

Province III Joint Synod/Provincial Council Meeting
October 26, 2020
Via Zoom Conference

The meeting opened with Morning Prayer, led by The Rt. Rev. Kevin Brown, Bishop from the Diocese of Delaware.

Secretary Kilp took a roll call of the House of Bishops to confirm a quorum. Present were Bishops, Brown, Haynes, Ilhoff, Klusmeyer, Marray, and Scanlan.

A Quorum was confirmed for the House of Deputies and the Provincial Council. Provincial Council representatives answered to roll call: Bethlehem – No representative, Central Pennsylvania – Veronica Chappell, Delaware – John Michael Sophos, Easton – Jane Morgan, Maryland – The Rev. Ramelle McCall, Northwestern Pennsylvania – The Rev. Geoffrey Wilde, Pennsylvania – Christopher Hart, Pittsburgh – Lisa Brown, So. Virginia – Alice Wembley, Southwest Virginia – Jack Barrow, Virginia – Ellyn Crawford, Washington – Gerry Perez and West Virginia – Philip Steptoe.

We held our first vote on a resolution for amendment to the Third Province Ordinances. *The proposed amendments address electronic meetings of the Synod (Ordinance IV) and issues on background checks in Ordinances VIII and X in order to conform to policies recently adopted by the DFMS Executive Council.*

These proposed amendments were submitted to the Provincial Council and Synod by the By Laws sub-committee: Bishop W. Michie (Mike) Klusmeyer, President, the Rev. Nathaniel W. Pierce, Vice President, Mr. Eddie Vance, Provincial Council, and Mr. Russell Randle, Diocese of Virginia and EC Rep

On the amendment to Ordinance IV, there was a motion by Christopher Hart to approve and seconded by Jack Barrow. There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

There was a motion by Ellyn Crawford to approve the Minutes of the previous meeting held in 2019. The motion was seconded by Alice Wembly. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without changes.

We then entertained a motion to accept the minutes from the 2019 Synod meeting. Alice Wembly moved and Gerry Perez seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

We next moved to the proposed amendments to Ordinances VIII and X concerning the Nominating Committee and Background Checks. We then took a roll call of the Bishops on the motion. All six Bishops approved unanimously. Next the house of deputies all voted unanimously to approve the motion. The motions to approve the ordinances carried.

Dr. Pam Cochran, Province III coordinator then introduced some of the ministry coordinators. The Rev. John Downey updated the group on the full communion proposal by the United Methodists in 2020 with the Episcopal Church set to vote in 2021. Due to internal turmoil within the church, the United

Methodists could not agree on any amicable separations within the church. UMC general conference was postponed until next year. It was suggested by them to take it off the table until after they meet in 2021. It may even go to when they can meet in 2024

Mr. Steven Jones read his report regarding Environmental Stewardship. He has already reached out to the Episcopal Church to commit to using local food and produce at the upcoming General Convention, currently scheduled for 2021, and possibly being moved to 2022 due to the Pandemic. The Episcopal Church has committed to this. This would all take place next spring, unless the General Convention gets moved from 2021 to 2022.

We next had an update from the Rev. Dina van Klaveren and Mr. Karl Colder of the Opioid Response Task Force. Although things keep having to get rescheduled, Pam has been helping the task force to re-engineer in order to keep working with the help of the Constable Grant to provide substance abuse ally training. They are training to be our allies on the street. Due to COVID the program is transferring to online. Julie Lytel at Bexly Seabury, and Jan Brown in Southern Virginia are working on this online program so we can make it accessible in early January. The task force for PIII will be regathering in mid-November before Thanksgiving, and hopefully in the spring in Virginia, hopefully in-person. There is about a 20% increase in substance abuse due to COVID as they are being more isolated and struggling. There is an increase in overdoses because of COVID isolation. 14% of people seeking services cannot access them due to COVID restrictions, and that is post-shutdown.

