

**Minutes of the
129th Annual Council
The Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia
February 22- 27, 2021
via Zoom from Diocesan Office, Newport News, Virginia**

Saturday, February 27, 2021, Business Session

(Due to COVID-19, other customary presentations and reports, including that of the Keynote, Jerusalem Greer, were made during the week preceding the Business Session, via live events on Zoom.)

At 9:30 a.m., the Bishop called the meeting to order and opened with prayer.

Morning prayer was offered via recordings from members and churches in the Diocese.

Bishop Haynes welcomed the attendees of the 129th Annual Council, beginning with words of thanks to the Rev. Grant Stokes of Trinity Church, Portsmouth; Kevin Kwan of St. Andrew's, Norfolk; and Suzanne Daniel of Grace Church in Yorktown, for their liturgical leadership. She also expressed her thanks to the Rev. Derek Harbin for his leadership of Diocesan liturgies for 8 years. She then thanked the Diocesan Staff for their work in designing and implementing this new form of Council, and noted that their reward was to be 2 days off.

The Report of the Committee on Credentials and Certification of Quorum

The Rev. Charlie Bauer certified that a quorum of clergy and lay delegates are present via Zoom.

Announcements (Dispatch of Business)

Ann Turner offered instructions for Zoom and Jessica Mancini from Turning Point Technologies offered guidance for voting. A practice vote was conducted.

Adoption of Rules of Order of Council

The Bishop moved the adoption of the Special Rules of Order and the Rev. Frederick Walker of St. James, Portsmouth seconded the motion. The Rev. Ron Ramsey noted correction of the date in paragraph 1, from 1010 to 2021 in some versions. The Adoption of the Special Rules of Order was approved.

Supplemental Special Rules of Order for Virtual Attendance at Annual Council February 27, 2021

I. Preamble

Special Rules of Order

These Supplemental Rules of Order for the Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, to be conducted electronically (virtual), adopted pursuant to the Rules of Order of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, shall apply during 2021 Annual Council. Except as these Special Rules provide otherwise, the Rules of Order of Council shall continue in full force and effect.

2. Purpose.

The purpose of these Supplemental Rules is to facilitate the calling and meeting of the Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia in a situation where it is impractical to hold a face-to-face physical meeting of the Council due to health considerations and governmental restraints or as otherwise directed by the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

3. Interpretation of Certain Constitutional and Canonical Terms.

For purposes of Councils governed by these Rules, these terms shall have the following interpretation:

"Council": The meeting of clergy and laity of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia conducted wholly or in part via remote electronic participation by its members

"seat": The ability to participate in the Council via electronic connection

"voice": The right to make oral statements during the Council

"vote": The right to cast an oral voice vote or file an electronic ballot during the Council

4. Council Managers.

In order to facilitate the conduct of an electronic meeting of the Council, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall appoint one or more Council Managers to assist the President and Secretary of the Council.

II. Notice of Meeting of Virtual Council and Connection Information

1. Notice Time.

If the Ecclesiastical Authority shall call for a meeting of Council by electronic means, the notice for such meeting shall be given by publication on the diocesan website and otherwise no later than four weeks prior to the date called for the opening of the meeting.

2. Members to Furnish Communication Information.

No later than 60 days before any such meeting, every member of the clergy entitled to seat, voice, or vote in Council shall notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of his or her email address in order to receive access to and participate in a Council held electronically. No later than such date, every rector, vicar, priest-in-charge, and senior warden of any congregation entitled to representation in Council shall notify the Ecclesiastical Authority of the unique email address of (a) every Lay Delegate of such congregation or (b) any Alternate who will replace an elected Lay Delegate who will be unable to attend the Council.

3. Secretary to Send Login Information.

No later than three days before such meeting, the Secretary of Council or his or her designee shall send an email to every member of Council setting forth (a) the time of the

meeting, (b) the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access codes the member needs to participate aurally by telephone, and (c) if applicable, a Voter ID code.

III. Opening of Meeting and Quorum

1. Login Time.

The Secretary shall schedule Internet meeting service availability to begin at least 60 minutes before the start of each meeting.

2. Signing in and out.

Members shall identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.

3. Quorum.

The Council Managers shall determine and report to the Secretary the presence of a quorum as required by the Constitution on the basis of members' login information. The members present may continue to do business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal of enough members to leave less than a quorum. Less than a quorum can adjourn.

IV. Conduct of Meeting

1. Technical requirements and malfunctions.

Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the ground that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.

2. Forced disconnections.

The President of Council may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The President's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that may be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.

3. Assignment of the floor.

To seek recognition by the President, a member shall use the Zoom "raise hand" request and await recognition.

4. Interrupting a member.

A member who intends to make a motion or a request, under the rules, may interrupt a speaker by using the Zoom Chat feature for so indicating, and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the President's instructions before attempting to interrupt the speaker by voice.

5. Motions submitted in writing. A member intending to make a main motion, to offer an amendment, or to propose instructions to a committee, shall, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing to the Zoom Chat feature, preceded by the member's name and parish affiliation (e.g., "John Smith, Rector of St. Swithin's, Richmond").

6. Seconding of motions and related posts. Members responding "so moved" to a request from the President for a motion, or seconding any motion that requires a second, must do so using the Zoom Chat feature without needing to be recognized by the President.

7. Display of motions. The Secretary shall designate an online area exclusively for the

display of the immediately pending question and other relevant pending questions (such as the main motion, or the pertinent part of the main motion, when an amendment to it is immediately pending); and, to the extent feasible, the Secretary, or any assistants appointed by him or her for this purpose, shall cause such questions, or any other documents that are currently before the meeting for action or information, to be displayed therein until disposed of.

8. Video display. Video of the President shall be displayed throughout the meeting. The member currently recognized to speak or report shall cause their own video to be displayed.

V. Floor Nominations and Voting

1. Floor Nominations. Nominations closed 60 days prior to Annual Council, therefore nominations from the Floor will not be permitted for Virtual Annual Council.

2. Voting. Votes, including balloting for elections, shall be taken anonymously by the designated Internet voting service. Results of votes shall be reported to the President by the Chairperson of Tellers.

The Consent Agenda

The Bishop moved that the Consent Agenda be adopted, and the motion was seconded.

