

For the Mountain

The Diocesan Council met for its quarterly meeting on Tuesday evening Feb 15th by Zoom. Several reports to the Council were discussed concerning the ongoing work of the Diocese.

The Treasurer, Paul Horn, presented an overview of the Operating Budget for the full year of 2021, both the operating budget and non-operating budgets. Overall the Operating Budget ended 2021 slightly positive. While parish contributions were slightly below the original predictions made in November of 2020, they were higher than the revised estimate made once 2021 Vestries shared their budgets after Annual Meetings. There were additional incomes from a now forgiven PPP loan under the CARES Act. Also, personnel expenses were higher than the original budget due to increased personnel. Disbursements not included in the Operating Budget made by the Grants and Loans Committee, which are made from non-operating funds, went to a dozen parishes for multiple purposes including expenses to upgrade physical plant used for worship and streaming services. A report for the current year is being prepared and will be shared later.

Canon Walter Browning presented an oral report outlining some of the current transitions in staffing at the Diocesan level including clergy transitions, his work in Racial Healing, and ongoing responsibilities for oversight and revision of administration

Bishop Shannon also presented an oral report noting ongoing consultations with the Bishops of Maine and New Hampshire and a joint meeting of Standing Committees of the three dioceses. She continues visitations with congregations and noted there were constellations being considered in the diocese. She also noted progress in the area of Racial Reconciliation. The Bishop will be meeting with the members of the House of Bishops later this spring and has obligations for other work with other entities in the wider Episcopal Church as well.

The work of THRIVE was outlined for the Council, its sub-groups and their areas of responsibilities. The entire membership of this group meets about every month and a half, the sub-groups more frequently. They are raising

important questions and seeking solutions to enable the Episcopal Church in Vermont to move forward as more vital congregations within a more vital diocese with better organization to fulfill its mission as Vermont's branch of the Jesus movement. It is anticipated that Council will play a role in the implementation of THRIVE's work and probable Canonical revisions arising from it.

Council will continue to meet with other leadership groups in the "Same Page Retreats"s (May 14th) and has their next scheduled Council meeting on May 25th.