

CANON FOR CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT

My duties shifted over the past year from being the diocesan Director of Administration to Canon for Congregation Support. The new title better reflects the movement in my job responsibilities over the past year. I worked very closely with Kathi Workman to move more and more of the administrative responsibilities to her while retaining some of the old administrative responsibilities like approving bills and journal entries, HR, IT and office maintenance.

Cathedral and Diocesan Office Security

The new security system was installed in late spring 2017. The security system protects diocesan house and cathedral office employees from those who just wander in without having legitimate business within the building. It provides a bell, and video camera with audio capabilities on the Oliver Avenue entrance so employees in both offices can observe who is at the door, and talk with them before admitting them. There is an electronic lock that can be opened by an employee from their desk after observing and/or talking with the person ringing the bell. The door to each office has its own camera with audio capabilities as well as a bell. Each door has an electronic lock that can be opened only by people in that specific office. There is a keyboard at each door to provide keyless entry for each employee.

Cathedral and Diocesan Office Fire Escape

I worked with contractors and the cathedral staff to finalize the design of an appropriate escape ladder/stairs from the first floor to the ground, to rectify the current fire escape which terminates on the roof of the first floor, leaving an 18-foot jump to the ground. There are many security concerns with the escape ladder, which not only provides a way down, but could also provide unwanted access to the upper floors of the cathedral building. The final design was submitted to the city, with approval being granted, with some modifications, on June 14, 2017. Installation is pending.

New Diocesan Website

It has been a long haul to learn about the possibilities of using our website to reach an un-churched population. We have settled on a contractor and the site design is progressing. It is being driven not by those who manage the site, but rather by the end users, as represented by an advisory group assembled from within the diocese, and their needs.

Appreciative Inquiry

St. Michael's, Ligonier

We finished our work in January 2017 and are aiding them as needed in the implementation of the new work that arose in response to their identified call from God. They are a great parish, with a lot of energy to drive forward and serve Christ. Kim Karashin was trained as an Appreciative Inquiry leader during this process.

St Brendan's, Franklin Park

The vestry, along with a few additional volunteers, went through the Appreciative Inquiry process. They re-discovered St. Brendan's DNA and its historical call from God. They have nearly completed identifying where they think God is calling St. Brendan's and are developing a path forward in response. Once St. Brendan's knows where God is calling, it will identify the desired attributes for their next priest.

Kim Karashin did the Appreciative Inquiry work at St. Brendan's and during the process she trained the Rev. Regis Smolko as an Appreciative Inquiry leader.

Deployment

St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, has called the Rev. Noah Evans as its new rector. Let's all welcome Noah and his family to the diocese.

There are currently four openings at four parishes and we have had many transitions – some into retirement and others to new calls.

Financial Re-structuring of Parish Debt

I worked with the Board of Trustees, Kathi Workman, and Morgan Stanley to restructure loans for St. David's, Peters Township, and St. Brendan's, Franklin Park. Using our endowment as security, we were able to get a low, risk-free, interest rate with a seven-year term for both parishes. This lowered their carrying costs and, in St. David's case, saved the diocese a significant amount of money. St. Brendan's also saved a significant amount of money that has allowed them to refocus on their ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Ted Babcock
Canon for Congregational Support