**PROVINCE 1 SPRING SYNOD**

**APRIL 8, 2017**

**St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 53 N Main St, North Grafton, MA 01536**  (Thanks to The Rev Laura Goodwin!)

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| **Present** | **Unable to Attend** |
| Diocesan Bishops:* ME, Stephen Lane
* VT, Tom Ely
* W MA, Doug Fisher
* CT, Ian Douglas

Diocesan Delegates:* CT Clergy, The Rev. Rebekah Hatch (2019, 3 yr. term)
* ME Clergy, Aaron Perkins (2018, 3 yr. term)
* NH Lay, Eleanor Vander Hagen (2019, 3 yr. term)
* NH Clergy Gail Avery (2019, 3 yr. term)
* RI Lay, Betsy Fornal (2019, 3 yr. term)
* RI Clergy, Jan Grinnell (2019, 3 yr. term)
* VT Lay Alternate, Elizabeth Parker (2019, 3 yr. term)
* W MA Clergy, Nancy Webb Stroud (2017, 2 yr. term)
* W MA Clergy Alternate, Sam Smith (2017, 2 yr. term)
* W MA Lay, Gale McKenzie (2018, 2 yr. term)
 | Diocesan Bishops:* NH, Rob Hirschfeld
* MA, Alan Gates
* MA, Gayle Harris
* RI, Nick Knisely
* CT, Laura Ahrens

Diocesan Delegates:* CT Lay, Barbara Casey (2019, 3 yr. term)
* ME Lay, Rita Redfield (2018, 3 y. term)
* MA Lay, Becky Alden (2018, 3 yr. term)
* MA Clergy, Karen Coleman (2018, 3 yr. term)
* VT Clergy, Lee Alison Crawford (2016, 3 yr. term)
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**NOTES**

10:00 Opening Prayer and President’s welcome – The Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane

* Introduced history of the Provincial Synod – 2 per year
	+ Spring, physically gathered –receive information about Provincial efforts; often educational, set direction/priorities for year
	+ Fall, via web conference – budget approval
* Brief Introductions: Name, Day Job, Diocese, offer 1 word ID of something in the church that is energizing you
	+ The Jesus Movement - changing the culture of the church
	+ Sanctuary conversations in Maine, refugee resettlement
	+ CT River Pilgrimage
	+ Congregational resources ad training
	+ New model of Parochial visitations – what is Jesus doing in our neighborhoods
	+ St Josephs Day celebrations
	+ Idea becoming reality – center for Reconciliation in RI
	+ The Jesus Movement – facilitating parish resource use to reimagine ourselves and our core mission
	+ Collaboration - with Lutherans, UCC, Muslims, Jewish neighbors… as well as diocesan neighbors
	+ Forward Movement’s Renewal Works – who are we and where do we want to go on our spiritual journey personally and corporately
	+ Reinvigorated office of deacon
	+ Interfaith collaboration
	+ Energy across dioceses, bringing us together and prioritizing efforts
	+ Church as a place of openness, particularly in current context
	+ Formation for the church in the 21st century, especially with other churches and denominations

10:15 Introduce John Hennessy, Director, Maine Episcopal Network for Justice

* John is an advocate (prefers over lobbyist) – state legislature, faith based activism in the public sphere – works in Maine with collaborators in DC – Chuck Wynder Jr is liaison to Faith Rooted Organizing efforts -
* Maine received grant from Episcopal Church for position, willing to serve province-wide efforts
* Share folder with introduction of how the Province Can Respond to Current Context
* Faith Rooted Organizing is a style of organizing and action that is shaped and guided bin every way by faith principles and practices
* Rooted in work of The Rev. Alexia Salvatierra, *Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World* [*https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0830836616/ref=oh\_aui\_detailpage\_o00\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1*](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0830836616/ref%3Doh_aui_detailpage_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)
* Baptismal Covenant calls us to “strive of justice and peace and respect the dignity of every human being
* Characteristics include:
	+ Helping people of faith dig into their religious traditions and spiritual practices as grounding for the action work
	+ Politicians or other leaders are not targets; they are children of God and should be treated with love and respect
	+ The point is less about winning a battle and more about being in the right fight
	+ Our engagement holds the possibility of transforming people at an intrapersonal level
	+ The perspectives of the poor should be prioritized for the sake of the common good
* Congregation-based Justice Work
	+ Many leaders are unsure how to introduce justice practices to their congregations
	+ They fear the repercussions (alienating particular congregants)
	+ Controversy exists about the most effect and most faith rooted ways to work in and with congregations
	+ Story sharing is an essential element
* Challenges Opportunities
	+ Build authentic relationships
	+ Listen to one another
	+ Patience
	+ Long-term
	+ Depoliticize issues (I support moral budget)
	+ Demonstrate relevance
* Key questions:
	+ How can we ensure our organization is based and guided by faith?
	+ How can we invite others to share unique gifts and resources to broaden movement for justice?
	+ Being value-based – not issue based, or politics based – gives space for dialogue
* **PLANNING SEPT 15-16, 2017 FAITH IN ACTION TRAINING AT Barbara C Harris Camp and Conference Center with The Rev. Alexia Salvatierra**

