

## **DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING**

Friday, August 18, 2023

In attendance: The Rt. Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, The Rev. Amy Mayes, John Angst, The Rev. Mike Evers, The Rev. Lori Modesitt, Kim McAtee, Shirley Wildman, Mary Appel, The Rev. Walt Seeley, Shealee Donahue, John Sullivan

Ex-Officio: Walt Tanner

Staff: Canon Jessica Reynolds, The Rev. Canon Lara Gilbert, The Rev. Canon Bobbe Fitzhugh,

An opening devotional was provided by The Rt. Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler based on Vincent van Gogh's painting of a Mulberry Tree during a time of crisis.

An opening prayer was provided by the Council Chaplain, the Rt. Rev. Amy Mayes.

Mary Apple moved to accept the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Shealee Donahue and carried.

Shirley Wildman moved to approve the minutes of the Diocesan Council meeting of February 10, 2023, with the correction of adding those who were not in attendance. The motion was seconded by John Sullivan and carried.

Bishop Paul-Gordon reminded the Council of the mission and vision statements of the Diocese. He will send out the document to the Council so they can keep them afresh in their minds.

He then shared about the current priorities: Spiritual Depth, Relevancy, Leadership. The Bishop thanked the staff for all they give to the Diocese. He also thanked the Council members for the contributing their time, skills and ministries on behalf of our churches.

Transition updates included the below:

-The Rev. Rick Veit has been called to serve as Dean of our Cathedral. This is a new phase for the Diocese and the Cathedral as we move towards the Cathedral living into all that it can be as a Wisdom Center. The Revs Walt and Janet Seeley will serve as the Interim Rectors at St. Mark's Cheyenne.

-The Rev. Jim Shumard will be retiring from St. Mark's in Casper, and the Rev. Camie Dewey will be serving as a Priest-in-Charge at St. Marks.

-St. Luke's Buffalo has offered a call to someone and is opening to have a confirmation of acceptance very soon.

-The Rev. Diane Carlton will be retiring in early November from service at All Saint's in Torrington, and they have called the Rev. Kenli Barling to be their Priest-in-Charge. With Rev. Barling accepting this new role, the Rev. Steve Christy will be serving part-time as a Missional Priest for Region 2 (Newcastle and Wright).

-The Rev. David McElwain has retired from St. Alban's Worland, which will be developing a profile and is starting at search process. The Rev. Linda Anderson will be serving as the Missional Priest for our churches in Basin and Meeteetse.

Other updates from the Bishop included:

We are waiting to hear further from the "united" church in Star Valley as to their continued interest in partnering with the Diocese.

The 2023 Episcopal Youth Event (EYE) held in the D.C. area ended up being a real success, with 9 kids from Wyoming attending, making us one of the larger youth delegations. Allen Doyle and Kira Bachus served as the chaperones. It was bonding experience for all in attendance. The Bishop benefited from their counsel as well as to the future of the church in Wyoming.

Our first School of Earth and Soul with John Philip Newell held in early May went exceptionally well. The second school will be in early May 2024.

*ArtSpirit's* exhibitions are doing well. The exhibition GROUNDED has been wonderfully received. So far it has been showcased in Lander, Casper, Cheyenne and Jackson. It opens next in Worland. After that it will go to Rock Springs to finish out its tour in Wyoming. There are plans for the exhibit to go to New York, Washington, D.C., Leicester, London and then the Middle East. The *Dying Sorrow* exhibition was well received at our Cathedral during the Easter season. Our WHITE ROBE exhibition, which is about the Rev. John Roberts, has now opened in Lander at the Pioneer Museum, and the remaining touring schedule is being developed. Also, we are hosting at St. John's Jackson the first indigenous art market in Wyoming on Sept 30 and October 1.

The Rev Jordan Bishop has begun serving in Lander, and will soon be their Priest-in-Charge. He will also in a part-time capacity serve as the Youth Coordinator for the Diocese (middle school/high school). Allen Doyle has begun his new role as the Director of Campus Ministries, based out of Laramie's Canterbury House. He will also serve as a Lay Curate at the Cathedral until he is ordained.

