



**Diocesan Council Meeting
August 22-23, 2025 – Minot
Minutes**

Present Friday night: The Rev. Dn. Elsie Magnus, The Rev. John Floberg, The Rev. Dn. Beth Lipp, Donna Pettit, The Rev. Dn. John Anderson, Tyrrell DeCoteau, Jael Mogga, The Rev. Robert Hoekstra, The Rev. Lindsey Dwarf, Rafael DeCoteau, George Abdilnour, Rachel Schmidt, Karilee Lieberman, The Rev. Jamie Parsley, Dr. Jason Thoms, Leo Wilking, Bishop Brian Thom, Amy Phillips (Recorder)

Absent Friday night: John Baird, Susan Lisok, Ashley Hubbard

Present Saturday: The Rev. Dn. Elsie Magnus, The Rev. John Floberg, The Rev. Dn. Beth Lipp, Donna Pettit, The Rev. Dn. John Anderson, Tyrrell Decoteau, Jael Mogga, The Rev. Robert Hoekstra, The Rev. Lindsey Dwarf, Rafael Decoteau, George Abdilnour, Rachel Schmidt, Karilee Lieberman, The Rev. Jamie Parsley, Dr. Jason Thoms, Leo Wilking, Bishop Brian Thom, Amy Phillips (Recorder)

Absent Saturday: John Baird, Susan Lisok, Ashley Hubbard

Red items are included in the August Council Packet (page #s are in parentheses)

Assignments/action items highlighted in yellow. Motions highlighted in blue.

Friday, August 22nd 6:15--8:15

6:15-7:00pm Arrivals, social time, & dinner at All Saints, Minot

- I. **Welcome** – Bishop Thom welcomed everyone and thanked John Baird and Donna Pettit for serving on the Council (they rotate off at the end of this year). The Bishop also welcomed Fr. Jamie Parsley from the Standing Committee and the new Treasurer, Fr. John Floberg. The Bishop thanked All Saints Minot and particularly Rachel Schmidt for hosting the meeting and facilitating meals.
- II. **Opening Prayers led by Chaplain Jamie Parsley**
- III. **Land Acknowledgment and Respectful Communication Guidelines (pp. 4 & 5)** – The Guidelines were read aloud.
- IV. **Approval of June 2025 Council Minutes (pp. 6-8)** -- Elsie Magnus made a motion to approve the minutes, Bob Hoekstra seconded, all voted in favor.
- V. **Business Session**
 1. **Review Action Items from previous meetings**

- a. Finance Committee to review Trust & Endowment Funds: too restrictive or should be spent/repurposed.
- b. Proceeds from sale of All Saints, Valley City.

2. Finance Report

- a. *YTD 07/31/25 (pp. 9-14)* – John Floberg walked the group through the YTD 2025 budget. A question was asked about the amount listed for Dunseith property repair in the Temporary Designated Funds document (the amount is currently less than that listed in the April document). Tyrrell DeCoteau will ask Jess if the current amount is less because of equipment purchase for Dunseith.
 1. Line 3580 – Bishop will check on what the \$2381.98 expense is.
 2. All approved the YTD 07/31/25 Report
- b. “*Building the Diocesan Budget*” -- John Floberg gave an educational power point presentation on the Diocesan budget. The 2026 budget is currently predicted to have a deficit of \$63,188.43.

- VI. WoDakota Spring Appeal Update** – The Bishop reported that there are 26 unique donors with \$14,717 received. WoDakota funds will be divided between Sudanese ministries and food banks. Anyone should talk with Jess to clarify particular food banks. The Bishop will direct Jess to verify food bank locations and to disperse the funds between the banks and Sudanese ministries.

