

## DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Diocesan Council's only meeting in 2012 after the adjournment of the 147th Annual Convention was held in December. During that meeting, Diocesan Council bid farewell to members completing their terms of office, welcomed new members elected at the Annual Convention, re-elected Mr. John F. Hose and Mr. Rich Creehan as President, and Secretary respectively, and elected the Reverend Louis Hays as Vice President.

The elected officers immediately began organizing for 2013 by finding qualified individuals to serve in appointed positions or as committee chairs. They were pleased that Mr. Steve Stagnitta of St. Andrew's, Highland Park, agreed to serve as Judge of Assessments; Ms. Linda Getts of St. Thomas, Oakmont, agreed to serve as Judge of Audits; Dr. Diane Duntley of Christ Church, Indiana, agreed to continue as Chair of the Diocesan Life Committee; Ms. Nancy Lapp of Holy Cross, Homewood, agreed to continue as Chair of the Social Justice and Outreach Committee; and Dr. Jeffrey Dunbar of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, agreed to serve as chair of the Resolutions Committee.

To continue with the update of the Diocesan Compensation Plan begun in 2012, the Reverend Bruce Robison of St. Andrew's, Highland Park, agreed to continue as chair of the Compensation Committee consisting of the Reverend Lennel Anderson of St. Francis-in-the-Fields, Somerset; Mr. Stuart Fox of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Dr. Joan Gundersen of the diocesan staff and also a member of Church of the Redeemer, Squirrel Hill; the Reverend Leslie Reimer of Calvary, East Liberty; and Ms. Karen Schneider of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon.

The Reverend Kris McInnes of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, agreed to serve as the chair of the Diocesan Nominating Committee with the assistance of Ms. Daryl Walker of All Saints, Brighton Heights; Mr. William Moore of St. Matthew's, Homestead; The Reverend Lennel Anderson of St. Francis-in-the-Fields, Somerset; and Ms. Betsy Hetzler of Nativity, Crafton. Diocesan Council dissolved the Communications Committee because that committee's functions had shifted to the Director of Communications and the Webmaster.

So far in 2013, Diocesan Council has convened on five occasions with meetings in January, March, May, June, and September. Council is scheduled to meet again in October and December.

Diocesan Council is kept well-informed with regular reports from Diocesan Leadership. Bishop McConnell has kept Council current on activities of the wider church, as well as through his concerns and plans pertaining to the future of the diocese. The Reverend Canons Scott Quinn and Jay Geisler kept Council abreast of happenings in parish ministry, activities of ordained leadership, and the opportunities for attracting new candidates for ordination. Periodically, representatives from the Commission on Ministry briefed the Council regarding the discernment and development of future ordained leaders of the diocese. Representatives from the Committee on Constitution and Canons kept Council informed of that committee's work

Reports were given at each meeting by the Chancellor, the President of the Board of Trustees, and the President of the Standing Committee. The Reverend Canon James Shoucair, Secretary of Convention, kept Council up-to-date about plans for 148th Annual Convention. Diocesan Council was encouraged by the progress reported by the Archivist and Director of Properties, the Provost of Trinity Cathedral, the President of ECW, the Youth Ministers on behalf of the Pittsburgh Youth Initiative, the Coordinator of Christian Education and the Resource Center, and a representative from the Growth Fund Committee. Director of Communications, Mr. Rich Creehan, kept Council apprised of his activities and the Diocesan

Treasurer and Director of Administration, Mr. Carl Hockenberry, provided clear and informative reports regarding the fiscal activity and financial status of the Diocese until his departure at the end of May.

During 2013, Diocesan Council approved housing resolutions designating a portion of the respective compensation as housing allowance for the Reverend Ann Staples; the Reverend Canon Dr. Catherine Brall; the Reverend Timothy V. Hushion, Jr.; and the Reverend Eric McIntosh.

In April 2013, Bishop Dorsey McConnell requested that Diocesan Council and the Board of Trustees form a joint task force to make recommendations regarding the implementation of the Strategic Plan which had been completed in 2012 by a prior task force. Pursuant to the bishop's request, Diocesan Council nominated Mr. Rich Creehan of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; the Reverend Louis Hays of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Mr. John Hose of Advent, Jeannette; the Reverend Bruce Robison of St. Andrew's, Highland Park; and the Reverend James Simons of St. Michael's of the Valley, Ligonier, to accomplish the assigned tasks in conjunction with the representatives appointed by the Board of Trustees.

