

**Minutes of the 145<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention**  
**Diocese of Western Michigan**  
**November 1 & 2, 2019**  
**Crowne Plaza Hotel**  
**Grand Rapids, Michigan**

The Rt. Rev. Wayne M. Hougland opened the 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan at 10:00 a.m. with a prayer composed by St. Catherine of Sienna and proceeded to welcome delegates, visitors and guests to the convention. He then invited the Rev. Canon Michael Spencer, Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan and designated chaplain to convention, to officiate at Morning Prayer.

Following Morning Prayer the convention was organized and William Fleener, Jr., chancellor and parliamentarian, announced a quorum present. The Bishop introduced those sitting on the dais: The Rev. Canon William Spaid, Secretary of Convention, Janet MacKenzie Dispatcher of Business and Timekeeper (Epiphany, South Haven), Bill Fleener, Jr. (St. David's, Lansing), Parliamentarian. Other convention leaders were also introduced: Canon Katie Forsyth managing all the technology arrangements, The Rev. Jen Adams Resolutions Chair (Grace, Holland), and Fred Skidmore nominations chair (St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids). The Bishop also acknowledged the help and support of Registrar Carole Redwine (St. Philip's, Grand Rapids) and registration volunteers from St. Philip's Church in Grand Rapids.

The Diocesan Staff were introduced: The Rev. Canon Bill Spaid, Southern Region Canon Missioner, The Rev. Canon Val Ambrose, Central Region Canon Missioner, The Rev. Canon Anne Hallmark, Northern Region Canon Missioner, Canon Katie Forsyth, Canon for Evangelism & Networking, Tammy Mazure, Bishop's Assistant for Finance & Benefits, and Willa Williams, Executive Assistant.

Other volunteers who serve as the Bishop's appointees include Bill Fleener, Jr., Chancellor; Dr. Ken Reid, (St. Luke's, Kalamazoo) Pastoral Care and Counseling – (not attending); David Croal (St. Mark's, Coldwater) Assistant Treasurer; The Rev. Beth Drew, Deacon for Sustainable Development Goals & DR Missions; The Rev. Cindy Nawrocki, Deacon for Domestic Mission; Martha Bartlett (St. James', Pentwater) Jubilee Officer; and The Rev. Ed and Ann Emenheiser, Chaplains to the Retired Clergy.

The Bishop introduced our guests from the Diocese of Eastern Michigan: The Rev. Canon Michael Spencer, Canon to the Ordinary; The Rev. Valerie Fargo, Director of the Coppage-Gordon School for Ministry; McKenzie Bade, Facilitator of Youth and Young Adult Networks and Executive Director of Camp Chicagami; Sara Philo, Financial Manager; Angela Krueger, Assistant to the Bishop; The Rev. Dan Scheid, President of the Standing Committee. The Bishop pointed out that the "dance" we are doing together is working.

The Bishop welcomed our Keynote speaker Lisa Kimball from Virginia Theological Seminary and expressed that we would look forward to hearing her later in the day.

The Convention adopted the Rules of Order and gave seat and voice to the chancellor, Standing Committee laity who are not delegates, Diocesan Council laity who are not delegates, clergy serving in congregations who are licensed but not canonically resident, Lutheran pastors serving Episcopal congregations, and the Bishop's staff. The Bishop emphasized a number of procedural expectations outlined in the Rules of Order.

The Convention approved the minutes of the 2018 Diocesan Convention.

The Convention elected the following officers of Convention: Secretary, The Rev. Canon William Spaid; Registrar, Carole Redwine, St. Philip's, Grand Rapids; Chancellor/Parliamentarian, Bill Fleener, Jr.; Assistant Treasurer, David Croal, St. Mark's, Coldwater.

