

Approved: 10/11/25

THE DIOCESE OF WEST MISSOURI

Minutes of September 13, 2025 Diocesan Council Meeting

The Diocesan Council of The Diocese of West Missouri met Saturday, September 13, 2025, via Zoom.

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

1. **Call to Order and Devotion.** The Rev. Susan Roberts, Council Vice President, determined that a quorum was present and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She shared a message from the Bishop, who is in the Dominican Republic at the House of Bishops meeting. Ms. Hayley Cobb led Council in prayer.

2. **Consent Agenda.** Mr. Phil Metz moved, seconded by The Very Rev. Joe Pierjok, that the following Consent Agenda be adopted:
 - a. Approval of August 9, 2025 Diocesan Council meeting minutes
 - b. Receipt of September 3, 2025 Executive Committee meeting minutes
 - c. Receipt of reports, if any, from committees, commissions, and ministries

The motion carried.

3. **Reports.**

a. **Deanery Reports**

- i. **Northwest-Metro Deanery**
The Very Rev. Jean Long reported that the Deanery ice cream social was well received. The next Deanery meeting will be September 27 via Zoom.
- ii. **Southern Deanery**
The Very Rev. Joe Pierjok reported that the next Deanery meeting will be in person on October 25.
- iii. **Central Deanery**
The Central Deanery had no report as The Very Rev. Kary Mann is on sabbatical

c. **Standing Committee Report**

Mr. Eric Rhodes, President of the Standing Committee, reported that the Standing Committee is receiving updates from the Bishop on her work. The Committee consented to the diaconate ordination of Brandon Smee and to Richard Liantonio as candidate for presbyteral ordination.

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

The Rev. Chandler Jackson III had no report.

e. **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary read a letter of thanks received from St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, Belton, expressing, on behalf of the entire parish, gratitude to the Diocesan Council for the grant of \$300,000 to reduce principal on the church's mortgage debt (Vestry courtesy resolution enclosed with letter).

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

The Treasurer submitted a written report and the minutes of the September 2, 2025 Finance Committee meeting. The Treasurer reported that the Diocese's revenue and expenses are tracking favorably to budget currently.

Grant Funds Balances Update:

Central: \$23,454 spent. \$103,767 balance remaining.

Property: \$72,905 spent. \$123,530 balance remaining.

Action Items:

property grant:

The Finance Committee moved for approval of a property grant request of \$5,900 to St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, Noel, to replace a 3-ton HVAC unit at the rectory as the current unit is unrepairable. **The motion carried.**

line of credit:

The Finance Committee moved that St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Independence, be granted a line of credit of up to \$3,000 to cover the deductible and other expenses related to roof repair due to a water leak that will cost \$17,000-18,000 (Church Insurance will be covering all except \$1,000). **The motion carried.**

draft 2026 budget:

The Treasurer reported that the Finance Committee recommends three changes to the diocesan draft budget for 2026: (1) Bishop Amy is requesting equity adjustment amount for diocese employees of \$11,665; (ii) the Committee agreed that we are over budgeted for the 2026 Diocesan Convention and reduced the budgeted amount from \$40,000 to \$25,000; (iii) The Episcopal Church assessment will be going up by \$5,000—all of which will result in a \$14,000-\$15,000 deficit in the draft budget. Council agreed to address these issues when the Bishop has returned and to postpone a vote on these changes until we have all changes to the budget.

Ms. Amanda Pershall raised several questions regarding the draft budget, including: the relative compensation of the Vocations and Hispanic/Latino Ministry missionaries; breaking out the compensation of the three youth ministry employees; clarifying that the \$5,000 expense for Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE) breaks down to \$2,500 for dues and \$2,500 for convention expenses (the cost for the UBE Conference is for the Bishop of the Diocese and the president of the Diocesan UBE chapter to attend the conference for 2026 that will be in-person); clarifying what the \$25,000 for Diocesan Council expenses pays for. It was agreed that these items will be discussed with the Bishop. Spreadsheet corrections will be made by Finance Administrator Ron Weil to line items for vocations ministry and congregational development.

g. **Vice President's Report**

The Rev. Susan Roberts submitted a written report. Regarding Saint Luke's Spiritual Wellness Ministry, Mtr. Susan reported that The Rev. Mark Jeske was called to be the chaplain for Luther Acres, a campus of Luther Care a multi-care senior living community in Litzig, PA. More than 20 applications have been received for his position. The Clinical Pastoral Education department has enrolled 11 new students, 6 Extended Interns

who will serve in our metro hospitals and 5 Residents who will be at Saint Luke's Hospital.

