



Episcopal Diocese of
Eastern Oregon

Diocesan Council/Leadership Gathering
Minutes of the Meeting
April 12-14, 2024
Ascension School, Cove

Present:

The Rt. Rev. Patrick Bell, Bishop

Class of 2024

The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake (SC)

Betty Palmer

Angela Pursel

Joel Bigelow (SC)

Class of 2025

The Rev. Kelly Mahon (SC)

David Kosar

Cory Bradshaw

Ellen Nesbitt (SC)

Class of 2026

Barbara Reynolds (SC)

Beth Spell

Holly Hendricks

The Rev. Roy Green

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

Absent:

The Rev. Ray Jeff Spreier

Guests:

Mieke Vandersall

Erin Weber Johnson

Megan Cox (Cove)

Nathan Cogsdale (Cove)

Cindy Feibert (Ontario)

George Nairns (Heppner)

Najaria Esty (La Grande)

The Rev. Jan Kozak (Madras)

The Rev. Joann Dickson (La Grande)

The Rev. Marilyn Roth (The Dalles)

The Rev. Joyce Atchley (Canyon City)

Friday, April 12, 2024

The Standing Committee meeting preceded the Diocesan Council at 4:00pm.

Call to Order

Bishop Pat called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. Beth Spell opened with prayer. Amy Jayne introduced Erin Weber Johnson and Mieke Vandersall, the representatives from the Vandersall Collective, who led a presentation on the Feasibility Study and Case Statement that they were contracted to develop for the upcoming Ascension School Capital Campaign.

Saturday, April 12, 2024

Beth Spell called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

M/S/C *Motion to approve the minutes from February 24, 2024, with corrections.
(Roy Green, Charlotte Wells)*

Standing Committee Report -The Rev. Kelly Mahon

- Kelly reported that Standing Committee drafted a new LOA for Bishop Pat as he moves into his new role as Assisting Bishop. The LOA was approved and signed by Kelly, as president of Standing Committee, and Bishop Pat. The LOA will expire on December 31, 2024, and will be renegotiated each year on that date. Under the Assisting Bishop model Standing Committee is the Ecclesiastical Authority and will be taking a more active role in the leadership of the diocese and will be interacting with staff more than in the previous model of Diocesan Bishop.
- Standing Committee voted to elect The Rev. Liz Cahill to fill the 2026 clergy vacancy. She will begin her tenure at the August meeting.
- There is a group that is interested in the St. Paul's property in Klamath Falls. The Rev. Georgia Giacobbe is assisting Kelly and the realtor with finding building blueprints and plans, which the interested party inquired about. The Klamath Falls police are also increasing their patrols and enforcing trespassing laws around the property as the neighbors have been complaining about some transients camping and loitering on the campus.
- St Stephen's has agreed to take on the care and upkeep of St. Brigid's in the Pines. According to Aletha Bonebrake, repairs from the flooding that occurred last fall will be done by the end of next week. Those repairs were covered by Church Insurance. Aletha also reported that they will use the building as an outreach center for the community.

Financial Report – Treasurer Patty Olson Lindsey

- Patty reviewed the 2023 year-end numbers. There are still some expected additions to the income for that year, including a possible assessment correction from Trinity, and a transfer from an incorrectly applied property insurance payment. There is a slight deficit from 2023 and Finance Committee will be gathering to discuss how to balance both the EDEO budget and Ascension School’s budget, as previously reported on.
- Bishop Pat shared that Patty will be stepping down at convention and David Kosar will be stepping in as Diocesan Treasurer at that time. Council thanked Patty for her work and dedication.

Diocesan Council Vacancy

M/S/C *Motion to elect The Rev. Pamela Miller to Diocesan Council, Class of 2025.
(Patrick Bell, Aletha Bonebrake)*

Convention Report

- The 2024 convention will be held at Ascension School with an overarching theme of Faithful Innovation.
- Ascension School will be celebrating its 100 year anniversary.
- Workshops will again be included. Juli Stratton has agreed to come back to offer a workshop and also Tai Chi.

Bishop Report

Bishop Pat shared that the rest of the weekend would be spent continuing the conversation around a new model for the future of EDEO. The Diocesan Council and staff began talking about the possibilities almost 2 years ago and the November 2023 Diocesan Council weekend brought other key leaders into the conversation. The Assisting Bishop model, which we are now working with due to the 72 mandatory retirement age for Diocesan Bishops, is one that is unique to EDEO. Because of its uniqueness there is some freedom in the development of how to move forward. Over the last 2 years, and especially since the November meeting, the staff along with the Standing Committee President and Treasurer, have been working on a potential model for how EDEO might operate in a sustainable way into the future. While this is a potential model, it is also fluid and will need to be adapted and refined should Diocesan Council approve moving forward with something like this.