Night prayers and recess led by Fr. Jamie Parsley

Saturday, August 23rd 9:15am--2:00pm

Breakfast at hotel

- I. **Morning Devotions by Fr. Jamie Parsley**
- II. **Overlap of Bishop-Elect and Bishop Provisional** – March 14 2026 is the intended consecration date of the new Bishop (location to be announced). Bishop Thom recommended a one-month overlap starting around February 15 2026. The new Bishop would become an employee (without canonical authority) for that one month. Elsie Magnus moved that the Council recommend to the Transition Committee a one-month overlap, Beth Lipp seconded, all voted in favor.
- III. **Business Session (continued)**
 1. *Budget Priorities for 2026 & 2027 (pp. 26-32) – cont’d from Friday night*
 - a. *St. John the Divine Personnel* -- Leo Wilking made a motion, Amy Phillips seconded, that the St. John the Divine personnel item be left in the 2026 budget while St. John the Divine discusses an arrangement with Father Peter Ackemeir. All voted in favor.
 - b. *Proceeds from sale of All Saints, Valley City* – Amy Phillips made a motion, Rafael DeCoteau seconded that the proceeds be placed in the Real Estate Fund. All voted in favor.
 2. *Designated & Donor Restricted Funds 2025 (pp. 15-24)* – Amy asked that there be discussion of a process for clarifying, understanding, and potentially combining some of these funds. Bishop recommended that this be tabled to a later meeting.
 3. *Q2 Trust & Endowment (p. 25)* -- Amy asked that there be discussion of a process for clarifying, understanding, and potentially combining some of these funds. Bishop recommended that this be tabled to a later meeting.

4. Dunseith Repairs – Rafael DeCoteau made a motion, Amy Phillips seconded, that the \$9,513 in “Other NA Funds, Unspent Dunseith” (from “Donor Restricted,” p. 19 of packet) be moved to the Dunseith line in the “NA Property Repair” fund (in the “Temporary Designated Funds,” p. 16 of packet). The total NA Property Repair fund for Dunseith will then be \$14,792.15 and these funds will be used toward repairs to “Rising Sun Hall” which will be used for Sunday School. All voted in favor.

IV. Old Business

1. Reimbursement to St. John the Divine for water damage costs
St. John’s will get bids on the repair and send to Jess. Leo Wilking may request reimbursement from the City of Moorhead for the plumber repair of the unopen sewer. Bishop Thom will ask Jess to be in touch with St. John’s senior warden about the issue and Jess or the Bishop will contact church insurance about paying for the basement repair.
2. Rolette County property tax confusion re. St. Sylvan’s, Dunseith
Rolette County has told St. Sylvan’s that the church is in arrears on property taxes. Tyrrell DeCoteau and Rafael DeCoteau will talk with a neighboring property owner about paying the current tax and getting a quitclaim deed completed by October 1. If this cannot happen by October 1, the Diocese will pay the tax (\$811.86) so the church property isn’t sold.

V. Reports

1. **Diocesan Missioner (pp. 33-34)** -- Available for review in the packet.
2. Standing Committee
Transition Committee – Jason Thoms reviewed the dates of the bishop candidates meet-and-greets and the format of these sessions. The Committee will also be providing webinars for diocesan members to ask questions about the process leading up to and the Convention. Jason urged Council members to encourage their parishes to submit online questions for the candidates and to research the candidates’ biographical information.
3. Convention Planning
 - a. **Convention Planning Committee report available on p. 35 of packet.**
 - b. *Unique Scheduling needed* – There will be no workshops at the Convention.
 - c. *Convention Secretary* -- Amy Phillips will be a nominee.
4. **Diocesan Administrator (p. 36)** -- Available for review in the packet.
5. ND Council on Indian Ministry (NDCIM)
 - a. *St. Thomas, Spirit Lake* -- Tyrrell DeCoteau distributed copies of the “NDCIM Update.” He reviewed the issue of pigeon damage at St. Thomas in Spirit Lake. Tyrrell and Rafael went to St. Thomas to look at the damage. They will ask members from St. Sylvan’s to help with clean up. Bishop Thom reported that the Diocese has contacted a pest control company and a contractor and the Bishop is waiting for a bid (neither of these has contacted St. Thomas individuals). Bishop will have Ashley Hubbard follow up with the pest control person and contractor and the Bishop and Tyrrell will stay in touch with each other about progress.
 - b. *Priest at St. Thomas* – Tyrrell reported that St. Thomas parishioners are interested in having their own priest. They haven’t had one in 40 years. Without a consistent priest, it’s hard to keep people consistently attending church.
 - c. *St. Paul’s, White Shield* -- Tyrrell asked that the Geothermal funds be used to finish the repairs to St. Paul’s White Shield. John Floberg confirmed that this was already approved.