There was to be one vote on all unless there was an objection to any part:

Appointment of Council Committees & Parliamentarian

CREDENTIALS

The Rev. Charlie Bauer, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

Ms. Jessica Mancini, Turning Point Technologies

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL COUNCIL

The Rt. Rev. Susan Haynes

Secretary of the Diocese

Chair for Dispatch of Business

Diocesan Staff Personnel

Chancellor

Chair of Constitution and Canons

Chair of Resolutions and Memorials

Chair of Liturgical Commission

DISPATCH OF BUSINESS

Ms. Ann Turner – Diocesan Staff

CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

Mr. Samuel Webster, Ascension, Norfolk, Chair

The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Grimm

The Rev. Dr. Connie Jones

The Very Rev. John Rohrs, St. Andrew's, Norfolk
Mr. Tim Coyle, St. Andrew's, Norfolk
Mr. Rusty Bishop, St. Timothy's, Clarksville

RESOLUTIONS AND MEMORIALS

The Very Rev. Keith Emerson, St. John's, Suffolk
The Very Rev. Dr. Stanley Sawyer, All Saints', Virginia Beach
Mrs. Janet Estes, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg
Ms. Alice Webley, All Saints', Virginia Beach

PARLIAMENTARIAN

Mr. Samuel Webster, Ascension, Norfolk

JOURNAL OF COUNCIL

The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Grimm
The Rev. Canon Ed Tracy

COMMITTEE TO CERTIFY THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL

The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Grimm
The Rev. Elizabeth Felicetti, St. David's, Chesterfield County
The Very Rev. Dale Custer, St. John's, Chester

HEAD TELLER

Ms. Jessica Mancini, Turning Point Technologies

Agenda / Order of Business

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Worship
3. Greetings from Bishop Haynes
4. Report of the Committee on Credentials and Certification of Quorum
5. Announcements (Dispatch of Business)
 - Notes on Zoom
 - Practice Vote
6. Adoption of Rules of Order of Council (Vote)
7. Consent Agenda (Vote):
 - One vote on all unless there is an objection to any part*
 - Appointment of Council Committees & Parliamentarian*
 - Agenda / Order of Business*
 - Approval of Minutes of Previous Council*
 - Election of Officers, Committees & Commissions Nominated by the Bishop*
 - Granting of Seat & Voice*
8. Receipt and Referral of Resolutions
9. Recognition of Visitors
10. Announcement of Executive Board Elections
11. Appointment of Deans

12. Welcome Clergy New to the Diocese
13. Report of Committee on Nominations
14. Election Ballot (Vote)
15. Memorial Resolutions (Vote)
16. Budget (Vote)
17. Introduction of Postulants/Candidates
18. Bishop's Presentation
19. Closing Worship
20. Council Adjourns (Vote)

Approval of Minutes of Previous Council

Election of Officers, Committees & Commissions Nominated by the Bishop

CHANCELLOR (Article XIII)

Mr. Sam Webster, Ascension, Norfolk

VICE-CHANCELLOR (Article XIII)

Mr. Tim Coyle, St. Andrew's, Norfolk

Ms. Anne Bibeau, Eastern Shore Chapel, Virginia Beach

HISTORIOGRAPHER (Article XIV)

The Rev. William Taylor, St. John's, Hopewell

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (Canon XII)

The Rev. Mimi Lacy, Emmanuel, Virginia Beach (Chair)

The Rev. Andy Buchanan, Galilee, Virginia Beach

Ms. Isabel Burch, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

The Very Rev. Ron Ramsey, St. Cyprian's, Hampton

The Rev. Brenda Overfield, St. Matthias, Midlothian

Mr. Rusty Bishop, St. Timothy's, Clarksville

The Ven. Jan Brown, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

Ms. Caryl Felty, All Saints, Virginia Beach

The Very Rev. Dale Custer, St. John's, Chester

COMMISSION ON STATUS OF PARISHES AND MISSIONS (Canon XIII)

The Rev. Eve Butler-Gee, Martin's Brandon, Disputanta

Mr. James Clements, Martin's Brandon, Disputanta

Ms. Kathy Clements, Martin's Brandon, Disputanta

The Rev. Lisa Green, St. Martin's, Williamsburg

Ms. Lucy Jones Rothnie, Hickory Neck, Toano

Mr. Raymond Gallagher, Christ Church, Amelia

COMMISSION ON CHURCH ARCHITECTURE (Canon XXVIII)

Mr. Scott Spence, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg, Chair

COMMISSION ON CHURCH INDEBTEDNESS (Canon XXVII)

Mr. John Fogarty, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

CHURCH PENSION COMMISSION (Canon XXIV)

The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes

Mr. Edwin Kellam, Good Shepherd, Norfolk

Mr. John Fogarty, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

Granting of Seat & Voice

POSTULANTS AND CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS

Ms. Darlene Jackson – St. Cyprian’s, Hampton

Mr. Daniel Toven – Christ & St. Luke’s, Norfolk

Ms. Jean Vinson – Galilee, Virginia Beach

Ms. Anne Zobel – All Saints, Virginia Beach

OTHER

Canon Lynn Farlin, Canon for Christian Formation

Ms. Megan Dern, Youth Missioner

Ms. Judy Dobson, Comptroller

Ms. Ann Turner, Communications Officer

Mr. Gareth Kalfas, Executive Director, Chanco on the James

Ms. Jessica Mancini – Turning Point Technologies

The Consent Agenda was approved by electronic vote.

Receipt and Referral of Resolutions

Sam Webster reported that there were no canonical resolutions or regular resolutions. He noted that there were 11 Memorial Resolutions

Recognition of Visitors

The following Ecumenical Guests were recognized by the Bishop:

The Rev. Mary Ann Glover, Interim General Minister, Virginia Council of Churches

Deacon Gary Harmeyer, Catholic Deacon, Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach

Announcement of Executive Board Elections

As a list of members of Executive Board was displayed, the Bishop welcomed new members of Executive Board and thanked the outgoing members.