Potential Model for a New Way

Kelly Mahon presented a power point outlining the current model, with the existing roles and job duties of the bishop, staff, and diocesan officers and leadership. He then presented an outline for a future model that would rearrange the current job description and add the position of Canon for Diocesan Vitality. The hope is that this reorganization would lead EDEO to the Team Episcopate model that Bishop Ousley had suggested when he met with Diocesan Council in the spring of 2023.

The potential model presentation is included at the end of these minutes.

Small Group Discussions

- The group was broken into small groups and asked to use the S.W.O.T Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) method to analyze their reactions and thoughts around the presentation.

Large Group Discussions

Each group shared their results from their discussions. A synopsis of their findings is as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Offers financial sustainability and fits with our current 2 year time frame.
- Helps us focus on Diocesan priorities.
- The current team is very capable.
- Elevates and empowers Standing Committee and Diocesan Council.
- Places us in a proactive, rather than a reactive, model.
- Offers stability.
- Everyone has an opportunity to grow into their calling, using talents wisely.
- We have a current bishop who can step back and nurture this model as our shepherd.
- When we get this right, we can hire to make the model successful in perpetuity.
- There is flexibility in the model – Team Work!
- Shared responsibilities.
- De-centralized and De-siloed.
- Can be modeled by the current bishop.
- The new Canon position would offer a full-time, boots on the ground position.
- Economical compared to a search.
- Offers the ability to do “vision” better.
- EDEO is small, which provides a more shared commitment, which leads to community trust.
- Allows EDEO to remain autonomous.

WEAKNESSES

- There is no Communication Director position.
- Collaboration only happened at the “hub” February – April 2024.
- Lack of pastoral care for the clergy included in the model.
- The roles and boundaries need clarity.
- Potential conflict of interest between staff and parishes.
- Don’t always have enough volunteers for leadership positions.
- A shifting target.
- Aging.
- Year by year bishop model may create a lack of continuity, shallow commitment, and a steep learning curve.
- Are we trading salary for less experience.
- Timing of potential model could interfere with Ascension Capital Campaign.
- Could be difficult to bring our congregations along.
- Dependent on frequent and effective communication.
- Will we be able to find people of equal competence to fill roles if staff/leadership resign.

OPPORTUNITIES

- This model gives us staff stability.
- We can try things and change them as we are not bound to a system.
- Opportunities to develop intentional relationships between Team Episcopate and the diocese.
- Model the transition.
- Congregations can develop a relationship with a full time Canon for Diocesan Vitality and that person/position may appeal to the younger generation.
- Opportunities to find and develop lay leader strengths, creating a “brain trust” in areas like legal, HR, insurance, etc.
- An Ascension-centric model is dynamic.
- Nimble model helps us meet the needs of our changing role as a church. Numbers in pews vs. community outreach and engagement.
- Reinvigorate the diocese with a younger vision.
- Builds capacity among clergy and laity.
- Develop stronger communications between Standing Committee and Diocesan Council.
- Bishop Pat can lead and mentor the new Canon for the next 2 years before he retires.
- Continued leadership development.
- Model might be attractive to younger people as there is less hierarchy (flattening the curve.)

- This would be a model/case study for the National Church.
- Growth and revitalization.
- Establish new mentors for clergy.
- Financial savings to the diocese.

THREATS

- Clergy will leave if they feel unsupported.
- Could be taken over by another diocese.
- Unintended consequences – we don't know what we don't know.
- Governing by consensus can be messy.
- Aging.
- Decision fatigue/different polity.
- Loss of Episcopal culture and identity.
- Change is scary!
- This model is based on the people/staff we have now.
- Ascension-centric model overshadows EDEO's mission and vision.
- 2nd tier bishop figurehead vs. honored and valued relationship.
- General uncertainty of our time.
- Sustainability of vision.
- Divergent attitudes/feelings about the role of a bishop.
- Could lose crucial staff and disrupt the process.
- Lost opportunity – could lose our diocesan identity.
- Loss of relationships.
- Pushing this agenda too hard and too fast.
- We get what we pay for in a 1/3 time bishop.

