

Diocesan Council Report to Convention

The mission of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Missouri, in response to Christ, is to nurture, support and challenge congregations and institutions in the exercise of our common ministry by:

- Recommending policies to Convention
- Supervising Diocesan Mission Groups, commissions, committees and task forces
- Drafting the Diocesan Program Fund budget
- Overseeing the Program Fund Budget
- Acting as a communications network, keeping the Diocese in touch with one another.

The membership structure and responsibilities of the Diocesan Council are delineated in Canon 111.6. The Bishop serves as Chairman of the Diocesan Council with seat, voice and vote; the Vice-Chancellors and the Treasurer of the Diocese serve, ex officio, as members of the Diocesan Council with seat and voice, but do not vote; the voting members of the Council consist of elected and appointed members. The elected members shall consist of 6 at-large lay members elected by Convention and 1 lay and 1 clerical representative elected by Convocation. The appointed members consist of 3 persons selected by the Bishop, subject to ratification by the elected members. The Council prepares a proposed Diocesan budget and oversees receipts and expenditures under the budget adopted by the Convention. The Council plans, develops, reviews, and evaluates annually the programs of the Diocese and makes written recommendations concerning them to the annual meeting of the Convention.

Since December 2019 your Diocesan Council has met 6 times. We began meeting at Christ Church Cathedral and necessarily learned to meet via ZOOM from February until God only knows. (Thank Tracy Grigsby and the Cathedral staff for making this smooth-ish. They cannot be responsible for internet connectivity and learning curve inequalities).

The first resolution coming before the council this year resolved that of the total annual compensation to be paid to the Rev. Deon Johnson in 2020 by the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri be designated a housing allowance within the meaning of that term as used in Section 107 of the IRA CODE of 1986; and further resolved that the amount designated as a housing allowance shall apply to calendar year 2020 and all future years unless otherwise provided. This resolution was presented, seconded, and passed unanimously.

In light of the suspension of public worship due to the coronavirus pandemic and the need to take unprecedented steps to maintain continuity in all operations and ministries the financial stress of the times was addressed. The Council moved, seconded, and unanimously passed a resolution to grant a deferred payment holiday for the payment of parish and mission diocesan assessments until July 1, 2020 and further authorized the Bishop to make additional emergency grants as needed on a case by case basis to an individual parish or mission up to \$25,000, and up to \$200,000 in the aggregate for all parishes and missions. Such emergency grants shall come from the unrestricted accounts of COEDMO. The grants shall be requested by the parish priest and senior warden and approved in consultation with the Bishop, the Executive Director of Finance & Administration and/or the Diocesan Treasurer.

Through the year Aged and Infirm Clergy Fund requests were granted. Three grants in the amount of \$3,000.00 were approved from the Theological Education Fund. A Clergy Compensation Resolution to be presented to the 181st Diocesan Convention was passed. The Counsel resolved to engage in the work of Strategic Visioning and Planning for the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri.

The mission of the Council to act as a “communication network” is being actively addressed. Bishop Deon is interested in leading the council into being a body of greater service to congregations rather than being mostly involved in financial work. To this end a proposal for the formation of Diocesan Council Standing Teams is underway. Adjoined to this restructuring is an intention to evaluate our convocation system. Taking a fresh look at how the system works and doesn't work will be a council action early in 2021.

Thank you for your attention.

Holly Maffitt