The following were elected:

The Rev. Ashley Urquidi, Convocation 2

Dr. Faye Felton, Convocation 4

The Rev. Mark Riley, Convocation 5

The Rev. Brenda Overfield, Convocation 7

The following completed their terms:

The Rev. Julia Messer-Croteau, Convocation 2

Mr. Philip Ford, Convocation 4

The Rev. Bruce Cheney, Convocation 5

The Rev. Gini DiStanislao, Convocation 7

The Executive Board for the 2021-2022 Conciliar year

Convocation I The Rev. Janet Wheelock, 2023
 Ms. Sharon Parker, 2022

Convocation II The Rev. Ashley Urquidi, 2024
 Ms. Jeanne Hoerr, 2022

Convocation III The Rev. Stewart Tabb, 2023
 Ms. Michelle McCoy, 2022

Convocation IV VACANT, 2023
 Dr. Faye Felton, 2024

Convocation V The Rev. Mark Riley, 2024
 Dr. Jacqueline Bontemps, 2023

Convocation VI The Rev. Eve Butler-Gee, 2023
 Ms. Robin Magee, 2022

Convocation VII The Rev. Brenda Overfield, 2024
 Mr. Roy McLeod, 2022

Convocation VIII The Rev. John Boucher, 2023
 Ms. Lauraetta Yates, 2022

Convocation IX The Rev. Jon Anderson, 2022
 VACANT, 2023

Appointment of Deans

The Bishop's appointments were displayed on the screen.

Convocation I The Very Rev. Bob Coniglio

Convocation II The Very Rev. Andy Buchanan

Convocation III The Very Rev. John Rohrs

Convocation IV The Very Rev. Keith Emerson
Convocation V The Very Rev. Ron Ramsey
Convocation VI The Very Rev. Charles Moore
Convocation VII The Very Rev. Dale Custer
Convocation VIII The Very Rev. Nancy Meck
Convocation IX The Very Rev. Susan Grimm

Welcome Clergy New to the Diocese

The Bishop welcomed clergy new to Diocese since last Diocesan Council. Each had a picture and profile displayed on screen. The Rev. Donna Hines, the Rev. Grace Rigby, the Rev. Vince Connery, the Rev. Sarah Shirley, the Rev. Seldon Walker, the Rev. Janet Wheelock, the Rev. Terry Miller, the Rev. Melody Purdue, the Rev. Jesse Lassiter, the Rev. Liam Muller, the Rev. David Perkins, and the Rev. Ed Hunt were recognized.

Report of Committee on Nominations

Nominations were posted on the screen and there no nominees from the floor according to the Rules of Order.

Election Ballot

The voting was conducted electronically in the case of contested or ranked elections.

During this 129th Annual Council, Alternates to General Convention were elected (Deputies were elected in 2020, at the 128th Annual Council.) There was to be a two step voting order for General Convention: first to elect the 4 nominees in each order by acclamation. The second vote was for one person in each order, to rank the alternates in each order.

Lay Elected: First Alternate: Toni Hogg, St. Aidan's, Virginia Beach
Second Alternate: Faye Felton, St. James, Portsmouth
Third Alternate: Madeline Hanlon, Hickory Neck, Toano
Fourth Alternate: Hunter Phillips, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg and
Canterbury at William and Mary

Clergy Elected: First Alternate: the Ven. Jan Brown, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg
Second Alternate, the Rev. Charlie Bauer, Bruton Parish, Williamsburg
Third Alternate: the Rev. Frederick Walker, St. James, Portsmouth
Fourth Alternate: the Rev. Les Ferguson, St. John's, Suffolk

Standing Committee Lay Member: There being only one nominee, Alice Webley of All Saints, Virginia Beach, was elected by acclamation.

Standing Committee Clergy Member: the Rev. Samantha Vincent-Alexander was elected.

Disciplinary Board Lay Member: There being only one nominee, John Rector of St. Paul's, Suffolk, was elected by acclamation.

Disciplinary Board Clergy Member: the Rev. Mark Riley of St. John's, Hampton, was elected.

Memorial Resolutions

The Rev. Keith Emerson of the Memorials and Resolution Committee presented the following Memorials. The Bishop read a precis of each Memorial Resolution as it was presented.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION THE REVEREND GORDON BELL DAVIS

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Gordon Bell Davis to his heavenly home on February 10, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Gordon was born on January 3, 1926 in Beaufort, NC, the son of Clarence and Claudia Davis; and,

WHEREAS, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree from the East Carolina University in 1948; and,

WHEREAS, after teaching English and History for a few years at Hopewell High School, Gordon answered God's call to the ordained ministry and enrolled in Virginia Theological Seminary, earning a Master of Divinity degree in 1954; and,

WHEREAS, The Rt. Rev. George P. Gunn ordained Gordon a Deacon in the Episcopal Church on June 4, 1954 and a Priest on June 1 of the following year; and,

WHEREAS, Gordon served in various capacities in various church in Virginia, including St. John's, Chester, Grace Church, Yorktown, and Christ and St. Luke's Church, Norfolk; and

WHEREAS, he married Virginia Davis on February 16, 1963, a union producing two children, Isabelle and Nicholas; and

WHEREAS, after being married, Gordon and Virginia spent a year in England where he completed in a study program at St. Augustine's College, Canterbury in 1965; and,

WHEREAS, he returned to England many times to visit museums and historic houses, garnering him the reputation of being a 'true Anglophile'; and

WHEREAS, Gordon is remembered as being a devoted priest, husband, father, grandfather, and friend; and

WHEREAS, he survived by his wife of fifty-six years, his children and their spouses, four grandchildren, and a great-grandson; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia gives thanks for the lifetime of dedicated service, including sixty-seven years in the ordained ministry, offered to God's glory by The Reverend Gordon Bell Davis; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that a copy be sent to his wife, Virginia.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION THE REVEREND ROBERT HANCOCK ARMSTRONG

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Robert Hancock Armstrong to his heavenly home on February 29, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Bob was born on September 5, 1932 in Richmond, VA, the third son of Thomas and Julia Armstrong; and,

WHEREAS, while growing up, Bob was blessed to sing in the Men & Boys Choir of All Saints' Episcopal Church in Richmond, laying the foundation for a lifelong love of singing and the arts; and,

WHEREAS, after graduating from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1949, he enrolled at the University of Richmond and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology in 1954; and,

WHEREAS, after graduation he entered preflight training and advanced flight training, receiving his wings in fixed aircraft before going on to complete instruction in

flying helicopters; and,

WHEREAS, Bob utilized his flying skills in the United States Coast Guard, rescuing in the Mediterranean Sea four downed Navy personnel in 1956 and serving as Officer-in-Charge of a helicopter detachment on a Coast Guard Icebreaker to the Arctic prior to being honorably discharged in 1957; and,

WHEREAS, Bob answered God's call to the ordained ministry and entered Virginia Theological Seminary in the fall of 1958; and,

WHEREAS, during this time he met and married Susan Haywood Wells on June 18, 1960, a marriage producing three daughters, Kimberly Jean, Lisa Anne, and Mary Catherine; and,

