

## **Minutes of the 128th Annual Convention**

Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan  
Immanuel Lutheran Church, Negaunee  
October 26, 2024

### **Convention Convenes**

The 128<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention began with a video recording of Bud Nedeau drumming, followed by a song led by Charles Murphy. The opening prayer was “The Dream” by Wesley Frensdorff.

### **Land Acknowledgement**

Bp Rayford Ray began with the Land Acknowledgement: *As we gather today, let us remember that we in the Diocese of Northern Michigan acknowledge the sacred land where we work, live, teach, learn, and build community. This land is the territory of the Anishnaabe people. We recognize the repeated violations of sovereignty, territory, and water, perpetrated by European and other settlers that have impacted the original inhabitants of this land. We extend our respect to citizens of these First Nations People who live here and their ancestors who have lived here for over five hundred generations, and to all Indigenous people. We also know that this acknowledgement is insufficient. It does not undo the harm that has been done and continues to be perpetrated now against Indigenous people, their land, air, and water.*

### **Call to Order**

Bp Ray called the Convention to Order at 9:55 am and welcomed all of those gathered.

### **Introducing Playground Space**

Sarah Diener-Schlitt noted that this year the convention would include the presence of children and youth in the space and reviewed some guidelines.

### **Invitation to Dream 1 – Chaplain’s reflection**

Brother Thomas Steffensen reviewed the history of “The Dream”. Groups reflected on what it means to dream.

### **Appointment of Parliamentarian**

Bishop Ray appointed Richard Graybill as Parliamentarian for the Convention.

### **Recommendation of adoption of Order of Business and Rules of Order**

R Graybill 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 Secretary**

Bishop Ray appointed Kathy Binoniemi as Convention Secretary.

### **Report of Registration Committee**

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

### **Approval of Minutes**

*Motion to approve the written minutes of the 127<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, held October 20-21, 2023 was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

## Introduction of guests and newcomers to Convention

Recognized guests that were attending our Convention as part of Visitors' Weekend. Attendees were from Massachusetts, the Society of St. Francis, General Theological Seminary, Diocese of Alaska, Diocese of Maryland, and Diocese of Arizona.

## Bishop's Address

Bishop Ray gave his address on the power of Love to Heal.

## Elections – Announce and Receive Nominations

Wyndeth Davis announced the nominations for various leadership positions. She explained the procedure for accepting nominations from the floor.

- Nominations received for **Diocesan Treasurer**: 1 nomination to fill the one-year term – Dick Graybill.
- Nominations for **Standing Committee** to fill 2 3-yr terms, 1 ordained and 1 non-ordained person; 2 2-yr terms, 1 ordained and 1 non-ordained; 1 1-yr term either ordained or non-ordained. Nominees: Non-ordained, Katie Chipman Bergsma, Rick Stanitis, Wyndeth Davis; Ordained, Karen Ettenhofer and Mary Miron.
- Nominations for **Diocesan Council**: 3 3-yr terms are open. Nominees: Ann Turney, Coralie Voce, and Wendy Wils.

*Motion was made by J Martindale to close the nominations and a unanimous ballot cast. Motion was seconded by J Slater. Motion carried unanimously.*

## Break

## Reports

- **UP Wild** – Ken Kelley presented a written report submitted by Lanni Lantto who was unable to attend. Noted in Mqt there are 15-25 people that gather per event. 200+ are receiving a newsletter and 100+ are signed up on their texting app. There are now 7 branches of UP Wild set up. There was a leaders' retreat held in 2024 at Fortune Lake that was attended by 18 people. Brochures have been put in coffee shops, and visitor's centers as well as a monthly ad in the Marquette Monthly. Mr. Kelley went on to say as an attendee of UP Wild, it has been a revitalizing experience for him. L Lantto has made adjustments as necessary to accommodate those who attend and "has created a safe and healthy container for honest conversation".
- **Resolution # 1** – (attached) presented by Lydia Bucklin and Steve Godfrey. "To amend the Canons of the Diocese to allow for recognizing "Partner Spiritual Communities" submitted by the Commission on Ministry. This amendment would provide for the establishment of Partner Spiritual Communities.
- **Resolution # 2** – (attached) presented by Lydia Bucklin and Steve Godfrey. "To amend the Constitution of the Diocese to allow for full participation of "Partner Spiritual Communities" in the life of the diocese." Submitted by the Commission on Ministry. This amendment would allow for non-congregational entities to have full participation in the life and governance of our diocesan community.

*A motion to adopt Resolution #1 was made by L Bucklin and seconded by Jim Martindale. The motion carried unanimously.*

*A motion was made by S Godfrey to adopt Resolution #2 as presented. Motion seconded by Katie Chipman-Bergsma. Motion carried unanimously.*

- **Brad Hauff, Episcopal Church Missioner for Indigenous Ministries** – addressed the convention via Zoom. Acknowledged and appreciate the work being done in our diocese which is above and beyond other dioceses across the country. He noted that Pres. Biden had given an address acknowledging the Boarding Schools to present day and gave an apology. He said it's a good start, a very important first step but now what? He noted that our diocese has been very intentional and very thorough in addressing Boarding Schools and the healing work that needs to be done.

