

Deanery Assembly Minutes

Date: 07 May 2020

Host Parish: Our house, sponsored by COVID-19

Parishes Present: St. Mary's, Barnstable, St. Christopher's, Chatham; St. Barnabas, Falmouth; St. Peter's, Osterville; Church of the Holy Spirit, Orleans; Christ Church, Plymouth; St. Mary's of the Harbor, Provincetown; St. David's, South Yarmouth; Church of the Messiah, Woods Hole.

6:45 Assembly called to order

Agape Meal: Andi Taylor from St. David's opened the meeting with an Agape Meal (used on Maundy Thursday). The words were available on a shared screen and this document is available on our website. The service included WLP 791 Peace Before Us, Luke 22:7-20, and the prayers.

Minutes: The minutes from March 26 will be available on the website as soon as possible.

Reports:

Co-Convener (Andi Taylor): The first order of business is the election of Assembly officers. It was decided to nominate the same people currently in their positions to lessen confusion during these unusual times. Andi and Connie, Dicky and Helen, David Osowski as Treasurer, Helen and Dave Fredrickson will remain Diocesan Council reps and we have a potential new Youth Rep in Piper Hunt. **The slate was nominated, seconded and passed.**

Dean's Report: Terry discussed what happened at the Bishop's and Dean's Council meetings. Some highlights:

- Assessments are reprieved temporarily. [Connie is chair of the Assessment Coordinating Committee and reminded us of a few things: The assessment is based on a 3-yr rolling average; if an abatement for 2021 is needed, the application deadline for assessment appeals is May 27.
- COVID testing for clergy
- Congregational development grants suspended
- Bishop Gates' sabbatical postponed
- Barbara C. Harris camp
- Diocesan office has Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans
- 60 Congregations approved for PPP loans
- When will churches reopen? It's up in the air. Will be decided by Governor Baker and Diocesan Covid Team
- Not *when* as much as *how*.
- In terms of Covid-19 in our own parishes, we must think long-term and not that this is a temporary situation.

Regional Canon: Kelly O'Connell was with Terry at the same meetings. She just wanted to add that for the first 6 weeks, the diocesan staff focused on the *immediate, i.e.*

supporting parishes *this week*. Now it looks like living with the Covid pandemic is a process, with peaks and valleys. Big Pentecost celebrations are not going to happen.

As it turns out, singing is one way to spread the virus. Right now they are looking at banning singing for maybe 2 years. The Bishop doesn't want to say something and then retreat, so he's listening very carefully.

Diocesan Council (Helen Gordon and Dave Fredrickson): Kelly and Terry covered most of it.

- Budget timeline changed due to coronavirus. May 27 tentative deadline for assessment appeals.
- Mission Initiatives Committee now has 3 subcommittees: Supported Parishes, Chaplaincies & Youn Adult Ministries, and Partnerships & Community Programs.
- Helen had a slide with initiatives.
- It was Helen and Dave's turn to present on Cape and Islands Deanery happenings. They complimented Hilary and the Mission Strategy Team for their Asset Mapping. Hilary has been calling parishes to update their asset maps with Covid-19 information.

Asset Map: Hilary shared the screen.

Communication: Helen was having a conversation concerning Zoom with lay people on Nantucket. At the moment they are using Facebook Live. Martha's Vineyard is using Zoom but we haven't contacted them yet.

Treasurer: No report.

Announcements:

- Becky Alden: Safe church. New guidelines exist. System matches people/position with courses to take. Gail is taking courses but some are not there.
- Dave Fredericks: Yom HaShoah over zoom was moving. (Holocaust Remembrance Day)
- We will have another Assembly in June. Usually the May Assembly is the last until September, but there was some interest in meeting again.

8:05: Closing Prayer. Will Mebane from St. Barnabas gave the closing prayer, written by parishioner Susan Schmidt.

O God, our protector, we pray that you keep us safe in these frightening times. Give strength to the nurses, doctors, first responders and those who are in essential businesses who are tending to our needs ahead of their own. Protect them. Help those who are struggling to find or keep faith by letting them know of your promise to be there always. Comfort the lonely and broken-hearted. Give us courage to love one another while keeping our distance so we may emerge from this trial with a deeper faith and new appreciation of ourselves and each other. We pray in your name. Amen