WHEREAS, Bob left seminary and worked as a probation officer in the Fairfax County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for two years before returning to Virginia Seminary and earning a Master of Divinity degree in 1963; and,

WHEREAS, The Rt. Rev. Robert Fisher Gibson, Jr. ordained Bob a Deacon in the Episcopal Church on June 21, 1963 and ordained him a Priest on June 1 of the following year; and,

WHEREAS, after serving five years as an Assistant to the Rector of St. James' Church in Richmond, in 1968 Bob accepted a call to serve as rector of St. John's Church in Chester; and

WHEREAS, after a fire in 1974 destroyed the church building, he held the congregation together and led them in a campaign to build a new facility; and,

WHEREAS, in 2000 he led the congregation through a second major capital campaign for the purpose of expansion, thus putting his fingerprint on St. John's church building that will facilitate the congregation's worship, fellowship, and Christian ministry for years to come; and,

WHEREAS, Bob was a strong proponent of ecumenism, bringing together Chester area churches and creating close bonds throughout the community; and,

WHEREAS, Bob ministered faithfully and effectively to the people of St. John's for over thirty-four years until his retirement in January 2003; and

WHEREAS, in retirement he continued to offer supply services to parishes on both sides of the James River; and,

WHEREAS, Bob was an avid (some might even say rabid) tennis player, known for instructing both clergy and laity in the finer aspects of the game; and

WHEREAS, Bob was proceeded in death by his two older brothers and by Susan, his beloved wife of forty years; and

WHEREAS, Bob is survived by his three daughters, their spouses, and six grandchildren; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia gives thanks for the lifetime of dedicated service, including fifty-seven years in the ordained ministry, offered to God's glory by The Reverend Robert Hancock Armstrong; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that copies be sent to his daughters, Kimberly Hafner, Lisa McCarthy, and Mary Catherine Gunter.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE REVEREND DR. SEAN A. COX**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Sean Cox to his heavenly home on March 10, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Sean was born on April 5, 1970, in Phoenix Arizona, and baptized in All Saints' Episcopal Church; and,

WHEREAS, he graduated with an English degree from the University of Arizona, and

WHEREAS, when he was leading a preschool chapel during an internship while attending the Seminary of the Southwest an attractive young teacher winked at him, causing him to blush; and,

WHEREAS, he married the winking teacher on December 28, 1996, in between his ordination to the diaconate on September 10, 1996, and to the priesthood on March 11 of the following year; and,

WHEREAS, Katie and he had two children, Rebeckah Lynn and Brian Stephen, who grew to be on constant vigilance for Sean's next practical joke; and,

WHEREAS, he spent his ordained ministry serving parishes in Arizona, Texas, and California before discerning a call to diocesan ministry in Indiana, all while he served 25 years with sailors, marines, Coast Guard, tanks and joint forces as a Navy chaplain who was deployed to Guantanamo Bay and Afghanistan, achieving the rank of Captain; and,

WHEREAS, he discerned diocesan ministry was not his calling and accepted a call as an interim at St. Luke's Powhatan; and,

WHEREAS, he was an avid hiker, connoisseur of barbecue, with a particular interest in beef ribs, and Celtic music enthusiast; and,

WHEREAS, the birthdays of his family and friends were celebrated with his gifting to them an acrostic prayer based on their name; and,

WHEREAS, in less than three months he not only captured the hearts of his congregation but also of his clerical colleagues in the Diocese of Southern Virginia before his untimely death; and,

RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia gives thanks for the lifetime of dedicated service offered to God's glory by The Reverend Doctor Sean Cox; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that a copy be sent to his wife, Katie.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN CLARK BUCHANAN**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call The Right Reverend John Clark Buchanan to his heavenly home on April 15, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, John was born in Joanna, South Carolina, the son of Dock Jones Buchanan and Ella Virginia Clark Buchanan; and,

WHEREAS, he served in the United States Air Force from 1951-1955; and,

WHEREAS, he graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1958, the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1961, and General Theological Seminary in 1966; and,

WHEREAS, he served as Rector of three parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina: St. Barnabas' Church, Dillon, St. Matthew's Church, Darlington, and St. Andrew's Church, Mt. Pleasant; and,

WHEREAS, he was elected as Bishop Coadjutor to the Diocese of West Missouri in 1988 and began his tenure as Bishop in 1989, faithfully serving the clergy and parishioners of the Diocese until his retirement in 2000; and,

WHEREAS, during his Episcopate, Bishop Buchanan's vision and diligence led to the development of the Bishop Spencer Place retirement community in Kansas City, Missouri; and,

WHEREAS, in retirement, he continued to be a faithful servant of the Episcopal Church in various capacities: Parliamentarian for the House of Bishops from 2003 until 2013, Bishop-in-Residence at St. Michael's Church from 2000 until 2004, Assisting Bishop Diocese of Texas from 2004 until 2006, Interim Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia from 2006 until 2008, Provisional Bishop of the Diocese of Quincy from 2009 until 2013, and Assisting Bishop Diocese of Chicago from 2013 and 2014; and,

WHEREAS, he is survived by his beloved wife, Peggy, daughters, and grandchildren;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the dedicated service offered to God's glory by The Right Reverend John Clark Buchanan; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family and loved ones; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that a copy be sent to his wife, Peggy.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE REVEREND THEODORE HARBOUR BAILEY, III, D.MIN.**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Theodore Harbour Bailey, III, Priest, to his heavenly home on April 23, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, this native of Baltimore, born on December 18, 1922, graduated from Catonsville High School; and,

WHEREAS, after beginning his studies at the College of William & Mary, he left school in order to serve our country during World War II as a P-38 pilot in the United States Army Air Corps in India, Burma, and China; and,

WHEREAS, having completed his military service, he returned to the College of William & Mary, earning his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1947; and,

WHEREAS, while working as a salesman in Pennsylvania, he met Gunda Gabcke, a Fulbright exchange student at Dickinson College, marrying her in 1954, and spending the next year in Germany visiting various members of her family, and, at the same time, learning both German and how to play the violin; and,

WHEREAS, Theodore Harbour Bailey, III, responded to God's call to ordained ministry and earned his Master in Divinity from the Berkley Divinity School at Yale in 1958, and later, in 1985, earned his Doctor in Ministry degree from the Union Theological Seminary in Richmond; and,

WHEREAS, he was ordained Deacon on June 17, 1958, and Priest on December 23, 1958, by Bishop Noble C. Powell; and,

