

Executive Council Minutes
February 18, 2020 | Diohouse

Attendance: **Present** **Absent** **Telephone** **Excused**

Officers:

The Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus Bishop and President **P**
The Rev. Jane Stratford Chair **P**
Richard Patenaude Vice Chair **P**
Mees Tielens Secretary **P**

Class of 2020:

The Rev. Jane Stratford **P**
The Rev. Debra Low-Skinner **P**
Aidan Jobe Sea **P**
Thomas La France **P**
Charles Mader **P**
Patrick Anderson **P**

Class of 2021:

Bruce Morrow **P**
Eleanor Prugh **P**
Mees Tielens **P**
Richard Patenaude **P**
Don Miller **T**
The Rev. Merry Chan Ong **P**

Class of 2022:

Marj Leeds **A**
The Rev. Ginger Strickland **A**
Tom Matthews **P**
Anna Haight **P**
Birgit Eschmann **P**

Bishop's Appointees:

Robyn Amos **P**
Miguel Bustos **P**
The Rev. Liz Tichenor **P**

Ex-officio members:

The Rev. Richard Edward Helmer Secretary of the Convention **T**
Brad Barber Treasurer of the Diocese **P** until 5:30PM

Diocesan Staff:

The Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey *Canon to the Ordinary* **P**
Tom Ferguson CFO **P**
Stephanie Martin Taylor Working Group Head for Communication **A**

Other attendees:

Christopher Hayes, Esq. Chancellor of the Diocese **P**
Albe Larsen Standing Committee **P**

4:32 PM Call to Order and Opening Prayer (Liz Tichenor)

4:35 PM Approval Item

Meeting Agenda approved.

Minutes of Jan 24, 2020 meeting approved with amendments.

4:40 PM “Left Hand Column” check –in (Jane Stratford) Discussion Item

The idea of the left hand column was introduced at the retreat in January: everybody brings certain experiences, filters, or perspectives (the ‘left hand column’) to a conversation that influence how those conversations go. Meetings go better when we are aware of our left hand columns. Jane asks EC members to check in on their left hand columns in pairs.

4:44PM Norms (Richard Patenaude) Discussion Item

Richard walks us through the EC norms he disseminated prior to the meeting. On confidentiality: it is true that outside of executive sessions, all EC meetings are open to the public. But even if it’s not confidential or secret, some of the information we handle is sensitive and our norm is to handle those items with discretion. Canon Abbott adds that it is important to respect the timing of communications and the channels through which they are communicated.

4:48 PM Recap of Retreat: Discussion Item

- What would you want those not at the retreat to know about the retreat?

The retreat was collaborative, open, and a good summary of and primer for all the items we cover and need to accomplish in the next year. Creating a one year vision statement on what we personally and collectively wanted to do this year was very effective. Together, we articulated 3-5 big items for the council to focus on. Bishop Marc will email those items around for further discussion.

The opening icebreaker on Wednesday night was as an activity that centered worship and how we all experience our faith, and it was particularly valuable to highlight that given how business oriented the work is that EC does.

4:55 PM Financial Reports (Brad Barber)

For the last several years funds have been managed by DFMS (Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society) rather than internally by the diocese. It was an excellent year with an extraordinary return of 22.7%. The net return was 22% (well above benchmark). Funds grew from \$22.75 million to \$24.05 million. Any real estate holdings are not included in this figure as that is not managed by DFMS.

The Finance Committee met on 2/12/20 and reviewed the first month’s performance. There was not a lot of activity and a reported surplus of \$60,000 for the month, which will resolve as the year goes on because funds are not spent evenly each month.

The LOC report shows very little activity. There was a \$12,000 payment from Berkeley Food and Housing Project. There is a good amount of money available to lend to eligible entities.

The Aging and Arrears report also shows little activity, but does show a payment from St. Dorothy’s Rest. Most congregations are in good shape and reasonably current; a few have arrears in excess of 90 days and those congregations/institutions are a subject of continuing discussion at EC (St Michael’s and All Angels, St Dorothy’s Rest).

5:01 PM Bishop's Time

The decision to move funds to DFMS was a result of pretty intense discussions at multiple Diocesan Conventions about socially responsible investments and a possible divestment from fossil fuels. There was a concern about whether socially responsible investments would pay off so it is heartening to see that our investments are doing well.

