

**PPEAT meeting notes**  
**6:00 PM - 8 September 2020**  
**VIA ZOOM**

Present: Connie Bingham, Sarah Braik, Kathy Coughlan, John Hennessy, Mary Linneman, Ted Poland, Barbara Ryland

**Diocesan and Legislative Updates**

John Hennessy reported that there are no substantive legislative updates right now since the Legislature is still adjourned due to COVID.

- He added that he wouldn't make any predictions about the outcome of the fall election in this state.
- There are, however, over 300 pieces of legislation that probably won't get addressed this year. If the Legislature does reconvene it would probably only be for COVID-related issues. These other pieces of legislation might be reintroduced in January.

On the Diocesan front:

- The Poor People's campaign has had to move to a virtual format. The Diocese remains committed to supporting it.
- Bp. Brown has appointed a new [Justice Commission](#) that will be responsible for coordinating Maine Episcopal Network for Justice (MENJ), the Committee on Indian Relations (CIR), Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF), and racial justice matters. Eleanor Prior has been appointed Chair of this Commission. And the whole should be authorized at Diocesan Convention this year.
  - The new Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri has created an anti-racism [covenant](#) that includes a lament for past sins and considers how to move forward. Our new Justice Commission is hoping to use this here in Maine.
  - We had a good discussion of what this Commission means for how the Diocese will do its work
- The carbon offset program our committee recommended for the Diocese last year came about after Convention, so was limited to Loring House. Liz reworked the proposal into a draft resolution (see attached) to go before Diocesan convention.
- The solar energy for churches initiative has resumed, following a time of comparative inaction due to COVID. Robert Stoddard of St Alban's is working with Diocese on this. The original idea of forming a dedicated 501(c)3 non-profit has been abandoned due to excessive complications. John has been approached by a new organization called Next Amp about this effort. So far, about 100 parishes/congregations have expressed interest in signing onto this via a simple contract.
- Farmers in Aroostook County have contacted the Diocese again about their having more food to distribute. The previous effort at distributing extra food had disappointing results despite the Diocese engaging in major publicity. This next distribution will be considerably smaller.
- The Sacred Ground program is proving quite popular with 32 people signing up from across the Diocese.
  - Kathy Coughlan is doing the program with her St. Petersburg FL parish and highly recommends it.

## **Voter Registration**

Mary Linneman noted that her interest in working on voter registration came out of Sacred Ground.

- One thing some people are doing is sending around postcards reminding people to vote.
- A few people in the Sacred Ground program will also go through a voter registration training via the League of Women Voters of Maine. They hope to have people present at St. Elizabeth's Pantry and St. Luke's food pantry who can register new voters.
- This same small group is also investigating how to help with absentee ballot preparation and submission.
- Mary asked for PPEAT volunteers to help on Tuesday and Thursday mornings between now and Election Day. John, Liz, and Kathy can participate.

## **Updates**

Sarah Braik brought us up to date on other matters we had been working on prior to COVID:

- The Wolf's Neck Farm public forum had to be canceled earlier this year. After some discussion we agreed to wait until early 2021 to see if this could be rescheduled next spring.
- The [Carbon Tracker](#) program from the Diocese of California had been envisioned as launching here with some in-person orientations. But COVID prevented these so Sarah has been putting notices about it in the Dio Log and via St. Luke's e-blasts. So far six people have signed up. Sarah will keep working on this.
- The screening of "[Dawnland](#)" that we had planned to for this past spring has been rescheduled for 15 May 2021 from 10:00 AM to 12:30 PM at St. Luke's. This is a collaborative effort amongst the Cathedral, Companions of the Holy Cross, and other parishes. The new format will not accommodate a lunch but there will be a worship service and/or eucharist.
- The [Maine Climate Council](#)'s six working groups have submitted their proposals. For more information, follow the link provided here.
- The joint planning process between Portland and South Portland, One Climate Future, has released its [draft plan](#).

## **Seeking New PPEAT Co-Coordinator**

Liz Parsons will step down as co-coordinator at the end of this calendar year. She will continue to be involved but wants to devote more time to getting World Too Beautiful well-established. She is also hoping that someone with more social action/justice expertise can step in to help balance our Team's collective interests. Anyone who is interested in taking on this endeavor should contact Sarah and/or Liz.

**Next meeting: 6:00 PM, Tuesday, 13 October via ZOOM**