

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH – BISMARCK, ND  
NOVEMBER 21-22, 2014

Present: The Rt. Rev. Michael G. Smith, Charlotte Peterson-Treasurer, the Rev. Canon John Floberg, the Rev. Jim Shannon, Don Henderson, the Rev. Bart Davis, Sandi Myers, the Rev. Duane Fox, Carmine Goodhouse, the Rev. Terry Overbo, Linda Hokana, Deacon Barb Olson, Julie Helgaas, Pat Fearing-Sec., the Rev. Erin Richards, Robert Fox, Mary Ann Henry, the Rev. Canon Zanne Ness, the Rev. Christian Senyoni

After enjoying a meal together, the council was led in evening prayer by Bishop Michael who read a short biography of Edmund, King of East Angola. His kingdom was overrun and he was killed because he would not denounce Christianity.

The meeting was called to order and a quorum was established with 19 members present and 4 absent. The agenda was accepted. The minutes were accepted with a correction.

Bart Davis nominated Zanne Ness to be vice-president of the council. Zanne was re-elected by voice vote of the council. Zanne Ness nominated Pat Fearing as secretary of the council. Pat was also re-elected by voice.

Charlotte Peterson gave the treasurer's report, commenting on a number of items. She noted that Gethsemane has made another OFS payment. They have had a change of treasurer. She also said that overall income to the diocese has been low while expenses have been on track.

Charlotte reported that the amount for a house for a priest in Williston has had to be upped from \$300,000 to \$325,000 due to lack of availability in the lower price range. Sandi Myers noted that the \$3,000 earnest money mentioned in the letter Charlotte wrote concerning the house was not in Sandi's possession, but is with a realtor.

Charlotte indicated that oil royalties which the diocese has been receiving may be down next year because of lower oil prices.

Sandi Myers moved for acceptance of the treasurer's report. Barb Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Zanne Ness led a discussion on the feedback from the 2014 Diocesan Convention. Delegates reacted favorably to the Texas/North Dakota partnership. Child care was discussed. The consensus was that it needs to be on site but a hotel room is not an option. It was suggested that perhaps a follow-up could be done to see what is needed. Terry Overbo will take on this task. The bishop recommended that some kind of interactive group process could be incorporated into the convention next year. Regional meetings were also brought up in the feedback surveys and were discussed. The two regions differ quite a bit in how meetings are conducted. It was suggested that a bigger meal could be served on Friday with the soup and sandwich meal moved to Saturday noon. Don Henderson suggested that our youth be given a bigger presence at convention. Discussion was held on the different aspects of youth taking part in the convention if they were not delegates. Comments from the feedback survey were generally good.

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Saturday's meeting was opened with Morning Prayer led by Bishop Michael. He read about C. S. Lewis who was raised Anglican but denounced Christianity in his teenage years. In 1929 he became a "reluctant convert" to Christianity and became an apologist and a well-known Christian author.

Youth at convention was revisited with several suggestions from council members including a youth retreat at St. Gabriel's Camp, having them help as tellers, having them help at the church service, youth workshops, and youth choir. There is also material available from Cokesbury, including "Marked for Mission: Youth in Action."

Bishop Michael announced that he would be going on sabbatical in January to Nashotah House where he will be serving as "Bishop in Residence" and working on his doctorate. While he is away Zanne Ness, as diocesan council vice president, will be on call for things relating to pastoral care and council business. Leisha Woltjer will be available at the diocesan office, and John Floberg will take care of NDCIM questions.

A question concerning the Continuing Education Fund was brought up. If you don't spend all the continuing education funds which are allowed, can the balance be put in a reserve fund? Discussion followed. Bart Davis moved the following resolution:

Be it resolved that the annual unused continuing education money for diocesan employed clergy can be put into an interest-bearing reserve account for later use by that clergyperson while employed by the Diocese of North Dakota. If there is a fund balance upon separation from diocesan employment, that fund will be transferred to the Masuda Fund interest (as opposed to principal) to be become available to any clergyperson in the diocese for sabbatical.

This motion was seconded and passed by council.

Housing allowances for clergy were discussed. It was noted that Bishop Michael's housing allowance has increased due to an increase in rent. Bart Davis moved for acceptance of all clergy housing allowances. Erin Richards seconded the motion. Motion carried.

John Floberg asked the council for feedback on the askings proposed by the Episcopal Church each year. John and Deacon Brandon Maui currently serve on the Executive Council. John explained how the askings work. Right now the general asking for all dioceses is set at 19%. The Episcopal Church is hoping we will commit to 18½% in 2015, 16½% in 2016, and 15% in 2017. After some discussion, the council agreed that our intention is to comply with the figures proposed.

John also asked council members to go on line and look at the budget for the Episcopal Church. He said that 1.6 million dollars of the budget are to be used to help develop projects in the dioceses of North Dakota, South Dakota and Navajo Land to help them become self-sufficient. He suggested that council members contribute their insights concerning our base budget grant and the self-sustainability grant.

Bishop Michael announced that the dates for diocesan council meeting scheduled in March have been changed to March 13 and 14. We will meet at the Spirit Lake Casino in Devils Lake.

Duane Fox gave a building update for the church in White Shield. He reported that they are still having problems, stating that the construction crew did not do the work they were contracted to do and had even damaged the building. Duane has been talking to people who can hopefully finish the work.

Work on the construction project in Dunseith is progressing slowly.

The bishop announced that Dean John Whitnah had resigned from Gethsemane Cathedral. A search for a new dean is getting underway.

Barb Olson reported on the Sudanese ministry at St. John's in Moorhead. She said that Dralu Karlo has left St. John's and is conducting services at a different church. Bishop Michael said that further action on this matter might have to be taken in the future. Father Michael Paul is now conducting both the Arabic-speaking service and the English service at St. John's. St. John's and the City of Moorhead are still in negotiations to sell a portion of church property to the city. Bart Davis moved that the proceeds from the sale of the property should go to the diocese to be used for building repairs at St. John's. Don Henderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

It was reported that the church building in Lakota has been listed for sale with a realtor.

St. Luke's in Fort Yates has a mobile home sitting on their property which is no longer used. There is a bid of \$3,000 for it. The mobile home originally came from Dunseith. Bart Davis moved that any net proceeds from the sale go to Dunseith. Jim Shannon seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bishop Michael said that Ed Wos will be ordained to the diaconate. JoAnn Keehn will begin the process to become a deacon at St. Michael and All Angels in Cartwright.

Dickinson is doing well with its new clergy.

Williston is nearing the end of its search for a priest. Zanne Ness reported that there have been 8 or 9 interviews for that position. In the meantime, Erin Richards has been conducting services there twice a month. Bart Davis moved to use up to \$900.00 from the move/interview reserve fund to help St. Peter's in Williston with an interview in their search process. The motion was seconded and passed by council.

John Floberg reported that the youth ministry on Standing Rock is going well. They have ten leaders and had 80 young people on Wednesday for Youth Group!

John also said that a grant of \$25,000 had been received for projects at Sitting Bull College in Fort Yates and United Tribes College in Bismarck.

Pat Fearing reported that the fall ingathering for United Thank Offering is under way. She thanked those who had been at convention and supported the "weight loss" project which was very successful.

The meeting was adjourned by a motion from Julie Helgaas and a second from Sandi Myers.

Holy Eucharist was conducted by Bishop Michael followed by a noon lunch.

Submitted by Pat Fearing, Secretary