



## DIOCESE of ATLANTA

*The Episcopal Church in Middle and North Georgia*  
2744 Peachtree Road NW • Atlanta, GA 30305 • 404-601-5320 or 800-537-6743 • episcopalatlanta.org

MINUTES of the 115th Annual Council of the Diocese of Atlanta, November 12 and 13, 2021.

The 115th Annual Council of the Diocese of Atlanta met virtually, over the internet, with only the Bishop Diocesan, the Chair of Dispatch of Business, the Chancellor, the Chancellor Emeritus and Registrar, and the Secretary convening in person at the Cathedral of St. Philip, 2744 Peachtree Road NW, Atlanta, GA, 30305. The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, Bishop Diocesan, was in the chair.

### **FIRST DAY: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020**

Virtual registration began 8:00am (by members logging-on), followed by a check-in and a Virtual Council Tutorial.

The Annual Council Pre-Recorded Worship and Bishop's Sermon were shown at 9:10am.

#### **Call to order, quorum call, and organization for business**

At 9:40 a.m., Bishop Wright convened Annual Council and called on the Chair of Dispatch of Business to remind Council Members about the webinar format, to direct them to detailed instructions in their Council Packets, and to confirm that all voting would occur through the Socio format.

Bishop Wright called on the Secretary, The Rev. Dick Game, who announced that a constitutional quorum was present based on the registrations, and that 13 parishes had not registered. Bishop Wright confirmed that a quorum was present. The Secretary announced that all parishes were entitled to vote. The Council was organized for business.

#### **Seating of Lay Delegate from The Church of the Common Ground, Atlanta**

The Secretary moved the seating of the Lay Delegate from Church of the Common Ground.

**Motion seconded and carried. Lay Delegate seated.**

#### **Approval of the Minutes of the 114th Council**

Bishop Wright called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the 114th Annual Council.

**Motion seconded and carried. Minutes adopted.**

#### **Adoption of the Agenda**

Bishop Wright called for a motion to adopt the Agenda as included in the Reports and Information Tab of the Electronic Council Packet.

**Motion seconded and carried. Agenda adopted.**

#### **Announcements and Introductions**

Bishop Wright welcomed first time delegates and new clergy members to Council.

Bishop Wright introduced the persons at the virtual praesidium: Richard Perry, Esq., Chancellor Emeritus and Parliamentarian; Tom Christopher, Esq., Chancellor; The Rev. Dick Game, Secretary; The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster-Weltner, The Chair of Dispatch of Business.

Bishop Wright called on the Chair of Dispatch of Business who advised members and delegates that the Rules of Order and instructions for voting and debate were included in the Electronic Council Packet, and that the Rules of Order of this Council stood amended and modified as may be necessary to facilitate this virtual meeting of the Council. Any amendment or modification shall only apply to this virtual meeting.

The Chair of Dispatch of Business then provided detailed instructions on dispatch of business.

### **Introduction and referral of resolutions to legislative committees**

Bishop Wright referred these pre-filed resolutions to Council legislative committees for deliberation (none were proposed from the floor):

- **C21-1**      **Membership of Deacons on Standing Committee (Constitution and Canons)**
- **R21-1**      **Appointment of Members of the LGBTQ+ Commission (Community Ministries)**
- **R21-2**      **Addition of Barbara Harris to the Commemorations of the Church (Liturgy)**
- **R21-3**      **Resolution Urging Big Pharma Vaccine Access for the Most At-Risk Governments (Community Ministries)**

The 2022 Mission and Ministry Budget for the Diocese of Atlanta was referred to the Finance Committee.

### **Elections**

Bishop Wright appointed Mr. Phillip Knight (St. Teresa's, Acworth), as Chief Teller, to certify the electronic election results.

Bishop Wright announced the names of the nominees for *The Standing Committee (lay and cleric)* and *The Board of Governors of Mikell Camp and Conference Center*, and *Trustee of the University of the South (lay)*. There were no nominations from the floor. Bishop Wright declared the nominations closed.

