

## Task Force on New Funding for Clergy Formation

Monday, February 25, 2019 Minutes

5 pm EST/2 pm PST

The meeting was called to order by the Rev. Brendan Barnicle, and opening prayer was led by Jim Murphy.

The following committee members were in attendance: Barnicle, Cowart, Heller, Henry-McKeever, Kittredge, Murphy, Taylor. Guests from the Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation in Small Congregations joined the meeting, including past Chair the Rev. Susanna Singer, past Vice Chair Demi Prentice, and past member the Rev. Maureen Hagen. The Rev. Hagen is also current chair of the Task Force on Theological Education Networking, which also resulted from a resolution from General Convention that was sponsored by the Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation.

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Breidenthal is on sabbatical. The Rev. JoAnn Jones had a conflicting meeting. Mr. Joseph Swimmer and the Rev. Andrew Hybl were unavailable due to unexpected changes to travel plans.

In its January meeting, the Task Force identified a need to understand the previous Task Force that promoted Resolution A027. The Rev. Susanna Singer, who lead the prior Task Force, provided background information to the task force. Demi Prentice and the Rev. Maureen Hagen provided additional background information. The Rev. Singer noted that the task force had envisioned the creation of a fund that could provide grants and scholarships to students preparing for bi-vocational, part-time and non-stipendiary clergy positions. She noted that the fund might cover all expense related to formation, including travel, childcare and books. The task force had envisioned providing nontraditional formation options in order to make clergy formation available to more people. Therefore, the task force concluded that funding for these educational options was a fundamental justice issue requiring the Church's attention.

The task force understood and shared the Rev. Singer's concerns. Many people noted that increasing role of small congregations in the Church, going forward. 70% of Episcopal congregations are currently small congregations (i.e. fewer than 100 ASA), and 50% of Episcopalians are members of small congregations.

Dean Kittredge and Bishop Taylor both discussed the Iona Initiative and its success in providing formation in 28 dioceses. It is also being translated into Mandarin, Korean and Spanish, in order to reach more people.

The Rev. Hagen shared that her task force will be creating a database of all the clergy formation options that are available in the Church, like the Iona Initiative. As a result of the conversation, the task force discerned that it might be called to institute the creation of a similar database for clergy formation funding. Courtney Cowart described the highly disjointed and decentralized way in which funding for clergy education is currently organized.

In listening to the Rev Singer, she seemed to identify three goals for the current task force. First, identify, collect and/or raise the money for a centralized clergy formation fund. Second, identify an administrator for the fund. Third, set the policies and procedures for administering the fund. There seemed to be growing consensus that the first task will be the most significant for the task force. Jim

Murphy collected data from DFMS about clergy education funding, which he will post to the Extranet site.

Coming out of the meeting, the task force identified the following tasks:

- 1) Collect all the questions that the task force members have about funding and our objective; members should post their questions to the Extranet or email them to Brendan, who will collect them for our next meeting.
- 2) Review the reports from the last task force that will be posted to the Extranet site.
- 3) Brendan will contact Brian Murray for greater clarity on staffing resources, executive council sponsorship and DFMS resource.

The Task Force hopes to meet again on a Zoom call in March.

Bishop Taylor led the Task Force in closing prayer.