

A Word From Council November 2011

Council met in retreat at Ascension School in Cove from Friday evening 11/11/11 until Sunday afternoon 11/13/11. The retreat was planned and led by Bishop Nedi. During the weekend we participated in 7 worship services and several Bible studies designed to determine how the Holy Spirit is speaking to us as the Diocese of Eastern Oregon.

Our first order of business was to get to know each other and the nature of our calling. 4 of the 5 new members of Council were in attendance. Those attending were: Julie Sarazin, St. Paul's, Nyssa; Don Dickinson, St. Paul's, The Dalles; Kim McClain, Trinity, Bend; The Rev. Rich Landrith, St. Luke's, Lakeview. The Rev. Jim Mosier, St. Matthew's, Ontario was unable to attend.

Next, Council reviewed the results of the convention surveys. Most respondents were pleased with our convention in Hermiston last month. Plans for our convention in Bend October 12-14, 2012 are beginning. Council is reviewing the survey results in an effort to make our 2012 convention even better. Thanks to the host committee in Hermiston for its good work, and thanks to those who responded to the survey.

In August of this year at our meeting in Klamath Falls, Council voted to increase the mileage paid to members of Council in their travels around the diocese. The intent of this change was to allow people of limited means to fully participate in Council activities. It was recognized that with gasoline prices hovering near \$4.00 per gallon that we were not covering Council member's expenses. We agreed to increase the reimbursement amount. Treasurer Jerry Frazier was able to find resources to make this transition for the remainder of 2011. A discussion will be held at our first meeting in 2012 to see what budget adjustments might be needed especially if Council intends to visit each parish again. One of the options to reduce costs is to have some Council meetings by teleconference. Given the great distances around the diocese, Council recognizes the need to have teleconferences and appropriate training for Council members. This will be reviewed at our January meeting in The Dalles.

Council reviewed and scored 7 Bisbee Grant applications. Council found all the proposals worthy, and, at the suggestion of Treasurer Jerry Frasier, money was found in the Ministry Development fund which enabled Council to fund each of the proposals to some level. The grants are:

- St. Paul's, Klamath Falls – PALM (Provide a Loving Meal) Feeding program - \$1500
- Church of the Redeemer, Pendleton – Helping Hand emergency housing - \$2000
- Trinity, Bend – Family Kitchen, addition of Family Night program - \$1000
- All Saints, Heppner – First Fridays Friends of Jesus projection equipment - \$1500
- All Saints, Heppner – 2012 Thanksgiving food boxes seed money - \$500
- St. Barnabas, Bonanza – The Learning House preschool and afterschool programs technology upgrade - \$1500

In reviewing Council's charge from convention, we discussed our obligation to continue taking steps to our future. It was discussed that the vast majority of congregants who attended our meetings around the diocese supported some form of "missional" bishop. Among the considerations could be a cooperative relationship with another denomination or denominations. We recognize that such a structure would need approval well beyond what can be done at the local diocesan level and would take several years to develop. Council agreed to spend its entire February meeting discussing the future of the diocese and the next steps that we will have to take to keep moving forward.

On Saturday night Council relaxed, put on slippers and silly socks and played "Taboo," led by Anna Carmichael.

In other business, Council discussed our finances and the progress of our audits. "Norms" for our meetings were also discussed and we will work to improve proceedings both in our meetings and at convention. We also approved our meeting minutes from our August meeting. Council considered letters of agreement and elected Terry Rahmsdorff, Trinity, Bend co-chair of Council (along with Bishop Nedi). Ruth Tsu, St. Mark's, Hood River was elected vice chair.

Council closed with Eucharist and expressed thanks to the Ascension School staff for a relaxed environment and wonderful food during our retreat