

**Standing Commission on Ministry Development**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**June 22-25, 2008**  
**All Saints' Episcopal Church**  
**Atlanta, Georgia**

**In Attendance:**

The Rt. Rev. Larry R. Benfield  
Dr. Luisa Bonillas  
Canon Stephanie T. Cheney, Secretary  
Mrs. Jane R. Cosby, Vice-chair  
Mr. Jack Finlaw  
Dr. Rosemary Gooden  
The Rev. Dr. Melford E. "Bud" Holland, Program Officer for Discipleship  
and Leadership, Ordained Ministry  
Dr. Donn F. Morgan  
The Rt. Rev. C. Wallis Ohl, Chair  
The Rev. Joseph Pae  
The Rev. Deacon Sherry Young

**Absent:**

The Rev. Barbara Bender-Breck  
Mr. Bruce T. Swan

**Invited Guests in Attendance:**

The Rev. John R. Mitman, Society for the Increase in Ministry  
Dr. Matthew Price, Church Pension Group

**Sunday, June 22, 2008**

The opening session was held on Sunday evening in the Conference Room of the Hotel Indigo. The meeting was opened with a prayer. The Commission members spent time reconnecting since the last meeting. Bishop Ohl reported that the Rt. Rev. Charles vonRosenberg has resigned from the Commission since he has been unable to attend any meetings. He suggested that the Commission not request a replacement because it is late in the triennium and because of the difficulty in bringing someone new up to speed. Canon Cheney suggested that the Commission might consider requesting that the Presiding Bishop appoint Bishop Stephen Lane, Bishop of Maine, since he had served on the Commission as Bonnie Anderson's representative prior to his consecration. After discussion, it was the unanimous concurrence of the Commission that this request be made. Canon Cheney agreed to contact Bonnie Anderson regarding the appropriate means of making this request. The evening session concluded with Compline.

## **Monday, June 23, 2008**

The meeting was opened with Morning Prayer.

### **Plenary Session**

A motion was made and was seconded to accept the minutes of the February 27-March 1, 2008 as submitted. The motion was adopted.

Bishop Ohl reviewed the "To Do List" on the second page of the agenda.

Dr. Gooden asked that the members of the Commission take responsibility to talk with their Bishops and COM chairs regarding the COM Handbook and request accountability for its use.

The Rev. Dr. Holland asked the Commission to consider topics of discussion with Matthew Price. He noted that Dr. Price will talk about employment issues related to Resolution A125 and research being done. Suggested topics included:

- The number of clergy available to meet the needs of the Church in the future;
- Information on local training;
- Decline in the number of communicants vs. the number of clergy needed;
- Second career clergy (attitude toward second career vs. younger clergy); and
- Number of dioceses with local training.

Bishop Ohl stated that the Commission needs to begin thinking about the Blue Book Report soon, and he noted that any canonical resolutions need to be written immediately in order for the Canons Committee to review them and get them in proper canonical form.

The Rev. Dr. Holland reported that he and the Very Rev. Ward Ewing, Dean of General Seminary, have been working on the concept of an Urban Training Program to be held at General. They are discussing the focus of programs to offer for both lay and clergy leaders in the Church.

Mrs. Cosby stated that people in the pews don't know what is going on outside of their own congregations, and there is a need for a new meeting ground. Bishop Ohl pointed out that "all politics is local." The Rev. Dr. Holland stated that the Church can't expect the seminaries to do everything in terms of formation for leadership unless the Church meets the seminaries on new ground. Seminaries will need to be supported, and the Church will have to take on some of the responsibility.

Discussion then centered on whether SCMD needs more clarity about its role and whether there is overlap in its work and that of the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Education and Formation. Consideration needs to be given to SCMD's current mandate.

Dr. Morgan reported that PEALL (Proclaiming Education for All) will have a report at the next meeting.

The Rev. Dr. Holland provided background on the relationship between SCMD, PEALL and SCLCEF.

Bishop Benfield suggested that perhaps SCMD should suggest that lay ministry should be carved out of the mandate and given to SCLCEF, and SCMD deal totally with ordained ministry. Explanation was offered that, in 1997, the concept was to bring all components together: theological education, ordained ministry and ministry in daily life. In the early 90s, the largest unit at the Church Center was education and formation, and there seemed to be resistance to separating out lay ministry. Bishop Ohl noted that the sense of SCLCEF is that it is focusing more on baptismal ministry and not particularly on ordained ministry – more along the lines of continuing education for all ages.