- d. *St. Sylvan's, Dunseith* – Rafael DeCoteau reported on the cemetery. It isn't clear if St. Sylvan's owns the cemetery. Rafael will do more research at Rolette County to determine if there are documents related to property titles. Donna Pettit volunteered to go to the Diocesan office to look for property records.
 - e. *Attention to church repairs* -- Tyrrell DeCoteau asked the Council to prioritize getting the above-listed churches repaired and staffed. Possibly NDCIM funding could be used for these repairs.
6. Other Reports – Not available for review.
- a. United Thank Offering
 - b. Commission on Ministry
 - c. ND Episcopal Foundation
 - d. Shepherds for New Season Goals
 - e. Congregational Development Committee
 - f. Creation Care & Reconciliation Committee
 - g. Personnel Committee
 - h. Canons Committee
 - i. Episcopal Relief & Development
7. Bishop's Report
- Priest-in-Charge vacancy at St. Sylvan's, Dunseith & St. Paul's, White Shield* -- After discussion about whether the Bishop should move forward with re-advertising for this position (a recent search failed), the Bishop stated that he would not decide at this moment, pending more discernment about posting the job versus waiting until the new bishop is on board. The Bishop will communicate his decision by the September Council zoom meeting.

Noonday Prayers & Lunch Break

VI. New Business

1. *Nominations for Convention elected Positions (pp. 37-38)* – Nomination form is in the packet.
 - Diocesan Treasurer - 1-year term
 - Convention Secretary - 1-year term
 - 1 Standing Committee, Clergy - 2-year term [The Standing Committee appointed Fr. Jamie Parsley to fill this position through October 2025; the Convention will need to elect to fill the remaining two-year term.]
 - 1 Standing Committee, Clergy - 3-year term [Deacon Elsie Magnus is eligible for a second term]
 - 1 Standing Committee, Lay - 3-year term [John Baird is eligible for a second term]
 - Two East Region Council Positions - 3-year term
 - Two West Region Council Positions - 3-year term [George Abdilnour and possibly Elaine McLaughlin are eligible for a second term]
 - Four General Convention Deputies, Lay
 - Four General Convention Deputies, Clergy
2. *Return to Ordained Episcopal Ministry for the Diocese of Albany*
 The Bishop of North Dakota needs to accept The Rev. Dr. Dean Kellerhouse back into the ministry and the Standing Committee has to agree so that the Diocese of Albany can assign him a parish. The Standing Committee will meet briefly after this DC meeting to vote on agreement.

3. *Diocesan Mineral Rights Council resolution from St. Stephen's Vestry (pp. 39-62)*
Bob Hoekstra made a motion, Beth Lipp seconded, to receive the resolution. 15 approved, 2 opposed (Amy Phillips and Leo Wilking). Motion by Amy Phillips, Tyrrell DeCoteau seconded, to hire an appropriate professional (for up to \$10,000) to research Diocesan titles and contracts for mineral rights. John Floberg and Leo Wilking volunteered to research titles before hiring a professional. Jason Thoms moved to table the motion, Bob Hoekstra seconded. 16 approved, 1 opposed (Amy Phillips). John Floberg said that the plan would be to report back the findings from his and Leo's research to the Diocesan Council at its November 2025 meeting.
4. *Diocesan property in Bismarck*
The Flobergs are interested in buying the property (their Bismarck home). Beth Lipp moved, Elsie Magnus seconded, that the Diocese get a fair market appraisal and then offer the house for purchase to the Flobergs. All voted in favor.

