

Executive Council Meeting
Waycross Camp and Conference Center
Sept 18, 2021

These minutes were approved at the October 16, 2021 meeting.

Members Present: Dr. Mary Ellen Brown, Ms. Lara Dreyer, Mr. Dick Frey, Dr. Rose Anne Grasty, Ms. Sally Hardgrove, The Rev. Paul Jacobson, Mr. Michael McGraw, The Rev. Rebecca Nickel, The Rev. C. Davies Reed, Ms. Mariann Scott, The Rev. Holly Rankin Zaher Canon Brendan O’Sullivan-Hale, The Rev. Canon Kristin White, Dr. Laurel Cornell, the Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Ms. Janet Brinkworth.

(Four members attended via zoom)

Members Absent: The Rev. Mary Bargiel, Master Jeffrey Dreyer, Mr. Isaiah Kuch, Mr. John Steele, Ms. Susan Steigerwald, Mr. Sean Sullivan, Miss Ellie Zaher

The meeting was called to order at 10:10am by Bishop Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, opening with a devotional. Janet Brinkworth called the roll, with some members present on zoom. The Bishop advised that two of our members, the Rev. Suzanne Wille and the Rev Jan Oller have moved and no longer reside in the diocese. There was a brief discussion, with the reminder that they will be replaced and affirmed at our annual convention in November.

Organizing for Business. The Bishop went over our diocesan mission and reviewed the norms for Executive Council work. All agreed to these norms.

2022 Budget Formation. The Rev. C Davies Reed began by indicating that currently this is a balanced budget. The Council will have one more meeting to adjust before the annual convention. Some key points made include reducing apportionments to 13.5% and taking the draw (from the endowment) to 5% which allows us to balance the budget. However, it is anticipated that there will be a surplus in 2021, which could allow the effective draw rate to be less than 5%. Canon Brendan O’Sullivan-Hale began by proceeding through the income lines. Canon Brendan pointed out that appreciation from the investment of the Pathways grant will continue to support funding for Pathways clergy and the “other income” line reflects the release of appreciation on funds set aside to support the Diocese of Haiti in 2012 (the pledge to Haiti has been paid in full). The healthcare increase was less than originally forecast, and the cost of lay retired insurance is lower due to plan design changes. There were several questions regarding clarification on apportionment rate, the Medicare Advantage program for lay retirees, and the continued low dollar figure in the youth budget. Canon Brendan pointed out that the youth budget, like other line items such as travel, reflect estimates about a return to in-person activity, and that Executive Council will need to be prepared to make changes as actual conditions warrant. The Budget Formation Committee moved to accept the proposed budget for 2022, and it was a unanimous approval. The Bishop gave her appreciation of all the work done so far and suggested some items should also be mentioned at convention (such as the youth budget, etc.)

Minutes of June 26 Meeting. The Council was reminded that there are two documents – regular minutes and minutes of an Executive session. There was some conversation on the confidentiality of the executive session subject. One correction was made to the spelling of a name and a motion was made to approve the minutes with the correction by the Rev. C. Davies Reed, with a second by Sally Hardgrove. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. No abstentions.

Took a short break

New Cooperating Ministries Information (Two presentations by zoom)

First presentation was the St Nicholas Early Learning Center, by AmySue Bacon. Canon Brendan reminded the Council of the process to add a Cooperating Ministry. Ms. Bacon gave an overview of the program and history, adding that they do want access to affordable insurance for their staff. Their focus is on diversity and care of participants. Having benefits for the staff should decrease turnover and assist with a better environment. Some questions asked included the budgetary impact (Trinity Indy provided seed money to begin), and they are a 501(c)3 non-profit. There are fifteen staff members and have a capacity to serve fifty-six students. They have fifty-three students now (50 students will equal enough funds for their budget parameters). Some student's fees are paid by state government. Advertisements are made through the United Way, the MLK Center and others. Ms. Bacon also mentioned their website, their rates are reasonable, and they hold some spots for local neighbor students.

