

Convention Handbook



IN CHRIST, CALLED TO COLLABORATE

238th Annual Convention
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Oct. 27-28, 2023

“Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” (Ephesians 4:15-16)



CALL TO THE CONVENTION
NOTICE OF THE 238th ANNUAL SESSION OF THE CONVENTION
OF
THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS

In accordance with Article 3, Section 3 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Massachusetts, I hereby issue the formal call for the two hundred thirty-eighth annual session of the Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts, which will begin at one o'clock in the afternoon on Friday, October 27, 2023, in Danvers, Massachusetts.

THE REV. RACHEL WILDMAN
Secretary of Convention

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Note: Courtesy titles are printed with the names of members of the laity for whom preferred titles were provided.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

October 28, 2023

- 9:00 a.m.: Procedural Announcements
Land Acknowledgement
Eucharist, with the Bishop's Annual Address
- 10:40 a.m.: Break
- 11:00 a.m.: CALL TO ORDER OF LEGISLATIVE SESSION
Declaration of Constitutional Quorum
Invitation to Honorary and Special Seats
Permission to Speak
Report from Dispatch of Business
Acceptance of Special Rules of Order
Receiving of 2023 Journal Reports
Report of Qualifications Committee
Introduction of Nominees for Diocesan Election
Report of the Racial Justice Commission
- 12:45 p.m.: Lunch Break
- 1:45 p.m.: Report of the Budget Committee
Report from the Compensation and Benefits Committee
Greetings and Good Wishes
Honors and Thanks
- 3:15 p.m.: Break
- 3:30 p.m.: Report of the Resolutions Committee
Report from the Diocesan Youth Council
Report from the Constitution and Canons Committee
Report from the Nominating Committee
Introduction and Report from Life Together
Introduction of Postulants and Candidates
Introduction of New and Retired Clergy
Report of Election Committee with Election Results
Approval of Commission on Ministry Appointments
Closing Prayers
- 4:45 p.m.: Adjournment

SPECIAL RULES OF ORDER

In order to facilitate discussion and debate on the convention floor, the Committee on Dispatch of Business will move acceptance of the following Special Rules of Order:

MOVED:

Presenters of resolutions will be limited to three minutes per resolution. During debate of resolutions, constitutional and canonical amendments, and other motions moved for consideration, any person seated and with voice will be allowed to speak for two minutes per motion. Five minutes will be allotted per any amendment to main motions: two-and-one-half minutes for the amendment and two-and-one-half minutes against.

NOMINEES FOR DIOCESAN ELECTIONS

With Results of Uncontested Elections

Nominees for Lay Member of STANDING COMMITTEE (4-year term)

(2 nominees, 1 to be elected)



Kevin Miller
Epiphany Parish, Walpole

I have served in different levels of church leadership for years, including on Vestry, Diocesan Council, Cathedral Chapter, and at General Convention. I also serve on the Steering Committee for the Deputies Under 40 Caucus at General Convention. As a young leader in this diocese, I believe that we need to focus on strengthening the church and forming leaders for evangelism and ministry. I believe that I can help our diocese accomplish these difficult tasks.

Michael Pierce
Bristol Trinity Church, Easton

I, Michael Piece, have been an active member of the Diocese of Massachusetts most of my life excepting five years in Illinois. A member of diocesan congregations in Milton, Boston, Sharon, Canton, and Easton; involved with Grace Chapel, Brockton; served in districts, regions, and deaneries, as convention delegate, member of Diocesan Council, a bishop search process, and several diocesan committees. I have a half century of knowledge and experience to draw on.



UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS
The following nominees were unopposed:

Alternate Deputy to 2024 General Convention

The Rev. Rowan Larson, Christ Church, Cambridge (3-year term)

Clerical Member of the Standing Committee

The Rev. Kit Lonergan, Trinity Church, Boston (2-year term)

The Rev. Walter Connelly, St. John's Church, Winthrop (4-year term)

Clerical Member of the Diocesan Disciplinary Board

The Rev. Lynn Campbell, Church of the Advent, Medfield (3-year term)

Deputy to the Provincial Conference

Ms. Betsy Ridge, Church of the Advent, Boston (3-year term)

Treasurer of the Diocese

Mr. Theodore Y. T. Ts'o, Church of Our Saviour, Arlington (1-year term)

Secretary of the Diocese

Ms. Julie Shea, St. John's Church, Winthrop (1-year term)

Clerical Member of the Cathedral Chapter

The Rev. Megan C. Holding,

Northeastern University Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry (3-year term)

Members of the Board of Directors of the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center

Mr. Michael Pierce, Bristol Trinity Church, Easton (3-year term)

Member of the Trustees of Donations

Ms. Judith Edington, St. John's Church, Newtonville (5-year term)

The photos and bios of uncontested election nominees will be listed at <https://www.diomass.org/diocesan-convention-2023>.

ELECTION WORKSHEET

THIS IS NOT A BALLOT

Voting for positions to be filled by election will be done electronically onsite. Voting stations will be set up at designated areas, and volunteers will be on site to help you through the process. Voting will be open from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Clergy and lay delegates are welcome to vote any time during this period. There is not a remote voting option.

Listed below in random order are the names of nominees for diocesan elections. Please refer to pages H-5 through H-6 for nominees' descriptive statements. This worksheet is meant to guide you through the electronic voting process. You may bring this sheet with you when you vote.

In accordance with proportional representation, indicate your RANK preference for each nominee (1 for first preference, 2 for second preference, etc.) between the parentheses after the nominee's name. An example is provided.

EXAMPLE: BEST ICE CREAM FLAVOR (4 nominees, 1 to be elected)

Cookies n' Cream	(3)
Black Raspberry Chocolate Chunk	(1)
Mint Chocolate Chip	(2)
Vanilla	(4)

Nominees for Lay Member of STANDING COMMITTEE (4-year term)

(2 nominees, 1 to be elected)

Kevin Miller	()
Michael Pierce	()

STANDING COMMITTEE SPECIAL REPORT AND IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTIONS ON BISHOP ELECTION

September 14, 2023

The Standing Committee is pleased to provide the following report and proposed enabling resolution. This report is specific to the Standing Committee's work on the election of a bishop diocesan to become the 17th Bishop of Massachusetts, supplementing the Standing Committee's annual report.

Pursuant to Canon III.11.1.a., the Standing Committee has the honor and canonical responsibility of exercising jurisdiction over the process for electing of a bishop. Some of the requirements for the election are established by national canon; others are established by the Constitution, Canons, and Convention of the diocese. The work of the Standing Committee as of the date this report was submitted consists of the following primary elements:

- On May 10, 2023, Bishop Gates announced his intention to resign by the end of 2024, and, therefore, called for election of his successor.
- On May 17, 2023, the Standing Committee announced that it had begun the process of formalizing the plans, including the timeline, for the nomination, election, transition, and ordination of the next bishop diocesan. We also announced that there would be many opportunities for the Episcopalians of Massachusetts to be involved in that process, including through Listening Sessions and possible service on the committees charged with nomination, transition, and ordination.
- Late June 2023, we accepted applications for membership on the Nominating Committee. Approximately 40 applications were received from both the laity and clergy of the diocese.
- July 19, 2023, the Standing Committee announced that our work continues with the aid and expertise of consultant Judith (Judy) Stark, who has consulted on more than 20 bishop searches since 2009, aided by two apprentice consultants, Marsha Adell, from the Diocese of Connecticut, and the Rev. Dcn. Geoff Smith, former chief operating officer of the Episcopal Church. Also announced was that we called as co-chairs of the Nominating Committee: the Rev. Diane Wong of St. John's Church, Arlington; Linda Ouellette, Esq., of St. Michael's Church, Holliston; and Mr. William Boyce of Grace Church, New Bedford. Finally, we also announced that a page on the diocesan website had been created, dedicated to the bishop search process, see: www.diomass.org/bishop-search.
- On August 16, 2023, the Standing Committee announced the calling of remaining members of the Nominating Committee, who are: Michael Bent, St. Peter's Church, Beverly; the Rev. Christopher Fike, St. Elizabeth's Church, Wilmington; Kim Garrison, Grace Church, Vineyard Haven; Claudette Hunt, St. Andrew's Church, Ayer; Olivia Jaynes, St. Paul's Church, Natick; the Rev. Sarah Mato, Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Hingham; the Rev. Joseph Mumita, St. Thomas's Church, Taunton; the Rev. Derrick Muwina, St. Peter's Church, Cambridge; the Rev. Nick Myers, Parish of the Epiphany, Winchester; the Rev. Dcn. Ema Rosero-Nordalm, Allston-Brighton; David Sullivan, Emmanuel Church, Wakefield; Clark Warner, St. Bartholomew's Church, Cambridge. Additionally, the Rev. Ginger Solaqua, Church of Our Redeemer, Lexington, was called to be chaplain to the Nominating Committee. They met for the first time, and received their charge, on Aug. 12, 2023.

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The Standing Committee's charge to the Nominating Committee includes but is not limited to:

- upholding the dignity of everyone involved;
- taking antiracism/multicultural awareness training prior to review of application;
- working within the timeline and budget given to them by the Standing Committee;
- maintaining the strictest confidence with respect to all deliberations, now and forever;
- conducting a survey and listening sessions throughout the diocese, the findings from which will be reported back to the Standing Committee;
- generating a draft diocesan profile, for approval by the Standing Committee, with an expected publication in December 2023;
- seeking and accepting applicants for bishop (provided that, pursuant to Canon III.1.2 of the national canons, "No person shall be denied access to the discernment process or to any process for the employment, licensing, calling, or deployment for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, immigration status, national origin, sex, marital or family status (including pregnancy and child care plans), sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to employment, licensing, ordination, call, deployment, or election is hereby established.");
- vetting each applicant in a holy and sound manner, including with deep and frank conversations, and background and reference checks;
- charging each applicant to refrain from communications or activities which could be interpreted as lobbying or campaigning;
- presenting to the Standing Committee a diverse slate of three to four final nominees by the date specified by the Standing Committee; and
- with the prior approval of the Standing Committee, publicizing the slate of nominees at the time specified in the timeline (currently set as April 2023), along with a report to the diocese on its work.

Also announced on August 16, 2023, was the timeline for the nomination, election, and transition, including the dates enumerated below. The timeline is available for review on the diocesan website at www.diomass.org/bishop-search/timeline, where it will be updated as necessary.

