

Rocky Mountain Regional Council

Meeting Notes for September 2, 2021

Host: Church of the Beloved; Facilitator: Dennis Giblin; Scribe: Alice Bradley

Present:

Kae Madden (Bishop-elect),
Alice Bradley, Dennis Giblin - Church of the Beloved
Teri Harroun, Jack Wolfe - Light of Christ
Rosean Amaral, Tom Moos - Mary of Magdala
Mike Weil, Anne Grant- Holy Family
Michael Nicosia – Vicar for Ecumenical Engagement
Don Sutton, Greg Yonker - St. Paul

6:03PM Dennis opened meeting

Regular Business:

1. Opening Prayer: Dennis led us in the regional prayer and then shared that this past week, 2 COB parishioners were shot (now both in stable condition in the hospital) by a neighbor who then took his own life. Dennis asked us to take a minute in silent prayer for physical, mental, and spiritual healing of all involved.
2. Welcome any guests: Webmaster Bill Hanzel joined as a guest from CA. Bill invited by Fr. Michael to discuss notes publication on website.
3. Agenda approvals/additions: The agenda for today's meeting was approved with the addition of Fr. Teri asking the RMRC to be part of the opening procession for the Bishop's Consecration. Clergy wear alb and stole others appropriate dress. Mixed appearance shows lay and clergy and bishop collaboration and appear as the 3-legged stool. Greg joined us at this point.
4. Approval of August meeting notes: The minutes were approved as written.
5. Personal connections: Dennis asked us to share the name of the last book read and if you would recommend it or not and why?

Jack- American Dirt by Janine Cummings Novel Recommend

Alice- The Cure for Sorrow by Jan Richardson Recommended

Don- Fully Human, Fully Divine by Casey took months to get through but truly energizing of one's faith life. Recommend

Bill- Journey for the Souls-recommend

Mike- Watching the Clock-Star Trek Novel- Mike, enjoyed just

Tom Moos- Full Spectrum Resistance Recommended for Activists

Fr. Michael- Holy Quran Fascinating Read

Fr. Teri- Epidemics and Society from the Black Death to the Present; if you're interested in epidemics and plague but since we're living through this now might now be the time to read

Rosean, The Art of Pilgrimage by Phil Cusino; 50/50 reviews in the book group but Rosean loved and would recommend because the deepening of awareness of what pilgrimage is even a short one to your back yard.

Dennis- Educated by Tara Westover really harrowing story of dysfunctional family. Recommended with a grain of salt... Jack read this about a year ago.

Ann joined the call at this point from the car driving back from family in the East Coast. Reading Bill Bryson's book, dated but funny, lighthearted. I would recommend any of his books. Mother Kae likes to read her mom's Guidebook mysteries; she doesn't need to think and helps fall asleep. Highly recommend recreational reading
Greg joined at this point and passed because he has a carful of grandkids and his daughter.

6. Financial report:

Dennis read a summary of the financial report provided by Greg since Greg is attending by phone.

7. Vicar of Ecumenical Engagement Report (*see Appendix B, below*)

- Consecration - so far, 85 registered for Consecration/ 95 for both the Consecration and Reception.
- CCC board asked to identify lead donors to sponsor this Easter Sunrise Service for the 75th Anniversary.
- Safe parking initiative is challenge for many church member insurance policies because all vehicles parked on property overnight must be insured and that cannot be assured.
- Legislative intern starting this month and they break down CCC public policy concerns that all CCC are all on board with.
- Nothing is up at this point legislatively for affordable housing so **please send contact info to Fr. Michael for any persons interested in working on new affordable housing policy initiatives.**
- CCC New initiative on advance care planning has gotten a grant for education of member churches on the importance of Advance Care Planning. The grant will focus on how to bring up the subject with Church members. Kae mentioned that Kathleen Gorman has also done a program on advance care planning and suggested she be consulted.

8. Bishop-elect Report (*see Appendix A, below*)

Update re: office space at Rocky Mountain Synod Center.

- Kae met with person there, Tina, and expressed that, "They are kind and lovely."
- Tina requested that the agreement be informal rather than formal/contractual.
- Will start the Sept 1 so we can print the Consecration program there.
- Kae has keys to the center and a small office.
- We will make a \$200 per month donation for the use of this space which also covers printing.

Dennis raised a question of Kae about whether she will update us on matters from the OPB Vicar and Bishop Calls that are appropriate to share with the group.

