

Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions

Submitted by John and Carol Pettipher

Bishop Wayne Hougland, highly likely to be Provisional Bishop of our Diocese – exciting opportunity for Diocese of Eastern, Western Michigan, our Episcopal church & each of us!

As we said in our St. Jude's October Beacon, we attended our Diocese 2017 Annual Convention in Bay City, where Bishop Hougland was invited by our Diocese to be Keynote Speaker, and the Adaptive Leadership Workshop Leader and presenter with much quality time for Q & A about the present and future of our Episcopal Church and youth. God is calling Bishop Hougland to be the next Bishop of the Diocese of Great Lakes Episcopal, like he was called to be Bishop of the Diocese of Western Michigan 5 years ago in 2013, in our opinion. At our Diocesan Annual Convention October 2018, we attended our Diocese voted overwhelmingly (65%) for Bishop Hougland (Option 3). The following information is from the www.eastmich.org and www.edwm.org websites. The information is an important high-level summary of what all of us and our Diocese have been discerning and deciding over the last 18 months since June 2017. *The information represents an exciting framework, roadmap, and process for our future together with Bishop Hougland and Western Michigan (you can read/reference next 3-5 years)!!!*

John & Carol Pettipher

Decisions & Next Steps Near-Term (3-5 Years) & Long-Term (10-20 Years) Episcopal Diocese of Eastern & Western Michigan

1 of 2 (Source: www.Eastmich.org The Feast Online 10/31/2018)

The 24th Diocesan Convention chooses next steps in Episcopal Transition Eastern Michigan invites Western Michigan to conversation

At last weekend's diocesan convention (10-27-2018), the delegates and clergy determined the next steps in our Episcopal transition, following last year's resignation of our second bishop, the Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley.

The convention cast 37 (22%) votes for Option 1 (Move forward with a search process and election of the next bishop), 23 (13%) votes for Option 2 (search for and nominate a Bishop Provisional to serve 3-5 year as we continue conversations with the Diocese of Western Michigan and around sustainability), and 110 (65%) votes for Option 3, crossing the 60% supermajority threshold for a decision set by the Standing Committee on the first ballot. --1st and only ballot.

Option 3 calls for the Standing Committee to nominate the Rt. Rev. Wayne Hougland, Jr., Bishop of Western Michigan, pending the consent of the Standing Committee in Western Michigan, to serve as bishop provisional in Eastern Michigan for a period of 3-5 years as we have intentional conversations about the sharing of resources and deeper relationship. Western Michigan will have a series of gatherings in the spring where they will take up this issue and consider their consent.

- Visit www.eastmich.org/convention to read the text of Resolution #3/Option #3.
- Visit eastmich.org/bishop-transition to access all documents and information from throughout our transition process.
- Visit this link to read Bishop Hougland's message to Western Michigan following the vote in Eastern Michigan.



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Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions (continued)

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Decisions & Next Steps Near-Term (3-5 Years) & Long-Term (10-20 Years) **Episcopal Diocese of Eastern & Western Michigan**

2 of 2 (Source: www.edwm.org)

The Diocese of Eastern Michigan has voted to reach out in partnership.



The Episcopal Diocese *of Western Michigan*

To the People of the Diocese of Western Michigan,

At their diocesan convention today, the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan voted to ask the people of Western Michigan for our consent to the nomination and election of me to serve as Bishop Provisional in our neighboring diocese.

This Spring at our Bishop's Workshops, we will take up this question - do we wish to enter this period of mutual discernment with the Diocese of Eastern Michigan around shared resources and ministries? How might we imagine the Episcopal Church to be in 5, 10, 20 years and how might we see our relationships across the state in that? And how might the sharing of a bishop help us be more intentional in those conversations?

The three Bishop Workshop days will take place:

- February 23 - Southern Region – St. Luke's, Kalamazoo
- March 2 - Central Region – St. Andrew's, GR
- March 30 - Northern Region – Grace, Traverse City

Registration information will be available later this Winter. Please save the date and plan to attend and add your voice to the discussion.

We continue to be grateful for our relationships with our neighboring dioceses. We do very great work together already and will continue to do so no matter the direction we choose. I am excitedly looking forward to working together to help Michigan see that the grace, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God is indeed near.

I continue to be honored to be your bishop as we take on the important work of finding what it means to be a disciple in our little cul-de-sac of the Lower Peninsula.

