Three years ago, as the new Ecumenical & Interreligious Officer, I started my first term on the governing board of the North Carolina Council of Churches. The Diocese of East Carolina has been involved with the North Carolina Council of Churches since the Council’s founding in 1935 – and supports the Council with a yearly financial commitment.

I met this past spring with Bishop Skirving to discuss plans for a diocesan network for ecumenical & interfaith conversation and potential resource sharing. I had initially considered convening a meeting late summer but decided to wait until the Clergy Conference in October to start the process. Toward this goal of forming ecumenical & interfaith partners through the work we do in our respective communities, three clergy colleagues have responded to be part of this pioneering initiative, which formally starts with a workshop prior to the start of our 134th Diocesan Convention. The workshop will be led by the Rev. Jessica Stokes, staff member of the NC Council of Churches and myself. This workshop has a twofold purpose: I will offer an invitation to all who would like to learn more about how we can grow a networking system, connecting us in the work we do in our respective communities as we open doors with ecumenical & interfaith partners to a future we perhaps haven’t possibly imagined.

Jessica will share some resources currently available through the NC Council of Churches. While the resources of the NCCC will be available throughout the 134th Convention at the Ecumenical & Interfaith Table, Jessica will present in particular the Partners in Health and Wholeness programs, helping parishes start or expand health ministries. With the prevalence of tier 1 and tier 2 counties in the eastern part of our state, this is an opportunity to learn about statewide resources and how we can do far more together than we can do apart or on our own.

For more information concerning the North Carolina Council of Churches, go to www.ncchurches.org or contact me at rector@stpaulepiscopal.com.

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