**The Vestry of the Diocese** (formerly called the Executive Board)

**February 15, 2018**

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Orange, VA**

**Orientation: Bishop Johnson**

The Vestry of the Diocese (VOD), as a body of the Convention, is responsible for continuity of management between Conventions. The theme for this year is, “To you, all hearts are open.” Priorities of the Diocese for 2018 are as follows:

* youth and the young
* strengthening congregations
* evangelism and proclaimation
* multi-culturalism
* mission beyond ourselves

The function of the VOD is to insure support for the work associated with these priorities. This includes support for 120 parishes and over 80,000 parishioners. The VOD includes sixteen regional members, the president of Episcopal Church Women, and the Bishop. The VOD is subdivided into two working groups: Program and Finance. The Program working group is responsible for any matter that does not fall under the purview of the Finance working group. The Finance working group will be responsible for a) development and management of the budget, b) business and property management, c) managing the audit, d) and administering the budget. The executive committee of the VOD will include the following persons: a) the Bishop, b) the Vice President of the VOD, c) two working group chairs, and two ex officio members who are the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Diocese.

**Elections and Appointments**

The following elections and appointments were made:

Vice President Steve Clifford

Secretary of VOD Ed James

Coordinator of VOD Bill Martin

Finance Working Group Jack Schick

Program Working Group Ben Moss

**Approval of Empowerment Resolution**

Every year, at the first meeting of the VOD, the Empowerment Resolution of the Diocesan Canon is read. This resolution outlines the responsibilities of the Executive Committee, its officers, and the Working Group chairs.

Page Two

**Presentation of Virginia Diocesan Homes**

An approximately one-hour presentation was conducted by officers of Virginia Diocesan Homes (VDH), a non-profit entity that develops senior living centers in the Diocese. To date, eight projects have been completed, the first of which was Goodwin House in 1967. The presentation focused on the development, coordination, planning and execution of these projects among a partnership that includes:

* property developer
* non-profit management (VDH)
* local government
* the church (i.e., the parish, the Diocese, and VDH)

Three such projects are currently in negotiations and one is in the design and financing stage. VDH will be holding a “summit meeting” on senior housing at the November convention.

**Report of the Bishops**

The process for selection of an additional Suffragan is underway. Search and nominating committees have been appointed, and a search consultant has been retained. This will be an aggressive process. Three to five candidates are anticipated to be selected by the April/May timeframe and the election is planned for the November convention. Meanwhile, an interim bishop, to be called The Bishop Associate, has been selected. He is Robert Ihlof, the retired Bishop of the Diocese of Maryland. He will begin his duties on March 1.

On March 10 and 11, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will be in Richmond at St. Paul’s Church.

The diocese of Virginia, the City of Liverpool, and the nation of Ghana will be involved in the reconciliation of human trafficking in a project called *Triangle of Hope*. This will include pilgrimages to each of these locations. More information to follow.

There are some 60 parishes in Puerto Rico looking to establish partnerships with mainland parishes to assist with disaster relief. More information will be forthcoming from the Diocese.

Committee of Congregational Mission (CCM) began “church planting” projects in 2001. At one point there were twelve mission churches in the Diocese. Three remain in Atlee, Goochland, and Leesburg. These are vibrant churches, and the Diocese hopes these three will be self-sufficient by 2020. Currently, they still receive financial assistance from the Diocese.

**Secretary’s Report**

The Mustard Seed Grant Program currently has five applications and the Small Church Grant Program has twelve applications. All are being reviewed and processed.

Page Three

**Treasurer’s Report**

New budget request forms are now available. All requests must be filed by August 31 for approval at the November Convention. Pledging by parishes has met expectations overall, though some parishes have not pledged as expected while others have exceeded projections. Due to a fourth quarter super-heated stock market, the Trust of the Funds (TOTF) ended the year (2017) up by 15.05% to yield a balance of $149.8 million. January saw an additional increase of 3.2%. The 1/31/18 funds balance was $151.3 million.

**Canon to the Ordinary Report**

Ministries and retreats will be conducted across the Diocese focused on “what the church will become.” The theme will be about keeping an eye on the future and not on the past.

April 8 has been designated as a commemoration day for Dr. Martin Luther King. A letter to each parish will be issued by the Bishop in the week of February 19.

The Commission on Ministry for people seeking ordination will now be headed by Rev. Jamie Lennard.

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Finally, the VOD went into executive session for confidential discussion.