- Following the announcement of the slate of nominees, the Standing Committee shall conduct a petition process for additional nominees, according to a timeline published in due course for that purpose. The Standing Committee shall set minimum requirements, including regarding signatures and other information needed, for any petition-process candidates.
- Only the nominees put forth by the Nominating Committee and the successful petition-process nominees shall be those persons qualified to be elected bishop. Any other rule notwithstanding, no other nominee may stand for election. The Standing Committee affirms that all nominees standing for election must and shall meet all canonical requirements.
- The Standing Committee shall appoint a Transition Committee which shall shepherd the nominees through the meet-and-greet visits throughout the diocese, as well as the election process, and care for persons affected by the transition to new episcopal leadership.
- Pursuant to Articles IV and XI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Section 2 of Canon 11 of Title III of the Canons of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the Bishop and

Standing Committee hereby formally call for a Special Session of Diocesan Convention upon May 18, 2024, for the sole purpose of electing the next bishop diocesan. Said Special Session shall convene at such a place and time as the Standing Committee will announce in due course.

Pursuant to Art. II, §§3-4, of the Constitution of the Diocese, every parish and mission of the diocese in union with Convention shall be entitled to send two lay delegates to the Special Session of Convention, with seat, voice, and vote. The lay delegates of each parish or mission shall take office upon being certified to the Secretary of the Diocese. Subject to the following, all bishops of the diocese and canonically resident priests and deacons shall be entitled to seat, voice, and vote at the Special Session of Convention. Convention shall be the final judge of the qualifications of its members; provided that no cleric under canonical sentence of suspension, and no laity repelled from the Holy Communion with the subsequent approval of the Bishop of the Diocese, shall be qualified for membership; and no person shall be qualified for membership as a lay delegate unless he or she be a baptized person and a member qualified to vote in the parish or mission which he or she represents.

By the established modes and methods of each parish and mission of the diocese in union with Convention, those elected as lay delegates for the Special Session of the Convention on May 18, 2024, shall also be the duly elected delegates for the annual session of Convention in November 2024.

- In collaboration with the Secretary of Convention, the Standing Committee shall establish, and the Secretary shall promulgate, Special Rules of Order for the Special Session, including setting modes and manner of communications, procedures, and limitations for speeches and debate, methods of voting, and whatever other rules for the Special Session of Convention as may be appropriate. All else notwithstanding, pursuant to Art. XI, §2 of the Constitution of the Diocese, the “election shall be by ballot and by Orders and the concurrence of a majority of each Order shall be necessary to constitute a decision of election.”
- The Standing Committee shall appoint an Ordination and Consecration Committee which shall be charged with coordinating the sacramental rites and other celebrations associated with the ordination of the next bishop.
- The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate, has set aside October 19, 2024, for the ordination and consecration of the bishop-elect, and the people of the diocese are welcome to gather on that expected date for that purpose at a location to be announced in due course.
- The Standing Committee is responsible for formulating a budget for the nomination, election, transition, and ordination process, which budget will be presented to the Diocesan Council for funding.

Pursuant to Title III, Canon 11, § 1, paragraph a, of the Canons of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Massachusetts submits to the Annual Convention 2023 for its consideration and approval the Resolution attached to this report to adopt rules and procedures for the election of the bishop.

Respectfully submitted,

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS

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Louise Gant, *President*
The Rev. Kathryn Elledge, *Vice President*
The Rev. Dr. Karen Coleman, *Secretary*
Grace Knowles
The Rev. Kit Loneragan
Suzanne Owayda
The Rev. Dr. Daniel Dice
James Dilday, Esq.

ENABLING RESOLUTION

Resolved, that this 238th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts gives its assent and support to the Standing Committee for the conduct of an election of bishop diocesan, as follows but not limited to:

- 1) that, pursuant and subject to the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church and of the Diocese of Massachusetts, the Standing Committee has jurisdiction over the entire discernment, nomination, transition, election, and ordination process for the next bishop diocesan of the diocese; and
- 2) that the actions completed by the Standing Committee since the announcement on May 10, 2023, by the Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates, 16th Bishop of Massachusetts, of his intention to resign by the end of 2024, as well as all future actions taken to fulfill the process of nominating, electing, and ordaining our next bishop diocesan, along with any and all appropriate procedures needed to accomplish them—particularly as outlined in the Standing Committee’s Supplemental Report to Convention dated September 14, 2023—ought to be, and hereby are, enabled.

REPORT OF THE COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS COMMITTEE

Purpose of Committee

The Clergy Compensation Committee was established by a resolution of the Diocesan Convention of 1980 as a subcommittee of the Commission on Ministry. The present title “Compensation and Benefits Committee” reflects the broader role of the committee as it has evolved since 1980. Oversight of the committee was transferred to the Diocesan Council by a resolution of the Diocesan Convention of 2011.

The role of the committee is to assist the bishop in matters pertaining to the compensation and benefits for clergy and lay employees of the church, which includes establishing guidelines to promote uniform, fair and equitable compensation and benefits for such church employees within the diocese and performing other projects relating to compensation, benefits and personnel matters.

The committee is a resource to lay and ordained congregational leadership as advisors and facilitators in establishing and maintaining compensation and benefits in relation to diocesan guidelines, congregational mission and individual performance objectives. In fulfilling this role, the committee collects and reviews data on compensation and benefits in other Episcopal dioceses and other denominations, as well as in the business, government and academic communities.

Goals for the Committee

The focus of the committee related to compensation and benefits for clergy and lay employees is to:

Attract, retain and support clergy to achieve the mission of the diocese and congregations.

Create an environment that promotes the well-being of clergy through a clear understanding of the relationship between clergy and their congregations and goals that express their mutual ministry.

Allow a reasonable standard of living according to local and/or regional measures.

Recommend that the initial salary in a new clergy placement conforms to the diocesan standard and takes into account differences in range of experience relative to the scope of the position and role.

Promote salary advancement and benefits that reflect personal growth and experience in the role.

Advocate standards for fair and equitable benefits and compensation for lay employees.

Since 2001, the diocese has maintained guidelines for the minimum Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) to be paid to a priest in a parish as recommended annually by the committee and approved by the Diocesan Convention. The minimum TCC is based on various

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measures of parish size and on an individual priest's years of service in that parish. A parish may (and is encouraged to) provide additional compensation for special skills, abilities and competencies that may be relevant to its specific needs.

In addition, the committee has promulgated guidelines for benefits for clergy and lay employees, model letters of agreement for clergy, model personnel policies for parishes and standards for priests in campus ministry. Further, it has conducted studies and made recommendations relative to health insurance for church employees, and conducted periodic surveys of compensation, benefits and personnel policies and practices of parishes within the diocese.

Summary of Committee Work in 2023

During this past year, the committee addressed the following matters:

Guidelines Updates

A significantly revised Total Clergy Compensation worksheet has been posted and can be found at <https://diomass.org/inside/docs/compensation-benefits-resources-congregations>. The worksheet includes tabs to calculate your TCC Standard and Negotiated compensation, as well as the Total Cost to your parish and a reference guide for health insurance costs. The committee is in the process of drafting updated Guidelines for 2024 as well.

Compensation Survey

A simplified and revised clergy compensation survey was developed, and the data is being collected in the fourth quarter of 2023. Committee members and diocesan staff are available to assist clergypersons in completing their responses. A separate survey for lay employees is in development.

Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) Standard

The primary goal of the committee is to help the diocese attract, retain and support well-qualified clergy, and promote salary advancement that recognizes the talents, experience and tenure of those who serve. The long-term practice of the committee has been to maintain a steadily increasing Total Clergy Compensation Standard, and once again we are recommending an increase to the 2024 Standard of 3%.

This level of increase is consistent with various salary surveys we review from time to time, and fairly reflects current inflation figures published by the Department of Labor. Further, it is on par with the proposed salary increase for diocesan staff for the coming year.

As a reminder, "TCC" takes parish resources into account – over time, if a parish's fiscal position lessens, the TCC level will necessarily decrease as well. Strictly speaking, an increase to the TCC *Standard* is not a fixed "Cost of Living" increase. However, we emphasize that these discussions should be held in an open manner and guided by a spirit of generosity. Further, it is critically important that parishes take advantage of the TCC process and review their clergypersons' overall compensation package annually – *whether or not a decision is made to*

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increase or change someone's compensation. It is vital that your clergy receive this feedback on a regular basis, and that parish leadership recognizes where it stands with regard to our standards - and whether it has engaged fairly with its clergy over time.

Supply Clergy Rates

From time to time, the committee reviews the level and adequacy of its published Supply Clergy Rates. A comparison of the existing rates against peer dioceses' rates highlighted that ours were due for an increase. As a result, we have raised our standard to \$200 for a full service, on par with dioceses in similar high-cost areas. The mid-week rate is now \$100. This update will be included in our revised Guidelines for 2024, and the new rates will be distributed to parish treasurers and wardens.

Health Insurance

The Medical Trust released its 2024 health plan renewal on August 23, and once again the news was favorable. As we have reported previously, the Trust strives to keep increases below 7% whenever possible, and it has done so once again. This year's average increase is approximately 5%, depending on the plan option chosen. This follows an overall increase for 2023 of 2.68%.

The increases in our health plan costs remain well below national and regional healthcare cost "trend"; industry estimates of healthcare trend for 2023 were typically in the 7% to 8% range, with pharmacy trend exceeding 10%. As the Medical Trust reported last year, specialty pharmacy costs have increased rapidly, along with a general increase in claims costs as we return to a new post-Covid "normal." For 2023, there were modest copayment changes to the standard and premium pharmacy benefits as a result. However, there are no plan-level changes to report for the coming year to our medical plans. Separately, the Medical Trust is changing its dental provider from Cigna to Delta Dental – but at the same rates as 2023. This should result in even greater provider access to an already robust program.

As a reminder, it is diocesan policy that the lowest cost comprehensive plan act as our "Base Recommended Plan." This plan should be provided at no cost to *all* eligible lay and clergy persons, consistent with 2009 General Convention Resolution A177. The Anthem BCBS Blue Card PPO 80 remains the diocese's base recommended plan. For the PPO 90 and PPO 100 plan options, parishes are permitted to charge the *difference* between the base plan and the chosen plan. Again, we encourage the open discussion and fair-minded negotiation of any contemplated cost-sharing arrangement, conducted in a spirit of generosity, and considering parish resources and the affected person's ability to pay. The Anthem Blue Cross Consumer Directed Health Plan/H.S.A. compatible plan remains an option as well. This plan should be offered with *at least* the minimum required Healthcare Savings Account funding (65%) as stipulated in our Guidelines (the 2024 rate increase for this option is 5.93%).

Finally, the committee is aware of the burden that the absolute cost of providing health insurance places on all of our organizations, and that this often affects the compensation packages parishes develop—especially during transition periods. That said, we respectfully ask that Guidelines be adhered to and the actions of General Convention are kept in mind as you consider hiring decisions for *all* types of employees.