12:00 Lunch Break

12:30 Introduce The Rev. Stephanie Johnson, Co-Chair, Advisory Council on Stewardship of Creation

* Stephanie is both the Co-Chair of the Advisory Council and the Province I Rep
* Resolution Number: 2015-A030

Title: Support Ecologically Responsible Stewardship of Church Property

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended

Final Text:

Resolved, That the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society is directed to implement a program to develop parish and diocesan resources designed to support local ecologically responsible stewardship of church-related properties and buildings. The program shall be implemented in cooperation with an **Advisory Council on the Stewardship of Creation** composed of **one person from each province** by April 1, 2016. Each province member of the Advisory Council shall **convene, in their respective provinces, Regional Consultive Groups ("RCG's") on the Stewardship of Creation**. Each RCG shall be comprised of no fewer than five experts in areas of environmental sustainability appropriate to the demographic, ecological, cultural and geographic specifics of each region. These should include, but not be limited to, consultants in food and water security, property development, alternative energy, and engineering. Each RCG will also include theologians, educators and liturgists to provide resources in education and formation. These RCGs shall:

1. **Compile and develop** **theological and formational material** for teaching the theology of stewardship of creation;

2. **Create networks designed to share ideas and information** for practical application among the regions, such as sustainable development and green conversions of church- related properties, including without limitation, energy audits, solar conversions and other alternative energy, community gardens, and development of fallow property;

3. Be available for **consultation to the Dioceses and Parishes**.

The Advisory Council on the Stewardship of Creation shall create a structure for allocation of money to fund RCG initiatives at Parish and Diocesan levels within a year of the 78th General Convention, and **serve as the granting body**; and be it further

Resolved, That $700,000 be allocated for this purpose, which includes the $500,000 already allocated to the Fifth Mark of Mission, so that $100,000 will be available for the support of the RCGs themselves, and $600,000 be available to provide direct grants to Dioceses and Parishes in the implementation of these programs and support of measurable pilot projects. Of the $100,000 funding the RCGs, $40,500 is to be allocated for the Task Force meetings. Recognizing that this is new work, and a newly formed taskforce, they shall convene in person for their initial meeting, and thereafter determine their needs for future meetings, with funding available for them to meet once yearly. The remaining $59,500 is to be used for **regional meetings of the RCGs according to regional needs**; and be it further

Resolved, That the Advisory Council shall report back to the 79th General Convention on the progress and ongoing results at the local and provincial levels.

* The Council has been formed and a staff person has been hired to help coordinate efforts. Regional groups are being formed. Province I has gained recommendations from each of the Bishops and hope to meet soon. Will spread the word both about the meeting and its results with the Province in collaboration with the executive director.
* There is a small grant process available with $300,000 allocated. There has been one grant cycle with a maximum of $10,000 grant. Innovative, replicable. Advocacy and action-oriented efforts were awarded. This includes a grant to the CT River Pilgrimage. A second grant cycle is underway.
* There are initial planning efforts to convene a regional.
* Bishop Lane raised a question about the challenge of the reduction in church wide financial support to provinces/regions at the same time as more is being asked of them. Stephanie reiterated resolution’s direction to form regional groups… which to date have paralleled provincial groupings. Stephanie also commented that the resolution offered a great design for collaboration to network people and resources however it is not effective in places where there is not an active regional coordinator.

1:00 Introduce Jo Brooks, River Pilgrimage Coordinator, <http://kairosearth.org/river>

