

Present were Bishop Carol Gallagher, Ray Brown, Steve DeHart, Donna Gleaves, Glen Gleaves, and Marcia Lauzon. Participating by phone were Dorcie Dvarshkis, Roxanne Klingensmith, Gary Waddingham, and Joan Yetter.

Bishop Carol opened the meeting with prayer. Special mention was made of those on Montana reservations suffering from the blizzards, and those in the cities suffering from addictions.

Correction to previous notes: correct spelling is Togendowagan. The notes of 1/17/18 were approved with that correction.

### Today's Agenda

- 1 - Montana State Prison outreach
- 2 - Wintertalk report
- 3 - Blackfeet Tribe needs
- 4 - Increasing diocesan awareness
- 5 - Bishop Carol's time at Holy Spirit on April 14-15
- 6 - Crafting a liturgy

### Montana State Prison Outreach — Roxanne Klingensmith

- Roxanne has been providing care at the prison for a long time. She has a contact there, Robert Athen Bennet, a Lakota person who expertly interfaces Christian and Native spiritualities.
- Roxanne has obtained permission for Bishop Carol to visit at the prison.
- Deacon Doug Anderson has joined the board of the ELCA group Freedom In Christ. Doug has been doing prison ministry a long time.
- Sadly, the Montana State Prison staff can be somewhat difficult to deal with about spiritual needs of Native inmates. Ray asked if anyone has spoken to the Coordinator of Indian Affairs this. Roxanne will pursue this. Ray said the Coordinator is attached to the governor's office and very influential.

### Wintertalk - Joan Yetter

- Joan attended this inter-tribal group of Native leaders in the Episcopal Church. This was a three-day conference, plus two travel days. One day was spent at the nearby Chickasaw Cultural Center.
- Most attendees were from the Western U.S.; there were also people from elsewhere in the States, and a native bishop from New Zealand. There were four bishops present. The experience was "enlightening, overwhelming, and prayerful."
- Most of the time was personal sharing. Joan learned of some new resources. One is the First People's Theology Journal (found online). There are wonderful articles written by indigenous people which synthesize Christianity and a Native perspective. Joan recommends this highly. Bishop Carol said this is a product of the Indigenous Theological Training Institute; she was previously on the board the journal.
- Books recommended:  
*Coming Full Circle: Constructing Native Christian Theology*, by Steve Charleston  
*A Disciple's Prayer Book* by Forward Movement.  
This is available online, at this link:  
<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/library/document/disciples-prayer-book>

- Also recommended are *The Spirit of the Circle* posters and workbook, through Forward Movement. These were acquired by the most recent Deacons' School class as part of their capstone project, and the materials are in the diocesan office.
- It was very positive to learn of several young native people in seminaries who are involved in their home dioceses. We need to find more native people who are hearing that call.
- We learned the dates for Wintertalk very late this year. Bishop Carol hopes to get notice earlier next year.

#### Blackfeet Nation emergency

Extreme weather is causing real hardship on the Blackfeet Reservation. Roads cleared one day are completely blocked and closed the next. The Blackfeet Indian boys basketball team has been unable to return home for about six or seven weeks. Food, water, and other needs are urgent.

- Governor Bullock has declared a state of emergency.
- Ray notes there was a good article yesterday in Helena Independent Record. According to the article, snowmobile traffic is about all that is available. Schools are closed.
- Both our bishops have sent substantial donations.
- There are options for online donations.
- The VA is collecting nonperishable food, baby supplies, cases of bottled water, and toiletry items, but no cash, checks or gift cards. The National Guard will arrange transportation for items collected by the VA.
- The Helena Indian Alliance, 501 Euclid Avenue (Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:00) will accept donations.
- The group Farm Hands Nourish the Flathead takes donations through this website:  
<http://nourishtheflathead.or/donate/>
- The Blackfeet Food Pantry of the Blackfeet Nation:  
P.O. Box 3003  
Browning MT 59417  
406-228-7340
- The Togendowagan Society has pledged \$500. They challenge every parish in the diocese to give the same.
- After some discussion, it was decided to ask the parishes to contribute directly to the diocese, which will work with Togendowagan to find the best way to get support to the Blackfeet Tribe.
- This is an opportunity for the diocese to take the lead. Ray said our message should be "we love you and we're here to serve you."

