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March 5, 2020

Dear Members of Diocesan Council and Members of the Standing Committee:

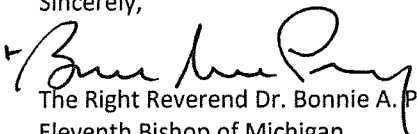
Trinity Episcopal Church in Detroit is a diocesan mission formed just over a year ago at 1519 Martin Luther King Blvd., the former site of Trinity Episcopal Church and then Spirit of Hope, a Lutheran-Episcopal congregation. Spirit of Hope ceased worship and closed in February 2018 and, at that time, the diocese paid off substantial liabilities of the congregation related to the building. Non-church tenants remained in the building to provide Head Start, feeding, addiction recovery and other programs to the local North Corktown community.

The Reverend Anthony Estes accepted a call from The Right Reverend Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr., Tenth Bishop of Michigan, on February 1, 2019 to serve as Missioner and to help develop the new worship community called Trinity. For several reasons, this new community is unsustainable. In June 2019, Church Insurance Company announced the cancellation of the building insurance because of safety concerns about significant roof, wall and electrical structural repairs needed to the building. The insurance was subsequently reinstated for a very high annual premium pending the needed repairs. Then in August 2019, Matrix Head Start cancelled its lease and moved out, ending the largest source of operating income beyond diocesan mission funds. No other sources have been identified for significant operating expenses and building repairs. While a very small worship community has developed, much of Anthony's time has been spent on landlord duties for the building.

Given the untenable situation with Trinity, I have asked Anthony to accept a call to become an Associate at Christ Church Detroit. This call is a wonderful opportunity for Anthony to live more fully into his vocation as a priest reaching out to serve the people of Detroit and to provide mentoring and experiences to help support and prepare him for this vocation. The diocese will help encourage and assist members of the small Trinity worship community to find other communities in which to experience love and support for their spiritual and life journeys. And as we move toward finding a community or organization that needs Trinity's building, we will try to find ways for the feeding, addiction recovery and other programs to continue to serve the local community.

Members of my staff and I have carefully and prayerfully considered whether there are any reasonable alternatives available to sustain or grow Trinity's life and ministry. Accordingly, as Eleventh Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, I am notifying you that this diocesan mission that was in my charge under Canon 3.1.1.2 is closing. Additionally, I am requesting Diocesan Council approval to work towards the sale of the real property from the original Trinity Episcopal Church Corporation and dissolution of that corporate entity.

Sincerely,


The Right Reverend Dr. Bonnie A. Perry
Eleventh Bishop of Michigan

attachment

cc: The Rev. Anthony Estes, The Rev. Emily Williams-Guffey

*From the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan
October 2019*

3.1.1.2 Diocesan Mission. A Diocesan Mission is a congregational ministry of the Diocese; in the charge of the Bishop or, at the Bishop's discretion and pleasure, a Vicar; and authorized to send lay delegates with voice and vote to Convention. The Governing Body of a Diocesan Mission is a Bishop's committee. A body of worshipers numbering twenty (20) or more baptized persons, aged sixteen (16) years or older, at least ten (10) of whom, at the time of petition, shall be communicants in good standing of a congregation of this Diocese, and who represent no fewer than ten (10) separate households, may petition the Ecclesiastical Authority for recognition as a Diocesan Mission of this Diocese and for admission to voting status at Conventions of the Diocese. The Bishop, or the Vicar if appointed, shall exercise the authority of the member of the clergy in charge in all Diocesan Missions.