

Attending at Diocese House were Bishop Carol Gallagher, Ray Brown, Donna Gleaves, Glen Gleaves, Roxanne Klingensmith, Marcia Lauzon, and John Heilman, a parishioner from St. James in Bozeman. Attending by phone were Dorcie Dvarshkis, Bill Felton, Joan Yetter, and Gary Waddingham. Dean Scott Anderson arrived after the meeting had started.

Bishop Carol opened the meeting with prayer. Introductions were made and updates given.

Change is coming

- Ray Brown and Bill Felton are concerned with Togendowagan's continuation, with Bishop Carol leaving, and Bill relocating to Post Falls, Idaho. Bill will come to services as long as the roads are passable. Without a native spiritual leader, it will be difficult for the group to continue. There is no identified spiritual leader to succeed Bill.
- Bishop Carol will leave our diocese at the end of October. As announced by letter earlier this month, this follows national canons, which require an Assistant Bishop to step down when the Ordinary retires. She will be serving as a regional canon in the Diocese of Massachusetts.
- Scott said he is here to learn and to support the work of this group.

Agenda

1. Togendowagan
2. Native-focused liturgy
3. Future Council meetings
4. Legislative concerns

1. Togendowagan

- Togendowagan shuts down for the summer because of pow-wow season. Services will resume next month. There are no native services in the Couer d'Alene area yet; Bill would like to work on that over the winter.
- The Last Chance Pow-wow is this coming weekend and the Society drum will be there; any of us are invited to sit at the drum. Those who can meet Friday at the pow-wow can meet there. Grand Entry is at 7:00 p.m.
- Friday morning they will drum for the Helena schoolchildren at the fairgrounds.
- Regarding a new spiritual leader for Togendowagan; Bill says that a member of the drum circle, Darcy O'Dell, would be well-suited, but transportation issues would need to be solved.

2. Native-focused liturgy

- Marcia and Carol introduced the Prayers of the People, which Marcia wrote and Bishop Brookhart has approved.
- Terms familiar to natives are used. The prayers also aim to not use anything that would be too unfamiliar to non-native parishioners. The prayers focus on our shared lives as people who belong to and love Montana, and include a confession that we have not understood each other and need to work on being better neighbors.
- Notes on language and terms:
 - ★ "Grandfather" is a term for the deity that is often used by natives.
 - ★ Honoring the ancestors (of ourselves, our church, our nation) is important.
 - ★ The term "walked on" for those who have died.
 - ★ The mention of the "clean and healthful environment" mandated by the Montana Constitution.
 - ★ "Walking the Good Road" as living in a way pleasing to the Creator.
- Carol will write an introduction to the prayers, which will explain this resource, and confirm Bishop Brookhart's endorsement, and their suggested use from this coming Sunday, which is Native American Sunday, until Advent.

3. Future Council meetings

- After some discussion it was agreed that Ray and Marcia will work together to organize meetings. Marcia will do scheduling, Ray will provide spiritual support.
- Upcoming meetings scheduled:
October: Tuesday, 10/16, 11:00 - 2:00.
November: Tuesday, 11/20, 11:00 - 2:00.
- Bishop Carol will be leaving Montana on October 24, so we will have one more meeting with her.
- With a new bishop coming, support for native issues will be critical. This is an opportunity to further raise the importance of support for natives. Carol noted that of all the dioceses, we have the largest population of natives in the church. (We have 11-12% here, and it's less everywhere else.)
- Ray questioned what support will we get from national church. Carol said there are grants we should apply for and partnerships we should pursue. We need to look into those.

4. Legislative concerns

Issues we might bring either to our state legislature (next January), or to our national representatives at any time include:

- Recognition of the Little Shell Tribe.
- Domestic violence against native women; currently a very visible issue.
Carol mentioned that native girls are culturally more vulnerable to trafficking. As a nation, we need to face the issue of "if this was really severe, it would have been reported." Her top concern is that we may seem to be saying to native youth, "no one will listen to you if you have a problem."
- Ray said that the most pressing current issue among native people is no longer the Doctrine of Discovery, but is now focused on current political assaults on native sovereignty, and on missing and murdered native women.

Future of our group - continued

- Roxanne said we need to narrow our focus. Marcia agreed and suggested that a start would be for us to pray together regularly. Carol said if we pray together, the mission will come. She suggested using the Disciples Prayer Book, and creating a special prayer list for this group, which would mention nations and tribes of Montana, and the local Indian alliances. Perhaps just praying the opening prayer to one of the services daily, using that prayer list.
- Carol said this group started without a defined goal. For native people, being in relationship was more important than a stated goal. Part of the mission for her has always been support for Togendowagan. Her second goal was to educate the diocese and encourage the ministry. It only became clear later that the relationship with the cathedral was fractured, and that we needed to rebuild trust.
- Ray asked how this committee going to participate in the bishop search, and respond to our new bishop. We need a short list of specific questions to ask the bishop candidates. It is important to have Togendowagan people part of formulating those questions.
- Ray urged all council members to read *Coming Full Circle*. Carol will secure copies and have them at the next meeting for anyone who doesn't have one.
- The diocesan profile is done, and it includes Togendowagan and native ministries. The profile goes live next week.
- Carol said it may seem what we have done is small, but we are getting recognition from people around the state who want to do more. This is a big change from where we started.

Continuing education

After some discussion, it was agreed we should pursue using The Spirit of the Circle for study groups.

- Carol is willing to lead a workshop on Spirit of the Circle at convention.
- Carol and Joan will work on creating an online study group for this winter, perhaps using a platform such as Zoom. Carol said she can participate in this from anywhere, and it would help to keep our momentum going. Joan noted it would also keep folks engaged while we are between bishops.
- Roxanne noted that the first step for diaconal action is always education.

Before the next meeting

- Carol will get in touch with Valerie Webster about legislative issues.
- Ray will ask Tim Coulter of the Indian Law Resource Center, to our next meeting.
- Anyone who plans to attend the Last Chance Pow-wow, meet at the drum on Friday by 6:30.

Reminder: Our next meeting (and the last with Bishop Carol present)
will be Tuesday, October 16, 11:00- 2:00.