

African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA) – Los Angeles Chapter
General Session Meeting – June 28, 2025
Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran, Inglewood
Meeting Minutes

June 28, 2025

Present: Jeanne Armstong, Connie Chaney, Dorothy Cole, Gavin and Marquita Curry, Carolyn and Randall Foster, Willa Glover, Pr. MaryAnn Harrison, Dawn Horton, DN Gwendolyn Jackson, Mayomey Lawson, Carlotta LaRue, Phoebus Lee, DN Agnes McClain, Enid McGraw, Carolyn Pate, Mary Shipp, Pr. Albert Starr, Jr., Judith-Tutt Starr, Pr. Tracy Williams, Ronald Wortham

Excused: Pr. Scott Adams, Dr. Len and Carol Bergland, Renee Brandt, Debra Bowie, Kathleen and Robert Chillison, Mynesha Gray, Beverly Hamiter, Andrea and Huandre Johnson, Pr. Roderick and Shandra Hines, Pr. Maurice Ingram, Rita Lee, Rev. Charlene Limenih, Thomas and Kenisa McKee

- I. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 9:10A by President Foster who called upon Council President Jeanne Armstrong (HTELC) to offer the morning devotions.
- II. **Devotions** – ‘To everything there is a season...’ Ecclesiastics 3:1. Mrs. Armstrong began by stating that “times are changing! For HTELC the recent agreement with The Rev. Scott Hamilton Adams as the new Lead Pastor has brought ‘healing and closure’ to a five-year quest for pastoral leadership. God has a Plan! A new journey has begun.” She concluded her expression of life’s seasonality with a comment and subsequent prayer for those who are deemed immigrants in this land and the dreadful plight that they face with deportation. Her own mother is a legal immigrant, and she is most concerned for her safety and well-being during this tragic season in American history. Lastly, Ms. Armstrong welcomed everyone to HTELC - her house of worship.
- III. **Self-introductions and welcome** – Each person present was asked by Pres. Foster to offer their name and congregation. Those excused were identified numerically, totaling 17.
- IV. **Approval of the Agenda** – It was presented for discussion and MSC. *The right to move the order of discussion for items listed remains an executive option.*
- V. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes** – The meeting minutes for April 26th were approved as edited (MSC). The meeting minutes were annotated to include the presence of Pr. Tracy Williams and Ms. Kimberley Crosby. President Foster reiterated the need to ensure that everyone ‘signs in’ at each meeting as this is

the only document used to reflect attendance. *Copies of the meeting minutes are now approved to be posted on the ADLA website and filed with ADLA National.*

- VI. Treasurer's Report** – The ADLA checking account had a beginning balance of \$11,933.38, receiving \$2,055 in receipts while dispensing \$4,249.33 for an ending balance of \$9,739.05. The 2025 ADLA Membership dues to ADLA National (confirming LA's membership of 153) was transmitted in the amount of \$2,445.00. Other expenses incurred were for printing, postage, and hotel accommodations and registration for the upcoming ADLA National Assembly. Monies received were for Dodgers' Night and the Viejas Trip. Special intercession was extended to The McKee's following Kenisa's mother's passing. The homegoing service is scheduled for July 8th (10:30A) at First, Carson.
- VII. Report of the Region II Representative** – Ms. Gwen Jackson offered a highlighted summary of the impending ADLA National Assembly, pointing to the website for specific details. She mentioned that the plenary sessions and speakers are listed and that the itinerary for the entire time in Pheonix is delineated. Registration has been extended and hotel availability at the Hyatt has been confirmed. She further mentioned that the July 24-27th ADLA National Assembly precedes the ELCA Biennial Assembly by a few days and that voting representatives like The Rev. Albert Starr, Jr. will be in attendance at both assemblies. The ELCA Biennial Assembly this year addresses the retirement of Presiding Bishop Eaton with an election for a new presiding bishop. It was further mentioned in conclusion, that in recent ADLA National e-meetings, a significant emphasis has been placed on the relationship between ADLA National and the ALLIA (Association of Liberian Lutherans in America). Some form of enhanced, organized collaboration between the two organizations is being considered.