Kae shared the following in relation to Dennis' question:

- She is still discovering what is "bubbling" in the communion thus far and expects to have a better idea of dynamics after participating on the bishops' retreat following the Consecration.
- The monthly OPB and vicar calls will change to quarterly for regional bishop participation.
- Kae thinks that a key question up for discussion at the bishops' retreat will be about whether a community can opt out of the diocese without opting out of the ECC.
Kae thinks this will be a "no", but the constitution and positions will be reviewed in the context of this issue.

9. Leadership Team Meeting- Teri

No update as the Leadership meeting was cancelled this month.

Continuing Business:

10. Consecration plans, including the coordination of Bishop Travel:

- Teri: Liturgy is a 49-page document, planning going well now. Teri will be starting to send emails to people in the liturgy.
- Alice: Bishop Travels and Lodging: Travel plans for all the bishops and a place for all are in the works. (Retrospective note: all travel arrangements and stays worked well. Thanks to the many who drove and hosted!)
- Rosean: there will be dessert, many options for eating and drinks! Rosean working on the floorplan for set up. Need help with carrying tables out to the courtyard at 2:30.

11. Transition to Operating with a Regional Bishop

Update from Jack on Next steps for forming the region's corporation:

- We are a corporation. From a legal standpoint, to be 501(c)(3), we must be a corporation, so we must move out of the unincorporated association that we've always been, the question is:
- **Do we need to amend the constitution?**
- "Jack is thinking, not, unless Kae comes up with something she sees that needs to be changed.
- One thing we can do is to put in the by-laws which then can be amended and done strictly by the council without having to go through election of new members.
- In an email I sent on August 29th, I listed a bunch of things that need to go in there the by-laws), things like notices, quorums, how we vote and indemnification, etc.
- Typically, when an organization is set up, you do an organizational meeting with the initial directors, everybody votes on affirming the constitution and the by-laws, and the bank account and who signs and who the officers are and that kind of thing.
- Then you go forward.
- Since we don't have by-laws and a final constitution until Kae is done, **my suggestion is perhaps in October we convene an organizational meeting of the entire board of directors which hopefully is the 10 of us here plus Kae.**
- At that time, **define the start and of the end dates of the terms because half at least of the lay members need to be two-year terms and half need to be one-year terms, elect officers, a chair, a treasurer, and a secretary.**
- To get the things done, **we at least need a treasurer, authorize the establishment of a bank account, authorize someone to start work on the 501c3 application, signing authority for the bank account for contracts and grants and then we can recess that meeting and do everything else down the road when we're a little more relaxed.**
- We do need authorized signatures for the bank account and for getting the federal employer identification number for the bank account (we have to get the FEI # to get the bank account.) We should identify who the treasurer is going to be.
- **Everybody should think about it. Are you in it for the long haul? Are you in it? At least for another year and, if so, do you want to be in for one year or two years and are you willing to be an officer so that this train doesn't run you over at the October meeting?**
- Chairman, treasurer, and secretary. Constitution says that Kae will be the president for corporate purposes but that's a state requirement. It doesn't necessarily mean Kae is going to be the chairman for the meetings and running things although she could be. (Kae silently shakes her head no)

- And I'm also suggesting that there's no reason to have any difference between lay members and clergy members even though the constitution says the lay members will have terms...the clergy members will have terms too, so a bunch of things to think about their..." Hopefully that unpacked it.
- Dennis asked if it is a requirement that we have staggered terms and Jack responded that it is a requirement in the constitution. Just the lay people.
- Fr. Michael pointed out that one of the considerations for not having it staggered for clergy is that we don't have enough clergy to have staggered terms. Dennis pointed out that may also be the case with laity. And there is nothing right now in the constitution that precludes someone serving consecutive terms.
- Bill Henzel pointed out that you could have a secretary and treasurer that are hired rather than filled by council members and this would allow for having continuity. Jack said that the constitution did not preclude this happening.
- Teri mentioned that she thought it was a state requirement to have a board member fill those positions. Jack checked and explained that the State does not require them to be board meetings.
- **No one is allowed to skip the October meeting.**
- **Except Greg** who will be in Portugal. Greg volunteered to be the Treasurer and the President!

12. Paying off the loan:

- Alice asked whether there might be any advantage or disadvantage of using some of the EIDL grant to pay off the loan. Alice suggested we **table this discussion until October when we knew the total amount expended on the consecration.**
- Jack discussed that we should use the grant money to pay for the consecration and then pay off loan before official corporation application. Jack said we should probably spend off all the federal money before we close out the association bank account and open the corporation's bank account.

