



Report to the 2022 Synod of the Diocese of Christ Our Hope, ACNA

Jessica Patton

Vice Chair, Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Council serves as a council of advice to the bishops and provides financial and other oversight to the diocese as canonically defined. The council has worked this year to create and to mature our policies and processes to better support the missional work of the diocese. We prayerfully seek to respond in practical ways to the changing needs of our diocese.

The council is currently composed of the Bishop Ordinary, the Bishop Coadjutor, and six lay and three clergy representatives drawn from all seven deaneries. The Chief Operating Officer for the diocese as well as the Canon to the Ordinary and the Suffragan Bishop are all non-voting members of the council. The council seeks to represent the demographic and geographic diversity within our diocese. Members serve staggered three-year terms.

In light of the growth of the diocese, the quantity and type of work facing the council, and the council's canonical charge to maintain a two-to-one laity to clergy ratio of members, the council has voted to expand the number of members from nine to twelve. At Synod 2022, delegates will elect two additional lay members and one additional clergy member for one to three year initial terms. This will allow the council to continue to have representation from every deanery and for four members to rotate off each year instead of three.

This year, two members of the council have completed their terms and are standing for re-election: Rev. Brian Campbell (Triangle-Tidewater Deanery) and Rev. Travis Dorman (Blue Ridge Deanery). Rev. Mark Rudolph is resigning from the council as he is now serving as the Dean of the Metro Mid-Atlantic Deanery. Ryan Willers (Northeast Deanery) has finished his term and is not standing for reelection on the Diocesan Council.

The council meets at least once a month over video conference to conduct its business. During this past year, the work of the council has focused on the following areas:

Safeguarding: The council authorized the creation of a Diocesan Response Team (DRT) in March 2022 to receive and assess any complaints of suspected misconduct and to offer care and support for all parties involved in the complaint. The council engaged Grand River Solutions (GRS) to investigate the actions undertaken by the Diocese relating to specific complaints of pastoral misconduct. The council recognizes that not all of the steps taken by the diocese were in compliance with current best



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P.O. Box 52449
Durham, NC 27717
Office: (984) 999-4604

practices for responding to such complaints and are committed to engaging seriously with the recommendations from GRS to faithfully ensure that our diocesan policies and procedures align with current safeguarding best practices.

Financial Oversight: The council, in conjunction with the Finance Committee and the Diocesan Chief Operations Officer, have created and approved the 2023 budget. This budget continues to reflect the structural changes to staff compensation that the council communicated about earlier this year and incorporates the expected results of the Anchor Fund fundraising campaign in order to sustain and grow the mission of the diocese. To support the diocesan fundraising efforts, the council authorized the hiring of a Development Support officer to assist in the creation and execution of a strategic plan for the Anchor Fund. Lastly, the Diocesan Council has elected Ryan Willers to serve as the new diocesan Treasurer. Ryan is a CPA and managing director at Deloitte LLP and has served as the chair of the Constitution and Canons Committee, as a lay delegate on the Diocesan Council, and as treasurer of his local parish.

Ministry Partnership Proposals (MPPs): The council oversees the mission budget of the diocese, primarily through disbursement of MPP grants. We received fourteen applications and were able to approve 7 new grants for 2023, including funds for church plants and mission program expansion opportunities. Currently there are 19 outstanding grants supporting works in every deanery. The council has also enhanced our grant oversight process to ensure all recipients are in compliance with the diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children and are providing twice yearly written reports on the status of the work the grant is enabling.

Policy Updates: The Diocesan Council has approved a Conflict of Interest Policy that will be signed by all diocesan council and staff members to bring the council into alignment with standard disclosure practices for nonprofit boards. The council also approved updates to the Clergy Licensing Policy to include the diocesan policies specifically regarding female clergy. We authorized updates to the Policy & Manual for the Protection of Children, primarily in response to feedback from the deaneries to clarify requirements and recommendations based on practical experiences from parishes. Additionally, the council has created a Brokerage Account Policy to govern the handling of donations of stock or other securities.



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Miscellaneous:

- Conducted an Episcopal Evaluation and Review of the Bishop Ordinary as canonically required and created a process whereby the council can conduct the review annually going forward
- Provisionally received The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul of Roanoke, VA to the Diocese of Christ our Hope
- Interviewed and approved the slate of candidates for the Diocesan Council to be voted upon at synod
- Reviewed and approved the nominees to the Constitutions and Canons Committee, to be voted upon at synod

Please be in prayer for the Diocesan Council as we seek to wisely steward the resources of our diocese.

In Christ,
Jessica Patton
On behalf of the 2022 Diocesan Council