The Rev. Mr. Pae asked for information on the decision to revise the Title III canons. The Rev. Dr. Holland stated that there was a growing awareness of the importance of the ministry of the baptized, and this opened up avenues on how people might engage in ministry; on how the canons might be made more flexible; on changing the definition of what happens with COM; and on providing clarity about its advisory role to the Bishop. As a part of the canonical revisions, separate canons for the diaconate and the priesthood were created, and clarity was provided regarding licensed ministry. He noted that one of the biggest controversies had to do with the former Canon 9 local priests. In the revised canons, the thought was that a priest is a priest for the entire Church. He further noted that the canons still do not resolve issues around cluster ministries. He concluded that revisions to Title III have occurred over the last three triennium.

The Commission discussed the status of resolutions that were assigned:

- C-030 on access to ordination process: tabled
- D-034 on amending licensed ministries: tabled
- D-009 on Con Ed requirements: still under consideration
- B-006 on seminary debt: still under consideration

Dr. Morgan stated that a request will come from PEALL to continue to keep the web site going and that it will require funding. He stated that the resolution will go to Executive Council, but it will probably also come to SCMD. Created by a

Lilly Endowment grant, the Office for Ministry Development has kept it alive, but with the changes at the Church Center, consideration will need to be given regarding how to continue to maintain and update it. Dr. Morgan noted that he does see at the grassroots level exciting efforts occurring that should make theological education accessible to everyone.

Dr. Gooden reported that the Anti-racism Training program, "Visions," being provided by the Diocese of Chicago is a program she feels is very effective.

Following lunch, the Commission broke into small groups for the work assigned to each of them.

## **Reports from Small Groups**

### **Leadership Development**

The Racial-Ethnic Ministry Survey was reviewed, and discussion followed on how best the Commission could utilize this survey in support of racial-ethnic ministries. Discussion at the previous meeting had been about writing a resolution mandating a line item in diocesan budgets for racial-ethnic ministries or suggesting a strategic plan for development of racial-ethnic ministries. Questions were raised regarding how the Commission could best help dioceses that want to attain more ethnic diversity. It was suggested that the survey be re-sent to all diocesan bishops in dioceses that did not previously respond to the initial survey.

The Rev. Dr. Holland gave an update on FOCUS (Families of Clergy United in Christ). He noted that their work is very important, but he cautioned that he did not see how the group could maintain its present structure after 8 years of seeking funding. He suggested that CREDO and FOCUS should determine if the two organizations could work together.

Dr. Bonillas reported on resolutions for the Blue Book Report under consideration:

1. Re-instatement of the ethnic congregational development office – The Rev. Dr. Holland provided background on how the original desks were developed in response to the 2020 Initiative, noting that those working in this ministry area decided to work together in responding to congregations. The current iteration is that the ministry area has now been divided, and those working in the area are in different parts of the country or doing different work. Dr. Morgan stated that the commitment should be to the results, rather than the office, and that the Commission should seek accountability regarding the need for the work the desk was doing.

2. Mandate for a budget line item in diocesan budgets for ethnic ministries
3. Proposal for a multi-cultural task force

In discussion, it was noted that if there was an articulated vision about what a budget with ethnic ministries in it would look like, then a resolution of this nature would it make sense. It was further noted that the deeper question is whether the Church is really committed to ethnic ministry.

### **Theological Education**

Dr. Morgan reported the following:

1. In the 2006 Blue/Green Book, there is a description of each seminary in the SCMD report. He volunteered to obtain this information from the seminaries.
2. A report from PEALL will come to the Commission, and SCMD may be asked to affirm their resolutions.
3. In response to B006, one bulletin insert regarding seminary debt has been done so far. The sub-group would like to use either the same insert, or a variation of it, for 2 or 3 Sundays in a row in Epiphany. He noted that this is a conscious-raising effort. The Rev. Dr. Holland advised that 3 different inserts be used (telling the same story 3 different ways). He also suggested that the insert availability be advertise through Episcopal Life Online.