WHEREAS, he served God in Maryland as Rector at St. Peter's Church, Ellicott City, 1958-1966; Rector at St. John's Church, Baltimore, 1966-1973; Assistant at the Cathedral of the Incarnation, Baltimore, 1973-1975; and,

WHEREAS, he served God in the Diocese of Virginia as Rector at St. John's Church, Richmond, 1975-1988; and,

WHEREAS, he moved to Williamsburg in retirement and again answered God's call to serve, this time in Southern Virginia; and,

WHEREAS, he served with great pastoral care and the love of God for all people as Interim Rector of numerous parishes throughout this Diocese, earning the respect and love of those parish families;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the enthusiastic and faith filled witness to the Glory of God by Theodore Harbour Bailey, III, during 62 years of ordained ministry; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to the family of Theodore Harbour Bailey, III; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council, and that a copy be sent to his family.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION CHARLES F. TUCKER

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Charles F. Tucker to his heavenly home on April 30, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Charles was born in Suffolk, Virginia, the son of The Reverend Herbert Nash Tucker and Sarah Alice Faulkner Tucker; and,

WHEREAS, he graduated from Washington and Lee University in 1952 and Washington and Lee University School of Law in 1954; and,

WHEREAS, he served three years in the United States Army's Judge Advocate General Corps; and,

WHEREAS, he joined the law firm of Vandeventer & Black in 1957 and served as Managing Partner of the firm from 1969 until his retirement in 1998; and,

WHEREAS, in retirement, he served as Chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia; and,

WHEREAS, throughout his lifetime, he worked actively with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and Christ & St. Luke's Episcopal Church; and,

WHEREAS, he is preceded in death by his beloved wife, Helen, of fifty years; and,

WHEREAS, he is survived by his children, Jane, Charles, and Hampton, their spouses, seven grandchildren, and two great-grandsons;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the dedicated service offered to God's glory by Charles F. Tucker; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family and loved ones; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that a copy be sent to his children.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE HONORABLE JAMES E. BRADBERRY**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call James E. Bradberry, beloved member of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, to his heavenly home on July 25, 2020, having triumphantly attained the age of 80; and,

WHEREAS, this native of Chicago, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, and then, in 1965, earned a Law Degree from the University of Virginia School of Law; and,

WHEREAS, after Law School, he served in the United States Army Judge Advocate Corps in New York and Germany and then spent a year as a Newport News Prosecutor before entering private practice; and,

WHEREAS, after 20 years he was appointed a Federal Magistrate Judge to the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, 1991-2010, where he earned a reputation as a Judge who was "straight-forward in his dealings with attorneys, litigants, and colleagues...a

person the court could count on when needed”; and,

WHEREAS, his love of the Lord was evident in all aspects of his life as he daily lived his life, and especially in his service to the Church at St. George’s, Newport News, where he served as a Lay Reader, and as a member and Warden of the Vestry; in the Diocese where he served on many Commissions and Committees; and at the national level where he served as a Deputy to General Convention and as a member of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church; and,

WHEREAS, he found a true vocation as he helped to organize and support Chanco on the James in Surry, and as one of the Founders of Camp Wakonda, a summer Day Camp sponsored by the Diocese for kids and families infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, working with this program for 14 years;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the life and witness of James E. Bradberry who truly lived the Jesus Way of Love during a life filled with laughter, love, compassion, honor, and integrity; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to the family of James E. Bradberry; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council, and that a copy be sent to his children, Sean and Casey.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION THE REVEREND DOCTOR JAMES RUSSELL HENRY

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call The Reverend Doctor James Russell Henry to his heavenly home on August 21, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, James was born in Athens, Georgia, the son of Jones Wesley Henry, Jr. and Elizabeth Jones Henry; and,

WHEREAS, he was commissioned in 1962 as 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army and served in the Reserve until 1968; and,

WHEREAS, he graduated from the University of Georgia in 1962, Virginia Theological Seminary with a Master’s in Divinity in 1965 and a Doctor of Ministry in 1987, and Lynchburg College with a Masters of Education in 1997; and,

WHEREAS, his ministry first brought him to churches in the mountains of northern Georgia before he returned to his home church, Emmanuel Church in Athens, Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, he was a faithful servant to Episcopal Churches throughout Virginia, including St. James Episcopal Church in Louisa, Church of the Incarnation in Mineral, St. Paul’s Episcopal

Church in Alexandria, St. John's Episcopal Church in Bedford, and Christ Episcopal Church in Roanoke; and,

WHEREAS, upon retirement, he became a full-time family counselor with the Bedford Counseling Center, where he became managing director of the Center; and,

WHEREAS, he was an active volunteer in every community where he lived, serving as a police Chaplain, volunteer fireman, Boy Scout troop leader, volunteer genealogist and historian; and,

WHEREAS, he is survived by his beloved wife, Nancy, of fifty-one years, his children, and granddaughter;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the dedicated service offered to God's glory by The Reverend Doctor James Russell Henry; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family and loved ones; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that a copy be sent to his wife, Nancy.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE REVEREND CHARLES MORTON RIDDLE, III, D.MIN.**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Charles Morton Riddle, III, Priest, to his heavenly home on August 25, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, this native of Danville, Virginia, was born on December 15, 1934, attended Danville schools and excelled in tennis and track; and,

WHEREAS, he continued his athletic career at the University of Virginia, earning 6 varsity letters in track and cross country, and obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1957; and,

WHEREAS, Charles Morton Riddle, III, received his commission in the United States Marine Corps as an Infantry Officer where he served in the highest traditions of the Marine Corps on active duty for 3 years, and then in the Reserves, retiring in 1965 with the rank of Captain; and,

WHEREAS, he responded to God's call to ordained ministry; and,

WHEREAS, he obtained his Master in Divinity degree in 1963, and his Doctor in Ministry degree in 1985 from the Virginia Theological Seminary; and,

WHEREAS, he was ordained Deacon in 1963, and Priest in 1964, by Bishop David Shepherd Rose; and,

WHEREAS, he served God in Southern Virginia as Curate at Trinity Church, Portsmouth, 1963-1966, and as Rector at Eastern Shore Chapel, Virginia Beach, 1971-1986, after having served as Rector at Calvary Church, Tarboro, North Carolina, 1966-1971; and,

WHEREAS, while Rector at Eastern Shore Chapel, he was pleased to hire the first woman Priest in the Diocese of Southern Virginia; and,

