Minutes from the 2022 Southwest Region Convocation

August 29 9:00-11:00 A.M.

The Rev. Larry Bradford, Missioner, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom. The opening prayer was led by the Rt. Rev. Kym Lucas.

Present were Gayle Sofka, St. Luke’s Delta, Yvonne Rowland, St. Luke’s Delta, Victoria Atkins, St. Barnabas Cortez, Rhoda Yeager, St. Barnabas Cortez, The Rev. Doug Bleyle, St. Barnabas Cortez, Elizabeth Shank, St. Stephen’s Monte Vista, Amy Jones, Church of the Nativity Grand Junction, The Rev. Lauren Larkin, Church of the Nativity Grand Junction, Ginny Wayland, Good Samaritan Gunnison, The Rev. Laura Osborne, Good Samaritan Gunnison, Jackie Cox, St. Patrick’s Pagosa Springs, Wendy McAllister, St. Patrick’s Pagosa Springs, The Rev. Wren Blessing, St. Patrick’s Pagosa Springs, The Office of the Bishop: The Rt. Rev. Kym Lucas, The Rev. Canon Greg Foraker, The Rev. Deacon Nancey Johnson Bookstein, The Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass, Canon Mike Orr, Janet Choyce, Jay Swope, Southwest Region Executive Committee: Anne Shepard, All Saints in the Mountains Crested Butte, AliceMarie Slaven-Emond, St. Luke’s Delta, The Rev. Debbie Shew, St. Mark’s Durango, The Rev. Larry Bradford, Southwest Region Missioner (retiring September 1st) and Missi Stone, Southwest Region Administrator.

Fr. Larry introduced Bishop Kym who spoke on how this year’s convention will be the first in-person event in over two years. She posed some questions that this convention will further explore. What does it mean to be Church today? How do we love bigger than before? Sustainability is an issue since there are several aging congregations. She also spoke about the guest speaker, the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall, and is excited to have her share about her experiences in growing the church.

Fr. Larry also introduced the Executive Committee, AliceMarie Slaven-Emond, St. Luke’s term expiring 2023, The Rev. Debbie Shew, Clergy Rep. to Standing Committee, St. Mark’s, term expiring 2024, Stephen Bisbee, St. Mark’s, term expiring 2023, Anne Shepard, Lay Rep. to Standing Committee, All Saints, term expiring 2024, Don Schneider, St. Matthew’s, term expiring 2024, Jack Schuenemeyer, St. Barnabas, term expiring 2024, and Missi Stone, Southwest Region Administrator. He encouraged people to consider running for the positions that will be opening next September.

The minutes from Convocation 2021 which had been emailed to delegates prior to the meeting were presented by Missi Stone. There was a request to amend the 2021 minutes to include Rhoda Yeager, St. Barnabas Cortez as having been present. Rhoda Yeager moved to accept the minutes as amended and Jackie Cox seconded. The motion carried.

An abbreviated version of the Diocesan Budget was presented by Jay Swope, Treasurer of the Diocese. A more detailed version is on the Diocesan website and Jay encouraged delegates to look at it before convention. There is also time to ask questions between now and Saturday, October 8th for the Zoom budget hearing. Jay entertained questions on the budget and Fr. Larry asked how many churches are at the full tithe. Jay said that overwhelmingly, most churches in the Diocese are at the full 10% tithe, some are contributing more, and then there are some outliers. Jay encouraged any congregations that are having trouble to contact Pam Greenfield. Jay thanked everyone for their support.

Grant Reports:

Victoria Atkins, St. Barnabas Cortez, reported on their two grants, Montezuma Youth Pride and Phase 1 Landscaping. The Montezuma Youth Pride is now up to 14 facilitators for their after-school youth program. The Rev. Debbie Shew thanked them for all they’re doing for LGTBQ2S+ youth and invited St. Barnabas to join St. Mark’s on September 10th for Pride in Durango.

The Phase 1 landscaping grant improved morale both at St. Barnabas and in the community. Xeriscaping and new water efficient irrigation system improved the area. The hired landscaper donated her time and travel which helped their budget. They are anticipating submitting a grant for phase 2 this year.