Karl Colder offered some good news about Tele-health. They will have a representative from Eagle Force Health to help in the ally training,

The Rev. John Pumphrey gave a report on Vocational Formation. The Vocational Formation conversation got underway in May. There was a meeting of formation on May 5th which included Bishops, Canons to the Ordinary, Deployment Officers and commission representatives. This is the first in a long time in the Province. They have agreed to have quarterly conversations. They met again in September and will meet soon in early November. They will focus on matters of recruitment for new clergy and deployment of new clergy and practice to the Holy Orders, and lay formation as well. They are hopeful that partnerships and shared resources will come from these conversations. Please get in contact with him with your ideas so they can focus on what needs to happen.

We then were shown a slide show from the youth commission co-chairs, Kate Riley and Joanne Fisher. Six dioceses were represented on the Trail to Truth event of 2019. They learned a lot about racial reconciliation. Due to COVID the 2020 PYE was cancelled, as well as the EYE.

We got a report from the Latino Deacons school which the Province is helping to support. The Ven. L. Sue von Rautenkranz, Archdeacon of the Diocese of Washington and the Rev. Yoimel González Hernández, Dean of the Latino Deacon School. This program began about 2-1/2 years ago, to provide training to young Latinos to become Deacons in the Episcopal Church. They created formation for our students that could eventually be accessible to students from other dioceses. The Province gave them a grant to help them in their endeavor. That money was used for translations in the training. Yoimel has been developing one-year academic online courses of Old Testament and New Testament in Spanish.

They will primarily be using YouTube for their videos. They currently have three postulants in EDOW. They are hoping to have our first three Latino Deacons in the Diocese in three years.

Racial Justice/Anti-Racism report from the Rev. David Wacaster and the Rev. Canon Chris McCloud. They are trying to pick up where Nancy Travis-Bolden left off after stepping down as chair. They along with Frances Dannenberg and Enid Legesse created a program called "Province III, a Conversation on Race". This was built off a program used in the Diocese of Maryland. It was easy to make that available on a Province level. David Wacaster thanked Nancy Travis-Bolden and Terry Brown for training him. They are planning a discussion on Ibram X. Kendi's book "How to Be an Antiracist". They have divided it into 8 sessions, beginning on November 17th ending in March. There will be a 9th session wrap-up and a 10th session that will be with Dr. Kendi himself. They felt that Dr. Kendi will be a bigger draw in interest in the conversations. This is the reason for the large ask from the Provincial budget.

The Province III newsletter will have information regarding this, and a link to the chapter assignment and dates are on the PIII website: <https://www.province3.org/join-us-for-the-province-iii-discussion-of-ibram-x-kendis-how-to-be-an-antiracist/>

Pam Cochran opened it up to everyone for discussion and questions to the Racial Justice/Anti-Racism group, then after that to all the ministry coordinators that presented. A question was asked of Pam as to whether Dr. Kendi has us on his calendar. He does not, currently, but we are trying to coordinate this. It all depends on today's budget being passed.

David Wacaster and Enid Legesse are facilitators for "Sacred Ground" and in response to a question about that, they think it plays well into these sessions. They are willing to facilitate some meetings for the dioceses that are interested.

Linda Watkins – Diocese of Central Pennsylvania Peace and Justice ministry coordinator mentioned that all dioceses from Province III are invited to a planned event in the coming year in Atlanta at the Absalom Jones Center. More information will be forthcoming.

Eddie Vance commented to John Downey that he has been on the Legislative Committee at General Convention for Ecumenical since 2003, so the Full Communion discussion with the United Methodists is of the highest importance for him. He felt that next summer would have been too soon. The Methodist Church is not ready, so we are not ready. He also asked if John thinks the Methodists will have a church at that time to make this kind of decision. John's reply was that they are struggling, and they know they will have trouble making an ecumenical decision. This will be an ecumenical challenge that will be on peoples' minds for a generation.

A note for the minutes that Anne Bardol will now be voting as a representative to the Provincial Council from Northwestern Pennsylvania.

