

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

September 17, 2025

The Council of Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas, Inc., met via Zoom on September 17, 2025. The Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden Bascom, Bishop and Chair, shared a prayer for the state of Kansas written by the Rev. Francis B. Sayre, Dean Emeritus of the Washington National Cathedral. The bishop thanked the Rev. Doreen Rice Daab and Mr. John Smittle for their service to the Council of Trustees. She also shared information about Mr. Smittle's recent surgery and Rev. Rice Daab's issues as well as her husband's accident and related surgeries. Bishop Bascom offered prayers.

Members of the Council read sections of the message from the House of Bishops sent after their meeting in September. The bishop called the meeting to order at 10:17 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 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

Members absent:

- The Ven. Jim Cummins
- Ms. Teresa Ryther

Also present as advisor to the Council of Trustees:

- Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer

Also present:

- Mr. Jay Currie, Assistant Treasurer and Comptroller
- Ms. Michael Funston, Executive Assistant to the Bishop
- The Rev. 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
- The Rev. Lisa Senuta, Canon for Spiritual Life & Clergy Care

Minutes

Bishop Bascom presented minutes from the August 20, 2025, meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Ms. Melanie Laster, seconded and approved unanimously.

Assistant Treasurer and Comptroller's Report

Mr. Jay Currie gave his report on the financials for the diocese. The diocese is behind on apportionment for this time in the year, but Mr. Currie believes that it will be paid out in full by the end of the year. There was \$17,971.00 which was received for apportionments after August 31. There was a draw on the endowment as budgeted for this time of year. The draw on endowment is \$17,000.00 short. The biggest expense left for this year will be diocesan convention which will be offset by increased fees income as registration payments come into the office. The other income that is expected for this year will be from St. Margaret's payment of their loan.

Expenses: Bethany Place is over budget due to repairs for an older building. Community Life is currently under budget. That will change with convention. Congregational Development is currently over budget due to front loading but should level out by the end of the year. Mission and Outreach also has had several upfront expenses, particularly those relating to minister priests, multi-cultural consultant and ministry support at St. Paul's in Kansas City. Mr. Curry also paid ahead for church assessment. In youth ministry the camp payment was paid, and camp fees have come in. Mr. Currie projects that the diocese will be in the black at the end of the year.

The financial report was received.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Brian Geary, Treasurer, gave his report from the Finance Committee. It was short as their September meeting was moved to next week. There are no parish hearings for unpaid apportionment ahead of diocesan convention. Mr. Geary asked for anyone on Council with a human resources background to help the finance committee as they polish the job description for the comptroller as Mr. Currie is set to retire at the end of January. The Rev. Margaret McGhee asked if there had been discussion for an interim during the time between when Mr. Currie retires and a new bishop begins his/her episcopacy. Mr. Geary said that it had been discussed but that the nature of the job requires relationship building that would make a temporary person hard to hire. The plan is for Mr. Currie to help with the transition of the new person into the role.

Diocesan Convention Updates

The Rev. Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary, gave an update on convention. The convention booklet will be out soon and available to clergy and delegates in digital format. The voting software that will be used for this convention's elections is almost ready to test and Canon Funston will ask members of convention to run tests. Canon Funston said that over the past couple of years the diocesan staff is being more careful

about the form for changing delegates ahead of convention. There is a parish delegate change form on the website that parishes must use to register delegate changes. This is in order that the system is in place and well used and in line with the canons ahead of the electing convention for the eleventh bishop of Kansas. Costs for this year's convention will be much higher than usual due to increased food costs. The Council of Trustees will need to keep this in mind as they approve the location of the 2026, 167th Diocesan Convention. Canon Lisa Senuta is working with liturgy and music committee members on worship during convention. Canon Funston asked the lay council members to let him know if they are not standing for reelection in their convocations for this council. The bishop commended Canon Senuta, Canon Funston and Mrs. Michele Moss for their work ahead of convention.