The Bishop highlighted the success of *CampFire* at St. John's Jackson (which is led by Rev. Travis Helms), *Unplugged* in Thermopolis, and *Table Talk* in Region 4. He explained how these three are examples of alternative services that are doing well and connecting to those outside our churches.

The Rev. Bobbe Fitzhugh will be leading a racial reconciliation pilgrimage for our Diocese next year to Alabama.

This year's ECW conference is scheduled for September 15 & 16 in Riverton. The keynote will be Shannon Smith, the Curator of the upcoming Museum of the Sacred Circle. Jessica Reynolds will also be speaking about the plans for St. Michaels Circle, and Lynne Chandler will be providing the music.

Our Pre-Convention meeting is coming up. Convention this year has a Native American theme. The Bishop reminded everyone that the days of Convention being just for delegates is gone and that everyone in the Diocese is invited to attend. There will also be an honoring of our own elders at Convention.

Bishop Paul-Gordan and Bishop Martyn in Leichester recently met to discuss what the future of the partner relationships with our Link Dioceses. This will be an ongoing conversation.

The annual pilgrimage this year will be to Egypt and is a clergy pilgrimage.

Our new Ministry Covenant agreements have been shared with the lead multi-vocational clergy and their churches. We are slowly moving forward with these agreements, toward enabling the lead clergy in these congregations to live into this new level of ministry. We have also rolled out new bylaw templates for churches to update their bylaws. There will be workshop later this year for multi-vocational priests to talk about what they may need to live most fully into these Ministry Covenants. We have also developed a Ministry Covenant for Deacons, and a Diaconal retreat was held recently with all the deacons in the Diocese.

The Diocesan staff are putting together a document that we send to our churches highlighting the various ways our staff members can be of assistance to them.

Canon Jessica Reynolds, Walt Tanner and Bishop Paul-Gordon presented the financial reports. Jessica gave the July 2023 financial report.

Shirley Wildman moved to accept the financial report. The motion was seconded by the Rev. Lori Modesitt and carried.

Canon Jessica Reynolds, Walt Tanner and Bishop Paul-Gordon presented the 2024 draft budget on behalf of the Finance Committee of Council.

Shirley Wildman moved to present the 2024 budget to Pre-Convention with the Wyoming COLA (7.3%) for Diocesan staff salaries. The motion was seconded by Walt Seeley. After some discussion the motion carried.

Canon Jessica Reynolds gave an update on the Ethete Revitalization project.

The Rev. Canon. Lara Gilbert gave her report to the Council. She has rolled out the "Being With" small group initiative. New Morning workshops have been held in two different locations in the Diocese and there are two more scheduled. They are also beginning to think about New Morning 2, where laity and clergy will be invited, and all those invited in planning worship and liturgy in a given church. Additionally, there may be new lay licensing requirements coming out soon.

Bishop Paul-Gordon gave an update on the Foundation, as Katie Parrish, the Executive Director, as now able to be in attendance. The Foundation is beginning to think in new strategic ways to be of greater assistance to our churches. This includes updating the grantmaking guidelines.

The Rev Canon Bobbe Fitzhugh gave her report to Council. She has been holding monthly Zoom calls with our Missional Priests. She will also be hosting a Soul Shop Suicide prevention training in Rawlins on September 12. Additionally, she shared that the Spirit on the High Desert retreat will be held in September at TAC.

The Rev Canon Lara Gilbert and the Rev Walt Seeley gave a report on the COM.

Bishop Paul-Gordon gave the communication report for Genie Osburn, who was not able to attend the meeting. He shared that our *Rope Hope* campaign has received positive feedback and has had a good response.

Bishop Paul-Gordon shared that they have been in contact with Partners for Sacred Places, an organization that works with churches to help them come up with how they can best missionally use their buildings, in ways that also may generate income. The current thinking is to find a few churches in the Diocese that we could use as a trial.

Bishop Paul-Gordon then shared a confidential report related to our camp.

The Regional Representatives (John Angst, John Sullivan, Mary Appel, Shealee Donahue and the Rev. Lori Modisett) each shared 1-2 ministry highlights from their respective regions.

Shealee Donahue asked for prayers for those going to General Convention in June of 2024.

Bishop Paul-Gordon asked the board members to pray for each other.

A closing prayer was provided by the Council Chaplain, the Rev. Amy Mayes.