



# The Diocesan Council

Episcopal Diocese of Michigan

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January 11, 2014 St. John's Episcopal Church, Plymouth, MI  
Full Business Meeting – Approved Minutes

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**Council Members Present:** Bishop Wendell N. Gibbs, Claudia Hamlin, Shannon MacVean Brown, Rob Sherry, George Davinich, Clare Hickman, Rob Matras, Judith Schellhammer, Cindy Corner, Rick Smith, Joyce Matthews, Geoffrey Smereck, Rae Lee Baxter, Richard Pina, Bill Stech, Indira Samuels, Jenny Ritter, Don Dersnah, Roger Weekes, Liam O'Connor, Lizzie Anderson, Edie Wakevainen (Secretary), Mark Miliotto (Treasurer)

**Council Members Absent:** Ron Byrd (excused), Patrice Thornton (excused), Patti Klaver (excused), Deon Johnson (excused)

**Diocesan Staff:** Jim Gettel (Canon for Congregational Life), Michelle Meech (Ministry Developer/Provisional Director of Whitaker Institute), Rick Schulte (Dir. Of Communications), Eric Travis (Youth and Young Adult Missioner), Canon Jo Ann Hardy (Diocesan Administrator—excused)

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**8:30 – Refreshments Available**

**9:00 – Morning Prayer** led by Bishop Gibbs

**Roll Call**

**Agenda accepted with no additions**

## 2015 Mission Conversation

Bishop Gibbs reviewed the history of budget development for the Diocese. Rather than having the staff develop it, Diocesan Council debate it, and Convention reject it, a change in the process was made. Now, early in the process, the program staff members make presentations about their current work and what they could do with additional funding. Thanks to this process, and the clarity of the Treasurer's information, for the last three years budgets have passed unanimously without debate at Convention.

### Jim Gettel, Canon for Congregational Life

Canon Gettel began by introducing himself as a man who loves organizational development and helping people build things. His greatest passion is helping churches grow, and he sees this as his dream job. He talked about his three areas of focus:

1. *Clergy Transitions:* There are seven parishes currently in transition. He meets monthly with an interim clergy group. A new Transitions Manual will soon be on the Diocesan website.
2. *Congregational Development:* He has identified the 80 congregations/worshiping communities by levels and areas of need, and has done something with 40 of them to date. The biggest need (for 20) is revitalization. As they struggle with resources (money and people), he wants to help them focus on going out and being relevant to the world. Some congregations need reconciliation and peacemaking. The fastest growing congregations need support and help to overcome barriers as they grow.

Canon Gettel sees positives and challenges at all levels. He wants to see people connecting to the RUACH vision—the five marks of mission. He encourages adoption of this vision at the congregational level, to ensure a common language. In the pre-Convention RUACH workshop, he asked parishes to consider this.

He plans to develop a group of companions and consultants to assist in congregational development through a ministry of presence. He is looking for a wider diocesan conversation around this.

3. *Leadership Development:* Canon Gettel has been working with Rev. Michelle Meech in this area, and he mentioned the terrific foundation provided by Whitaker. He also discussed the upcoming Becoming the Household of God events, the first of which will be Saturday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, with the second to follow in February. Immediately after the second event, vestries are invited to participate in a workshop with Bishop Gibbs.

The Rev. Michelle Meech, Ministry Developer and Interim Director, Whitaker Institute

*Ministry Development:*

1. Five congregations are currently in Total Ministry, and three of them are integrating new team members. She compared this to building a plane while flying it.
2. There are one or two congregations looking at becoming Total Ministry congregations. The Ministry Developer will be responsible for their formation.
3. She mentioned the amazing work of Church of the Messiah in Detroit. A side effect of their ministry is a growing congregation.

*Whitaker Institute:*

1. Safeguarding training is offered monthly. Because of increased demand (ELCA members have been invited to participate), a Train-the-Trainer session will be offered on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Interested individuals should contact Rev. Meech.
2. There are two cohorts of EYSJ in 2013-2014. A second group started in January because of the large number of applicants.
3. The diocesan curates program is ongoing, with a focus on helping congregations be a community around them.
4. The diaconal formation program is being revamped. She is working with the Diocese of Eastern Michigan and will reach out to Western Michigan, too.
5. She is also reaching out to these groups to share in anti-racism training. Crossroads has been asked to provide the training. The first session in November was not filled to capacity. The second session will be in March. A task force will be developed in the three dioceses to design a response to racism.
6. Preacher and Worship Leader classes have been revamped into a nine-month program, allowing time for reflection and engagement.
7. NEW! Spanish language classes will be offered through Whitaker, to support the Diocese's push into Hispanic ministry.

Rick Schulte, Director of Communications

Mr. Schulte described his work in knowing about and promoting events in the Diocese.

1. *The Record* has evolved from a monthly printed piece to a quarterly one, with stories featuring people and events of interest. With increasing postage rates, he would like to nudge more people to read it electronically to save money.
2. *Weekly Connections*, an e-newsletter that goes out every Tuesday morning to churches all over the Diocese, includes breaking news and events to raise awareness.
3. The Diocesan website serves as the core source of information. Notify Mr. Schulte if something is missing there.
4. The social media presence on Facebook and Twitter is growing. He uses pictures to promote events on Facebook. The immediacy is appreciated.
5. Mr. Schulte would like to work with churches to develop clear and useful websites. The goal is to help people create sites that are easy to maintain.

