

Diocesan Council Highlights April 2021

Diocesan Council met on Friday night April 23 and Saturday April 24 via Zoom. We were led in worship by the folks from the Prince Edward Island Region.

On Friday night, the meeting began with a presentation by Susan Barthos, who is a change management consultant. She was contracted to review the situation at the Diocesan Office following the retirements of Jan Connors, Gordon Redden, and the upcoming retirement of Glen Greencorn. Susan affirmed that the diocese, and the diocesan office is a state of major transformational change. The ongoing pandemic, coupled with a new bishop and the retirements of several people with large areas of work means that there is a lot that is shifting.

She recommends that the Diocese 1) identify and respond to immediate parish needs, 2) Identify and respond to diocesan office needs, 3) wait out the human impact of the pandemic, 4) wait out the financial impact of the pandemic 6) pause and strengthen until April 2022 5) plan a Synod for May 2022.

Council had a good discussion about these recommendations, and were very grateful to Susan for her work in meeting with the management team, and with staff at the Diocesan Office. She also recommends hiring employees for the roles of executive director and controller.

Bishop Sandra followed Susan Barthos. She reported to Council on the work she has been doing. Much of her time in parishes has been via the internet, but this has allowed her to participate or lead worship in many regions of the diocese. She also reflected on the success of the Clergy Quiet Day, which was held March 25 via Zoom. It was very well attended.

On Saturday morning, Council heard from Allie Colp, the Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator. She is working on helping the Youth and Family Ministry VSST get re-organized. A meeting was held, and there is a lot of excitement and energy. She also presented to Council about an idea to create some online courses for topics to do with youth ministry. This could include training that is required for volunteers, such as Healthy Boundaries, but also be expanded to many other areas. Council agreed this is a good use of her time.

John Morrell presented a draft document to Council from the Human Resources VSST. This is designed to describe what responsibilities exist in each parish, and help parishes in assigning this work to people. After much discussion, it was sent back to HR with a lot of suggestions.

The Creating Missional Communities VSST gave Council notice that they are going to begin a Facilities Repurposing/Community Revitalization working group. This group will work with parishes who have an interest in opening up the use of their building beyond church use.

Lisa Vaughn, the Parish Vitality Coordinator, presented her report. She has been busy as a member of the management team, working with the new Connectors Group and working with parishes. She let Council know about some upcoming book studies, and provided a list of good book resources. Lisa is also beginning an MBA program.

Glen Greencorn gave what will be his last report as Controller. The 2020 deficit is going to be slightly lower than anticipated, around \$321 000. This lower deficit is partly due to a number of parishes who have been able to pay outstanding allotment. He spoke about the effect of the pandemic on parishes and the diocese. Parishes saw their revenue decline by an average of 20.2%. The diocese collectively qualified for the CERB benefit for much of 2020.

Matthew Spongale presented as the chair of the Financial Management and Development VSST. The regular Audit is in process. The Rev. Will Ferrey and the Rev. Canon Lisa Vaughn have been appointed signing officers of the diocese.

Matthew Sponagle also presented on behalf of the Diocesan Times Management Board. The Times was recently asked to print a retraction of some material that had been published. The article in question was submitted by the Episcopal Search Committee and written by one of the nominees. It contained some information that was not correct. The situation was reviewed, and the DTMB suggested a number of items for Council to review and consider to clarify any future situations.

Bishop Sandra noted that it was the last meeting for Margie Fagan (Clergy, PEI) Laura Bird (Lay PEI) and Glen Greencorn (Controller). She thanked all three for their dedication and work while members of council.