MA Paid Family Medical Leave Reminder

As a religious organization, the diocese and its members are exempt from participation in MA Paid Family Leave but *may apply* to the Department of Family and Medical Leave to participate. Disability income protection for both short and long-term disabilities is provided via the Church Pension Group. However, PFML does provide certain benefits that disability insurance policies typically do not. Parishes are free to explore the pros and cons of requesting coverage via the PFML and weighing the possible benefits against the payroll contributions required to maintain the coverage.

Clergy Housing Allowance Note

The committee would like to remind parish leadership that a formal vote of the vestry must be taken and recorded *prior to the beginning of the 2024 Tax Year* to designate the amount of the Clergy Housing Allowance. This is one of the most important benefits a clergyperson has access to, so please mark your calendars and make sure this action is taken during your December vestry meeting at the latest.

Recommended Increase in TCC Standard

Consistent with our goals and objectives, history of promoting a rising standard of living, and survey data gathered each year, the Compensation and Benefits Committee recommends a **3%** increase in the Total Clergy Compensation Standard for 2024.

Members of the Committee in 2023

Mr. Bill Mills-Curran
Mr. Nathaniel Fasman
The Rt. Rev. Canon Carol Gallagher
The Rev. Megan Holding
The Rev. Canon Martha Hubbard
The Rev. Dr. Paul Kolbet

Ms. Carol Kingston
The Rev. Canon Kelly O'Connell
The Rev. Canon Dr. Jean Baptiste
Ntagengwa
Ms. Annie Russell
Mr. Jeff Tyrakowski, Chair

Adjustments to the Compensation Formulae

Pursuant to our stated goals and objectives, the committee has made an adjustment to the formula for parochial clergy, and presents the following resolution to be voted upon here:

Resolutions on Clergy Compensation and Benefits

Resolved, that the diocesan Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) be defined as the total of cash stipend, utilities allowance, housing, SECA (Self Employment Contribution Act) allowance, if any, and all other cash compensation paid to an individual clergyperson. TCC does not include benefits (e.g. pension, health, or dental insurance, etc.) or reimbursements for job-related expenses as described in the 2023 Guidelines.

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Resolved, that the TCC Standard be defined as the minimum TCC for active full-time parochial clergy and, for the calendar year 2024, is determined by the following formula:

$$\text{TCC Standard} = \$83,173 + (170.96 \times \text{Points}) + \$500 \times [\text{years of service}^* \text{ within congregation}]$$

Provided that the minimum TCC Standard for full-time parochial clergy is \$88,302.

Points are determined as the sum of three factors, calculated from data taken from the most recent Parochial Report:

Total Current Operating Revenues (000s)	x .30
+ Number of Current Adult Pledging Units	x .40
+ Average Current Sunday-Attendance	x .30
= Total Points	

The TCC applicable to a full-time rector, vicar, priest-in-charge or interim shall not be less than 100% of the TCC Standard for the congregation.

The TCC applicable to a full-time curate shall not be less than:

$$\text{TCC Standard (curate)} = [\$83,173 + (170.96 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.60$$

The TCC applicable to a full-time assistant rector shall not be less than:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCC Standard (assistant)} &= [\$83,173 + (170.96 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.65 \\ &+ \$350 \times [\text{years of service within the congregation}] \end{aligned}$$

The TCC applicable to a full-time associate rector shall not be less than:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCC Standard (associate)} &= [\$83,173 + (170.96 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.75 \\ &+ \$375 \times [\text{years of service within the congregation}] \end{aligned}$$

*Provided that in each case no more than 10 years of service will be considered in this calculation.

REPORT OF THE RACIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

The Racial Justice Commission (RJC) forged ahead in 2023 with the work assigned when the commission was launched by Diocesan Convention in 2020. Those tasks continued to be organized and conducted by five subcommittees. The areas of focus included an examination of structures and systems, financial systems, supporting BIPOC individuals and communities, reparations, and fostering antiracist Episcopal communities.

The Baptismal Covenant to which we vow serves as the foundation upon which the work of the RJC and its subcommittees is built. That is for us individually and collectively to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor” as ourselves and to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 305)

Subsequent resolutions since 2020 have directed the RJC to provide tools, experiences, leadership, accompaniment and, sometimes, challenge to diocesan leaders, congregations, and other Episcopal communities to courageously embrace and engage the soul-searching work necessary to achieve antiracist attitudes and hearts that embody the command to love our neighbors...without exception or regard to race.

We acknowledge that the work is perhaps slower than some desire and may be moving too quickly for others. Members of the RJC and its subcommittees have confronted the legacies from the painful past still being experienced by those victimized by racism and white supremacy. What follows is a report on efforts by the RJC to live into the spirit and hoped for reality of the Beloved Community to which all God’s children aspire.

The work is challenging and the RJC remains deeply appreciative of the opportunity to engage in racial justice work through the bold leadership of our bishops, the allyship of people across the diocese, and with those that have joined us as accomplices in the sacred work of identifying, eradicating, and repairing harm to persons simply because of the color of their skin.

In 2023, our work fell into three broad areas of focus.

For individuals and congregations: provide and promote opportunities to learn and grow in the area of antiracist behaviors and practices

Throughout the winter and spring of 2023, the Racial Justice Commission hosted a six-part workshop series, *Race, Church, and Healing*, developed and led by Bryanna Clover of CCW Transformation Ministries. Participation in the online trainings was open to anyone in the diocese. The workshops were complemented by online affinity group gatherings—one for BIPOC participants and one for white participants—to allow for honest conversation and processing in a more intimate setting. The six workshops were recorded, and the recordings are available to individuals and groups across the diocese through July 2024. See the RJC’s page on the diocesan website (www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission) for access to the recordings.

During Eastertide 2023, people from across the diocese gathered at the Church of Our Saviour, Brookline for "Answering the Provocative Call: To Desire, Love and Enfold Our Differences," led by *The Christian Century* columnist and contributing editor Debie Thomas. During the day-long event that included silence, shared reflections, prayer, and a shared meal, Thomas led participants in a series of personal reflections and conversations similar to those featured in her most recent book, *Into the Mess & Other Jesus Stories: Reflections on the Life of Christ*.

Throughout the year, commission subcommittee members were busy visiting some 20 congregations across the diocese. These visits—all scheduled at the invitation of the individual congregations—were designed to help them assess where they are in the process outlined in *A Toolkit for Reparations in Community: A Resource for the Body of Christ* developed for our diocese in 2021 and available on the commission's web page. The hope is that through these honest, forthright conversations, meeting individuals and congregations where they are, we can encourage as many congregations in our diocese to participate in the movement toward "repairing the breach" as possible, whatever that means in their own particular context.

Many of these congregations had already begun some work on their own (such as hosting screenings and discussions of the film *Traces of the Trade*, following Mission Institute facilitators through their program *Becoming Beloved Community*, using the The Episcopal Church curriculum *Sacred Ground*, or running the program *What is Truth?*, published by the commission in 2022). Still, most admit that they are in the very early stages of Phase 1: Learning the Truth. Most congregations also admit to feeling "stuck" in the work, looking to the commission and others for support, encouragement, and guidance. Many stressed the importance of transparency in terms of how money from the diocesan Reparations Fund will be dispersed, once we get to that point.

In an effort to encourage all to participate in opportunities to increase their own cultural competency and cross-cultural understanding and experience, the commission has looked to promote, participate in, and in some cases, partner with the Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries and others throughout the year.

For our diocese as a whole, on the systemic and collective level—promoting actions and opportunities to move us to becoming Beloved Community

At our 2022 Convention, our diocese took the historic action of creating the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Reparations Fund. At the time, Bishop Gates noted that this act puts "the enterprise of racial justice and repair as a non-negotiable priority, as something we are committed to fund 'off the top' and not just with whatever is left over after we do everything else we're already doing. It places this work in the highest tier of our mission priorities. It asserts, simply, that this is a generational obligation, and that the time is now."¹

At that time, Convention charged the commission to bring to this 2023 Convention a proposal for the guiding principles and governing structure of that fund. The proposal—the result of much discernment, prayer, listening, study, and input—is presented in the resolution found elsewhere in this Handbook.

¹ From the address given by Bishop Alan M. Gates at the 237th annual Diocesan Convention on Saturday, Oct. 29, 2022.

Alongside the work of the commission, staff members of both the diocese and the cathedral have been doing their own work of introspection, conversation, and evolution towards becoming a more antiracist organization with the aid of VISIONS, Inc. We applaud this effort, in part because it was self-initiated as opposed to mandated and the work has been steered by an interdepartmental working group. Raising up this work and encouraging its continued success is the focus of the second resolution being put forward by the RJC this year, also found elsewhere in this Handbook.

In late 2022 and early 2023, people across the diocese were invited to take a racial equity, diversity, and inclusion survey (REDI). The online survey, developed by consultant Bryana Clover, measures proxies for race-based discrimination, diversity, inclusion, and equity within faith-based institutional settings. The results of the survey, including a broad look at the results overall as well as a breakdown of the differences in responses of people of color vs. people who are white, were shared in an online meeting in June. A recording of that meeting, along with introductions to the survey tool itself, are available on the RJC's page on the diocesan website ([www.https://www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission](https://www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission)). These results, as well as those from the Intercultural Development Inventory®² taken by a number of key lay and clergy leaders in the diocese late last year, will form the foundation of creating an Antiracist Strategic Plan in the coming months.

Running parallel to this work, the commission has continued our study of the diocesan budget processes and financial structures, with a focus in 2023 on how the work of the Trustees of Donations (TOD) interacts with and impacts the diocesan systems. Meeting with current and former TOD members and the bishop diocesan, we studied processes for Trustees' nomination and election, as well as Trustees' terms and current makeup (e.g., lay and ordained, race, gender identity, age, *ex-officio* roles, etc.). On the investment side, we are becoming familiar with the Trustees of Donations' advisors and policies, including the extent to which they follow socially responsible investment (SRI) and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards of practice, as well as any efforts aimed to invest in BIPOC-owned or -managed funds and firms. This fall we are turning to the distribution side of the TOD's work. We also expect to answer the question, "Who is the TOD's client?" (concerning *diocesan* funds, not those of parishes which have chosen for the Trustees to manage their investments). Given our approaching episcopal transition, we hope to identify clearly whether the TOD serves and supports the "bishop" or the "diocese," and, if the latter, determining how the TOD defines "diocese." We will then consider whether any structural interventions should be suggested to the Trustees and/or recommended to our next Convention.

