

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

December 18, 2024

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met via Zoom on December 18, 2024. Prior to the start of the meeting, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, offered thanksgiving and prayer for Chancellor Frank Taylor and Council Member, Mr. Mike Morrow. Bishop Bascom called the meeting to order at 10:08 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
The Rev. Carl Edwards
Ms. Melanie Laster
The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis
The Rev. Margaret McGhee
Mr. Mike Morrow
Mr. Ron Olson
The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab
Ms. Teresa Ryther
Mr. John Smittle
The Rev. Daryl Stanford

Member absent:

Mr. Mason Weber

Also present as advisor to the Council of Trustees:

Mr. Frank Taylor, Chancellor

Also present:

Mr. Jay Currie, Assistant Treasurer and Comptroller
Ms. Michael Funston, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary
The Rev. Caroline Howard, Curate for Creation Care
Mrs. Michele Moss, Director of Operations
The Rev. Karen Schlabach, Youth, Young Adult & Campus Missioner
Mr. Chad Senuta, Director of Communications

Bishop Bascom resumed the orientation from the last council meeting beginning with Mr. Jay Currie, Comptroller, who distributed an overview of the diocesan Endowment Funds and gave a history for each fund. Bishop Bascom gave an overview of the convocations and minsters of the diocese. Convocations now meet only three times a year and are the groups for the governance of those regions. The bishop hopes that convocations can be a good place for formation within the church. The minsters are more local and regional and really draw on the concept of being neighborly.

Minutes

Bishop Bascom presented the November 13, 2024, meeting minutes which were accepted as corrected.

Grace Cathedral Encumbrance and Apportionment Exclusion

The Rev. Margaret McGhee, as one of the Northwest Convocation representatives, presented a two-part request from Grace Cathedral, Topeka. The cathedral would like to take on a secured loan of \$75,000 to pay for support of the encumbrance for a lighting upgrade project. The plan is to change all lighting to LED. Questions and other considerations were addressed. Mother McGhee moved the Standing Committee's approval of the \$75,000 encumbrance per General Canon 1.7 Sec. 3. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Mother McGhee further reported that the Northwest Convocation board has, per diocesan Canon IV.2 Sec. 3, made an affirmative recommendation to the Council of Trustees to allow the Cathedral's debt repayment to be deducted from their Normal Operating Income over three years. Mother McGhee moved the approval of the Cathedral's requested debt reduction. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Assistant Treasurer and Comptroller's Report

Mr. Jay Currie reported the diocesan staff clergy requests for housing allowance as follows:

- The Rev. Canon Patrick Funston requested \$53,000 of his compensation be declared as housing allowance.
- The Rev. Canon Lisa Senuta requested 60% of her compensation be declared as housing allowance.
- The Rt. Rev. Cathleen Bascom requested 60% of her compensation be declared as housing allowance.
- The Rev. Karen Schlabach requested 50% of her compensation be declared as housing allowance.

Dean Lewis moved to approve the housing allowance requests as one. The motion was seconded, and the requests were approved unanimously.

Mr. Currie moved on to the bishop's shared equity agreement with the diocese. During the year there were a couple of changes. Originally the bishop was having \$800/month deducted. The bishop discontinued that with the September payroll. The appraisal used this year was \$291,235. Currently using this amount, the equity percentage works out to 69.64% for the bishop. Mr. Currie will update that with year-end numbers before the January meeting.

Mr. Currie then gave a report on the diocesan financials from November. St. Thomas, Overland Park is behind, but they have reported that they will pay it off at the end of the year. St. Paul's, Kansas City, has sent in money since this report. There are a couple of others that are only a month behind. The income side has a difference because of the assumption of St. Margaret's loan income but that has changed with their refinancing. Mr. Currie then walked through other expenses. Mr. Currie anticipates that all of the parishes will pay their apportionment for 2024. He expects the diocese to be very close to on budget by the end of the year.

Mrs. Teresa Ryther joined the meeting at 11:05 am.

Finance Committee Report

In the absence of the Treasurer, Mr. Brian Geary, Mr. Currie gave a report on Covenant, Junction City, and their endowment fund. Members of the Executive Committee met with members of Covenant. There will be another meeting in January. Mr. Curry continues to work with representatives from Covenant alongside Mr. Geary and Vice Chancellor Coffman.

In light of the new restructured parochial report, the Finance Committee will work in the new year on how to calculate apportionment. Canon Funston reminded the council that he is hosting zoom sessions to go over the new parochial report with treasurers, clergy, parish administrators and anyone else who helps fill out those reports. Those will be going on throughout the next months ahead of the March 1 filing date.