The Bishop announced new calls and personnel changes in the Diocese since the 2018 Convention:

#### **Retirements**

- The Rev. Brad Allard, Deacon at Holy Trinity, Wyoming
- The Rev. Cory Stoppel, Rector of All Saints, Saugatuck
- The Rev. Dr. Stephen Holmgren, Grace, Grand Rapids leaving in January 2020
- The Rev. Dale Bennett, St. Thomas, Battle Creek and moved to New York

#### **Ordinations to Transitional Diaconate**

- The Rev. Kellan Day, Grace, Grand Rapids
- The Rev. Abby Bok VanderBrug, St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids
- The Rev. Peter Homeyer, Trinity, Wyoming

#### **Resignations**

- The Rev. BJ Heyboer from St John's, Fremont
- Gennie Callard, Bishop's Assistant for Children, Youth and Young Adults
- Tricia Leistra, Diocesan Office Administrator

#### **New Calls**

- The Rev. James Lively, St. John's, Sturgis
- The Rev. Diane Pike, Southwest Michigan Episcopal Covenant
- The Rev. Molly Bosscher, St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids
- The Rev. David Brower, Interim at Mediator, Harbert
- The Rev. Kellan Day, Church of Incarnation, Highlands, NC
- The Rev. Michael Fedewa, St. Paul's, Muskegon
- The Rev. Alan James, Interim, Emmanuel, Petoskey
- The Rev. BJ Heyboer, St. Mark's, Newago
- The Rev. Becky Michelfelder, Interim, All Saints, Saugatuck
- The Rev. Nurya Love Parish, Holy Spirit, Belmont
- The Rev. Dr. Gail Shafer, Trinity, Grand Ledge
- The Rev. Abby VanderBrug, Christ Church, Greenwich, CT
- The Rev. James Smith, Lutheran Pastor, Trinity, Three Rivers

#### **Deaths**

- The Rev. Wayne Nicholson, retired from St. John's, Mt. Pleasant

- The Rev. Tom Toeller-Novak, retired from Grace, Holland
- Fr. Jude Bell, OSB of St. Gregory's Abbey in Three Rivers
- Marjorie Bennison, wife of the late Rt. Rev. Charles E. Bennison
- The Rev. Hugh Hostetler who served in Dowagiac, Plainwell, Three Rivers, and Grand Rapids
- Th Rev. Beth McLaren, former Associate at St. Luke's, Kalamazoo
- The Rev. Edward Scully, Fremont, Newago, Albion and the Diocesan Camp
- Canon Donalee Williams, former Music Director and Organist at the Cathedral of Christ the King

The Bishop introduced Interim Clergy who are present & not canonically resident: Kathryn Costas at Grace Traverse City, Alan James at Emmanuel Petoskey, and Becky Michelfelder at All Saints Saugatuck.

The Bishop also recognized

***Candidates for Ordination to the Priesthood***

- Radha Deitenbeck Kaminski, Grace, Holland (Seminary of SW, Austin)
- Eileen Stoffan, St. Paul's, Muskegon (Bexley Seabury)
- Philip Zoutendam, St. Andrew's, GR – (Duke)

***Postulants to the Priesthood:***

- Derek Quinn, St. Barnabas, Portage (Sewanee)
- Joanna and Kurt Unangst, St. Andrew's GR (Virginia)

***Postulants to the Diaconate:***

- Wendy Pearson, Trinity, Marshall
- Elizabeth Kinsey, St. John's, Sturgis
- Micheal Hueschen, St. Luke's, Kalamazoo

At approximately eleven o'clock the Bishop gave his annual address to the convention. Highlights of his address included the *Way of Love* and exploring the seven areas: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, and Rest. He also spoke of his sabbatical time including photos from Sienna, Rome, Spain and Portugal. He spoke about the major task of moving the diocesan offices from Kalamazoo to the new Diocesan House in Wyoming, and changes in the diocesan staff especially paying tribute to the work of Gennie Callard for 16 years. He also emphasized the joint decision of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council to "continue to dance" with the Diocese of Eastern Michigan, our award winning magazine *The Feast*, and the success of the canons missioner. Further, he outlined signs of health in the Diocese:

1. All Parochial reports filed on time
2. 40 congregations have completed their annual audit for 2018. The remaining congregations are in process. Compared to 15 completed audits at this time last year.
3. 23 persons in discernment for Holy Orders - 9 for Diaconate and 14 for Priesthood

4. Five Apportionment Review requests from five congregations with anticipated allowance within 2020 proposed budget
5. Dismantling Racism Taskforce has grown from five members to 35 members
6. Plainsong Farm has grown into a national leader and grassroots ministry development – receiving a Roanridge Grant for rural ministry
7. The vitality/viability congregational assessments are ongoing and being adapted as we go
8. Balanced 2020 budget
9. Process of discernment regarding our relationship with Eastern Michigan
10. Every congregation has an active service ministry within their community

The Bishop concluded with things to look forward to:

1. Creation of a Youth and Young Adult Ministry Task Force
2. Creation of a Hispanic Ministry Task Force
3. Creation of an Estate Planned-giving and Capital Campaign Task Force
4. Bishop's pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey in May
5. 2020 Lambeth Conference in England
6. Establishment of a Sudanese cultural center in Grand Rapids

Following the Bishop's address there were a number of brief announcements and then the Bishop invited Canon Mike Spencer to officiate at the Noon Office which included a moment of silence to remember those on the *In-Memoriam* list. After the Noon Office the convention recessed for lunch.

