# Diocese of Rupert’s Land Diocesan Council December 12, 2020

# **Diocesan Council Minutes (via ZOOM)**

# **Saturday, December 12, 2020 – 9:30 am**

Present = P Regrets = R Absent = A ex-officio = (\*) appointed = (a)

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| P | Akinwale, Wilson | P | Ripley, Mr. Jim – Chancellor \* |
| P | Blaikie, The Ven. Simon – Executive Archdeacon \* | P | Robinson The Rev. Theo |
| P | Cummings, Lucy | P | Roe-Finlay, Susan |
| P | Dolloff, The Rev. John | P | Russell, Canon Gary |
| P | Dorrian, Colin |  |  |
| P | Ford, The Rev. Brian | P | Solomon, The Rev. Vince - Urban Indigenous Ministry Dev. |
| R | Graham, Rebecca | P | Thagard, Claudine |
| P | Green, Gail | R | Trott, Dr. Christopher - Warden, St. John’s College \* |
| P | Henderson, Ted | P | Vezina, Marcella |
| P | Holbrook, The Rev. Helen | P | Webster, Tannis - Chair |
| P | Johnson, The Very Rev. Paul \* | P | Wedlake, Robert \* - Secretary of Synod |
| P | Kennedy, The Ven. Helen \* | P | Woodcroft, The Rt. Rev. Geoffrey \* |
| P | Lampman, The Rev. Paul | P | Labdon, The Ven. Dave |
| P | Larson, Barbara |  |  |
| P | MacDonald, The Rev. Deacon Lynn |  | *Staff* |
| P | Mawejje, The Ven. Godfrey \* |  |  |
| P | Mawejje, June Rachel | P | Valencerina, Joy - Director of Finance |
| P | Manzongo, The Ven. Naboth | P | McCance, The Rev. Dr. Heather - Diocesan Ministry Dev. |
| P | McIntosh, The Rev. Wayne | R | Doyle, The Hon. Justice Robert - Vice Chancellor |
| P | Pilbeam, Richard | P | Routley, Sharon – Diocesan Treasurer |
| P | Rampton, The Rev. Andrew |  |  |
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**Acknowledgement of the Land**

The Chair, T. Webster, welcomed everyone to Council and opened the meeting with an acknowledgement of the land:

*We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1, 2 and 3 Land, the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dakota, Sioux and Oji-Cree people and the homeland of the Métis Nation. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land and their hospitality which allows us to live, work and serve God the Creator here.*

**Gospel Based Discipleship**

We broke into small groups to read Isaiah 61:1-4, and discuss the questions, “What is God’s mission in this passage?” and “How may God be calling you to this mission?”

1. **Regrets**

R. Doyle, R. Graham, and C. Trott sent their regrets.

1. **Approval of the Agenda**

*Motion: Be it resolved that the Agenda for today’s meeting be approved.*

B. Larson / P. Lampman **Carried**

1. **Minutes of Diocesan Council – October 28, 2020**

*Motion: Be it resolved that the minutes of the last meeting be approved.*

P. Johnson / R. Pilbeam **Carried**

**Business Arising from the Minutes**

Discussion: H. Kennedy noted that the minutes (point 5, pp 4-5) reversed the New Church Development Fund and the Ministry Development Fund, the latter funded from the sale of St. Stephen’s building. The funding for the postulancy Mission Team initiative was to come from the Ministry Development Fund.
S. Blaikie asked Joy Valencerina what fund is being used for this. She replied, “Designated Ministry Costs,” as she has not been able to locate funds with the specific name noted in the minutes or the motion.

P. Lampman noted that the ‘designated ministry costs’ sounds like a budget line rather than a capital fund, and that these monies were intended to come from the latter.

Bishop Geoff noted that proceeds from the sale of St. Stephen’s were actually to fund Indigenous ministry development and the ministry of Epiphany Indigenous Church. Vincent Solomon responded that it was his understanding that it was not only for indigenous ministry development but for ministry development in general.

J. Valencerina confirmed that the New Church Development Fund is an Integra Fund, and the Designated Ministry Costs represents the proceeds of the sale of St. Jude’s, Grand Marais. This is where the funds for the Mission Team have come.

