



Episcopal Diocese of
Eastern Oregon

Diocesan Council
Minutes
April 28-29, 2023
Sunriver Christian Fellowship, Sunriver

Present:

The Rt. Rev. Patrick Bell, Bishop

Class of 2023

Barbara Reynolds

The Rev. Ann Marie Hardin (SC)

Beth Spell

Class of 2024

The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake (SC)

Terry Rahmsdorff (SC)

The Rev. Ray Jeff Spreier

Cory Bradshaw

Angela Pursel

Class of 2025

The Rev. Kelly Mahon (SC)

David Kosar

The Rev. Jonathan Galles

Ellen Nesbitt (SC)

Ex Officio

Patty Olson-Lindsey, Treasurer

The Rev. Charlotte Wells, Secretary of Convention

Seat and Voice

Amy Jayne, Ascension Executive Director

Lisa Boquist, Secretary to Council

Guest:

The Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley, Office of Pastoral
Development

Absent:

Karly Nash (SC)

Betty Palmer

Call to Order

Bishop Pat called the meeting order at 5:02pm and Beth Spell opened with prayer. Bishop Pat introduced The Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley from the Office of Pastoral Development.

- The agenda was accepted with no additions.

M/S/C

Motion to approve the minutes from February 7, 2023 (Barbara Reynolds Mayo, Charlotte Wells)

Ascension School Update

Executive Director Amy Jayne gave a power point presentation highlighting the work that has been happening at Ascension School since Diocesan Council last met. Some updates included:

- Summer Camp's theme this year is "Belong" and registration is open on the Ascension School website.
- The furnace in the girl's dorm has quit working and she is working with a HVAC company to replace not only that furnace but the one in the boy's dorm as well. The replacement will include a new gas furnace with an electric heat pump and the wiring will be converted to accommodate future solar panel implantation.
- New floors will be installed in Kimsey Commons in the next month – this was possible by an increase in a grant from the Grey Family Foundation that had provided funds for updates to the dorms.
- Amy explained the need for a new shop building on campus that would not only allow for more secure storage of Ascension School's equipment but would also be used as a storage facility for the diocesan archives which will be moved from their current location in The Dalles this spring. Amy would like Diocesan Council's permission to submit a grant to the Eastern Oregon Episcopal Foundation to assist with funding this project.

M/S/C *Motion to approve a grant application to the Eastern Oregon Episcopal Foundation with an additional provision to include fire protection and security measures. (Aletha Bonebrake, Cory Bradshaw)*

- Amy also gave an update on the Trail Project and shared a budget that she has created to track the income and expenses of the project. During the financial update there is a section that will highlight the diocesan responsibility for the project and how that is accounted for.
- Caretakers of the Land continues to grow and thrive. Bobby and Brosnan continue to receive grants and are being asked to participate in and lead many different events around cultural revitalization.
- The Advisory Board continues to work on the master plan for Ascension School. Once step that they have taken is to update Ascension School's Mission Statement to read:

Ascension School is A Place Apart to connect with God's sacred mystery, celebrating the dignity, diversity, and oneness of all creation.

M/S/C *Motion to approve the changes and updates to the Ascension Mission Statement. (David Kosar, Charlotte Wells)*

- Program Director Roman Heidrich and Operations Manager Katie Sanchez have given their notice and will be leaving Ascension School in mid-August for a new adventure in Bend. Amy is in talks with Megan Cox and Nate Cogsdale to fill those roles. Megan would cover the Program Director position and Nate would be Operations, with some aspects of those jobs shared between the two.

Financial Report – Patty Olson-Lindsey

Treasurer Patty Olson-Lindsey gave the following updates on the finances and presented recommendations from the Finance Committee.

- Due to the deficits experienced in both the EDEO budget and the Ascension School budget finance committee is recommending balancing the 2022 shortfalls with the money that was set aside from surplus funds garnered through the PPP loan and the Employee Retention Credit. There is currently \$90,000 set aside in this fund.

M/S/C *Motion to accept the recommendation from Finance Committee to use the Budget Surplus fund to balance the 2022 budgets of both Ascension School and EDEO. (Barbara Reynolds Mayo, Ray Jeff Spreier)*

- **2023 Budget Adjustments**

The following are recommendations from Finance Committee for transfers from designated funds to support changes to the 2023 budget.

