

The Episcopal Church in Maine
Meeting of the Diocesan Council 12-13 December 2014 St. Mark's, Waterville

Members present: Stephen Lane, Laura Peckham, Kim Wallace, Mark Spahr, Rita Steadman, Tim Fleck, Elizabeth Phipps, Claudia Smith, Rebecca Grant, Joseph Riddick, Tim Higgins, Linda Cappers, Liz Graves, Peter Bickford, Fred Fowler, Nina Pooley, Tim Walmer, Dick Rozene, Jane Schroeder, and Cindy Beaulieu (Saturday)

Staff present: Terry Reimer, Jane Hartwell, Michael Ambler, Heidi Shott

Others present: Leigh Spahr, Secretary of Council

Excused: Elizabeth York, Lu-Anne Conner, Nancy Moore

Friday, 12 December

The Bishop asked everyone around the table to introduce themselves and tell where they worship and how long they've been on council.

The Bishop spoke on Council norms: communication/confidentiality/expectations.

The Bishop then spoke on the Canonical responsibilities of Council members as outlined in the Diocesan Canons. In addition to the Canonical responsibilities, he asked for members to think of it more like a "think tank" that wrestles with new ideas to help the diocese evolve and grow.

Council is one of four standing bodies of the diocese – the other three are Standing Committee, Commission on Ministry and Trustees.

Diocesan Council Structure (Council Committees)

Structure of Sub-committees

Officers: Bishop, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Finance Chair, Secretary

Executive (Bishop, Vice-Chair, Finance Chair, Member-at-Large)

Finance (2 new appointed members David Greer, Rob French) – needs 1 for 3 year term

Mission Priorities

Strategic Mission Support (subset of Finance Committee)

Public Policy – possible new committee (2 council members and Canon for Advocacy)

Intro to the book: "The New Parish" Bishop asks Council members to read it and talk about it
Discussion will come up at the next Council meeting also.

Saturday, 15 December

Bishop called to order at 8:30. After morning prayer, meeting convened at 8:45am.

Review of the minutes: 6 September 2014 meeting. After proposing a couple of changes, the minutes were approved. They will be posted to BaseCamp after those changes made. (Others present to include Nina Pooley as she was not a member of council at the time)

Finance Committee Report

Review third quarter 2014 financial information. Treasurer Dick Rozene spoke on this. Canon for Finance Terry Reimer also spoke on this.

Diocesan canon requires that congregations need to be current in diocesan assessment payments by Convention. Tim Walmer spoke of the struggles at the Diocesan level are also struggles at the parish level. Claudia Smith suggests sending a notice from Council to remind parishes to get their assessments in on time.

2015 Reserve Account

Terry and Finance Chair Nina Pooley spoke on this.

Strategic Mission Support group and Finance Committee have been working with some congregations in transition.

- Brewer – ready to release \$5,000 if council approves. New rector hired.
- Working with Calais, Dover, Brownville Jct, Palmyra, Rangeley, Winn (\$4500) if they don't receive the New Initiative Grant, \$10,000 in reserve for Aroostook Cluster (set Easter for deadline for decision). May meeting of Council should have update on that.
- Proposal for Council to release money held in reserve from Strategic Mission Support to St. Patrick's, Brewer, now that they have a priest in charge.

After discussion, Tim Higgins moved and it was seconded and the money will be released to Brewer. There will be more recommendations regarding the reserve account at the February Council meeting.

The Bishop then spoke about the financial implications of taking on St. Mark's, Augusta property:

- Rectory will be sold – estimated between \$75,000 – \$200,000
- The diocese has made an agreement to assume the cost of operating the parish hall to allow outreach ministries to continue. Estimated cost - \$25,000
- When the rectory sells, that money will be used to recoup the money that it will cost the diocese for the operation of the parish hall.
- Re-evaluate the situation in six months.

The Bishop also spoke about the St. Mark's, Augusta and Prince of Peace Lutheran Church collaboration. The ministries in the St. Mark's parish hall have a huge impact on the community.