The Chair of Dispatch of Business gave instructions on balloting and elections. Virtual ballots were cast for elections as follows:

### **First Ballots Cast**

Ballots were cast for the following elections from among the nominees shown:

#### *Standing Committee, Lay, elect one*

- Julie Groce (Christ Church, Macon)
- Patricia Holloway (St. Teresa's, Acworth)
- Joseph Whidby (St. Francis, Macon)
- Robert Trim (Christ Church, Kennesaw)

#### *Standing Committee, Cleric, elect one*

- The Rev. Ben Wells (St. Francis, Macon)

The Rev. Jane Weston (St. Simon's, Conyers)  
The Rev. Elizabeth Shows Caffee (St. Luke's, Atlanta)

*Board of Governors, Mikell Camp and Conference Center, elect 2*

Noah Brewer (St. Margaret's, Carrollton)  
Emilie C. Crofford (St. Bartholomew's, Atlanta)  
Tscharner Dickerson (St. Bartholomew's, Atlanta)  
Kristi Farner (Emmanuel, Athens)  
Sarah High (St. Columba's, John's Creek)  
Jere Stokely (St. David's, Roswell)

*Lay Trustee of the University of the South, Sewanee, elect 1*

George Williamson, St. Martin in the Fields

*Diocesan Review Board*

Bishop Wright nominated The Rev. Bonnie Underwood (All Saints', Warner Robins) for a five-year term and Roger Schwenke (St. Gregory the Great, Athens) for a four-year term.

*Officers of the Diocese*

Bishop Wright nominated the following to serve as Diocesan Officers  
The Chancellor—Tom Christopher  
The Chancellor Emeritus --Richard Perry  
The Secretary—The Rev. Dick Game  
The Treasurer—Peggy Haskell-Farnham  
The Registrar—Richard Perry

**Results of First Ballots**

Bishop Wright announced that the following persons were elected:

*Standing Committee, Lay, elect one*

*Runoff*  
Julie Groce (Christ Church, Macon)  
Patricia Holloway (St. Teresa's, Acworth)

*Standing Committee, Cleric, elect one*

*Runoff*  
The Rev. Ben Wells (St. Francis, Macon)  
The Rev. Jane Weston (St. Simon's, Conyers)

*Board of Governors, Mikell Camp and Conference Center, elect 2*

*Elected*  
Noah Brewer (St. Margaret's, Carrollton)

*Runoff*  
Kristi Farner (Emmanuel, Athens)  
Sarah High (St. Columba's, John's Creek)

*Lay Trustee of the University of the South, Sewanee, elect 1*

*Elected*

George Williamson (St. Martin in the Fields, Atlanta)

*Diocesan Review Board*

*Elected*

The Rev. Bonnie Underwood (All Saints', Warner Robins) for a five-year term

Roger Schwenke (St. Gregory the Great, Athens) for a four-year term.

*Officers of the Diocese*

*Elected*

The Chancellor—Tom Christopher

The Chancellor Emeritus --Richard Perry

The Secretary—The Rev. Dick Game

The Treasurer—Peggy Haskell-Farnham

The Registrar—Richard Perry

### **Results of Second Ballots**

Bishop Wright announced that the following persons were elected:

*Standing Committee, Lay, elect one in runoff*

*Elected*

Julie Groce (Christ Church, Macon)

*Standing Committee, Cleric, elect one in runoff*

*Elected*

The Rev. Jane Weston (St. Simon's, Conyers)

*Board of Governors, Mikell Camp and Conference Center, elect 1 in runoff*

*Elected*

Kristi Farner (Emmanuel, Athens)

### **Committee Appointments**

Bishop Wright appointed the following to the Committee on Memorials and Courtesy

Resolutions: Chair: Deacon Letty Guevera-Cuenca (Christ Church, Norcross), The Rev. Fabio

Sotelo (St. Edwards & San Bedas, Lawrenceville & Atlanta), The Rev. Kirk LaFon, (St.

George's, Griffin), and Ann Canipe (St Benedict's, Smyrna).