### **Society for the Increase of the Ministry**

The Rev. John Mitman joined the Commission and provided the following information:

- The Society has been providing seminarian support for 151 years and has helped approximately 5,000 seminarians.
- The Society is currently providing support to 74 seminarians.
- For the last 6-7 years, they have been working on ways to provide even more support.
- They have gathered significant data about the extent of the problem.
- Ann Gardner designed the instrument to do a survey, and the have combined forces with Matthew Price at the Church Pension Group in this effort.
- For 4 years, they have been doing a survey of middler year students.
- By graduation, seminarians have between \$12,500 and \$13,000 debt per year. We're graduating people and giving them a mortgage.
- All postulants need to go online and complete the Pension Fund PlanAhead financial planning tool prior to going forward in the ordination process.

- All Commission on Ministry need to have a resource person in financial planning available to the Commission.
- The number of M.Div. students in seminaries has declined by 25% in the last 3 years. This tracks with other denominations. However, the number of ordinations has remained constant. This implies that they are going other places to obtain seminary training.
- The Fund for Future Leaders' goal is to raise \$200 million to support seminarians.
- The pool of money for scholarships is increasing each year.
- The Society is working with the Pension Fund on providing health insurance for seminarians.

## **Tuesday, June 24, 2008**

### **Small Group Reports**

#### **Theological Education**

Dr. Morgan completed his report with the following information:

4. Theological Education needs to consult with the Title III Small Group regarding the resolution on the General Board of Examining Chaplains.
5. He raised questions about the Commission's role in stressing the importance of theological education to the staff at the Church Center, and he suggested it might be appropriate for a letter to come from the Commission stating our concerns and requesting that someone on the national level be assigned the responsibility for oversight of theological education. The Commission concurred with his suggestion. Dr. Morgan did note that there is a position open which has not been filled.

In discussion that followed, the following observations were made:

- It might be good to consider putting this conversation in with GBEC.
- There used to be a Board for Theological Education which was later combined with another office into SCMD and the Office for Ministry Development. PEALL was formed as well. Now, with the reorganization, things have changed.
- Seminaries are talking with other theological education efforts now in a way they haven't before. There needs to be a vision that meets the needs.
- At issue is what is what do we expect someone in the national office to do. There are new connections going on around the Church, and there is also a decrease in the resources available at the Church Center. The other problem is that people who come to work at the Church Center have broader portfolios than what the position calls for.
- The concern is education and ministry.

- Don't assume that an old structure will solve new issues. We really need to dream new dreams about how we're going to work together on new ground. The Bishops on the Task Force on Theological Education need to be involved in the process as we go forward.

### **Title III**

Canon Cheney reported a resolution for the Blue Book in response to B009 on continuing education is being developed by the small group. It will include the following points:

- Authorization for the development of a website for the purposes of providing examples of best practices in continuing education, providing links to suitable continuing education opportunities, and providing examples of how to record the continuing education of licensed ministers, deacons, priests, and bishops;
- Administration of the website should reside at the Episcopal Church Center with suitable staffing provided; and
- The General Convention should request the Joint Standing Commission on Budget and Finance to consider a budget allocation to implement this resolution.

Dr. Morgan suggested that this be a collaborative effort with Theological Education Small Group. The Rev. Dr. Holland stated that there might be strong interest at 815 in the development of this web site. Bishop Benfield will talk to Pan Adams, Chair of P, B & F, to alert them that SCMD will have budgetary requests around technology.

It was noted that any other budget requests the Commission may have should also be submitted soon.

### **Matthew Price**

Dr. Price joined the Commission and reported the following:

- The average age of seminarians is still in the 40s. This is being pushed by a set of ordinands who are in their 50s.
- The under 30 group has gotten larger, but not enough so in order to bring the average age down.
- The proportion of male to female seminarians has stabilized. 55% male; 45% female (UCC is more of a female majority now.)
- The number of ordinations peaked in 2005 and has been going down since then.
- The number of active clergy (full-time employed in church) appears to be stable. (About 6,000 as of end of 2007.) The Pension Fund shows about 7,000, but it includes other categories, e.g. overseas, newly ordained.

