenses incurred while children are housed at the medical center. Some 118 pounds (1,248 tabs per pound) have been deposited with the Ronald McDonald House thus far!
7. **National ADLA President's Meeting** – postponed due to scheduling mix-up. New date is being obtained among the Chapter Presidents (possibly in October).
8. **End of Summer Gathering, 2024** (Summit of 15 to 17 Churches) – postponed until 2025, seeking a funding source. The 2023 event cost \$5,000.
9. **SWCA Synod Mission and Ministry Grants** – A revised date to submit grant proposals for consideration has been set by the Synod as September 13, 2024. Both ADLA and My Friends House are poised to submit proposals for funding. ADLA will be including a request to fund the 2025 End of Summer Gathering.
10. **Annual Dodgers Night with the Episcopal Diocese** – September 7th is our night with the Dodgers, bringing Churches of the Episcopal Diocese and the Southwest California Synod together. ADLA helped the Synod in selling 332 tickets. RTD buses provide transportation services for free. Tickets to the game are to be released by the Dodgers by August 27th.
11. **Viejas Casino Trip** – September 8th is the designated bus trip to Viejas Casino (San Diego County). Thirty-six passengers are needed to reclaim to the \$1,100 deposit. The new deadline is August 31st for bus confirmation and casino attendance. Zelle is accepted!

New Business

1. The new *ADLA polo shirts* are now available! Sunflower yellow, Kelly Green and White are among those to select from. See ADLA website for selection and purchasing link. An informational email will also be sent.
2. *God's Work, Our Hands (GWOH)* is now slated for the Christmas Season, moving it from September to Advent. ADLA members will be asked to support the bulk purchasing of gift cards, socks, jackets, etc., with individual \$20 donations for students who may not have much of anything for Christmas. Several agencies are now providing school-based back packets and it was felt that ADLA's presence would be better felt if its outreach were performed in November/December rather than September. There was a general census to proceed (MSC). Those schools, agencies and universities previously supported shall receive priority status.

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3. *Grown Woman, Real Talk (GWRT)* was planned this year for two seasons, one at HTELC and the other at CLU. It is now only being planned for HTELC. Volunteers were sought to be greeters, hosts, set-up and clean-up teams. Participants are women (young ladies 16+ years or older). Subjects for discussion have previously included Suicide Prevention as well as issues of relationships, family, identity, faith, etc. Bishop Jester, Arizona will be the principal presenter, assuming she is not deployed by FEMA. ADLA will know more about her availability in the weeks to come. Gavin, Lurlean, and Jeannie volunteered. It was indicated that Monique Nunes, wife of CLU President, desires to participate.
4. President's Annual Holiday Gathering is among the events for the remainder of the year. It was cancelled during the pandemic and attempts are being made to have one this year, if possible. More information to follow.

Open Discussion

1. The *2025 Tribute to The Rev. Dr. MLK, Jr.* will have as its preacher of the hour, the Rev. Scott Hamilton Adams, CLU. Trinity, Hawthorne is the site under consideration, subject to agreement and confirmation by its new pastor. A meeting to consummate this arrangement is forthcoming. The Synod Sanctuary is another option under consideration. Parking arrangement would be required.
2. *Black History Month Celebration at CLU* – Pastor Scott has taken on a new responsibility with the University Department of Athletics. Plans for BHM should be directed to Rev. Colleen Windom Hughes. Follow-up is needed to ensure all planning steps are arranged.
3. *Pastor Rod Hines' last Sunday at Messiah* is August 25, 2024. He and Shandra will become the first family at Shepherd of the Valley. We wish the two of them God's very best!
4. *The ELCA Youth Gathering & the MYLE* (Multicultural Youth Leadership Event) took place in New Orleans. Youth participated in community projects (addressing homeless shelters, storm drains, etc.) They were to have enjoyed themselves immensely.
5. *Double Good Popcorn Fundraiser* is to begin on September 5th and conclude on September 9th. The goal is to sell \$3,000 in popcorn, netting ADLA \$1,500 which shall be forwarded in support of the Trout Endowment. Project notices will be sent along with the purchasing link to share with others.
6. *The literary work of The Rev. Dr. James Thomas and The Rev. Dr. Albert Starr, Jr.* were highlighted and their respective books placed on display. "A Rumor of Black Lutheranism", authored by Dr. Thomas and "Late Night Offerings and Morning Prayers", penned by Dr. Starr were shared with information as to the purchasing options of each. In Dr. Thomas book it was noted that the ELCA honored The Rev. Dr. Nelson W. Trout in its Calendar of Saint's Day on September 20th. Dr. Thomas will be featured as one of three presenters during The Richard Stewart Lifelong Learning series, September 9, 16, 23, and 30 at 7P (see flyer from United Lutheran Seminary).
7. Simon Burris, member of HTELC, authored a crossword puzzle *exploring the life of Presidential Candidate, Kamala Harris, VP*. All were welcome to take the 'test'.
8. October 5th is the final day to register for the *November elections*. Provisional ballots can be obtained at any polling place.

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9. Dates to remember:
 - a. September 14th – Universal confirmation for all ADLA congregations begins at HTELC
 - b. September 24th – Paint and Praise at St. Mark's
 - c. September 31st – California OES Grants, \$250K available for campus security
10. Congratulations to the Curry's and Foster's on their respective wedding anniversaries!
11. Next Meeting to held at Olivet Lutheran, October 26th

Meeting adjourned at 10:54A

Respectfully submitted,
Randall S. Foster
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Recording Secretary