

THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI
CORRECTED DRAFT Minutes of December 9, 2023 Diocesan Council Meeting

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, December 9, 2023, at 11:55 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church, 820 Howard Street, Carthage, Missouri, following a mutual ministry review discussion with members of the Standing Committee beginning at 10:00 a.m. Members attending:

~~Ms. Regina Berens~~
Cn. Shirley Bolden
Ms. Anne Breid
The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, President
Ms. Hayley Cobb
The Very Rev. Tim Coppinger, Dean of the Central Deanery
Ms. Zella Forsythe
Ms. Kate French
Mr. Mark Galus, Chancellor
The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Dean of the Southern Deanery
The Rev. Steven King
~~Mr. Tom Kokjer, Treasurer~~
Mr. Phil Metz
Mr. Chris Morrison
Mr. Spencer Orr
Ms. Amanda Perschall
The Rev. Joe Pierjok
Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee
The Rev. Susan Roberts
~~Ms. Beverly Roggenkamp~~
The Rev. Galen Snodgrass
The Rev. Donna Stanford, Secretary
Ms. Judith Turner, President of Episcopal Church Women
Mr. Steven Williams

Mr. Ron Weil Jr., Diocesan Finance Administrator, also attended.

1. **Call to Order and Devotion.** Bishop Bruce determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 11:55 a.m. New members Ms. Anne Breid and Ms. Hayley Cobb were welcomed, and members introduced themselves. The Rev. Susan Roberts led Council in a devotion and opening prayer.

2. **Consent Agenda Adoption.** The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by The Rev. Susan Roberts, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:

- a. Approve the October 14, 2023 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
- b. Receive the Diocesan Council Onboarding Document

- c. Receive the following written reports
 - i. October 17, 2023 Campus Ministry Commission Minutes
 - ii. November 29, 2023 Executive Committee Minutes
 - iii. December 4, 2023 Stewardship Commission Report
 - iv. December 2023 Youth Ministry Report
 - v. December 2023 Spiritual Formation Commission Report

The motion carried.

3. Reports.

- a. **Treasurer and Finance Committee Report.** Mr. Ron Weil, Diocesan Finance Administrator, reviewed the Operating Revenue and Expense Report.
 - i. **St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church, Cassville, Railing Bids** – Mr. Weil reported that two bids had been obtained to install double railings at the front and side entrances at St. Thomas as a safety issue. The installation of in-ground- installation bid was \$3,120 and the in-concrete-walkway installation was approximately \$5,800.

The Finance Committee moved that Diocesan Council approve a grant to St. Thomas à Becket Episcopal Church, Cassville, from the Rust Fund for rural ministry of up to \$6000 to install concrete double railings at the front and side entrances of the church.

The motion carried.

- ii. **Church Audit Update**

Mr. Weil reported that of the diocese’s forty-seven churches, five have operating revenue of \$500,000 or more and require an independent CPA audit. Thirty-four churches have requested that Mr. Weil perform their audits, and five churches have stated that audit committees will perform their audits. Mr. Weil reported that twenty-two audits have been completed.

Ms. Amanda Perschall moved that the Treasurer and Finance Committee report be accepted as presented.

The motion carried.

- b. **The Vice-President’s Report.** The Rev. Galen Snodgrass thanked the Bishop and members of Council for the turn-around in the last two years.
- c. **The Standing Committee Report.** Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee, reported that the Standing Committee:

