

**Minutes of the 124th Annual Convention
Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan
St. Stephen's, Escanaba
September 28, 2019**

Saturday, September 28

A celebration of Holy Eucharist was led by Bishop Rayford Ray. The homily was given by Shane Spellmeyer.

Call to Order

The Convention was called to order at 11:30 am by Bishop Ray.

Welcome

Delegates and visitors were welcomed to the Convention by Gin Mannisto. St. Stephen's and all involved were thanked for hosting.

Appointment of Parliamentarian

Bishop Ray appointed Patricia Micklow as Parliamentarian for the Convention. Bishop Ray also noted the new Diocesan Logo that was displayed on the screen behind him and described the meaning of the different symbols within the logo.

Order of Business and Rules of Order

P Micklow recommended the adoption of the Order of Business and the Rules of Order for the Convention. Motion to adopt was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Appointment of Convention Secretary

Bishop Ray appointed Kathy Binoniemi as Convention Secretary.

Report of Registration Committee on a Quorum

The Registration Committee certified the presence of a quorum with 15 congregations being represented.

Approval of the Minutes of the 123rd Annual Convention (Oct. 26-27, 2018)

Motion to approve the written minutes of the 2018 Annual Convention was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Introductions of guests and newcomers to the Convention

Shane Spellmeyer was introduced as the recently hired Priest in Partnership at Trinity, Houghton as well as other guests attending for the first time.

Communications Received

K Binoniemi noted the Presiding Bishop sends his greetings and is excited to be coming to the Upper Peninsula for the Revival at NMU in October.

Presentation by Title of Resolutions, Petitions and Memorials

K Binoniemi reported no Resolutions had been received.

Announce and Receive Nominations

Arlene Gordanier announced the nominations for various leadership positions. She explained the procedure for accepting nominations from the floor.

Nominations received for Diocesan Treasurer:

(1 year term) Nominee: Dick Graybill. Motion to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Dick Graybill made by Rick Stanitis, seconded by Mike Cutaiar. Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations received for Standing Committee:

(3 members for 3 year terms: 1 ordained, 1 non ordained and 1 either)

Ordained nominees: Norm Satterly, Charles Mineau. Non-ordained nominee: Kathy Binoniemi. Motion to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot was made by Mike Cutaiar, seconded by Jim Martindale. Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations received for Member at Large to Diocesan Council:

(1 3 year term) Nominee: Mary Sullivan. Motion to close the nominations and cast a unanimous ballot by Mike Cutaiar, seconded by Judd Spray. Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations received for Trust Association:

Motion to affirm the appointments of Jack Lenten, Patricia Micklow and Ron Smith to the Trust Association by Bishop Ray was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Nominations received for Nominees of Deputies to the 2021 General Convention:

(Nominations for up to 8 ordained and 8 non-ordained)

Nominations for ordained: Lydia Bucklin, Dick Graybill, Gin Mannisto, Sue Ray and Shane Spellmeyer (plus Thelma Clarage nominated from the floor). Nominations for non-ordained: Kathy Binoniemi, Jane Cisluycis, Arlene Gordanier and Rick Stanitis.

Appointment of Tellers – Bishop Ray appointed Mary Miron and Judd Spray.

Bishop's Address Summary

Bishop Ray addressed those gathered. A video of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's sermon at the Royal Wedding was shown. Bishop Ray reviewed the many ways our Diocese is living the 'Power of Love' that has been the theme for the work of The Episcopal Church. He highlighted Wyatt Imhoff of St. Mark's working to raise funds to bring a Feeding America West Michigan truck to Iron Co., the work of the Great Lakes Peace Center, Canterbury House, UP Wild Church and Taking the Pulse. An alumnus of Canterbury House spoke about how her time at Canterbury House has affected her and has kept her returning there for the past four years. Lanni Lantto spoke about UP Wild Church and what they have been doing since its inception and touched on plans for the future. Bishop Ray concluded the address reminding us there is no resurrection without death. He's confident in the work we have to do and has faith in us as we reconstruct what has to be done.

