

Executive Council Minutes

September 20, 2025

Waycross Camp & Conference Center

10:00am – 3:00pm

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

Opening Devotion

Members Present: The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Canon Brendan O’Sullivan-Hale, The Rev. Canon Giulianna Cappelletti Gray, The Rev. Allen Rutherford, Mr. Dick Frey, Ms. Amy Dobbs, The Rev. Karen Sullivan, Ms. Joan Amati, The Rev. C. Davies Reed, The Rev. Jim Said, Ms. Connie Betts, Canon Mariann Scott

Members via Zoom: The Rev. Dr. Jason Haddox Dr. Laurel Cornell, Mr. Mike Staubitiz

Members not present: Mr. Greg Seamon, The Rev. Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, Mr. Todd Relue

Guest: Ms. Sara Gunter

Call to Order Bishop Jennifer led the group in a devotion and called the meeting to order at 10:12.

Organizing for Business

Canon Giulianna Cappelletti-Gray reviewed the mission of the diocese and norms for the Executive Council. Members present agreed with norms for the meeting.

Reunification Discernment Update

Bishop Jennifer referred to our July discussion regarding reunification. Since then, she met via Zoom with Bishop Doug and Ms. Jen Adams, reunification consultant. The plan was to vote in Fall 2026. However, Bishop Doug later asked to vote in March 2026. He made it known that he would like to retire before reaching the age of 72. Bishop Jennifer feels it is too soon to vote in March.

At a Reunification Discernment meeting on Wednesday, September 17, Bishop Sparks noted that he would ask his diocesan council and standing committee to consider voting in March. Joan Amati, Rev. Allen Rutherford, and Rev. C. Davies Reed also attended the Zoom meeting. Rev. Rutherford was surprised by the 3 questions put forth to clergy:

How do you feel about reunification? Most felt positive

How does this fit in the priority of the diocese? Medium to low

Do you have enough information? Yes

Rev. Jason Haddox noted that he put it medium to low. It was not his understanding in the moment of responding that Bishop Sparks is interested retiring soon.

Rev. Rutherford and Rev. Reed agreed that they sensed that the Diocese of Northern Indiana was hesitant to vote for it. Mr. Dick Frey asked why not vote in March? Are there ways that the Diocese of Northern Indiana can hold off choosing a bishop? Bishop Jennifer said yes, they can choose a bishop or a provisional bishop. She reiterated her concern about voting too soon. A no vote could be harder than not voting.

Ms. Connie Betts asked how we will do this work at the November convention? These delegates for the coming convention had the understanding that they would vote. They are more invested

than others in the diocese. Rev. Karen Sullivan concurred. Rev. Rutherford believes many assume it's a done deal. Mr. Frey feels that our delegates do not feel connected to the process. Mr. Staubitz noted that the key message should explain the primary benefit.

Ms. Jen Adams, reunification consultant, noted our process is different than other dioceses. The Pennsylvania dioceses that merged were about the same size. They quickly merged several committees prior to the vote. We are still trying to meet and get to know each other. Rev. Sullivan noted that there are few opportunities for congregants to meet.

Mr. Staubitz asked if both dioceses could vote on further collaboration instead of voting on reunification. Bishop Jennifer reviewed three options: No reunification, collaboration, or reunification.

Ms. Sara Gunter suggested there should be a clear plan to vote on. If we vote on collaboration, have a plan. Connie concurred, without a clear picture, we'll lose energy. Canon Mariann Scott asked if the Reunification Discernment Committee could do this work. Guilianna acknowledged that Bishops staff has not been involved in the work.

Bishop Jennifer asked Ms. Amati and Rev. Rutherford to relay the feelings of Executive Council to the Reunification Discernment Committee. She has met with the Standing Committee, clergy, and Executive Council to gather input.

A four-minute break was taken at 11:00

2026 Budget

The Rev. C. Davies Reed & Canon Brendan O'Sullivan Hale presented the 2026 budget. In the following discussion, they explained changes and answered questions.

Rev. Reed noted that the Finance Committee was \$13,000 short. They asked the Executive Council to consider how to balance. The diocesan budget is a tangible witness of our priorities as a diocese.

- We are giving a 3% raise for staff. Guilianna noted that insurance rates increases will be shared by recipients.
- Canon Brendan reminded us that apportionment is based on the average of 3 years of normal operating income. His calculation for 2024 came pretty close. He reviewed income and expenses in the proposed budget. Mr. Staubitz asked about the apportionment changes. Will it increase revenue for diocese? Information from parochial report would increase apportionment for most congregations. Canon Brendan modified his calculation to hold the apportionment steady. If an apportionment goes up, it is due to the congregation increased income.
- Canon Brendan noted the increase in Waycross support reflects the actual support we are providing as discussed in the previous meeting.

The members identified areas that could be adjusted. Bishop took a vote for approval. The Executive Council voted to approve the budget with no abstentions.

Lunch break was taken at 12:00 to reconvene 12:45

The council reconvened at 12:47

Safe Church Policy Updates

Canon Guilianna reviewed and discussed additional changes to the Safe Church policy. Canon Mariann moved to accept the updates to the Safe Church Community Policy from August 2025,

which includes language pertaining to visiting entities and certain keyholders. The motion passed with no abstentions.