- Compensation is not keeping up with inflation, but it seems to be ahead of inflation in the larger churches.
- There is a huge reliance on retired clergy now. About 1,900 retired clergy are working in parishes now, mostly on a part-time basis and at the lower end of the compensation scale. They are essentially priest-associates. It doesn't look like they are taking a position that might otherwise go to someone out of seminary, however this is debatable. Matthew doesn't see this trend going away anytime soon.
- Young clerics are getting the highest rates of compensation, and they are going to predominantly larger congregations.
- Retirees seem to have played it safe, and they are living within their means.
- Younger clergy seem to live beyond their means.
- Older people in congregations are the pivotal members – they show up, they pledge, they are involved.
- Older women in congregations will do whatever needs to be done – dinners, committees, etc.; the gen-x generation wants specific time commitments.
- Older women priests have the lowest deployment rate, and their salaries are the lowest.
- There is an extraordinary rise of late in ordination debt. Consequently, we will have large numbers of retirees with large debts. We're losing the corollary between debt level and age.
- The Rev. Mr. Mitman stated that we have to take this situation on as a Church that we don't set people up to fail.
- The number of deacons is growing.
- The Pension Fund is not seeing an explosion in locally trained clergy in terms of knowing where they got their training.
- Episcopalians feel stronger about being Episcopalians than any other mainline denominations.
- We are managing decline, as are other mainline denominations.
- It's not so much change that is affecting church decline in membership; it's the inability to adapt to change. There is a sort of fatalism about it.
- The average age at ordination is still at 45.
- Episcopalians are the most highly educated. That doesn't mean we spend the most on education, nor are we the smartest.
- 30% of Episcopal households have incomes over \$100,000 compared with 15% of the general population.
- Clergy who have a sense of wellness tend to grow churches more easily. Volatility tends to track with a sense of wellness.
- Every COM needs to ask itself: Can this person grow a parish? The people coming into ministry need to be really outstanding. Is the COM really taking this into account?

- In the new models of leadership, it is no longer top down, but collaborative.
- \$64,000 is the median compensation.
- CREDO: the acceptance rate for females is 40%; for males, its 25%. The lowest rate is among 55 year-old males running a 150 ASA church.

Dr. Price talked about Resolution A-125 from the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention, which addresses whether lay employees of the Church should have a mandatory pension plan. The Pension Fund has done a study. At most, 70% of those working over 20 hours per week have some form of pension. In 1991, a resolution from General Convention said that all parishes should provide pensions at 9% to those working over 20 hours per week. But there were no teeth in it. He noted that compensation is not great, but neither is it that bad. Surveys were sent to all lay employees. What came out it is that the church is a great place to work, but it does a terrible job of managing in terms of formal measures. For example, a big issue is that most lay employees think they are exempt. The resulting Feasibility Study is recommending that the Pension Fund canon in the Constitution and Canons be amended to add lay employees. It will give the same level of protection to lay employees as to clergy. He also noted that lay employees who are single and female are particularly vulnerable. He concluded that the Executive Council has taken up this report, and it will become a resolution of Executive Council.

The Commission then broke into small groups for continued work.

In the Plenary Session following the small group meetings, Bishop Ohl reported on his attendance at the meeting with the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Education and Formation, stating the following:

- He commended the Diocese of Utah on their conference center and recommended it to anyone needing a place to hold a meeting.
- The Commission is still struggling with what they should be doing.
- The Commission spent time in grappling with the definition of formation.
- They are strongly motivated to have a joint meeting with SCMD and possibly PEALL in the next triennium with us to discuss how we can interface. The idea is to put forward a resolution for General Convention to fund a meeting of all three groups. They would like for SCMD to support this resolution.
- The Rev. Dr. Gregory Straub was also in attendance and informed the Commission that there will be a CCAB meeting in January. Canon Cheney suggested that a day be added to that meeting rather than requesting a separate meeting that would require additional travel.

Additional comments included the following:

- It would be helpful to have some crossover between the two commissions.
- We need to think through the finances of crossover meetings and who needs to be involved.
- There will be another meeting over the summer to write a Formation Charter, and this meeting might be a way to have some crossover.
- The original conversation about a joint meeting of the two commissions occurred at SCMD's meeting at CDSP, but the intent then was to host a larger meeting which would include educators.
- If the purpose of a joint meeting with SCLCFE is to help them figure out their mandate, why should SCMD participate?

