

THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI

Minutes (as amended) of December 14, 2024 Diocesan Council Meeting

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, December 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in person at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, 7110 N MO-9, Kansas City, MO 64152. Members attending:

~~Ms. Regina Berens~~
Cn. Shirley Bolden
Ms. Anne Breid
The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, President
Ms. Hayley Cobb
Ms. Zella Forsythe
Ms. Kate French
Cn. Mark Galus, Chancellor
~~Ms. Amy Garcia~~
The Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Registrar
Mr. Tom Kokjer, Treasurer
The Very Rev. Jean Long, Dean of the Northwest Metro Deanery
Anne Jetter Maas, Associate Treasurer
~~Mr. Phil Metz~~
Mr. Chris Morrison
Ms. Amanda Perschall
The Rev. Joe Pierjok
Ms. Jennifer Snider, Vice Chancellor
Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee
The Rev. Susan Roberts, Vice President
The Rev. Brittany Sparrow Savage
The Rev. Cn. John Spicer
The Rev. Donna Stanford, Secretary
~~Ms. Judith Turner, President of Episcopal Church Women~~
Ms. Elisa White
~~Mr. Steven Williams~~

Also attending: Mr. Ron Weil, Finance Administrator
The Rev. Cn. Chas Marks, Transitions Missioner

1. **Call to Order and Devotion.** Bishop Bruce determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The Rev. Susan Roberts led Council in a devotion and prayer.
2. **Onboarding.** Council members introduced themselves, and the Bishop reviewed the onboarding document (Orientation to Diocesan Council).

3. **Consent Agenda Adoption.** Ms. Kate French moved, seconded by Mr. Chris Morrison, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:
- a. Approval of October 2, 2024 Diocesan Council meeting minutes, as amended
 - b. Receipt of December 4, 2024 Executive Committee meeting minutes
 - c. Receipt of reports, if any, from committees, commissions, and ministries

The motion passed.

3. **Reports.**

- a. **FaithX and Congregational Vitality Report**

The Rev. Cn. Chas Marks, Transitions Missioner, reported on the rollout of FaithX and the beta test of the congregational vitality assessment with three congregations, one in each deanery. He also reported that a training session will be held via Zoom on January 7, 2025, and Archbishop Melissa Shelton will facilitate a training session to be held at Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral on February 21 and 22, 2025. The Rev. Cn. Marks raised the issues of the future use of undisbursed ministry developer funds and curacy funds, and the response to the proposed area bookkeepers program. He also reported on the status of transitions of clergy in the Diocese.
- b. **Deanery Reports**
 - i. **Northwest-Metro Deanery**

The Very Rev. Jean Long, Dean, reported that the last Deanery Council meeting was prior to Convention. The Deanery Council will meet again in the new year.
 - ii. **Southern Deanery**

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III reported that a new Dean will be elected at the January 4, 2025 Deanery meeting to be held at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Ozark.
 - iii. **Central Deanery**

There was no report from the Central Deanery.
- c. **Standing Committee Report**

Mr. Eric Rhodes, President, reported that of the \$259,000 budget for the Bishop Search, \$100,437 has been spent. Committee expenditures are under budget by \$31,000. Mr. Rhodes also reported that the Standing Committee re-elected him as President and elected The Rev. Cn. Robin James as Vice-President, Mr. Curtis Hamilton as Secretary, The Rev. Timothy Coppinger to the Commission on Ministry, The Rev. Ron Verhaeghe and Ms. Marsha Patterson as liaisons to the Transition Committee, and Ms. Alexandra Connors and The Rev. Isaac Petty Pierjok as liaisons to the Consecration Committee. The Standing Committee is in

negotiations with the Bishop-Elect, The Very Reverend Amy Dafler Meaux, as to her start date. Her consecration will be May 3, 2025. She will attend the joint Standing Committee-Diocesan Council retreat in February. In The Episcopal Church, a Bishop-Elect must receive consent from both a majority of diocesan Standing Committees and a majority of Bishops with Jurisdiction to be ordained as a bishop. Mr. Rhodes reported that the consent process started November 11, and a majority of Bishops with Jurisdiction have consented. The Standing Committee has approved the following persons for ordination: Keith Johnson and C.J. Duffie to the transitional diaconate, Jennifer Sackhoff to the vocational diaconate. The Standing Committee approved The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas's election of The Rev. Angela Maria Cortiñas as its next bishop suffragan, and The Diocese of West Missouri's election of The Very Reverend Amy Dafler Meaux as its ninth diocesan bishop.

d. **Transition Committee Report**

Canon Shirley Bolden, Co-chair, reported that the committee is organizing farewells for Bishop Bruce:

Saturday, March 1, 2025

Motown Dance

Place: Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral's Founder's Hall

Time: 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Music by: D.J.