The meeting recessed for a break and resumed at 10:54 a.m.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Bascom spoke to items included on her September report found as an addition at the end of these minutes. The bishop called on the Rev. Caroline Howard, Curate for Creation Care, to speak about the meeting of those gathered for the Bethany House and Garden Advisory and Program Committee. Rev. Howard asked the Council of Trustees what their expectations are for this committee and the future of Bethany House and Gardens. The Rev. Helen Hoch noted that what she remembered from the August council meeting was Rev. Howard saying that BHG would need an advisory board initially to consider becoming a diocesan institution. The Rev. Margaret McGhee agreed and she and several other council members added that there needs to be a separate committee or advisory board outside of diocesan councils to help decide what will be needed by the leaders of Bethany House and Garden. Rev. Howard thanked the council for their clarity. Bishop Bascom restated that that the BHG needs a group with focus on what the next steps are for the mission of this group. The bishop asked for timing clarity.

The bishop then moved on to the visit of Bishop Mambo and his wife Lucy from Kenya. They will be visiting during the convention as well as traveling throughout the diocese. Deacon Steve Segebrecht and others have been organizing their trip and their hosts throughout the diocese. The bishop encouraged council members to introduce themselves at convention as well as visits throughout the diocese. The bishop also requested that the council be prayerful about new leaders and participants for the Kansas to Kenya mission. It has been a goal of Bishop Bascom to have Kenyans travel to Kansas and she is excited that the Mambos will be here.

The bishop then talked a little bit about presentations at House of Bishops. Canon Funston gave an update on the current parishes in transition as well as Ms. Melanie Laster giving an update on the parish in Junction City.

Canon Funston gave an update on St. Bartholomew's, Wichita. The council's recommendation during the August meeting was to have St. Bartholomew's vestry and members consider a merger with St. Andrew's, Derby. St. Bartholomew's is currently

in support of the merger as it is drafted and people from St. Andrew's are to have a meeting on September 17 to discuss it. Both parishes will come together soon to discuss the final merger arrangements.

The bishop briefly presented information about the Nairobi-Cairo proposals within the Anglican Communion Governance. Nothing has been decided yet but be on the lookout for updates about this.

The bishop shared that she enjoyed her time with the Southeast Convocation doing the walkabout and confirmation services.

Standing Committee Business

President Fitz Gibbon said the Standing Committee met before the council meeting. They discussed the location for the Search Committee retreat in February. The Search Committee has had a good response to the survey as well as the Listening Sessions throughout the diocese. There will be a presentation of survey and listening session results on September 23rd. The publication profile date is November 3rd.

The theme for this year's gathering is Practicing Hope. Each strategic group will need to present updates on their activities for the past year.

Noonday Prayer

The Rev. Patrick Funston, Canon to the Ordinary, and Rev. Margaret McGhee led Noonday Prayer celebrating Hildegard of Bingen, mystic and scholar.

After a lunch break, the council resumed at 12:28 p.m.

The bishop asked the council to break out into their strategic priority groups to talk about reports for diocesan convention next month. The groups came back and discussed how best to report on their work. The council decided to make verbal reports and touch on the bullet points from last year's posters. This information will probably be presented at times scattered throughout the convention.

The staff gave reports relating to their various ministries.

Bishop Bascom closed the meeting with a blessing, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

The Rev. Helen Hoch
Clerk

Addendum to the September 17, 2025 Council of Trustees Minutes

Standing Committee notes, May 14, 2025

The Ven. Jim Cummins opened the meeting with prayer at 8:30 a.m.

- President Beth Fitz Gibbon reported on the e-mail motion and vote taken on May 8.
- Mr. Tim Flynn and Mr. Chad Senuta have been working on the application and cover letter for Search and/or Transition Committees.
- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis requested that these documents be attached to the website by noon today.
- Members of the Communications Committee (Beth, Margaret, and Laurie) will respond to messages and questions.
- Reminder about the importance of identifying a chaplain.
- Next meeting will be held on May 21 in coordination with the regular meeting of the Council of Trustees.

The Rev. Margaret McGhee closed the meeting with prayer at 9:20 a.m.

