**Vestry of the Diocese Meeting**

**April 12, 2018**

**Christ Church, Winchester, VA**

Bishop Johnson opened the meeting with prayer. Rev. Webster Gibson, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church welcomed the Vestry of the Diocese (VOD), after which the Bishop introduced the attending Regional Council Presidents. Four presidents were in attendance.

Minutes of the February 15 meeting were approved.

**Bishop Suffagran Search Update**

Bishop Johnson provided an update on the search for an additional suffragan bishop. The process is apace, and the election of a suffragan is still on schedule for the November convention in Richmond. A profile of the Diocese and a job description are posted on the Diocesan website. There were 21 listening sessions held in February and March among the regions and several parishes and parish surveys were collected that allowed for local input to the development of the job description. The application process is being conducted online and will close on April 29, 2018. A retreat will be held for the semi-finalists at Shrine Mont in August. The Bishop added that there are only seven suffragans now serving in US dioceses and five others in other capacities (e.g., the suffragan for Europe).

**Update on the Upcoming 79th General Convention**

The General Convention will be held from July 3 through July 14 in Austin, TX. The Bishop will no longer be serving on the Committee for Music & Liturgy but will move to the Committee on Social Justice & Domestic Policy in the US. Bishop Goff will be chairing the Revision of TITLE IV Committee. TITLE IV deals with disciplinary actions set forth in the Canons. The vast majority of bishops agree on the need for more precise policies and guidelines.

One of the major issues to be discussed will be the *communion of the un-baptised.* Several parishes in our diocese practice open communion, which is actually not in line with the current Canon. It is anticipated that this issue will be strenuously debated.

Heated debate is also anticipated on the issue of whether the President of the House of Delegates should be a salaried position. The office of president is for a three-year term and is far more than a part-time position. A major contention regards how the Church is to be led and the role of the President of the House of Delegates v. the House of Bishops v. the Presiding Bishop.

Another key issue to be addressed at the General Convention regards the expanding of paid family leave for clergy and employees.

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**Report of the Bishops**

Bishop Goff gave a report on the Committee on Congregational Mission (CCM) which provides financial support for mission churches in the Diocese that are not yet parishes. CCM is currently the second-largest line item in the annual budget at $83,550. At its peak in the 1980s there were 28 mission churches. That number has dwindled to seven in existence today. The downward trend is due mostly to out-migration of population, merging congregations, and missions that have gained parish status and are thus self-sustaining entities. Two of the current seven missions are led by lay pastoral leaders.

Bishop Johnson sought approval of the VOD to begin the process of developing a five-year strategic plan to encompass: a) financial growth, b) evangelism, c) reorganization for mission, d) social engagement, e) outreach, and f) campus ministries and youth involvement. He would like to use as a model the five-year plan recently completed by VTS. The Very Rev. Ian Markham has agreed to lead the initiative. The VOD approved and endorsed moving forward.

**Secretary’s Report**

The Secretary presented background on an Episcopal Service Corps Program called Grace-on-the-Hill operating on Oregon Hill in Richmond. This program offers young adults an opportunity to participate in hands-on internships to work with 4th to 8th grade students at the Anna Julia Cooper Episcopal School who have limited resources. Students are offered full-tuition scholarships. Interns are offered a monthly stipend, housing, and health insurance and a weekly opportunity for spiritual formation provided by the Diocese of Virginia, as well as church and community leaders.

**Treasurer’s Report**

During the first quarter of 2018, the Diocese collected 95% of budgeted revenue and spent 97% of its projected operating and other costs. The annual audit has been recently completed. The draft budget for 2019 will be distributed to the VOD on the Friday prior to the Diocesan Convention in November (2nd thru 5th). The Diocese is looking into methods for upgrading the budgeting process and bank reconciliation

**Regional Reports/Budget Approvals**

Regional reports, distributed to VOD members prior to the meeting, were approved. Budgets for the Alexandria and North Neck regions were approved. (While the Alexandria budget was submitted on time for the February meeting, it had not yet been approved by the Alexandria Council. Hence, it was presented at the April meeting.)

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**Working Groups**

Finance: Disposition of properties owned by the Diocese were discussed. These included properties in Prince William, Louden, Stafford, Fairfax Counties. The five acre Fairfax property is under contract for sale. The Prince William property is a former Episcopal church rented to another denomination. Other properties are multiple acreage tracts of land.

Executive Board: The VOD will award $11,000.00 in Mustard Seed Grants and $9,000.00 in Peter James Lee Small Church Revitalization Grants.

Regional Presidents: The geography of the Culpepper and North Fairfax regions has been reformed. They are in the process of reorganizing their programs, in particular their youth programs. Other critical issues include revamping communication and redesigning websites. These newly defined regions will gather on retreat on June 15-16, 2018.

**Next VOD Meeting**

The next VOD meeting will be held at the Church of the Resurrection in Alexandria on June 21, 2018.