Food: Hot and Cold Appetizers

Drinks: Coffee, Tea and Punch

Participants: Members of the Diocese and family and friends of the Bishop

Friday, March 14, 2025

Eucharist and Reception

Location: Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral and Founder's Hall

Time: 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.

Food: Diocese will provide the meat, other items provided by parishioners of the Diocese (Potluck).

Drinks: Coffee, Tea, Punch,

Anticipated Attendance: 100-125

Saturday, March 15, 2025

Eucharist and Reception

Location: Christ Church, Springfield, Mo

Time: 1:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Food: Diocese will provide the meat, other items provided by parishioners of the Diocese (Potluck).

Drinks: Coffee, Tea, Punch,

Anticipated Attendance: 100-125

Sunday, March 16, 2025

Location: St. Paul's, Clinton

Time: Church service with Eucharist for congregation at 10:00 a.m.

Reception: St. Paul's, Clinton

Time: 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Food: Diocese will provide the meat, other items provided by parishioners of the Diocese (Potluck).

Drinks: Coffee, Tea, Punch,

Anticipated Attendance: 50-75

e. **Consecration Committee Report**

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Co-chair, reported that the committee met with The Rev. Molly James from the Presiding Bishop's Office. The seating of the Bishop will be during the consecration service on May 3. The Nave of the Cathedral will accommodate 700 people, Founder's Hall will accommodate 400 people, and tents will be set up in outside areas. Having themed areas for the reception has been discussed. On May 10, a reception will be held at Christ Church, Springfield.

f. **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary reported that greetings were received from the 165th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Kansas held in Wichita on October 18-19, 2024.

g. **Treasurer's Report** (with reports of Finance and Property Committees)

The Treasurer submitted a written Treasurer's report and a written report of the November 5, 2024 and December 3, 2024 Finance Committee meetings. The Treasurer reported that the Diocese's long-term investment portfolio is up about 16% this year to date. The Diocese has \$12.4 million in long-term assets. Revenue is running about even with budget and expenses below budget so far this year. Three pillars (How We Serve Others, How We Proclaim the Good News, and How We Form Disciples) are running under budget, and the Finance Committee will reach out to stakeholders to review the use of the 2024 monetary resources.

The Treasurer gave the following Grant Funds update:

Central: \$69,000 spent; \$31,720 balance remaining

Property: \$167,956 spent; \$173,711 balance remaining

The Treasurer reported that the Finance Committee recommends that three Property Fund grant requests be approved by Council. The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Ms. Elisa White that the following Property Fund grant requests be approved:

Calvary, Sedalia - \$5,000 spotlight camera and update existing play structure

St. Stephen, Monett - \$3,267 bring ADA ramp up to code
St. Paul, Clinton - \$4,104 urinal repair, AED maintenance,
emergency door bar, security system upgrade

The motion passed. Ms. Kate French (St. Paul's, Clinton) abstained from the vote.

After discussion, Ms. Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by The Rev. Cn. John Spicer, that undisbursed budgeted amounts for ministry developer, curacy, and area bookkeepers be redistributed into designated funds. **The motion passed.**

Mr. Ron Weil, Finance Administrator, reported that he has made 29 audit visits; 12 churches have done their own audits, 3 churches have had CPA audits; 10 audits are outstanding. Mr. Weil also reviewed the financial reports, noting that the Diocesan Center expenses are up due to bad debt expense and maintenance expenses.