- **Traveling Exhibit, Reparation and Justice Work** – Miskopwaaganikwe (Leora) Tadgerson reported on a very busy year. The Traveling Exhibit is getting great feedback and more areas are requesting it. A Truth and Healing Commission has been established by MI state legislation. Needs widespread support and we are urged to talk with our elected officials to get them to take action. Saying nothing if the wrong thing. Questions arise about violation of Treaties and why that would be a concern now. The violation of treaties by the US government, violated our own Constitution – the law of the land. It's not about giving land back, the goal is not to have people lose their homes. It's about living in right relationship. What ways can our wealth and power be used to restore – education. Put programs in schools that tell the truth. Boarding Schools are not talked about. Repatriation of Indigenous children. Bring them home.

## **Invitation to Dream 2**

Miskopwaaganikwe (Leora) Tadgerson invited us to think about ways that we might become more culturally competent and how to amplify what is already ongoing initiative with our native communities.

**Lunch Break** – A huge thank you to all those that prepared and presented the meal.

**Trust Report** – Amanda Knaffla and Michele Kontio of Range Bank Trust and Wealth Management presented the report on the diocesan trust holdings. In all the trusts were up 16.97% for 2024. A very good year.

## **Invitation to Dream 3**

Steve Godfrey explained how the information that had come out of our Visioning and Dreaming Conference in the Spring has been collected and organized. The large sheets of paper around the room are the results. We are to go around the room and place stickers on the areas we want the Diocesan Council to focus on and what we can work on together.

## **Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the 2025 Budget**

Dick Graybill reviewed the written report included in the delegate packets. He noted we passed a deficit budget in 2024 but we ended up with a surplus largely due to staffing changes and a bequest that was received during the year. He presented the proposed budget for 2025. There is an additional missioner included in the budget. This budget is balanced.

*He moved the approval and acceptance of the proposed 2025 Budget. The motion was seconded by J Martindale and carried unanimously.*

## **Trust Association Member Affirmation**

Bp Ray announced that he had appointed Jack Lenten to another term, and Lydia Bucklin as a new member of the Trust Association. Motion to affirm the appointees was made by Susan Harries, seconded by Katie Chipman-Bergsma.

## **Announcement of Committees**

Bp Ray noted the list of Committee Conveners and Appointments could be found in the delegate packet. *He moved the affirmation of these appointments. The motion was seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

## **Reports**

- **General Convention** – Rick Stanitis and Lydia Bucklin reported on the Convention held in Louisville, Kentucky. Frank Bergsma was there this year as a Junior counselor taking care of children. It was a great opportunity and Northern Michigan was well represented.
- **Province V** – R Stanitis reported. Prov V consists of MI, Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Missouri. Gave an overview of the work they do.
- **Living Waters Cooperative** – S Godfrey and L Bucklin reported on the redevelopment of the group that had been Living Stones many years ago in partnership with other dioceses. They've transitioned to the LWC. Our diocese is the fiduciary entity. They hold online conversations about

the future church every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 2 pm. They hold retreats and this year held a conference/training in MN which was a skills based opportunity to reimagine community organization.

### **Jim Kelsey Awards for Justice and Peace**

Bp Ray presented four awards this year to the following:

- **Dick Graybill** – for the work that he has done for the Great Lakes Recovery Center and his 40 years of leadership and service to our diocese
- **Jenn Ray** – daughter of Tom and Brenda Ray. For her work as a member on the Marquette Area Public Schools Board to remove the former MSHS mascot and name.
- **Miskopwaaganikwe (Leora) Tadgerson, Mitch Bolo, Ariel Gougeon, Kathy Vanden Boogaard, and Dan Truckey** – for their work on planning, preparing and implementing the Traveling Exhibit.
- **Lydia Kelsey Bucklin** – now the Dean and President of the Episcopal Divinity School. We are honored to have her walking with us.

### **Courtesy Resolutions**

Arlene Gordanier and Rick Stanitis presented the Courtesy Resolutions. Affectionate greetings were sent to Jane Cisluycis, Charlie and Linda Piper, all the food preparers, kitchen helpers, to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Negaunee for hosting us today and St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Marquette for hosting us on Friday. *Motion to adopt these resolutions was made and seconded. Motion carried.*

### **Time and Place of the next Annual Diocesan Convention**

The 129<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention will be held in Escanaba at St. Stephen's Church and Bay College on October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

### **Invitation to Dream 4**

Bro Thomas concluded with thoughts on dreams – how they capture our attention and imagination. They can be liberating, challenging and freeing. They can become reality. How will you/we make that happen? Remember that dreams can be heavy and are not lifted alone.

### **Adjournment**

The 128<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention was adjourned by Bp Ray at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Binoniemi  
Convention Secretary