

JOURNAL OF THE 89TH DIOCESAN CONVENTION

The 89th Convention of the Diocese of Rochester was held on October 31, 2020, at Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster, NY. This convention was held virtually due to Covid-19

Welcome and Call to order of the 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Bishop Singh opened the convention, reminding those in attendance that we were meeting on the eve of All Saints. Convention was called to order.

The Church of the Good Shepherd was host. Rev. Lance Robbins was introduced and gave a warm welcome to those attending. Rev. Robbins gave additional thanks to Bruce Dunn and Chris Nuccitelli from the parish, who spent a lot of time setting up the equipment to live-stream the convention. He also gave thanks to Ms. Kristy Estey and Mr. Stephen Richards.

Bishop Singh continued with thanks to Kristy who troubleshooted problems attendees were having getting on Zoom. More thanks to Kristy, Steve, Bruce and Chris for pulling this gathering together.

A “snap-shot” of the day was given. There would be the typical Anglican three business session:

First Business Session: Looking at establishing a quorum, amending the rules of order for this Zoom version of our convention and then worship.

Second Business Session: Appoint and elect officers and work on the consent agenda.

Third Business Session: Vote on audit, apportionment, look at the nominees and elect officers for the various positions in our diocese, Bishop’s Address, Memorial Resolution which was a technicality from last convention. Update on Grace Mission and Rural Migrant Ministry (RMM).

Throughout the day, chaplains will punctuate gathering with prayer. There will be two breaks.

FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

Recognized Deacon Andrea Stridiron, Deacon Coordinator and Secretary to Convention.

Deacon Andrea appointed the Rev. Greg Kremer from St. George in Hilton as Assistant Secretary.

Deacon Andrea and Rev. Greg will share the work of secretary. Rev. Greg works with the Diocesan Council to create agendas with the Steering Committee and takes the minutes for Council.

Quorum

Deacon Andrea announced as of 8:25 A.M. there were 62 clergy present, 125 lay delegates and 46 churches represented. Total of 187. Quorum was established:

All ordained Episcopal clergy functioning in charge of congregations by canonical residence or licensed within this diocese shall have seat, voice and vote according to ARTICLE III, Section

2(c). The Chancellor, Assistant Chancellor(s), Secretary and Treasurer of the diocese and lay canons also have seat, voice and vote except in the case of a vote by orders.

Introduction of Diocesan Communication Director

Mr. Stephen Richards explained convention protocol and how people will communicate on this version of the Zoom. Robert's Rule of Order which was provided in the required reading section of the diocesan web site. Participants were urged to use the "Raise Hand" feature in Zoom for questions and responses or to use the "chat" feature if there was a concern or question. Delegates will vote by the "Raised Hand" feature.

Bishop Singh continued with further information on how voting will proceed. By raised hands, votes were in this order: those in favor, those opposed and those abstained. During the vote, Bishop Singh and Rev. Michael Laver will view the raised hand count. If there is a majority in favor the motion is carried. If the vote is too close to call, there will be a need to continue with the vote, with those opposed and those abstained, the motion will pass or fail as determined by the raised hand count. Mr. Fileri, Chancellor, agreed, but added that if the raised hand in favor is the majority, there is no need to ask for those opposed or those abstained.

Introduction of the Chancellor and the Assistant Chancellors

Mr. Philip Fileri, Esq. was formally introduced. As the Chancellor of the Diocese. Mr. Fileri will also serve as parliamentarian for Convention '89. Mr. Thomas Wright, Esq. and Mr. Paul Green, Esq. will serve as assistant chancellors and were thanked for their generous service to our diocese.

Mr. Fileri has agreed to continue serving. Motion to elect him as the Chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester using the "raised hand" feature. **MSP**

Mr. Philip Fileri, Esq was elected Chancellor of the Diocese for three years. Thanks for his leadership and service. Mr. Fileri was asked to present the amendment of Rules of Order to remove Holy Communion for this 89th Convention.

Mr. Fileri went over the rules. We have full canonical authority to hold a virtual zoom convention. We adopted an amendment to our canon in 2011, Section 28, 2(a) which allows us to hold meetings in whole or in part through use of telephonic or other electronic communications equipment by means of which all participating people can hear each other at the same time. It was worded generally enough to include virtual meetings.

A shout out to Rev. Johnnie Ross who drove out to NYC to be part of a special Synod meeting on September 1, 2020 for a 12-minute meeting which amended the ordinances to allow virtual meetings.