Other questions and concerns that came up during the discussion:

- Will this cause our canons to be rewritten?
 - Yes – we will need to change them if this model is adopted.
- Does this change need to be ratified by Convention?
- Should we move to bimonthly meetings of Diocesan Council while we are trying to figure out this new way?

Charlotte offered a centering prayer, and a vote was called, first among the guest leadership which voted 7 in favor with one abstention and then among the Diocesan Council which voted 13 in favor and 1 abstention.

M/S/C *Motion to approve in principle the proposed Team Episcopate model as presented. (Roy Green, Charlotte Wells)*

With the approval to move forward with the new model the following items will need to be developed:

- Timeline
- Job Descriptions
- Communication Plan
- Financial plan

Adjourn

Bishop Pat adjourned the meeting at 4:53pm, and let people know that if they did not wish to stay for further discussion on Sunday morning, they were free to go home.

Sunday, April 13, 2024

Reflections

With the departure of much of the group on Saturday evening, Sunday morning was spent sharing reflections about the discussions and decisions from Saturday. The following is a list of things that were shared or questioned:

- How will we communicate this moving forward?
- A letter should be sent out to parishes explain the decision and should include:
 - The reason why a transition needs to happen (Pat's age and move to assisting bishop, etc.)
 - The letter should come from Kelly and Beth.
 - The letter should come out this week.
- A video of Bishop Pat explaining the process might be helpful.
- The weekend felt rushed, especially at the end, and there should have been more time allotted for working through this.
- There should have been more time for prayer.
 - Utilized the chapel more.
 - Offer compline.
 - Rest and quiet time built in more.
- It was too much all at once, especially for clergy who also attended Collegium the same week.
- Lisa should send out a poll to find a time to meet in June, and every other month thereafter.

Capital Campaign Update

Bishop Pat met with Erin and Mieke on Saturday evening and reported that they are feeling very positive with the results that they have received so far from both interviews and surveys that have already started to come in. They are feeling optimistic that we will be able to move forward with the campaign.

EDEO might consider financially supporting the campaign by retaining the Vandersall Collective to run the solicitation phase of the campaign. The cost is usually around 10-15% of the campaign's goal, so it may be close to \$120,000. This would also include assistance with communication around the new model that EDEO will be stepping into.

Eucharist

The Rev. Roy Green led Eucharist and the group departed at 10:00am.

Future Meetings

- August 9-10, 2024, Location TBD
- November 15-17, 2024, Ascension School



Episcopal Diocese of
Eastern Oregon



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Potential Model for a New Way

Team Episcopate

EDEO-Diocesan Council-2024

Current Roles

Diocesan Bishop
(Half-Time)

**Dio Administrator &
Executive Assistant to
the Bishop**
(Full-Time)

**Ascension School
Program Director**
(Full-Time)

**Ascension School
Operations Director**
(Full-Time)

**Executive Director of
Ascension School**
(Full-Time)

Current Roles

Standing Committee

- Sale of Property
- Bishop Elections
- Ordination Certifications
- Council of Advice for the Bishop
- Ecclesiastical Authority in the absence of a Bishop
- Title IV Review Committee

Officers of Diocese

1. Treasurer
2. Secretary of Convention
3. Transition Officer
4. Chancellor

Diocesan Council

- General oversight of the Diocese between Conventions
- Visioning
- Financial Stewardship of the Diocese
- Evaluation of Program & Policy
- Parish Support
- Diocesan Liaison

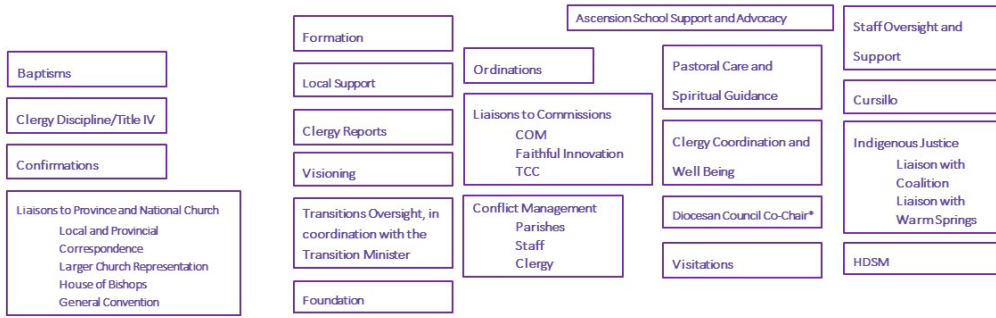
Current Roles

Ascension School Advisory Board
Commission on Ministry (COM)
Convention Committee
Cursillo Community of Eastern Oregon
Diocesan Archive Coordinator
EDEO Episcopal Foundation Trustees
Ecclesiastical Disciplinary Board
Faithful Innovation Commission
Finance Committee
General Convention Deputation
Truth and Conciliation Commission