Dr. Elizabeth Boyd, Director of Congregational Resources at Seabury, and the Rev. Susan K. Walker a Deacon in the Diocese of Washington are leading a program called "The Path Ahead – Spirituality and Purpose in Later Life". Susan serves at St. Stephen and the Incarnation, which is a multi-cultural parish in

the Columbia Heights area of Washington, and she also serves as the leasing agent and resident services director at St. Mary's Court, an apartment building, subsidized for seniors in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood. Her ministry is in the world and in the church. A large portion of our community are the elderly or at-risk, and during this pandemic, the people on the margins are challenged.

Elizabeth is director of congregational resources at Seabury. Seabury began in 1924 at the Episcopal Church Home in Georgetown. Their program also includes services to LGBTQ elders. This is a new collaboration between Seabury and the EDOW. The pandemic has caused new challenges to people on the margins (elderly, isolated, etc.). Bishop Marianne called Seabury and asked them to develop a pilot program in the spring of 2017 on the spirituality of aging.

The social distancing measures taken today are life-saving measures, but they also create the possibility of even more isolation for the elderly. Diocese of Washington is 38,000 people in 88 congregations.

They have six goals. 1) Build community among older adults 2) Foster spiritual wellbeing 3) Name the value of age, and identify the significance 4) Highlight the spiritual value of "letting go" – the shift in focus from "doing" to "being" 5) Identify opportunities for living life for meaning and purpose 6) Identify resources for deeper exploration of related topics.

Program was originally named "Sightlines" but changed to "The Path Ahead" They meet in locations with room for mobility devices, etc. They are also doing Zoom sessions and will also begin to provide PowerPoint presentations, as well.

There will be a second train the trainer's session for the year. It is not yet set but will probably be in February or March.

Lisa Brown reminded everyone that Forma will happen this year. It will include formation leaders across the church. You can sign-up by diocese, parish or any type of group. 10 people will get a discounted rate. 20 people will receive a greater discount.

We broke for lunch and plan to resume at 1:00 pm.

When we resumed, Bishop Klusmeyer began with a presentation to Ms. Nancy Travis-Bolden, thanking her for her many years of service as Anti-Racism Coordinator. He remembers when we were in Martinsburg, West Virginia years ago, and Nancy stood up and told us that we were not doing enough about the systemic racism that exists. She has been our conscience, our voice. He read the resolution in honor of Nancy's long tenure of service. Nancy's parting words to us are included in whole at the end of the minutes. Nancy was presented with a bowl from the Province. It is made from Blenko glass, the same glass that is in the Rose Window of the National Cathedral. Nancy said she will treasure it. Ramelle McCall moved to accept the resolution presented by the Province, and it was seconded by Bishop Ilhoff. The resolution passed unanimously.

2019 Profit and Loss statement was presented to Synod to be received. We had approved a budget with a negative \$36,000.00 bottom line. Utilized cash carried into 2019. Loss was only a negative \$11,000.00.

Started 2020 with \$47,500. This is the report that Synod would have received in the spring. The Synod voted to receive this report. It was unanimously received by the Synod.

2020 P&L – We ended up with a positive \$31,000.00 bottom line. We ended up with approx. \$78,000.00. Many things we planned on doing, we couldn't do because of COVID and virtual meetings, and no in-person meetings, there was no in-person spending. Russ Randle moved to receive the report. Gerry Perez seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council received the report unanimously.

In the fall of 2019, the Provincial Council voted to keep apportionment at .0035 and it would have been asked for approval from Synod in the spring of 2020. Due to the pandemic, timeline for submitting diocesan budgets was delayed. Judi held one-on-one meetings with treasurers, CFO's etc. This is an apportionment, not an assessment. If a diocese cannot pay the apportionment this year due to the pandemic, they need to notify the treasurer. Synod must vote to accept this report. Patty Downing moved to accept this report. Alice Webly seconded. There was one abstention. The motion carried.

2022 Apportionment – Council needs to vote to approve keeping the apportionment for 2022 at .0035 for planning purposes. Council will vote now and will present to the Synod next spring. Russ Randle moved for council to recommend this action to the Synod next spring. Gerry Perez seconded. The motion carried. Council will present as a recommendation to the Synod next spring.