The second presentation was by the Rev. Patrick Burke and Mr. Eric LaSure (founder of the Avenue Foundation). Eric began by giving some background and history, mentioning the desire to connect with Indianapolis' historically Black neighborhood of Indiana Avenue. The focus of the Avenue Foundation is on racial equity, providing a new business incubator, assist Black artists and entrepreneurs. This will begin with a coffee house as gathering place in association with St Pauls on the Way, plus Liberation Church. St Paul's on the Way has space in Broad Ripple and is the principal financial backer. This is an opportunity to get in early with this new program and promote it. Liberation Church is a recent church plant that devotes particular attention to LGBTQ people of color. Questions included access to resources and when there will be staff who can offer resources. Patrick shared St Paul's commitment and mentioned the neighborhood makeup/culture, and the competition for a coffee house. Executive Council members asked questions about the status of The Avenue Foundation (no board yet, no 501(c)3 yet, and no budget yet) and inquired about when these items would be in place.

Discussion among the Council followed the conclusion of the presentation. Members expressed concern regarding the Avenue Foundation's very early stage causing many important items to be incomplete, and there were questions about whether the organization not yet being a 501(c)3 posing a risk to the diocese.

Lunch break

The Council convened after lunch to continue the discussion on these two potential cooperating ministries. The Bishop reminded the Council that our deadline for this is to make a decision and report at the convention. Canon Brendan provided some additional information on the IRS standard for how non-profits, not The Council, agreed to encourage the Avenue Foundation to

move forward with key organizational details. The executive team will discuss this with Patrick and Eric, indicating this is not a rejection but that Council needs additional information by the next meeting. A motion to approve the St Nicholas Early Learning Center to become a cooperating ministry was made by Michael McGraw and seconded by the Rev. Rebecca Nickel. UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED. No abstentions. A follow up with the Avenue Foundation, including a timeline of details, is set for the Oct 16 Executive Council meeting.

The Episcopal Fund for Human Need (EFHN) – Next Steps. Sally Hardgrove began by giving the Council some historical information and the task of the committee to look at the overall program. The committee was formed recently and consists of Sally Hardgrove, Dick Frey, Lara Dreyer, and Rose Anne Grasty. The committee feels the work of EFHN met our pillars of mission, and there is interest in the program. This is an opportunity to help and give neighborhoods a vehicle for community outreach. The committee's recommendations: 1) the Sodrels (long-time leaders) should be thanked, and Bishop Cate has done this, 2) If the Executive Council wants to move forward, the committee envisions a plan for the program to start at diocesan neighborhood meetings in the fall. The committee can help create the process, but ownership is with neighborhoods to implement, with Executive Council members facilitating this (realistically beginning in 2023 with the committee designing the infrastructure alongside Executive Council). 3) Have a pilot program with money from the budget and make presentations at convention. The pilot program could begin summer 2022. There was a lengthy discussion with questions including the inequity of neighborhood numbers (of people), that the process should be manageable for all neighborhoods, and whether these grants could work toward an issue of justice rather than a grant to solve money issues. The Bishop wants to update the convention of EFHN's status and reminded the Council that this is very different from our previous discussion of cooperating ministries. A PowerPoint presentation will be made at neighborhood meetings by Council members. The Bishop thanked each member of the committee including Ron Newlin, who also assisted.

Diocesan Updates

Bishop Jennifer

- A gathering of clergy took place on Sept 15 at Waycross – it was nourishing to all. The clergy want to gather more, maybe quarterly gatherings of clergy by neighborhood?
- There are numerous transitions in the church now. Matching clergy and church can be a challenge. We try to equip the clergy as best as we can.
- Things are progressing through the pandemic, but there are some people wondering about what happens if people don't come back.
- Three notices of bishops retiring has occurred in last 3 days, which means there are provisional bishops in many places.
- The Bishop's staff works one day each week in the office and otherwise they work from home. {There have been some conversations with the Cathedral about a shared office space downtown. This would mean sharing space with the Cathedral staff, giving us a church nearby with possibly a five-year contract. This information is to be held in confidence until October when it is expected this potential move would be shared more widely.}

