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**Minutes Diocesan Council 2020 03 06**

**Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota**

**Prairie Knights Casino**

**Present:** John Floberg, Elaine McLaughlin, Terry Overbo, Christie Iverson, Don Henderson, Robert Fox, Bishop Keith Whitmore, John Anderson, Hal Weidman, Dionne Nelson, Mary Johnson, Angela Goodhouse; Larry Thiele, Donna Pettit, Duffy Williams.

Present Electronically: Dan Rice, Mark Strobel.

Absent: Margaret Zaharia, Tammy Enockson, Emily Wittkop, Mary Ann Henry, Peter Mading

Meeting called to order at 6:23 pm

Prayer led by Bishop Keith Whitmore

Introduction of Dionne Nelson

Treasurer’s Report: Duffy Williams

Narrative put together by Charlotte Peterson—Dionne, please attach before sending out.

Finance Committee is pleased with Haga Kommer, as they bring our books up to date from 2019

Bishop Keith: Reported on the Spring Conference (Special Diocesan Gathering). Dwight Zscheile is coming May 1-2. This conference is about congregational life; its primary target is members of congregations. Bishop Keith’s observation is that congregations don’t know what questions to ask about their own futures. Canon Hal added that there are 25 rooms reserved in Fargo for this conference at the Quality Inn at the rate of $100 per night.

**Canon Missioner’s Review and Report**—Dionne, please attach before sending out.

* This report contained information about reducing the chance of passing the Coronavirus through worship and sacramental practices.

**2020.03.01**

**Moved by**

**Donna Pettit: Motion to let congregations make their own response to the attached guidelines**

**Terry Overbo: Second**

**Motion carried.**

* Grants are available for revitalizing new congregations in the Episcopal Church—Tom Brackett. Hal has just begun to review this material.
* Re: Diocesan Convention Meeting Place—In 2020 the plans are in place to meet in Bismarck; 2021 could become a very important convention if DDTF and Standing Committee believe we are ready to elect a bishop. Do we want to have a “Moveable Feast” as the Diocese did many years ago, or keep Convention in Bismarck? (The answer is theoretically dependent on survey results, which Hal did not have at his fingertips)

**2020.03.02**

**Duffy:Moved**

**Resolved: that Bismarck be diocesan convention venue in 2021**

**Don H: second**

**Motion carried**

**NDCIM REPORT—Elaine McLaughlin**

* June 13 is the date for the church dedication at St. Sylvan’s Dunseith.
* Re: St. Luke’s Ft. Yates. Church and house renovations are proceeding nicely. The contractor is doing excellent work.
* Re: Fort Totten. There still needs to be work on the rectory and church.
* Niobrara Convocation June 25-28, to be held at Fort Yates Jr High School

Mary Crist will be coming to present on Doctrine of Discovery

Canadian Bishop for First Nations ministries, Mark McDonald will be coming to ordain Joe Hubbard to the Diaconate

* To commemorate the Battle of Greasy Grass, there will be a ceremony and buffalo feed and pow wow
* Around Labor Day, Whitestone Hill Riders will be commemorating the Massacre at Whitestone Hill by making a horseback journey. They will ride through Standing Rock, where there will be prayers and a ceremony . (John, please help me get these details expressed correctly.)

**Standing Committee Report—John Floberg**

* From 1989 -2003 Andy Fairfield was bishop in Diocese of ND. As a diocese we’ve done nothing in response to Andy’s death. We need to send Condolences to Sally, his wife and a member of St. Stephen’s in Fargo. John asked: “What is the will of the Diocesan Council?” In May there will be a more public memorial. Bishop Andy wanted a green funeral, without embalming, hence a quick service, oriented toward family and local friends. Dean Mark Strobel suggested that we send an official delegation from the Diocese of ND to Massachusetts for his public memorial. We agreed to consider this further in the morning.
* John reported on the health and wellbeing of each of the congregations in the diocese, and believes that Diocesan Council should give the Standing Committee permission to sell the house in Williston that was purchased as a rectory. After discussion, Council determined that we want to put a caveat on that permission. If, before it is sold, a plan is brought forward that utilizes that house in a mission capacity for St. Peter’s, then we would want the resolution passed here to be to remove it from the market.
* Charlotte Peterson has gone way further than anyone could have asked her to do. Standing Committee proposes: Make a gift to her of $2500 out of the line item for expenses finances.

(John, I don’t think we ever revisited this with a formal resolution, if it needed one.)

We adjourned (is that the correct word?) until morning.

Saturday: 8:40 am we resumed our meeting

We sang “Sweet Hour of Prayer” in Dakota, led by John Floberg.

We made and deliberated on the following motions as a result of our discussion on Friday night.