Members of the commission and its subcommittees have met throughout the year with members of the Commission on Ministry in order to explore how better to recruit more people of color to consider ordained ministry and, for those in the process, how best to form and equip them. This joint group is also looking at ways to better deploy and support new clergy of color—both newly ordained and those new to the diocese—as they settle into our common life as a diocese. In a separate but related project, members of the two commissions have formed a joint task force to begin the work of implementing the 2022 resolution, Equipping Ordained

² The Intercultural Development Inventory ® is a tool to assess individuals' cultural competency. Each person who takes the inventory is given their results and suggestions for further work in a one-on-one session with a trained facilitator. For more on the IDI, see <https://www.idiinventory.com/>. A presentation of the composite results of the IDI's administered to diocesan staff and leaders is available on the RJC page of the diocesan website.

Leaders for the Work of Becoming the Beloved Community. That work is reported on elsewhere in this handbook.

Listening to, supporting, and raising up people of color in our diocese

In order to hear from voices too often unheard, listening sessions specifically for African American and Afro Caribbean individuals were held in late spring and early summer of 2023. Ahead of these sessions, participants were asked to consider the question, “When you hear the word *reparations*, what are your feelings, thoughts, concerns, and questions?” As the promotional material urged, “Your feelings, thoughts, concerns, and questions matter. Your voice matters.”

Many of the participants who attended one of the sessions expressed gratitude, reporting that they felt more comfortable sharing their feelings, thoughts, and questions about reparations in that setting. As one attendee said, “we are reluctant to participate in sessions [held in 2022, open to everyone], feeling Black voices would not be heard and decisions would be made by white people in control.” Many expressed the hope that future opportunities would be made available to gather in racial affinity groups.

In addition to the diocesan wide Day of Reflection led by Debi Thomas (discussed above), Thomas was recruited to be the guest speaker at a dinner gathering for people of color, clergy and lay, from across the diocese. At the gathering, reflections and conversations were launched among the gathered community through Thomas’s reflections of Jesus’s stories.

The commission also hosted a special send-off dinner for Bishop Gayle E. Harris as she retired, giving clergy of color a special opportunity to offer their gratitude, their good wishes, and their prayers. Great food and much laughter filled the rafters.

And, as noted elsewhere in this Handbook, a working group of the Racial Justice Commission continued its work of developing relationships with Indigenous people in the diocese. For more on this work, see the report on the implementation of the 2022 resolution, *Fostering Right Relationship: The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Indigenous Episcopalians and Our Indigenous Neighbors*.

Opportunities for engagement with the work of the Racial Justice Commission in 2024

The commission will be rolling out to the diocese a new course, *Dismantling Racism*, in 2024. The one-day course, currently under development in consultation with Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director of The Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing in Atlanta, will be a Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts-specific variation of the center’s acclaimed foundational course, and as the center’s webpage describes it, “one that seeks to increase racial understanding, healing, and reconciliation.”

A team of local facilitators worked with Dr. Meeks over the course of the summer of 2023 and into the fall. After a pilot and revision phase now happening, the course will be tested in a small number of sites during Lent 2024 and then offered across the diocese throughout the remainder of the year and beyond. The expectation is that this course will be the diocesan

offering for those in parochial and diocesan service and leadership who are required by canon to take such a course.

Racial understanding, healing, and repair begins with truth-telling and accepting, even when some of that history is hard to accept. Two projects in this hard and holy work, both under development for the past year or so, will be brought to the diocese in 2024.

Next year will see the release of *A Historical Framework (1620-1840) For Understanding How The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Benefits Today From Chattel Slavery And Its Legacy*, by Alden Fossett. Lynn Smith, Diocesan Registrar-Historiographer, advised and consulted on the project, which included drawing from published sources as well as original research into the archives and papers of some of our earliest leaders and benefactors. The report provides some snapshots for us to better understand how our diocese participated in and benefitted financially from the slave trade, as well as provides a model for congregations seeking to create their own historical reports and document their own, local connections to the slave economy.

Another project rolling out next year—focused much more on the present and near past—is an effort to document stories of harm and resilience within our diocese currently. The project is recording and storing stories of racialized harm experienced by people in our diocese as a result of the legacies of American slavery. A team is now piloting its methodology with a small group of interviews and hopes to recruit a broader roster of interviewees in 2024.

For deaneries, congregations, and clusters interested in their own truth-sharing, members of the commission are available to assist in organizing a workshop on microaggressions similar to the one organized for the North Shore Deanery in late 2022. The North Shore workshop, modeled after the clergy professional development series in 2022, included a panel, “This Is My Story, This Is My Song: 1,000 Cuts of Microaggressions,” during which laity and clergy from the North Shore shared their experiences of suffering from microaggressions here in our diocese and elsewhere in the church.

Small groups and parishes thinking about a Lenten study series may want to consider using the six-session course, *Race, Church, and Healing*. As noted above, each session includes a two-hour recording of the 2023 offering from Bryana Clover. For Lent 2024, a facilitator guide will be available to help leaders adapt the videos and the series to the needs of their particular context.

The work noted in cultivating relations with local Indigenous people and learning of their current cases, campaigns, is ongoing; and in 2024, the commission hopes to find ways to identify Native people “in our pews and in our pulpits,” as well as to continue the work with the tribes indigenous to the area we claim as the Diocese of Massachusetts.

The two projects with the Commission on Ministry noted above—on seeking ways to better recruit, form, deploy, and support clergy of color in the diocese and on developing practicum-based formation in hopes of creating a more culturally competent consortium of new clergy—will continue as well.

Finally, as noted above, the commission will be working on an Antiracist Strategic Plan, and we expect new activities and mandates for 2024 will come from that plan.

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Summary

Inquiries about the work of the RJC are periodically received. People from across the diocese want to know what the commission is doing. Some of those comments critically state, “The Racial Justice Commission is not doing anything!” The contents of this report will hopefully assuage that misunderstanding. As previously noted, the work in which the RJC is engaged is slow, hard, and challenging. It is not moving fast enough for some, while others believe the RJC is moving too quickly. Regardless of which expression best reflects your belief, you are invited to join us in the sacred work being undertaken by the RJC. At the very least, we hope you will track progress being made by the RJC through our webpage:

<https://www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission>. We also extend an invitation and encouragement for you to participate in the programs, events, conversations, and other activities to be presented by the RJC in the coming year.

Those interested in learning more about the commission and our work, and those motivated to join the work of one of our five subcommittees and working groups, are encouraged to contact our staff liaison, the Rev. Canon Dr. Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, (jbntagengwa@diomass.org; 617-416-8715), who can direct your inquiries to the appropriate people.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. W. (Will) H. Mebane, Jr. and the Rev. H. Mark Smith, co-chairs
The Rev. Canon Dr. Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, staff liaison
Jocelyn Collen, Administrative Support

On behalf of the subcommittee co-chairs, subcommittees, and working groups:

Structures and Systems

Co-Chairs: The Rev. Derrick Muwina, St. Peter’s Church, Cambridge; Kris Wile, St. Andrew’s Church, Framingham

Subcommittee members: Grace Clark, Trinity Church, Boston; Zena Link, Mission Institute; Helen Patmon, St. Stephen’s Church, Lynn; The Rev. Canon Martha Hubbard, Regional Canon for the Northern and Western Region (staff liaison)

Financial Systems and Structures

Co-chairs: The Rev. Morgan Allen, Trinity Church, Boston; Holly M. Carter, Ph.D., Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Hingham

Subcommittee members: Patricia Henderson, Christ Church, Hyde Park; ; The Rev. Hall Kirkham, St. Michael’s Church, Milton; The Rev. Paul Minor, All Saints’ Church, Belmont; The Rev. Paul Shoaf-Kozak, formerly with the Cathedral Church of St. Paul; Tamara Sobers, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan

Supporting BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, & Persons of Color) Individuals and Communities

Co-Chairs: The Rev. Jennifer Beal, St. Anne’s Church, N. Billerica; The Rev. Eva Ortiz, St. Stephen’s Church, Boston; Claudette Hunt, St. Andrew’s Church, Ayer

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Subcommittee members: The Rev. Zenetta Armstrong, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; The Rev. Joel Ives, Church of Our Saviour, Brookline; The Rev. Edwin Johnson, formerly of St. Mary's Church, Dorchester; The Rev. Canon Gregory Perez, Regional Canon for the Central Region, as of Oct. 1, 2023; Julia Slayton, formerly of Bethany House of Prayer; The Rev. Diane Wong, St. John's Church, Arlington; The Rev. Canon Dr. Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, Canon for Immigration and Multicultural Ministries (staff liaison); The Rev. Canon Kelly O'Connell, Regional Canon for the South Region (staff liaison)

Reparations

Co-chairs: Constance R. Perry, Trinity Church, Boston; The Rev. Chris Wendell, St. Paul's Church, Bedford

Subcommittee members: Michael Bent, St. Peter's Church, Beverly; Leonie Drummond, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; Louise Gant, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; The Rev. James M. Hairston, Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin, Boston; Wayne Kennard, St. Peter's Church, Weston; The Rev. Carol Morehead, Grace Church, Medford; Timothy Potter, St. Stephen's Church, Lynn; The Rev. Tamra Tucker, Cathedral Church of St. Paul and The Crossing, Boston.

Forming Active Antiracist Episcopal Communities

Co-Chairs: The Rev. Chitral de Mel, Church of the Good Shepherd, Dedham; Deborah Gardner Walker, St. Peter's Church, Beverly

Subcommittee members: Angel Figueroa, St. Mary's Church, Dorchester; The Rev. Jim Kodera, Wellesley College; Kelsey Rice-Bogdan; Life Together; The Rev. Ema Rosero-Nordalm; Carla Toussaint, Grace Chapel, Brockton; The Rev. Canon Edie Dolnikowski, Canon for Ordained Vocations (staff liaison); The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carol Gallagher (staff liaison)

Report on efforts to implement the 2022 Resolution, Fostering Right Relationships: The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Indigenous Episcopalians, and our Indigenous Neighbors.

Introduction

When the 2022 Diocesan Convention adopted the resolution [*Fostering Right Relationship: The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Indigenous Episcopalians and Our Indigenous Neighbors*](#), it charged the Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network of the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts ("the Network"), the Province I Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network, and the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Racial Justice Commission (RJC) to support the diocese in implementing the resolution. In early January, leaders from both the Network and the RJC met for preliminary discernment.

This was followed quickly by a much larger organizing meeting, designed to recruit a wider pool of team members. Invitees included those who had attended the October 2022 Indigenous Peoples' Day commemoration at Christ Church, Plymouth, members of both the Network and the RJC working group involved in developing relationships with Native people in the diocese, and others who had shown an interest in this work. Seventeen people, lay and ordained from across the diocese as well as from the Diocese of Western Massachusetts attended, and the meeting opened with reactions to the resolution from three Native leaders from the area. They noted that the resolution puts forward an ambitious list and will need to be prioritized; and that the resolution sounds good on paper but it is empty without implementation.

Recognizing the expansiveness of the resolution's charge, the group identified four areas around which to organize the work.