Our meetings are governed by the Rules of Order, Section I, 5(e) provides that the rules of order enforced at the preceding annual convention apply to the current annual convention until changed by vote of the convention which in this case will be a majority vote. So we operate under the existing twenty-one rules.

Rule #1 however, provides that the convention shall include a celebration of Holy Communion and an address by the bishop, either of which shall be in order at any time. At this point we have determined that we are not able to have Holy Communion, so we do need to amend this rule.

Bishop Singh continued with the question, “How do we meaningfully move forward while taking care of one another and honoring the fact that we are an incarnational community that believe in actually breaking the bread together and using the common cup and sharing Eucharist together.” In order to proceed with our business at convention we would like to suspend that portion of our Rules of Orders so that we can meaningfully gather together and absorb the essence of who we are as a Eucharistic people.

Mr. Fileri moved for the 89th Convention and for this convention only that Rule 1 be amended to delete the words of celebration of Holy Communion and either of, such as the rule shall read, “The convention shall include an Address of the Bishop which shall be in order at any time.”

Bishop Singh concludes that the chancellor has moved to amend the Rules of Order to remove the celebration of Holy Communion for Convention 89. **MSP**

A big “Thank you” to Rev. Nita Byrd chaplain at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Dean for Spiritual Engagement and for our Diocesan Dean for Liturgy and Formation, Rev. Billy Daniel, Rector at St. Michael’s Geneseo. They helped lead and put together the liturgy that we do. Reminder that the liturgy is done as we would if we were to live stream while gathering in person, so, singing was not recommended. Instead, narrations were done. The offertory will be directed to Covid-19 relief and will be split fifty-fifty for a global commitment through Episcopal Relief and Development and the Bishop’s Annual Appeal.

Thank you to Canandaigua National Bank for their generous donation of \$2000.00 towards the Bishop’s Appeal for Covid Relief. Reminder of the United Thank Offering for parish in-gathering, both offering instructions may be found on the Diocesan Convention 89 web page and by email. Due to all the disruptions of this year the Necrology and other parish life matters, such as baptisms, confirmations, receptions, and re-affirmations, will be address at our next diocesan convention.

WORSHIP

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION

The Rev. Gretchen Ratterree was presented as the new dean of the Northeast District by the outgoing dean The Very Rev. David Hefling.

The Very Rev. Gretchen was commissioned by Bishop Singh. Prayerful support was asked of the convention participants.

Introduction of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

The Chair introduced and thanked Mr. Terry Butwid, treasurer and Ms. Bliss Owen, assistant treasurer. Mr. Butwid’s term will come to an end after Convention 89. He assisted with the transition of 935 East Ave.

The Standing Committee and Bishop Singh nominated, moved to elect Ms. Lynn Omphroy from The Church of Incarnation in Penfield to serve as the next Diocesan Treasurer for a term of five years. No second was needed since the motion came from a committee. There were no questions.

So Ordered

Appointment of Chaplains

The Bishop appointed Rev. Nita Byrd and Rev. Rick Hamlin to be chaplains at the 89 Convention.

Appointment of Registrar

The Bishop appointed The Very Rev. David Hefling to serve as registrar of convention.

Prayer - Rev. Rick Hamlin

Appointment of Timekeeper

The Chair appointed Rev. Mitch Bojarski, priest at Church of the Incarnation in Penfield who has agreed to be our timekeeper during this convention.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda has been posted in the required reading for delegates on the convention website. In order to simplify and expedite voting on procedural and administrative motions where we believe there will be unanimous support, we have put together a consent agenda to consider. This means there will be one motion, then a discussion, then one vote to accept the consent agenda instead of six separate motions and votes. This will save considerable time on this Zoom meeting. The following procedural motions are from the committees and in the consent agenda.

- Waiving the reading of Convention 88 minutes
- Acceptance of the 88 minutes as presented on the website
- Courtesy of seat, voice and vote resolution
- Convention agenda
- Rules of debate
- Official reports

Motion to approve the consent agenda in its entirety. A second is not required as the motion came from committees. No discussion. **So ordered**

Recognition of Committees

Thank you to all the Standing Committees of this convention. Committee members are listed in the required reading. Those committees are: Committee on Arrangements, Constitution and Canons, Resolutions Committee, Read and Correct Minutes, Committee on Credentials, Committee on Dispatch of Business, Nominations Committee and Committee on Elections.

