



## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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### President's Report to the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church Annual Board Meeting - July 27, 2022

*Areas of focus in my sixth and final year as President.* I have continued to commit my energies to three main areas of concern that carry over from our work together for the past several years. These include (a.) a concentrated effort to promote the Historical Society and increase its visibility and recognition, (b.) targeted initiatives to boost membership, especially among students, and (c.) the ongoing development of creative initiatives for future sustainability.

*Membership and promotional projects.* Over the course of the past year, I have focused on projects that will continue to develop the sustainability of the Historical Society for the future. These include the complimentary, one-year student membership promotion, which has produced 65 new members for the Historical Society in this year alone, and which has brought the total membership of the Historical Society to its highest level in the past six years. This increase in membership, if it continues, will ensure that HSEC will continue to flourish as a healthy, scholarly organization well into the future.

*Nominations to the Board.* I am very grateful to Pam Cochran for serving so admirably for many years as the Secretary of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church. It is no easy task to record the minutes of the Board meetings and the Executive Committee meetings, and Pam accomplished this with grace and a conscientious attention to detail. We will miss her in this role, but I am delighted to welcome Susan Stonesifer back to the Board as our nominee for Secretary. Susan has served as the President of NEHA, as the NEHA representative to the HSEC Board, and on the Board of EWHP, and it is a pleasure to nominate her for election at our Annual Meeting. Thank you to Lauren Winner, who has served for many years as a Board member and who has made invaluable contributions as a member of the Grants Committee. Her term on the Board is coming to an end, and to fill the vacancy she leaves behind, Lauren has nominated Lachlan Hassman, a divinity student at Duke with a master's degree in architectural history from UVA and a keen interest in church history. Lachlan has expressed interest in working on our Membership and Promotions Committee to support outreach initiatives to students. Both Julia Randle and Tuck Shattuck are up for nomination to a second three-year term, and I am grateful to each of them for agreeing to continue to serve on the Board. I value their counsel and experience.

My own term as President has come to its end, and Mike Utzinger has been nominated to stand for election as the next President of the Historical Society. I could not be more delighted. Mike brings many gifts to this role, not least among them his superb command of parliamentary procedure and his graceful people skills, and I am truly grateful to him for accepting this nomination. I am also grateful to our current Second Vice President, John Runkle, for agreeing to stand for election as First Vice President. I look forward to hearing more from John, especially as we consider exciting new resource projects for the future. In addition, George DeFilippi stands for reelection as our Treasurer. I have been impressed by George's leadership and wisdom, especially during Matthew Payne's performance and compensation review. I thoroughly endorse these candidates, and I look forward to continuing to work with them to support the Historical Society. I have been nominated for Second Vice President, which will allow me to continue to manage and expand our membership growth initiatives.

*Amendments to the HSEC Constitution.* At its annual meeting, the Board adopted two amendments to Article IV of the HSEC Constitution with regards to non-board members. This will not only grant

*"Promoting the preservation of the particular heritage of the Episcopal Church and its antecedents..."*

current members of HSEC the official right to serve on board committees (which they already do, in practice), but it also codifies and formalizes the Historical Society's position on non-board members' participation on committees. The requirement of Episcopal denominational affiliation for Board members has also been amended. The two amendments create new language in Article IV:

- Amend Article IV by inserting, "Non-Board members of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church may serve on committees, provided (a.) they are current members; and (b.) there is a majority of Board members on each committee; and (c.) only Board members can be chairs of committees."
- Amend Article IV by striking "All elected Directors must be adults members in good standing of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America or of any other church in the Anglican Communion" and inserting "All elected Directors must be committed to the Purpose and Objectives defined in Article II and shall be members of the Society."

*Tri-History Conference.* The HSEC Executive Committee, together with the presidents of NEHA and EWHP, had previously agreed to move the Tri-History Conference to the summer of 2023 (instead of 2022), due to the unanticipated changes in both scheduling and logistical planning that the COVID-19 pandemic has occasioned. We may need to postpone the Tri-History Conference even further to allow the Joint Planning Committee to further coalesce. I have appointed two representatives from HSEC to the JPC: Sylvia Sweeney and Edna Johnston.