Standing Committee notes, May 21, 2025

- The Rev. Margaret McGhee moved that Bishop Robert Price of the Diocese of Dallas be asked to assist with diocesan needs during the time between the 10th and 11th bishop for the Diocese of Kansas. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
- Mr. Tim Flynn reported that there are currently 8 applications for the Search and Transition Committees. More are needed. Ms. Teresa Ryther suggested all COT members contact anyone who might be interested and qualified.
- A sub-committee (Teresa, Carl, and Doreen) will work on a budget.

The Rev. Daryl Stanford closed the meeting with prayer.

Standing Committee notes, May 28, 2025

- The Rev. Margaret McGhee reported that 26 applications have been received. The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis informed committee members that there were probably over 40 applications the last time the diocese went through this process. Mr. Tim Flynn reported that applications have been received from all ministries and convocations. There was discussion about extending the due date. The Ven. Jim Cummins asked as to specific numbers as far as deacons, priests, or lay applicants.

The Ven. Jim Cummins closed the meeting with prayer at 8:57 a.m.

Standing Committee notes, June 4

The Rev. Margaret McGhee opened the meeting with prayer at 8:33 a.m.

- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis reported that the Search for the Search Committee met. There are 37 applicants with a good spread. The committee is now ready to call references.
- Anne Schmidt hasn't found anything to use for bias training. The Rev. Margaret McGhee will search for links to appropriate TED talks.
- Anne Schmidt talked about planning for the upcoming retreat and the importance of developing community.
- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis reported that the chaplain from the bishop search for the 10th bishop has been contacted and is currently going through a discernment process and will let her know soon.
- The Communications Committee will work on a charge for each of the committees—Search and Transition. There will also be need for a confidentiality agreement for members of the Search Committee.
- Presentation and review of a draft timeline for the retreat.

The Rev. Daryl Stanford closed the meeting with prayer.

Standing Committee notes, June 11, 2025

- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis reported that the Rev. David Jenkins will be the chaplain.
- Mr. Tim Flynn reported that applicants have been contacted looking for members for the Transition Committee.
- Co-chairs have been identified for each committee
- Anne Schmidt would like names and contact information for each committee.
- President Beth Fitz Gibbon thanked members of the Search for the Search Committee.
- Anne Schmidt discussed the Survey and Listening sessions. She suggested using Holy Cow which would be \$1,000-\$1,500. The company would do everything including an explanation.
- Ms. Teresa Ryther suggested opportunities for people who are unable to attend the listening session.

The meeting was closed with prayer.

Standing Committee notes, June 18, 2025

The Ven. Jim Cummins opened the meeting with prayer.

- Anne Schmidt will need temporary name tags for those attending the upcoming retreat.
- Review of proposed retreat agenda.

- Anne will meet with committee co-chairs.
- The Transition Committee needs to talk about dates and locations for walkabouts. These will need to be added to the website at the appropriate time.
- Packets will be prepared for each retreat attendee.

Standing Committee notes, June 25, 2025

The Rev. Daryl Stanford opened the meeting with prayer.

- The Search for the Search Committee reported that all is going well.
- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis reported on plans for the retreat Eucharist.
- The Rev. Margaret McGhee moved that the Standing Committee accept the drafted version of the Charge to the Bishop Search Committee and the Charge to the Bishop Transition Committee. The motion was seconded. There was discussion as to the number of candidates needed. The motion passed.
- The Rev Doreen Rice Daab moved that the Standing Committee accept the 2025 budget for the Bishop Search and Transition Committees as presented and the motion was seconded. There was some discussion after which the motion passed.
- The Ven. Jim Cummins moved that the Standing Committee/Council of Trustees approve the settlement between St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Kansas City and the Church Insurance Company for roof repair. The specific section of the agreement (Section 2.5) is the most important for Council of Trustees' approval. The motion was seconded and passed.
- The Rev. Carl Edwards reported that All Saints Hall and the Robyn Room will be available for breakout rooms.
- Consultant Anne Schmidt reported that she has met with committee co-chairs about agenda items for the retreat. She also asked that Standing Committee members not attend the afternoon breakouts for the Search and Transition Committees. Ms. Teresa Ryther asked if there could be a room for Standing Committee members to use during the afternoon breakout sessions.
- President Beth Fitz Gibbon offered appreciation for all of the work Mr. Mason Weber and Mrs. Michelle Moss have provided preparing for the retreat.
- The Rev. Margaret McGhee asked if weekly meetings for the Standing Committee could be stopped for the summer months.
- Ms. Teresa Ryther reminded that there will need to be a meeting to discuss and approve the 2026 budget, probably in August.
- The Standing Committee will meet again in conjunction with the August Council of Trustees meeting

The Rev. Margaret McGhee closed the meeting with prayer.

