

Approved: 7/12/25

THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI
DRAFT Minutes of June 21, 2025 Diocesan Council Meeting

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, June 21, 2025, at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 201 S. Killingsworth Ave., Bolivar, Missouri. Members attending:

Ms. Regina Berens
Cn. Shirley Bolden
Ms. Anne Breid
~~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~~
The Rt. Rev. Amy Dafler Meaux, President
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
 The Rev. Cn. Chas Marks
 The Rev. David Wilcox

1. **Call to Order and Devotion.** Bishop Meaux determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Dcn. Donna Stanford led Council in a devotion and prayer.

2. **Consent Agenda Adoption.** Mr. Phil Metz moved, seconded by Ms. Regina Berens, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:
 - a. Approval of April 12, 2025 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
 - b. Receipt of June 4, 2025 Executive Committee meeting minutes
 - c. Receipt of reports, if any, from committees, commissions, and ministries
 - i. Youth Ministry Commission reports for May and June 2025
 - ii. Consecration Committee report
 - iii. Diversity and Reconciliation Commission report

The motion passed.

3. **Reports.**

- a. **Deanery Reports**

- i. Northwest-Metro Deanery
The Very Rev. Jean Long reported that the Deanery picnic will be an ice cream social to be held on July 19 at HJ's Youth and Community Center and hosted by St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Kansas City. The next Deanery meeting will be at the end of August.
 - ii. Southern Deanery
The Very Rev. Joe Pierjok reported that the monthly clericus will be held on July 15. The Deanery picnic will be held on August 2 and hosted by St. James Episcopal Church, Springfield.
 - iii. Central Deanery
The Bishop reported that the Deanery picnic will be held on September 20. The Deanery is working on a program of Christian education.

- c. **Standing Committee Report**

Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee, submitted a written report. The Standing Committee held discussions regarding the exit interview with Bishop Bruce; developed and is finalizing a policy regarding retention of search documents; conducted a survey of individuals across all search committees to be included in archives; met with Bishop Meaux for our first time on June 8th and received updates regarding her transition and the Diocese; and held a discussion with Bishop Meaux about how we might work in ministry together. Search expenses are expected to end shortly, with the total cost likely around \$200,000. The Standing Committee consented to:

- the election of the Very Rev. Rob Price as Bishop Coadjutor of Dallas
- the ordination of the Rev. Dcn. Mark Bowers to the priesthood
- the ordination of the Rev. Dcn. Keith Johnson to the priesthood
- the ordination of the Rev. Dcn. Christopher (CJ) Duffie to the priesthood

- the candidacy of Jory Mertens

d. **FaithX Report**

The Rev. Cn. Chas Marks reported that 22 congregations served by regular clergy have participated in the congregational vitality assessment, and 8 have received reports. The trends were: high satisfaction with worship, spiritual life and outreach, lay engagement and empowerment; low satisfaction with internal/external sustainability. Regarding church growth and church planting, Cn. Marks met with the Rev. Meg Rhodes and the Rev. C.J. Duffie. Cn. Marks also reported that his takeaways from attending a Tending the Vineyard conference were: work on formation, the power of personal testimony, and pray for growth. The FaithX contract is up in December, and he recommends that the contract not be renewed.

e. **Registrar's/Archivist's Report**

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III submitted a written report. On May 12, the Registrar welcomed assistant archivist Craig Amason. Blueprint rolls are being flattened and preserved in large flat drawers for better preservation for future use. An inventory of the collection is underway. Questions by researchers are invited, and the archivists will either search for answers or provide access to the materials required.

f. **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary reported that a thank you letter for financial contributions from the Diocese from the International Outreach Grant program was received from Global Birthing Home Foundation, the sponsor of Maison de Naissance birthing center in Haiti. An IOG request was also approved for the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

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

The Treasurer submitted a written report and the minutes of the May 6 and June 3, 2025 Finance Committee meetings. The Treasurer reported that financial markets are doing better than expected. Finance Administrator Ron Weil reviewed the operating revenue and expense report and reported that operationally revenue was above budget. He also reviewed the 2026 budget timeline and anticipates having the first draft to Council at the July 12 meeting.

The Treasurer reported that St. Mary Magdalene's/the Diocese's \$833,000 20-year commercial real estate loan with Central Bank will be coming due in July. If the bank agrees to continue the loan, the rate would go from 3.25% to around 7%, with the principal and interest payment going from \$5,820 per month to \$7,640 per month. Regarding refinancing of the loan, the Treasurer recommended that Council approve:

- paying down \$300,000 of the outstanding balance
- with funding coming from the Expansion Fund (which has a \$2.4 million balance)

- contingent on the bank agreeing to a maturity extension on the remaining balance of the loan.

The Treasurer noted that, despite the higher interest rate, this would reduce St. Mary Magdalene's monthly obligation to the bank to \$4,300 per month, a difference of \$1,520 to the good for the parish.

