

Executive Council Special Meeting

May 12, 2018

Waycross Camp and Conference Center

PRESENT: Lara Dreyer, Jeff Brinkmann, Marianne Scott, Dave Guilfoyle, Bill Hughes, Frank Impicciche, Tom Wood, C. Davies Reed, Sean Sullivan, Max Nottingham, Laurel Cornell, Susan Steigerwald, Isaiah Kuch. From the Standing committee: Karen Sullivan, Sally Hardgrove, Frank Guthrie, George Eastman.

The Special Meeting was called to order at 10:07AM by Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows.

The Bishop thanked everyone for coming to this special meeting/extra meeting. We began with introductions around the table. The Bishop invited us to have a time of prayer.

Standing Committee/Executive Council: One of the reasons to meet is to understand what is happening with each governing body. There should be some collaboration between groups. The question is how do we share information? The Bishop reminded us that the Mutual Ministry Review is overseen by the Standing Committee. The Bishop invited members of the Executive Council to share what the Council has been doing recently. Among the comments from members, it was mentioned that the Council is trying to step back and look at our structure and what our diocese needs. There are currently two sub-groups working on restructure and on budget. These sub-groups are asking, what do we need to do and how do we fund it? Often the challenge is that the vision is emerging, but there is a need to do things now, therefore, planning can be the challenge. Regarding budget process, there is conversation on how to “turn the ship”. This metaphor describes the time and planning it takes to change course. Transition takes time if the goal is to be something long-term, bold & radical. All agree that this takes time and needs continued, healthy conversation. We are keeping in mind that many things happen behind the scenes and that there is a need to understand the history and to look at prior happenings. There was a question from the Standing Committee as to why there is conversation about restructuring. When there is a transition, there is a need to look at everything; to keep things fresh & relevant. Plus, when things are not working, that may signal the reality of church life coming into play. The diocese has a small body of lay leaders which needs expansion.

There was conversation reminding us of our first Executive Council meeting led by Bishop Jennifer. We discussed deaneries and how they relate to the Executive Council and how they relate to the budget and congregational needs. In the Walkabouts for the bishop search, there were questions about vision -- is this working? This work has been going on for a while and there has been groundwork and many conversations.

Historically, the Standing Committee and Executive Council were intentionally one large body, but when they separated (including a separate finance committee) more of the work was completed. These groups were fed thru our deaneries, but this may not be working any more. There was a time when the Standing Committee had too much to do, so they spread the wealth and the Executive Council took over some duties, but it seems the balance of the work has now come to Executive Council. There followed discussion on the differences of the two committees

and maybe the scope of the Standing Committee should change. The Standing committee is 6 people. Executive Council is 20-22. Do we need both committees? Of the two, the Standing Committee is the one required by national canon. Sally Hardgrove volunteered to serve on an ad hoc committee on this topic. There are a lot of people on Executive Council and perhaps the number is too high. We need to be sure a high number of members is not in place just for the sake of having people involved. We need to keep work transparent. The Standing Committee canonically carries out specific things, but not all tasks are ongoing (such as the election of a Bishop).

The discussion moved to the topic of Mutual Ministry Reviews (MMR). The Bishop's Letter of Agreement states an MMR should be done after the 1st round of parish visitations. The Standing Committee says there are consultants that come in and do this. They are looking at several people and plan to choose someone in next couple of months. The Bishop read the statement from her Letter of Agreement and indicated that her first round of parish visitations are scheduled through October 2018. The Standing Committee has looked at models and once chosen will move forward. An outside consultant is chosen for impartiality and these goals were laid out during the search process to have an outside consultant. This consultant should help not just analyze and review the Bishop's work, but the work of the parishes and diocesan committees, too. The Bishop suggested there should just be a small group leading this and a timeline for completion is important, possibly beginning in January 2019. The consultant can be a bishop or a lay person. Other diocese have been interviewed by the Standing Committee members and the Bishop looks forward to this, hopefully it will help us "see what we can't see."

The Bishop thanked the Standing Committee for attending this joint meeting with the Executive Council. There was a short break while the Standing Committee departed, and the Executive Council prepared for the rest of the meeting.

Discussion on Deanery Structure/Restructure: The deanery structure is not working; how can people feel more engaged? It should be a more regional focus. There was discussion on having two layers to connect in the Diocese: by (new/regional) Deanery and by Affinity Groups. This would provide more possibilities for clergy as well as lay involvement, though some clericus groups function well. Deaneries now are only active 1 time per year (there is no continuity except around convention), and there is a need to enhance the participation of deaneries. The affinity groups would help parishes share in similar interests. The restructuring using a "regional neighborhood" approach would mean that driving to an event would average about an hour for anyone participating.

Other suggestions and questions that came out of this discussion include

- Wanting a "job description" for lay and clergy leadership, make clergy and lay responsible for meetings.
- What is a delegate? – more than just convention delegate. More frequent meetings, perhaps once per quarter?
- Add sense of community. How to make more opportunities to see each other, maybe see each other in another way. Could include electronic conferencing easily. Affinity groups may have other focus beyond geography. It's a matter of finding the common thread, but how do we find this and find a facilitator? The regional group opportunities could include guest speakers and special events; think of members of regions as "neighbors."

