

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

**March 12, 2025**

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met at Upton Hall on March 12, 2025. Prior to the start of the meeting, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, read the history behind the St. Patrick's Breastplate hymn from *The Hymnal 1982 Companion*, a book that is out of print. The council sang Hymn 370 together. Bishop Bascom called the meeting to order at 10:15 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

Mr. Tim Flynn

Ms. Melanie Laster

The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis

The Rev. Margaret McGhee

Mr. Ron Olson

The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab

Mr. John Smittle

The Rev. Daryl Stanford

Mr. Mason Weber

Member absent:

Ms. Teresa Ryther

Also present as advisor to the Council of Trustees:

Mr. Hurst Coffman, Vice-Chancellor

Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer

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

**Minutes**

Bishop Bascom presented the February 19, 2025, meeting minutes which were accepted as corrected.

**Assistant Treasurer and Comptroller's Report**

Mr. Jay Currie gave the report on the financials for the diocese. Looking at the income for year-to-date, it looks like the diocese is \$38,000 behind. If what has come in after the end of February is added, the diocese is only \$25,000 behind. Looking at the actual year-to-date apportionment, there are some zeros. This is because some parishes pay in one lump sum or several months at a time. Looking at other income, there has been a draw on the endowment because St. Paul's, Kansas City, was in need of some money and the diocese has been holding the new community grants from the Episcopal Church which was set aside for clergy salary and benefits. Mr. Currie drew an amount that would allow money needed for St. Andrew's, Emporia, as well as for the Agape Minster priest and for the Little Church on the Prairie Minster priest. The bishop asked for clarification on where those line items are in the budget. Mr. Currie said those are in Mission & Outreach.

Also lagging is Fees Income. A lot of those fees will not come in until after summer camp and diocesan convention later in the year. The Other Income item is St. Margaret's loan payment. Looking at expenses there are some big bills. Overages in the line item for Bethany House include snow removal and repairs for the older buildings on the diocesan campus. Deacon Carl Edwards asked if this includes mold remediation in Upton Hall. Mr. Currie said that the bill was just paid, and it came in a lot lower than predicted but the cause of the leak and subsequent mold still needs to be addressed and will be another expense. Other areas are either at or below budgeted expenses. The Congregational Development line expense is partly for Curate Maddy Bishop Knoth's funding. Mission & Outreach is way over because of the funding of various minster priests, and St. Paul's, Kansas City. Mission Management is over due to computer and insurance expenses. Mr. Currie said most of this is the typical pattern due to the front loading of expenses. It is expected that parishes will be faithful in their apportionment as they have been in the last years.

**Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Geary reported on the Finance Committee and their work. Logistics for audits are being finalized. This information will be shared with the convocations and parishes. The committee will be doing an apportionment review and gathering names for people to help with that review. At our last meeting there was a question about diocesan investments. The committee, along with a few others will begin to research investments looking for those which are considered to be most ethical. Mr. Geary reported that changes could lead to higher fees and lower yields. Members of the council are interested in those investments concerned with environmental and social justice issues. Mr. Geary will bring more information to the next meeting.