### **House of Bishops Report**

Bishop Benfield reported on the last meeting of the House of Bishops:

- Time was spent on discussing the upcoming Lambeth Conference.
- Emotionally, the most challenging conversation was about Gene Robinson's not being invited.
- Also discussed was the situation with the Diocese of San Joaquin and what the Church is doing as necessary next steps. Included in this discussion was conversation about what steps the House takes next regarding the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Bishop Duncan.
- There was no discussion on the future of the Church. After August, they'll be able to talk about next steps and what the Communion is going to look like.
- Time was spent on church reorganization and health insurance for all.
- The Presiding Bishop believes strongly in self definition and is probably trying to give the House the opportunity to self-define, which has not been allowed in the past.

During the evening Plenary Session, the Rev. Mr. Mitman stated that the General Board of Examining Chaplains was founded canonically in 1972. Before the implementation of General Ordination Exams, the Church was in terrible shape regarding how exams were given. A major reason for the implementation was to get beyond that. He encouraged the Commission to consider this long view as it thinks about GOEs.

The Rev. Dr. Holland reported on his continuing work:

- Fresh Start is continuing to develop as a major initiative in the Church with over half the dioceses in the Church participating.
- The Coaching Network is an emerging project.
- Work continues on Employment Policies and Practices.

- Work continues with the Convocation of American Churches in Europe. They are attempting to tell the Anglican story in the midst of multi-cultural realities.
- Work continues on the development of a Sudanese Leadership Institute (currently 28 ordained in this country).
- He is a conference leader for CREDO Retired Clergy Conferences and is also a trainer for EfM.
- He continues working with Senior Ministries at the Church Pension Fund, with Cultural Diversity in the Workplace, and with Churches in Metropolitan Areas.

## **Seminary Report**

Dr. Morgan reported that the deans met with bishops on the Theological Education Committee. He noted that none of the deans think things will be the same in the future and that the bishops want a summit meeting of all involved in theological education. Hopefully an agenda will be developed by September.

## **Wednesday, June 25, 2008**

The small groups reported on their work from the previous day:

### **Theological Education**

Dr. Morgan reported that in response to Resolution B006, the group will affirm a proposed resolution to support for a three-year seminary study and will ask bishops to focus on this with their deputations. A written copy of the resolution will be distributed to the Commission.

### **Title III**

Canon Cheney read the group's Blue Book Report, a copy of which is attached to the minutes of the meeting. Dr. Morgan suggested that the GOE report be put in the form of a resolution, and the Commission concurred. He also asked to whom in the House of Bishops this should be directed for implementation. Bishop Benfield pointed out that we did not address the cost of the GOE. He also suggested that the seminaries could be asked to have conversations with COMs that do not understand the GOEs.

### **Leadership Development**

The group will continue to work on suggesting ways that FOCUS could be blended with CREDO, and they will provide an update on the DVD, "Meeting on New Ground". They will also propose two resolutions:

- That a task force be formed for multi-cultural ministry
- That a strategic plan and budget line item in diocesan budgets for ethnic ministries be requested

It was noted again that any resolutions with monetary implications should be submitted as soon as possible. It was also suggested that any budget requests should be tied to a ministry priority.

Bishop Ohl asked the small groups to have their Blue Book Reports written by September 15<sup>th</sup> and submit them to him and Canon Cheney so that the report can be compiled in draft form and sent back out to entire Commission by October 15<sup>th</sup>. The report will need to be complete at the November meeting.

It was decided that the November meeting at the Tutu Center will begin on Wednesday evening, November 5<sup>th</sup> and end at 4 p.m. on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. The 2009 spring meeting will be held April 19-22 in Scottsdale, Arizona. The purpose of the meeting will be to strategize about what will need to be done at General Convention. Those members who will be at General Convention are Dr. Morgan, Mrs. Cosby, Mr. Finlaw, Dr. Bonillas, Dr. Gooden, the Rev. Dr. Holland, Bishop Benfield, Bishop Ohl and Canon Cheney. Mrs. Cosby and Mr. Finlaw are deputies.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Cheney  
Secretary