WHEREAS, he answered God's call to serve in the Diocese of West Tennessee as Rector at Grace – St. Luke's Church, Memphis, 1986-1991, and as Chair of the Commission on Ministry, 1990-1991; and,

WHEREAS, he answered God's call to Interim Ministry, serving as Interim Rector at several parishes in North Carolina and Virginia; and,

WHEREAS, He served God in the larger Church community as a Deputy to General Convention in 1979 where he voted in favor of the "New" Book of Common Prayer, and served a term as the alumni representative on the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Theological Seminary;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia give thanks for the significant and faith filled witness offered to the Glory of God by Charles Morton Riddle, III, during 57 years of ordained ministry; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to the family of Charles Morton Riddle, III; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council, and that a copy be sent to his beloved wife, Patricia.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION THE REVEREND RAYMOND A. NELSON

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call Raymond Nelson to his heavenly home on November 4, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, Ray was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1932, the son Raymond and Georgina Nelson; and,

WHEREAS, after graduating with honors for Poly Prep County Day School in Brooklyn, he did his undergraduate work at Williams College and graduate studies at Harvard University, earning the distinction of Phi Beta Kappa from each; and,

WHEREAS, he married Rosemary Davenport King on August 13, 1953, a union producing four children; and,

WHEREAS, Ray answered God's call to the ordained ministry and entered The Episcopal Divinity School, graduating with a Master of Divinity degree in 1960; and,

WHEREAS, The Rt. Rev. George E. Rath ordained Ray a Deacon in the Episcopal Church on October 9, 1966 and The Rt. Rev. Leland Stark ordained him a Priest on December 1 of the following year; and,

WHEREAS, during his ministry Ray served as Headmaster of eleven different independent schools in the United States and Europe, including Trinity Episcopal School in Richmond, VA; and

WHEREAS, he helped Trinity Episcopal School to flourish, introducing a much admired International Baccalaureate Diploma Program to the school; and,

WHEREAS, Ray was licensed to serve in fifteen Episcopal dioceses in the United States and Europe; and,

WHEREAS, he received letters of commendation from seven bishops and equivalent letters from Ambassadors in Switzerland, Cyprus, and Korea; and

WHEREAS, after the end of his first marriage, Ray met and married Mimi Van Swell, giving rise to a joyful partnership of forty years; and

WHEREAS, Ray served as the Rector of St. Barnabas Church in Richmond from 2014 until his passing; and,

WHEREAS, he was blessed with a remarkable singing voice and a penchant for languages; and,

WHEREAS, he loved golf and learning, being "A teacher to all, guided by hope and humor, boundless mind and grace"; and

WHEREAS, Ray is remembered for his lightheartedness, kindness, and caring nature; and,

WHEREAS, Ray is survived by his first wife and their four children, his second wife and a step-daughter, and nine grandchildren; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia gives thanks for the lifetime of dedicated service, including fifty-four years in the ordained ministry, offered to God's glory by The Reverend Raymond A. Nelson; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that copies be sent to his wife, Mimi Van Swall Nelson, his children, Raymond Nelson, Jr., Kristin Foster, Christopher Nelson, and Todd Nelson, and to his stepdaughter, Leigh Van Swall.

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
THE REVEREND GEORGE DONALD BLACK**

WHEREAS, it has pleased God to call George Donald Black to his heavenly home on January 5, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, Don was born on April 29, 1935 in Swainsboro, GA, the son of George and Runelle Black; and,

WHEREAS, he studied for two years at the University of Georgia prior to joining the Navy, where he specialized in Naval Aviation and surface fleet combat intelligence; and,

WHEREAS, while stationed in Norfolk he discerned a call to the ordained ministry and enrolled at the University of Richmond to complete his undergraduate studies, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree; and,

WHEREAS, Don answered God's call to the ordained ministry and enrolled in Sewanee: The University of the South Theological Seminary, earning a degree in Master of Divinity degree in 1963; and,

WHEREAS, The Rt. Rev. David Shepherd Rose ordained Don a Deacon in the Episcopal Church on June 27, 1963 and The Rt. Rev. George P. Gunn ordained him a Priest on June 11 of the following year; and,

WHEREAS, two days after being ordained to the diaconate, Don married his University of Richmond sweetheart Suzanne DuPuy on June 29, 1963, a union producing two sons, Matthew and Edward; and

WHEREAS, Don was a curate at the Church of the Ascension in Norfolk prior to accepting a call to serve as the rector of St. James' Church in Accomac and St. George's Church in Pungoteague in 1965; and

WHEREAS, in 1969, Don accepted the call to be the founding rector of St. Mathias' Church in Midlothian, nurturing the congregation through the early stages of its growth and development; and,

WHEREAS, Don accepted a call to serve as the rector of Christ Church in Blacksburg in 1978, before moving back to the Peach State and serving several congregations there; and

WHEREAS, Don's exhibited his love of learning by maintaining a close relationship with Sewanee, which led to a fellowship in 1972, a Doctor of Ministry degree in 1990 and being honored with the prestigious DuBose Award in 2005 as recognition of his distinguished ministry in and for the Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, in life Don enjoyed music, football, golf, and sailing, but most of all spending time with family and friends; and

WHEREAS, he was proceeded in death by Suzanne, his wife of fifty-five years; and

WHEREAS, Don is survived by his sons and their spouses, seven grandchildren, and Marny Busbin, a beloved companion; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this 129th Annual Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia gives thanks for the lifetime of dedicated service, including fifty-seven years in the ordained ministry, offered to God's glory by The Reverend George Donald Black; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Council extend its heartfelt sympathy to his family; and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be spread across the minutes and books of Council and that copies be sent to his sons, Matthew Black of Tuscaloosa, Alabama and Edward Black of Marietta, Georgia.

Following a moment of silence and prayer, the Bishop moved that the above memorials be adopted. The motion was seconded and passed by the hand-raising function.

Budget (Vote)

The Bishop recognized John Fogarty, Diocesan Treasurer; the Rev. Anne Kirchmier, Chair of Program, Budget and Review Committee; and Judy Dobson, Diocesan Comptroller, who presented the 2021 Budget. Anne Kirchmier moved the adoption of the Budget, as a Member of Council and John Morgan of Bruton Parish Church seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The motion was approved by electronic vote.