Conversation ensued about how the proceeds of the sale of St. Stephen’s were distributed at the time of that sale. Bishop Geoff noted that we may have passed a motion to draw down on a fund, where that designation may not have been respected.

Chancellor J. Ripley advised that this matter be referred to H. Kennedy, S. Blaikie, J. Valencerina , and Bishop Geoff to investigate, look at the documentation, and report back to Council. Chair T. Webster concurred.

1. **Compensation Committee**

S. Blaikie presented the report. The committee recommends raising the housing allowance from $15,225 to $16,000, the first raise since 2017. Based on recommendations from Diocesan Executive, the committee has decided to change the note accompanying the minimum clergy stipend scale, as seen in the report. This scale is proposed to remain the same for 2021 as in 2020, reflecting the cost of living increase of only 0.4% and the realities of tougher financial times for everyone this year. Minimum fees for service is recommended to increase from $150 per service to $175 per service. Automobile allowance remains the same.

P. Johnson recalled that at the meeting of Executive Committee, A. Rampton had noted that no change to scale, with a cost of living increase of 0.4%, actually means that no change to the stipend scale represents a decrease in real income.

G. Mawejje noted that some parishes have received provincial and federal grants, and thus parishes are not in as difficult a place as they might have been. He supports the motion, suggesting that we pay particular attention to year-end reports from parishes as they come in, so that we have a real picture of how the year is ending.

L. Cummings asked whether the communication to parishes was sent, with information on how to obtain these grants (referencing the minutes which noted that Bishop Geoff was to write to parishes more than two months in arrears with Common Mission and Ministry (CMM), and with information on how to get the grants.) Bishop Geoff noted that he held off in sending that letter, and that parish remittances to CMM have increased since that time. Communication from parishes has been mixed, but for the most part parishes that require assistance have been able to access it in a timely fashion. He noted that we will hear more in the financial report from J. Valencerina and S. Routley, and also that because the rules for governmental programs change frequently, these folks are having to shoulder an incredibly heavy workload in this.
R. Pilbeam asked for clarification; is L. Cummings asking about the new Manitoba bridge grant? L. Cummings affirmed that this was her intention. Bishop Geoff said that the bridge grant is not accessible to parishes that have been received the CEWS (Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy) grants (or would have implications for having to pay back some of the latter). However, those parishes that are applying can expect to receive the bridge grant in the coming days.

*Motion: Be it resolved that the Diocesan Council approve the recommendations from the diocesan compensation committee titled, “Clergy Housing and MINIMUM Stipend Scale for 2021.”*

S. Blaikie / D. Labdon **Carried**

1. **Financial Report**

S. Routley noted that the time to apply for the Manitoba Bridge grant has been extended to December 31. We have the year-to-date financial statements. CMM is up from where it was last month, and we have received donations so that our total revenue is in a similar place to where it was at this point last year.

Investment committee discussed paying out a 4% distribution to diocesan accounts from investments. This was approved there, and came to the finance committee. At that time our ROI was over 7%, so that finance committee recommended that 4% distribution go ahead.

Projected year-end deficit is $21,000.

As required by Council last month, J. Valencerina provided a balance sheet. S. Routley noted the extra work this represented and commended Joy for it.

There is a budget meeting upcoming soon, which will be discussing CMM and plans to keep the Diocese viable in the coming years. The Budget Committee will have a draft budget for the next Council meeting.

P. Johnson asked about an amount designated for St. John’s Cathedral of $2,000. Was it for the anniversary commemorations, and was it actually forwarded? J. Valencerina will look into that.

CEWS has allowed over $300,000 to be recovered for twenty parishes to the end of June. As Bishop Geoff mentioned, it adds a significant workload, although a CRA spreadsheet has helped. The finance committee plans to resolve any errors that may have been made internally, and the committee is proofreading Sharon’s work. While this has resulted in some delays, it seems prudent to have more than one set of eyes on this work. CEWS is expected to continue through June, 2021.