Waycross Update

Ms. Sara Gunter reviewed progress with establishing a budget for Waycross Camp & Conference Center. She noted that they have real, accurate data to use. The board has completed the 2025 budget and begun work on the 2026 budget.

Bear Creek property update: A team was formed to explore this purchase. The team determined that it was not a viable purchase, given the price and the amount of work it would take to prepare it for our use.

Executive Council Statement

Bishop Jennifer asked for updates on the statement that a sub group has been working on. She noted the difficulty of responding when things in our nation are rapidly changing. Rev. Sullivan noted that she will no longer be working on this sub group. Bishop Jennifer said that we'll bring this item back next month.

When the House of Bishop met last month, it was requested that they make a statement. It was a difficult task for the Bishops as well.

Financial

Treasurer's report was presented by Dr. Laurel Cornell. The executive Council received it and thanked Dr. Cornell for her work.

Allen asked about unpaid apportionment, St. John Speedway and St. Paul Jeffersonville. Brendan noted that they will likely go unpaid.

Canon Brendan noted that 2024 audit was completed in September. The findings are clean with no concern. After 3 years with this new company, the process was very smooth. There are two recommendations for us. The first is to look at redundancy of roles. The second recommendation is that we should consider increasing cyber security. The Executive Council voted to accept the audit.

Diocesan Convention 2025

This will be a one-day convention, Saturday, November 8, with an optional dinner on Friday. Constitution and Canons will have a few minor changes.

Minutes

Rev. Reed motioned to approve the July 12, 2025 minutes. Rev. Rutherford seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as presented with no opposition or abstentions.

The April 12, 2025 minutes approved on May 17 with amendments. These minutes are found in 5/17 Dropbox folder in edit mode.

The May 17, 2025 will be completed with use of the transcript.

Bishop & Staff Updates

Bishop Jennifer

- Capital Campaign is feasibility study shows readiness for campaign youth, campus, & Waycross. The study also found that we are not ready for a capital campaign. We are not staffed appropriately or have the infrastructure to support a campaign at this time.

- Staff changes as noted in previous communication. Janet Brinkworth will be retiring soon.
- Indiana Landmarks is planning to sell Kemper House at 10th and Alabama. Bishop Jennifer wished to clarify that this home was named after Bishop Kemper, he did not actually dwell in the home.
- St. Paul's, New Albany received a grant through Indiana Landmarks

Canon Giulianna

- Many clergy transitions
 - Peter Gray will serve at Grace Unlimited with quarter-time as Regional Young Adult Missioner for the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis.
 - St. Phillips has hired Susan Cholgish as an interim rector
 - Bishop Jeff Lee interim part time at All Saints for 6 months.
 - Madison has a new Priest-In-Charge. Rev. Kirstin Springmeyer
 - Brad Pace moving to Trinity, Indianapolis
 - St. John, Lafayette in transition
 - Grace in Muncie is seeking for a full-time rector
- Rev. Mary Taflinger, will serve as the chaplain for the Commission on Ministry. She will also meet with Wardens in Charge on Mondays.
- New clergy gatherings are taking place quarterly.
- 50 clergy gathered for Clergy Day.

Canon Brendan

- Property insurance is a strain for many congregations. Some other policies are cheaper, but the coverage is poor. Brendan is looking at ways to cut costs by increasing deductibles.
- Please read the document in the Executive Council Dropbox regarding the Good Samaritan loan. This is a thoughtful way to consider debt resolution. Rev. Jim Said noted that Good Samaritan appreciates this plan. It is very reasonable.

Leadership and Diocesan Updates

Rev. Rutherford shared that the Seamen's Institute has a new chaplain. An ALCA pastor. She will be joining St. John's to preach soon.

St. John's, Mt. Vernon purchased a house some time ago. They hired a consultant to help turn it into transitional housing. She helped obtain permission from local and state agencies. They are now preparing the home for use.

Rev. Rutherford celebrated 20 years of ministry at St. John's, Mt. Vernon

On September 7, St. Francis in the Field installed and blessed their new space.

Canon Mariann announced that the Latin Ministry at Christ Church Cathedral is celebrating 25 years of ministry.

Rev. Jim Said shared that Good Samaritan had its first birthday party at their new location.

Updates among Executive Council Membership

Bishop Jennifer recognized those whose term on Executive Council is ending: Ms. Amy Dobbs, Mr. Dick Frey, Ms. Joan Amati, Mr. Mike Staubit

Old Business: none

New Business: none

The meeting was adjourned at 2:29

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Betts

Remaining 2025 Executive Council Meetings:

Joint Leadership Retreat with Standing Committee:

December 12-13 (Waycross)

2026 Executive Council Meetings

January 31, 2026 (Zoom)

March 28, 2026 (Waycross)

May 30, 2026 (Waycross)

July 18, 2026 (Zoom)

September 12, 2026 (Waycross)

December 11-12, 2026 Joint Leadership Retreat (Waycross)