The meeting recessed for a short break and resumed at 11:33 a.m.

Standing Committee Business

Archdeacon Jim Cummins presented reports on the following potential ordinands:

Diane Kruger-Boley – Priesthood
Suzan Olson – Priesthood
Lynne Powell – Priesthood
Clare Stern-Burbano - Priesthood

Mr. Morrow moved to approve Diane Kruger-Boley for candidacy for ordination to the priesthood, which was seconded and passed unanimously among those who voted. Mr. Olson and Mother McGhee abstained.

Mr. Morrow moved to approve Suzan Olson for candidacy for ordination to the priesthood, which was seconded and passed unanimously among those who voted. Mr. Olson and Mother McGhee abstained.

Mr. Morrow moved to approve Lynne Powell for candidacy for ordination to the priesthood, which was seconded and passed unanimously among those who voted. Mr. Olson and Mother McGhee abstained.

Mr. Morrow moved to approve Clare Stern-Burbano for candidacy for ordination to the priesthood, which was seconded and passed unanimously among those who voted. Mr. Olson and Mother McGhee abstained.

Mother Hoch led the council in Noonday Prayer celebrating Dorothy L. Sayers, apologist and spiritual writer. The meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 12:39 p.m. Mr. Morrow left the meeting during the lunch break.

NourishKC Merger with Prospect KC

Mr. Taylor, Chancellor, presented documents from NourishKC requesting approval of their merger with Prospect KC. Mr. Taylor reminded the council of the history of NourishKC which was known as Episcopal Social Services. Dean Gar Demo is involved with NourishKC and is in favor of this merger. Mr. Taylor recommends that the Council approve the merger if they maintain an Episcopal member on the board and that amendments to the Articles of Incorporation for Episcopal Social Services, Inc., require approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the governing body of each Diocese. Archdeacon Cummins, former board member of NourishKC, said that as a non-profit they have been struggling for years and sees this merger as a good thing for NourishKC. Mr. Olson asked if there were any assets that would be lost with this merger and Mr. Taylor said that there are no assets. The kitchen would continue to have the name "NourishKC".

Archdeacon Cummins moved to approve the proposed merger of NourishKC and Prospect KC with the following provisions: 1) the board of the surviving organization have an Episcopal member approved by the Ecclesiastical Authority and governing body of each Diocese (West Missouri and Kansas) and 2) amendments to the Articles of Incorporation for Episcopal Social Services, Inc. would require approval of the Ecclesiastical Authority and the governing body of each Diocese. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

President's Report

President Beth Fitz Gibbon gave an update on Topeka United and Mosaic Partners. Karen Hiller, a representative from that organization, visited with the Council at their November meeting. Topeka United and Mosaic Partners have voted to include the LGBTQ+ community as part of their work. They are also partnering with the Topeka Rotary Club. Karen Hiller would like to partner with the diocese for \$10,000-20,000 to use the Topeka United program. President Fitz Gibbon thinks this partnership would strengthen the priority goals of the diocese. Bishop Bascom said that as someone who has engaged with the Mosaic Partners program, she sees one of their strengths is community building with the African American community in Topeka. Mother Rice Daab presented possible connections with St. David's.

President Fitz Gibbon called on members of the task forces to give reports. She started with the Justice, Welcome and Inclusion Task Force, which has met and has thirteen members. President Fitz Gibbon is excited about the work of this task force moving forward. They plan to meet regularly in 2025. Dean Lewis gave a report on the Task Force for Congregational Vitality. They have met and plan to use the book *Holy Currencies* by Eric Law for their work in 2025. They plan to meet regularly in 2025. Ms. Ryther gave a report on the Task Force on Youth & Young Adults. They have already started meeting and will continue to meet in 2025. The Task Force on Leadership Capacity is not regularly meeting but is completing their tasks through work with the diocesan staff and other committees and task forces.

Bishop's Report

The bishop's written report can be found at the end of these minutes.

The bishop asked for the Council's approval on the bid from Topeka Landscape to construct the labyrinth in the prairie garden. Mother Hoch moved to approve the bid from Topeka Landscape for \$52, 580 on construction of the labyrinth in the Bethany Gardens. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Reports from Trustees and Staff

Mother Karen Schlabach, Youth, Young Adult & Campus Missioner, gave a report on her ministry. The price (\$525) and the theme (*Another Way*) for 2025 Summer Camp has been set.