S. Routley has a request for parish treasurers. Some have been submitting information on Excel spreadsheets; please submit printed pdfs instead to save time. Also, please ensure the correct month is showing, as some reports have not changed the title each month. Finally, be sure to flag any CEWS revenue you have received in your finacial statements so that it is not included as regular operating income. However, when CMM calculations are done, CEWS or other grants should be included as revenue.
Bishop Geoff noted that this communication should come through Joy to all parish treasurers.

Bishop Geoff wants Council to be clear about how CMM is established. It is based on statistics from two years previously (ie, 2020 CMM levels used 2018 statistics). This could mean that 2022 might have a marked decrease in CMM funding to the diocese. Over the past five years, Council has established staff positions in ministry development without making plans for stable funding for these. It is Bishop Geoff’s plan to ask the budget committee to be clearer about what the true picture is to adequately fund these positions and this work. This may increase how the formula for CMM works (looking at 15% rather than 12.5%; the Kenora deanery parishes were used to this level when they were part of Keewatin Diocese). He also wishes to examine capital fundraising campaigns and major gift asks. He supports the work of the two ministry developers and cannot perceive how we would get by without them.

*Motion: Be it resolved that the financial reports be accepted as presented.*

S. Routley / H. Kennedy **Carried**

1. **Bishop’s Reflections**

Across this diocese there is a myriad of expressions and practices of how we provide online support, in person, prayer, relationship-building, eucharistic practice. It is beautiful and gratifying to see how hard-working clergy and lay leaders are doing the work of Christ, going above and beyond to hold the energy level and the beauty of the Church that God has made.

In the last six months there have been countless calls for more eucharistic presence and ministry. Bishop Geoff is giving permission to a few communities within Rupert’s Land to experiment with an online eucharist. Some bishops have offered resistance to this, and others have welcomed this experiment (including the Primate). For some communities, this is not of interest. For some, a spiritual communion is fine, in which people receive Christ spiritually rather than through physical elements. This experiment will be six months long, or until the end of the suspension of in-person worship.
The Anglican Church of Canada (ACC)’s Faith, Worship and Ministry department has published a resource on this issue, including submissions from two of our members, Dr. Rebecca Graham and Canon Donna Joy. (Members can find that here: https://www.anglican.ca/faith/ministry/pandemic-times/)
This isn’t an individualistic, consumer-minded conversation. It has come with a great deal of critical review and prayerful discernment. Papers will be produced at the end of this experiment for the ACC to consider.

A number of legal matters are before us as a Diocese. Please pray for our Chancellor J. Ripley, Bishop Geoff, Executive Archdeacon S. Blaikie, and Finance Director J. Valencerina, who are assisting those who are providing us legal representation. As well, please pray for all others who are in pain and suffering.

Bishop Geoff has been working on the legacy of maternity homes for girls, institutions largely run by religious institutions in this country including the Anglican Church. Initially it seemed that Rupert’s Land did not run any such homes, which in 1959 were taken over by the province. However, from 1926 to 1959 we financially supported a United Church-run home. Pregnant girls from church communities, including Indigenous girls, were taken to these facilities. Birth would take place in a hospital and the baby removed to be adopted; the mothers were forced to sign documentation ‘consenting’ to this.
Six dioceses across Canada are working together on an apology for our part in this.

1. **Members’ Concerns and Other Business**

G. Mawejje reported on the situation in Uganda, where our companion diocese of Central Buganda is, and where the political climate is worsening. There will be elections January 14th, and campaigning by opposition is being violently repressed through police brutality. He requests prayers for this situation. Paul Johnson noted that there is Facebook page for the companion diocese relationship and encouraged Council members to join it.

W. Akenwale requested prayers for Nigeria, where the federal government has ordered violence against peaceful protestors and tensions are high. People have been killed by police and the military. Canada has granted some opposition leaders asylum.

B. Ford passed along a request for prayers for the situation in Hong Kong, where democracy is increasingly being violently repressed.

Bishop Geoff asked prayers for the family of Ralph Baxter, dean emeritus of this diocese who passed away recently, and for the Indigenous people of this land, especially Shamattawa and in other remote communities hit so hard by COVID-19.

Bishop Geoff led us in a time of prayer.

1. **Adjournment**

Motion: Be it resolved that this meeting of the Diocesan Council be adjourned (1102 hrs).

G. Mawejje / R. Pilbeam **Carried**