

Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania
Minutes of the Standing Committee
February 6, 2018

Attendance: John Harwood+, Sarah Weedon, Sarah Weedon+, Jim Strader-Sasser+, Patrick Pierce+, Barbara Hutchinson+, Kate Harrigan+, Anthony Alexander, Drew Dorgan, Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer, Amy Swiernik, and +Audrey Scanlan. John Stevenson's absence was excused.

Following opening devotions led by Anthony, we reviewed the importance of our participating in the seasonal ordination interviews later this month and then affirmed our common understanding of group norms (see the attached) with only one small editorial emendation. The final version is attached.

We then reviewed the canonical responsibilities of the Standing Committee and assigned members to particular roles.

- Ordination (John and Amy are liaisons to the COM and will report to the SC regularly; Barbara and Anthony will be responsible for shaping the interview meetings)
- Property (our liaisons to the Finance Committee will be Drew, Patrick, and Sarah+)
- Counsel and advice (Sarah Weedon will work on the Cathedral review)
- TEC matters (Charlotte will ask John Stevenson if he would track elections of bishops in the TEC and help us stay current with the required paperwork)

TEC Matter

We unanimously consented to the election of a second bishop suffragan for the Diocese of Virginia.

Ordination

The Bishop reviewed the history of the workflow for the COM and the challenges to making the ordination process work more efficiently (e.g., the idea of a regional discernment committee had merit, but we could not make it work) and comply with our canons. With new leadership and clarification of processes, we expect to see improvement this year both for candidates and the committees involved.

Amy reported on her perspective on the queue of candidates in the process. (She will send out her materials before our February 20 meeting.)

Property

Chad Linder has reported that St. John's-Lancaster has provided all of the required information except the line of credit statement and their 2018 budget. He has significant concerns about the financial challenges facing the parish, which is drawing very heavily from their endowment funds to meet operational needs. Their annual meeting will be in March; their priest retires this month.

Counsel & Advice

Barbara provided an update on the work of the Design team (see attached). The team has met monthly to analyze the responses gathered at the Diocesan convention (2017), teasing out themes and opportunities for individuals, parishes, and convocations. This work will help prepare us for the spring convocations. The Diocese will also engage a consultant to help extrapolate themes and identify possible initiatives for missional projects.

Charlotte reported on the Cathedral study proposal. The consultant would like members of the SC to interview clergy, and she will provide us with training on the interview protocol. The results of the interviews will feed into the design process. The members of the Committee agreed to serve in this role.

Jim and Kate introduced the discussion of the missional church by engaging in a small-group activity. In summation, “being missional is about our identity as Christians,” Audrey noted. “We are partners with God in building the Kingdom.” This includes worship, being strengthened by the sacraments so that we are clear about our identity and purpose.

We will read *Participating in God’s Mission* to help us with our program. For our April meeting, we agreed to read chapters 1-2, review the index for topics of special relevance, and then determine our best focus for our future meetings. Jim suggested that we also find a means to discuss these ideas digitally. (Question: should this be a listserv? A private Facebook group? Other?)

Audrey provided updates on several projects, including the “sacramental access group,” which will have a report by May. The Cathedral project is underway, and so is the “Clergy Handbook.” She also reported that the Diocese is looking again at moving out of Pine 101, but no decision has been made yet.

Her other topics included campus ministries and the #MeToo movement. In the past the Diocese funded campus ministries, primarily at University Park. We have colleges and universities in many communities where we have churches (and there are grants to support campus ministries). But how else could we make an investment that would make a difference in the lives of young people (15-35), a huge demographic in the US? To focus on our denomination might not be the best way forward: there are many possible strategies and programs for engagement.

Re: #MeToo, the Presiding Bishop and Gay Jennings have stressed the need for repentance for sins committed within the Church but also in the broader culture. But who should repent? How? When? Should the Diocese sponsor a program that would respond to these needs – pastoral and/or liturgical? We agreed that the topic is timely, complicated, and worthy of serious reflection and discussion.

Charlotte concluded the meeting with a prayer from the Moravian Daily Texts.

Winter Ordination Interview Meeting: February 20, 2018, 12 noon
Next Standing Committee Meeting: April 3, 2018, 1p.m.