

Task Force on Church Planting and Congregational Redevelopment

Wednesday, June 19, 2019

Zoom Meeting

Present: The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner, The Rev. Eric Metoyer, Ms. Caroline McCall, The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, The Rev. Daniel Velez-Rivera, The Rev. Tom Brackett, The Rev. Michael Sells, The Rev. Canon Ada Wong Nagata, The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow, Canon Katie Forsyth, Mr. Jason Evans, The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne, Dr. Gandhi Lopez, The Rev. Katie Nakamura-Rogers

Absent: Ms. Natalie Finstad, The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, The Rt. Rev. Allen Shin, -The Rt. Rev. Mariann Budde, The Very Rev. Amy McCreath

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. EDT.

She facilitated introductions with the following question: What are you doing that brings you joy this summer?

Janet invited The Rev. Katie Nakamura-Rengers, Interim Staff Officer for Church Planting, to introduce herself and describe her role for the coming months.

The Rev. Tom Brackett updated the group on the search for a more permanent Staff Officer for Church Planting.

The Episcopal Church Center has received more than 30 applications to date and is currently scheduling interviews with applicants.

Tom also shared that Meghan Ritchie will be departing the Episcopal Church Center in early July to pursue new opportunities.

The Rev. Katie Nakamura-Rengers offered an update on the work of church planting

She began with an update on the assessment process, reminding the Task Force that the goal of these assessments is to participants to evaluate the gifts and skills necessary to be a planter, noting that these skills differ from those needed to be, cardinal rectors or bishops, for example. In 2019, we will offer three gatherings (the next one being in October 14-17, 2019 in Cincinnati). In 2020, we will offer four events. We also have an opportunity to work with the Presbyterian Church USA and can register two Episcopalian aspirants at their assessment events in 2019.

Katie noted that it is important to know that the assessment process is separate from the grant process in that the assessors provide final report to the discerner that we hope they will share with their bishops, coach, spiritual director/mentor. However, these assessments are not directly provided back to this Task Force. Both Bishops Rehberg and Scarfe offered concern about the separation of the assessment and the grant, and Janet and Tom explained how this process works in tandem with applications.

Janet reminded the group that this process is in transition and is not perfect yet, and that we are still perfecting it. The group had additional questions which Janet, Katie, and Tom answered.

Janet announced that Katie is working with Meghan for a Genesis Gathering. November 11-13, 2019. Location TBA, likely in a location near an existing church planter.

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner offered an update on grants applications.

Janet announced that there are several aspirants applying for a discernment grant of up to \$5,000, and that we are working with Executive Council to fast-track those applications. She encouraged the Task Force that if we know of anyone thinking of applying for those grants, they should get applications in as soon as possible and we will start processing them.

The Task Force tabled discussion of Covenants between Planters and Dioceses for future conversation.

The Rev. Canon Janet Waggoner offered an update on the next Task Force Meeting

The next group meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 12 (3 p.m.)-Wednesday, August 14 (noon), 2019 at Maritime Center in Baltimore. Members will be receiving invitations and travel arrangement instructions from Episcopal Church Center soon.

The grant subcommittee will be meeting after the gathering. Decisions from that group will come back to the Task Force for ratification and then on to Executive Council for ratification. Another gathering of the entire Task Force will happen sometime between April 21-25, 2020. Janet asked group members to email her with times they could not meet during that window.

The Rev. Tom Brackett offered an update on Congregational Redevelopment work.

We have four groupings of diocesan clusters:

1. Dioceses and congregations that are launching new ministries out of existing ministries without participating in our program.
2. Dioceses that have been thinking about redevelopment and have expertise in house and don't want to work with outside consultant but do want to be part of a community of practice.
3. Dioceses that are already working with the College of Congregational Development, Missional Network, Faithful Innovations Group, etc..
4. Dioceses that are willing to work directly with our redevelopment process.

Explorations are happening with Dioceses of Central Pennsylvania, Bethlehem and Central New York.

Diocese of North Carolina, Diocese of Upper South Carolina, East Carolina; Diocese of Long Island and Diocese of New York; Diocese of Southern Ohio and Diocese of Indianapolis. We will focus on convening a community of practice from all these featuring Alan Roxburgh and Melissa Skelton with a focus on local settings.

Subcommittee Reports:

The Rev. Dr. Gray Lesesne updated the Task Force on the work of the Communications Subcommittee

The communications subcommittee continues to work on managing social media. Katie Nakamura-Rengers is now doing day-to-day communications for the Genesis Gathering. Amy McCreath is working on copy for the congregational redevelopment website. Tom noted that Executive Council is seeking stories/case studies of transformation and that we will want to offer these in a variety of forms, including a blog, on our website and with larger Episcopal Church media.

Canon Katie Forsyth updated the Task Force on the work of the Grants Subcommittee

A few things are in process: Formstack is being prepared for common ratings in each application. Form letters are being prepared for grant recipients and those denied grants. Position descriptions

for all parties involved in granting process. Maintaining consistency in communications with diocesan advocates. Preparing a FAQ for the process.

The Rev. Canon Dan Morrow updated the Task Force on the work of the Structure Subcommittee

Our group has met twice since the last meeting. Working with three primary questions:

1. How do we transcend the triennium?
2. Should we establish some sort of fund for church planters?
3. What sort of staffing would be most appropriate at the Episcopal Church Center to help this work to be done?

Tom noted that for the third question, this is a larger question to think about with General Convention planning. Tom then addressed the first two questions. He's speaking with bishops about designating portions of building sales to pool resources for church planting on a regional basis. He also noted that we may be a point in terms of momentum where new ministry development is just part of the regular budgeting process. That may take more discernment and a strategy to bringing this to the next General Convention.

The next meeting of this group is on Wednesday, July 17.