Wendy McAllister, St. Patrick’s Pagosa Springs, reported on their Expansion of Food Pantry grant. They had to reassess the space due to other ministries using the same space. They were able to hire an architect to design a space to be able to accommodate all the ministries that take place. The Rev. Wren Blessing, Rector St. Patrick’s, said she was excited to see how things continue to unfold.

Copies of all reports will be filed with the minutes.

Fr. Larry welcomed the Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass, Canon for Transition Ministry, and asked for an update on St. John’s Ouray. She reported that the Rev. Mark Chambers has been called to serve as their priest in charge.

Fr. Larry introduced the Office of the Bishop staff and asked each of them to speak briefly on what they do.

The Rev. Canon Greg Foraker is the canon for Formation and Pastoral care he, with Tracy Methe Missioner for Baptismal Living and Elizabeth Cervasio Missioner for Children, Youth, and Campus Ministry, provide help and support to clergy and lay leaders.

Canon Mike Orr is the Canon for Communications & Evangelism. He provides help with church websites, Caffeinated Church, e-newsletters, banners, signs, live video streaming, and other communications related work. He has developed 63 websites in the past four years.

Janet Choyce is the Events Coordinator for the Diocese. She is responsible for organizing the annual convention as well as other diocesan events. While she is setting up the mock election the meeting turned to other business.

The proposed budget for the Southwest Region was presented by Missi Stone. The Rev. Laura Osborne, All Saint’s Crested Butte and Good Samaritan Gunnison said that they plan to double their pledges to the region for 2023. A copy of the budget will be filed with these minutes.

The Mock Elections were presented by The Rev. Deacon Nancey Johnson Bookstein and the Rev. Canon Greg Foraker. While Convention is in-person this year, people need to bring a smartphone, tablet, or laptop—any device that can receive email. Janet said that elections will take a few minutes at convention to determine results. Canon Greg said that voting will be simpler since the meeting won’t be on Zoom. The voting procedure was explained, and the Disney candidates were presented, and the votes cast. Other business was conducted while the votes were counted.

The Small and Rural Church Taskforce preliminary report was presented by Missi Stone, who sits on the taskforce.

The Missioner’s Report was given by the Rev. Larry Bradford whose report wasn’t available for early submission with the other Convocation documents. Fr. Larry summarized by thanking all the churches who respond to emails and phone calls in our region. He also wanted to highlight two disasters the Southwest Region responded to. On the Western Slope, there were four migrant families whose husbands were in a tragic traffic accident resulting in three widows and the wife of a worker now paralyzed. The region sent $750 to a charity organization that was helping these folks. The other disaster was a sewer line break in the parish hall of St. Gregory’s, Littleton Front Range Region. Church Insurance has a cap of $50,000 but the cost of repairs was to be $80,000. St. Gregory’s had $25,000. The Southwest Region has pledged to give up to $5,000. This has brought up the question of how to address this regionally at the Missioners meeting. There will be ongoing conversations about this sort of thing because this could happen to any of our churches.

There is still a lot of work to be done in our region. We are very dispersed, and Fr. Larry is unable to travel even though the directive is to do so. We have been having monthly Clericus meetings but here, it is impractical to have in-person meetings. We have been meeting on Zoom but only three clergy have participated regularly. Clericus is for celebrating successes and collaborating to help where needed. The Region wants to help but without mutual communication it is frustrating. A copy of the actual report will be attached to these minutes.

Fr. Larry also mentioned that he is stepping down as Missioner as of September 1st, 2022. The Region needs someone who has more ability to travel. He thanked Executive Committee members for taking on a couple of churches per member in the region to reach out to. It is disappointing that several churches don’t respond. He also thanked them for their unwavering service and support. He also thanked Missi Stone, Regional Administrator, for her dedication to keeping the region moving forward.