*General Convention.* We had previously arranged to host an exhibition booth in a prime location in the exhibition hall at General Convention this July, and we had made all the necessary reservations to host a luncheon with Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook as our featured speaker. However, the organizers of General Convention eliminated the exhibition hall and affiliated events altogether due to concerns over COVID, and this has meant that our plans have necessarily changed. We intend to prerecord Sheryl's lecture and share that with our membership at a later date. We have been refunded the cost of the exhibition booth.

*Performance and Compensation Review for HSEC Director of Operations.* Beginning in the Fall semester of 2021, I gathered a committee for Matthew Payne's performance and compensation review. I appointed George DeFilippi, Treasurer of the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church, to chair this committee, which also comprised First Vice President Mike Utzinger, HSEC representative to the Tri-History Conference Joint Planning Committee Sylvia Sweeney, *Anglican and Episcopal History* editor Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, and HSEC member Susan Stonesifer. The review was long overdue, and the committee determined that going forward, a review should be conducted once a year. After a thorough analysis, the committee concluded that Matthew has substantially exceeded all the performance elements outlined in the 2014 Letter of Agreement (LoA) between Matthew Payne and HSEC. He is currently working significantly more hours than his current compensation structure allows for. The committee recommended that Matthew should be compensated fairly, such that his compensation could be raised gradually over the next five years to better reflect the work that he does. Moreover, the Committee is making the following recommendations for consideration and implementation:

1. That an informal Personnel Committee consisting of the President, Vice President, and Treasurer will meet to make compensation recommendations for annual budget formation. This group will also form the nucleus of a committee to do an annual DOO performance assessment.
2. The current Letter of Agreement between the Society and Matthew should be reviewed, updated and a more explicit DOO job description should be incorporated.

The chair of the committee and I met with Matthew via Zoom in the Spring semester of this year to discuss the performance and compensation review report. The discussion was productive and amicable. We are very grateful for all that Matthew does to support the Historical Society.

*Statement of thanksgiving for Mark Duffy's service to The Episcopal Church as Archivist.* The Historical Society of the Episcopal Church gives thanks to God for the work and ministry of Mark Duffy, canonical archivist and director of the Archives of The Episcopal Church, who retired on March 31, 2022, after thirty years of service. As archivist, he and the Archives Board have provided essential leadership in the collection, management, and maintenance of the archival holdings of The Episcopal Church. The Archives of The Episcopal Church contains materials across multiple media formats, from papers and documents - including correspondence, diaries, periodicals, and journals - to personal effects, ephemera, and such objects as photographs, paintings, and film. Under Mark Duffy's direction, the Archives successfully moved to a new location in 2021. We are grateful for his service, and we wish him a happy retirement.

*Statement of thanksgiving for Bruce Mullin's service to The Episcopal Church as Historiographer.* The Historical Society of the Episcopal Church is grateful for the service of Bruce Mullin, Historiographer of The Episcopal Church, who retired from this role on June 20, 2022, after serving as Historiographer since 2012. Dr. Mullin's ten-year term of service included his important historical research in support of The Episcopal Church maintaining its properties during the years of schism that began at the turn of the present century, and due in no small part to his meticulous historical documentation, many parishes were able to keep their church buildings and property after extensive legal proceedings. The three Episcopal historical organizations made a joint statement to General Convention regarding Resolution A-154, which concerns the process for selecting a new Historiographer. The Historical Society welcomes Mr. Lee Little as the new Historiographer of The Episcopal Church.

