

**THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI**

Minutes of April 12, 2025 Diocesan Council Meeting

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, April 12, 2025, at Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, 1433 NW RD Mize Rd., Blue Springs, Missouri. 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~~  
The Very Rev. Kary Mann, Dean of the Central Deanery  
The Rev. Katherine Mansfield  
~~Mr. Phil Metz~~  
Mr. Chris Morrison  
Ms. Amanda Perschall  
~~The Very Rev. Joe Pierjok, Dean of the Southern Deanery~~  
~~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

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. Cn. Shirley Bolden led Council in a devotion and prayer.
2. **Consent Agenda Adoption.** The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Mr. Chris Morrison, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:

- a. Approval of March 8, 2025 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
- b. Receipt of April 2, 2025 Executive Committee meeting minutes
- c. Receipt of reports, if any, from committees, commissions, and ministries
  - i. Diversity and Reconciliation Commission report
  - ii. Youth Ministry Commission report

**The motion passed.**

### **3. Reports.**

#### **a. Deanery Reports**

- i. Central Deanery  
The Very Rev. Kary Mann reported that plans are being made for a formation opportunity for the Central Deanery.
- ii. Northwest-Metro Deanery  
The Very Rev. Jean Long reported that the Deanery farewell celebrations for Bishop Bruce were well attended. The Dean also reported that the first Deanery meeting was held on March 22.
- iii. Southern Deanery  
There was no report from the Southern Deanery.

#### **c. Standing Committee Report**

Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee, reported that the Standing Committee consented to the election of The Rev. Angel Rivera as the next Bishop of The Diocese of Cuba. The Committee continues to work with the Consecration Committee. Contributions have covered the cost of all consecration gifts for the Bishop Elect. The Standing Committee conducted an exit interview with Bishop Bruce. To date, a total of \$143,371 has been spent in bishop search expenses.

#### **d. Transition Committee Report**

Cn. Shirley Bolden, Co-chair, reported that the Committee's work is winding down after organizing farewells for Bishop Bruce:

- Motown Dance at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral's Founder's Hall on Saturday, March 1, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.
- Eucharist and reception at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral and Founder's Hall on Friday, March 14, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.
- Eucharist and reception at Christ Church, Springfield, on Saturday, March 15, 2025, from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m.
- Eucharist and reception at St. Paul's, Clinton, on Sunday, March 16, 2025, from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

#### **e. Consecration Committee Report**

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III, Co-chair, reported that the consecration service will be held at 10:00 a.m. on May 3, 2025, at Grace & Holy Trinity

Cathedral, Kansas City. Attendees will include 24 visiting Bishops, the co-consecrators, and 650 people who have registered. Overflow seating for 200 will be available in Founder's Hall. Service details will be forthcoming.

f. **FaithX Report**

The Bishop reported that the program is moving forward, with The Rev. Chas Marks in conversation with congregations, and Bishop Elect Amy Dafler Meaux supportive of the work.

g. **Task Force Report**

A written report was submitted by the Very Rev. Joe Pierjok, convenor, on behalf of task force members Cn. Shirley Bolden; Ms. Kate French; Ms. Amanda Perschall; and Mr. Eric Rhodes.

h. **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary reported that thank you letters for financial contributions from the Diocese had been received from Episcopal Relief and Development and Episcopal Migration Ministries. The Secretary also reported that the next Dean of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry is Dr. Lynne Moss Bahr, who will assume her duties on July 1.

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

The Treasurer submitted a written report and the minutes of the April 1, 2025 Finance Committee meeting. The Treasurer reported that the Diocese has a strong balance sheet, thanks in part to investment with DFMS. The Diocese's long-term investment portfolio is down around 5% year to date. Fortunately, the Diocese has been in a very liquid situation with that excess liquidity (\$680k) in US Treasury Bills yielding 4%+.