Bishop Bascom closed the meeting with a reflection on the season and the meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm.

The Rev. Helen Hoch
Clerk

Bishop's Report for the Council of Trustees - 2024 October-December

Church Oversight

- Presided Diocesan Convention
- Host Bishop of N. Indiana and President of Bexley-Seabury Seminary
- Met with Council of Deans
- Attended House of Bishops in Minneapolis, Presiding Bishop Rowe's first. Focus on restructuring and new structuring for mission, ensuring that the Episcopal Church can make a strong and effective witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - Re-orient churchwide structures to support dioceses
 - Reform structure while preserving polity
 - Support innovative work to create capacity for mission
 - Become a people who effectively embody and communicate the depth of Christian spirituality
 - Measure impact and adapt accordingly
- Continued work to launch and revitalize our Task Forces & Commissions: with new staff liaisons. ESP engaging Architecture; Liturgy; Creation Care

World Engagement

- Served as part of the Episcopal Church delegation to the UN Biodiversity Summit in Cali, Columbia. My pursuits are always around Nature-Food-Faith linkages. Strong presence of faith leaders. Very good helpful time with Fr. Daniel Mafla who accompanied me on travel to and from, also with the Bishop of Colombia.
- New PB and his staff have expressed support for the Eco-Regions Networks and in fully supporting our pilot Grasslands Network *see general Convention Resolution B002 (forwarded)
- We received \$18,000 for the Grasslands grant!
- Organizing letters & connections with the 11 other bishops/dioceses
- Zoomed with Professor Andrew Thompson and an Intern from Sewanee about research assistance for Grasslands Network

Congregational Vitality

- I penned sermon parish presentations on Holy Currencies for this round of parish visitations. Bring vestries our strategic goals and mission plan.
- Full Saturday and Sunday Visitations *plus creation trustees:
 - Grace, Winfield
 - Good Shepherd, Wichita
 - St. Paul's, Coffeyville
 - Trinity, Ark City
 - Trinity, Lawrence
- Parish Transitions
 - Met two times with new Team: Canon Patrick, Teresa, and Michele
 - Focused time with wardens and search leaders; vetted candidates: St. Aidan's, Olathe and Trinity, Lawrence

- Parish Concerns
 - Met with Treasurer, Comptroller
 - Trip to JC Leaders regarding new fund
 - Grateful that team of Jay, Hurst, Patrick+ and Teresa made next visit

Culture of Invitation and Mission

- Zoom meeting with the new Bishop of Nakuru, Kenya re: K2K & invitation to visit Kansas Convention in 2025. Also, young adult clergy leader involved in Communion Forest tree planting (30,000 trees!)
- Multi-cultural & bilingual initiatives
 - Bishop Daniel Genovesi has submitted a proposal for my review. I will bring it to Jan. CoT
 - Meeting with Mercedes Genovesi as well tomorrow.
 - Encouraged Father Julian Campbell while in the Bahamas awaiting Visa meeting. He is approved and on his way to Good Shepherd Jan. 19!
- Kansas Creation Work and Bethany House and Garden
 - Work with Caroline+ to update KS Creation Trustees list and BHG contacts
 - Helped get newsletter out to them
 - Emails and Zoom with Architect Scott Bingham to finalize plan and pricing for Labyrinth addition *see forwarded docs
 - Met with the Principal and VP of Topeka High School to find best practices for student use of the Garden

Leadership Development

- Met with Fr. Daryl Stanford for renewal and refinement of role in Minster
- Signed LOA for Mother Eli Montes at St. Bartholomew's
- Met with Deacon Charles Durland for renewal and refinement of role in Minster
- Met with Fr. Jere Hinson about possible focus on these two Minsters in his diocesan role of Church Planter/new models
- Visited Fr. Laird McGregor after heart surgery
- Met with Seminarian Suzan Olson about possible future ministry
- Met with Seminarian Clare Stern-Burbano about possible future ministry
- Met with Seminarian Lynne Powell about possible future ministry

Youth and Young Adult Leadership

- Met with Maddy Bishop-Knoth for renewal and refinement of role:
 - Letting go of St. Bart's
 - Focus on curacy at Derby and Breakthrough/ESS gardens
 - Shifting the Young Adult Work to Creation Care and Grasslands
- Working with Immigration Attorney and Caroline+ on Visa application for Cami Genovesi
 - Revising job description to center on Youth ministry at Bethany Garden and with Topeka High School and at Emporia State with Young Adults
 - Meeting with Cami tomorrow!