Friday, July 25, 2025

The Search Committee for the XI Bishop of Kansas has received permission to add an additional member to ensure young-adult representation. Joshua McCall (St. Thomas, Overland Park) was recommended. The committee co-chairs Scott Howard and the Very Rev. Torey Lightcap have interviewed him and found him to be “an excellent and enthusiastic candidate.”

Beth Fitz Gibbon, acting as the president of the Standing Committee, moved to accept the appointment of Mr. Joshua McCall of St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church, Overland Park, KS, to the Search Committee for the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Kansas. The motion was seconded and an e-mail vote showed the motion passing unanimously.

Bishop's Report for the Council of Trustees - September 17, 2025

General Oversight and Wider Church Work

- Hosted CoT, Council of Deans, Minster Shepherds and Staff for a "Tea of Gratitude"
- Finalization of financial and fund reporting with Canon Patrick for Roadshows and Convention
- Various Eco-Regions and Grasslands zooms/calls, esp in preparation for presentation at House of Bishops
- Meeting with Title IV Intake Officer Mike Morrow
- House of Bishops with Spouses. Topics: Remnant Time Models for Church; Stewarding our Properties; ministry site visits Diocese of the Dominican Republic; The Bishop's Voice in this moment; Nairobi-Cairo Proposals/Anglican Communion Governance; Theological Education today; Business meeting

Justice, Welcome and Inclusion

- Work with Shane Swedlund-Hall and Mother Caroline Howard on signage for new Labyrinth
- Gathered interested leaders and have begun to form "Advisory and Program Committee for Bethany House and Garden" as well as voluntary educators and St. Simon's worship leaders. The Committee will work on reviewing and refining BHG mission and further report to CoT to help inform any discernment around BHG becoming a Diocesan Institution.
- Worship leadership St. Simon's Chapel
- Meeting with Bethany House and Garden Team, particularly about prairie garden restoration now that labyrinth construction is complete
- Supporting exploration of next stage of a New Episcopal Community grant application for St. Paul's, KCK
- Zoom call with Father Andy Houlberg, Director of Breakthrough-ESS, and Mother Mandy Bishop-Knoth about plans for collaborative agrarian program in Derby and application for a New Episcopal Community grant to fund it
- Participated in Ministry Fair at Grace Cathedral to promote Bethany House and Garden and Labyrinth and recruit volunteers

Congregational Vitality

- Regional Visitations and Emmaus Walk-Abouts
 - Walk-about and Bible Study at St. Mary's, Galena
 - Southeast Regional Confirmations at St. Peter's, Pittsburg
- Met with Fr. Mafla, Archdeacon Cummins and leaders of St. Paul's, KCK
 - Allocating funds to St. Paul's from Millspaugh-Wise Fund for HVAC. They have functioned without AC all summer.
- Celebration of New Ministry for Fr. Julian Campbell and Good Shepherd, Wichita

Leadership Development

- Archdeacons meeting by Zoom
- Pastoral visit Fr. Sam Criss and wife Beth
- Time with Archdeacon-Emeritus Monte Giddings and wife Jill
- Time re-orienting with Exec. Assistant Michael Funston and sabbatical reflections

- Time re-orienting with Canon Patrick Funston and Sabbatical reflections
- Met with confirmation candidate/aspirant Ivan Greuter about ordination process and Bethany Garden/Grasslands

Youth and Young Adult Leadership

- Researched possible fundraising consultants for Youth/Camp campaign
- Zoom meeting with CoT lead Teresa Ryther and Mother Kelly Demo about campaign realities between bishops
- Conversation with Topeka High School photography teacher encouraging class and student visits
- Supporting gardening and yoga events that are kid friendly