#### FRIDAY AFTERNOON

(There was a technical issue with the audio recording normally used by the secretary to complete the minutes of this business session, and the minutes are based on the secretary's brief written notes.)

The Bishop called convention to order at 1:10 pm and introduced Dr. Lisa Kimball, Associate Dean of Lifelong Learning and the James Maxwell Professor of Lifelong Christian Formation at Virginia Theological Seminary. Dr. Kimball spoke about baptismal ministry and the Way of Love, and the full inclusion of all generations in the life and ministry of the church.

At approximately 2:45 the Bishop asked if a quorum was present and called for the beginning of our first business session. He introduced Fred Skidmore (St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids), Chair of the Nominations Committee and Chief Teller to begin the balloting for General Convention Deputies. The following people were nominated:

#### **Lay Members**

- Laurie Atwater, St. Martin's, Kalamazoo
- Pam Chapman, St. Philip's, Grand Rapids
- Anne Davidson, St. Mark's, Coldwater
- William Fleener, Jr., St. David's, Lansing
- Genia Lenore, Holy Trinity, Wyoming
- Matthew Roney, Grace, Traverse City
- Mary Simpson, St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids

## Clergy Members

- Jennifer Adams, Grace, Holland
- Jared Cramer, St. John's, Grand Haven
- Brian Coleman, St. Thomas', Battle Creek
- Nurya Love Parish, Holy Spirit, Belmont
- Anne Schnaare, Trinity, Marshall
- Bill Spaid, Diocesan Staff

Ballots were distributed. We were directed to vote for four people in each order. After the ballots were collected, Fred introduced nominees for lay and clergy positions on the Standing Committee. There are two positions open - one lay and one clergy and one nominee for each available slot. Carole Redwine from St. Philip's in Grand Rapids and The Rev. Diane Pike of the Southwest Michigan Episcopal Covenant were elected by acclamation.

The Bishop introduced David Croal, (St. Mark's, Coldwater), assistant treasurer, to move the adoption of the proposed diocesan budget. The motion was seconded and Tammy Mazure, Bishop's assistant for Finance, was introduced to talk about the budget and the budget process. After answering questions, the budget was approved. Tammy also spoke about parish audits and health insurance enrollment.

There were several presentations including the work of the Dismantling Racism Team by Joyce Henry (St. Philip's, Grand Rapids); the proposed pilgrimage to Greece scheduled in 2020 by Doug Mohrman (Grace, Grand Rapids); and the planned camp program for 2020 by Bill Fleener, Jr.

The results of the General Convention Deputies election were announced: Lay deputies are Bill Fleener, Jr., Laurie Atwater, Pam Chapman, and Matt Roney. Clergy deputies are Jen Adams, Nurya Parish, Bill Spaid and Brian Coleman. Balloting then happened for alternate deputies.

The afternoon session wrapped up with Gail Donovan (St. David's, Lansing) presenting a video about the work and ministry of UTO (United Thank Offering) and reports from the diocesan Canons Missioner and Canon for Evangelism and Networking who jing-jing-jingled the work they've been doing. The Bishop, when he stopped laughing, thanked the Canons for the success of their ministry and expressed appreciation to the Bishop Whittemore Foundation for supporting these vital positions.

Fred Skidmore returned to the podium to announce the election of alternate deputies to General Convention: Anne Davidson (St. Mark's, Coldwater) lay alternate and Anne Schnaare (Trinity, Marshall) clergy alternate. The Bishop thanked the tellers for their work. There were several brief announcements and convention was recessed until Saturday afternoon.

## SATURDAY

After the Convention Eucharist and Confirmation liturgy at Thornapple Covenant Church on Cascade Road and luncheon at the Crowne Plaza the Bishop called the convention back to order at approximately 1:30 pm. Chancellor Bill Fleener, Jr. announced a quorum present.