### **Bishop's Report**

The bishop spoke to her report which can be found at the end of these minutes. She requested the April council meeting be in person. The bishop asked for comments from those who went to the Episcopal Parish Network Conference in Kansas City last month. Mother Doreen Rice Daab appreciated hearing the Presiding Bishop speak to his first months as PB. Dean Laurie Lewis gained tools to bring back to her parish to help their ministry. The bishop mentioned that the diocese helped clergy to attend the conference using a clergy education fund. Mother Margaret McGhee has gone every year of her ministry and always gains helpful information from this gathering. The bishop spoke about St. Jude's, Wellington, and St. Thomas, Holton, two of the diocese's smaller parishes. The bishop has Fr. Jere Hinson, rector at St. Paul's, Leavenworth, also working as the diocesan Church Planter with St. Thomas, Holton. St. Thomas has started worshipping at a Christian church and that relationship is working well. Fr. Hinson is going to be more of their chaplain and will provide Eucharist for them two times a month while turning more of the community work to the parishioners of St. Thomas. Fr. Hinson will spend more time with other growing communities like the parishes of the Agape Minster. St. Jude's, Wellington, has grown twice its size, and their new parishioners are really investing in the town of Wellington and bringing community members to St. Jude's. St. Michael and All Angels had nine confirmands in the 17–18-year-old age group. Trinity, Lawrence, has called their new rector, the Rev. Jennifer Allen. The bishop continues to work with the Transition Team which is made up of Canon Patrick Funston, Mrs. Michele Moss and Mrs. Theresa Klimiuk. The bishop encouraged the Council of Trustees to register and come to the Grasslands Gathering at the end of April. This is a gathering that includes the diocese of Kansas as well as dioceses around Kansas. Dean Laurie Lewis asked if people were not prepared to come on both Friday night and Saturday could they just come on Saturday. The bishop said if money is an issue to email her with a request for scholarship. The bishop emphasized that Friday night is more of the artsy, music evening. Bishop Bascom has penned a letter to Archbishop Mambo from Nakuru, Kenya, to visit Kansas for convention this year. The bishop hopes this will encourage people in Kansas to participate in Kansas to Kenya. Bishop Bascom is working with the senior seminarians about curacies after ordination this summer.

The meeting recessed for a short break and resumed at 11:19 a.m.

Bishop Bascom presented information relating to a situation occurring at Church of the Covenant in Junction City. A group from the diocesan office met with members of the vestry to facilitate the use of Canon III.9.14. Recognizing that these methods were not working, Diocese of Kansas Canon IV.7 will now be implemented. Council member and vestry member from the church, Ms. Melanie Laster spoke as a member of the vestry for Church of the Covenant. Council members looked closely at each point of the plan for restoring congregational health.

The Rev. Doreen Rice Daab led the council in Noonday Prayer celebrating Gregory the Great, Bishop and Theologian, 604. The council recessed for a lunch break and resumed at 1:28 p.m.

Discussion continued about the letter to Church of the Covenant to begin the process outlined in Canon IV.7.3.

The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis moved that in regards to the ongoing situation at Church of the Covenant in Junction City, the Council of Trustees acting as Standing Committee will authorize the bishop as ecclesiastical authority to take any and all actions put forth by Diocese of Kansas Canon IV.7.3 in recognition that the plan to restore congregational health has not been successful. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Rev. Daryl Stanford moved that the Diocese of Kansas is committed to an ongoing Episcopal presence in Junction City. The Council of Trustees, acting as Standing Committee, supports the bishop as rector and bishop's committee in the establishment of a renewed mission and worshipping community functioning under its historic name St. John's Episcopal Mission. The corporate entity, The Church of the Covenant, Junction City, Kansas, will remain in existence, but will do business as St. John's Episcopal Mission. At the end of three years, this decision will be reviewed. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

The Rev. Margaret McGhee read an updated version of the bishop's letter to Church of the Covenant, Junction City, worked on over the lunch break. The council gave their audible approval of the changes.

### **President's Report**

Dr. Beth Fitz Gibbon shared an article from the *New York Times* about the state of the church. President Fitz Gibbon told the council about her presentation along with the Rev. Kelly Demo to the Episcopal Parish Network conference in Kansas City last month about the diocese's strategic plan. It brought the work from the Diocese of Kansas to national attention.

