

**African Descent Lutheran Association, Los Angeles Chapter  
General Session Meeting, Saturday – April 26, 2025 @ 9A  
Chapel of Peace Lutheran Church, Inglewood  
Meeting Minutes**

Approved on June 28, 2025

**Present:** Rev. Scott Hamilton Adams, Jeanne Armstrong, Debra Bowie, Kimberley Crosby, Gavin Curry, Marquita Curry, President Carolyn Foster, Randall Foster, Willa Glover, Mynesha Gray, TEEM Pastor MaryAnn Harrison, Pr. Roderick Hines, Dawn Horton, TEEM Pastor Maurice Ingram, Andrea Johnson, Haundre Johnson, Mayomey Lawson, Phoebus Lee, Rita Lee, Rev. Charlene Limenih, Mary Shipp, Judith Tutt-Starr, Patricia Waters, Pr. Tracy Williams, Ronald Wortham, & TEEM Pastor Keith Youngblood

**Excused:** Renee & Jeff Brandt, By Hamiter, Enid McGraw, Thomas & Kenisa McKee, Rev. Albert Starr, Jr., & Dale Washington

**Guest:** Fred Ascher

- I. **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order by President Foster at 9:03A.
- II. **Devotions** – Pr. Charlene offered a homily on the *'Resurrected Appearance of Christ'*, sharing the bewilderment and uncertainties experienced by the women, the disciples and those of our present day in recognizing the Omnipresence of Jesus. Joining our ecumenical partners, we look to the next 50 days leading to Pentecost and the realization that Christ is the resurrection and the life! Through our faith... 'we have decided to follow Jesus!'
- III. **Self-Introductions and Welcome** by all.
- IV. **Approval of the Agenda:** MSC
- V. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes** - February 22, 2025: MSC
- VI. **Treasurer's Report** (submitted in the absence of the Treasurer due to illness). The February 17<sup>th</sup> – April 22<sup>nd</sup> report denoted a *Beginning Balance of \$14,724.49* concluding with an *Ending Balance of \$11,933.38*. Cheques were issued to cover the LA Galaxy Park deposit of \$1,845 for the End of Summer Picnic Gathering and to the ELCA Fund for Leaders in response to the 2025 LA Fires in the amount of \$2,812. ADLA supplies were purchased and replenished along with recurring cost of the website's renewal.
- VII. **Region II Representative** – In the absence of the R2R, the National VP, TEEM Pastor, Keith Youngblood offered an update on the July 24-27, 2025, Biennial Assembly. He shared that the assembly program agenda governing the plenary sessions has been completed. Regrettably, he also announced that new National website crashed and that communications from the National President are now being administered through Facebook. Pr. Youngblood committed to sending out specific updates to the LA Chapter regarding the assembly in the immediate future. He did mention that hotel information

will soon be made available for purposes of securing lodging for the assembly period.

VIII. **President's Report** – Pres. Foster proudly announced the selection of The Rev. Scott Hamilton Adams as the Lead Pastor at HTELC, effective May 1<sup>st</sup>. A rousing applause was received.

## **Old Business**

### **IX. Status on Ongoing Measures of Intervention and Intercession**

- a. *Trout Endowment* – The current reserve is \$10,228.45 with a disbursement goal based on a coffer balance of \$25,000. Once the goal is achieved, accumulative interests can begin to be distributed in support of the Trout Lectures in Ohio.
- b. *Eyeglasses Recycling* – In partnership with the Inglewood Lions Club, previously used eyeglass wear is elicited, obtained and recycled for use by those for whom insurance and/or finances are insufficient. Hundreds have received eye exams and glasses as a result.
- c. *Aluminum Pull Tabs* – At present, 120 pounds (1240 tabs/pound) have been deposited with Ronald McDonald House, Inc., Long Beach in support of Miller's Children's Medical Center. Marquita Curry shared that she was in conversation with a family whose child was hospitalized at Miller's. They conveyed that their expenses for food and on-site services received came at NO cost to the family. The family lauded Miller's for its graciousness in their time of trial. Those expenses are routinely offset by the recycling of pull tabs. This is an example of impacting others through ADLA's generosity and commitment to help others. ADLA's work has a direct impact on many experiencing medical care challenges!
- d. *2025-26 ADLA Membership* – The membership campaign concluded on March 31<sup>st</sup> (albeit a few renewals are expected on or before April 30<sup>th</sup>). The membership goal of 150 new/renewed members has been achieved for the very first time this year! Members present expressed their pleasure at this milestone as they received "thanks" from President Foster. Pr. Starr presented ADLA with this program objective years ago indicating that given the number of inner-city congregations, securing 150 members should be doable. He was prophetically correct!
- e. *Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Tribute* – This year's worship service offerings resulted in a cheque write of \$2,812 to the ELCA Fund for Leaders dedicated to aiding those adversely impacted by the LA Fires. The cheque was issued this month. Last year's contribution to the ELCA Chaplaincy was acknowledged with the receipt of the 2024 Gold Star to be inserted on the existing award/plaque.
- f. *ADLA apparel* – The newly issued polo shirts in "winter green and sunshine yellow" are now available through Custom Ink. At the conclusion of the meeting, 26 polo shirts had