- Continue to cultivate relationships with an eye toward allyship
- Develop an annual Sunday celebration/commemoration, including resource materials to assist congregations
- Land Acknowledgement resources and recommendations—and cautions!
- Providing resources and opportunities for us to continue educating ourselves

The team publicized an introduction to these four areas, and an invitation to join, in the FYI newsletter as well as the Networking and Formation News throughout the spring of 2023.

Progress

• Relationships and Allyship

Building on the RJC working group's efforts in 2022, an expanded working group met regularly from February through October 2023, sharing with each other resources they had found helpful in understanding the history of Indigenous people in what is now eastern Massachusetts. They also invited guest speakers from tribes indigenous to this area to teach the group what each speaker might envision a relationship of allyship and accompaniment with the Episcopal Church in eastern Massachusetts might look like. Group members also attended events in an effort to meet our Native neighbors

where they are—these events included the Mashpee Wampanoag Powwow, the Chaubunagungamaug Nipmuc Powwow, a Naming Ceremony on the land of the Pocasset Wampanoags, and a presentation of the recently published book, *The Nashobah Praying Indians*, where one of the speakers was Strong Bear Medicine, himself a direct descendant of the Nashobah Praying Indians. Over the two-year period, the group had conversations, some one-time and some ongoing, with members of eight different tribes indigenous to the area. More work in this area is needed.

As the group took stock of what it had learned from these experiences and Native guides, it became clear that effective efforts toward allyship should be locally based (by deanery, cluster, or congregation) rather than diocesan. The rationale for this "local response" plan is two-fold.

First, for Native tribes and clans, their identity, traditions, and very spirit are indelibly linked to specific locations; so it seems clear that Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts' initial, collective responses at this time should be local, specifically tied to a place and a people.

Second, each tribe with whom the group spoke had different efforts and causes for which they seek allies. For example, the Chaubunagungamaug Tribal Council has been struggling for some time to establish recognition and memorialization of the many unmarked graves of Native people on Deer Island and Long Island, used as a prisoner-of-war camp during King Philip's War (1675-1676). The Pocasset Wampanoags seek legal and public relations assistance to regain full access to the ancestral lands and burial ground. The Littleton Historical Society is doing some interesting work with the Nashobah-Natick-Ponkapoag Praying Indians. The Herring Pond Wampanoags with whom we have spoken are particularly invested in the environmental protection and reclamation of their sacred waters (Herring Pond). Mashpee Wampanoags are also looking for allies in critical watershed protection efforts. A consortium of Mashpee, Herring Pond, and Aquinnah Wampanoags are struggling to reclaim ancestral artifacts now held by a local museum. We expect to learn of other opportunities for allyship as the work of relationship-building continues.

In order to facilitate this campaign of local efforts, the working group sees its role as, first, developing these initial relationships and then inviting congregations and others to use us as a resource in their own work of developing relationships with Indigenous peoples native to their specific area by introducing them to some of the Native people with whom we have begun a relationship, assuming that we have a resource for their area and that the resource person(s) give consent to being introduced.

- **Liturgical Commemoration and Liturgical Resources**

In response to the mandate to provide liturgical resources for commemorating Indigenous Peoples' Day and other appropriate observances within congregations and across the diocese, we have assembled several suitable texts from a wide range of backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous cultures and voices in North America. These liturgical texts are available as attachments and links on the Racial Justice Commission webpage: <https://www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission>.

Included in these resources is a rich library of liturgical texts titled “Worship in the Age of New Agape,” prepared by the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee of the Anglican Church of Canada and the Anglican Council of Indigenous People, found originally on the website of the Anglican Church of Canada. This resource includes guiding principles in crafting liturgies for communities of reconciliation, as well as opening prayers, Four Direction prayers, prayers for healing and reconciliation, litanies and responsive prayers, and eucharistic prayers, as well as examples of full services. Some of these texts have been used in congregational and diocesan liturgies here in Massachusetts.

We also have included examples of full services used to observe Indigenous Peoples’ Day (U.S.) and the National Indigenous Day of Prayer (Canada), including liturgies offered at All Saints’ Church in Minneapolis, Minn.; in the Diocese of Arizona; at the Old North Church in Boston; and our Diocese of Massachusetts observance in 2022.

Finally, we have provided links to resources found on websites of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada, as well as The Episcopal Church.

Additional resources will be added as they are identified.

- **Recommendations and Resources on Land Acknowledgement**

“Wherever we are, we are on Indigenous land. Any time settlers come together for a formal gathering, we have the opportunity to open with respect by acknowledging the land and Indigenous Peoples who have tended that land for many generations.”

General Convention resolutions C072 and D019—adopted in July 2022 and echoing some of the calls of our own Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts 2022 Convention—call for the implementation of “land acknowledgement liturgies and prayers to begin any public meetings or worship held in North America” and the promotion of Indigenous land acknowledgements “at all gatherings within the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society and its affiliate organizations.” In response to this, in June 2023, the Episcopal Church released *The Episcopal Church and Indigenous Land Acknowledgements* (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/06/IndMin-Land-Acknowledgment-Resource-EN-1-1.pdf>). Many congregations across our diocese have begun the practice of making land acknowledgement statements regarding the Indigenous people who used to live on the land they currently occupy, and in some cases still do. In order to fully implement the spirit of this resolution, we encourage our siblings in Christ to understand land acknowledgement as a process, not simply a statement.

Acknowledging the heritage of the land upon which we stand is holy and powerful work. However, many Indigenous voices urge that acknowledging the heritage of the land takes much more than simply writing a statement. Land acknowledgements, as one Native advocate put it, “shouldn't just make you feel good without actually contributing anything to [Indigenous] communities.” Instead, developing a land acknowledgement statement is just one part of a process of fully acknowledging the

heritage of the land. The Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery suggests that acknowledgement is a three step process: 1. Learn (“about the land where you live, and reflect on settler complicity in the Doctrine of Discovery”); 2. Write a statement; 3. Start a practice that fulfills a commitment to action on behalf of Native people and communities. A statement without this commitment to action can appear to Indigenous people as, in the words of one speaker, like “writing a thank you gift for something that was stolen.”

The Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery’s guide also offers some important guidelines for engaging Native people in your process of acknowledging the land and its heritage:

- Offer an honorarium if an Indigenous person gives feedback on your land acknowledgment or contributes artwork.
- Consider meeting in person (not just on the phone) and being willing to be the one who travels in order to meet with people.
- Different cultures see time differently, both in terms of meeting times and how long a process is taking. Try not to make assumptions.

For more, find links to the resources mentioned here and others posted on the Racial Justice Commission webpage, <https://www.diomass.org/racial-justice-commission>.

“Acknowledgement by itself is a small gesture. It becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and informed action. But this beginning can be an opening to greater public consciousness of Native sovereignty and cultural rights, a step toward equitable relationship and reconciliation.”

— Laurier Students’ Public Interest Research Group, Ontario, Canada

<http://www.lspirg.org/knowtheland>

• **Education and Formation**

The Indigenous Peoples’ Justice Network of the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts took the lead in developing and promoting education and formation opportunities. Many of these opportunities overlap with the “Right Relationships and Allyship” opportunities, attending many of the powwows that have taken place in the Commonwealth. Over the last couple of years, several members of our diocese have taken the Doctrine of Discovery course offered online by Bexley-Seabury, taught by either Bishop Carol Gallagher or The Rev. Canon Mary Crist. All who have highly recommended the course. You are encouraged to register for the next course being offered beginning in February 2024, led by Bishop Gallagher:

<https://bexleyseabury.pathwright.com/library/exploring-the-doctrine-of-discovery-for-province-i-175024/about/>

Book discussions have been a rich source of education and formation this year. The first online book discussion, led by Karen Hotte, St. Gabriel’s Church, Marion, was held to discuss Bishop Steven Charleston’s book *Ladder to the Light: An Indigenous Elder’s Meditations on Hope and Courage*. Starting in September of 2023, we are coordinating

with the Province I (i.e., the New England dioceses) Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network in a bi-monthly book study series. More than 80 people registered for the September 13 book discussion of *The Gatherings: Reimagining Indigenous-Settler Relationships* by Shirley N. Hager and Mawopiyane. See below ("Next Steps") for upcoming opportunities being planned.

The Diocese of Massachusetts and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts co-sponsored the second annual Indigenous Peoples Day celebration on October 9 at All Saints in Worcester. The day focused on sacred listening and responding, lunchtime conversations and a worship service of lament and commitment. In addition, a formation opportunity for children and opportunities for advocacy in the Commonwealth were featured. Planning for the third annual Indigenous Peoples' Day (to be held in the eastern part of the Commonwealth) will begin early in 2024 – contact Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation, at mgardner@diomass.org if you are interested in participating in the planning.

Next steps

We encourage congregations to take advantage of the many resources being made available.

The working group of the Racial Justice Commission will continue the hard and essential work of developing "Right Relationships" with our Indigenous neighbors under the auspices of the RJC's Subcommittee for the BIPOC Support Subcommittee. Priorities this year will include making an effort to identify and develop relationships with Native people "in our pews and our pulpits" as well as trying to recruit congregations, clusters, and deaneries interested in developing relationships with Native people in their areas, relationships with an eye to developing allies and companions.

The Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network of the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts continues to meet, continuing to create opportunities for individuals and communities across both dioceses to continue to educate ourselves regarding past and present relationships and interactions with Indigenous people in our midst and with our Indigenous neighbors. This ongoing work of unlearning and relearning the truth, particularly from the perspective of Native peoples, is essential groundwork for the work called for in this resolution, establishing right relations between our church and our Indigenous neighbors.

The Province I Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network's series of bimonthly book discussions include the following: Nov. 8: *This Land is Their Land: The Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving* by David J. Silverman; Jan. 10, 2024: *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*, by Lisa Brooks and March 13, 2024: *(Path Lit by Lightning: The Life of Jim Thorpe* by David Maraniss. Contact Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation, at mgardner@diomass.org for registration information.

The holy work of developing right relations between the church and our Indigenous neighbors continues, and there are plenty of opportunities to get involved. As Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful..." (Matthew 9:37, NIV) Those motivated to join this work are

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encouraged to contact Martha Gardner (mgardner@diomass.org), Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network of the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts) or the Rev. H. Mark Smith (hmsmith46@gmail.com), Racial Justice Commission.

Gratitude

We offer a special word of thanks to the Native people who have taught and advised us in this work. They have generously shared with us their wisdom, their stories, their heritage, and their spirit with graciousness, forthrightness, and patience.