The first item of business was the affirmation of regional representatives to Diocesan Council. Robbie Schorle and Joan Smith, both from Grace, Holland were elected by the Central Region and Laurie

Atwater from St. Martin's, Kalamazoo was elected by the Southern Region. Convention affirmed their elections by acclamation.

In the absence of the Resolution Chair, Jen Adams, the Bishop asked Chancellor Fleener who moved the adoption of the first resolution regarding cooperating ministries, and recognized Nurya Love Parish to speak to it. The text of the resolution is below:

**Resolution 1:**

**Resolved, that the 144th Convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan amend the following portions of Canon 1.1, Canon 1.8, Canon 1.28 to read:**

**CANON 1 DEFINITIONS**

Terms used in these Canons are defined, for purposes of this document, as follows:

- a. "Bishop" refers to a Bishop Diocesan elected to that position as provided by the Constitution and Canons of this diocese.
- b. "Calendar Year" refers to a year beginning at the first moment of the day on January 1 and ending at the last moment of the day on the following December 31.
- c. "Church" refers to The Episcopal Church as a constituent member of the Anglican Communion.
- d. A "Communicant in Good Standing" shall include all persons who have received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism with water in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, whether in this Church or in another Christian Church, and whose Baptisms have been duly recorded in this Church. An "Adult Communicant in Good Standing" in a Congregation is a communicant in good standing who is sixteen (16) years of age or older in that Congregation; and who, for the previous year, have been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and have been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God. [As amended, April 21, 2012.]
- e. A "Cooperating Ministry" is an organization, located within the diocese, whose mission, purposes, and activities have been determined by the Bishop and Diocesan Council, and ratified by the Diocesan Convention, to merit an established and recognized status as an ongoing partner in ministry with the diocese.

*(Further Text of Canon 1, unchanged, will be saved for re-lettering to reflect the amendment per Canon 71.02).*

**Section 8.02** The Mission Region provides a vehicle for parishes, new congregations, and *cooperating ministries* in proximity to each other to undertake projects and activities in furtherance of their respective missions and the mission and vision of the diocese, which would be too difficult for one parish or new congregation to undertake alone, or which would so drain the resources of one parish or new congregation as to make the effort impracticable.

The Mission Region shall be responsible for carrying out the following duties:

- (a) Promoting and aiding in the implementation of cooperation *collaboration* among the congregations and *cooperating ministries* in the Region;...

**CANON 28 AUDITS and INSURANCE**

**Section 28.01.AUDITS**

As soon as may be after the close of each fiscal year, the accounts of all officers handling funds, whether of the Diocese or its auxiliaries, or of congregations and their auxiliaries, *or of all cooperating ministries* shall be audited in accordance with the Episcopal Church Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs and The Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan Policy "Annual Audit of Congregations". Copies of audit reports shall be submitted to the Diocesan Treasurer for review by September 1 following the close of the fiscal year.

**And be it further resolved that the 144th Convention of the Diocese of Western Michigan add Canon 15 to read**

## **CANON 15 COOPERATING MINISTRIES**

### **Section 15.01 APPLICATION FOR COOPERATING MINISTRY STATUS**

(a) If a chaplaincy or organization, formed or to be formed for religious, educational or charitable purposes within this *diocese desires to enter into an agreement with the diocese as a Cooperating Ministry, such organization shall file an application with the diocese on forms approved by the Bishop. The application form must include the following:*

*Financial records;*

*Summary of demographic research and/or asset mapping;*

*Summary of conversations between the applying ministry and any other cooperating ministries and parishes within ten miles.*

*If the Bishop determines that the purposes and activities of the chaplaincy or organization are sufficiently related to those of the diocese and that the organization should be considered for designation as a Cooperating Ministry, an Agreement for Designation as a Cooperating Ministry shall be executed by the organization and the diocese, which, among other items, shall contain the following provisions:*

*a. The Agreement shall not be effective until it is approved by the action of the Diocesan Council. Upon such approval, the agreement shall be deemed provisionally approved, and in temporary effect until such time as it is ratified by the Diocesan Convention at its next regular meeting. The initial term of the agreement shall commence on the effective date and expire on March 31st of the second calendar year following the effective date.*

*b. The terms upon which the cooperating ministry shall be governed under relevant state and federal statutes, including a complete copy of its proposed by-laws.*

