

Diocesan Council Report to Deanery
September 24, 2015

Bishops' Time

Bp Alan reported the highlights of his summer including: General Convention, moving, parish events around the diocese and having vacation time. Mally Lloyd's last day on the Diocesan Staff was in September. She will be at Clergy Day and Convention to receive their recognition. Bp Gates thanked Sam Rodman for stepping into the role as Acting Chief of Staff. The Cathedral renovations are almost complete. The rededication and seating of the bishop Eucharist will be Friday night (Nov 13) of Convention with the business portion of Convention continuing on Saturday (Nov 14).

Bp Gayle spoke about the great concern in the diocese and the world about the situation of the refugees fleeing Syria (part of the Diocese of Jerusalem). The bishops have been asked several times "what are we going to do?" Their proposal is to ask congregations to sponsor refugees - Bp Gayle will be meeting with Holly Hartman and Laura Walta (Global Mission) to discuss how to proceed. Bp Gayle and others have submitted a resolution to Convention to recommend that parishes give to ERD to support this cause. Bp Gayle also reflected on General Convention and recommended that Council listen to the PB's last sermon.

Budget Review

Core Revenues

Total Revenue from assessments is \$5,001,803

Council voted to accept recommendations for assessment adjustments for 15 parishes and a multi-year downward assessments for three others.

Other Core revenue including spending policy draws, dividend and interest income and other congregations contributions is about the same as in previous years. Total amount is up due primarily to higher stock market values.

There are currently four vacant staff positions.

Some funding added to cover some increased staffing

Mission Hubs

The Boston/Cambridge Hub Mission team gave a presentation to answer questions raised by the Council. Council member consultants Joe Robinson and Matt Harper-Nixon are more comfortable with supporting the siting of this mission hub now. It was voted to present the siting of this hub at the October meeting following a review by the budget committee.

Fundraising

There is still a funding gap of \$1.9 million for supporting the mission hubs. A variety of strategies are being explored/recommended to close this gap including asking the mission hubs to take a 5% cut in their budgets, asking high-end donors for more money,

asking parishes to extend their Together Now campaigns by one year, one-time gifts through focused in-gathering, and hubs to do their own fundraising.
Jin In Lee is the newly hired Director of Mission Hubs.
Metrowest Mission Hub gave an update of their work over the last year.

Treasurer's Report

Fossil Fuel Free Investment

The Council voted the treasurer's proposal to allocate its stock market exposure through DIT equally between the existing DIT Stock Fund and the proposed DIT fund.

Mission Strategy Listening Process Design Team

The Design Team gave a presentation which is tasked with creating the listening process, not with creating the actual Mission Strategy of the diocese. It has been working with a consultant to help them gather and interpret the information they seek. . So far, the team has created a Mission Strategy Development Guide and a document called Shared Mission: God's Mission and the Ministries of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

- The listening process will be introduced at Convention 2015
- The listening process will take place from December 2015-February 2016
- Open "town hall" meetings, surveys (phone, online, mail, etc.), and targeted listening sessions.
- Gathering Information in March 2016
- Inviting Feedback in March 2016
- Identifying Priorities from May-June 2016
- Decide on a plan of action/formalizing the Mission Strategy from July-November 2016

Questions/Comments:

- When does development happen and will there be a development team?
This will happen in Phase 3 and the team will be decided by Council.
- The time frame seems tight - communication with the Budget Committee so that this coincides with the budget process will be crucial.
- There was a suggestion to use Deanery meetings to "augment" the listening processes - let the deaneries run their own meetings about this with a facilitator.
- Use words like "collaborate" "collective" and "partnership" when inviting parishes, communities and individuals to participate.
- Have listening a listening session in a Boston neighborhood vs at the Cathedral
- Have listening sessions in places other than churches

Groups for the “targeted” listening sessions:

- Those who have ideas for mission as well as those who have needs for mission
- People on the Autism spectrum, people with mental health issues and disabilities
- People who can’t get online or attend meetings or aren’t versed in the “internal” language of the diocese
- Young people
- Retired and Older members of the diocese
- Those for whom English is not a primary language

Stewardship Conference/Annual Fund Update

Lynd Matt reported that there were 67 individuals from 31 parishes that attended the annual Stewardship Conference, less than last year.

For the Annual Fund, we are about \$10k and 35 gifts ahead of last year. Council members will be making “thank you” calls soon.

Budget Discussion& Vote

Canonically, the Treasurer and Council are to present a diocesan budget to Convention for their approval. The budget book will be “cleaned up” and edited before it is presented to Convention, but there will not be any substantial changes. There was a recommendation to have a review of what Strategic Ministries are and how they relate to the BDF/overall budget – what make something a strategic ministry?

It was voted that the Diocesan Council endorse the 2016 Budget as presented and amended and recommend favorable action by Convention on the motions presented on page 8.

Other Business

It was voted to allocate up to \$54k from the Equipment Reserve Fund for a new server and computer system.

Convention Update

Lisa Garcia has agreed to be nominated to serve as our new treasurer to replace Jim Gammill who is retiring. There are three elected positions which have not yet been filled with nominations. Three resolutions have been submitted for review by the Resolutions Committee as well as two proposed amendments to the Constitutions and Canons.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Connie Melahoures
Deanery Representative to Diocesan Council

