

Report of the Committee on Congregational Missions December, 2016

The Committee on Congregational Missions (CCM) assists the Bishop Suffragan in her delegated oversight of the mission churches of the diocese. Its members serve as lay liaisons or as area priests. Each lay liaison works closely with the mission(s) assigned to him or her and provides regular reports to the Bishop Suffragan and to the other members regarding each mission's spiritual well-being and financial stability. Area priests serve as resources for the liaisons and the mission churches in various matters, such as application of diocesan canons or providing advice on pastoral matters.

We are grateful for the leadership and support of our Bishop Suffragan, The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff. Bishop Susan's leadership has helped us to maintain our focus on supporting the mission congregations that we serve, but has also caused us to refine and revisit elements of our work as a committee. We are thankful for the advice and assistance of our diocesan staff liaison, Mrs. Stephanie Higgins.

One particularly engaging element of CCM is that we meet "on site" at a mission congregation four or five times a year. This allows us to meet at different locations throughout the diocese and to understand more fully the mission context for the church that serves as host for us. This also gives mission congregations an opportunity to share with us their hopes and dreams as well as to better explain their needs. After our business meeting and a presentation by the church, we share a meal together before returning home.

CCM assists missions in their quest for full parish status. In 2016, we assisted St. Luke's, Simeon and St. Paul's, Nomini Grove in their movement to full parish status within the diocese. When Bishop Susan first joined us, she noted that many churches in the diocese had been financially independent for years and even decades, but had remained at mission status. Both St. Luke's and St. Paul's are examples of this. We are thankful that they will become independent parishes at Annual Convention in 2017.

In 2016, we continued to emphasize our desire to have each mission church under CCM supervision to complete a covenant with CCM, on behalf of the larger diocese. Our calling as Christians is to go forth into the world in the name of Jesus Christ to serve and to spread the good news. Our CCM Covenants demonstrate that our committee does not seek to simply provide funds to balance budgets. We want to partner with mission churches in sponsoring outreach into the community. The Covenants we received in 2016 witnessed to a wonderful variety of energy and service on the part of our mission congregations.

The members of CCM are a talented, dedicated and lively group. Our meetings are filled with energy and our liaisons care deeply about their ministry of supporting mission congregations in the diocese. We are thankful for the opportunity to serve Christ in this ministry.

The Rev. David Keill, Chair
On behalf of the Committee on Congregational Missions