*c. The organization shall be required to deliver to the diocesan council within sixty (60) days after the end of its fiscal year an annual report describing its activities and present a financial statement for such fiscal year, including an operating statement in reasonable detail and a balance sheet.*

*d. The organization may use the title A Cooperating Ministry only so long as the agreement shall remain in force and effect.*

### **Section 15.03 RENEWAL OF COOPERATING MINISTRIES**

*The agreement may be renewed for annual periods ending March 31, upon agreement by the organization and approval by the Diocesan Council acting upon the recommendation of the Bishop, but only if the organization shall have been in compliance with the agreement and if the Bishop determines that the activities of the organization and the continued use of the title Cooperating Ministry by the organization is consistent with the mission and purpose of the diocese.*

Nurya Love Parish spoke to the resolution, along with Linnea Stifler and Jodi Baron, who also commented that it would be helpful to have pre-convention meetings scheduled after all business matters before convention are published. Voting happened with red and green cards, and the resolution passed.

The Bishop invited Secretary Bill Spaid to read the courtesy resolutions which follow:

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan offers its appreciation to the management and staff of The Crowne Plaza for their hospitality; and to Joan Smith and Robbie Schorle who worked faithfully on details too many to mention to facilitate this Convention.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send our heartfelt appreciation to Thornapple Covenant Church for their hosting our Convention Eucharist.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings to the Rt. Rev. Robert R. Gepert, eighth Bishop of the Diocese of Western Michigan and his wife Anne Labat-Gepert.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings to the Rt. Rev. Edward L. Lee, seventh Bishop of the Diocese of Western Michigan and his wife Kathryn.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings to The Rt. Rev. Cate Waynick, recently retired Bishop Provisional of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan; The Rt. Rev. Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr., Bishop of the Diocese of Michigan with congratulations on his approaching retirement; The Rt. Rev. Rayford Ray, Bishop of the Diocese of Northern Michigan; and The Rt. Rev. J Moisés Quezada Moto, Obispo de la Iglesia Episcopal Dominicana.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings and warm wishes to The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop, with prayers for his ministry as we all grow in The Way of Love.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings to The Most Rev'd Dr Justin Welby, and prayers for his ministry and leadership within our Communion.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan send greetings to the Standing Committee, diocesan staff, and people of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan and our thanks for the opportunity to share this dance.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan express its thanks to Dr. Lisa Kimball, for her inspiring message as speaker to this Convention and for her hopeful leadership into ways of love and deep formation.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan express our condolences to the families of Marjorie Bennison wife of the late Rt. Rev. Charles E Bennison, Canon Donalee Williams who was director of Music at the Cathedral of Christ the King for over 25 years, and Pat Kellogg who served as Bishop Lee's Diocesan Administrator for 15 years as we remember their presence and ministries with us.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan express its thanks to The Rev. Marilou Schlotterbeck for her many years of service as Archdeacon.

Resolved that this 145<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan express its thanks to Gennie Callard for 15 years of service to our diocese, for her fun, faithful approach to ministry with youth and for helping us be a church for all ages.



The courtesy resolutions were affirmed by acclamation.

The Bishop thanked retiring members of the Standing Committee Zachariah Char (Sudanese Grace, Grand Rapids) and Judy Fleener (St. Paul's, Muskegon); retiring members of Diocesan Council Barb Kelly (St. Philip's, Beulah), Cindy Nawrocki (St. Andrew's, Grand Rapids), and Tom Perrin (St. Martin's, Kalamazoo). He also thanked Rosemary Burke, St. Martin's, Kalamazoo, for three years as president of the Joint Disciplinary Board with the Dioceses of Michigan and Eastern Michigan.

Bill Fleener made an announcement about a farewell event for Gennie Callard at Camp Newago on November 16.

The Bishop thanked our camp counselors, the youth mentors for youth delegates, Robbie Shorle chairperson of the convention arrangements, Anne Davidson who organized the exhibition tables, Convention volunteers especially at registration and the tellers, and members of the Commission on Ministry.

Next year's convention will be a joint convention with the Diocese of Eastern Michigan to be held October 30-31, 2020 at the Lansing Convention Center with our guest speaker the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church.

The Bishop closed convention with a prayer for the Church and the Convention was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William J. Spaid" followed by a small cross symbol.

The Rev. Canon William J. Spaid  
Secretary