been ordered. Shipment of these shirts takes place once 20 are procured. Members will begin receiving their orders on or before May 16<sup>th</sup>.

- g. *Grown Women-Real Talk* – Remains on hold until Bishop Jester is available. She is still deployed by FEMA attending to national disasters (and there are many!)
- h. *California Wildfires* – ADLA is in possession of \$170 to be used by those impacted by the LA fires. While not an extensive amount, every little bit helps (place your little in the Master's hands!). TEEM Pastor Harrison will provide a list of families in need.
- i. *Lent/Easter Highlights*
  - 1. **Shepherd of the Valley** – 40 folk participated in Bible Study leading up to Holy Week, including members from St. Luke's. Seven new members joined Church!
  - 2. **Ascension** – Three immersion baptisms transpired, offering a truly spiritual experience and perhaps a greater appreciation for its use, especially given the ages of those involved: 7 months to 42 years!
  - 3. **Holy Trinity** – The annual creation of the "Living Cross", a floral cross representing a new life in Christ has been placed in the church's patio. It is the centerpiece for family photos, conversation and fellowship on Easter Sunday. Youth were given Easter Speeches to present. The Lee's granddaughters began by saying: "Easter eggs are all about fun, but Easter is about God's SON!" Lastly, a new marquee has been erected since the previous one was demolished following an auto accident. The new unit has an electronic digital display.
  - 4. **Lutheran Church of the Master** – Celebrated Easter in joint 'communion' with the Persian Community as they bore witness to Noruz (Persian New Year). This experience culminated in a 'full house' for worship and a grand fellowship exchange! Each worshipping community shared their faith highlights.
  - 5. **Holy Redeemer** – Served as the Maundy Thursday worship site for First, Carson, St. Luke's, Long Beach, Olivet Hawthorne, and Holy Redeemer, Bellflower. The collaborative worship was well received.
  - 6. **St. Mark's** – Held Maundy Thursday foot-washing, Good Friday worship and fish fry, inviting USC students and Easter morning worship services.

## **New Business**

### **X. Upcoming/Impending Actions and Opportunities**

- J. *2025 Synod Assembly, May 30-31, 2025:* Assembly registration closed on April 15<sup>th</sup>, but some on-site registration might be available for visitors. ADLA will continue to provide the service of on-site registration/operations and has requested that its 11 volunteers all wear ADLA polo shirts for both days. Synod is feverishly working on the assembly books, e-communications, and voter accommodations. Synod has indicated a need for volunteer runners, ushers and event aids. There will not be

voting machines this time, rather color-coded voting cards (red, white and green) shall be in use. Voters will be seated at tables of six. There remain hotel rooms available.

- K. *ADLA National Assembly, Phoenix, Arizona:* The ADLA National assembly precedes the ELCA Churchwide Assembly by a week. Several ADLA members will be attending both, especially since this year includes the election of a new Bishop. Bishop Eaton will be retiring.
- L. *End of Summer Picnic Gathering:* A site has been selected for August 23<sup>rd</sup>, having secured The LA Galaxy Park (which is adjacent to the Dignity Sports Complex). The facility offers free parking, ADA ramp access, multiple bathroom accommodations, use of the jumbotron, Bounce House, tents, tables, chairs, coolers, playground facilities and the ability to bring-in your own Food Truck. There will be facepainting, worship and continuous fellowship. There will not be an ADLA meeting on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, as the ESG will replace it. Pricing for the gathering: Children ages 0 to 5 free, Children 6 -12, \$10; Ages 13 and greater, \$15. Follow-up instructions on 'how best to secure tickets will follow via designated flyers. The event shall take place from 10A – 3P. Special thanks to St. Timothy's and First, Carson for their willingness to host!
- M. *Episcopal – Lutheran Dodgers Night:* The Dodgers will be playing the Arizona Diamondbacks on August 29<sup>th</sup>. All financial encumbrances (tickets, on-site sales) are by e-payments. ADLA has 350 tickets for sale. Last year, that volume was insufficient, thus, first come – first serve. *Save The Date* notices have been distributed.
- N. *Viejas Casino Trip:* The annual fundraiser to Viejas casino is scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup>, leaving from Olivet where parking is sufficient and secured. Trip payments must be paid by September 15<sup>th</sup>. Proceeds to be used in support of The Rev. Dr. Nelson W. Trout Endowment.