Diocesan Bishop



½ Time



Diocesan Administrator Executive Assistant to the Bishop



Full Time

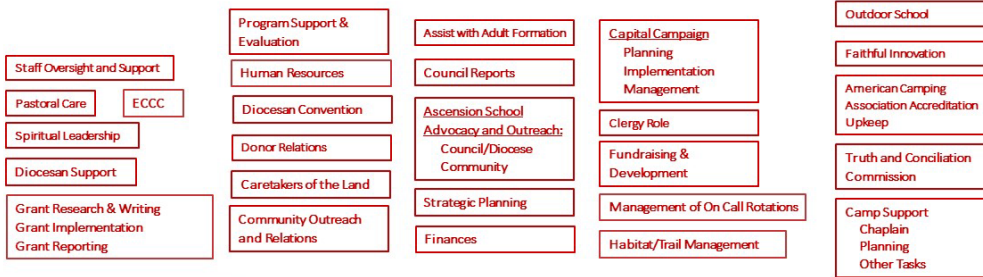


Executive Director of Ascension School



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time

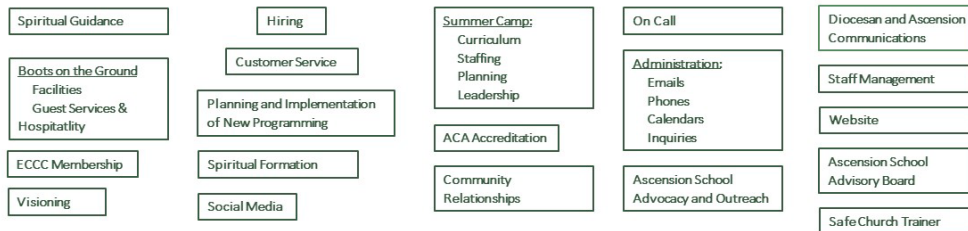


Ascension School Program Director



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time



Ascension School Operations Director



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time



Potential Model



Assisting Bishop



1/3 to Half Time

Baptisms

Ordinations

Visitations

Clergy Discipline/Title IV

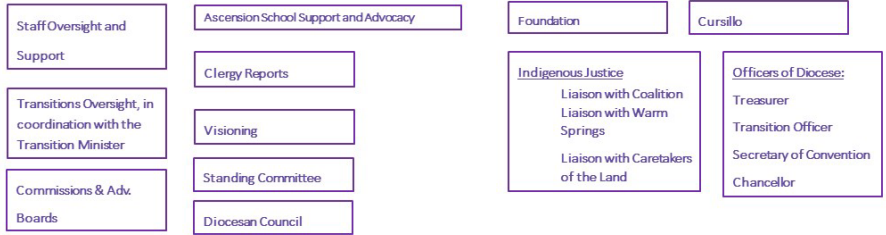
Confirmations

Liaisons to Province and National

Church:

- Local and Provincial Correspondence
- Larger Church Representation
- House of Bishops
- General Convention

Team Episcopate



Diocesan Administrator Executive Assistant to the Bishop



Full Time



Canon for Diocesan Vitality



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time

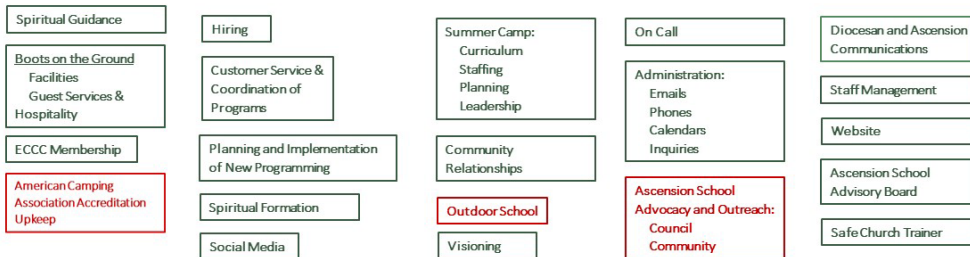


Ascension School Program Director



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time



Ascension School Operations Director



Ascension School
Camp & Conference Center

Full Time

