

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
ALL SAINTS' CHURCH – MINOT  
MARCH 14-15, 2014

Present: The Right Rev. Michael Smith, the Rev. Bart Davis, Sandi Myers, Carmine Goodhouse, Mark Raymond, Deacon Barb Olson, Marilys Carter, Pat Fearing, the Rev. Jim Shannon, Deacon Brandon Maui, Carol DeWall, Mary Ann Henry, the Rev. Canon Zanne Ness, Wes Fox, Deacon Erin Richards, the Rev. Canon John Floberg, Charlotte Peterson, Leisha Woltjer, the Rev. Canon Kevin Goodrich.

Guests: The Rev. Christian Senyoni, Rosa Wilson, Mary Ann Henry's granddaughter, and Zack Hellrung from Williston.

After a delicious meal cooked and served by members of All Saints', Evening Prayer was led by Bishop Michael, who read a short biography of James Theodore Holly who was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1856. After serving as a priest for several years, he led a group of people to Haiti where they established a settlement. He became the first Bishop of Haiti and was also the first black to become a bishop.

The council meeting was convened, roll was called and a quorum was established. Guests at the meeting were introduced. The agenda was adopted with the addition of matters from Executive Council.

Bishop Michael spoke of how Terry Star's death had greatly affected all of us, and asked that we be especially kind to one another during this time of grief.

Three churches in the Bakken area were discussed. St. Michael's in Cartwright would like to have a priest to serve their church. The Rev. Randy Keehn is willing to take further training to serve as priest-in-charge there.

St. Peter's Church in Williston has seen an increase in new people in the church (including children) and would like to reach out to more new people in the community. They would like to have a full-time priest who would help them concentrate on growing the church in Williston. However, the high cost of housing is a real problem there. Zack Hellrung from Houston, Texas, but now living in Williston and working in the Bakken, shared the story of what is currently happening at St. Peter's. He is a member of their vestry. They have started a soup kitchen and once again have a Sunday School. However, Zack said the people of St. Peter's feel somewhat lost without a "quarterback" (priest). John Floberg told the council that a United Thank Offering grant for \$80,000 had been written and submitted to the UTO which would be used to help finance the cost of a rectory for a priest in Williston. It will not be known until May whether the grant is approved. If it is, the additional amount for a house would have to come from St. Peter's. As another possible solution to the housing problem, a parishioner of St. Peter's has offered the use of a 2-bedroom condominium at a reduced price (around \$1,000 a month), but this would not allow for a priest with a larger family to be called. Christian Senyoni is a possible candidate for rector of St Peter's. He worked as an intern one summer at Grace Church, Jamestown, and has also been a youth leader in the diocese. He attended Nashotah House with help from Grace Church.

John Floberg presented a 3 page synopsis of the Bakken area ministry needs and possible resources and solutions, called St. Peter's Gate, which he asked the council to study and give their thoughts on after

consideration of the information. It was noted that the Diocese of Wyoming has offered the Diocese of North Dakota assistance in the Bakken.

The third church in the Bakken area which was discussed was St. John's in Dickinson. Zanne Ness told the council that she had been conversing with the ELCA Lutheran Bishop for that area and there are two Lutheran churches which are in need of ministers, one in Dickinson and one in Richardton. She and the Lutheran bishop have talked to a couple from Ohio who would be willing to come and serve all three churches. He is an ordained minister and his wife would serve as deacon. In talking about what it would take for this couple to be able to come to North Dakota, St. John's has offered the use of its rectory, but would also need to contribute \$10,000 a year toward salary. Zanne had high praise for this couple. She also said that the two Lutheran churches were eager to partner with St. John's to make it possible for the couple to come to North Dakota to serve in these churches.

Discussion was held concerning St. Michael's, St. Peter's and St. John's and the challenges facing them. No action was taken, but this subject will be further discussed and acted upon in the morning.

In other business, several corrections were made to the November 2013 minutes. Spelling corrections are as follows: Peterson not Pederson; Bakken not Balken; Nashotah not Nashota. The third paragraph on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page should refer to acceptance of the treasurer's report, not the minutes. Friday's session was closed with prayer, not Evening Prayer. In the last paragraph on page 2, the last part of the second line should read "the feasibility of instituting an adult education course patterned after the Master of Arts in Ministry."

The motion in the second paragraph of page 2 should be corrected to read as follows: Move funds from the CPC Grant Fund (97.31) and the Church Periodical Club fund (\$458.73) into the CPC checking account (288.73). A check for \$844.77 (the balance of the three accounts) will be written to the Church Periodical Club which will close the CPC checking account. (In December, Leisha acted on the intent of the original motion. As there were no checks associated with the CPC checking account, she transferred all of the funds from the three accounts into the primary checking account and wrote a check for \$844.77 to the Church Periodical Club.) The council passed all of the above corrections by voice vote.

Bishop Michael announced that he would be taking a sabbatical from January through April of 2015.

The Diocese of Texas and the Diocese of North Dakota have set up a companion relationship. Bishop Michael asked that we come up with ideas as to how the Diocese of Texas could best help with projects in North Dakota, which they are very willing to do. We also need to determine how we in North Dakota could return the favor.