The Bishop spoke about the future of St. Mark's. They are collaborating with Prince of Peace - shared rector and worship space. Bishop Lane and New England ELCA Synod Bishop Hazelwood both support this collaboration and exploration. Right now they are being treated as a mission. There is a risk but the hope is a new life will begin for the Kennebec 6. The hospitality and courage of both St. Mark's and Prince of Peace have been amazing. This does also affect the rest of the parishes in the area.

Motion to accept the third quarter report pending audit. Moved by Peter Bickford and seconded and after vote, was passed.

Proposal to establish an Advent Campaign for Bucksport Mill Employees from the Emergency Discretionary Fund from 2014 funds (budget) \$10,000 (Advent Campaign)

\$2500 to Washington Hancock Community Agency

\$1250 to Penquis CAP

\$1250 to Waldo CAP

\$5000 to Good Shepherd Food Bank

— \$1000 each to be credited to the GSFb account of five area food pantries in Bucksport, Searsport, Blue Hill, Ellsworth, and Orland.

(Line Item should be from 190114 Emergency Discretionary Fund.)

Heidi spoke on this. After discussion and questions, Claudia Smith moved, it was seconded and after vote, was passed.

The Bishop called a fifteen minute break.

Population of Diocesan Committees /Election of Officers

- Confirm Claudia Smith as vice-chair (moved by Joe Riddick and seconded) after vote, passed.
- Cindy Beaulieu to continue as member-at-large of Executive Committee.
- Three year term for Finance. Affirm Nancy Moore as continued. After vote it was passed.
- Mission Priorities - Liz Graves would like to step down if someone wants to step in. Rebecca Grant would like to take her place. Affirm Linda Cappers, Tim? (Higgins, Walmer, or Fleck), Rebecca Grant and Mark Spahr. After vote, it was passed.
- Strategic Mission Support – Mark Spahr and Cindy Beaulieu to consider if they want to continue and let Nina know
- Public Policy – Jane Schroeder and Elizabeth Phipps volunteered. After vote, it was passed.

New Initiative grants:

2015 First Round NIF deadlines, application, and process.

Encumbering money from 2014 to 2015

Heidi spoke on this. Heidi read a letter from Calvin and Holly Sault regarding withdrawal of their request for funds from NIF granted in February 2014. They will reapply in 2015 for a new program with a different focus.

Rebecca asked about Council's philosophy on 2nd and 3rd phases by the same congregations. Clarity of same ministry or new proposals? Some parameters of what will be considered. Discussion about assigning a Council member from the area that the application comes from to go meet with the applicant in order to be an advocate for that grant application. And ask if congregation/priest in charge is aware of the request for the grant.

Application with two additions and deadline of February 6th.

\$450 allowed to stay in Bridgton, Peter Bickford moved and seconded by Cynthia Beaulieu. \$2200 given initially in February 2014 for a women's initiative. After vote, it was adopted.

Peter Bickford moved and seconded by Joe Riddick that \$4450 not drawn by St. George's, York Harbor, be put into reserve account designated for the 2015 grant cycle. Recommend to Finance Committee for their consideration. After vote, it was passed.

Adult Formation

Jane Hartwell spoke on this.

Claudia Smith also recommended a book called "We Make the Road by Walking".

Web Hubs for 2015

Heidi Shott spoke on this. Thanks to Jamie Dickson, a member of St. Ann's in Wyndham, who works at a law firm in Portland. He provided five donated laptops for web hub congregations. Loring House became a web hub this year. Heidi is wondering if big screen TV's are a better option for web hubs than projectors? Evaluation of expanding the places for the web hubs or updating current ones?

New Faith Communities. A presentation for reflection by the Bishop.

Criteria used in Episcopal Church canons for "faith communities"

(Canons) Title III.3.3 – Discernment for Ministry. "Other faith communities" means military bases, youth groups & house churches.

Other possible criteria

Relationship with bishop

Use of authorized rites
Christian commitment, ministry beyond self
Connection with the body
What else?

Diocesan Constitution - requirements for “a mission” in Article VIII

Obedience to the constitution and canons
Five member bishops’ committee made up of contributing members
Vicars
Property held by trustees
Bonding, audits and annual reports

Discussion about the difference between what the canons and the constitution say and what the bishop thinks “Other Criteria” might be.

Bishop would like to start a Study Group about this. Can we come up with criteria to identify, recognize and support faith communities without making them feel constrained to the box?