#### Increasing diocesan awareness

- Bishop Carol said there is very limited understanding of native life among non-natives. Seminaries don't teach about this.
- Joan has submitted an article for diocesan newsletter.
- Bill Felton has been putting regular articles in St. Peter's newsletter, which is sent to the diocesan distribution list. Donna will send Bill's article to our committee.
- This summer the group Yellowstone Forever will have a three-day seminar with Lakota storytellers. Glen will send info to the committee, although this is probably already full. Blackfeet teachers also do this in the summer in Glacier.

### Bishop Carol's visit to Holy Spirit

- Dorcie sends thanks to Jill Sallin for the Native Ministry page on the diocesan website
- Bishop Carol will be in Missoula on April 14-15. The goal is to come up with a model to be shared with other churches on sharing about native issues. Such as, "If you have an hour, here's a suggested format; if you have an evening here's a format. "
- On Saturday April 15, they will have a 5:30 soup-and-bread meal, review the national church video, and talk around the circle about what repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery means to us. Current issues with natives and opportunities for parishioners to volunteer locally will also be discussed.
- Between Sunday services, there will be a 15 minute presentation that also references the Doctrine Resolution that we passed, to promote discussion.
- Bishop Carol is hoping to have an outline to share afterwards.
- If anyone is interested, please attend. Let Dorcie know if you need a place to stay. Roxanne asked that information about this be sent to all the deacons.

### Alternative liturgies

- One option for crafting an educational liturgy would be to adapt what the Togendowagan Society already has. Bishop Carol will soon attend the UN Commission on the Status of Women, at which part of this liturgy will be used.
- The church has little exposure to really well-honed native liturgies. The best option is something that could be used in a variety of ways, and that will educate through prayer. Donna has the Togendowagan Society service bulletin and will send out copies to our committee.
- One or several versions of Prayers of the People would be good. Dorcie and Marcia will both write sample Prayers of the People, sending copies to Roxanne.
- Joan has a contact in Pocatello Idaho, Ron Braman, who has a native liturgy. She will ask for a copy.
- Bishop Brookhart has said that the Togendowagan liturgy is not to be used by non-natives who lack understanding of it.
- Our (future) liturgy could be used to replace Columbus Day with Native Day at diocesan Convention,. Prayers of the People could be used all month or just on a designated day.
- The "Season of Creation" is also in the fall.
- Ray asked where our clergy fit in: are they all onboard? Have we done any training of them? Could something be undertaken at Clergy Conference? Bishop Carol responded that she believes they are committed to our goals, but there remains a lack of awareness about the breadth and depth of issues and needs. She will put together a sheet of resources for clergy and share it at Clergy Conference.
- Ray notes that there were no questions about native ministry or having Bishop Carol's continued ministry here in the new survey sent out by the Bishop Search Committee, and this is of concern.
- Bishop Carol reminded us that most Montana women in crisis are native women.
- Steve raised the issue of the role of deacons in taking social justice issues to the church. Roxanne would like regular regional gatherings of deacons, where this and other issues could be discussed.

Tasks to accomplish

1. Dorcie & Marcia to prepare drafts of alternative POP.
2. Roxanne will contact the state Director of Indian Affairs about spiritual needs of natives in prison.
3. Joan will contact her friend in Pocatello for a copy of their native liturgy.
4. Donna will send the Togendowagan liturgy copy out to this committee
5. Bishop Carol will prepare a sheet of resources for clergy and distribute it at Clergy Conference.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Friday, April 13, from 11:00-3:00, at Diocese House.

Notes by Marcia Lauzon