**2020.03.03**

**Motion: John Floberg/Anderson???**

**Second: Donna Pettit**

**Motion to authorize Charlotte Peterson, as assistant Treasurer of the Diocese, to negotiate on behalf of the Diocese and to execute necessary papers in the matter of selling the rectory/home owned by the Diocese in Williston**

**Motion carries**

**2020.03.04**

**To commemorate the ministry and life of the Rt. Rev. Andrew Fairfield, we will plant a**

**tree at Gethsemane Cathedral, and a tree or perennial flowering plant at St. Stephen’s, Fargo.**

**Moved: John Anderson**

**Second: John Floberg**

**Motion carried**

Elaine McLaughlin reported that all the congregations at Niobrara Convention will get a tree sapling to plant at their home church in memory of Bishop Fairfield

**2020.03.05**

**Authorize up to three people from the Diocese, appointed by the Standing Committee, to go as an official delegation to the memorial service later this year.**

**Moved: John Floberg**

**Second: Larry Thiele**

**Motion carried**

**2020.03.06**

**Moved: John Floberg**

**Second: Mary Johnson**

**Diocesan Council authorizes Standing Committee make a $500 donation to one of the two organizations suggested by the family of Bishop Andrew Fairfield in his obituary.**

We discussed that there are some congregations of this diocese that are at risk of closing.

Bishop Keith observed that many congregations that he has visited around the Diocese are waiting for somebody else to do something for them. He continues to remind them that the future is their own to claim. He also said, from the point of view of a newly elected bishop beginning episcopal ministry in a diocese, it would be best if the new bishop should not have his or her first task be to close congregations that should have been closed a long time ago.

John Floberg asked: How do we become proactive in March, 2020?

Donna Pettit asked: If at some point in our future so many congregations close that we go below 12 congregations (the threshold minimum for **beginning** a diocese) what happens?

John Floberg responded that in The Episcopal Church no canons presently exist about that possibility.

**2020.03.07**

**Motion: Aware that we should deal with marginal congregations definitively during this interim period, Diocesan Council believes we should deal with marginal congregations on a case-by-case basis, asking, Is there outreach? Is there mission still taking place?**

**Moved: Duffy**

**Second: ???**

**Motion carried**

**2020.03.08**

**Motion: Diocesan Council authorizes the Standing Committee to sell the house owned by the Diocese in Williston**

**Moved: Donna Pettit**

**Second: John Anderson**

**Motion carried**

**Commission on Ministry Report—Mary Johnson**

Members of the COM met Friday before our Council meeting. They are working deliberately through the list of tasks that the Standing Committee gave them.

* The survey distributed after the February Ministry Conference at Richardton asked about licensed lay ministries, listing each of them that are provided by the Canons, seeking to determine which ministries are active in each congregation, how ministers exercising those ministries are trained, and how many lay people are doing those ministries. It became apparent that none of those ministries had been formally licensed by the Bishop in several years, and clergy and lay leaders who responded did not know much about licensed lay ministries beyond (perhaps) Lay Eucharistic Ministers.
* COM is pleased to report that, God willing, Bishop Keith will ordain John Anderson to the Diaconate on April 4 at 11 am at St. Stephen’s in Fargo; and Bishop Mark McDonald will ordain Joe Hubbard to the Transitional Diaconate on June 27 in Fort Yates.
* COM is working to get a list of all people formally in the process to Holy Orders who are not yet ordained. It has proved more difficult than we thought to get a complete list.
* COM is hoping that (as published in the *Sheaf*) people of the Diocese will help us Beta test a program called “Dimensions of the Faith,” a series of audio lectures offered online at no charge by Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. While these lectures come from an Evangelical Protestant viewpoint, COM is exploring offering ZOOM meetings to supplement and offer an Anglican viewpoint.
* On May 1-2 COM is sponsoring a Special Diocesan Gathering at Gethsemane Cathedral in Fargo with the Rev. Dr. Dwight Zscheile as keynote speaker. Prof. Zscheile will focus on helping congregations navigate with agility the challenging transitions that they must make to offer the Gospel in times of rapid cultural change. The registration fee will be $25 ahead of time and $30 at the door. There was discussion of making Bakken Ministry funding available to defray travel costs for attendees from the western part of the diocese, and of making NDCIM funds available for members of indigenous communities.

**Commission on Youth Ministry Report—John Floberg**

* The triennial Episcopal Youth Event (EYE) takes place July 5-11 in DC. The cost to students attending is $200. The Diocese will cover additional costs. In order to send a delegation of youth from the Diocese of North Dakota, John is seeking one chaperone per 6 youth. They must be 25 or older to be an adult leader. There must be one male and one female leader if there are both boys and girls (rising high school age) attending. These leaders must have had Safe Church training, which may be obtained online or by contacting diocesan trainers Sandy Holbrook and Zanne Ness. There is no cost to these adult leaders.
* St. Gabriel’s Camp sessions will take place June 16-18; July 21-23; August 4-6. These camps are for rising 6th grade through rising 12th grade students. There is also a more intensive program for youth leaders called Pathways.
* There was discussion about the **Naming** of the **Commission** on Youth Ministry, specifically about the difference between a commission and a Committee. John explained that, at the national level, in The Episcopal Church, Commissions have authority to set policy for the Church while Committees must go through some other group. So “Commission” gives greater status than “Committee.”

**Diocesan Discernment Task Force (DDTF) report –attached—Dionne, please attach when you send these minutes out!**

The Council adjourned to Holy Eucharist in honor of Perpetua and Felicitas, and went to

Lunch at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted,

the Rev. Mary P. Johnson, Secretary of Diocesan Council