



Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania  
MEETING of the STANDING COMMITTEE  
Minutes

Meeting of May 25, 2021

Approved July 27, 2021

**Call to Order** at 5:11 p.m. by Jones.

**Clergy Present:** Hilary Greer, Jo Ann Jones, Jill LaRoche-Wikel, Michael Ruk

**Laity Present:** Ron Francis, Eric Rabe, Pat Smith **Excused:** Colin Johnstone

**Also present:** Bishop Daniel Gutierrez, Canon Arlette Joseph, Canon Shawn Wamsley

**The Agenda** was adopted unanimously.

**Opening Prayers** were offered by Rev. Hilary Greer.

**Minutes/Notes:** Minutes of the April 27, 2020 meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

**Bishop's Report :**

The Bishop reminded Standing Committee of Serviam Institute educational opportunity being provided for lay and ordained people in the Diocese. He asks for help promoting Serviam as the Diocese encourages all to explore and use the resource this month.

The Church of the Crucifixion will reopen with services and ceremony on June 12. The church was founded in 1847 as the second Black church in the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania. Information is available at <https://www.diopa.org/events/the-reopening-of-the-church-of-the-crucifixion>

The 2022 budget has been approved for circulation. It was reviewed by Canon Wamsley at this meeting (see below).

Wamsley added that churches supported in the budget and identified as “mission churches” in the past will now be designated “Acts 2 Churches.” This is an effort to avoid a feeling of “second class citizenship” sometimes felt by these parishes, he said.

**Draft Budget:** Canon Wamsley presented the 2022 Budget. He listed accomplishments of the Offices of the Diocese including grants given to churches for both relief from lost income and for technology improvements to better communicate during the pandemic. Wamsley also pointed out that the Diocese now pays the full assessment from The Episcopal Church. He argued that despite the pandemic the Diocese is stronger.

Wamsley noted that three churches in the Diocese have reopened in recent years. “After years of cutting, we must invest,” he said. The new budget includes funding for Hispanic ministries, additional technology support, support for veterans and other programs. City Camp is included as is the new Serviam education program. The objective, Wamsley said is “Empowering our churches to do God’s work in the world.”

Wamsley said that investment growth of \$20M since 2016 can be leveraged. Under the budget the Diocese will take a 6.35% distribution from invested funds (Endowment funding). There will be no increase in the Diocese requests for funding from the churches.

Jones asked for a sense of the impact of various grants to churches. Wamsley reported that churches are asked to report back, and he gave several examples. One church used a grant to create a “thriving youth ministry.” Technology improvement grants are helping to provide live streaming or services that helps engage parishioners and others. The African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas has actually increased membership in the midst of the pandemic using technology to reach members, Wamsley said.

Pandemic grants have been used to off-set lost income rather than create new programs. Grants were capped at \$20,000 although some churches have asked for more than one grant. Some churches have asked for grants to support food programs. However, most have offset lost rent, reduced pledges or other income lost during the pandemic.

Jones asked if there are plans for new “Act 2 Churches.” The budget does not fund additional Act 2 Churches at this time, Wamsley said.

Smith asked about the use of funds from the recent sale of Camp Wapiti. Wamsley reported that the Board of Trustees is developing an online response to questions about Wapiti.

The Budget will be circulated, and the Bishop and staff hope to hear back from the churches with questions. Open draft budget hearings have been scheduled:

- Thursday, May 27th
- Wednesday, June 2nd
- Wednesday, June 9th
- Tuesday, June 15th
- Wednesday, June 23rd
- Wednesday, June 30th

The budget must be final not fewer than 60 days before Convention (now scheduled for October 22 and 23, 2021).

### **Candidates for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate were interviewed.**

**Steve Lindsay:** Steve joined the meeting and offered a prayer. He has been working full-time at Christ Church, Media, during the pandemic year after graduating from seminary in 2019. While his work has mostly been online, the discipline of the daily office has been important in grounding and focusing his work, he said. He looks forward to seeing how the Church comes out of this difficult year. He has been offering morning prayer on Sundays. Steve has also worked with a family in preparation of baptism and has been working with confirmands. He has completed his studies and exams and is anxious to move on toward ordination.

**John Connor:** John joined the meeting and offered a prayer. John has just graduated with an M. Div. degree from Nashotah House. John's orientation is toward the Anglo-Catholic tradition. In March, John began an internship at St. Mary's, Bainbridge. He helps with a Bible study and social media interaction from his seminary in Wisconsin.

He says he stretched to consider what gifts can create community in the midst of the pandemic. He says learning to broaden our horizons while still holding on to the essential has been a focus. He thinks a restructure may be needed as the church comes out of the pandemic in order to grow and spread the gospel.

How are we meeting our communities now, he asks. Historic identities may be uprooted. Previous strategies and presuppositions may simply not work. John sees his role as to facilitate the use of the gifts that exist within each parish.

Following the discussions, the Standing Committee provided feedback to Canon Joseph on each candidate.

It was then **moved and seconded** that Standing Committee recommend Steve Lindsay for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (Francis/Greer). The resolution **passed unanimously**.

It was **moved and seconded** that Standing Committee recommend John Connor for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (LaRoche-Wikel/Rabe). The resolution **passed unanimously**.

**Chancellor's Report:** No report.

**Communications:** None

**Old Business:** None

**New Business: Pre-School Lease. Messiah, Gwynedd** is negotiating a lease for a pre-school on its campus. The Chancellor and Property Manager will work with the parish to finalize the lease. It was **moved and seconded** (Smith/Ruk) to approve the lease of a portion of the property at Messiah Gwynedd for use as a day care facility. The approval is subject to review by the Chancellor. The resolution **passed unanimously**.

#### **Diocesan Commission/Committee Reports**

- Commission on Ministry: The Commission on Ministry submitted to Standing Committee letters in support of the candidacies for ordination of both Lindsay and Connor (see discussion above).
- Property Committee: Lease approved for a child care facility at Messiah Gwynedd.
- Episcopal Elections: No elections.

**Adjournment :** The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

The **Next Meeting** of Standing Committee will be held on **June 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM** via Zoom Conference.

Submitted, Eric Rabe, Secretary