Thanks were given to archivists The Very Rev. David Hefling, rector at St. John's in Canandaigua and Ms. Joanne Wisor from Trinity Church, Geneva.

Prayer - Rev. Nita Byrd

First Break

THIRD BUSINESS SESSION

The 2019 Diocesan Audit Report

The Bishop recognized Mr. Terry Butwid, Treasurer and Ms. Bliss Owen, Assistant Treasurer to present the 2019 Diocesan Audit and Financial Report.

The audit was completed August 10, 2020 by Mengel, Metzger Barr & Co. LLP. There were no deficiencies reported in the audit. Thanks to the financial staff of the diocese. Total Net Assets increased by \$2.3 M (11%) as strong growth of investments was partially offset by recognition of post-retirement health benefit obligations (HRA) Total Revenue and Operating Expense were 1% and 2% below budget, respectively, resulting in a ~\$10,000 operating surplus for 2019. Looking back to 2009-2012 the current draws on cash and investment averaged 9.0%. The current draws for 2016-2019 averaged 4.7%. Net Financial Assets of \$22.6 M remain 15% below 2007 peak of \$26.5 M.

Diocesan draws from investments looking forward to 2020-2025. Real returns (and ideally our DRAWS) should both be about 4% if over the next 5 years returns average 6% and inflation averages 2%.

Resolved: That the 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester accepts the 2019 Audit and Financial Report, as prepared by the firm of Mengel, Metzger Barr and Co., LLC presented by our Diocesan Treasurers and accepted by the Diocesan Trustees.

The entire Audit Report is included in a separate section of the Journal and available on the diocesan website.

Thank you to Ms. Owen and Mr. Butwid. The Audit Resolution is moved by a committee so no second is needed. There was no discussion. The acceptance of the 2019 Audit was included in the electronic voting on Ballot K.

Presentation of the 2020 Diocesan Budget

The Bishop recognized Canon Todd Rubiano, Chief Financial Officer to present a summary of the 2021 Diocesan Budget which has been approved by the Diocesan Council.

Canon Rubiano presented a series of PowerPoint slides that provided a thorough review of the proposed 2021 budget. The first chart was a “Look Back” at what expenditures were between 2009 and 2019. The Diocesan Budget Expenditures dropped between 2009-2016, then rose slightly between 2017-2019. The 2020 estimate for expenditure should be about \$2,000,000, with a very modest increase, maybe 1-2 percent through 2023. Expenses by Category show that Administrative Expenses were reduced by almost \$600,000.

Apportionment Formula changes were made three years ago to move towards a 10% Tithe. Since then, we’ve expanded the 10% rate range from \$100,000 to \$135,000. Capping the maximum Effective Rate, reduced apportionment by \$13,556 and will be applied as credits to 2021 apportionment.

The draw from investments will be 4.8%, which along with Apportionment & Other Income (Grants & Bishop’s Appeal), provides total income of \$2.059 M. to fund the 2021 Budget. Program expenses for 2021 will be about \$1,048,000 (CDP & Mission Grants, contributions to the D&FMS and Leadership Development). Administrative expense will be about \$953,000 (for Governance, Staff & Office Expenses), plus non-operating draw and expense of \$58,000 for post-retirement health benefits.

Diocesan Budget Resolved

Bishop Singh introduced Ms. Julie Syracuse, warden of St. John’s Sodus and Vice Chair of Diocesan Council. Ms. Syracuse read the 2021 Budget Resolution:

Resolved, that the 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester accepts the 2021 Diocesan Budget of \$2,058,532; including approving apportionment of \$1,011,476, as recommended by Diocesan Council; with thanks to the Committees for their work and to all our churches through whom mission and ministry are undertaken.

No second is needed as it comes from Diocesan Council. Question concerning emergency needs of smaller churches. Canon Rubiano answered this question sufficiently.

The entire Diocesan Budget Report is included in a separate section of the Journal and available on the diocesan website.

The acceptance of the 2021 Diocesan Budget was included in the electronic voting on Ballot L.

Nominations and Elections

The Bishop recognized the Co-Chairs of the Nominations Committee, Rev. David Hefling, rector of St. John’s in Canandaigua and Ms. Julie Syracuse, warden at St. John’s in Sodus and vice-chair of Diocesan Council. Rev. Hefling announced the following clergy representatives elected to Diocesan Council:

- Monroe District: Rev. Lance Robbins, Good Shepherd, Webster
- Northeast District: Rev. Gretchen Ratterree, St. Mark’s, Newark
- Rochester District: Rev. Keith Patterson, St Luke and St. Simon Cyrene
- Southeast District: Rev. Josh Barrett, Church of the Redeemer, Addison
- Southwest District: Rev. Eric Thompson, St. Peters, Dansville

Bishop thanked those elected as clergy representatives.