### **Report of Canon 20 Appeals Board**

The Rev. Scott Kidd (Church of the Resurrection, Sautee-Nacoochee), Chair of the Canon 20

Appeals Board, reported on parishes' compliance with Diocesan Canon 20 for support of the

Diocese's mission and ministry for 2021: thirteen parishes appealed non-compliance in 2021

(compared to twelve in 2020). Granted in appeals in 2021: \$165,539 (compared to \$180,226 in

2020).

### **Presentation of Financial Report and Proposed Draft Budget**

Bishop Wright recognized Peggy Haskell Farnham, Treasurer, who presented the diocesan financial report (published separately).

David Culp, Chair of the Diocesan Budget Committee, presented the Proposed Draft Mission and Ministry Budget for 2022, noting that it will be considered by the Council Finance Committee, approved as the Draft Budget, and then referred to the Diocesan Executive Board for final adoption as the Budget for 2022.

### **Congregational Vitality Video**

Bishop Wright introduced a video on Congregational Vitality, which was then shown to Council.

### **Bishop's Address To Council**

At 10:59 am, Bishop Wright offered The Bishop's Address To Council, which ended at 11:20am.

### **Virtual Table Discussions**

Bishop Wright called on The Chair of Dispatch of Business to introduce virtual table discussions.

### **Video Address from The Rt. Rev. Victor Atta-Baffoe**

Bishop Wright introduced a video from The Rt. Rev. Victor Atta-Baffoe, Bishop of Cape Coast, which was shown to Council.

### **Council recessed for Committee Meetings**

Bishop Wright called on Easton Davis, Diocesan Staff, who made announcements regarding afternoon and evening events for Council.

Bishop Wright recognized The Chair of Dispatch of Business, who gave instructions about Committee Meetings that would commence at 2:00pm via zoom.

Bishop Wright recessed the Council for legislative committee meetings at approximately 11:57am.

## **COUNCIL IN RECESS**

### **SECOND DAY: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2021**

Bishop Wright called Council to Order at approximately 9:30am.

Bishop Wright recognized Holle Tubbs, who introduced the pre-recorded youth address and worship and facilitated a live conversation between Bishop Wright and three youth.

Bishop Wright recognized Chair of the Dispatch of Business who introduced a video of The Wright House (which was shown to Council), and introduced The Rev. Nikki Mathis (St. Gregory the Great, Athens) who spoke about the Wright House Foundation.

### **Legislative agenda**

Bishop Wright called on the Chair of the Dispatch of Business for reports from legislative committees, who then gave instruction on the procedures for speaking from the virtual floor. The reports were made as shown.

**Constitution and Canons:** Mr. Tom Christopher, moved adoption of Resolution C21-1, reading as follows:

#### **C21-1 Resolution to Amend the Canons to allow Deacons to be Elected to Standing Committee**

*Resolved*, that Section 1 of Canon 3 Of the Standing Committee be amended to read as follows: Section 1. The Standing Committee shall be composed of six members, three ~~from the priestly order~~ clergy and three ~~from the lay order~~. One clerical and one lay member shall be elected at each Annual Council for a term of three years. No member of the Standing Committee completing more than one half of a term shall be re-elected until after an interval of one year from completion of an elected term, except that a member elected to fill a vacancy and who has served less than one half of a term shall be eligible for election.

**Motion Tabled. Resolution C21-1 was tabled by motion of The Rev. Tripp Norris, (St. Columba's, Johns Creek), which was seconded and carried**

**Community Ministries:** The Rev. Jane Weston (St. Simon's, Conyers) moved adoption of Substitute Resolution R21-1, reading as follows:

#### **R21-1 Appointment of Members of the Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry**

*Resolved*, that the 115th Annual Council of the Diocese of Atlanta, meeting virtually on November 12-13, 2021, acknowledge the appropriateness for diocesan commissions, committees, and boards to be representative of the geographic diversity of the Diocese of Atlanta; And be it further

*Resolved* that the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning+ (LGBTQ+) Ministry of the Diocese of Atlanta currently lacks such geographic diversity; And be it further