VIII. Old Business – Status of Ongoing Measures & Activities

- a. *Trout Endowment* – Periodic reporting on the status of accumulated reserves housed in the ELCA supporting the Trout Endowment are now being received. Proceeds from the Viejas Casino and Shopping Trip will become annual Trout Endowment deposits. The prison ministry sponsored by Hope Lutheran is no longer in existence. In past years, monies from this excursion were used to purchase 'Recovery Bibles'.
- b. *Eyeglass Recycling* – Members were urged to continue to donate their previously used eyeglass wear. ADLA's partnership with the Inglewood Lions' Club is fostered and promoted by this arrangement.
- c. *Pull Tabs* – It was announced that another 4-5 pounds of tabs (1,240 per pound) were received just today for subsequent delivery to The Ronald McDonald's

House in Long Beach. Over time, as much as 120 pounds have been delivered by ADLA. The aluminum from recycled tabs is used to make surgical needles. Thus, the cost to families with sick children is reduced by this manufacturing process and the proceeds generated.

- d. *SWCA Synod Assembly* – Kudos were extended to the ADLA Registration Team for its skillful engagement during the recent Synod Assembly. Attendees said that the process employed by ADLA was virtually seamless, flawless and expedient. ADLA members also took on several other key functions (e.g., balloting and election verification) equally advancing these tasks with alacrity. It was, however, recommended that in future assemblies, at least four persons must be assigned to the Synod Office and the office must have at least two high speed printers. ADLA has already received a request to serve again in this capacity in 2026, which will include this Synod Bishop's election. Lastly, all those who attended were asked to complete the Synod's evaluation survey online and submit their reflections and comments.
- e. *Grown Women – Real Talk*: Bishop Jester remains deployed via FEMA and, as she is the facilitator of this educationally inspiring outreach, GWRT will only take place once she is able to attend. It remains ADLA's intent to host the event on the campus of CLU such the female students may be enriched by Bishop Jester's approach and biblical enlightenment.

IX. New Business

- a. *ADLA Apparel* – The next cycle for purchased ADLA attire has begun with 5 polo shirts on order. It requires 20 purchased shirts before shipment to each purchaser's home can transpire. As in the past, the accumulation of 20 purchases can be done in a short period of time.
- b. *End of the Summer Gathering* – This year's event, comprising invites to all 14 ADLA congregations and their members, will take place at LA Galaxy Park in Carson. Catered food, beverages, DJ, summer umbrellas for family seating, line dancing & games for all ages, free parking, Jumbotron visuals and announcements are all available. HTELC, in its affirmation of this event, has donated from its operating budget \$500 to cover the nominal participant expenses for its congregants. Other congregations were encouraged to do the same. A cost of \$15/person for those 18+ is required.
- c. *Dodgers' Night with the Episcopalians* – To date 70 tickets have been purchased from the 350 allotted to the Southwest California Synod. It won't be long before all of the \$45 tickets will have been sold. Last year, ADLA had to request additional tickets from our ministry partner. Members were encouraged to obtain their entry tickets early. Transportation is free if you use The Dodgers' bus system.

- d. *Viejas Trip* – As mentioned above, all proceeds will be directed to the Trout Endowment, usually constituting about \$1,000 per trip. The Viejas Trip cost \$35/ person. Bus seats are presently being secured.

X. Open Discussion and ADLA Highlights

- a. *Tribute to The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* – The annually sponsored worship service and tribute shall be site-hosted by Shepherd of the Valley, The Rev. Roderick Hines, on January 18, 2026, at 3P. The organizing committee shall convene to oversee and manage the work associated with the worship service on or before October 2025.
- b. *Installation of The Rev. Dr. John Nunes*, 9th President, CLU shall take place on October 17th at 10A on the campus of CLU. President Foster was requested to be a member of the planning committee.
- c. *Installation of The Rev. Scott Hamilton Adams*, HTELC shall take place on October 26, 2025, at 3P. The HTELC Planning committee will meet for the 1st time following the ADLA meeting at 11A today.
- d. *Modified ADLA Annual Calendar of events.* Discussion ensued as to the planned projects for God's Work, Our Hands Sunday and the month of service in September. It was agreed to continue to provide 'backpacks' to selected schools in support of students with 'needs'. This initiative is jointly sponsored by My Friends House, Inc., Los Angeles.
- e. *Congregational Updates:*