*Notable transitions in membership.* The Historical Society has received notice of the deaths of several members this year. **The Rev. Phillip Wallace Ayers (1941-2022)** was a longtime member of the Historical Society and a warm and loving Episcopal priest. The rector of St. John's "on the green" in North Haven, Connecticut, for many years, Phillip later moved to Portland, Oregon, with his wife, LaVera, where he shared his gift for music through his participation in the Portland Symphonic Choir, the Bach Symphonic Choir, and a classical music radio show that he hosted. He passed away this year on May 25 in Portland, surrounded by his loving family, after a long battle with pulmonary issues. **The Rev. John Halsey Spruhan (1950-2022)** was a priest and member of the Historical Society who served parishes in Chicago and at the Episcopal Mission in Rosebud, South Dakota, where he and his wife, Judy, also a priest, spent the best years of their lives among the Lakota people of the Rosebud Sioux tribe (Sicangu Lakota). They retired to Salem, Virginia in 2010. John was well known in the Salem and Roanoke communities due to his many interests and his leadership roles in several community organizations. He passed away this year on February 5 due to heart disease and complications related to COVID-19. **The Rev. Dr. J. Robert Wright**, a retired General Theological Seminary professor who was known in The Episcopal Church for his work as a church historian and in promoting ecumenical dialogue, died on January 12 at his home in New York. Father Wright served for years as the St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery Emeritus Professor of Ecclesiastical History at GTS, and alumni, faculty and associates remember him fondly. Born on Oct. 20, 1936, Wright attended The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. He also studied at Oxford University and the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto, Canada. He would become the longest-tenured faculty member at GTS. He served as the official historiographer of The Episcopal Church and the chaplain, in perpetuity, of the

Guild of Scholars of The Episcopal Church. In 2007, he was awarded the Archbishop of Canterbury's Cross of St Augustine for his scholarly contribution to ecumenical dialogue. **The Rev. Dr. Harold Lewis (1947-2021)** was the rector of Calvary Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from 1997 until his retirement in 2012. He was an active chronicler of the African American struggle in the Episcopal Church and participated on numerous church and seminary boards including the Office of Black Ministries as director from 1983 to 1994. He served on the Standing Commission on World Mission of the Episcopal Church where he pressed to have African American missionaries recognized and celebrated alongside white missionaries. He served as headmaster of St. Mark's School in Brooklyn; adjunct professor at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary; and taught at George Mercer School of Theology, New York Theological Seminary, and General Theological Seminary. In Pittsburgh, Dr. Lewis served on the boards of the Urban League and the Metro-Urban Institute of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Nationally, he was a member of the Episcopal Church Foundations Fellows' Forum and served on the board of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary. Dr. Lewis also served on the Board of Trustees at Yale Divinity School and was instrumental in that institution's South African divestment. By appointment of the Archbishop of Canterbury, he chaired and served on the Advisory Council for the Anglican Observer to the United Nations. Among Dr. Lewis's many publications are *Yet With a Steady Beat: the African American Struggle for Recognition in the Episcopal Church*; *Christian Social Witness*; *Elijah's Mantle: Pilgrimage, Politics and Proclamation*; the hymnal, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*; and *The Recent Unpleasantness*. May the souls of these persons and all the faithful departed rest in peace and rise in glory.

*Words of gratitude.* I am deeply grateful to each of my fellow Board members for their kind support and advice during my tenure as President. It has been a great privilege and a tremendous honor to work with you, and as I step down from this role, my heart is filled with warmth and gratitude for all that we have accomplished. I am also grateful to our Director of Operations, Matthew Payne, for his ongoing support of the Historical Society. I wish to also extend my gratitude to our new editor of *Anglican and Episcopal History*, Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook, for her excellent work on the journal, and for taking such an active role in promoting the Historical Society and its objectives. Finally, I give thanks to God for our membership, and I pray that our members will continue to gain insight and knowledge about the history of The Episcopal Church and its antecedents through the work of the Historical Society. Thank you for your support.

*Concluding statement.* As I look over the past six years, I am encouraged by the overall trend of growth in the membership of the Historical Society. We continue to maintain a healthy financial position, and this bodes well for the sustainability of the Historical Society for the next decade. I end my term as President having accomplished a significant increase in membership, having successfully developed new outreach programs to students, and having created new relationships with other organizations and ministries in The Episcopal Church that will further promote the preservation of our history. Thank you for sharing this sacred time with me. I wish all of you God's best and brightest blessings.

Faithfully in Christian service,



The Rev. Dr. Robyn M. Neville, Ph.D.

President, the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church