May the blessing of God Almighty be with us now and always,

The Rt. Rev. Wayne M. Hougland, Jr.
IX Bishop,
The Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan

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Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions (continued)

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Report on Eastern & Western Michigan Collaborative Meeting St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Flint

1 of 2 (Source: www.eastmich.org)

Participants:

Eastern Michigan

- The Rt. Rev. Cate Waynick
- The Rev. Dan Scheid, SC President
- The Rev. Ken Hitch, Diocesan Council
- Stephanie King, Standing Committee

Western Michigan

- The Rt. Rev. Wayne M. Hougland, Jr.
- The Rev. Valerie Ambrose, SC President
- The Rev. Linnea Stifler, Diocesan Council
- Joanie Smith, Diocesan Council

and Katie Forsyth, Canon for Evangelism and Networking for the two dioceses.

The Questions on the Table:

- What will the Episcopal Church in the lower peninsula look like in 10 years? 20 years?
- What new thing might God be calling us to do?
- In the midst of Episcopal transition in Eastern Michigan, might now be a time to undergo a dedicated process to consider juncture?
- How can we continue to collaborate and deepen our relationship across diocesan lines?

Core Understandings and Context:

- We feel a “longing for relationship” regardless of financial need.
- Shared sense that continuing on in separate ministry without change is not a sustainable model for the future of the Episcopal Church in this place.
- Both leaderships have voiced consideration of coming together to their diocesan communities in some way – Bishop Ousley to clergy community, diocesan convention. Bishop Hougland in conversation with congregations during parish visitations.

Eastern Michigan

- 10 months into Episcopal Transition.
- Bishop Cate was elected as Bishop Provisional part-time for one year in October 2017.
- Held five transition focused self-study gatherings - regionally and for clergy. Will report out in June 2018.
- Long-term, is financially unsustainable at current staffing and program levels, including provision for a full-time diocesan bishop.

Western Michigan

- In the process of implementing extensive restructuring from deanery system to three regions, led by staff.
- Bishop Hougland was elected in 2013 and expects to retire in approximately 10 years.
- Bishop Hougland is interested in serving as Bishop Provisional for Eastern Michigan, should a process for deepened relationship be explored.

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Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions (continued)

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Report on Eastern & Western Michigan Collaborative Meeting

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Flint

2 of 2 (Source: www.eastmich.org)

Shared Ministries

Currently Practiced:

- The Academy for Vocational Leadership: A three-year program of local formation for priests (Eastern Michigan only) and deacons
- The Diocesan Church Development Institute: A two-year development program to coach and resource congregations for ministry in their local contexts
- The Canon for Networking and Evangelism: In March 2018, the two dioceses began to share a staff member to oversee communications, evangelism, and networking
- Youth Ministry: The dioceses collaborate and invite participants to almost all youth events and trainings across diocesan lines. Examples include Happening, The Gathering, the Progressive Youth Mission Trip.
- The DREAM Project: The Dominican Republic and Episcopal churches in all of lower Michigan is the shared project with the Dominican Development Group to send short-term mission teams to the Dominican Republic.
- Lower Peninsula Diversity Taskforce
- The Disciplinary Board: The three lower peninsula dioceses share a board to handle all clergy discipline and Title IV matters
- Licensing: Clergy licensed in any diocese in Michigan may serve any congregation in Michigan.
- Bishops speaking together on issues of social justice, advocacy: For example - Marriage Equality, Enbridge Pipeline 5
- AMEN Conference: Annual conference for clergy from all Michigan dioceses on Mackinac Island

Anticipated & to be Explored:

- Revival to be led by The Episcopal Church staff in Fall 2019
- Clergy Retreat - plan to share in May 2019
- Invite, Welcome, Connect Training via DCDI in 2019
- Common presence and reporting from General Convention 2018
- Common print magazine in Fall 2018
- Relationship between deputations to the General Convention
- Clergy Continuing Education - one day workshops on different areas of ministry
- Gathering Standing Committees, Diocesan Councils, Staffs for retreat
- Discernment process and shared Commission on Ministry
- More youth programs
- Camp and Retreat Ministry for children and adults
- Young Adult Ministry
- Additional staff sharing
- What else might we share?

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Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions (continued)

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Summary of Focus Groups, Diocese of Eastern Michigan Discerning Mission & Ministry in Diocese of Eastern Michigan Five (5) Self-Study Gatherings Winter 2018 (January – March)

Questions 1 and 2: Success, miracle, and joy in the last 5-10 years and best personal experience in the diocese.

