



HIGHLIGHTS – Diocesan Council Meeting

Saturday, February 18, 2017

Feast of Martin Luther, Theologian, 1546

Eighteen Council members met at St. Hilda's in Catonsville at 10 am. The Rev. Jason Poling, Vicar, and Becky Caulk, Facility Manager, warmly welcomed us and encouraged us to visit their historic 1845 sanctuary. Jason explained a little of the history from St. Timothy's that left to join the Roman Catholic Church under the Anglican Ordinariate. St. Hilda's is partnered with New Hope Community Church, an independent non-denominational congregation. Jason serves as pastor to New Hope as well as vicar to St. Hilda's.

The Rev. Jim Perra opened the meeting with prayer and a short reading from "God Has a Dream: A Vision of Hope for Our Time" by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Bishop Sutton:

- Our May Diocesan Convention will have the Evangelical Lutheran (ELCA) Bishop of the Delaware-Maryland synod speak: The Rev. William J. Gohl, Jr.
- There is a growing collaboration with our companion diocese of Puerto Rico. The Rev. Rafael Morales was elected Dec. 10 and will be consecrated on July 22, 2017. Bishop Sutton is his mentor. Kate Riley, Youth Missioner, is working with our Puerto Rico companions who will join Maryland youth at our National Episcopal Youth Event (EYE) in Oklahoma. There is talk of a clergy educational exchange as well as a Spanish Cursillo.
- We also have a partnership with the Diocese of Kenya. There is some "tension" as Kenya is having difficulty including "all God's people" for ordination.
- Claggett has a new interim director, Norm Ross. The Bishops and members of the board are meeting frequently with the staff. NOTE: interim is temporary The General Convention will be held in Baltimore in 2021.
- The Bishop has appointed the Rev. Ramelle McCall Urban Missioner for West Baltimore and priest in charge at Church of the Holy Trinity, Baltimore. The diocese is working to promote a presence in West Baltimore, an area impacted especially by the death of Freddie Gray. Ramelle was born and raised there and has a special calling to reach out to his friends and neighbors there. Bishop Sutton was a part of a "March for Refugees". About 350-400 people attended. He stated a clear biblical, moral, and theological basis to protect refugees, the fatherless, and widows. It was not a political statement—it was pastoral and provided comfort to the frightened. Bishop Sutton stated the church has a role in the democratic system and failure to exercise this responsibility is contrary to the gospels.
- When asked to clarify the stand on being a sanctuary, Bishop Sutton stated that any church may declare its property a sanctuary but cautioned that "advertising" only invites scrutiny by ICE.
- This week Bishop Sutton will have a meeting with clergy discussing how to preach in a time of such political division.
- The Rev. Nancy Foote, retired archdeacon, died the morning of the meeting. She helped develop the modern diaconate.

Bishop Knudsen:

Bishop Knudsen shared her very busy calendar with us and other work she is doing:

- March meet with Washington, Alleghany, Garrett Counties for a joint vestry meeting.
- Meeting with four churches to look at future collaborations.
- In April there will be a "Small Church Movement" at Claggett.
- The "DDD" (Diocesan Day on the Diaconate) will meet in April to form a clear picture of how to form deacons in the future. The Task Forces have been very busy. Three transitional deacons were ordained in January. There will be four vocational deacons ordained in June. The economics of

“supply and demand” has shifted. The majority of Episcopal priests are over 55. Last year they had one postulant to the priesthood and one to the diaconate.

- Work with the Intergrace Board that works with the aging on six care facilities (CCRC-continuing care communities).
- She wants to form a network of consultants for strategic planning for vestry retreats and/or conflict resolutions. Bishop Knudsen will address the Ecumenical Leaders Group advocating a permanent ban on fracking.

Canon Slater: This has been the fourth year for Episcopal Advocacy Day. It began with 15 people and over 100 participated this year addressing issues on the environment and health care. -He presented a tentative schedule for the convention May11 – 13. The Right Rev. Michael Curry will be speaking at Diocesan Convention and again Friday night at Krauchaar Auditorium of Goucher College. Seating is limited and the convention team is considering tickets to the evening event, which is open to the public.

Doug Vaughan, Treasurer: reviewed the end of year financials. There was a discussion of “on-line” paying and the cost related to using credit cards. A committee has been tasked to find less expensive alternatives using credit cards. The communication and stewardship & development teams will be asked to meet with join Council about strategy for diocesan communication and what needs to be on the diocesan website.

Judy Wright, Co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Reparations: Judy presented the findings of the five diocesan wide meetings held. There were 234 attendees with a 20% return on surveys. The council expressed thanks and affirmed the committee’s actions. The findings will be included in the convention report. The council voted to have the committee continue its work and perhaps join with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee as well as the Union of Black Episcopalians. There will be time at the convention for “table talk”. The overall consensus was to continue the discussions and information sharing.

Respectfully,

Kathy Polk
St. Margaret’s, Annapolis
Member-at-Large ‘17