13. Regional Calendar Discussion

Bill -it can be done. Someone should set up a Google Calendar to add to the regional website. The calendar can be linked to the regional website. Microsoft Teams also has a calendar. The calendar itself will not be within the regional website only linked to the Website. It's totally separate from the website itself. Bill thinks Google is easier to use.

Kae said it's not critical now but think about and it would be helpful to have a regional calendar at-a-glance community events to share with one another and Kae to know what's going on.

- Bill- Process of posting approved minutes on the Website. Bill posts within 2 to 3 days to post on the website.
- Kae reiterated that her question was not about the lag time in posting on the website, it was whether they should/could we approved mid-month or should we stick to our current process of approving minutes at the next month meeting and then posting them.
- Michael discussed that people need to be more conscientious about getting notes out in a timely manner. Sometimes they have not gotten out for months.
- Bill offered Mother Kae his warm congratulations on her upcoming Consecration.

- Alice suggested that “ordinarily notes be gotten out within a week.” To this group to use to refer to and then continue to publish officially after they’ve been approved.
- Teri suggested that we post the agenda prior to the monthly meetings so that people could see and attend if they are interested.
- Jack suggested care in sharing widely before notes were approved by the board. Jack agreed that posting the agenda before the meeting is often standard practice.
- The notes will ordinarily be sent out to this group within a week.
- Agenda’s will be posted prior to the meetings.
- Jack suggested that ordinarily people review the draft notes and provide feedback in a timely manner to the notetaker.
- Teri mentioned that getting the notes out in a timely manner will really help with accountability and allow people to follow up on action items before the next meeting. It helps us keep the momentum continue through the month.
- Michael also wants to get the vicar report out sooner so we could share things better with the community.
- Alice suggested you pull out the things to share with the community and put them all in one place.
- Ordinarily we need to get the agenda out a week in advance of the meeting.
- We are a work in progress and moving toward these things.

Other Brief Topics:

- October ordinations of Alice (Oct 10th) and Rosean (October 24).
- Teri asked about St. Paul and how that’s doing?
- Update on St Paul’s transition ... Don shared that they have moved and are nested in the United Church of Christ at 6th and Adams. (Same community that hosted Pax Christi.) They feel so very welcome and realize anew, this is how things should be in relation to church sharing.

Closing Prayer:

Alice shared a prayer named, “A Secret Blessing” from Jan Richardson’s new book, The Cure for Sorrow

Next meetings: 6:00 PM_October 7: HF; Nov 4: LOC; Dec 2: StP

Fr. Michael requested the following be included on the October agenda:

Bill says he’s hoping to get out of the webmaster game, we need to put on the October agenda our looking into a new website platform administrated locally

Appendix A—Bishop-Elect Notes: August 2021 —Kae (submitted Sept 1, 2021)

Transition

- Our recommendation to the council is that Michael be appointed as Vicar in the roles of Ecumenical Engagement: advocacy, interfaith relationships, ecumenical relationships including Colo. Council of Churches board, and communication/media.
- My primary focus is 1) Listening internally, building relationships, determining the felt-needs/priorities of the region; 2) getting to know the bishops through monthly calls and the annual retreat; 3) transitioning some responsibilities at Church of the Beloved; 4) learning about the bishop role and responsibilities from Michael and the other bishops; and 5) working with the council to plan the affirmation and consecration.

Listening and Relationship building

- Met with three clergy members
- In conversation with staff at Bethany Lutheran regarding meeting/office space Aug 5, Aug 26th
- My husband and I attended a delicious catered dinner for Colorado Council of Churches judicators on Aug 13th– MN Catering! How may we include an announcement in our “networking” section of our bulletins that the CCC needs funding for the Easter Sunrise Service?

Consultation

Consecration

- Core Planning Meetings on Aug 10, 17 and 31st
- Liturgy reviewed, ministries assigned, and consulted with Teri
- Date: Sept 19 at 3 p.m.
- Working on narrative regarding symbols
- Drafted commemorative prayer card
- Expenses
 - Bethany Lutheran
 - A/V \$100 check to Laura Romig, \$100
 - Reception: \$100 check to Eric ?
 - Free-will Offering to church: ?
 - Reasonable offering to Lutheran Center for extra printing
 - Reimburse out of pocket costs from core team members

OPB and Council of Bishops

- Participated in the Council of Bishops call on Aug 9
- Participated in the OPB/Vicar call on Aug 18 – this call will change to quarterly for regional bishop participation
- Finalized bishop retreat contract Mother Cabrini Shrine, Sept 20-23

Discernment/Ordinations

- Presbyteral ordinations set for Alice (Oct 10 at 2 p.m.) and Rosean (Oct. 24th at 2 p.m.) Yahoo and Alleluia
- Met with two members in discernment

Confirmation: Wonderful outdoor confirmation of nine youth from Church of the Beloved on Aug15th.