## **Open Discussion**

- XI. **TEEM Pastor Financial Support** – The Synod DEMs contacted ADLA to determine if it were possible for the organization and/or its members to aid in providing financial assistance for TEEM Pastors in need. An extended conversation transpired, addressing the following possible options:
  - 1. Include resources annually for TEEM candidates from ADLA's General Fund,
  - 2. Provide one-time only support based on the Synod's request,
  - 3. Establish a complementary account for TEEM candidates and/or 1<sup>st</sup> Time Call participants from the Trout Endowment,
  - 4. Redirection of MLK or Viejas funds to address TEEM candidate's financial shortfalls.

After the request for TEEM Pastors to reclude themselves and allow those in attendance to further the conversation and subsequent vote in their absence, it was MSC that the following take place:

1. The LA Chapter shall donate \$500/year for 5 years in support of TEEM Pastors.
2. Additionally, by individual declaration, funds were donated in support of the Synod's request for aid. The following family units committed to \$100 each: Bowie/Gray, Foster, Glover, and Starr. Monies were collected and given to Pr. Tracy Williams for Synod submission.
3. President Foster will notify the Synod of these actions.

XII. **Venue MLK 2026** – Possible sites for the 2026 MLK worship service:

- a. Holy Redeemer,
- b. St. Timothy's and
- c. Sheperd of the Valley

XIII. **New Projects to Consider**

- a. Juneteenth at Lutheran Church of the Master (June 2025). Planning is underway. Assistance from ADLA was requested.
- b. Interfaith Gathering at Christ the Shepherd, Altadena including a 2P Vigil/Rally and a 3P Potluck. Thirteen congregations are expected (only three were not directly damaged due to the fires). Informational outreach services to the community will consist of insurance navigation, real estate/debris clearance, city construction permits.
- c. Synod has hired a grant-sponsored Disaster Coordinator who will serve for at least 3 years, addressing and aiding congregations and congregants experiencing natural disasters.
- d. Chapel of Peace is hosting its annual Jazz Benefit Concert with a 17-piece band. Prices are Ages 5-12, \$10; Adults, \$35. Tickets are available for this Sunday evening, April 27<sup>th</sup> event @ 4P.
- e. Extended Thanks were given by Rev. Tracy Williams to those who attended her honoring by the Ladies of Distinction at the Proud Bird last Saturday. The impressive program booklet was shared.
- f. Shepherd of the Valley has established a 'women's center' designed to provide information and guidance as well as to serve as a safe and secure breast-feeding site.
- g. Holy Trinity will be hosting its annual Vendor Fair on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Vendors are being sought to share their products in the parking lot booths. Detailed information will be forwarded to President Foster for subsequent distribution.

- h. My Friends House, Inc. – The food distribution center supported by several ADLA congregations is seeing and serving record numbers. It has also extended its ability to provide food to other food pantries including Holy Redeemer and St. Mark's. Food is routinely given to three educational sites: CLU, CSUDH and Bishop Conaty HS. Site coordinators assist with unloading at CSUDH. HS picks its food products up from MFH. Students are to be elicited to help with the unloading of delivered food at CLU. Coordination with Pr. Scott was requested. Finals at CLU begin on May 5<sup>th</sup>, if a delivery can occur before then, that would be great. MFH will hold its Annual Board Meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup> following worship at Ascension.
- i. Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary is hosting a retirement reception on May 22<sup>nd</sup> for Ray Pickett, Rector of PLTS. This is a pivotal position, akin to the President of the Seminary. It was requested that ADLA fully utilize its network with an 'eye' on helping to identify potential candidates. President Foster and Randall will attend the reception.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50A. Next Meeting will be at Holy Trinity on June 28<sup>th</sup> at 9A. Devotions to be provided by Holy Trinity.

Sincerely submitted,

Randall (Randy) Foster  
ADLA Recording and Corresponding Secretary