VII. Other New Business

Approval of 2026 and 2027 budgets – A Diocesan Council zoom meeting to approve the 2026 and 2027 budgets will take place on Monday, September 22 at 7pm.

VIII. Action Items review

1. Tyrrell will ask Jess if the Property Repair amount from page 16 of the Designated Funds document reflects equipment purchase for Dunseith.
2. Budget Line 3580 (p.14 of packet) – The Bishop will check on what the expense of \$2381.98 is.
3. For Wodakota Appeal funds, the Bishop will direct Jess to verify locations of food banks and to disperse the Appeal funds (half of which go to food banks).
4. Bishop will ask Jess to be in touch with St. John's senior warden about needed repair of basement water damage and to ask church insurance to pay for basement repair
5. Tyrrell and Rafael will talk with a St. Sylvan's neighboring property owner about paying the current tax and getting a quitclaim deed completed by October 1. If this cannot happen by October 1, the Diocese will pay the tax (\$811.86) so the church property isn't sold.
6. In relation to the St. Thomas pigeon damage, the Bishop will have Ashley follow up with the pest control person and the contractor, and the Bishop and Tyrrell will stay in touch with each other about progress. A report to Council will be provided.
7. Rafael will do more research with Rolette County to determine if there are documents related to property titles. Donna volunteered to go to the Diocesan office to look for property records. A report to Council will be provided.
8. Bishop Thom will report on his decision on the Priest-in-Charge vacancy at St. Sylvan's by the September DC zoom meeting.
9. John F. and Leo plan to report back to the Diocesan Council at its November 2025 meeting on the status of their mineral rights title/contract search.

Prayers led by Fr. Jamie Parsley

Adjournment

Diocesan Council for 2025

Standing Committee (Elected by Diocesan Convention)

- The Rev. Dn. Elsie Magnus St. Peter's, Walhalla 1st term | 2025
- Dr. John Baird St. Stephen's, Fargo 1st term | 2025
- The Rev. Jamie Parsley St. Stephen's, Fargo filing unexpired term | 2025
- The Rev. Dn. Beth Lipp St. George's, Bismarck 1st term | 2026
- Dr. Jason Thoms St. George's, Bismarck 2nd term | 2026
- Tyrrell DeCoteau St. Sylvan's, Dunseith 1st term | 2027

East Region: (Elected by Regional Convention Delegates)

- The Rev. Dn. John Anderson St. Stephen's, Fargo 2nd term | 2025
- Donna Pettit St. Paul's, Grand Forks 2nd term | 2025
- Susan Lisok St. John the Divine, Moorhead 1st term | 2026
- The Rev. Robert Hoekstra Grace, Jamestown 1st term | 2026
- Jael Mogga St. John the Divine, Moorhead 1st term | 2027
- Amy Phillips St. Stephen's, Fargo 1st term | 2027

West Region: (Elected by Regional Convention Delegates)

- George Abdilnour St. Peter's, Williston 1st term | 2025
- Elaine McLaughlin St. Jame's, Cannon Ball 1st term | 2025
- Raphael DeCoteau St. Sylvan's, Dunseith filing unexpired term | 2026
- Rachel Schmidt All Saints, Minot 1st term | 2026
- The Rev. Lindsey Dwarf St. Luke's, Fort Yates 1st term | 2027
- Karilee Liberman St. Paul's, White Shield 1st term | 2027

Ex Officio: *(with seat, voice, and vote)*

- Chancellor: Leo Wilking St. Stephen's, Fargo
- Treasurer: The Rev. John Floberg Standing Rock

Calendar Dates

53 rd Annual Convention	October 24-25, 2025 Prairie Knights, Ft. Yates
Diocesan Council St. Paul's, Grand Forks	November 21-22, 2025
Bishop Consecration <i>*tentative*</i>	March 14, 2026
Province VI Gathering	August 2026