Introduction of Postulants/Candidates

The following were introduced by the Bishop:

For the Vocational Diaconate:

Darlene Jackson, St. Cyprian's, Hampton, a graduate of the Deacon's School

For the Priesthood:

Jean Vinson, Galilee, Virginia Beach, The Virginia Seminary

Anne Zobel, All Saints', Virginia Beach, Bexley Seabury Seminary
Daniel Toven, Christ and St. Luke's, Norfolk, Bexley Seabury Seminary

Bishop's Presentation

129TH Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia Address to Council by The Rt. Rev. Susan B. Haynes February 27, 2021

WE HAVE SURVIVED A GREAT TRAUMA

In recent reading of Biblical commentary, I encountered the following story, originally published by Dr. Abraham Verghese in *The New York Times*. Dr. Verghese had been part of a medical team that cared for victims of Hurricane Katrina. Over the years, the doctor had learned to steel himself against the sight of human suffering, so that he could do his job. Then one night he treated an elderly gentleman whose home had been destroyed by Katrina. For two days, the man had perched on a narrow ledge without food or water. When a boat finally picked him up, he was dropped off on a bridge packed with other refugees. The doctor was deeply moved by the man's story and said the only words he could think of: "I'm sorry, so sorry." The man stood up, shook his hand, and said, "Thank you, Doc. I needed to hear that." Suddenly Dr. Verghese understood that his past attempts to steel himself against human suffering helped no one. He states, "The willingness to be wounded may be all we have to offer." (*Feasting on the Word: Preaching the Revised Common Lectionary, Year B, Volume 2 – Lent Through Eastertide, p. 42*)

This morning, as I gather with you for the 129th Council of the Diocese of Southern Virginia, I feel as if I have nothing to offer you except my willingness to be wounded for you. We have all endured a great trauma. Over the last year, as we have been separated from fellowship, community, and worship, we have all been wounded. In some sense, there is nothing to say except, "I'm sorry, so sorry." When Jesus considered the plight of Jerusalem and the trauma that the city had endured, he lamented about how he longed to gather his people into his protection as a mother hen would gather her chicks under her wing. When I say that I am sorry for what you endured last year, that's exactly how I feel.



JERUSALEM! JERUSALEM!

How I've longed to gather you as a Mother Hen gathers her brood under her wings.

In the pandemic, we had to make difficult decisions – decisions not to worship publicly in our buildings, decisions to remain at home, decisions to be apart from one another. While some of us thought that we should stay in our buildings at all costs, others saw this as the only way to keep one another safe. We didn't all agree about the direction of these decisions, but I am grateful that

we all did our best to abide by them. Thank you.

I never dreamed my first year as your bishop would be spent on a Zoom screen. Last year, as you'll recall, I left Diocesan Council with my running shoes on, ready to connect with you all over the diocese. I ran right into the pandemic. I never understood that the majority of my connection over that next year would be virtual only. While we did some good things this last year, it was not ideal; and I am sorry, so sorry. Sadly my running shoes remain mostly unused in the closet.



Holy Spirit Running Shoes

CHAOS PRECEDES GREAT CHANGE/GOD IS WITH US

You'll recall in last Sunday's lectionary reading from the Gospel of Mark, Jesus was plunged into a period of chaos following his Baptism. Immediately following his Baptism, He was *driven* into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit. Jesus didn't nonchalantly stroll into the wilderness. He wasn't out for an afternoon walk. He didn't stop to get a latte to drink on the way. He was *driven*. We are not told that He had any choice. Surely he submitted to it, didn't resist it, and maybe even allowed it. But he didn't necessarily choose it. It was thrust upon him. There in the wilderness he wrestled – with Satan, and wild beasts were his companions. He had some help from angels, but he wrestled and struggled nevertheless.

It has been said that chaos precedes all great change. This was true for Jesus. He started out as a carpenter from Galilee; but through the chaos of his Baptism and wilderness temptations, He became the Savior of the World. But it didn't happen easily. There was a period of instability and chaos which happened first. When he emerged from the wilderness he didn't emerge to return to carpentry. He emerged to save.

Just about a year ago, we too were thrust into a wilderness. When the danger of the pandemic mandated that we forsake our beloved worship and fellowship customs, we were thrust into a wilderness of wrestling and trying to figure out how to be the Church, how to live our Baptismal promises, in the desert. And how we have wrestled for the past year – trying to worship on the computer or the telephone, trying to stay connected to each other through phone, email, mail and text, trying to do good to our fellow humans without touching them or even being in their presence! We are ready to emerge from this desert. Hopefully we don't have much longer in this wilderness.

HOPE: PERCENT POSITIVITY AT 8%

Now I'm going to pause for just a moment to give you a pandemic update, and then an announcement. The percent positivity rate for Covid-19 has finally reached 8% within the Commonwealth of Virginia. We hit that milestone on February 24. I have said that when the Commonwealth reaches 8% positivity rate and stays there for two weeks, then churches may re-open their buildings for in-person worship provided local positivity rates are also 8%. This means that if the percent positivity rate remains at 8% or below until March 10, then churches may open their building for in-person worship beginning March 14. All COVID safety protocols that were in place prior to our last shut-down in November would remain in effect, but buildings would be open again. And I need to stress that each church should then make its own decision, paying close attention to the metrics in their individual localities. My beloved family, we are therefore looking at the possibility that we will be worshipping again in person for Holy Week and Easter! (I'm going to pause briefly to allow you to offer your virtual applause).

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? (5 Initiatives inspired by our Baptismal Covenant)

But now back to my Council Address. We now have light at the end of the tunnel and we are about to emerge from darkness.

But I need to warn us about something. When we emerge, we will not be returning to what we knew before. We will not be emerging in order to do business as usual – to conduct Church in the same way as we did before. We will not be embracing the same beloved customs and rituals in quite the same way. We will emerge into the post-pandemic Church, and that church is going to be different.

This morning I offer a brief synopsis of where I hope we will go as we seek to be the church after the pandemic. Before we chart a course along those lines, let's review the charge I gave you at last year's Council. When I asked you to put your own running shoes on, I was inviting you to launch into living your Baptismal Promises as if you really believed them. Let's refresh our memory as to what those promises are:

Will you continue in the Apostles teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers?

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

Over the past couple of months, the staff of the Diocesan Council and I have been reflecting afresh on these Baptismal promises and how we can live into them in new ways. How can we take the lessons we have learned from the pandemic and continue to be the Church? As we have reflected, five initiatives have emerged, and we would like to present those initiatives. They are not set in stone and serve today only as a jumping off place. You will be the ones to help us shape them as the future unfolds.