Election Results

Treasurer – Dick Graybill

Standing Committee – Charles Mineau, Norm Satterly & Kathy Binoniemi

Diocesan Council at Large – Mary Sullivan

Deputies to 2021 General Convention - Non-ordained – Jane Cisluycis, Arlene Gordanier, Kathy Binoniemi, Rick Stanitis. Ordained – Lydia Bucklin, Gin Mannisto, Sue Ray, Shane Spellmeyer.

Alternates: 1st Dick Graybill and 2nd Thelma Clarage

Taking the Pulse Presentation

Lydia Bucklin began the presentation by talking about how an article she came across in the January 1988 issue of Hiawathaland shaped the idea of Taking the Pulse. The article interviewed Bishop Tom Ray and his claim that “we are in the midst of a revolution, not of our making. God is dragging us into it.” She said that was 31 years ago and we’re still operating from this model. It was time to reflect on where we are. They wanted to listen deeply, practice the art of hosting. The whole process was thought through for quite awhile. L Bucklin and Brother Thomas Steffensen spent the summer months crisscrossing the UP – 5,000 miles.

Key points in the process were :

- 1) Go to the people, not make them come to us.
- 2) Set guidelines for communication, self focus. Deep listening and reflecting were done by Brother Thomas. They are his gift. Powerful questions were developed to prompt discussions and get past “we’ve never talked about this before”.
- 3) Wanted accountability – people wanted results and reporting back

They wanted to start in a place of strength; didn’t want negative questions. What’s giving you hope, strength, joy? Up on the screen was an image of words, a ‘wordle’ that was composed of the most used words that the found people that participated in TTP used: Community, Church, Diocese, People were the largest because they were used most frequently and in all of the congregations. “Issues, Grief” were much smaller; used less frequently. Two words that Episcopalians don’t like: evangelism and evaluation.

She then shared some take-aways from the conversations:

- Children and youth are a priority – not about survival ‘we just really enjoy them’
- People feeling scared, hard work, isolated, alone
- Theme of isolation – fact of life
- Distinction between the true Yoopers and those that move here
- Isolated from the Diocese and each other – nobody has as few members as us...

Nobody has as few leaders... was a common theme

- Diocese is seen as far away, disconnected. ‘It’s sad. If I wasn’t here, nobody would know. We could break off in the lake...’
- Exhaustion – people are tired, spread too thin. To the question “Are your gifts being fully utilized?” Answer, no – but I’m being spread too thin.

Hopes and Dreams

- Open doors – use the space in creative ways
- Have events – gets doors open other than just on Sunday mornings
- Get more kids in – ‘pray ground’
- Filling the pews but is it financial or need the gifts – both the feeling of being loved, cared for and noticed, people stressed.
- Doing church different times, different spaces, new ways
- Adult faith formation, deep theological formation is missed

Leadership will be looking again at this information at a visioning session on December 6th and 7th where Diocesan Council, Ministry Developers and others are gathering. Some discussion points – are the Districts working anymore? Make them smaller? Not sustainable the way they are now.

Treasurer's Report and Adoption of 2020 Diocesan Budget

Dick Graybill presented the Treasurer's report which summarized that the diocese is holding steady financially. Dick Graybill noted it's been an outstanding year for the trusts. The Trust Association has done really well. As of August 31st, the trusts had earned 17.6%. Also noted the Trust draw is based on the balance of the Trusts as of 2018.

2020 Budget - Dick Graybill directed delegates to the budget narrative on the front page of the proposed budget. It explained the difficulties the Diocese is having with the vast territory those serving congregations have to travel. Anticipation/hope/wish is for additional staff. Budget as presented has a "dream staff budgeted" which takes the bottom line high from where it has been. Probably won't fill all of the positions in 2020 as it sometimes takes awhile to find the person that fits in. The budget shows an increased draw on the Diocesan trust assets from the traditional 5 to 7%. We received excess monies from the Hiawatha District which will be applied the budget shortfall. Dick noted that we won't take the increased draw until we need it. He noted that the diocese as a whole has done an amazing job of stewardship, not spending when we don't have to.

Several questions were asked: Was the decision to increase the draw from the Trust to 7% approved by the Trust Association and Diocesan Council? Dick's response - Yes.