Ms. Amanda Perschall moved, seconded by The Rev. Joe Pierjok, that the Treasurer and Finance Committee Report be accepted as presented. **The motion passed.**

h. **Vice President's Report**

The Rev. Susan Roberts submitted a written Vice President's report addressing the status of Diocesan resolutions, resolutions from the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church, and congregational vitality. She also reported that the Creation Care Committee has identified goals and is planning a diocese-wide survey regarding creation care in 2025.

i. **Bishop's Report**

The Bishop reported that she:

- received a clean bill of health from her physicians
- has completed the clergy/lay leader review for the new Bishop
- is continuing pastoral care for lay and clergy
- is talking with the Bishop-Elect
- has completed staff performance appraisals
- will prepare staff performance plans in December and January
- was appointed to a six-year term on the Joint Committee on Budget and Finance

The Bishop addressed the Presiding Bishop's suspension of resigned Bishop Prince Singh for three years and reiterated the church's zero tolerance of abuse. Cn. Shirley Bolden reported that former Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will be in Kansas City for Martin Luther King Day celebrations on January 18, 2025, including a luncheon, Evensong at 4:00 p.m. at the Cathedral with a reception following; service at St. Augustine's

at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 19. The National Day of Racial Healing will be observed on January 21. Absalom Jones Day will be celebrated on February 16 with a service at St. Augustine's to commemorate the first African American ordained priest in The Episcopal Church.

4. **Old Business**
Archives

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Registrar, reported he will need documents related to the work of the Bishop Search, Transition, and Consecration Committees for preservation in the archives. He also reported that digitized files of the microfilm of Convention Journals have been received and will be uploaded to the Archives page of the Diocesan website soon.

5. **New Business**

a. **Elect Diocesan Council Vice President**

The Chancellor stated that nominations for the office of Council Vice President were in order. Ms. Zella Forsythe nominated The Rev. Susan Roberts. Ms. Anne Bried nominated Ms. Amanda Perschall. The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Mr. Chris Morrison, that nominations be closed. **The motion passed.** After members voted by ballot, the Chancellor announced that The Rev. Susan Roberts had been re-elected Vice President.

b. **Approve 2025 Diocesan Council meeting schedule**

After review of the proposed meeting schedule, The Rev. Cn. John Spicer moved, seconded by Ms. Zella Forsythe, that the proposed 2025 Diocesan Council meeting schedule be approved, with the May meeting cancelled. **The motion passed.**

c. **Housing allowance resolution**

After the Chancellor reviewed the proposed 2025 clergy housing allowance resolution, The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Ms. Amanda Perschall, that the following 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 2025 to be pro-rated as appropriate for any partial employment during said calendar year:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce..... | \$75,000.00 |
| The Rev. Cn. Anne Meredith Kyle..... | \$0.00 |
| The Rev. Cn. Charles Adams (Chas) Marks..... | \$21,500.00 |
| The Rev. Cn. Jose Palma..... | \$18,500.00 |

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the amount of the Parsonage Exclusions authorized for the calendar year of 2025 to the Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, the Rev. Cn. Anne Meredith Kyle, the Rev. Cn. Charles Adam (Chas) Marks, and the Rev. Cn. Jose Palma 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.

- d. **Distribution of International Outreach Grant (IOG) balance**
To date, \$9,915 in 2024 IOG grant funds had been disbursed; \$5,185 in grant funds remain. The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by The Rev. Cn. John Spicer, that the IOG grant funds remaining as of December 31, 2024, be disbursed equally so that the twelve 2024 recipients will each receive \$432. **The motion carried.**
- e. **Approve writing off St. Paul’s, Maryville, accounts receivable**
After discussion, The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Mr. Tom Kokjer, that the St. Paul’s, Maryville, accounts receivable of \$45,939.92 be written off. **The motion carried.**
- f. **Status of congregation or parish, change of status, and Canons XI, XII, and XIII related thereto**

After discussion, Council determined that a task force of Council members should consider the matter and develop recommendations. The Rev. Joe Pierjok will be the convenor, with members: The Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Cn. Shirley Bolden, Ms. Kate French, Ms. Amanda Perschall, and Mr. Erik Rhodes.

g. **Merger of NourishKC into The Prospect KC**

Chancellor Mark Galus reported on the current status of the merger of NourishKC into The Prospect KC. He noted that NourishKC was initially incorporated as Episcopal Social Services, and the corporate documents require that the dissolution of the entity must be approved by the bishops and governing bodies of the Dioceses of Kansas and West Missouri. Although the entity, NourishKC, will be dissolved, the NourishKC/Kansas City Community Kitchen will continue operating under the new entity, The Prospect KC.

Ms. Elisa White moved, seconded by Mr. Chris Morrison, that the merger of NourishKC into The Prospect KC be approved. **The motion carried.**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, The Rev. Joe Pierjok moved, seconded by Ms. Amanda Perschall, to adjourn. **The motion carried,** and the meeting adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Donna Stanford
Diocesan Secretary