M/S/C *Motion to approve the recommendation from Finance Committee to make the following adjustments to the 2023 budget. (David Kosar, Ray Jeff Spreier)*

- *Transfer an additional \$22,000 from the Strategic Development fund to support the Transition Minister and Diocesan Administrator compensation lines.*
- *Transfer an additional \$30,000 from the Indigenous Ministry fund to support the work of the Truth and Conciliation Commission and to support the administrative support for Caretakers of the Land that is provided by EDEO staff.*
- *Reduce the previously budgeted \$5,000 from the Diversity Fund to an annual \$1,500 transfer until the fund is depleted.*
- *Update the following expense lines to reflect new ministries and adjustments based on yearend numbers from 2022.*
 - *Add a line for Faithful Innovation Commission with a base budget of \$2,000, these funds were already budgeted in the New Ministry line and have just been reallocated.*
 - *Increase the budgeted amount for Truth and Conciliation Commission from \$5,000 to \$12,000.*
 - *Increase the budgeted amount for Diocesan Council from \$9,000 to \$15,000.*
 - *Increase staff expense line from \$7,000 to \$9,000 to reflect cost increases in travel.*
 - *Increase Diocesan Administrator salary from \$58,245 to \$68,000.*
 - *Add an expense line for Transition Minister of \$12,000. Transition minister will be paid \$2,000 per parish that they assist in addition to all expenses.*
 - *Add an expense line for Caretakers of the Land of \$20,000.*
 - *Increase the Photocopy line from \$3,500 to \$4,500 to reflect an increase in copy costs.*
 - *Reduce General Insurance Package from \$16,687 to \$11,477, which more accurately represents the actual diocesan cost, without other property coverages.*

- Patty is continuing to work with the Finance Committee to create a Short-Term Investment Policy and is hoping to have that ready for Council approval at the July meeting.

- Lisa reported that the diocese is changing their accounting program from QuickBooks to Shelby Financial, which should be more compatible with non-profit church accounting. That move will happen in May.

Standing Committee Report

The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake offered the following updates from Standing Committee:

- Standing Committee president, The Rev. Kelly Mahon is working on finding appraiser for St. Paul's in Klamath Falls and will report back to Diocesan Council for approval of that expenditure.
- St. Paul's in The Dalles has listed the old Diocesan House for sale, and it has been on the market for a month.
- Standing Committee is in ongoing discussions around the bishop election in Florida which has brought up some concerns.
- They are also working on updating the role of Standing Committee within EDEO.

Convention Committee Report

Bishop Pat and Lisa gave a brief update on convention.

- St. Paul's in The Dalles is working on site details.
- +Pat is finalizing some programing items and the theme. A much more comprehensive report will be available at the July meeting.
- Lisa reminded the outgoing members of both Diocesan Council and Standing Committee that they are the search committee tasked with encouraging people to run for the seats that will be vacant.

Adjourned

The meeting adjourned for the day at 7:40pm.

Saturday, May 1, 2023

Call to Order

Bishop Pat reconvened the meeting at 8:04am and Beth opened with prayer.

Bishop's Report

Bishop Pat gave the following updates:

- There are several parishes in the search process in EDEO, including our 3 largest congregations:
 - Church of the Transfiguration in Sisters
 - Trinity in Bend
 - All Saints of the Cascades in Sunriver
 - St. Mark's/Church of the Good Shepherd in Madras
 - Hopeful Saints in Heppner

EDEO's Transition Officer, The Rev. Marilyn Roth is partnering with The Rev. Neysa Ellgren from the Diocese of Oregon on the search at Transfiguration so that she can gain experience in the process. She will work with the rest of the congregations in the process on her own.

During the interim The Rev. Jeff Bullock will be filling in at Trinity and the Rev. John Collins at Transfiguration. No interim has been assigned to Sunriver as of this meeting.

- Over Easter +Pat visited Lakeview and Bonanza. Bonanza has about 3 or 4 faithful members and Lakeview is close to making a decision to possibly close. +Pat has committed to go down 2 or 3 times a year to provide Eucharist.
- Redmond will also likely close this year.
- Amy, Patty, and Lisa will all travel to Coeur d'Alene in May for a planning retreat.
- +Pat will attend the B+E+S+T Conference in Portland Oregon the first week of May along with 9 other bishops from Province VIII. B+E+S+T is the annual conference for Bishop's Assistants.
- The Truth and Conciliation Commission continues to meet regularly, and Sarah Augustine has agreed to meet regularly with them. The commission has joined the Repair Network which is a national group that is working towards dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery. EDEO is the first non-Mennonite member of the group.
- The Faithful Innovation Commission will have their first official meeting in June and will be working with Tom Brackett on a plan for moving forward with their work.
- Talks continue between EDEO and St. Paul's regarding the property at 601 Union Street in The Dalles. If St. Paul's decides they do not want to take ownership of that property, then Standing Committee and Diocesan Council will need to decide on what to do with that property.
- +Pat asked Diocesan Council to consider donating the Klamath Falls property to the local indigenous communities as part of our reparations. This will need further discussion before any decision can be made. Asking DC to consider this for further discussion.
- Beth Spell suggested that Sacred Ground would be a good foundation for racial reconciliation work within the Diocesan Council. She will follow up with DC members to see who might be interested in joining in on this project.