*Resolved* that the issues and concerns of the LGBTQ+ communities exist throughout the entire diocese and not just in any single particular geographic area; And be it further

*Resolved* that The Episcopal Church, through various canons and resolutions over many decades, has declared that LGBTQ+ persons shall not be discriminated against because of their sexual orientation, gender, or gender expression/identity; And be it further

*Resolved* that full inclusion of and prevention of discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons, is best achieved through the engagement of as many members of our diocese as possible; And be it further

*Resolved* that, to promote geographic diversity, the commission be encouraged to make use of available technology to minimize travel required for members; And be it further

*Resolved* that the deans of each of the convocations of the Diocese of Atlanta, shall appoint one person from their respective convocations to serve on the Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry for a term of three (3) years. Appointees may be appointed to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms. The chair and secretary of the Commission shall not be counted among the appointees by the deans.

**Motion carried. Substitute Resolution R21-1 adopted.**

**Liturgy Committee:** The Rev. George Maxwell (Cathedral of St. Phillip, Atlanta) moved adoption of Resolution R21-2, reading as follows:

**R21-2 A Resolution to add the Right Reverend Barbara Clementine Harris to the Calendar of the Church Year.**

*Resolved*, that the 115th Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta commends to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church that March 13 be added to the Calendar of the Church Year in celebration of the life and witness of the Rt. Rev. Barbara Clementine Harris and that propers for this commemoration be included in the appropriate liturgical resources of the Church;

*Resolved*, that the Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to send this resolution to the Resolutions Committee of Province IV of the Church for consideration by the Provincial Synod schedule for April 27-29, 2022; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to send this resolution to the Secretary of General Convention as a duly authorized resolution of this Diocese.

**Motion carried. Resolution R21-2 adopted as amended.**

**Community Ministries:** The Rev. Jane Weston (St. Simons, Conyers) moved adoption of Substitute Resolution R21-3, reading as follows:

**R21-3 Resolution Urging Big Pharma Vaccine Access for the Most At-Risk Governments**

*Resolved*, that Council use effective communications and policy resources to prevail upon U.S. pharmaceutical companies to escalate Covid-19 vaccine access for the most at-risk governments during a global state of emergency that justifies (1) waiving standard intellectual property rights and (2) implementing transparency policies in contractual negotiations for vaccine sales and distribution; and be it further

*Resolved*, that Diocese of Atlanta congregations be encouraged to support the work of the Office of Government Relations and Episcopal Public Policy Network in promoting global vaccine access; and be it further

*Resolved*, that a Task Force be created by the Bishop to determine the best way to achieve these goals, and the Task Force shall present action item(s) to the Executive Board of the Diocese for their further action no later than March 31, 2022.

**Motion carried. Substitute Resolution R21-3 adopted.**

**Presentation of Diocesan Proposed Draft Budget for 2021**

The Chair of the Dispatch of Business called on David Culp, Chair of the Diocesan Budget Committee, for Budget presentation, who moved that the Proposed Draft Budget for 2022 be adopted in principle and be referred to the Diocesan Executive Board for final action.

**Motion carried. Draft Budget referred to Executive Board**

The Chair of Dispatch of Business announced the end of the legislative session.

**Recognitions**

Bishop Wright recognized the COVID Task Force for its work in 2020-2021.

Bishop Wright recognized Tom Quinn for his service to the Diocese.

Bishop Wright recognized Canon Bonnie Burgess for her years of service as Director of the Department of Finance of the Diocese.

**Report and Resolutions of Memorials and Courtesy Committee**

Deacon Letty Guevera-Cuenca, Chair, moved the following resolutions that were seconded.

**R21-4 Memorials and Courtesy Resolutions**

*Be it Resolved*, that this 115th Council of the Diocese of Atlanta expresses,

*Let it be Resolved*, that we express our gratitude to the Rt. Rev'd Robert C. Wright, Tenth Bishop of Atlanta, who continues to inspire each of us, in the call "to love Jesus horizontally;" for his leadership during the last 18 months of these exceptional circumstances, we're living worldwide.