A weekend at Sacred Heart Convent in Richardton has been reserved for "Renewal Works".

Bishop Michael announced that Rebecca Lien, secretary/receptionist for Gethsemane Cathedral and the Diocesan office, has resigned. The cathedral and the diocese will not be sharing a person for this position in the future. The bishop and Leisha have been dividing up the additional duties. The diocese would not be able to hire someone to take Rebecca's place for the amount that we were contributing to her salary. Suggestions were made to remedy the situation and will be looked into.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer.

March 15, 2014

The Diocesan Council met again on Saturday morning and opened with Morning Prayer. Bishop Michael read about Patrick of Ireland who was born in Britain in 390 and grew up in the Roman Catholic faith. He was kidnapped and carried off to Ireland when he was 16 and became a shepherd there. He escaped and went back to his home in Britain where he was educated. He later returned to Ireland to bring the gospel. He erected churches there and also converted 3 high kings of Ireland to Christianity.

Next, the council heard from the diocesan treasurer, Charlotte Peterson, who reported that only 3.85% of the 5% budgeted amount which was to come from the Investment Fund was used in 2013. Leisha Woltjer explained why the diocese had unexpectedly received a \$38,000 royalty payment for producing wells in Divide and Williams Counties. (Explanation: Responsible party had been unable to secure an address for the Diocese for the last two years!) Discussion followed, including the explanation of how a lease bonus differs from a royalty payment, which is that the lease bonus is a one-time payment, but the royalty payment can continue for a number of years. John Floberg moved to accept the treasurer's report. Mark Raymond seconded the motion. Motion carried.

After some discussion about which account the \$38,000 royalties should be deposited into, Bart Davis moved that royalties received above the budgeted amount for any year be transferred to the Bakken Ministry Fund. The budgeted amount is to be proposed by the finance committee during the budgeting process. Barb Olson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Charlotte Peterson presented the Endowment Investment Policy draft proposal. Zanne Ness moved for acceptance of proposal as written. Erin Richards seconded the motion. Motion carried.

John Floberg went over the addendum to the investment policy which calls on members to develop the habit of tithing, recommended the draw on endowment to be 5%, work toward lowering Our Fair Share to 15%, and work toward fulfilling the asking of 19% to the larger Episcopal Church. Sandi Meyer moved to accept the addendum. Carol DeWall seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The finance committee has recommended that the council explore the possibility of combining the North Dakota Episcopal Foundation Fund, the Gethsemane Foundation Endowment Fund and the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota Endowment Fund which would reduce the cost of managing the funds and reduce the number of meetings. This would entail two people from each fund meeting with John Tillitson to go over the details of such a move. Bart Davis moved to have the council approve exploring the combination of funds. Charlotte Peterson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion returned to the Bakken Ministry issues in Dickinson and Williston. Bart Davis moved to commit \$10,000 per year for the next three years for the development of a partnership with two ELCA congregations in the calling of a pastor who would also serve to assist St. John's in Dickinson in reaching out to a growing population of their area of the Bakken. John Floberg seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bishop Michael told the council that he would like to have someone from the Standing Committee accompany him, Zanne Ness, and John Floberg to Williston the week after Easter to determine how best to partner with St. Peter's in Bakken outreach. John Floberg moved to have his proposal, St. Peter's Gate, used as a starting point. Mark Raymond seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion was held as to where the August meeting of the Diocesan Council would be held. It was decided that the council would meet at the Sky Dancer Casino in the Turtle Mountains. Bishop Michael will make room arrangements. Mary Ann Henry will arrange for meals and a place to hold the meeting.

Bills in connection with the recently closed Good Shepherd Church in Lakota came up for discussion. Leisha Woltjer said that only one bill had been received in the diocesan office since the closing of the church. Kevin Goodrich will talk to the former treasurer and have the bills and the checkbook turned over to the diocese. Bills from Good Shepherd will be paid from the Real Estate Fund. Mark Raymond stopped at the church recently and reported that the physical condition of the church is okay. Discussion was held as to how to dispose of the contents and how the building would be handled.

John Floberg reported that the building project at St. Sylvan's in Dunseith is expected to be completed in July. A crew is continuing to work on the building project at St. Paul's, White Shield, and should be done soon.

John Floberg proposed a new format (now used at Executive Council meetings) for meetings of the Diocesan Council. He suggested that at the Friday night meeting the council break into three groups as follows:

1. Congregational Development
2. Evangelism Formation
3. Resources in Partnership.

Saturday's meeting would involve discussing and voting on proposals offered by the three committees. Discussion followed. Bishop Michael suggested that the Executive Committee meet during lunch to further discuss this proposal. This committee is comprised of Bishop Michael, the president of the Standing Committee (Mark Raymond), the Diocesan Council vice-president (Zanne Ness), treasurer (Charlotte Peterson), and council secretary (Pat Fearing).

John Floberg pointed out that St. Gabriel's Camp is now in the black!

The meeting was adjourned and council joined Bishop Michael in the church for Holy Eucharist.

Lunch was served.

Submitted by Pat Fearing, Secretary