Eric Travis, Missioner to Youth and Young Adults

Mr. Travis stated that there are two messages he wants to promote:

1. God loves you without exception. (bumper stickers are available)
2. Youth ministry is Youth *doing* ministry.

He reviewed the year's programming:

*New Beginnings* is a program for middle school students, run by adults and high school students. The purpose is to help the students deal with important questions. There are now active young adults who have come up through it.

*Happening* is a program for high school students, run by high school students. For many of them, this is their most in-depth time of talking about faith and prayer. The level of talks has been increasing, and these students are speaking the truth in a voice not often heard.

*Nightwatch Detroit* is a program in which middle school and high school students came in to the Cathedral and planned what they wanted to do.

A focus of the coming year will be reaching out to the fringe in Detroit, doing ministry locally.

*Camp Compassion* took youth and adult leaders to the Dominican Republic. This year we will be joining with the Oakland Deanery's *Mission Possible* in a week-long local mission experience. Mr. Travis would like to see this expand to every Deanery.

*Episcopal Youth Event* (EYE) is coming up in Philadelphia. Twenty-four youth from the Diocese can attend. We work with the ELCA through *Living Waters Camp*. This summer there will be two weeks when Episcopalians will be on staff (July 6-11 and 13-18). We also participate in the Bass Lake Christian music festival.

In 2015, the *ELCA national youth gathering* will be held in Detroit. They expect 30,000 to come. We have been invited to participate fully.

Projects that would be added if there were additional funding:

1. Year-long Episcopal Service Corps project in Detroit
2. ELCA partnership—doing more ministry together
3. Local week-long mission in each Deanery
4. Peer ministry training
5. Leadership training for adults
6. Ministry to Hispanic youth

Following the presentations, the Council and Staff engaged in a time of Q&A.

**10:45 – 11:00 Break**

### **Business Meeting**

#### **Approval of Minutes from November 23, 2013**

*Motion was made and properly seconded to accept the minutes as presented, with three corrections (R. Smith excused absence, error in parish name in item #1 under Loans and Grants, and clarifying wording under Vital Congregations). Motion passed.*

#### **Bishop's Update**

- Requests for prayers for those experiencing grief and loss, illness
- Juan Perez was ordained to the vocational diaconate on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>. At the ordination, it was announced that a request for a grant of \$100,000 for the Hispanic ministry was approved. It is a matching grant, but funds allocated for salaries and benefits cover the match. M. Ledford and J. Perez will be keeping abreast of the requirements for the grant.
- Marcia Ledford, Maryjane Peck, and Paula Miller were ordained to the priesthood on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Attendance at the presentation by Michael Battle on January 18<sup>th</sup> is encouraged. It is the first part of this year's Becoming the Household of God.
- A new tower with an ecumenical chapel was dedicated at Crittenton Hospital in Rochester. The Rev. Dcn. Sharon Watton organized a great service of dedication with clergy from many different faiths participating.
- Bishop Gibbs visited St. Paul's Brighton to see the progress on construction. It is all enclosed, with the roof on, the cross on top, and windows in. They expect occupancy earlier than first anticipated. Dedication expected to be June 21<sup>st</sup> at 11 a.m. They will worship together there as a community on Pentecost.

**Communications to Council** – none

**Executive Committee Actions** – none

**Property Report** – none

#### **Finance Report**

Mark Miliotto presented current financial reports for review and acceptance. The books are closed through November. At the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting he will have the final 2013 numbers (unaudited).

*A motion was made and properly seconded to receive the Treasurer's report and file for audit. Motion passed.*

## Updates/Committee Reports

### Primary Committees

*Mission Budget* – no report

*Tithes & Offerings* – no report

*Loans and Grants*

1. A request from Trinity, Belleville was received and will go to the Trustees in March (Tretheway Fund). 2. A motion was made to make available half of the 0.7% allocated from the Millennium Development Goals funds for local social service ministry grants. Motion passed.

*Vital Congregations* – no report

### Secondary Committees

*Resolution Review*

Judith Schellhammer reported:

1. Please remind clergy about the special offering for Haiti recovery on January 12<sup>th</sup>. It has been discussed on the Nuts and Bolts blog.

2. “Sunday Assembly” is taking place in many cities. It is a non-church event featuring singing and inspiring talks. How should we respond to it? Discussion ensued.

*HR Policy Review*

Roger Weekes distributed a handout describing a request to the committee from Bishop Gibbs, to acquire and review relevant data and recommend a standard minimum compensation (salary only) guideline for clergy in the Diocese of Michigan. The committee will work on this and report back to Council with their recommendations.

*Audit* – no report

*By-laws/Constitution & Canons*

Geoffrey Smereck gave a verbal report. The committee’s communication has been good and they will be tackling issues of primary importance. Bishop Gibbs reminded them to include Vice Chancellor Natalie Yaw.

### Advisory:

*Property Advisory* – no report

Bishop Gibbs provided an update on St. Anne’s Mead in Southfield, an agency of the Diocese. We continued to research the “legal” relationship between the Mead and the Diocese. Their by-laws require that all members of the Board must be approved by the Bishop. At this point, the Mead is looking for assistance in how to stabilize their financial picture and move strategically into the future. More will be reported as there is information to report.

*Emrich Advisory Council* – letter from Andrea

Finances are healthy enough to support offering health insurance and pension to Shari.

Deposits are being received for 2014 and 2015.

### Other:

*Ruach* – no report

## 12:10 Adjournment

## Lunch

Next Meeting:

Meeting Date & Time	Agenda/Focus	Location
Saturday, March 1, 2014 9:00am – 3:00pm	Full Business Meeting	St. John’s Episcopal Church, Plymouth MI