*Let it be further Resolved*, that we extend our thanks to the Rt. Rev'd Don Wimberly and the Rt. Rev'd Paul Lambert for their dedicated and faithful leadership and service to our diocese.

*Be it Resolved*, that we express our gratitude to the Diocesan Staff, Chancellor, and Officers that made this Annual Council possible in these particular moments of changes and reinvention.



*Be it resolved*, that we send our appreciation and prayers to clergy and members of our Diocese who have retired or will be retiring by the end of the year: Bonnie Burgess, Canon for Finance and Administration, Tom Quinn with the Diocesan Foundation, Carolynne Williams, Dean Taylor, Elizabeth (Liz) Hendrick, Mary Erickson, Sam Buice; Deacon Lesley-Ann Drake, Executive Director of “Path to Shine”; and William "Bill" Harkins; and

*Let it be Resolved*, that we express our appreciation for the faithful clergy and laity who devoutly love, care, and serve Jesus Christ in parishes and worshipping communities throughout the Diocese of Atlanta.

*Be it resolved*, that we welcome the following clergy to our diocese: Kirk LaFon, Remington Slone, Pauline Samuel, Winnie Varghese, Brandon Mazingo, Reid Hamilton, Ann Barker, Richard (Rick) Tiff and,

*Be it resolved*, that we welcome all the new members of the clergy ordained in our Diocese, may God guide them in their ministries

*Be it resolved*, that we welcome Barbara Schroeder and Holle Tubbs as new members of the Bishop’s staff.

*Let it be resolved*, that we commend the following clergy to ministries in other Dioceses: Donna S. Mote, Licia Affer, Julia Rusling, Jorge Rosa, Hugh Grant, Keith Oglesby, Walter B. S. Salmon, Lori Cameron O’Riley, and,

*Be it resolved*, that we remember those who have lost their lives by an act of violence. We pray for those who have died, those who are impacted by their deaths, and for those who committed these acts. We also want to elevate a prayer for refugees and those who had to flee their countries to an unknown destination to start a new life facing discrimination and hostilities, may God guide them and help them and receive the love and care they need.

We also pray to express our gratitude for those working in the front line of the pandemic, ministers of the healing, comforting, and caring spirit as Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us.

*Let it be resolved*, that God may heal the wounds created by ideological differences, that have created separation between our communities based on discrimination, intolerance and violence.

*Let it be resolved that* recognizing this week was Veterans Day, we remember those who have served and continue to serve our country at home and abroad in the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

*Let it be resolved*, to invite our communities to take the coming Thanksgiving celebration as an invitation to join neighbors, friends as a family sharing the table in communion with our Baptismal Covenant, and develop a Christian vocation of love and service.

*Be it Resolved*, that we remember those members of this Council and our Diocese who died in the past year, especially, The Rev. Herschel Atkinson, The Rev. Carl Buice, The Rev. Joel Hudson, The Rev. Donald Black, The Rev. James Curtis, The Rev. Kirk Lee, The Rev. Richard “Dan” Brigham, Jack William Wagner, father of The Rev. David Wagner, Deacon Lucy Martínez, Jack Minett, youth member and acolyte at Christ Church, Macon, Alberto Baldi, father of The Rev. Licia Affer, and Agnes Parker, widow of The Rev. Nathaniel “Nat” Parker.

*Be it Resolved*, we remember and pray for all those who were called to God's presence during the pandemic due to covid-19. We also pray for their families and friends.

**Motion carried. Resolution adopted.**

Bishop Wright offered prayer for the departed persons.

**Closing announcements and adjournment**

Bishop Wright gave his recognition and thanks to all who assisted in the 115<sup>th</sup> Council.

Bishop Wright introduced the video *Encouragement*, which was showed to Council.

Bishop Wright adjourned the Council *sine die* at around noon until November 11 and 12, 2022.

Bishop Wright blessed the participants at Council prior to their departure.

**Submitted by The Rev. Dick Game, Secretary**