- i. elected the following officers: Mr. Eric Rhodes, President; The Rev. Cn. Robin James, Vice President; and Ms. Alexandra Connors, Secretary;
 - ii. consented to the election of The Rev. Cn. Kristin Uffelman White as the tenth bishop of the Diocese of Southern Ohio;
 - iii. consented to four ordinations;
 - iv. hosted a joint retreat at St. Anne’s Episcopal Church, Lee’s Summit, for members of the Standing Committee, the Bishop Search Committee, chairs of the Transition and Consecration Committees, and the Bishop Search consultants;
 - v. will select members of the Transition and Consecrations Committees after December 31, 2023.
- d. **Bishop Search Committee.** The Rev. Steven King reported that since the joint retreat, the committee has met each week either as the full committee or as sub-committees. It is anticipated that the schedule of listening sessions will be shared next week, with the first session held on December 17 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Lebanon, and the other sessions held after January 1, 2024. Either the Standing Committee or the Bishop Search Committee will communicate with the diocese weekly. The goal is for in-person listening sessions to be within a one-hour drive. Two Zoom-only sessions are planned. Zoom-sessions are planned for clergy, youth, and Spanish-speakers. Surveys will be available in January. Complete participation is attendance at a listening session and completion of a survey, since the questions will be different. The goal is to have the profile made public on March 1, 2024.
- e. **The Diocesan Secretary’s Report.** The Secretary requested that members sign up to lead a devotion and opening prayer at 2024 Council meetings. She also reported that two International Outreach Grant applications were received and approved by the IOG Committee:
- St. John’s Episcopal Church, Springfield: \$1,000 was sent to Episcopal Relief and Development to support their efforts to provide hives of bees to communities in Central and South America, Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean;
 - St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, Raytown: \$520 was sent to Church World Service to support their efforts to provide assistance for vulnerable communities around the world through the CROP Walk
- f. **Deanery Reports.**
- Central Deanery.** The Very Rev. Tim Coppinger, Dean, reported that he had been reelected as Dean and that all the Deanery Grant funds for 2023 had been expended.

Northwest-Metro Deanery. Mr. Chris Morrison, Vice Chair of the Deanery, reported that The Rev. Cn. Robin James had resigned as Dean upon election to the Standing Committee, and that two presbyters of the deanery, The Rev. Jonathan Frazier, rector of St. Peter & All Saints Episcopal Church, Kansas City, and The Rev. Jean Long, associate rector of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Kansas City, have agreed to stand for election as Dean at the next Deanery meeting to be held Saturday, December 16, 2023.

Southern Deanery. The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson, Dean, reported that he had been reelected as Dean.

g. **The Bishop’s Report.** Bishop Bruce reported as follows:

- i. The Bishop has appointed Ms. Elisa White (Grace, Carthage) as Diocesan Convention Credentials Secretary.
- ii. The Bishop has appointed the Vice President of Diocesan Council as General Convention and Diocesan Resolutions Monitor to track response and action to these actions and report back monthly to Diocesan Council.
- iii. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has been released from the hospital following a head injury. He will not be able to be in the Diocese of West Missouri for Martin Luther King Jr. Day on January 13, 2024, as planned. The Bishop asked for prayers for the Presiding Bishop.
- iv. A Convention de-briefing meeting was held, and ratings for the Convention were positive. Mr. Curtis Hamilton expressed concern that the Convention was not live-streamed and asked that his concern be shared with Council; his concern will be addressed by the Convention Planning Committee.
- v. Staff performance reviews have been completed.
- vi. The Bishop asked for prayers for former Diocesan Council member David Schlomer, who is hospitalized and on a ventilator.
- vii. The Bishop is working on funding for a team from the diocese to attend a “Forty and Under Clergy Gathering” at Trinity Church Wall Street in New York.

4. Old Business

- a. **Grant Process.** The Bishop proposed that one consolidated grant request form be created for property maintenance, centralized grants, and letters of credit. It was suggested that the request form include guidelines regarding appropriate requests for each area. A Form Advice Group composed of Cn. Shirley Bolden, Ms. Anne Breid, Mr. Phil Metz, Mr. Chris Morrison, Ms. Amanda Perschall, and The Rev. Joe Pierjok will work with the Bishop in January 2024 to develop the form, with the form available by mid-February 2024.

b. **Diocesan Center Technology.**

Mr. Ron Weil reported that three bids for monthly technology support had been obtained. After discussion, by unanimous consent, the matter is tabled until the January Council meeting when Communications Director Zach Phillips can answer technical questions and make a recommendation regarding the best candidate to provide technology support.