Moreover, Diocesan Council amended several sections of its by-laws to conform to the Diocesan Constitution and Canons or to reflect current practices.

Much of the work of Diocesan Council is accomplished by its committees.

### **The Budget and Assessment Working Group**

The Budget and Assessment Working Group, chaired by Mr. Steve Stagnitta, regularly evaluated and made recommendations to Diocesan Council regarding requests for assessment relief and grant funding from 2013 Diocesan Budget line items. In performing these functions, the chair was assisted by: Mr. Joseph Baird of St. Peter's, Blairsville; Ms. Linda Getts of St. Thomas, Oakmont; the Reverend Louis Hays of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Mr. James Neral of Christ Church, North Hills; and Mr. Alan Schneider of St. Brendan's, Franklin Park.

Following the recommendations of the Budget and Assessment Working Group, Diocesan Council granted assessment relief for 2013 to St. Francis-in-the-Fields, Somerset; St. Paul's, Kittanning; Trinity Cathedral; and St. Stephen's, McKeesport. Funding for special mission projects was approved for St. David's, Peters Township, and Emmanuel, North Side. The Budget and Assessment Working Group also spent many hours assisting with the preparation of a fiscally responsible 2014 Diocesan Budget.

### **Diocesan Life Committee**

During 2013, the Diocesan Life Committee, chaired by Dr. Diane Duntley, continued to assess options for rebuilding the life of the diocese. In addition to the chair, participants in the committee's activities were: the Reverend Kamila Blessing of St. Barnabas, Brackenridge; Mr. Walter Bowman of Calvary, East Liberty; Mr. David Dix of Christ Church, North Hills; the Reverend Carol Henley of Calvary, East Liberty; the Reverend Kathy LaLonde of St. Paul's, Kittanning; Mr. William Moore of St. Matthew's, Homestead; Ms. Kerry Ochap of St. Stephen's, McKeesport; Ms. Daryl Walker of All Saints, Brighton Heights; and the Reverend Canon Scott Quinn, Pastoral Care Director and Canon to the Ordinary.

In 2012, the Committee supported the Convention Committee by developing and coordinating workshops on seven relevant topics. The Diocesan Life Committee supported the revitalization of districts by producing an introductory brochure on the role and functioning of districts and examined approaches to develop an expanded leadership pool by interesting a new generation of candidates to seek elective offices and volunteer for appointed roles.

During its meeting on September 9, 2013, the committee determined that it had completed its work of bringing healing and reconciliation to the diocese following the 2008 split and recommended that the committee be dissolved. Later that same evening, acting on the Diocesan Life Committee's recommendation, Diocesan Council passed the following:

“That the Diocesan Life Committee, having completed its assigned mission, is hereby dissolved with Diocesan Council's sincere appreciation to the committee's members, both past and present, and with special appreciation to Dr. Diane Duntley for her dedication, leadership, and contributions to the committee's successful endeavors.”

Diocesan Council is extremely grateful for this committee's outstanding efforts which have strengthened the ties of understanding, respect, shared mission and ministry, and mutual affection among the parishioners and parishes of the diocese.

### **Social Justice and Outreach Committee**

The Social Justice and Outreach Committee is chaired by Ms. Nancy Lapp of Holy Cross, Homewood. Members of the committee include: Mr. Jerry Stephenson of Christ Church, North Hills; the Reverend Moni McIntyre of Holy Cross, Homewood; Ms. Judy Rosensteel of All Souls, North Versailles; Ms. Marianne Novy of Redeemer, Squirrel Hill; Ms. Sue DeWalt of Calvary, East Liberty; Ms. Patricia Eagon of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Mr. Bill Farra of the Community of Celebration; Ms. Elizabeth Duckstein of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Mr. Mark Rust of Calvary, East Liberty; the Reverend Charles Weiss of St. Thomas, Canonsburg; Mr. Joseph Baird of St. Peters, Blairsville; and Ms. Patricia Kennedy of St. Andrews, Highland Park. Mr. Andy Muhl often attends committee meetings and has helped to spread the word of the committee's events. It is a very active committee and all members are to be thanked for their leadership of the various activities.