Nominating Committee Report – Elected Officials

On behalf of the Committee on Nominations, Rev. Hefling moved the nomination of elective offices by title and guided delegates through the process to be used for electronic voting. Nominations were received for the entire slate.

Standing Committee, Clerical: Elect (1) Clergy Ballot A
Rev. Ruth Ferguson, Christ Church, Rochester

Standing Committee, Lay: Elect (1) Lay Ballot B
Mr. Floyd Bayley, St. Paul’s, Rochester

Trustees: Elect (3 clerical or lay) Ballot C
Rev. Carl D'Angio, C
Ms. Julie Forney, Christ Church, Pittsford
Mr. Charles Zettek, St. Stephens, Rochester

Diocesan Council: Elect (3) Lay Ballot D
Ms. Margaret Ashley, St. John's, Canandaigua
Mr. Drew Guild,
Mr. Bill Hoehne, St. John's, Sodus
Mr. Gilbert Stewart, St. John's, Sodus

Commission on Ministry: Elect (1) Clergy Ballot E
Rev. Virginia Mazzarella, Zion, Avon

Commission on Ministry: Elect (1) Lay Ballot F
Ms. Anne Lewis, St. John's Clifton Springs
Ms. Ellen Ralston, Good Shepherd, Webster

Disciplinary Board: Elect (2) Clergy Ballot G
Rev. Jimmie Sue Deppe, Church of the Epiphany, Gates
Rev. Richard Krapf, St. Peter's W. Bloomfield

Disciplinary Board: Elect (1) Lay Ballot H
Mr. Abraham Steiner, Christ Church, Rochester

General Convention - Alternates Elect (4) Clergy Ballot I
Rev. Melanie Duguid-May, St. Thomas, Bath
Rev. Ruth Ferguson, Christ Church, Rochester
Rev. Michael Hartney, retired priest
Rev. Ken Pepin, St. Luke's, Fairport
Rev. Andrea Stridiron, St. Thomas, Rochester

General Convention - Alternates Elect (4) Lay Ballot J
Ms. Paula Gitlin, St. Thomas, Rochester
Ms. Deborah Cole-Wenderlich, St. John's, Canandaigua

No nominations were nominated from the floor for any position.

The Bishop asked for a motion to close nominations for the Diocesan elections. MSP
As the slate for each office was presented, the Bishop called for additional nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were closed at the end of each slate. The Bishop explained that it will be necessary to vote for all offices on the electronic

ballot. A motion to close nominations as follows was approved. A reminder to vote on all ballots including Ballot K, Diocesan Audit and Ballot L, Diocesan Budget.

Prayer for Diocesan Leadership – Rev. Rick Hamlin

Taking of the First Ballot

The Bishop declared the nominations closed and recognized the Rev. Michael Laver, St. John's, Sodus, who provided comprehensive instructions via a Power Point presentation to assist delegates with the electronic voting process. Following instructions, delegates were led through the process of voting for each office. Questions were put in the "Chat" box. At the conclusion of the voting, the Bishop declared the First Ballot closed.

Highlights of Bishop's Address

- Welcome to the Historic On-Line 89th Convention of the Diocese of Rochester.
- Gratitude for being able to meet this way and do our ministry together safely and thoughtfully.
- Thoughts and thanks for navigating the last 8 months during COVID-19.
- Variety of gifts in response to a variety of challenges.
- Diocesan Council's rapid response to Covid-19 included a \$300.00 technology grant for congregations.
- A 35%, one-time annual apportionment credit up to \$1200.00
- Accelerated distribution of congregational development grants - all of which were funded by reducing other expenditures.
- Trustees provided assistance with church loans to help with cash flow.
- Standing Committee acted quickly to facilitate parishes applying for PPP loans.
- Through the CFO's initiative we were able to coach many of our congregations with a PPP loan process resulting in over \$800,000 of approved parish loans to manage through this historic crisis.
- Diocesan Council worked closely with the Racial Reconciliation, Healing and Justice committee to draft and send a letter from our diocese to Governor Cuomo to address racial disparities.
- Tribute to Carolyn McConnell.
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The text of the Bishop's full address is included in a separate section of the Journal and is available on the diocesan website.