INITIATIVE NO. 1

Christians who follow Christ within the Diocese of Southern Virginia engage in a RULE OF LIFE that includes a commitment to Prayer, Study of Scripture, Acts of Charity, Community and Worship Life.

One reason that Christians come to church is that they want to learn how to lead lives of meaning and purpose. Our Baptismal promises mandate a commitment to worship, prayer and study. Every Christian should have a set of disciplines that supports this commitment. Every church parish or other faith community should embrace a Rule of Life that supports their commitment. The Diocese also should engage in such a rule.

During the pandemic we have been challenged to keep these commitments. We have risen to the challenge. At the beginning of the year last year, the Diocese of Southern Virginia had two parishes offering some sort of virtual worship. Just a few months into the pandemic that number had risen to 65. We learned how to do study and fellowship in online forums. We figured out safe protocols through which we could continue to address basic human needs. We learned how to be the Church even when the building was closed.

As we move forward from this pandemic wilderness, the Diocese stands ready to help you continue to reach out beyond your four walls with grants, technological support, formation, and genuine down-to-earth cheerleading as you embrace your own Rules of Life.

INITIATIVE NO. 2

Every faith community has a unique charism to offer. The Diocese commits to empowering and supporting all communities, large and small, to maintain and model healthy parish life. We will devote energy and resources to healthy congregational development, conflict resolution, and healthy relationships. The goal of this initiative is to establish *healthy, supportive* CONNECTION throughout the Diocese.

Once again the pandemic challenged us to maintain our connections, as parishes and as a diocese. We connected via virtual Open Office Hours, Virtual Book Studies, Virtual Town Hall Meetings, Virtual Bible Studies, Virtual Coffee Hours, Virtual Dinners and other fellowship events, Virtual Vestry Meetings, and Virtual Worship. We learned how to connect parts of the diocese which had never before been connected. And we learned how to reach out and connect with those who otherwise could not have been connected to church. In many instances, we gained new members.

As we emerge from the pandemic, the Diocese plans to continue some of its own virtual connections. Additionally I, as the Bishop, will try once again to connect with every parish in the diocese over the next year, either through a visitation, a meeting with the vestry or an adult forum or through Open Office Hours.

In the fall, we will be launching the long-awaited Diocesan Congregational Development Institute – a diocesan wide program devoted to the raising up of healthy and vibrant

congregations, regardless of size. Even now we are beginning to train those who will help us to implement this program. We have many formational plans as well for the empowerment of Lay Persons, including an exciting initiative to train lay preachers.

No one parish or community exists as an island. We are all connected. We are ALL the Diocese.

INITIATIVE NO. 3

The Diocese will commit to engaging the journey to BECOMING BELOVED COMMUNITY, improving our understanding of what it means to live “racially just lives,” and endeavoring to be agents of truth telling, healing, justice and racial reconciliation.

The pandemic provided the backdrop against which many were able to see in sharp relief the presence of systemic racism in our culture. Members of our diocese began to ask for the creation of Sacred Ground study circles and other opportunities in which to pursue education and take action. In response, I addressed the present Diocesan commission called “Repairers of the Breach” and charged them to widen the scope of their focus on anti-racism efforts. Specifically I asked them for a threepronged approach of Education, Anti-Racism Training and Action. The focus would become racial justice for all people of color. All lives would matter – black lives, Latino/a/x lives, and the lives of indigenous tribes. This is huge work that we have taken on and the Repairers of the Breach would like to challenge and invite you, if your heart is stirring in this area, to join them in their work. If we are going to address all three areas – education, anti-racism and action, additional help is imperative.

Contact Canon Lynn Farlin at the Diocese

INITIATIVE NO. 4

The Diocese will commit to developing and maintaining a model of CREATION CARE that articulates and implements an action plan advancing our stewardship, not only of Diocesan resources, but of the earth and all its resources.

The desired establishment of a Commission on Care of Creation was delayed last year by the need to address the pandemic. We will continue this year with its establishment for the purposes of education, training, and action for the Care of Creation as well as for the wise stewardship and of our diocesan and parochial resources.

INITIATIVE NO. 5

The Diocese will commit to develop and promote a model of EVANGELISM that enables us to proclaim by word and example the Good News of Jesus Christ, empowering us to tell our faith stories with the kind of ease and conviction that will attract people to our way

Last year we also intended the establishment of a Commission on Evangelism, but the pandemic intervened. The pandemic taught us quite a bit about evangelism. The post-pandemic Church will need evangelistic efforts on all fronts as we re-open and re-build. How fortuitous that our

key-note speaker helped us to begin to think about this! The Diocese, through the implementation of the Diocesan Congregational Development Institute, through training and through the availability of grants, hopes to fuel this energy and enthusiasm for proclaiming by word and example the Good News of God in Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

As a Diocese, we speak of the Baptismal Promises and these initiatives as a “Living Vision.” We are committed to embracing this Living Vision, and we invite you to join us in this embrace. There is work for every Episcopalian, for every congregation (large or small). We are committed to seeing that our Diocesan life embodies our Baptismal Promises. It is our hope that our collaborative and communal work on these initiatives will point us in that direction. When Jesus sat in the wilderness, he wrestled with Satan and was companioned by wild beasts. In the wilderness of the Pandemic, we too feel we have wrestled and perhaps have sat among wild animals. But Jesus was also attended by angels; and these angels assisted him in his transition. We too can count on the assistance of angels.

While I know that we are tired from the toll that this pandemic has exacted, this is certainly not the time to rest, although we may be tempted.



GET UP! WE HAVE WORK TO DO!

Hebrews 12:1-2 says *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith...”*



Living the Vision...

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...let us run with perseverance the race...

Let us pray:

All praise and thanks to you, most merciful Father, for adopting us as your own children, for incorporating us into your holy Church, and for making us worthy to share in the inheritance of

the saints in light. As we go forth into your world, renew in us the covenant you made with us at our Baptism. Send us forth in the power of that Spirit to perform the service you set before us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Closing Worship

Closing worship was offered at 11:15a.m.

The Bishop prayed for healing of our trauma, and for those who have died in the last year.

Prayers were also made for our moving forward to offer healing and beacon of hope.

Council Adjourns (Vote)

There being no further business, the Bishop moved the Adjournment of Council. The motion was seconded by the Rev. Frederick Walker, and passed by hand raising on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

The Very Rev. Dr. Susan Grimm
Secretary of the Diocese