

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF KANSAS, INC.**

**February 21, 2024**

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met at Upton Hall in Topeka on February 21, 2024. Prior to the start of the meeting, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, celebrated the Eucharist in St. Mary's Chapel, Grace Cathedral. The bishop then called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Members of the Council of Trustees present were:

- Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom
- Dr. Elizabeth Fitz Gibbon, President
- The Rev. Helen Hoch, Clerk
- The Ven. Jim Cummins
- Ms. Melanie Laster
- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis
- The Rev. Margaret McGhee
- Mr. Mike Morrow
- Mr. Ron Olson
- The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab
- The Very Rev. Casey Rohleder
- Mr. John Smittle
- The Rev. Daryl Stanford

Council Members absent:

- Ms. Teresa Ryther

Also present as advisors to the Council of Trustees:

- Mr. Hurst Coffman, Vice-Chancellor
- Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer

Also present:

- Ms. Michael Funston, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
- The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary
- The Rev. Karen Schlabach, Youth, Campus & Digital Missioner
- Mr. Chad Senuta, Director of Communications & Young Adult Ministries
- The Rev. Canon Lisa Senuta, Canon for Spiritual Life and Clergy Care

Bishop Bascom presented the January 17, 2024, meeting minutes, noting that the equity agreement adjustment for 2024 will be added in the January minutes. The Ven. Jim Cummins moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion was seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Brian Geary reported on the last Finance Committee meeting. He began by giving an update on what is happening with the building that St. Bartholomew's, Wichita, is using from the Presbyterian Church. The bishop will be in contact with Presbyterian leadership soon to get an agreement of time for use of the building.

The Finance Committee also began training for the new audit policy process, so they will be ready for next year's implementation.

Mr. Geary then moved on to the update on the building loan with St. Margaret's, Lawrence. He gave a brief documented history for new members of the Council about St. Margaret's building loan that the diocese took on and they have been paying off. St. Margaret's had a capital campaign last year to pay off their debt and the Council of Trustees agreed to forgive a matching amount. The capital campaign raised \$320,000 in 2023. The Finance Committee would like to work on new loan terms. The goal of 2024 is to work with St. Margaret's so that they can know what their repayment will be this year and what they will do next year, 2025.

The Finance Committee is asking the Council for permission to negotiate the terms of the payment of the loan from here. Mr. Morrow moved to empower the leaders of the Finance Committee to further negotiate the terms of repayment for St. Margaret's Building Loan. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Due to Jay Currie's absence, there was no treasurer's report this month. The January report will be part of the next meeting.

### **Standing Committee Business**

President Beth Fitz Gibbon notified the Council that At-Large Lay Member, Diana Waddell-Gilbert, resigned. There was discussion about how the Council will fill that vacancy. It was decided the council will submit nominations before the March meeting through the online form and will vote at the next meeting. The person chosen will fill that position until elections are held at the convention.

### **Bishop's Report** (attached to these minutes)

Bishop Bascom highlighted a few things from her written report. Debbie Kremers, Missioner for Transitions, will be retiring after she finishes transitions for a few of the parishes in the diocese. The bishop plans to replace her with someone who can also do some of the Congregational Vitality work. Dean Don Compier, dean for Bishop Kemper

School of Ministry, will be retiring at the end of the 2024 academic year. The BKSM board will be working to fulfill that position.

A New Episcopal Community grant has been received by the Bethany House and Garden ministry. There is a new fellow for Bethany House and Garden, Marley Hays. In addition to her work with Bishop Bascom on the Grasslands Project, she speaks fluent Spanish and has helped with our new diocesan staff member and associate at St. Paul's, Kansas City, Father Daniel Mafla.

The staff has been working on resources for Spanish translation for Father Mafla and future staff, clergy, and lay members of the diocese.

Epiphany in Sedan has called a deacon pastor who is working on a two-year course of study and is looking forward to ordination in June of 2025.

Dean Rohleder asked about the bishop's report mentioning sending a group to the College of Congregational Development. The bishop is thinking of sending a group of diocesan leaders to Chicago for this or having the College come to Kansas.

After Ms. Michael Funston, Bishop Executive Assistant, noted sensitive information in the bishop's January report added at the end of the January minutes, Mr. Morrow made a motion to strike sensitive items from the bishop's report as reproduced in the meeting's minutes. It was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **Reports from Trustees and Staff on Mission and Ministry of the Diocese**

Reports were submitted in writing and read by the Council on their own.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

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The Rev. Helen Hoch  
Clerk

## Bishop's Report for the Council of Trustees - February 2024

### Congregational Vitality

#### Foundational Earth Vitality

- A pastoral perspective on Creation Care ministry as foundational (attached piece)
- I have been appointed Bishop Chair of Creation Care and Environmental Justice Legislative Committee of General Convention, have begun to work with the other officers.