President Fitz Gibbon called on members of council to report on each of the strategic goal areas. Dean Laurie Lewis said there were a lot of members from Congregational Vitality who attended the EPN conference last month and Lent just began which was keeping their task force members busy. The bishop noted that at the last council meeting the Congregational Vitality group asked about funds for the Community of Hope International formation program and she checked that the Walsh Fund does have funds for that program. Dean Lewis said that the Wichita Minster is providing funds for them to do a proof of concept before bringing it to the diocese for financial support. President Fitz Gibbon reported on Justice, Welcome and Inclusion. Their task force has

a breadth of work under their purview and so she is still working on the best way to convene their meetings and work. She is excited that Father Julian Campbell is now in the diocese and eager to help. There was no member of the Youth and Young Adult task force at the meeting, but the bishop reported that the Rev. Kelly Demo is close to finding someone to help Ms. Teresa Ryther with the camp endowment campaign. Canon Funston reported on the Leadership Capacity strategic goal. The lay leadership academy is still a plan. Canon Senuta and Canon Funston held a weekly zoom in February on mental health for clergy in the diocese. The diocesan staff looked over survey results from last year's diocesan convention and are taking those under consideration as plans begin for this year's convention. President Fitz Gibbon pointed to the metrics sheet for the strategic groups to use and report on to the Council of Trustees at the June meeting.

Mr. Mason Weber joined the meeting at 2:06 p.m. He reported on the meeting he had just attended at the statehouse relating to social work. Mr. Tim Flynn informed attendees that Breakthrough members from Episcopal Social Services will be visiting the statehouse soon.

### **Canon's Report**

Canon Patrick Funston began his report by referring to the resolutions out of the 81<sup>st</sup> General Convention that were referred to dioceses. Canon Funston presented a grid showing what staff, task forces and other diocesan bodies could take action in the Diocese of Kansas. The council members affirmed the grid and thanked Canon Funston for his work.

Canon Patrick Funston moved on to the voting procedure for elections of deputies to General Convention. The Council of Trustees will need to make a decision on this process by the May meeting. The council asked Canon Funston to bring options to the next council meeting for them to vote on.

### **Reports from Trustees and Staff**

Curate Caroline Howard passed out a flier to all the council members with information about the Grasslands Gathering on April 25-26. She and the bishop encouraged members, their parishes and their friends to register and come to this event!

Bishop Bascom closed the meeting with a blessing and the meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

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The Rev. Helen Hoch  
Clerk

## Bishop's Report for the Council of Trustees – March 2025

### Broader Efforts

- Individual time with Presiding Bishop Rowe regarding Eco & Grasslands Networks
- Some succession planning conversations: request April COT be in-person, Zoom option
- Meeting with Creation Leaders across TEC (Green Caucus and Prov. IV and V Network)

### Congregational Vitality

- Attended and supported EDOK clergy to attend EPN Conference
- Junction City decisions. See and review four-page document
- **Episcopal visitations and worship leadership**
  - \*Visitations include taking clergy for a meal, celebration of Eucharist, preaching, parish forums, meeting with vestry to discuss diocesan strategic objectives and mission plan.
    - St. Luke's, Shawnee
    - St. Jude's, Wellington
    - St. Michael and All Angels', Mission

### Transitions

- Meeting with Transition Team
- Call complete to +Jennifer Allen for Trinity, Lawrence
- My own engagement Junction City

### Culture of Invitation and Mission

- Firming re-organization of Bethany House and Garden Team
- Earnest preparations for Episcopal Grasslands Gathering April 25-26
  - Reps from six dioceses registered so far; about 25 registrations to date
  - Please join us! Registration on the EDOK website is easy!
    - <https://episcopal-ks.org/grasslands-gathering-april-25-26-2025/>
- Letter penned to invite the Bishop of Nakuru in Kenya for Diocesan Convention

### Leadership Development

- Meeting with seminarian Suzan Olson, visits to some possible ministry sites
- Meeting with seminarian Lynne Powell, visits to some possible ministry sites
- Discussions with Father Gar Demo about possible St. Thomas opportunities
- Email correspondence with seminarian Clare Stern-Burbano
- Attended Zoom and in-person meeting with BKSM Dean candidates

### Youth and Young Adult Leadership

- Two visits to Canterbury K-State
- Time with nine confirmands ages 17-18 at St. Michael's