Regarding effective finance conversations, Mtr. Susan reported that the scheduled meetings of the Property and Finance Committees will be changed, with the Property Committee meeting on the last Tuesday of each month and the Finance Committee meeting on the first Tuesday of each month.

h. **Bishop's Report**

The Bishop submitted the following written report:

Grace and peace to you through our Lord Jesus Christ! I am sorry to miss our time together today. I am currently attending the House of Bishops meeting in the Dominican Republic. Please know that you remain in my prayers and I ask that you keep me in yours.

My report is simple this month. I spent a good deal of time with my family: moving our middle child to college and our eldest to Lee's Summit. In addition, a dear friend of ours, Ruth, died and I was able to attend her funeral in Kentucky. Of course, I had regular visitations as well as several "un-official" visitations, including with St. Luke's, Excelsior Springs and St. Augustine's, Kansas City.

Thanks to the faithful work of our Archdeacon, the Venerable Bruce Bower, the deacons had a retreat this month. I invited the Archdeacon Emeritus of Washington, the Venerable Sue Von Rautenkranz, to join us. She has decades of experience as a deacon, as well as in the formation of deacons and their ministry. She also traveled with me to Christ Church in Lexington. I am grateful for her presence with us and all that I learned from her. I am hopeful that this time together encouraged our deacons. I know that the time with our deacons helped me understand their ministries and the challenges they face.

My coach in the House of Bishops, Bishop Audrey Scanlon of Central Pennsylvania, made her on-site visit this month. As my coach, Bishop Audrey journeys with us during the first three years of my episcopacy. She is available to support me as I become more into the bishop God calls me to be. She spent her time meeting with the staff and getting to know our context. We had a wonderful visit!

Finally, I sent my first letter to the clergy of the diocese with the hope of offering support and some clear expectations. I was inspired by one of my colleagues who writes a version of this letter every year. In this letter, I outlined what the clergy can expect of me, what I expect of them, and an update on our Continuing

Education policies for clergy. I am looking forward to gathering with the clergy at clergy conference in October.

Thank you for your ministry! I am grateful to each of you for the offering of your time and leadership to our diocese. You are a blessing to me and to us! Thank you!

Peace be with you, Bishop Amy

4. **Old Business**

There was no old business.

5. **New Business**

a. The Human Resources Commission recommended the 2026 Medical Trust Plan Selection and the 2026 Minimum Clergy Compensation.

Specifically:

As to the 2026 Medical Trust Plan Selection, the Commission recommended:

- a. offering the same Medical and Dental plans as 2025
- b. the CDHP-20 Single monthly rate of \$1170 (7.05% increase over 2025) will be provided by the employer toward medical plans for eligible employees. Employees may elect at their own expense if they choose to select another plan or cover dependents.
- c. continuing the \$1000 annual HSA contribution by employer for those enrolled in a CDHP plan.

As to the 2026 Minimum Clergy Compensation, Clergy minimums were adjusted in 2023 for 2024. No changes were made in 2025. It was agreed to not recommend changes for 2026. Churches will be responsible for the 7.05% increase in medical premiums for clergy. Churches are reminded to consider an annual compensation percentage increase of 2-5% to be viable and competitive in the marketplace.

After discussion, Council agreed to consider the matters separately.

After further discussion, Ms. Amanda Pershall moved, seconded by The Very Rev. Joe Pierjok, to refer the issue of 2026 Minimum Clergy Compensation back to the Human Resources Commission for further study and for the Commission to report on the rationale for their recommendation for the October Diocesan Council meeting. **The motion carried.**

The Human Relations Commission moved to approve the 2026 Medical Trust Plan Selection. **The motion carried.**

b. Ms. Amanda Pershall, Chair of Nominations, encouraged submission of nominations for leadership positions in the Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri for lay and clergy members as the nominations window will close soon.

6. **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Mr. Phil Metz moved, seconded by Canon Shirley Bolden, to adjourn. **The motion carried,** and the Vice President adjourned the meeting at 10:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Donna Stanford
Diocesan Secretary