Pending/Parking Lot

Regional Calendar: perhaps it makes sense for the council to maintain a regional calendar so that all may see our regional commitments, bishop commitments, etc. Website? Thoughts?

Budget in development

Laptop??

Insurance

Office/Meeting Space: \$200/month DONATION, “normal” printing included – extra for program booklet

Office supplies/printing

Bishop retreat – biannual

Travel

Synod ECC

Synod RMR

Contract wages/Stipend (1099 or Letter of Call) for bishop and vicar(s)

Appendix B—Ecumenical Engagement Report for RMRC 09 02 2021

~ submitted by Fr. Michael Nicosia on 09/01/21

REGIONAL & NATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Forwarded sample ordination liturgies to Dcn. Rosean.

Participated in consecration planning meetings—coordinating invitations, media releases, correcting double bookings; liturgy input.

As of 9/1, 85 for reception, 96 for liturgy (not counting ECC bishops who haven't registered).

Met with HOP Liturgy Working Group to clarify upcoming seminars.

Presided at in-person and hybrid Masses with MoM 8/8, 8/22.

Attended Memorial Mass for Fr. Frank Quintana's late husband Ted Boltz 9/1.

Participated in weekly regional pastoral ministers' Zoom gatherings.

Populated Regional Facebook page with member churches' posts including ECC documentary video; circulated advocacy updates.

Attended tail end of Interfaith Alliance's 8/31 Transforming Justice meeting (will forward video)—major project re: Record Sealing; planning virtual town hall on issue plus addressing health equity; 10/2 Record Sealing Clinic to let people know if they qualify, where they stand, what they can do.

COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (CCC)

Easter Sunrise 75th anniversary fundraising: possible resources include Colorado Health Foundation (its mission has a spirituality component), Black Heritage Foundation, Augustana Lutheran (a past sponsor), 1st Plymouth UCC Foundation (a new CCC affiliate); BJ's Restaurants may run promotion in the Fall after pandemic pressures subside; Channel 7 reporter to do a piece; hope to connect with Channel 9);

Board asked to identify leads for other foundations and individual donors.

Judiciary dinner hosted by Rev. Chef Michael had reduced attendance due to personal and ministerial conflicts; Adrian to approach judicators not present with appeal for Sunrise Service funds. (Was a nice opportunity to introduce Bishop-elect Kae).

Colorado Safe Parking Lots: initiative of churches allowing overnight parking for people living out of their cars; **while our communities do not have facilities of our own, we might raise the issue with our site-partners**; numbers allowed determined by each church, usually no access to building so port-a-potty and water source supplied; stumbling block created by church insurers requiring individual auto insurance (which many homeless don't continue—looking into legislative action* to create an exemption).

Specific Safe Parking battle: Mountain View United Church in Aurora (member of Ecumenical Ministries, Inc. which is an association of UCC/Methodist/Presbyterian blended churches); Adrian to compose a draft letter to the Aurora City Council citing CCC's support under our fair housing policy statement.

Discussion was held about CCC member support by those who "don't have a dog in this local fight"

(e.g., ECC no longer has an Aurora community, within jurisdiction of Denver Presbytery but not Presbytery of Plains and Peaks). CCC role in this and other initiatives is primarily one of communication and cooperative gathering.

Voices of Justice: coordinated by 9-month legislative intern Haley who starts 9/13/21; ***need lead for affordable housing legislation.**

Univ. of CO Med School grant re: vaccination convos with Black churches.

CASTE book study with B&W churches: 4 Black churches and 12 White churches participating; Black leaders and congregations are pessimistic about White churches doing anything; acknowledge that Whites have to do their own work and not expect POC to handhold them. CCC hopes to further the discussions.

Identified "Intellectual Diversity Inventory" as valuable tool for self-clarity of what one believes.

NEW grant from UHealth with Dr. David Knowles on Advance Care Planning.

Red Cross collaboration clarification: wants promotional help for their resources.