Linda Coombs, Aquinnah Wampanoags and Wampanoag Consulting Alliance
Troy Currence, Herring Pond Wampanoags and Wampanoag Consulting Alliance
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carol Gallagher, Cherokee Nation and Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Penny Gamble, Chappaquiddick Wampanoags
Brad Lopes, Aquinnah Wampanoags
Alison Miller, Pocasset Wampanoags of MA and RI
Paula Peters, Mashpee Wampanoags and Wampanoag Consulting Alliance
Toma Raymore, Chappaquiddick Wampanoags
Love Richardson, Hassanamisco Nipmucs
Maria Turner, Hassanamisco Nipmucs
Anwan Weedon, Mashpee Wampanoags and Narragansetts
Kara Smith, Chappaquiddick Wampanoags
Heidi Tucker, Ho-chunk Tribe and Trinity Church, Stoughton
Ken White, Chaubunagungwa Nipmucs

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Matthew P. Cadwell, Ph.D., Old North Church/Christ Church in the City of Boston
Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
The Rev. H. Mark Smith, Racial Justice Commission

On behalf of those who participated in the work represented in this report (with apologies to any we may have inadvertently left out):

Becky Alden, St. David's Church, South Yarmouth; The Rev. Jennifer Beal, St. Anne's Church, North Billerica, The Rev. Kate Ekrem, Christ Church, Cambridge; Sue Entin, Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin, Boston; Julie Watt Faqir, St. Dunstan's Church, Dover; Charlotte Greeson, Westport Land Conservation Trust; Karen Hotte, St. Gabriel's Church. Marion; The Rev. Melissa Howell, Grace Church, New Bedford; Betsy Ridge, Church of the Advent, Boston; Kathy McAdams, St. John's Church, Franklin and Grace Church, N. Attleboro; Carol Radar, St. Barnabas's Church, Falmouth; Michael Scuderi, St. Andrew's Church, Longmeadow; Lynn Smith, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Registrar-Historiographer; The Rev. Barbara Smith-Moran, SOSc, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Sudbury; Alison Miller, Pocasset Wampanoags of MA and RI

Report on the Resolution from the 237th Convention titled: Equipping Ordained Leaders for the Work of Becoming the Beloved Community.

In response to and fulfillment of the resolution, members of the Commission on Ministry have met specifically on this topic seven times, members of the Racial Justice Commission and the drafting group have met four times, and members from each group have met jointly five times in the past year.

Thus far we have over that time gained deeper clarity around the spirit, scope, and intentions of the resolution, have sought feedback and guidance from the original drafters and others impacted by the work, and formed a joint task force to determine how best to implement the resolution.

In the early stages the group has discussed the gaps in formation that people have experienced and reported as they've emerged through the ordination process, noting that these gaps have been different for different people. For some, it is about being better equipped to serve in diverse contexts. For others, it is about hoping for more culturally competent clergy colleagues as companions in this work. We are also considering the unique ways that the implementation of this new requirement would manifest in the formation of persons of color in the ordination process. The joint task force, now formed, will move ahead to fully establish the parameters of the work.

This joint task force, with the support of the broader Commission on Ministry and Racial Justice Commission, hopes to have recommendations to put forth by Spring 2024. Depending on implementation requirements and funds available, we hope that those received into the ordination process in 2024 will begin their formation that Fall and therefore will be able to embark on their formational journey guided by the findings of this group.

Equipping Ordained Leaders for the Work of Becoming the Beloved Community

Resolved, that the 237th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, concurring with the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, affirms that “striving to become the Beloved Community of Jesus is central to our baptismal vocation in God’s mission, and every Episcopalian is called to a lifelong vocation of racial justice and equity and the dismantling of white supremacy”; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention affirms our call to improve our work of raising and forming ordained leaders in the Church equipped to companion us in this work, including building deep relationship and facilitating essential hard conversations; and be it further

Resolved, that, beginning with all individuals received into the ordination process in 2024 and thereafter, the formation process for ordination will include a significant experience of cross-cultural ministry in at least one internship, contextual education placement, or other supervised practicum placement in a context that will embed them in a worshipping community or other Episcopal context whose dominant racial, ethnic, and/or linguistic make-up is unfamiliar to the ordinand at the time of the placement; and be it further

Resolved, that the specific placement needs of the postulants and candidates for ordination to be determined by the Bishops, in consultation with the Commission on Ministry, as well as the Office of the Canon for Ordained Vocations, the Racial Justice Commission, the Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries, and other diocesan bodies that can help develop an ongoing list of suitable options; and be it further

Resolved, that these placements will be augmented by facilitated peer groups among postulants and candidates for ordination within the diocese, the intent being to form clergy who are able to engage in and lead difficult conversations within community, with these peer groups ideally meeting monthly for a year and that people connected to the evaluative process for the postulants and candidates for ordination be exempted from serving as facilitators; and be it further

Resolved, that these placements complement and do not replace the canonically required (didactic) Anti-Racism Training; and be it further

Resolved, that because participating in an Anti-Racism training designed for people who are white does not address the experience of people of color and may well be harmful to them, we commend all efforts of our Bishops and the Commission on Ministry to include, among the offerings they recommend, courses designed specifically for people of color, such as Healing from Internalized Oppression offered by The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that in recognition of the fact that we as the Episcopal branch of the Body of Christ in eastern Massachusetts live and move and have our being in increasingly multilingual ways, that all parish leaders, lay and ordained, be encouraged to develop proficiencies in multiple languages as appropriate in their ministry contexts, and that the diocese through its Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries be expected to develop a pool of resources to assist in such learning; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention affirms the work that our Bishops, the Commission on Ministry, the Office of the Canon for Ordained Vocations, the Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries, and the Racial Justice Commission have begun in their efforts to increase cultural competence among our ordinands and that the actions called for in this resolution are merely small parts of the broader, deeper work to which we are all called; and that members of these bodies be convened to create a working group, under the authority of the Bishop Diocesan, to determine the timing and specifics of this undertaking, with this joint working group reporting the progress of their work to the Diocesan Conventions of 2023 and 2024; and be it further

Resolved, that the Racial Justice Commission will work with the Commission on Ministry and Office of the Canon for Ordained Vocations to support the implementation of these placements and facilitated peer groups, including working with the Budget Committee to see that this program be adequately funded beginning in 2024.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The following is respectfully submitted as a summary of some of the activities and business of the diocesan Committee on Constitution and Canons since the 237th Convention.

In June 2023, the Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates, Bishop of Massachusetts, appointed five members of the diocese to reconstitute the diocesan Committee on Constitution and Canons. They are Daniel Dice, Eleanor Evans, Douglas Flores, Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, and Michael Thompson. Together, they bring a range of both not-for-profit organizational management and legal expertise. As the diocese hopes each parish and mission will do from time to time, the Committee has been tasked with reviewing the Diocesan Constitution and Canons, and, over the next several years, bringing to the Convention those things seen as salutary for its consideration.

This year, the committee is presenting one resolution, namely for the revision of Canon 14. A theme of this 238th Annual Convention is the notion of collaboration and of “doing church” in new ways. The proposed revision to the canons is to facilitate the support and integration of faith communities of the diocese beyond the traditional mission-to-parish model. It is certainly not the last word on this matter, but it is a start. Therefore the attached resolution is being submitted pursuant to Canon 21, §1 for the Amendment of the Canons.

Respectfully submitted,

THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The Rev. Daniel Dice, J.D., *Chair*

Eleanor Evans, Esq.

Douglas Flores, M.B.A.

The Rev. Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, J.D.

The Rev. Michael Thompson, Esq.

The Rev. Canon Bill Parnell, *ex officio*

Canon 14

ORGANIZATION OF PARISHES, MISSIONS, SUMMER CHAPELS, AND INTENTIONAL EPISCOPAL COMMUNITIES

Sec. 1. Procedure for Organizing Subject to the provisions of this canon, a mission or summer chapel may be organized as such by the adoption of a constitution or bylaws and the election of one or more wardens, an executive committee, a treasurer, and a clerk, and a parish may be organized as such, or a mission or summer chapel may be organized into a parish, by the adoption of a constitution or bylaws and the election by the parish of two wardens, a vestry, a treasurer, and a clerk; or alternatively, following election of the vestry, treasurer and clerk, one or both of the wardens may be appointed or elected from among the members of the vestry by such means as are authorized in such constitution or bylaws, but in each case only with the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee and only if such constitution or bylaws have been approved by them. The application for such consent shall set forth the number of communicants, the number of church school teachers and pupils, the prospects for future growth and such other information as may be deemed relevant, and shall be accompanied by a full statement of financial condition, income and expenses.

An Intentional Episcopal Community may be organized as such by the adoption of a constitution or bylaws, appointment by the Bishop of or election by its members of a governing body, and a petition for consent to the Bishop and the Standing Committee (a) affirming that such community will accede to the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church and the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese, (b) affirming that such community will be subject to the oversight of the Bishop, (c) affirming that such community will be loyal to the doctrine, discipline, and worship of Christ as The Episcopal Church has received them, and (d) containing or attaching a ministry covenant that describes the governance of the community and the rights and responsibilities of the community and Diocese in partnership. Upon the Bishop and Standing Committee granting consent to an Intentional Episcopal Community, the Bishop shall enter into the ministry covenant with the community.

Sec. 2. Conditions of Consent The Bishop and the Standing Committee shall not approve such constitution or bylaws unless in all respects consistent with the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese and containing a statement acceding to the doctrine, discipline and worship, and to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America and to the Constitution and Canons of this Diocese. They shall not consent to such organization unless they are satisfied that the applicant is adequately qualified for the status applied for, and if applying to be a parish, that it will be self-supporting.

Sec. 3. Notice to Neighboring Parishes and Missions Before giving consent to such organization, the Bishop and Standing Committee may, if they think advisable, give notice of such application to the neighboring parishes and missions, and offer them an opportunity to be heard or to submit their views and recommendations in writing.

Sec. 4. Reclassification of a Parish

(1) A parish which has voted to request reclassification as a mission, or which has failed to be self-supporting or to maintain public services for the past three years, may, after due notice of the proposed action has been given to the parish (unless it has requested

reclassification) and to the convener of the region in which the parish is located, be reclassified as a mission by the Bishop and the Standing Committee. The Secretary of the Standing Committee shall promptly notify the Secretary of the Corporation of any such action.

(2) Upon the recommendation of the Bishop and the Standing Committee, the Convention at the annual or any special session may vote to reclassify as a mission a parish which has not paid in full all its past and current assessments, in accordance with Canon 9, for a period of three (3) consecutive years prior to the annual or special session at which the foregoing vote is proposed to be taken. Notice of such proposed action shall be sent to the wardens and vestry of such parish at least thirty (30) days before the session at which such action is proposed to be taken.