The Treasurer reported that St. Mary Magdalene's \$850,000 20-year commercial real estate loan with Central Bank will be coming due in July. The Treasurer will have some options for renegotiating the loan at the May Finance Committee meeting. Diocesan financial aid will be required, and the Treasurer is having discussions with our two Bishops as to prospective options. The Treasurer anticipates being able to put the options in front of Council before the June Diocesan Council meeting thus allowing discernment.

The Treasurer reported that he would like to start 2026 budget conversations in June.

Mr. Ron Weil, Finance Administrator, reported that the Diocese is \$58,000 to the good with regard to the budget. A check for \$40,000 was received from the Renfro Trust.

The Property Committee approved several grants, and those will be on the agenda for Finance Committee in May.

Grant Funds Update:

Central:

\$11,404 spent year to date. \$115,816 balance remaining.

Property:

\$16,196 spent year to date. \$153,477 balance remaining.

Mr. Chris Morrison requested that a brief narrative report regarding awards of Central Grant Funds be given to Council.

Ms. Judith Turner moved, seconded by Ms. Regina Berens, that the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. **The motion passed.**

j. **Vice President's Report**

The Rev. Susan Roberts submitted a written report. Mtr. Susan expressed the Council's appreciation for Bishop Bruce's leadership, especially regarding the Diocesan budget, during her tenure as Bishop Provisional.

k. **Bishop Elect's Report**

Bishop Elect Amy Dafler Meaux submitted a written report.

l. **Bishop's Report**

- The Bishop reported that she and Bishop Elect Amy attended the House of Bishops meeting March 18-25 in Alabama.
- The Bishop gave Council an update on her health and wellness.
- Her sermons for Holy Week, Easter, and the week after Easter are prepared.
- From April 2-4, the Diocese hosted the 2025 Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Episcopal Clergy and Lay Leadership Retreat at Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral, with 59 attendees from all over, including from Maine, Texas, Hawai'i, and Guam. Bishop Bruce and Bishop Elect Amy both attended. Bishop Bruce and Bishop Allen Shin from The Episcopal Diocese of New York, cofounded this group and held the first gathering in person in Los Angeles in 2017.
- The Bishop is working on her "to do" list, including onboarding Bishop Elect Amy and making pastoral care visits.
- The Bishop has accepted a 6-year term as Vice Chair of the Executive Council Joint Standing Committee on Finance and to chair the Joint Committee on the Budget. She reported that The Episcopal Church's Executive Council appointed Mr. Christopher Lacovara as the church's next chief financial officer.
- The Bishop will co-sponsor a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in March 2026.

4. **Executive Session**

There being no old or new business to consider, The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Ms. Amanda Perschall, that Council move into Executive Session to discuss compensation and personnel matters. **The motion passed.** The Bishop and Mr. Ron Weil left the room, and Council moved into Executive Session at 10:45 a.m. Executive Session concluded at 11:17 a.m.

The Bishop and Mr. Weil returned to the room. The Bishop called the meeting back to order. Upon returning to open session, in accordance with the terms of the Bishop's Letter of Agreement (LOA), Council:

- authorized a reimbursement to Bishop Bruce for travel expenses incurred in connection with remote diocesan work from California, in an amount not to exceed \$30,000, provided sufficient documentation is presented to the Treasurer in accordance with diocesan financial procedures; this reimbursement shall be made as an exception to the standard 60-day reimbursement policy in recognition of the Bishop's good-faith reliance on guidance received early in her tenure, and in the interest of honoring the terms and spirit of the LOA; and the Finance Committee and Chancellor will review and, if necessary, recommend clarifying language for future episcopal LOAs and diocesan reimbursement policies to ensure consistent treatment of all categories of work-related travel.
- offered the Bishop the opportunity to purchase the vehicle purchased by the Diocese for her use during her tenure as Bishop Provisional for \$28,800.

5. **Point of personal privilege**

The Rev. Susan Roberts requested a point of personal privilege, which the Bishop allowed. On behalf of Council, Mtr. Susan presented the Bishop with a farewell gift.

7. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Cn. Shirley Bolden, to adjourn. **The motion carried**, and the Bishop adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Donna Stanford  
Diocesan Secretary