After a break for lunch, reconvened at 12:45

The Bishop spoke about the connection and collaboration of the Episcopal church and the Lutheran church. Spoke about the K6 and the possibility of participating in talks with Prince of Peace Lutheran church.

Bishop spoke on his “Praying the Neighborhood” project. It has turned out to be more difficult than he imagined. There have been lots of questions and concerns. He will keep Council updated.

Convention Debrief and Survey Evaluation

Heidi spoke about the survey on convention and then asked for comments and discussion.

Discussion of Area Meetings and why they are so dysfunctional. Attendance is low and not very productive. Move to electronic (combo webex w/telecon) in prep for Convention and for resolution committee members and debate.

Maybe formalize the process and inform the resolutions committee of feedback from the pre-convention hearings? Take under advisement.

Nomination and the Election of Members of Dio Council – going to try to work on how this is done. Maybe elect at convention instead of at area meetings?

New Convention Planning Committee – Chair is Carolyn Eklund, Rector, St. Paul’s Brunswick.

Health Insurance Task Force

The Bishop spoke about the new healthcare reform and how it will be affecting the diocese. Right now the diocese has what is called a "Rich Benefit Program." The parishes are responsible for 90% of the cost, and it is prorated. Peter Bickford will chair a task force to study and try to understand the issue. There will most likely be some difficult and contentious issues to discuss.

2015 Clergy Housing Resolutions for Staff

Housing Resolution for The Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane 2015

Whereas the Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane is employed as a minister of the Gospel by the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, which does not provide a residence for him, the Diocesan Council resolves that the total compensation from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 paid to Bishop Lane that \$34,666.67 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.

Housing Resolution for The Rev. Canon Michael Ambler 2015

Whereas the Rev. Canon Michael Ambler is employed as a minister of the Gospel by the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, which does not provide a residence for him, the Diocesan Council resolves that of the total compensation from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 paid to Canon Ambler, that \$20,000.00 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.

Housing Resolution for The Rev. Shirley Bowen 2015

Whereas the Rev. Shirley Bowen is employed as a minister of the Gospel by Seeds of Hope, an extension of ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, which does not provide a residence for her, the Diocesan Council resolves that of the total compensation from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2015 paid to the Rev. Bowen, that \$21,000.00 be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRS Code of 1986.

- The Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane – moved, seconded, passed.
- The Rev. Canon Michael Ambler – moved, seconded, passed.
- The Rev. Shirley Bowen – moved, seconded, passed.

After a short break, reconvened at 2:05

Clergy Education/Internship Funds

The Bishop asked council to make some changes to this to give him a little more flexibility to use the funds.

Original Criteria:

- Support residential seminary and alternative education tracks (tuition, fees, tutors, materials) for Maine residents
- Fund 2-3 year internships for Maine ordinands in Maine ministries (compensation, benefits)

Updated Criteria:

- Fund 2-3 years internships for other ordinands in Maine ministries
- Create new internship positions in congregations with limited resources (multi-point, regional, mentors)
- Create new internship positions in diocesan ministries
- Grants made on an individual basis (no fixed %)

\$50,000 designated in the diocesan budget in 2014 and 2015.

Fewer than 50% of those ordained in the Episcopal church went to Episcopal seminary.

After much discussion, Peter Bickford moved to make the adjustments to allow the bishop more flexibility with these monies. After vote, it was passed.

In other business, there was a question for the Canons Missioners – How is the new role with the added travel to congregations? All seem happy but busy. Bishop is overall very pleased.

Claudia moved that Council communicate with the parishes in the diocese that it would be helpful to stay current with assessments if at all possible to help with cashflow. There was no second and the bishop deferred this to the Finance Committee.

Calendar Notes

Proposed 2015 Diocesan Council Meeting Dates

Saturday, 21 February 2015

Snow Date 28 February 2014

St. Patrick's, Brewer (confirmed)

Friday, 1 May 2015

Ideas for Location?

Saturday, 2 May 2015

Saturday, 19 September 2015

Camp Bishopswood, Hope

Friday, 11 December 2015

?Brunswick ?Bath ?Other

Saturday, 12 December 2015