

## Standing Committee Report to 2013 Convention

Martha A. Fagley, President

October 19, 2013

### Members:

Martha A. Fagley, President

Elinor Normand, Secretary

The Rev. Susan Slaughter

The Rev. Curt Norman

The Rev. Bill Stanford

Norm Snyder

The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth welcomed our new members, and newly appointed Provisional Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Rayford B. High, Jr. Bishop High and the Standing Committee signed a Letter of Agreement for a one-year term and our new members became parties to our ongoing lawsuit. Thus, our year together began.

Before the end of November, the Rt. Rev. F. Clayton Matthews of the Presiding Bishop's office contacted us to announce that the Reference Panel referred our Title IV charges against seven bishops in the Episcopal Church who signed an Amicus Curie Brief in the Supreme Court of Texas in opposition to The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth and The Episcopal Church (IV.6.Sec.8) to Conciliation at the Roslyn Conference Center in Richmond, VA on January 8-9, 2013. The Rev. Janet Waggoner was appointed by the Presiding Bishop as our advisor. The Standing Committee chose The Rev. David Madison (past President), Martha Fagley (President) and Chancellor Kathleen Wells to represent us at that meeting. We participated in multiple conference calls and meetings with past and present Standing Committee members, Bishops High and Ohl in preparation for this Conciliation. Our communications continued throughout the Conciliation and for weeks following, as we negotiated the final Accord. The final Accord was executed in late February 2013 and approved by the Presiding Bishop soon afterwards.

We faithfully executed our canonical duties in other areas. We began the practice of calling each bishop-elect or the chairperson of the Bishop's Selection Committee to exercise our rights to hold each other accountable in our churches. We participated in the consent process of other Dioceses electing Bishops (Eau Claire, Southwest Virginia, New Jersey, Western Michigan, North Carolina, Massachusetts, and Maryland); and provided our consent to the reunion of the Diocese of Quincy with the Diocese of Chicago.

The Standing Committee heard from representatives of the Commission on Ministry outlining the extensive and complicated ordination process for candidates in our Diocese. We participated in the discernment process for two persons seeking ordination. We received regular updates from our Chancellors on the legal issues in the Diocese and continued to hear and prepare for transition as we waited for the Texas Supreme Court's decision. Bob Schorr, a church planter from the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, spoke to us and offered his expertise on church planting.

We served as a Council of Advice to Bishop High in discussions on issues related to current and future congregations and missions, mission strategy, structure, and reunification. We received reports and updates on building damage to St. Luke's-in-the-Meadow, Fort Worth, due to an auto

accident; tornado damage in the Granbury area including updates on the contributions to the Granbury Tornado Relief Fund and the distribution of those funds.

On August 31, a decision was handed down by the Texas Supreme Court. At our September meeting, we invited the past and present members of the Corporation, Endowment Fund and Standing Committee named in the litigation to confer with our legal team. We affirmed our combined desires to whole-heartedly continue our legal efforts to reclaim our property and funds.

The Standing Committee put the formation of the Bishop Search Committee on hold for this past year to further refine the infrastructure of our diocese, to more clearly identify who we are, and who we plan to become. We are thankful that Bishop High has agreed to continue as our Provisional Bishop for another year and move us to our goal of calling our own Bishop Diocesan.

We have faithfully executed the duties with which we have been charged.

Personally, I have been privileged and blessed to serve with five very faithful and dedicated Episcopal leaders on this Committee. Each has provided prayerful, deliberate discernment and dedicated ministry to God and this Diocese fulfilling their duties on the Standing Committee. Please continue to keep the work of the Standing Committee in your prayers as they begin another year of ministry.

This has been a year of transition from waiting to re-enter our buildings to realizing how that has held us back. We will continue our legal battles, but we are ready for the future that is now. This Standing Committee charges our new Standing Committee and everyone in this Diocese to focus on that future. Always be prayerful and generous. Be courageous. Move forward to grow our current congregations and create new ones. Form and encourage new leaders. Reimagine and renew our Diocese without fear. Move forward.

A Reading from the Book of Joshua

*I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” - Joshua 1:9*

The Word of the Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha A. Fagley  
President