

Executive Council Minutes

May 17, 2025

Zoom

10:00am – 1:00pm

These are official minutes, approved at the January 31, 2026 meeting of the Executive Council.

The following minutes were derived from the meeting summary provided by Zoom.

Opening Devotion

The group engaged in an opening devotion, observing the lesser feast of Thurgood Marshall, and discussed the ongoing fight for integrated education. They shared prayers for various individuals and causes, including the first university cohort, the recovery of Reverend Jackie Means, and the repose of Becky's soul. The conversation ended with a prayer led by Jennifer, focusing on recognizing the truth and embracing the brotherhood of all in Christ.

Call to Order & Organizing for Business

The Executive Council meeting began with a roll call and discussion of meeting norms led by Giulianna, who emphasized preparation, attendance, and transparent communication.

Waycross Update

Sarah Gunter provided an update on Waycross, highlighting progress on the Bear Creek property inspection, increased camp registrations, and potential grant opportunities, including a Clues Foundation application for a million-dollar grant to refurbish the retreat house.

Diocesan Capital Campaign Update

The council discussed the feasibility study for a capital campaign, with Jennifer noting that the consultants' report is expected later this month.

Reunification Discernment Update

Joan and Alan shared their impressions of the recent unification discernment meeting, emphasizing the importance of continued dialogue and neighborhood engagement. The meeting focused on the ongoing discussion about reunifying two dioceses, with participants sharing concerns and perspectives from recent neighborhood meetings. Alan emphasized the need to gather input from congregations about how reunification could benefit them, while Jennifer highlighted the importance of addressing fears and presenting a positive vision for the combined diocese. Participants discussed the challenges of apathy, fear, and lack of information among congregants, and suggested flipping the narrative to focus on the potential benefits and opportunities for collaboration. The group also touched on the need for more consistent and detailed information sharing across different locations, as well as the importance of developing a clear vision for the unified diocese that would inspire excitement and support among congregants.

Constitution & Canons

The meeting focused on several key topics related to the potential reunification of two dioceses. Jennifer discussed plans for a joint leadership meeting in January and mentioned an upcoming call with Bishop Doug Sparks to update him on recent meetings. Alan presented on the need to overhaul the current constitution and canons, suggesting that some sections should be moved from the constitution to the canons. The group debated whether to start this process now or wait until after a potential reunification vote. Brendan explained the timeline for constitutional changes and the potential for duplication of effort if reunification occurs. The conversation ended with a brief

discussion of safe church policy updates, with Brendan and Juliana planning to provide more information later.

Safe Church Policy Updates

The Executive Council reviewed and approved revisions to the diocese's Safe Church policies, which included updated definitions for key holders and building hosts, clarified screening requirements for youth volunteers, and addressed the placement of monitoring cameras in youth programming areas.

Financial

The council approved the investment policy statement without changes and discussed the March financials, noting that Christ Church Cathedral's change from monthly to quarterly apportionment payments had affected revenue figures. Concerns were raised about several churches, including Jeffersonville, which is in significant financial distress, and the council agreed to follow up on outstanding apportionments.

Bishop & Staff Updates

The diocese's Executive Council discussed several key topics, including the closure of the refugee resettlement program due to new U.S. immigration policies, with Bishop Jennifer noting this was a moral stance reflecting the Episcopal Church's commitment to vulnerable populations. The council reviewed positive attendance trends across many congregations, with Jennifer reporting upward trajectories in both Easter and regular Sunday attendance, though some areas remain challenging. The meeting covered updates on various diocesan initiatives including church building grants,

Leadership and Diocesan Updates

Indy Pride participation, and staffing changes, with Brendan announcing that Janet would be taking sabbatical leave in the coming weeks, and Giulianna highlighting new positions including a chaplain at Butler University and coordinator roles for congregational development and safe church.

Minutes

April 12th meeting minutes were approved with corrections for neighborhood vacancy rates and Good Sam's bishop's committee

Old Business

Executive Council Statement

New Business

Adjourn

2025 Executive Council Meetings:

July 12 (Zoom)

September 20 (Waycross)

Joint Leadership Retreat with Standing Committee:

December 12-13 (Waycross)

Diocesan Mission

1. Beacons of Jesus Christ
2. Generous Invitation and Welcome
3. Connect with one another and the world
4. Stand w/Marginalized and Vulnerable, Transform Systems of Injustice
5. Resource clergy and lay leaders for Church of today and tomorrow

Norms for the work of Executive Council

We will --

1. Seek to live more and more fully into the mission of the Diocese of Indianapolis:
 - Beacons of Christ
 - Generous Invitation and Welcome
 - Connect with one another and the world
 - Stand with Marginalized and Vulnerable, Transforming Systems of Injustice
 - Resource clergy and lay leaders for the Church of today and tomorrow
2. Do the good work that God has given us to do – by coming to meetings prepared ahead of time, by participating fully in our conversations, by reading and responding to correspondence between meetings, by taking part in the additional work we commit to.
3. Make every effort to arrive on time and to stay for the duration of our meetings.
4. Use technology in a way that brings us into our work together, rather than removing us from it.
5. Have a bias toward transparency in communication within and outside Council, while maintaining confidentiality when needed.
6. Communicate about the work of Executive Council in our congregations and neighborhoods.
7. Deepen our fellowship as partners in ministry
8. Praise God and proclaim the Good News!