Mock Election Results: Janet Choyce shared the results of the mock election. Votes were made by all voting for all orders (Lay and Clergy.) The candidates for Lay Representative to General Convent were Princess Tiana, Mickey Mouse, Daisy Duck, and Snow White. Princess Tiana won the vote. The Candidates for Clergy Representative were Minnie Mouse, Winnie the Pooh, Goofy, and Princess Jasmine. Minnie Mouse won the vote. Questions on the voting procedure were asked and answered.

Fr. Larry thanked the Office of the Bishop staff members for their participation in the Southwest Region Convocation.

A motion to adjourn was mad by Yvonne Rowland and seconded by the Rev. Debbie Shew. All were in favor, so the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Missi Stone, Southwest Region Administrator

**CONVOCATION of the SOUTHWEST REGION**

August 27, 2022

**MISSIONER’S REPORT**

**The Rev. Dr. Larry Bradford, Missioner**

*To the Delegates and Clergy of the Southwest Region, greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.*

Since our last Convocation in 2021, our regional leadership team, the Executive Committee, has welcomed new leaders who have worked diligently toward keeping our Region connected to our member churches and to carry out the mission of the Region to serve and assist our partner churches.

We have helped several of our churches by supplying grants to underwrite their efforts to carry out their outreach programs, especially in assuring that people in need can find food and supplies in their food pantries. We have also issued grants to help protect and increase LGBTQ+ initiatives in striving for justice and respecting the dignity of every person as we are all called to do in our Baptismal Covenants.

The Region is in good financial order. Most of our partner parishes have been faithful in fulfilling their pledges to the Region. Your contributions make it possible for us to supply grants to parishes in need. Thank you for the generosity that comes from your parishioners.

The Executive Committee has also voted emergency funding in recent months. One emergency grant was made in the aftermath of a horrific accident that claimed the lives of three migrant farm workers near Delta. The second was an unusual grant to a church in the Front Range Region. St. Gregory’s Episcopal Church, where a broken sewer line has caused damages in excess of $75,000. I am very grateful to our Executive Committee for being the first Region to respond with a pledge to assist St. Gregory’s. Other regions have also made financial pledges as well.

This has sparked an awareness that catastrophes can affect any of our churches at any time. Few of them have the resources to recover from a catastrophic loss. The Church Insurance Group has a limit of $50,000 for insuring a major loss. I have suggested the formation of a Co-Regional Emergency fund that will be available to help any church which lacks the resources to recover from an unexpected event. Some of our Regions are in favor of such a fund; others are not. Discussions on this proposal are going forward.

There is much work still to be done in the Southwest Region. We need to keep seeking ways to beome more engaged with one another. Although each of our Executive Team members call their assigned e parish partners each month, the disappointing truth is that many simply do not respond. Each month, our clergy priests and deacons are invited to join a Zoom Clericus, designed to hear guest speakers and to share the successes and challenges of our respective churches. Acceptance and attendance has been minimal, even when our Bishop was the scheduled guest. We cannot improve communication and connection if our clergy remain passive or nonresponsive. Please know that when your regional leaders reach out to you, we are attempting to meet our goals of increasing connection and communication by the most efficient and cost-effective means possible. Your participation in the life of the region is not only welcome, it is crucial.

In closing, I want to single out an individual who has done amazing work for the Southwest Region. Michelle (Missi) Stone, our Regional Administrator, has dedicated her time and talents to support the work of the Region in many ways, not to mention the planning of our annual Convocation. She has been of special assistance to me during my tenure as Missioner. Thank you, Missi, for your excellent work!!

As some of you may already know, I have submitted my resignation as your Missioner, effective September 1, 2022. It has been a privilege to serve the Region and our Diocese. I am confident Bishop Kym will appoint a new Missioner for our Region as expeditiously as possible. I respectfully urge all of my clergy brothers and sisters to welcome him or her and to make every effort to support your new Missioner in the work of the Region.

I am grateful to all of you who have been supportive of me and your Executive Committee during my tenure as your Missioner.

To all of our clergy, delegates to Convention and members in the Southwest Region,

*May the Living and True God,*

*who made us for Love,*

*Who saved us by Love,*

*And who loves us still,*

*Bless and keep you now and forever. Amen.*

Larry+