

The Diocese of West Missouri
Minutes of Diocesan Council Meeting
April 13, 2024

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, April 13, 2024, at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Kansas City. 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
Cn. Mark Galus, Chancellor
The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Dean of the Central Deanery
The Rev. Steven King
Mr. Tom Kokjer, Treasurer
The Very Rev. Jean Long, Dean of the Northwest Metro Deanery
~~Mr. Phil Metz~~
Mr. Chris Morrison
~~Mr. Spencer Orr~~
Ms. Amanda Perschall
The Rev. Joe Pierjok
~~Cn. David Powell, Vice Chancellor~~
Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee
The Rev. Susan Roberts, Vice President
Ms. Beverly Roggenkamp
~~The Rev. Galen Snodgrass~~
~~The Rev. Donna Stanford, Secretary~~
~~Ms. Judith Turner, President of Episcopal Church Women~~
Ms. Elisa White, Asst. Secretary
~~Mr. Steven Williams~~

Also attending: Mr. Ron Weil, Finance Administrator

1. Call to Order and Devotions: Bishop Bruce determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Zella Forsythe led the Council in opening prayer.
2. Election: Deacon Donna Stanford has a broken foot and will need time away from Diocesan Secretary duties to recuperate. The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III moved, seconded by the Rev. Joe Pierjok, that Ms. Elisa White be appointed Assistant Secretary.

After discussion, the Rev. Joe Pierjok moved to amend the motion to allow Ms. White a voice in Council proceedings. **Motion carried.**

3. Consent Agenda: Mr. Tom Kokjer moved, seconded by Ms. Beverly Roggenkamp, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:
 - a. Approval of March 9, 2024 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
 - b. Approval of April 3, 2024 Executive Committee meeting minutes as amended to correct Mr. Tom Kokjer's name
 - c. Receipt of written report from the Youth Missioner

The motion carried.

4. Reports:
 - a. Deanery Reports
 - i. Southern Deanery: The Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Dean, reported that there will be a Clericus meeting on April 16 and the deanery will meet on April 27 at St. John's in Springfield.
 - ii. Northwest-Metro Deanery: The Very Rev. Jean Long, Dean, reported that the Clericus and deanery meeting will be held May 4 at St. Andrew's in Kansas City. They have been including relationship building activities into their meetings.
 - b. Standing Committee Report
 - i. Mr. Eric Rhodes, President, reported that dates have been set for the ordination and consecration of the new bishop. The ordination and consecration will be May 3, 2025. Final candidates for the Bishop position will visit the Diocese September 16-21, 2024, for walkabouts. The Standing Committee has been working with the treasurer, finance committee, search committee, and the consultant to ensure the process continues to move forward. They approved the appointment of Ms. Elisa White as the Search Committee Secretary. The search has to date incurred expenses totaling \$24,411.
 - c. Bishop Search Committee Report
 - i. The nominating period ended Sunday, April 7 and the response is thrilling. The feedback on the quality of our Diocesan profile has been very positive. A letter will be sent out this coming week to update members of the Diocese. Milestone dates are booked and planned; everything is moving in accordance with the original timeline. The committee will meet on Sunday, April 14, to discuss the applicant pool and form interview plans.
 - d. Secretary's Report

- i. No report at this time.
- e. Treasurer and Finance Committee Report
 - i. The Treasurer submitted a written Treasurer’s report and a written report of the April 2, 2024, Finance Committee meeting. Our long-term investment portfolio is up about 4.5% year to date, and up about 17.75% year over year. The Finance Committee received an offer of \$220,000 for the property in Maryville; it will be discussed further in New Business. The Finance Committee has discussed the position of the Canon of the Ordinary and is mindful that it will have a budgetary impact on future plans for ministry. A new line item has been created for Treasury Bill Income, which will provide additional revenue.
 - ii. Ms. Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by Ms. Kate French, to accept the Treasurer and Finance Committee Report as presented. **The motion carried.**
- f. Vice President’s Report
 - i. The Rev. Susan Roberts reported the Creation Care Ministry Commission has met and are working to develop goals and action items. The Congregational Vitality Committee met to discuss next steps, which will be further discussed under Old Business. The Curacy Program received two applications, which will be presented under New Business. The Rev. Roberts amended her written report to add a report from the Vocations Commissioner, the Rev. Anne Kyle, who is thankful for the tremendous amount of support received in settling into this position. The Rev. Kyle is working to update the path to ordination process on the website, planning for a “next steps” retreat in June 2024, and leading a subcommittee to update the ordination handbook. This will be added to the website when it is complete. The Rev. Kyle has worked to support those who are in the ordination process and is planning a vocation retreat for those who are considering a call to ministry.
 - ii. Mr. Chris Morrison added a note that the Creation Care Ministry is the topic of the next Episcopal 101 podcast.
- g. Bishop’s Report
 - i. The Bishop has realized that she has entered into her year of “lasts,” that is, the last Holy Week, last Pentecost, etc., to be spent with the Diocese of West Missouri. Being mindful of that, she has created an extensive to-do list to help prepare for the transition to the new bishop.
 - ii. Planning is underway for Pride events, with participation planned for Ozark Pride and KC Pride.

