

**NORTHEASTERN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA  
(NELCSA)**

**Minutes**

for a virtual session – finances - of the  
3rd Sitting of the VII Church Synod of NELCSA  
on 9 October 2021

1. Opening Devotion  
The first session of the third ordinary Sitting of the VII Church Synod is opened with a devotion held by Bishop Dr. Horst Müller based on 2 Corinthians 8, 12-15.
2. Explaining procedures  
The President of Synod, Mr Henning Springer, welcomes all present and explains the purpose of this Synod session relating only to the finances. The protocol regarding this virtual session via Zoom is explained, especially the polls for the adoption of the Finance Report 2019 2020, the Budget 2022 2023 and Church Law 1/2021.
3. Constituting the Synod
  - 3.1 Establishing a quorum  
Roll-call is held to confirm attendance of delegates.  
Ms Anna Kaduma Gumbie, as secretary on the Synod Council, establishes that the Synod is in quorum. 67 delegates are present, this constitutes the required more than 45 delegates in attendance.  
(Due to loadshedding various delegates were intermittently connected and disconnected. At no point fewer delegates than 63 were present. The outcome of the votes was never affected by the fluctuations in the number of delegates attending.)
  - 3.2 Commissioning of new delegates  
The following members are commissioned since they were not present at the previous sessions of the VII Synod:  
Ms Leonora Klein (replaces Ms Natalie Zähringer, St Peters by the Lake)  
Mr Rainer Schütz (delegate for Nelspruit)  
Mr Holger Meier (stand in for Mr Steven Radebe from New Germany)  
Ms Ntebo Nkoenyane (replaces Mr Mpho Mofokeng from WRLCC)  
Ms Elizabeth Rommelspacher (replaces Mr Dieter Küsel for UELC, who was elected as lay member of Church Council for the Southern Circuit)  
Pastor Rüdiger Lutz (replaces Pastor Mark Meier who became acting Dean after Dean Hugo Filters' retirement)  
Ms Sigrun Rieth (replaces Ms Uta Röhrs due to the closure of Moorleigh congregation)  
Pastor Rene Risch, who had not been present at the previous sitting. He

took the vow via Whatsapp to the bishop.

#### 4. Finances

All reports are presented by NELCSA Treasurer, Mr Vernon Filter.

##### 4.1 Finance Report 2019 2020

Points highlighted:

- The funds received from the sale of the Kempton Park properties will be allocated to the Post-Retirement Medical Aid fund. This will ultimately reduce the congregational contributions towards NELCSA.
- Although WRLCC did not comply with the payments on their arrears as agreed on at the 2019 Synod, a lump sum totaling more than the agreed amount was paid after the sale of a property. Church Council agreed to still apply the conditional write-down as the congregation did adhere to the proposal by Church council to liquidate some properties and paid an aggregate of more than R10 000 p.m. over the time. No further comments or questions regarding this matter are raised.
- Congregations are encouraged to give more towards the Theological Education and Youth funds, because these funds are currently showing negative growth.
- The treasurer thanks all the givers for the contributions towards the Solidarity Fund. More than the budgeted amount was received.
- Gossman Trust: Although NELCSA does not have fiduciary control over this Trust, the account is held with NELCSA. The balance end of December 2020 was R304,452. Church Council is investigating the matter further.

Questions and Comments:

- Ms Elizabeth Rommelspacher from UELC requests that congregations, that are in arrears, report to the next synod what steps are taken to rectify this.

Reply from Church Council:

A process to accompany congregations who are struggling was started at the beginning of 2020 and then unfortunately came to a standstill due to the pandemic lockdown.

- Mr Karl Tobler from Kempton Park enquires if the WRLCC is still billed for a pastor's post because of the vacancy. The treasurer replies that they are not billed and this should see a significant reduction in their arrears.
- Mr Karl Tobler from Kempton Park enquires regarding congregations that sell properties. The treasurer replies that many congregations have expences for properties and no income and in some cases have to maintain multiple properties with very low active congregation membership. Selling and investing the capital is much more beneficial. Mr Konrad Hartman from ELCER adds that they only have 200 members but 3 church buildings and the sale of the additional properties will reduce their expences.

#### **Adoption of Finance Report 2019 2020**

Finance Report 2019 2020 is put to the vote.

The Finance Report 2019 2020

(NELCSA Treasurer's Report 2019 20.pdf) is adopted unanimously.

4.2 **Budget 2022 2023**

Points highlighted:

- The pastors' post is always budgeted for even if the congregation is vacant and a vacancy adjustment is then implemented.
- The budget is based on the highest salary scale.
- Pastor's housing, transport and communication is paid for by the congregations and therefore not included in the NELCSA budget.

Questions and Comments:

- Mr Andrew Bee from UELC notifies synod of their intent to present a motion, to change the name of the Solidarity Contribution, to the Synod in 2022. Church Council takes note.
- Ms Elizabeth Rommelspacher from UELC expresses concern in the dependency on the EKD Grant. The treasurer replies that the visit by the EKD council in 2018 left a very positive impression on the work that NELCSA is doing. Also in regards to German expats.
- It is again mentioned that the solidarity contribution is confusing to members. It is therefore extremely important for synod delegates to report back to their congregations and continually remind members what they are contributing towards.

**Adoption of Budget 2022 2023**

Budget 2022 2023 is put to the vote.

The Budget 2022 2023 (NELCSA Budget 2022 23.final.pdf) is adopted unanimously.

4.3 Church Law 1/2021

Points highlighted:

- Additional Recommended Offerings: The offerings for Hermannsburg Schule will now be made to the HMB Foundation, because the school is now owned by a private third party. The HMB Foundation fund supports scholarships for deserving learners and also the museum.

**Adoption of Church Law 1/2021**

Church Law 1/2021 is put to the vote.

The Church Law 1/2021 (Church Law 1 2021.final.pdf) is adopted unanimously.

5. Continuation of NELCSA Synod 2021

5.1 The remaining sessions of the NELCSA Synod 2021 will take place from Friday 14 October 2022 – Sunday 16 October 2022 at the North Rand Congregation.

5.2 The topic of the NELCSA Synod 2021 is "ALIVE". In January 2022 all congregations will receive tasks with challenges regarding the theme.

5.3 All current delegates are reminded that they remain delegates for the continuation of Synod 2021 in 2022.

6. Closing Prayer

Mr Dieter Küsel closes with prayer.

Read and signed at the Church Council meeting in: *Place* on *Date*

---

Bishop Horst Müller  
(Chair)

---

Mr Henning Springer  
(President)

The DRAFT read at the Church Council meeting on 23 November 2021  
The DRAFT sent to all delegates for comments on 25 November 2021