Reflecting on the travel Bishop Marc does around the diocese: our congregations are different and similar at the same time. It is a beautiful experience to get to travel around the diocese and see that firsthand.

The spring retreat meeting of the House of Bishops is in March. They hold two meetings a year and will be preparing for the Lambeth Conference this time. Lambeth happens every two years but was delayed in 2018 for 2020. It will be a conference with a lot of controversy around the issue of blessing same gender relationships. We continue to affirm our stance.

Lambeth will also see some environmental interventions that Bishop Marc is involved in.

The Church of the Resurrection in Pleasant Hill is hosting a celebration of new ministry to install the Rev. Liz Tichenor as rector in March.

The Diocese is commemorating the 50th celebration of Earth Day in April 2020 with a one-week celebration, featuring the following activities:

- Eco Confirmation at Grace Cathedral in which all may reaffirm baptismal vows but also their commitment to supporting the dignity of the earth.

- Yoga on the Labyrinth

- Bishop Marc will preach at the Vine that Wednesday

- an ODC dance performance that celebrates our connection to the earth

- labyrinth walk on Friday with Laurel Artress encouraging mindfulness to the earth

Diocesan staff engaged with *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* in which the filmmaker (Katrina Browne) discovered her ancestors were the largest slave-trading family in US history and retraces that history. This story has been shared with 450 congregations to deepen the work of racial reconciliation and the diocese plans to bring them back to work with deaneries. While the diocese has engaged with multiculturalism, it is important to engage directly with black-white relations in some way. The multicultural circle has had poor participation and bringing this work to the deaneries will hopefully make it easier for people to participate.

Canon Abbott adds that the 2019 convention honored indigeneous voices and we committed to continuing that conversation. As a part of that, the keynote at the Beloved Community training on March 7 will be given by Lewis Powell, the Indigenous Ministries Missioner. He will also lead a workshop that day. Miguel Bustos tells EC about the know your neighbor program Glide Memorial and Grace Cathedral are doing together. Glide and Grace are four blocks and a million miles away from each other. The first iteration got good turn out from Grace and good responses from Glide. Hoping to establish relationships in both directions.

Charles Mader: the 2019 convention passed a resolution about purchasing carbon offsets after traveling. Charles suggests people write a check to their parish garden committee instead of to an airline to offset their travel.

Debbie Low Skinner: the Japanese-American community in SF had their annual day of remembrance. Debbie highlights that they continue to remember those who were incarcerated in internment camps, and that the Japanese American community advocates for those incarcerated today. Advocacy works includes working against against ICE detention centers, the muslim ban, and children held at Fort Sill in Oklahoma.

5:24 PM Break

5:37 PM Matters before Council *Approval Item*

- Dissolution of St. Elizabeth's and St. Andrews' (Cn. Abbott Bailey)

The Standing Committee has accepted the two church's proposal to create one congregation, keeping the name of SEA Church. They have been worshipping together since 2011 and this decision comes at the end of a thoughtful, prayerful process that originated with the missions themselves. The EC must then vote on the dissolution of the two missions.

Birgit Eschmann moves to dissolve St Elizabeth's and St Andrew's. All vote in favor.

- Request from Santiago St. James to draw down from reserves (Cn. Abbott bailey)

Context: the EC functions as the congregational development committee, so significant requests around finance and budget that come to the bishop's office have to be approved by the EC.

Santiago St James has \$285,000 in reserves and is requesting to draw on \$37,000 this year to finance their ongoing life and mission. SSJ is a very responsible mission and is in the process of redevelopment. Their average attendance (and pledging) has doubled since their parttime vicar came on board. A diverse group of around 30 people attend, with 14 pledging members and 5-8 kids in Sunday School. It is a largely Spanish speaking congregation; many attendees come from non-Episcopalian backgrounds and have found a new church home at SSJ. To complete the picture: it is one of our oldest congregations (the parish hall dates from 1850). The neighborhood is experiencing more and more challenges with a median income of \$41,000. They receive an annuity from a gas well in Northern California every year which helps them a great deal. The houses on the property are not in good shape and the diocese is working with the mission to look at options for the property that are mission-oriented and will support the congregation going forward.