After discussion, Mr. Phil Metz called the question. The Rev. David Wilcox, rector of St. Mary Magdalene, recused himself. Mr. Phil Metz moved, seconded by the Rev. Cn. John Spicer, that the C Diocese pay down \$300,000 of the outstanding balance of St. Mary Magdalene's/the Diocese's \$833,000 20-year commercial real estate loan with Central Bank with funding coming from the Expansion Fund, contingent on the bank agreeing to a maturity extension on the remaining balance of the loan. **The motion carried**, with the Very Rev. Joe Pierjok and Ms. Regina Berens abstaining.

The Treasurer reported that the Executive Committee approved a revised grant request from St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Independence, for disbursement of up to \$17,000 for exterior building painting and wood rot repair, with immediate disbursement of \$12,000. The Rev. Susan Roberts moved, seconded by Mr. Phil Metz, that Council ratify the Executive Committee's approval of the revised grant request. **The motion carried.**

The Treasurer presented several action items on behalf of the Finance Committee. The Treasurer reported that the Property Committee recommended to the Finance Committee property grants to:

- Trinity Episcopal Church, Independence, in the amount of \$3,818 to purchase an anti-theft cage for the air conditioning unit
- Church of the Transfiguration, Mountain Grove, in the amount of \$5195 to remove 3 trees and building repairs
- St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Joplin, in the amount of \$3,417 to repair basement leak and associated damage

After discussion, the Treasurer moved, seconded by Mr. Phil Metz, for approval of a \$3,818 Property Grant for Trinity Episcopal Church, Independence, to purchase an anti-theft cage for the air conditioning unit; a \$5,195 Property Grant for Church of the Transfiguration, Mountain Grove, to remove 3 trees and building repairs; and a \$3,417 Property Grant for St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Joplin, to repair basement leak and associated damage. **The motion passed.**

h. **Vice President's Report**

The Rev. Susan Roberts submitted a written report. As Vice President of Diocesan Council, Mtr. Susan presented The Rt. Reverend Amy Dafler Meaux for ordination to the Episcopate in the Diocese of West Missouri.

The process of integration continues with Barnes -Jewish-Christian and Saint Luke's. This process will take approximately 2 more years. Currently they are working on integrating shared services, such as IT and Human Relations. Saint Luke's is currently exploring the possibility of developing a chaplain career ladder. Between June 2024 and June 2025, seven Saint Luke's chaplains have become Board Certified with Board Chaplaincy Certification, Inc, an affiliate of the Association of Professional Chaplains. Saint Luke's Hospital Spiritual Wellness department also hired The Rev. Mary Lynn Coulson to serve as a PRN Chaplain.

i. **Bishop's Report**

The Bishop:

1. gave thanks for the consecration service
2. thanked Diocesan staff
3. is meeting with clergy, commission, and other groups
4. has made Executive Assistant to the Bishop, Emily Davenport, a delegate to her email and responsible for calendaring events
5. is becoming familiar with her board responsibilities for St. Luke's Health System, Bishop Spencer Place, Bishop Kemper School for Ministry
6. is working with the Commission on Ministry to change the process for clergy continuing education grants
7. is making official and non-official visitations
8. has participated in a campus ministry podcast
9. attended Pride festivals
10. met with Archdeacon Bruce Bower to discuss diaconal matters
11. attended the College of Bishops
12. attended a retreat with Grace & Holy Trinity Cathedral staff
13. attended the Dean's Council
14. is planning the clergy retreat
15. attended the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Synod Convention
16. thanked Cn. Shirley Bolden, Chair of the Diversity and Reconciliation Commission, for the Commission's work and for organizing the Juneteenth pilgrimage
17. is working with The Very Rev. Shay Craig, Dean of Christ Cathedral, Salina, in the Diocese of Western Kansas, and The Rev. Cn. Leyla King on four chats for rural and small churches in Province VII
18. will meet with Mr. Walt George on July 17 regarding his staff salary study
19. has decided not to hire a Youth Missioner at this time and will meet next week with the Youth Commission to explore alternatives
20. gave Council a personal update regarding her family's move to Kansas City from Little Rock

4. **Executive Session**

There being no old or new business to consider, Council moved into Executive Session to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2025 Diocesan Council executive session. The Bishop, Mr. Weil, Cn. Marks, Rev. Wilcox left the room, and Council moved into Executive Session at 11:45 a.m. Executive Session concluded at 11:50 a.m. The minutes of the April 12, 2025 Diocesan Council executive session were approved.

The Bishop, Mr. Weil, Mr. Marks, and Rev. Wilcox returned to the room. The Bishop called the meeting back to order.

5. **Adjournment**

Upon returning to open session, there being no further business to come before the meeting, Cn. Bolden moved, seconded by Cn. Spicer, to adjourn. **The motion carried**, and the Bishop adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Donna Stanford
Diocesan Secretary