Canon Kristin

- A reminder of how many people are seeking clergy to fill open positions (Jen Phelps is currently at a transition conference). Congregations are finding creative, faithful ways to continue in their mission and ministries throughout times of pastoral transitions. Canon Kristin named the parishes currently searching for new clergy.
- Forty-two people participated in the first in-person College for Congregational Development (CCD) in the Diocese of Indianapolis at Waycross in July 2021. The next session is July 17-23, 2022. Thirty-one people have registered for 2022, with nineteen spots remaining. Six members of the newly established Mission Strategy Committee took part in 2021.
- Fall neighborhood meetings are almost all scheduled and will take place between the first week of October and the first week of November. Neighborhood co-conveners will meet Monday, September 20 to prepare for fall meetings.
- Canon Kristin thanked the Rev. Holly Rankin Zaher for the work she has done with diocesan youth ministry, particularly in the time since Victoria Hoppes' departure from the role of diocesan youth minister.
- The Diocesan Racial Justice and Education Team continues its work to support diocesan initiatives to dismantle systemic racism, including Sacred Ground, which begins another series this fall.
- Canon Kristin continues to consult with parishes throughout the diocese, most recently with St. Michael's, Noblesville, in their effort to invite and welcome new members.

Canon Brendan

- St Stephens Elwood is closing and there is a credible buyer to purchase the building. The diocese will have a celebration of the church, planning a small gathering, with the date still to be determined.
- Church Buildings for Collaborating Partnerships (CBCP) Cohort #1 is underway, with the first training taking place online on Sept 11, and two additional trainings coming up. Thirteen congregations from the Dioceses of Indianapolis and Northern Indiana are in the first cohort. Cohort #2 is coming soon.
- The Personnel & Policy committee recently met. The cost share for health care will stay at 22%. There will be a cost of living pay increase of 3-5%. The higher end of the range is closer to what actual inflation has been; the lower number is offered as an accommodation to some congregations' financial realities.
- Indiana Avenue has another buyer and as far as we know, the buyer is making good on the required payment schedule. The group called OG Ink was approached by the Mellon Foundation to apply for a \$750,000 grant to create a cultural heritage development corporation initially focusing on Indiana Avenue and Fox Lake. Claudia Polley has worked on this and submitted a preliminary grant proposal. The diocese will still act as fiscal sponsor, but this project is much broader than the 719 Indiana Avenue property, with a potential for greater positive impact on disinvested Black communities. The Avenue Foundation (discussed earlier in this meeting) is also connected to this theme. The Mellon grant could create undergraduate fellows and provide fully paid tuition for qualifying students.

Executive Council Member Announcements.

- Sacred Ground begins again Oct 7. St Paul's, Evansville
- St Paul's, Muncie recently received money for Waycross for the purpose of a tree planting project.
- St Francis has a new art show with the art of Elizabeth Wang in a show called Illuminations of Love.
- Episcopal Women's Ministry Fall Retreat is in person at Waycross on Sept 24-26.

There was additional conversation about other things happening in the diocese and the Bishop agreed that this is a time of creativity.

Financial. Canon Brendan advised the diocesan financials continue to be healthy and there is a projected surplus in 2021, but he is still confirming these numbers. Canon Brendan mentioned the Housing Allowance Resolution for the Rev. Mark Feather (interim in New Albany), indicating that he is becoming a diocesan employee due to a technicality related to his retirement. St. Paul's New Albany will reimburse the diocese for his compensation. A motion was made to pass the Housing Allowance for Mark Feather by the Rev. C. Davies Reed with a second by Mariann Scott. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. No abstentions.

Dr. Laurel Cornell began her treasurer's report by indicating that there are now six potential firms to be the financial advisor of the diocese. The Investment and Finance Committee is forming a new policy on donors and what can be accepted. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by the Rev. Paul Jacobson and seconded by Dick Frey. Passed unanimously to send to audit.

Old business – None

New business - None

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Rose Anne Grasty, with a second by Mariann Scott. The meeting adjourned at 2:54pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janet Brinkworth