(3) If a vote is taken, pursuant to the foregoing paragraph (2), to reclassify a parish as a mission, the Bishop is authorized to dismiss the wardens and vestry of the parish holding office at the time the vote is taken and to appoint a new warden or wardens and an executive committee.

Sec. 5. Revival of Parish A parish which has been reclassified as a mission may be revived, reestablished, or recognized as a parish under this canon with the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee upon submission to them of satisfactory evidence that it is qualified therefor.

Sec. 6. Constitution/ByLaws The constitution or bylaws of each mission, summer chapel and parish shall provide for an annual meeting of members of the congregation at which officers and vestry members shall be elected as therein provided. Each constitution or bylaw shall provide that any baptized person of age sixteen years or more who declares his or her intention to support the mission, summer chapel or parish by regular attendance at public worship and by financial aid shall be eligible for membership and entitled to vote at meetings of the members of the congregation. No constitution or bylaw shall preclude nominations for any office to be filled by an annual meeting from being made at such annual meeting by members of the mission, summer chapel or parish. The Standing Committee shall from time to time adopt and maintain a model bylaw for the guidance of missions, summer chapels and parishes of the Diocese, and the constitution or bylaws of each mission, summer chapel or parish shall at all times be in substantial compliance therewith, subject to such variations as the Bishop and Standing Committee may otherwise authorize.

Sec. 7. Intentional Episcopal Communities

(1) Each Intentional Episcopal Community must have a governance structure agreed to by the Bishop, which will be set out in the ministry covenant required by Canon 14, Section 1. An Intentional Episcopal Community may change its governance structure only with the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

(2) The Bishop shall make available to each Intentional Episcopal Community a system of support and accountability to encourage and enable the development of the community's life and ministry, including but not limited to: ministry from and visitation by a Bishop of the Diocese; access to diocesan grants, loans and insurance plans; and the use of trade and service marks of The Episcopal Church and the Diocese.

(3) Each Intentional Episcopal Community not in union with the Convention shall provide a report of its activities, ministry, and leaders annually to the Bishop in the format prescribed by the Bishop. Such report, so long as it substantially complies with the format prescribed by the Bishop, shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of Canon 16.

(4) Each Intentional Episcopal Community is responsible to live within a system of support and accountability that links its life and ministry with that of the Bishop and the Diocese, possibly including financial contributions. Whether and the level at which an Intentional Episcopal Community not in union with the Convention shall make financial contributions shall be determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Council.

(5) For an Intentional Episcopal Community not in union with the Convention, the Bishop, with the consent of the Standing Committee and upon no less than fourteen (14) calendar days' written notice to the Intentional Episcopal Community, may terminate the status of any group of individuals or organization as an Intentional Episcopal Community.

(6) An Intentional Episcopal Community may seek admission into union with the Convention under the provisions of Article 13, Section 2 of the Constitution as if such Intentional Episcopal Community were a mission. An Intentional Episcopal Community admitted into union with the Convention shall be subject to all the requirements of a mission in union with the Convention set forth in the Constitution and Canons in the same manner and with the same intent as if such Intentional Episcopal Community were a mission in union with the Convention.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

The committee presents three resolutions, found to be in order in the following form and hereby submitted to the 237th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

Continued Commitment to Racial Justice Work in the Diocesan and Cathedral Staff

Submitted by:

The Racial Justice Commission, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 238th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts commends the diocesan and cathedral staff for the initiative and dedication they have shown in their commitment to the work of becoming a more anti-racist community, under the leadership of the joint Diocesan/Cathedral Staff Anti-Racist Working Group; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention urges them to continue their work with an annual review of how their racial justice work has progressed during the intervening year; and be it further

Resolved, that the results of this annual review will be shared with the Racial Justice Commission through its Systems and Structures Subcommittee and be reported to the Diocesan Convention by The Racial Justice Commission; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention urges the Budget Committee of the Diocese of Massachusetts to allocate at least \$20,000 per year beginning with the 2025 budget to support this annual review of the progress and the staff's continued commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization, allowing them to access the tools, professional expertise, and other resources necessary for this assessment and their ongoing progress; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention urges all worshipping communities and organizations of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts to do the same work among their members.

Explanations For

- The diocesan staff made a commitment to engage in ongoing racial justice work in February 2021. Since that time, a working group of five to six staff members has met weekly to create a request for proposals and then review and select a consultant team to guide this work. Throughout this process, the work has been staff-led, with the full support of our bishops. The cathedral staff has been working in a very similar process and on a similar timeline, and this year, the two staffs have formed a single joint working group. The diocesan and cathedral staff is working with certified VISIONS consultants for a year, a group specializing in promoting multiculturalism and justice. The consultants completed an assessment of where the staff is and have begun initial workshops and dialogues to begin to move the staff forward. The process has been slow but valuable.

- The diocesan and cathedral staff want its racial justice work to remain central to its commitment to each of its members and the diocese on an ongoing basis. And, that staff recognizes that over time, new individuals will be joining as others depart. Therefore, a continual commitment and investment is necessary to maintain the staff members' accountability to one another and the diocese in this ongoing work.
- This resolution is the result of collaborative conversations between the Racial Justice Commission's Systems and Structures Subcommittee and the Diocesan/Cathedral Staff Anti-Racist Working Group, and this collaboration has deepened the working relationship between the two groups through sharing what each group is learning through this work.
- This resolution resonates with current diocesan mission strategy's goal to "Seek greater unity as members one of another." Specifically, the work called for in this resolution aligns with our diocesan commitment to "Engage in racial justice work with energy and intention, committing resources and time to learning...." (subgoal 5a) and "Participate in racial justice training and dialogue as a leadership team" (subgoal 5d).
- The joint Diocesan/Cathedral Staff Anti-Racist Working Group is aware of this proposed resolution and is encouraged by its submission to Convention.

Statements Against

- The diocese is spending too much time and energy on racial issues. Our focus and efforts should be on those in need regardless of their race.
- The diocese does not have enough money for this right now.
- Isn't the diocese doing enough already? This is duplicating work given to the Racial Justice Commission.

Implementation Requirements

The Budget Committee of the Diocese of Massachusetts is asked to allocate at least \$20,000 per year beginning with the 2025 budget to support an annual review of the progress and the staff's continued commitment to becoming an anti-racist organization.

Establish a Healthy Congregations Task Force

Submitted by:

Ms. Betsey Anderson, Congregational Consultant

The Rev. Daniel Bell

The Rev. Canon Martha L. Hubbard

The Rev. Canon Kelly A. O'Connell

The Rev. Gregory Perez

The Rev. Debbie Phillips

The Resolution

Resolved, that the 238th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts recognizes the critical importance of nurturing healthy communities as defined in our mission strategy; and be it further

Resolved, that the characteristics of a healthy congregation are many, including clergy and lay wellness, healthy power dynamics and boundaries, adherence to Safe Church practices, lay leadership development, and more; and be it further

Resolved, that we recognize the need for mental health support for our clergy and parishioners in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic; and be it further

Resolved, that the Bishops be requested to establish a Healthy Congregations Task Force, made up of clergy and lay members, including mental health professionals, with the mandate to identify the components of a healthy congregation, catalog the resources currently available, and recommend additional resources needed to support healthy congregational communities, with a particular focus on mental health supports, and make a report to the 239th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

Explanation

We are called by the second goal of our mission strategy to “nurture healthy communities where we can care for ourselves and each other.” In the mission strategy document, several commitments are called for by individuals and congregations, and by our bishops and Diocesan Council. Recognizing that this list of commitments is not necessarily complete, and understanding that many of the components of a healthy congregation need to be integrated in a holistic manner, a task force can provide the necessary focus to make comprehensive recommendations.

Statements Against

- There already exist resources and training to address many of the components of a healthy congregation, so the work of a task force would be repetitive.
- We adopted the mission strategy in 2021, so individuals, congregations, and the diocese should already be implementing these practices.

Implementation Requirements

Our bishops, in consultation with Diocesan Council and diocesan staff, would identify members of the task force to be appointed by our bishops no later than March 1, 2024. The task force would meet regularly to prepare a report which meets the submission deadline for the 239th Diocesan Convention. The task force would be accountable to Diocesan Council and report to the Council via the Mission Strategy Implementation Committee. The Task Force would make a mid-year interim report to Diocesan Council via the Mission Strategy Implementation Committee.

Budget Request

We respectfully request funding that totals \$1,000 in support of this important work, which would be funded by the mission strategy budget. These funds would go towards refreshments for meetings held by the task force to thank members for their time and energy, and to compensate a consultant.

On the Intent, Purpose, Governance, and Accountability of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Reparations Fund

Submitted by
The Racial Justice Commission

Resolved, that, building upon the resolutions passed by this body in 2008, 2009, 2020, 2021, and 2022, the 238th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts adopts the following Statement of Intention and Purpose for the Reparations Fund:

The Reparations Fund of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts exists to help repair the breach of systemic racism in the life of our diocese, region, and nation, by resourcing Black communities to flourish in myriad ways. Focused on systemic solutions to present-day racial disparities whose origins lie in the sin of American slavery, the Fund's mission is to counteract and redress ongoing social, economic, educational, judicial, medical, political, and other harm caused to African Americans and Afro Caribbeans.

The purpose of the Fund is to provide a vehicle for our diocese to come together in acknowledgement of our communal responsibility as followers of Jesus Christ for repairing the legacies of American slavery. These legacies harmed many Black people through several centuries, and they continue to harm people of all races in the form of persistent fractures within the Beloved Community, in which God yearns for us all to experience belonging. The harms of systemic racism have been perpetuated through the centuries by individuals and institutions connected with our diocese; and they have also, at times, been resisted by individuals and institutions connected with our diocese. The Fund is a key part of our renewed collective commitment to seek relational and systemic wholeness within the life of our diocese, Eastern Massachusetts, and our nation.

And be it further

Resolved, that, the guiding principles for the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Reparations Fund be as follows:

- A. The Reparations Fund is a long-term commitment of our diocese and will be used in ways that promote both repair for all and redress for those who have been harmed by the institution of American slavery and its legacies.
- B. The Reparations Fund will support systemic solutions in response to the ongoing legacies of racism that resulted from American slavery and continue to harm our society through unjust outcomes in housing, education, criminal justice, health care, food security, religion, and other aspects of our common life.
- C. Those governing the Reparations Fund will prioritize relationship building with African American and Afro Caribbean communities and organizations committed to serving these communities in our region as part of their ongoing discernment work.
- D. The Reparations Fund will be focused primarily on supporting communities within the geographic borders of our diocese, and may include both church-based organizations and those based outside of church settings.

E. The Reparations Fund's activities may include disbursements, loans, investments, and other financial mechanisms to promote the goals of the Fund. Attention will be paid to the economic diversity within African American and Afro Caribbean communities, to ensure that repair efforts reach economically disadvantaged members of these communities.