Prayer – Rev. Nita Byrd

Break

Introduction of Election Officer

Rev. Michael Laver was called upon by the Bishop to announce election findings. All elections save the elections to Diocesan Convention were uncontested. There was no need for a second ballot.

Standing Committee, Clerical: Elect (1) Clergy Ballot A
Rev. Ruth Ferguson, Christ Church, Rochester 155

Standing Committee, Lay: Elect (1) Lay Ballot B
Mr. Floyd Bayley, St. Paul's, Rochester 164

Trustees: Elect (3 clerical or lay) Ballot C
Rev. Carl D'Angio, C 164
Ms. Julie Forney, Christ Church, Pittsford 164
Mr. Charles Zettek, St. Stephens, Rochester 164

Diocesan Council: Elect (3) Lay Ballot D
Ms. Margaret Ashley, St. John's, Canandaigua 142
Mr. Bill Hoehne, St. John's, Sodus 118
Mr. Gilbert Stewart, St. John's, Sodus 122

Commission on Ministry: Elect (1) Clergy Ballot E
Rev. Virginia Mazzarella, Zion, Avon 161

Commission on Ministry: Elect (1) Lay Ballot F
Ms. Anne Lewis, St. John's Clifton Springs 96

Disciplinary Board: Elect (2) Clergy Ballot G
Rev. Jimmie Sue Deppe, Church of the Epiphany, Gates 161
Rev. Richard Krapf, St. Peter's W. Bloomfield 161

Disciplinary Board: Elect (1) Lay Ballot H
Mr. Abraham Steiner, Christ Church, Rochester 162

General Convention - Alternates Elect (4) Clergy Ballot I
Rev. Melanie Duguid-May, St. Thomas, Bath 142
Rev. Ruth Ferguson, Christ Church, Rochester 129
Rev. Ken Pepin, St. Luke's, Fairport 138
Rev. Andrea Stridiron, St. Thomas, Rochester 145

General Convention - Alternates Elect (4) Lay Ballot J
Ms. Paula Gitlin, St. Thomas, Rochester 159
Ms. Deborah Cole-Wenderlich, St. John's, Canandaigua 159

Diocesan Audit Resolution K 164 votes to accept
Diocesan Budget Resolution L 158 votes to accept
Both resolutions were passed.

Committee on Resolutions - The Bishop called on Rev. Rob Picken, Rector of St. Paul's Rochester, Chair of the Committee on Resolutions.

Resolution A was posted on the Diocesan Website. It was passed at last year's convention. Because of a technicality it had to be re-submitted:

Resolution A

Resolved, that this the 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester directs the Secretary of Convention to submit on behalf of the Diocese of Rochester the 2019 Action as a Memorial to the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Resolutions A comes from a committee, so there is no need for a second. **So ordered**

Prayer for People Around the World – Rev. Rick Hamlin

Update from Grace Mission and Rural and Migrant Ministries

Richard Witt, Priest in charge of Grace Lyons and Executive Director of RRM. Rev. Witt updated the Resolution that was passed at convention in 2016 which included a unique and inspiring partnership with the diocese and RRM at the former Grace Church in Lyons. A diverse array of people who gathered at Grace Mission seeking to pause and reflect about their presence in the world and their hopes for transformation. They sought sanctuary, community, peace and inspiration; the breath of God, then sharing a meal and fellowship with folks who were not a part of their daily lives. The partnership between Grace and RRM is committed to creating a loving way to welcome people from across the region and beyond.

Thank You and Recognition of Leaders

Gratitude and recognition of the leaders who helped the diocese live into their vision and mission can be found on the diocesan website under required reading. Thanks for those who served on Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, Trustees, Commission on Ministry, and Disciplinary Board.

Thank you to all the nominees for their willingness to serve.

Bishop Singh recognized a courtesy resolution that is being built into our website. It is primarily a way to say “Thanks” to all those who helped us over the past year. A motion to accept the Courtesy Resolution was passed. **So ordered**

Closing Prayer – Rev. Nita Byrd

Blessing – Bishop Singh

Special Musical Offering

Karen Robbins on organ performed J. S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor.

Convention Adjournment

Convention was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. sine die.

Respectfully submitted,
The Reverend Andrea Stridiron, Deacon
Secretary of Diocesan Convention