EDEO Long Range Planning Session with Bishop Ousley

Bishop Ousley shared some observations about EDEO and offered some possibilities for its future. A recording of Bishop Ousley's remarks is available upon request.

- There are 3 steps when a diocese enters a transition:
 - Pre-Contemplation – this is where creativity and imagination live and where EDEO might discover a path forward.
 - Serious Contemplation
 - Transition

- Budgets are a good tool to discern the health of a diocese. EDEO's budget is fairly typical but it may be advisable to report the budget in a way that also includes Ascension School, a consolidated financial statement. By doing this it would more obviously project the values and mission of the diocese.
- The essence of Eastern Oregon appears to be a diocese that is relational, accepting, and affirming. These values were obvious at Collegium, in the Diocesan commitment to the land, in Ascension School's new mission statement, and in this gathering of Diocesan Council. The process of transition needs to embody these internal values and we need to design a process that will reflect values.
- A successful transition needs:
 - Collaboration across all orders, lay, deacon, priest, and bishop.
 - All spaces within the diocese need to be listened to in a way that is affirming.
 - We need to look for the voices that are missing, those outside of the typical boundaries, maybe people who are involved or served by missions that EDEO is engaged in but don't necessarily attend church.
- Lack of money is not a hurdle, it just brings us to a place of imagination, creativity, and abundance.
 - EDEO does not have the budget for a full-time bishop but by using imagination we can look towards a new way forward.
- Bishop Pat will be 72 January 1st, 2024 which is only 8 months away. The Canons say bishops must resign all jurisdiction at age 72, but he will be able to continue to serve EDEO with a few steps:
 - Bishop Pat will resign as bishop as of January 1st, 2024.
 - Standing Committee will become the Ecclesiastical Authority in EDEO.
 - Standing Committee, along with Diocesan Council, will call +Pat to be the Assisting Bishop for the diocese and grant that ecclesiastical authority back to him.
 - This arrangement can be written, approved/affirmed any time prior to January as long as it is dated as *affective* January 1, 2024 so that there will be little to no disruption in the running of the diocese.
 - A new LOA will need to be drawn up specifying the duties given to +Pat as Assisting Bishop and any language referring to him a "diocesan" bishop will need to be updated.
- This model of Standing Committee and Assisting Bishop can work well and give EDEO time to explore other, more creative, models which could possible include:
 - Shared bishop – could be a bishop diocesan who also becomes our provisional and assistant. Or we elect a bishop and there is a partnership between several diocese that either remain separate but collaborative, or eventual combination.
 - Several people doing different roles – slicing and dicing roles through different bishops or people within the roles.
 - Expanded role of clergy and lay.
 - Partnerships with Diocesan Council and Standing Committee.

- Decentral not geographically contained – disbursed. We could decide in the future that the person who does the purely required bishop things is someone who live far away but is present when certain things require a bishop.
- Some things to consider when thinking about new and different models:
 - There should be clarity in naming roles.
 - Accountability needs to be a big part of the discussion, who is accountable to who?
 - Financial implications and organization.
 - Don 't be afraid to look to other denominations for models of leadership.
 - +Todd will monitor our progress and keep open the possibility of a “different way”.
- EDEO’s current model is already very creative. Our bishop does not reside in the diocese, the work of the diocese is handled by a team of bishop, staff, and volunteers.
- +Todd presented the following idea for Diocesan Council to consider:
 - What if we identified some dioceses who are in similar situations of movement into a place to think reflectively and more long-term in what leadership and mission support will look like. Dioceses that have contextual similarity to Eastern Oregon, like:
 1. Eastern and Western Michigan
 2. North Dakota
 3. Western Kansas
 4. Maybe Vermont or New Hampshire
 5. Maybe Montana
 6. Nevada

If we enter a process with members from these dioceses to do “*strategic thinking*” not strategic planning, to change the mindset around new models, not plan for them. It would be a think tank of dioceses in similar circumstances. Bishop Ousley would like to propose bringing on The Rev. Lydia Kelsey Bucklin from Northern Michigan to help with the process and to apply for a Roanridge Grant to help fund it, with perhaps a small financial buy in from each diocese involved. The goal would be to imagine Episcopal Leadership models and create a learning community that supports and challenges one another.

M/S/C Motion to affirm EDEO’s willingness to participate in a coalition with other dioceses to explore and imagine new episcopal leadership models. (Ann Marie Hardin, Charlotte Wells)

Bishop Todd will talk with Lydia and the other diocese to ascertain their involvement. Amy will work with him on the Roanridge Grant application.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:55am.

Next Meeting – July 28-29 at St. Stephen’s in Baker City