Diocesan Council was pleased to approve the committee's recommendation that the diocese's 0.7% Lambeth Resolution contribution for 2012 be spread among Episcopal Relief and Development with the request that it be directed to Nets for Life to prevent spread of malaria, to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank because of the continuing need to relieve hunger in the diocese, and to the Uncommon Ground Cafe in Aliquippa for its service to that community.

In the fall, the committee launched a Community Garden program under the leadership of Ms. Pat Eagon based upon the experience gained from participation in the community garden of the South Hills Interfaith Ministries. This project was promoted by a convention display, features in Grace Happens, and presentations by Mr. and Mrs. Eagon. Through this program and with financial assistance from ECW, the Committee awarded grants of \$280 to Shepherd's Wellness; \$250 to St. David's, Peters Township; \$420 to Calvary, East Liberty; and \$500 to the Community of Celebration. The committee is considering continuation of this successful program next year.

During 2013, the Social Justice and Outreach Committee continued to coordinate diocesan volunteer days at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and continued its participation in the PA Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN), particularly at the Spring Banquet where the Reverend Jared Jackson, the committee's former representative to PIIN was honored. In May, the committee voted to co-sponsor a workshop on solitary confinement initiated by the National Religious Coalition Against Torture and contributed \$50 toward the event.

In November 2012, the committee adopted plans for a second Habitat for Humanity house, again in Sharpsburg, for a refugee family with five children, ages eight to eighteen. Committee members took responsibility for various aspects of the work for which they all deserve thanks. A diocesan-wide kick-off

meeting took place on January 13 and the house was blessed by Bishop McConnell on March 16. More than eighty volunteers from various diocesan parishes have participated in work days alongside the family who provided “sweat hours.” In addition to the work by volunteers, the committee exceeded its goal by raising almost \$40,000 in support of this project. The contributions include \$3,708 in seed money from the committee, a grant of \$500 from ECW, \$15,000 from a family foundation, several individual donations, and contributions by seventeen diocesan parishes. As of the end of August, the house was not yet ready for occupancy, so volunteer work continued. Nevertheless, a dedication took place September 15 with the bishop present. It is hoped that the children of the refugee family will be able to enter schools in the Fox Chapel School District for the 2013-2014 school year.

Diocesan Council extends its sincere appreciation to the Social Justice and Outreach Committee as it strives to encourage the people of God to hear and respond to the cries of the poor, the hungry, the oppressed, and the alienated within our communities, the nation and the world.

### **Resolutions Committee**

The Resolutions Committee, chaired by Dr. Jeffrey Dunbar of St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon, with the assistance of the Reverend Vicente Santiago of Advent, Jeannette, has worked diligently to receive and review the resolutions being brought before the 148th Annual Convention.

Sincere appreciation is extended to Bishop Dorsey McConnell for his wisdom and guidance to the committees of Diocesan Council. Bishop McConnell, along with the President of Diocesan Council, serves as an ex-officio member of each of the committees.

In concluding, I express my sincere appreciation to the members of Diocesan Council for their dedicated, faithful, and prayerful work. All elected members serve on one or more of the committees and working groups of Diocesan Council. Their tireless efforts allow the Council to function effectively in its service to the Diocese. On behalf of the members of Diocesan Council, I want to thank Mr. Rich Creehan who consistently provided Council with accurate minutes of our deliberations, and the Reverend Louis Hays for his service as Vice President. Grateful appreciation also is extended to the diocesan staff members, the leaders of the other governing bodies, and the commission and committee chairs and members, all of whom assisted Diocesan Council in supporting the mission of the diocese.

Working with and assisting the Rt. Reverend Dorsey McConnell in his first full year as Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, has been a distinct pleasure and privilege. We are all exceedingly grateful for his leadership as we strive to meet the challenges and opportunities associated with rebuilding and strengthening the diocese.

Respectfully submitted,  
John F. Hose  
President, Diocesan Council