Christ the Shepherd	Interventional grants have been issued to fire victims in the Altadena area. Additional aid is pending. CTS has partnered with Altadena Meals on Wheels as an added service. ICE raids are occurring in Pasadena/Altadena. Interfaith community is mobilizing and networking to address this existential threat and to serve as a community resource. The food pantry has been relocated to Westminster Presbyterian Church and bible study as resumed at CTS.
Holy Redeemer & Community	Things are going well at both congregations – while small – they are doing the Lord's work. Prayers are extended to those congregations experiencing change.
First, Carson	Two summer programs are underway: 1) reading program with a licensed teacher, ages preschool to 8 th grade, 2) Nonprofit program in the Art of Entertainment (kids' instruction). Pastor Cook received a Doctoral degree and has entered the TEEM program in Berkeley.
Olivet	Pastor Barron offered his resignation last week and will be departing by July 13 th . The Women of the Church are scheduled for their annual Octoberfest, marked by line dancing and related fellowship activities. Sunday, June 29 th is Graduation Acknowledgement Sunday.

Holy Trinity	The installation for Rev. Scott Hamilton is slated for October 26 th . New congregational goals are being formulated already. On Graduation Sunday, \$13K was gifted in scholarships to deserving students (all ages). The new school year will carry with it a community event that HTELC will be participating. Kudos were extended to Jeanne Armstrong for her stellar leadership over the past five years, in light of not having a permanent pastor. Kudos were also directed accordingly to Marquita Curry for her phenomenal work with HTELC youth and young adults. Children, who were recently given Bibles as part of their faith walk have expressed great interests in reading God's word (e.g., The Lee's grandkids are an example).
Chapel of Peace	Pr. Charlene Limenih continues to serve in the capacity of Pastor Emeritus, accompanied by Pr. Maurice Ingram, who recently graduated from the TEEM program in May. With the assistance of the Chrystal Stairs Program, the CoP building is obtaining a 'makeover'. Other tenants, like the Head Start Program have broaden the reach of CoP within the community. ICE has made it difficult for CoP's partners in ministry within the Hispanic Community to venture far from home. Many didn't participate this year in the recent bus trip to Viejas. Angelica Lutheran, in particular elected to 'pass on this year'.
Trinity Lutheran, Long Beach	Pr. Albert Starr, Jr. serves as the Interim Pastor in a setting that is accommodating several other ministries: Brazilian, Cambodian, and Latino. On Families & Friends' Sunday, all four worshipping congregations came together in praise and adoration for what God is doing in and through them. Worship attendance has adversely been impacted in part due to the emphases on immigration/deportation. It was noted that in today's news, some 500,000 Haitians lost their temporary US status, effective June 28 th . The Florida-Bahama Synod has the most Lutheran Haitians and it requires our passionate yet aggressive voice on their behalf. ADLA has the skills, capacity and leadership to make 'some noise' in pronouncing 'good trouble'!
Ascension	Nothing specific to report
Community – extended commentary	Two tenants occupy space on campus: 1) Compton G'irls Club and 2) El Rio de Dios Ministry, both are willing contributors towards improving the functionality of the site. CSUDH provides teacher instruction for the girls attending the Girls Club and they have received notoriety from Channel 9. El Rio is a vibrant ministry and has invested significantly in Community, most recently installing a \$8,500 air conditioning unit on the roof. It sponsors several age-specific ministries throughout the week and has a ministry exceeding 140.

ADLA has scheduled and shall provide for the fellowship hours at Holy Trinity (the congregation with the most ADLA members) and Ascension (the congregation with the most ADLA new members) both for program year 2025-26.

It was mentioned the Messiah Lutheran, Los Angeles has a new interim pastor, Rev. Kimberly Scott, an Ecumenical partner. There is also a new interim pastor at Christ Lutheran, Compton. ADLA Executive Committee shall be reaching out to these ministers, welcoming them to LA!

Members and their families were lifted-up: Gil and Pat Jernigan (loss of mother), Tom and Kenisa McKee (loss of mother), Preston Foster (cancer), Joyce Woodard (stroke).

The meeting concluded at 10:30A. The next scheduled ADLA meeting will be in the form of the *End of Summer Gathering*, August 23rd. Members, their families and friends are invited for a day of 'blessed fellowship'.

Sincerely submitted,

Randall (Randy) Foster
ADLA Recording & Communications Secretary