#### Attended Bishop's Summit on Congregational Development

- Return having isolated a few important ideas and models for us
  - "What is Congregational Development?" Introductory ideas into the nature of a congregation and signs of vitality
  - Model One: an aid in our stated tactic of defining Congregational Vitality
  - Model Six: Elements of an Organizational Structure
- Initial conversations with the Bishops of Chicago and Oklahoma about either sending a EDOK team to Chicago's College for Congregational Development, or about molding a Kansas-Oklahoma College for Congregational Development of our own - BKSM and St. Crispin's Camp and Conference Center as resources
- Accepted Transition Missioner Debbie Kremer's intention to retire. Celebrated her stellar work with us! She will continue for the time being - in between overseas travel. I am beginning to imagine a new Half-time Missioner position that would include many of Debbie's duties as well as working with parishes, ministers, and all in empowering Congregational development.

#### Episcopal visitations and worship leadership

- St. Paul's, Manhattan, visitation
- St. Paul's, Leavenworth, celebration of new ministry
- St. Thomas, Holton visitation and celebration of new ministry
- Attended Shrove Tuesday supper and Ash Wednesday worship at Grace Cathedral
- St. Stephen's, Wichita, visitation
- St. Bartholomew's, visitation that included conversation on building and possible purchase
- Visitations include taking clergy for a meal, celebration of Eucharist, preaching, parish forums, meeting with vestry to discuss diocesan strategic objectives and mission plan.

#### Transitions:

- Epiphany, Sedan. Deacon Diane Kruger has accepted a full-time call as Deacon Pastor, appointed by me after a full round of interviews with the parish. She will continue BKSM presbyteral studies and will be eligible to serve as Rector depending on coursework completion, GOE results (next year,) and the experience of the parish. Mother Kitty Shield will serve as mentor and continue to celebrate Eucharist once a month.
- A call has been issued and verbally accepted for the next Rector of Good Shepherd in Wichita. The Letter of Agreement is being negotiated, with an anticipated June 1 start date.
- St. Andrew's in Emporia position description has been posted. We have one candidate.

- St. Margaret's in Lawrence has been posted. Debbie Kremers still receiving candidates.
- St. John's, Parsons would be interested in early stages of creating a parish profile as they look to Sharon's+ retirement in August.
- Interim Priest, Richard+ Osborne, reports that St. Matthew's in Newton is inching toward beginning their search.

## Culture of Invitation and Mission

### Talking-the Walk

- Preaching about Joseph, Lydia, Zaccheus and our call into Third Places on visitations
- I launched & led the all-diocesan Zoom study on *Humbler Faith Bigger God*

### Bethany House and Garden and Creation Care

- Marley Hays has begunAn added gift is that Marley is fluent in Spanish and part of her fellowship will be to serve as interpreter for Fr. Daniel Mafla and to translate EDOK & BHG print & on-line material.
- Screening of film "Hot Times in the Heartland" Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>, 1 p.m. cathedral (attached)

### Welcome for All People

- Fr. Daniel Mafla attended Full Staff adding many good insights. The staff working hard to empower his language needs.
- Met Eli Montes and Brother Guadalupe) and Archdeacon Jeff Roper about strong possibilities for bi-lingual, multi-cultural ministries in South Wichita (esp if purchase of Presby. Church )
- Bishop Daniel Genovesi, soon to finish his cure as provisional Bishop of Uruguay, and I continue in conversation about opportunities in EDOK, both parish-level and as a consultant with emerging Spanish-speaking clergy and congregations. +Daniel is very articulate both in English and Spanish.

## Leadership Development

- I have continued to meet with seminarian Sarah Shipman about placement.
- I have continued conversations with Maddy Bishop about possibilities post-seminary: Most likely is St. Andrew's, Derby and South Wichita/St. Bart's.

## Youth and Young Adult Leadership

- New Ecological Fellow Marley Hays
  - Interpreting for Father Daniel, some translation
  - Grasslands Network grant application (attached)
- Met with the youth group at St. Stephen's in Wichita. Recruited interested youth delegate for thoughts on new labyrinth at BHG.
- I consider how Maddy Bishop's role in Wichita can engage young adults.