Charles Mader moves that Santiago St James be allowed to draw down \$37,000 in order to meet their needs. Patrick Anderson seconds. All vote in favor.

Thomas La France recuses himself from this vote because of his ties to Santiago St James; he acts as their financial consultant.

- Kay Bishop bequest (Christopher Hayes)

See the attachment sent on 2/18. Kay Bishop was a long time parishioner at St Luke's in San Francisco and an active supporter of the Bishop's Ranch. She left gifts to a number of church related organizations, including the Ranch. The language of the bequest leaves the gift in trust to the Ranch through the diocese. In response, the Ranch has made a proposal to apply the gift towards the existing campaign for staff housing.

Liz Tichenor moves to approve the proposal from Bishop Ranch and to transfer the money to Bishop's Ranch. Charles Mader seconds.

Christopher Hayes clarifies that the gift was left in trust but is not an amount that would be made into an endowment. The bequest cannot be challenged.

All vote in favor.

- St. Dorothy's land sale (Christopher Hayes)

Nothing new to report. Recap: SDR has portion of land that is of no benefit to SDR but more of a liability. They are working with the local park and rec district to take on that land, who will pay all the fees associated (but not anything further). This is in the interests of SDR.

- Jim Forsyth: Change of title (Tom Ferguson)

Executive Council is asked to vote on changing the title of Jim Forsyth from controller emeritus to the more appropriate CFO emeritus and the appointment of Lane Ringlee as Assistant Treasurer.

Bishop Marc moves to designate James Forsyth as Chief Financial Officer Emeritus. Tom Matthews seconds. All in favor.

Richard Patenaude moves that Lane Ringlee be elected assistant treasurer. Jane Stratford seconds. All in favor.

5:55 PM Chancellor's Time

Entered executive session at 6:02PM. Exited at 6:14PM.

6:10 PM Appointments: Approval Item

- Program and Budget Comm.

Includes the Treasurer and 3 members from the Finance Committee, as well as a representative from each deanery.

Alameda: Bruce Morrow

Contra Costa: Marj Leeds

Marin: Eleanor Prugh

Peninsula: Aidan Jobe Sea

San Francisco: Birgit Eschmann

Southern Alameda: Richard Patenaude

Motion to approve the Program and Budget Committee: Tom Matthews moves to approve the Program and Budget Committee. Debbie Low Skinner seconds. No discussion and all vote in favor.

- Committee on Governance

The Committee on Governance needs one more person. Miguel Bustos volunteers. Birgit Eschmann moves to appoint Miguel. Liz Tichenor seconds. All in favor.

- Lane Ringlee: assistant treasurer

See item beginning at 5:37PM.

6:17 PM Standing Committee Report (A. Larsen)

The Standing Committee met on February 13. Bishop Marc and Christopher Hayes were present. The Standing Committee interviewed a candidate for ordination, voted to consent to the formation of SEA Episcopal Church, and voted to consent to four candidates for bishops. The relationships with diocesan institutions is a major focus for SC this year.

6:23 PM Deanery Reports

Richard P: Southern Alameda had their annual vestry/deanery retreat in January. The retreat is always a valuable opportunity to talk about joint ministry between parishes, such as the annual house build Southern Alameda undertakes in Mexico each year. Richard invites other congregations to join in what will be an incredible experience on June 13.

6:25 PM

Talking Points for the month

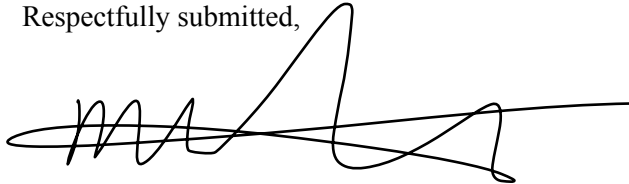
- Week long celebration around 50th Earth day
- SEA Church
- Staff engaged with Traces of the Trade racial reconciliation work

Review March meeting agenda

- Assessment appeal committee

6:28 PM Closing Prayer (Bishop Marc)**6:29 meeting adjourned**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mees Tielens', written over a horizontal line.

Mees Tielens
Secretary of Executive Council