- Camp Chickagami (said in all 5 focus groups)
- Coppage Gordon Academy (said in all 5 focus groups)
- Communication/ The feast/ Multit-media
- Inclusion, Justice, Outreach
- Transition process from + Todd to +Cate
- Inter-diocesan connections and collaboration, collaboration with other dioceses, grass roots, sense of potential and movement.
- Welcoming, hospitality, invitation to join/serve and lead.
- Diocesan Convention and Diocesan Events.

Questions 3 and 4: Not done well enough, could have done better in last 5-10 years, opportunities missed, passed us by in last 5-10 years.

- Evangelism, deepening our relationship with God and each other, spiritual growth, faith formation, listening/dialogue and sharing our stories.
- Stewardship and communication/transparency of finances.
- Communication and more connection between diocese/people and “up north” feeling disconnect with the diocesan office.
- Dropping the convocation mode, becoming more centralized

Questions 5 and 6: What do you want in the next 5-10 years and what needs to be changed and what personal commitments will you give,

- Raising up young people, serving youth
- Improved communications - diocese to parish, parish to parish
- Cross diocese cooperation, cross parish information sharing, reconfigure diocese and borders, community partnerships
- Financial planning accountability and reporting/stewardship
- Be open to the Spirit, remove walls and barriers, let go of fear and pride, step out in faith not fear, pray and encourage, faith sharing testimonies, listen better, storytelling, discernment, less resistance to change, joy.

What we gain with Bishop Houglund and a long-term discernment process with Western Michigan

(St. Jude's October 2018 Beacon)

1. Diocesan of Eastern Michigan, in collaboration with Diocese of Western Michigan, *creates opportunities for shared ministries* – and *opportunities to reduce and consolidate substantial costs* – \$500,000 lower estimated annual costs (\$2.5 million over 5 years).
2. **Gain** an *outstanding Bishop* – and fast, in October 2019.
3. **Gain** a *present Michigan Bishop* who has been in Michigan for 5 years since becoming *Bishop of the Diocese of Western Michigan* in 2013.

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Eastern & Western Michigan Dioceses Transitions (continued)

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4. **Gain** a Michigan Bishop who has been leading the restructuring of a sister Michigan diocese (Diocese of Western Michigan) he started considering restructuring with other diocesan leadership over the last several years. Michigan Bishop Houglund has an “in process” proven/proving track record of very positively restructuring a sister Michigan diocese. Our two (2) dioceses have many similarities, including geography, population, demographics, rural-city diversities, number of churches and church members, ministries, \$1.5 million annual budgets, etc. We likely also have some complementary differences that would be collaboratively and synergistically enhanced through an “asset mapping” process.

5. **Gain** an outstanding, knowledgeable, experienced, and very talented, creative, charismatic, personable, positive, professional and prime-of-his-career Episcopal Bishop -- with strong leadership, strategic planning, problem-solving, organizational structure, and management skills, based on Bishop Houglund’s lifetime secular and spiritual formation -- and his excellent leadership for the last 5 years of the Diocese of Western Michigan.

6. **Bishop Houglund is well recognized for his strong leadership skills by our Episcopal Church.**

7. **Gain** a great Diocese of Western Michigan website www.edwm.org , that Katie Forsyth and other leaders from our Diocese of Eastern Michigan www.eastmich.org will make even better!

8. **Opportunity to potentially create a larger and more valuable missions and ministries-based** Great Lakes Episcopal Diocese.

NEWS & UPDATES

Western Michigan Team at D.L.I. in Kanuga

EDWM one of [ONLY!] 11 invited [from throughout The Episcopal Church U.S.A.] to Diocesan Leadership Initiative

Bishop Houglund, Canon Val Ambrose, and Canon Katie Forsyth attended the Diocesan Leadership Initiative at Kanuga Camp and Conference Center last week at the invitation of the Episcopal Church Fellowship, the Lilli Foundation, and the Episcopal Church.

Western Michigan was one of [only] eleven dioceses [from throughout The Episcopal Church U.S.A.] invited to participate in a gathering of “innovative, creative, and entrepreneurial” dioceses of the church. The three-day long initiative consisted of training around visioning and change as well as collaborative time amongst the dioceses and church-wide staff.