* Jo shared the history of the River Pilgrimage from an idea during Bishop Rob’s discernment to be Bishop of NH through current implementation as a 40 day pilgrimage. She also showed the introductory video available on the River Pilgrimage website: <https://youtu.be/nWXap9XXCww>
* Kairos Earth is coordinating the planning with an ecumenical leadership team
* Mark and Lisa Kutolowski have been hired as the guides; they are preparing a Pilgrimage Prayerbook in consultation with the leadership team which will be given to the paddlers and available for a donation (likely $20) for those who want to travel with the pilgrims but not paddle.
* Folks can sign up for longer and shorter segments as well as for day paddles. There are spots for two guides and 10 paddlers in each segment. All of the bishops will be paddling July 3-4. There will be a concluding celebration for paddlers and supporters in Essex, CT on July 8 with music, food and worship. The schedule is
	+ May 31 – June 10:
		- 4th Connecticut Lake (northern NH) to Littleton, NH
		- Spiritual theme: The Call to the Wilderness / Water, Grace & The River of God
	+ June 10 – June 17:
		- Littleton, NH to Hanover, NH
		- Spiritual theme: Baptism and Immersion in God
	+ June 17 – June 24:
		- Hanover, NH to Brattleboro, VT
		- Spiritual theme: A New Relationship with Creation
	+ June 24 – July 1:
		- Brattleboro, VT to Springfield, MA
		- Spiritual theme: Drinking from our Divine Source
	+ July 1 – July 9:
		- Springfield, MA to Long Island Sound
		- Spiritual theme: Transformation and Resurrection
* Jo and her collaborators will post images/videos each day to facebook
* The province will send flyers about the pilgrimage, the press kit, and information about the prayerbook to each parish in the province using Constant Contact.

1:30 Introduce The Rev. Karen Montagno and James McKim, Co-Chairs of the Task Force on Exploring Multicultural Awareness and Nurturing Cultural Competency

* Karen and James described the expanded notion of anti-racism training which the province has developed based on the understanding that to really address racism requires an immersive process that increases knowledge and skills for folks to live into the Dream of God
* We have benefitted by strong support of the Province’s Bishops and staffs in our offerings
	+ Monthly web conferences
	+ Task Force membership
	+ Resource databank
	+ Trips to places like Royal House
	+ Consultation with dioceses to offer programs and resources
* James shared his experience as Province I representative on the Executive Council’s Anti-Racism Committee
	+ Goals include helping faith communities to have conversations about race (understanding barriers and gaining skills/competence to overcome), offering opportunities to talk about The New Jim Crow (book studies), beefing up training including a revision/expansion of Seeing the Face of God (out next year)
	+ Province I is being held as an exemplar to be replicated by the church wide office and other provinces
* Karen invited synod participants to identify how the task force can be supportive
	+ MAINE – need MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCY for refugee resettlement and immigration work - Moving to “just in time” models that train as need arises
	+ COMMISSIONS ON MINISTRY – Kit – need clarity about what counts to certify that those on ordination track have met requirements; Nancy – as well as ways to train those who will not go to seminary…
	+ James identified that the certification process for those being ordained is an unfunded mandate of the church
	+ Karen offered that MA has regularly scheduled training that other dioceses can join
	+ Eleanor identified challenge in locations that have few or no people of color to encourage training; James reminded of move to focus on diversity and “talking across difference” that exists even in predominantly white communities
	+ Tom Ely offered that Dr. Donna Hicks, Cambridge, will be keynote at VT diocesan convention. Her work is on how recognizing the DIGNITY of all persons is the essential element in resolving conflict. (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QN5WxW13rlw)

2:00 Review and Discuss Pre-distributed Materials

* Julie Presented 2016-17 Synod Report (see attached)
* 2016 Budget
	+ Terry Reimer has been operating as provincial bookkeeper; problematic, no treasurer as part of the Executive Committee that meets monthly to direct efforts – NEED TO FIND A TREASURER
	+ Not audited yet
	+ In 2018, the church wide contribution will be 0 (2016 was $10,000; 2017 was $5000)
	+ Currently operating within money allocated by dioceses within the province (not tapping reserve despite increasing programming/services)
	+ Started charging a modest fee (ie eformation was $65) in addition to food and lodging for offerings
* Identify Priorities for 2017-2018
	+ Episcopal Lutheran Collaboration – Jim Hazelwood initiated
	+ Summit with Provincial Spiritual Directors
	+ Small Church Summit – use restricted funds – one room schoolhouse model; translate from program parish to small community
	+ Revival 2018 – Diocese of Western MA
	+ Refugee Resettlement/Sanctuary – ME, ELCU chancellors, closing migrant ministry initiatives in Western MA and NH; Chris George – IRISEMM CT can help

Delegates invited to join efforts that fit their passions and values

**SAVE THE DATES**

* **May 16th 7:30-8:30** Invite Bishops to Share reflections from the HoB Visions Training on Exploring Multicultural Awareness and Nurturing Cultural Competency Webinar
* **Sept 15-16 – 2017** Faith Rooted Organizing, Alexa Silvestry – organizing FOR instead of AGAINST something
* Fall 2017 Synod via Web Conference will be **Nov 9, 2017 8 am** via Zoom
* **April 6-7, 2018 for** Spring 2018 Synod and General Convention Orientation

3:00 Closing Prayer and Dismissal