Who are the missioners on the budget? Lydia Bucklin, Transition Officer's response - The Huron District is currently being served by regional clergy Gin Mannisto, Sue Ray and Susan Harries. They are part time, not ministry developers. New hires would fill the vacancies left by retirees or those that have moved. Salary in the budget for the new hires is \$95,000 which someone questioned as high. Actually 1/3 of the salary is medical costs and 20% is pension so the actual salary is \$60,000. The salary would also include vehicle costs and travel. All medical insurance is through the Church Insurance Medical Trust by Canon Law.

Lydia at that time gave an overview of staffing needs looking ahead:

- Manuel Padilla will be retiring in April of 2020 after 31 years as the Ministry Developer in the Ottawa District, serving 8 congregations.
- Hiawatha – Ministry Developer vacancy since January.
- Gin Mannisto, Sue Ray and Susan Harries have been companioning in Hiawatha and Huron districts, with the congregations working with 2 each.
- Trinity, Houghton has hired Shane Spellmeyer as priest-in-partnership.
- Lydia Bucklin works with Munising. Rayford Ray with Menominee and Gladstone.
- Negaunee and Marquette have a Ministry Developer vacancy now. With Houghton on its own the Lake District but that configuration doesn't work anymore.

Motion to adopt the 2020 Budget as prepared was made and seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

Courtesy Resolutions

Be it resolved that the 124th convention of the Diocese of Northern Michigan meeting at St Stephen's, Escanaba on September 28, 2019, offer thanks for all who serve on committees, commissions, diocesan council and trust association for your dedication and focus to the life of this diocese.

Be it further resolved that we thank those who are taking a break: Laura Masters, and Gin Mannisto, from Diocesan Council; Karen Ettenhofer and Hazel Satterly from the Standing Committee; and Jim Heikkila from the Trust Association. We appreciate and offer deep gratitude for your commitment, and leadership in the business and mission of this diocese.

In addition, be it resolved that we thank all who were willing to stand for election this convention. We offer joyful appreciation that Lydia Kelsey Bucklin and Brother Thomas Steffensen for your gift of Taking the Pulse in our church communities. It was an energizing celebration and an invitation to dream. We are eager to continue this journey and are very thankful you guided us in this important adventure.

Be it resolved we welcome Shane Spellmeyer to the Diocese of Northern Michigan, it is a delight to have you here as a partner in mission and ministry. We are excited and eager for your ordination as Priest, next Saturday, Oct 5th at Trinity Church, Houghton and we celebrate this next step in your baptismal journey.

May it also be resolved, that we wish Kevin and Rise Thew Forrester joyful blessings on their new path in Oregon.

May it be further resolved that we thank Jane Cisluycis Canon & Operations Coordinator, and Alison Argall our bookkeeper, who are vital in our life as a diocese and our work as a team., We are very thankful for our, Missioners who share in the life and collaborative journeys of our communities. And be it also resolved, that we extend our gratitude to our Bishop, Rayford Ray for his guidance, wisdom and love for the people of this Diocese of Northern Michigan.

May it be further resolved that we thank the Hiawatha District, and St Stephen's for their many kindnesses and efforts as we gather for this Convention. We thank those who have planned and participated in worship, for lunch and snacks and time for fellowship.

Finally, we resolve to send the affectionate greetings from this 124th convention of the Diocese of Northern Michigan to: The Diocese of Michigan, Diocese of Eastern Michigan, and Diocese of Western Michigan; To the Diocese of Eau Claire, Diocese of Fond du Lac, our neighboring dioceses; To: Charlie and Linda Piper, Tom and Peg Lippart, Carol Clark, Marsha and Chuk Kleber, Sandy and Burt Purrington, Brother Thomas Steffensen, Cathy Clark, The Most Reverend Michael Curry, Rise and Kevin Thew Forrester, Bishop Griselda of the Episcopal Church in Cuba.

Respectfully submitted
Arlene Gordanier

Time and Place of next Convention

The 125th Annual Convention will be held October 23-24, 2020 at the Holiday Inn in Marquette.

Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, the Convention adjourned at 3:30 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Binoniemi, Secretary to Convention