- iii. The grant process is up and running. The Property Committee and the Centralized Grants Committee have each met.
- iv. Work is being done to strengthen congregational vitality and to implement initiatives that are new to the budget, including the curacy program and seminarian health insurance.
- v. Met with the Under 40 group to discuss plans and ideas for a variety of activities that will encourage participation, such as including more young adults on commissions and committees.
- vi. The Bishop will stand in for Presiding Bishop Michael Curry at the ordination and consecration of the new Bishop of California in May and will attend her last Church Pension Fund meeting in June.
- vii. Please continue to keep Phil Metz in prayers.

5. Old Business

- a. Centralized Grant Process: committee and leadership have been established. The committee has begun meeting, as noted in the Bishop's Report.
- b. Congregational Vitality: A written report was shared. It outlines a proposal to have all congregations complete a vitality assessment. The details are still being worked out with guidance from the Episcopal Church Foundation. Diocesan Council members will be expected to be involved in the process. The goal is for each congregation to be able to define their identity as a parish and a member of the Diocese of West Missouri. This will give our new bishop a global view of who we are, using a common language. The cost is expected to be in the range of \$4,000 and a funding source has been identified. More information will be available at the May meeting, at which time a larger discussion will take place.

6. New Business

- a. Recommendations for Curacy Program
 - i. Funds totaling \$60,000 have been allocated to the program. There were two applicants: St. James and Christ Church, both in Springfield. St. James has requested funding for three years and Christ Church requested funding for one year. Two seminarians who are nearing graduation are expecting to take positions at these churches. The committee that oversees the program has fully vetted and verified the applications and recommends their approval.
 - ii. The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, the Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III seconded, to allocate curacy funds in the amount of \$15,000 to Christ Church for one year and to allocate to St. James \$45,000 in year one, \$30,000 in year two, and \$15,000 in year three. **The motion carried.**

- iii. Suggestions for improving the process in the future include having grant applications due in January, and information about the applicants provided in a written report to Diocesan Council members prior to the meeting where the vote will take place.
 - iv. After the curates have taken their positions, we need to write an article about it for the website.
- b. Property Committee
- i. The Chancellor reported that the committee has received an offer of \$220,000 for the Maryville property, which is about equal to its appraised value. Since the Diocese owns the property, the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and the Diocesan Council have to approve the sale. The Bishop and Standing Committee have approved. The Council is being asked to approve the sale and allow the Bishop to execute all necessary paperwork. The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, Mr. Tom Kokjer seconded, to accept the resolution presented by the Property Committee to sell the property for \$220,000 and allow the Bishop to execute the necessary paperwork. **The motion carried.**
- c. Election of Trustees
- i. The Chancellor reported that a trust was established in 1984 to accept proceeds from a life insurance policy held by a parishioner in the Diocese. The parishioner is still alive and the insurance company has determined that it is now time to pay out the proceeds. The trust stipulates that there be five trustees: the Bishop and four people representing each of the deaneries. The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, Ms. Amanda Perschall seconded, to name Mr. Tom Kokjer, Canon Shirley Bolden, Ms. Kate French, and the Very Rev. Chandler Jackson III to be the trustees. **The motion carried.**
- d. Revision of the Constitution and Canons
- i. The group is working to update and revise these documents, with the goal of having them ready to present at the Diocesan Convention in November, 2024.
- e. General Convention
- i. Ms. Amanda Perschall reported that a full deputation is set to attend the convention in late June. There will be an election for a new Presiding Bishop. People are encouraged to read up on the topics that will be discussed at the convention and talk with their deputation to share thoughts and help inform the voting process.
 - ii. Please continue to keep Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in prayers.

- iii. There will be a new Secretary of the House of Bishops after the convention ends, as the Rt. Rev. Diane Bruce is stepping down. She is running for a position on the Executive Council.
 - iv. Extensive conversation took place regarding Episcopal Bishops and the numerous Title IV actions in progress. Concerns were shared that the actions of these bishops are affecting the Episcopal Church as a whole and eroding trust in the House of Bishops. The Bishop shared that newer bishops are calling for a change in the way the House of Bishops conducts itself and more transparency.
- f. Plan for Diocesan Convention
- i. The planning committee has decided the business meeting will be held on Friday, starting at noon or early afternoon, and the Bishop election will take place on Saturday.

Ms. Hayley Cobb gave a prayer and the Council took a lunch break. After the break, it being determined that there was no further business, the Rev. Susan Roberts moved and Mr. Chris Morrison seconded to adjourn. **The motion carried** and the meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m.