V. **New Business.**

- a. **Election of Diocesan Council Vice President.** The Chancellor stated that nominations were now in order for the office of Council Vice President. The Rev. Steven King nominated The Rev. Susan Roberts. Cn. Shirley Bolden nominated The Rev. Galen Snodgrass. There being no further nominations, the Chancellor closed nominations. After members voted by ballot, the Chancellor announced that the Rev. Susan Roberts had been elected Vice President.

The Bishop and Council members thanked The Rev. Galen Snodgrass for his service as Council Vice President in 2023.

- b. **Congregational Development.** The Bishop and The Rev. Steven King spoke regarding Council's consideration of congregational development as a primary focus of Council's work in 2024, aligning congregational mission and ministry with the Four Pillars. The subject will be revisited in January.
- c. **Diocesan Property Update.** Mr. Ron Weil reported that a water pipe leak in the ceiling of the Bishop's bathroom had been fixed, and the toilet in one of the downstairs bathrooms had been replaced. At the January meeting, the Property Committee will report on the property issues regarding Grace Episcopal Church, Liberty, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Maryville.
- d. **Request by St. Luke's Beloved Physician Episcopal Church, Excelsior Springs, to relocate from the Central Deanery to the Northwest-Metro Deanery.** The Rev. Galen Snodgrass moved, seconded by The Rev. Joe Pierjok, that St. Luke's Beloved Physician Episcopal Church, Excelsior Springs, be relocated to the Northwest-Metro Deanery.

The motion carried.

- e. **2024 Clergy Housing Allowance Resolution.** The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Ms. Amanda Perschall, that the following 2024 Clergy Housing Allowance Resolution be adopted:

Resolution of the Diocesan Council
of The Diocese of West Missouri to
Designate a Portion of Clergy Salaries
for IRS Parsonage Exclusion

WHEREAS, The Diocese of West Missouri (“Diocese”) employs certain clergy (“Clergy”) to provide ministerial services; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese does not provide housing to the Clergy; and

WHEREAS, Section 107 of the Internal Revenue Code permits members of the clergy to exclude from gross income (in computing federal income taxes) a designated allowance paid to the clergyperson as part of their compensation (the “Parsonage Exclusion”) to the extent such funds are used by the clergyperson for actual expenses in owning or renting a home (including furnishings, utilities, and maintenance); and

WHEREAS, the Parsonage Exclusion must be authorized by the governing body of the clergyperson’s employer; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Diocese, as the employer of the Clergy, through the Diocesan Council, its Board of Directors, hereby authorizes the Parsonage Exclusions for the Clergy listed below for the calendar year 2024 to be pro-rated as appropriate for any partial employment during said calendar year:

The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce	\$45,000.00
The Rev. Anne Cheffey.....	\$15,000.00
The Very Rev. Chandler C. Jackson	\$7,800.00
The Rev. Anne Meredith Kyle.....	\$0.00
The Rev. Charles Adams (Chas) Marks	\$21,500.00
The Rev. Cn. Jose Palma	\$18,500.00
The Rev. David Wilcox.....	\$27,420.00

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the amount of the Parsonage Exclusions authorized for the calendar year of 2024 to the Rt. Rev.

Diane M. Jardine Bruce, the Rev. Anne Cheffey, the Very Rev. Chandler C. Jackson, the Rev. Anne Meredith Kyle, the Rev. Charles Adam (Chas) Marks, the Rev. Cn. Jose Palma, and the Rev. David Wilcox shall continue on an annual basis for all subsequent years thereafter unless the Diocesan Council shall duly adopt by budget or resolution a different amount for said housing or rental allowance.

The motion carried.

- f. **Determine disbursement of remaining International Outreach Grant (IOG) funds.** Mr. Ron Weil reported that to date, \$7,797 in 2023 IOG grant funds had been disbursed; \$6,012 grant funds remain. After discussion regarding more communication regarding the IOG program, Ms. Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by The Rev. Joe Pierjok, that the IOG grant funds remaining as of December 31, 2023, be disbursed proportionally to the 2023 recipients.

The motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Mr. Phil Metz moved, seconded by The Rev. Galen Snodgrass, to adjourn. **The motion carried,** and the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Donna Stanford
Diocesan Secretary