Council now must look at the budget for 2021. Net bottom line is \$1,035.00. The 2021 budget was presented. Full Synod, General Convention, Anti-Racism, Constable Grant, Claggett, College of Congregational Development all would receive funds. They are all figured in on this budget proposal. Nathaniel Pierce moved to have the provincial council to adopt the 2021 budget. Elyn Crawford seconded. The motion was clarified to be approved as amended with verbal adjustment. Those adjustments would give us a net bottom line of approximately negative \$3,465.00. The motion then carried.

Vice President's report – Nathaniel Pierce spoke of the 2015 General Convention. There was a proposal to abolish the provincial level. Province III made a report that we need to figure out what our Mission and Ministry are? The pandemic has forced us to move forward using technological advances that were recommended in that report. Thanks to Pam Cochran and her ministry for making the resources possible.

Russ Randle and Patty Downing reported – Racial reconciliation was one of the main topics at Executive Council last year. There was a follow-up on discussion about Native American ministries, and the bad treatment that Native Americans have received. On the heels of the George Floyd murder and the turmoil that followed. Some fairly significant grants have been made to some dioceses for anti-racism work. Emphasis was put on moving to virtual meetings and systems. The pandemic has pushed us 5 to 10 years ahead on that timeline. We took a PPP loan in May that was robustly discussed. A greatly revised parochial report form was approved due to the pandemic. We substantially changed our by-laws to how we do business. Get all the committee work done before had to. We will need to do a lot more work in advance. Cuba has finally come back into the Episcopal Church as full membership.

Patty discussed program budget and finance, as well as finance of the Executive council. Planning for 2022 through 2024 has been put on hold as we look at the reality of 2020 and the future of 2021. As of September, diocesan giving has been what has been budgeted. There is a waiver system in place. Will we be having an in-person convention. All questions about the 2021 budget are with an *. If we don't spend it in 2021, we will spend it in the year we do have a General Convention. We are looking at how to push money to the dioceses, parishes and provinces to do the work during times of the pandemic. There is a lag and we are based on 2019 figures. Should look at The Episcopal Church website for waivers and how it works. Nathaniel asked how is the investment portfolio during these changing times? We have very secure and strong investments. Another question is will staff receive a cost-of-living increase in 2021? Yes, we are budgeted up to 3% cost-of-living. Planned 9% increase for 2021 was only 4%, so we can do up to 3%. Looking at funds and General Convention. There will be a decision next month. Very unlikely that it will happen in 2021. Negotiations are in progress with the vendors to minimize financial expenses. Move everything to 2022 so we don't lose everything.

At 1:35 pm, the Rev. Scott Slater arrived online. He discussed the 2021 General Convention. He said it is the same report basically that Russ and Patty shared. We will know within a month whether we can say definitely that the GC will happen.

So far only one diocese has responded to send representatives to MD Diocese to help with GC planning.

Archives Collection –Seminary of the Southwest has indicated that they need the space. They have just completed a capital campaign to expand their campus. That is the reason for this. We no longer have the option to use that space. In the interim, the COO is authorized to negotiate a 5-year lease (for a location in the Austin area) with option to add 5 more years.

Coordinator Report – Pam Cochran has been encouraged with the amount of ministry areas that have been continuing with their ministries. ECW has continued their work. They recently had their 101st annual meeting online on August 22nd. They had a large turnout. Nancy Sands is the newly elected Province III president of ECW. Nancy introduced herself and is a little overwhelmed at this meeting, but pleasantly overwhelmed. Beblon has been a great inspiration to Nancy and she hopes that she can live up to Beblon's standards. When she was diocesan president of ECW, they did over \$200,000.00 in outreach. She is grateful to Beblon.

They have been meeting quarterly for Title IV training. It might be helpful to have more Title IV training, but because of the pandemic we might have to wait.

College for Congregational Development continues to plan and work toward an early summer college this summer at Claggett. Diocese of Maryland has been using some of the college's models. They held Vestry vitality training. Get in touch with Pam and she can put you in touch with the Rev. Kristen Krantz.

People are making good use of our website and she encourages more people to make use of the website. Almost everything you need to know is on the website. Pam shared her screen and showed much of the information that is on our Province III website.