- A map was presented and color-coded by region, all showing a meeting place within a 1-hour drive. The 1-hour drive may not be a place where there is a parish, but at least a city (and maybe that's OK). Include social gatherings. Some areas have as few as 4 parishes, others at 7+.
- From a budget standpoint, does the diocese support regions and affinity groups? The diocese could help by providing for meetings and support. Affinity groups need budgetary support also. Regional structure is rigid, affinity groups more fluid.
- How do we communicate between groups? Some people might do nothing else in their parish except an affinity group. There is software that provides meeting dates between individuals easily. There must be someone in charge to facilitate this.

What would this restructuring mean to local parish? Historically, deaneries fell apart since leadership was usually a clergy person – no full-time clergy often meant no meetings. Also, the church size often overwhelms parishes in conversations, wondering if worth or involvement is tied to financial status. When talking about issues like sexuality and gun control, city parishes might have a different focus than rural parishes. Cohort grouping is healthy for the community and the diocese should communicate with the community when the bishop has visited a parish.

Executive Council should have representatives from each deanery, but we have vacancies because nobody ran for the position. Now people are interested, and we should be sure to follow up on this. If regional changes are made, how do we fill slots on Executive Council? How do people get excited to serve on a governance group versus affinity group?

Break for lunch

Budget

We began with five pages on the wall, as a reminder of “the work set forth” from the Bishop’s Listening Sessions.

1. Beacons of Jesus Christ (mission strategy)
2. Generous Invitation and Welcome (evangelism)
3. Connect with one another and the world (communications plus networking/convening)
4. Stand w/Marginalized and Vulnerable, Transform Systems of Injustice (social injustice, outreach, community organizing, racial healing)
5. Resource clergy and lay leaders for Church of today and tomorrow (congregational development, Waycross, leadership resources)

Restructuring may mean the budget changes. We looked at proposed 2019 budget. Comments were made on certain items included in the prepared budget sheets. Some of these items were: church income changes, a return of diocesan funds (change in percentage of the draw), some funds changed line item, Pathways clergy phase II is new, there is an estimate of 10% increase in medical benefit fees. Questions on Diocesan staff and Diocesan staff retirees vs. retirement or termination. Some people retired before retirement plan in place. Comments on bishop’s package and getting it to where it should be. The Lambeth Conference will occur in 2020. Center for Congregations match shows that congregations have received grant money.

EFHN (Episcopal Fund for Human Need): Do we want to continue? A history of these grants was explained and how they especially help smaller groups. Dave Guilfoyle has agreed to

coordinate. Grants have been substantial, but the funds collected have really dwindled. How do we do this and how do we grant the money? Clearly there is warrant for this. Tom Wood volunteered to send the last 10 years of recipients. Canon Brendan O'Sullivan-Hale already sent out a list of recipients to the budget committee members. Of 14 congregations that received aid, all needs were different. Diocese will fund College for Congregational Development in the coming year. The Anti-Racism committee budget request is much higher, when spending has been less than previous years (proposed \$32,000 but suggested putting in 2018 number). Everyone was tasked with reviewing the budget closely and asking the question: is this something that should change? Is there a new way to do things?

At the next Budget Committee meeting, these items will be corrected and will be sent out in June. There will be tweaks in the fall and the September Executive Council meeting should be final budget meeting. (Next meetings before the Diocesan Convention are June 16, Sept. 15 and Oct. 27.)

Budget Comments: All were invited to consider how to make us a 21st century church. Are there pieces of the budget that are not represented by the 5 pages/criteria? The four highest expenses are, 1) bishop staff, 2) clergy healthcare, 3) mission strategy, 4) apportionment. The next highest items relate to campus ministries. The comment was made that clergy healthcare is a mission strategy and campus ministries are an important part of our mission. Most parishes across the country pay the clergy healthcare insurance premium – Indianapolis is one of two dioceses that pays for parish clergy premiums as a cost-share. Regarding Bishop's staffing for next year, three positions are not yet filled but are included in the budget. The Bishop expressed a desire for full transparency regarding publishing bishop's staff salaries. If they are to be published, all clergy salaries should also be published. This is an item for further discussion. The positions yet to fill are: Canon to the Ordinary for Congregational Leadership and Development, Associate for Transition Ministry and Missioner for Pastoral Care. The final discussions included:

- The Bishop discussed what happens after each pastoral visitation - that her staff takes information from her and runs with it. She wants to inform the diocese of this effort.
- There was some discussion on what it would look like if church paid for their own clergy health insurance premiums. It could have unintended consequences (hire for fewer hours so no insurance required). When the decision is about money, everything changes. Could all churches do this? No. Could apportionments be changed to offset this, or pay for health insurance in the backend?
- What about giving to an annual fund?
- What about offering to match money raised in fundraising—matched by diocese. This prompts to give to diocese.

Next budget meeting is coming up. C. Davies Reed asked for suggestions via email within two weeks. He will coordinate with Janet Brinkworth to send out this email. Would like suggestions by June 8, the meeting is scheduled for June 14.

Lara suggested a discussion at the next meeting about using careful language regarding differences between parishes (endowed parishes and not endowed, race differences, etc.) to be

prepared to communicate equality. (The Bishop suggested Lara lead this discussion at the beginning of the June meeting).

The meeting ended at 2:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Janet Brinkworth