

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

The Diocesan Council exists by virtue of Article XI of the Constitution of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. Its responsibilities are summarized in Section 1 of Canon V as follows: “The Diocesan Council shall act on behalf of the Convention when the Convention is not in session. In particular, it shall evaluate the policies, programs, and other activities of the Diocese, make recommendations to the Convention, and give general oversight to the work, mission, budget and human resources of the Diocese. The Council shall perform such other functions and tasks as the Convention may assign to it.”

Since the 2015 Diocesan Convention, the council will have met six times: December 7, 2015, and February 1, April 11, June 6, September 12, and October 11, 2016. Minutes of these meetings are or will be available from the diocesan office. In addition, in December 2015, council acted under Section 9 of Canon XVII (electronic voting) to approve clergy housing allowances for six clergypersons whose salary is paid, in whole or in part, by the diocese, to spend the unused portion of mission grant funds for our missionary in the Philippines and for roof repairs at Trinity Cathedral, to approve final 2015 budget reallocations, and to approve a mission grant to Christ Church, North Hills. Using the same authority, in December 2015, council also approved changes to council by-laws eliminating term limits for council officers and simplifying the notice requirements prior to electing council officers.

Council meetings consist of reports from the bishop, canons to the bishop, president of the Standing Committee, president of the Board of Trustees, chancellor, treasurer, and the chairs of various diocesan committees and organizations, and action items as needed.

December meeting: The council lacked a quorum so the meeting was for informational purposes only. No decisions or actions could be taken.

February meeting: No decisions or actions were made or taken at this meeting.

April meeting: The following requests for Relief from Assessment were moved and seconded by the Budget and Assessment Working Group and approved unanimously by Diocesan Council: the 2016 assessment for Trinity Cathedral was reduced by 30% to \$34,932, and the 2016 assessment for St. Thomas, Canonsburg, was reduced by 44% to \$5,970. In addition, the following two requests for Diocesan Mission and Faithful Remnants Grants, moved and seconded by the Budget and Assessment Working Group, were approved unanimously by Diocesan Council: Emmanuel, North Side, \$22,000 and Good Shepherd, Hazelwood, \$12,000. Finally, reallocations to the 2016 Budget were moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

June meeting: No decisions or actions were made or taken at this meeting.

September and October meetings: Results not available for this report. Minutes will be available from the diocesan office.

Committees of Diocesan Council

The following committees have continued to function over the past year: Budget and Assessment Working Group, chaired by Kathy Baird of St. Peter’s, Blairsville; Social Justice and Outreach, chaired by Nancy Lapp of Holy Cross, Homewood; Resolutions, chaired by the Rev. Charlie Hamill, Christ Church, North Hills; Nominations, co-chaired by the Rev. Nano Chalfant-Walker, St. Stephen’s, Wilkinsburg, and Russ Ayers, Calvary, East Liberty; and Compensation, chaired by the Rev. Lou Hays, St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon. Joe and Kathy Baird, St. Peter’s Blairsville, serve as Co-Judge of Audits, and Courtney Harter, St. David’s, Peters Township, serves as Judge of Assessments.

Report of the Social Justice and Outreach Committee

Members of the Social Justice and Outreach Committee include: Jerry Stephenson, Christ Church, North Hills; Marianne Novy, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill and PIIN; Patricia Eagon, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Bill Farra, Fellowship of Reconciliation; Elizabeth Duckstein, Diocesan Council and ECW; Patricia Kennedy, St. Andrew's, Highland Park; Michael Foley, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill; Linda Schneider, St. Brendan's, Franklin Park; Garrett Yates, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; and Nancy Lapp, Holy Cross, Homewood. The committee continues a number of projects and all members are to be thanked for their leadership in our various activities.

Our recommendation for the Diocese 2015 Lambeth Funds, accepted by Diocesan Council, concerned \$3,053 to be distributed as follows:

- International: Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, \$1,053;
- National or Regional: Rural and Migrant Ministries, \$1,000;
- Local: Western Pennsylvania Human Trafficking Coalition, \$1,000.

Last fall, we sponsored a resolution concerning the Israeli/Palestinian question, and were pleased to have it pass at the 2015 Diocesan Convention without dissension. As a follow-up to this resolution that urged our support for the Christians in the Holy Land, we advocated participation of our churches in the traditional Good Friday offering for the Diocese of Jerusalem; this received headline publicity in *Grace Happens*. Continuing with this theme, our committee sponsored three sessions based upon *Steadfast Hope*, an Episcopal study program on the Palestinian/Israeli issue. These took place in May and June, with approximately 25 participants.

We continued our participation in packing days at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank with full contingents at both our fall and spring events. Ten parishes of the diocese and 52 individuals participated in these events. Our committee also has urged all parishes of the diocese to support Bread for the World, and we are pleased to have Erin Morey of St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, serve as a liaison between Bread for the World and our committee.

Our grants for community gardens continue to be one of most successful activities. This year, the Church of the Redeemer and St. Andrew's presented new programs. In addition, Holy Cross, St. David's, Calvary Camp, St. Brendan's, the Community of Celebration, and Shepherd Wellness again received grants. Several donations from individuals and churches supplemented the grants our committee awarded.

In January, the Social Justice and Outreach Committee provided the outreach representatives and churches of the diocese with activities and encouragement for some of the programs we are supporting. In addition to activities already mentioned here, others include Trinity Institute 2016, the Severe Weather Emergency Shelter, and action against gun violence.

With thanks to council for its support, we hope and pray we can do our small part in meeting the needs of our community, nation and world. Let us labor together in Christ's work.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Lapp, chair

Report of the Resolutions Committee

As of the time of submission of this report, no resolutions have been offered. The committee will take appropriate action on any resolutions presented after the date of the submission of this report.

Report of the Budget Assessment and Working Group

This group meets regularly to evaluate requests from parishes for reduced assessments or grants funded by the diocesan operating budget. It then recommends action to be taken by Diocesan Council. Members also work with the bishop, treasurer, and Board of Trustees to develop the diocesan budget for submission to the annual Convention. On occasion, members of the group work with parishes to assist with financial issues. Current members of this committee include: Kathy Baird, St. Peter's, Blairsville, Chair; Joe Baird, St. Peter's, Blairsville; Courtney Harder, St. David's, Peters Township; the Rev. Vicente Santiago, Advent, Jeannette; Kevin Hipolit, Emmanuel, North Side; and the Rev. Lou Hays, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon.

I would like to thank all members of Diocesan Council for their faithful service since last year's Convention, and those who regularly attend and participate in council meetings. It has been a privilege serving as president of council and with Terlene Brown, vice president, and Carol Henley, secretary.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Lou Hays
President of Diocesan Council