We've upgraded our Zoom from a free account to a paid account so we can have larger and longer meetings. It will be available to others for use.

People are continuing to do their ministries. It's been very encouraging to Pam.

Russ spoke to the elections to Executive Council. If we don't have a General Convention, we won't have the elections, and he may have to continue into the next term until we can have an election. This is hard work, and if you plan to nominate anyone, make sure you send your "first team". As Nathaniel had mentioned, there will be NO nominations from the floor. He explained the need for background checks for all candidates as has been adopted this morning at this meeting.

Nathaniel asked if there is any more business for today.

The Rev. John Michael Sophos led us in closing prayer.

Nathaniel thanked all the participants for today's meeting. There were still 45 participants engaged in the meeting at the end. He entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Russ Randle moved to adjourn the meeting. The Rev. Ramelle McCall seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Robert L. Kilp – Province III Secretary

Nancy Bolden's parting words to Province III:

When Pam contacted me about this recognition I was shocked because I didn't and don't think I have done anything special. The work that was done in and for the Province was mostly done by the Diocesan representatives who came, made plans and went on to implement them in their Dioceses and where appropriate at the Provincial level. For me, I was Blessed with the opportunity to meet and work with wonderful people I would never have met or gotten to know. And when we came together we learned from each other.

One example, do you remember the General Convention when the positions of 30 staff members at 815 were eliminated? The staff position for the Anti-racism desk was one of them.

At our next meeting with the Diocesan Representatives, prior to the next General Convention, the folks attending that meeting prepared and submitted a Resolution which called for restoring both budget and Staff. Although not immediately implemented the Resolution submitted by Province III was adopted at that next General Convention.

As one gets older and at times like this, one may be tempted to reflect on and share what they consider to be the vast amount of wisdom they have acquired overtime and I was tempted to do so today. I began to think about and compare racial issues when I was growing up with what we perceive to be racial issues today. I say perceived because there is the obvious and the illusion.

When I was a child in Kentucky Racism was legal segregation and you knew what that meant. TRAINS were the only places where folks of color were seated in front of white people. That was because the car we occupied was directly behind the coal fired and smokey engine. On BUSES however we sat at the back of the Bus --over the wheels.

Sometimes the segregation led to some interesting 'Trade-offs", There were separate SCHOOLS for White kids and Black kids. White kids usually had the better facilities. We had the better teachers. The Black Colleges in Kentucky did not have Graduate Schools. Since Blacks could not attend the White Universities, the commonwealth of Kentucky had to pay for them to go to the out-of-state school of their choice. My teachers would go to Columbia University in the summer.

At MOVIES folks of color sat in the Balcony. If you were sitting in one of the first two rows in the balcony you probably had a better view of the picture on the screen than the white folks on the first floor.

Today the racial issue is not so clear. Racial issues are not so clearly defined by Law. There are discriminatory Laws but they are more subtle, sometimes so subtle that one may fail to realize they are designed to exclude "the other" While it is true Racism was built into the structure of our country when it was founded, today it is also built into the structure of our institutions, including our church. There is Racism that is subtle and there are micro-aggressions.

I have worked to eradicate Racism both professionally and personally my entire adult life. As I did this reflecting (and remembering) I thought about all the wisdom (I thought) I had acquired over the years and I had this great temptation to share a lot of it with you. Mercifully, before I'd gotten too far into committing to paper all this wisdom I think I've acquired I remembered a prayer I found and read several years ago and decided I should re-think what I had previously thought would be appropriate.

I want to share a portion of that prayer with you. Perhaps it is already familiar to some of you. It was written by a seventeenth century Nun.

Lord Thou knowest better than I know
myself that I am growing older and
will someday be old

Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking
I must say something
on every subject and every occasion~
Release me from craving to straighten out
everybody's affairs
Make me thoughtful but not moody
---helpful but not bossy
With my vast store of wisdom---it seems a pity not
to use it all. But Thou knowest Lord that
I want a few friends at the end~~
Give me the ability to see good things in
unexpected places and talents in unexpected people~~~
~~~And give me~~~~~  
O Lord~~~the ~~Grace to tell them so