

# ***DIOCESE OF WESTERN MICHIGAN***

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT TO DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

**2009**



The Standing Committee consists of eight elected members, four clerical and four lay. The Standing Committee serves as the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese in the absence of a bishop. It serves as the bishop's council of advice. The Standing Committee is requested to give consent for all bishops elected in the Episcopal Church. It recommends persons for ordination. It gives the bishop advice and consent on the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of any property held by a congregation or the diocese. It gives the bishop advice and consent as to any judicial sentence given to a clergy person or concurs in allowing a clergy person to cease functioning as a member of the clergy. It investigates and reports to the bishop on the charge that a deacon or priest has abandoned the Episcopal Church.

The Standing Committee meets monthly in Grand Rapids and undertakes all the business as is presented. Time is set aside each meeting for bible study to ensure our work is gospel centered.

These are some of the highlights of the work and issues addressed during this year:

- Requests for 2 candidates to the priesthood and 2 to postulancy.
- All clergy depositions and inhibitions throughout the National Church are heard along with the request for consents to election for all Bishops.
- Property issues from seven parishes have been handled. At the request of the Standing Committee, Wes Hackett, Grand Valley Deanery, undertook the beginning of a large project to ensure the Diocese has all the deeds for all Episcopal property and at this time has ensured the Grand valley Deanery has completed this work and is working on addressing the mechanism for this in the other Deaneries.
- A final report of the Mutual Ministry Review for Learning (MMRL) was provided to Executive Council with a prioritized action plan in the areas of Staffing, Communication, Relationship Building/Connectedness within the Diocese, Regenerating the Diocesan Consulting Team and Revising the Deanery Structure.

- Ongoing meetings have occurred with representatives from Commission on Ministry and Standing Committee to clarify roles and expectations in the steps for postulancy and candidacy and a new document will be available to clarify all steps and requirements.
- The Bishop took his Sabbatical time as planned during September, October and November, 2008 and he retained ecclesiastical authority during this time.
- After thorough investigation in February 2009 the Standing Committee advised the Bishop that St. James' Parish, Albion be declared a "distressed parish". With the Bishop's decision and unanimous approval by the Standing Committee, Canon 14 was invoked in March 2009. An action plan has been presented to the parish in order for the Diocese and the parish to work together towards a healthy future.

Sincere thanks to all members of Standing Committee: Mike Fedewa, Mary Perrin, Knute Jacobson, David Meyers, Henry Fulton, Sarah Loomis and Anne Davidson.

Respectfully submitted,

**Netty Cove**

Netty Cove, President