F. The Reparation Fund's investment goals and policies will consider both long-term return on investment and how the Fund's investment allocations can advance the mission of reparations.

G. The Reparations Fund is organizationally accountable to the Diocese of Massachusetts through its leadership, governance structures, and policies, and is morally accountable to the African American and Afro Caribbean communities of Eastern Massachusetts.

And be it further

Resolved, that this Convention calls for the creation of a Reparations Fund Committee to oversee the Fund, to be formally constituted by the diocesan bishop (with the approval of Diocesan Council) under their canonical authority as part of our diocesan organizational structure. We renew our call that the Fund Committee consist predominantly of people from the communities suffering generations of harm, which the Fund exists to redress and repair. We further call for the Fund Committee to: include geographic representation from all three regions of our diocese, consist of both lay and clergy members of our diocese, and be given authority to ensure that the Fund's mission, operations, investments, and funding activities are consistent with the guiding principles adopted by this Convention.

Explanation for the Resolution

Why is there another reparations resolution this year?

Last year's Convention voted to direct the Racial Justice Commission to propose to the 2023 Convention a set of Guiding Principles for our diocese's Reparations Fund, along with a structure for creating a body to oversee and administer the Fund's activities. This resolution responds to Convention's request last year to carry our reparations work forward.

How was this resolution developed?

Since the last Convention, the Racial Justice Commission (through its Reparations Subcommittee) has engaged with a range of stakeholders within and beyond our diocese to discern how best to meet Convention's request. These have included: conversations with other Episcopal dioceses that are also creating Reparations Funds; holding additional listening sessions especially for African American and Afro Caribbean members of our diocese; ongoing engagement with congregations in our diocese wishing to learn more about the reparations movement; conversation with our partners at Episcopal City Mission; as well as discussions with our bishops, the treasurer of the diocese, the chancellor of the diocese, and the Executive Committee of Diocesan Council. The resolution before you is informed by all these conversations, along with the discernment of the Reparations Subcommittee and the Racial Justice Commission (both of which are bodies made up of a majority of people of color). All told, this resolution is informed by the input of well over 200 people.

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The Statement of Intention and Purpose for our Reparations Fund is rooted in the belief that our Reparations Fund is a key component of repairing the racial harm in our community due to slavery and its legacies of racism. The Bible contains several passages about one generation repairing harms that were caused by the actions of previous generations (Exodus 12; Isaiah 58; Ezra 1; Ezra 6). No one alive today participated in the institution of American slavery; nor is anyone alive today individually responsible for it (though many have benefited from its economic legacies). But together, we are all responsible for repairing its lasting harms: through truth-telling, through amendment of our common life, and through our financial commitments to dismantle the structures and effects of systemic racism. This is holy, generational, biblical work, to which we are called by Christ, and which we have accepted in our Baptismal Covenant. As such, the Fund is envisioned as a long-term commitment, that will build value gradually at first and ultimately provide ongoing funds for us to address these moral imperatives.

The Guiding Principles for the Fund:

- + Prioritize redressing and repairing *systemic* harms across society.
- + Center relationship building with African American and Afro Caribbean communities.
- + Focus our support within the geographic area of our diocese.
- + Allow for support of efforts both within and beyond the church.

What does this mean?

Some reparations efforts focus on identifying individuals who can trace their ancestral connections to slavery. However, in recognition of the fact that the legacies of slavery create systemic harms affecting many Black people regardless of their individual ancestry, our Fund will focus on providing redress for the *systemic* anti-Black biases that pervade our social systems. What might this look like? It could involve scholarship funding to address educational inequities. It could involve funding local organizations working to reverse long-standing racial disparities in health care outcomes or incarceration rates. It could involve repairing historical diocesan neglect by directing support to our historically Black congregations. It could involve investing in ways that empower local Black-owned small businesses. It could involve engaging with housing initiatives that increase homeowner equity in African American and Afro Caribbean communities in Eastern Massachusetts. There are many other possibilities as well. The specific discernment of particular initiatives will be up to the Fund Committee members, in keeping with the Guiding Principles.

Who will discern the use of Funds?

Recognizing that reparations is a relational movement, not a grant program or check-writing effort, the discernment of specific uses of our Fund's assets will belong to a Fund Committee made up of members of our diocese. As previously directed by Convention, this Fund Committee will consist of a majority of people from the communities most harmed by slavery and its legacies of racism. This is particularly important because it allows the discernment of how we repay the moral debt of slavery to be led by people from the communities to whom that debt is owed. It will also contain geographic diversity within our diocese, and include both clergy and laity. Building and maintaining relationships within African American and Afro Caribbean communities and organizations serving their needs in Eastern Massachusetts will be a key quality of Fund Committee members.

How will the Fund Committee be created?

The resolution calls upon the bishop diocesan to create a reparations Fund Committee, with the approval of the Diocesan Council, under existing canonical authority. While many options for creating an oversight group for the Reparations Fund were considered, this option provided for the best balance between: the flexibility needed for this new endeavor specifically focused on repairing racial harm, the range of skill sets necessary for the Fund Committee to perform the various tasks assigned to it, the need for the racial make-up of the committee to have credibility throughout our diocese, and the accountability required for a body overseeing diocesan assets.

How will the Fund operate transparently and accountably?

Like any other diocesan fund, our Reparations Fund will be part of the diocesan financial operation and subject to the same auditing, controlling, reporting, transparency, and accountability structures in place under our canons and policies. Faithful reporting of the Fund's activities, investments, and expenditures will ensure that our Fund's initiatives are clearly visible to our diocese.

Does this resolution allocate any more money to the Reparations Fund?

No. The revenue streams for the Reparations Fund were established by Convention last year. This resolution adds no additional money to the Fund.

Why doesn't this resolution address Indigenous reparations?

All five of our Convention resolutions calling for economic reparations going back to 2008 have affirmed our collective intent to redress and make repair for American slavery and its specific legacies. In the past two years, our diocese has begun engaging separately in (much earlier stage) efforts to build relationships with local Indigenous communities. That journey of truth-telling, reckoning, and reconciliation, rooted in its particular historical and present day circumstances, is related but different, requiring its own path (learn more in the "Report on Fostering Right Relationships..." found in the Convention Handbook).

Statements Against the Resolution

Reparations are a fundamentally flawed concept because they keep us stuck looking backwards towards our racist past, rather than forward towards a colorblind society.

The Guiding Principles shouldn't allow for funding church-based efforts at repairing harm because the Church has been too involved in perpetuating the racism we are seeking to redress.

Repairing racial harm shouldn't be part of the Reparations Fund's investment goals. We should only try to maximize the Fund's investment gains so that we can have more money to give away.

We don't need a separate Fund Committee to determine how the Reparation Fund's monies will be spent and invested. This work can be folded into existing diocesan structures.

Implementation Requirements

The first two resolve clauses are policy statements, and will only require that all those under Convention's authority adhere to those policies. The third resolve calls upon the diocesan

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bishop (with Council's approval) to form the Reparations Fund Committee to appoint its members. This will require their time and attention. We also envision that both the Nominating Committee of our Diocesan Council and our Racial Justice Commission will assist the bishop in identifying possible candidates for appointment to the Fund Committee.

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ROBERT'S RULES

The following is a very brief and highly condensed review of the various motions that can be made according to Robert's Rules of Order, generally accepted as a manual of Parliamentary Procedure. This condensation is a general guide only and does not begin to address the many exceptions and complexities of Parliamentary Procedure.

General Classification of Motions (these are in ascending order of precedence, i.e. the Principal or Main Motion has no precedence over any other motion):

Principal or Main Question or Motion: This must be moved and seconded before Subsidiary or Incidental Questions can be moved.

Subsidiary or Secondary Motions: These take precedence of a Principal Question and must be decided before the Principal Question can be acted upon.

- Postpone Indefinitely
- Amendment
- Amend the Amendment
- Refer to a Committee
- Postpone to a Definite Time
- Limit or Extend Debate * +
- Call the Previous Question (Close debate) * +
- Lay on the Table *

Incidental Questions: These arise out of other questions and take precedence of and are to be decided before the questions which give rise to them. These cannot be amended and are undebatable except an Appeal (which is debatable when it relates to rules of speaking or priority of business or while a previous question is pending).

- Withdraw a Motion *
- Suspend the Rules * +
- Read Papers (Request for reading of the motion before a vote is taken) *
- Point of Order *
- Point of Information *
- Objection to the Consideration of a Motion * +
- Division of a Question *
- Division of Assembly (Vote by Orders) *
- Appeal (to a ruling of the Chair)

Privileged Questions: These take precedence of all other questions whatever and are undebatable:

- Call for Orders of the Day (specific motions to be considered at a specific time) *
- Questions relating to the Rights and Privileges of the Assembly or its Members *
- Take Recess *
- Adjourn *
- Fix time to Adjourn *

A call for Quorum is appropriate at any time and is non-debatable.

* Undebatable + Requires two-thirds vote

Note: *The standing diocesan Rules of Order, which are part of the diocesan canons, give some information about the precedence of certain motions. Below is a summary of some of these Rules:*

Rule IV lists these specific motions in this order of precedence: 1) to lay on the table; 2) to postpone to a day certain; 3) to postpone indefinitely; 4) to limit debate by taking a vote at a time certain, or by determining the time allowed for each speech; (5) to commit; and 6) to amend.

Rule V states that a motion with distinct propositions can be divided at the request of any member.

Rule VI states that all amendments will be considered in the order in which they are moved. An amendment may be amended, but no amendment may be made to the second amendment, but a substitute for the whole matter may be made.

Rule VII states that a motion to lay upon the table shall be decided without debate.

Rule XII states that a question having been decided shall not be reconsidered during the same session, without the consent of two-thirds of the members present, nor unless the motion to reconsider be made and seconded by members who voted in the majority on the original motion.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

COLLABORATIVE MINISTRIES WORKING GROUP REPORT

- ⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor
¹⁰ If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.
But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.
¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?
¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.*
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

As we gather at Convention to discuss the theme of collaboration, the Collaborative Ministries Working Group would like to share some of the work being done to support collaboration throughout our diocese. Our working group is called to support congregations in coming together in collaboration. We must acknowledge that the word “collaboration” is heard by some as a substitute for merger or a euphemism for closing and by others as yoking of congregations or sharing of clergy. However, this is not reflective either of the full scope of collaborations happening in our diocese today or what is possible in the future. We have spent much of 2023 listening to members of our diocese in active collaboration and, in doing so, have developed a broader definition of collaborative ministry, elements of which can offer opportunity to every congregation in our diocese.

Our working definition of “collaborative ministry” includes:

Shared clergy: Congregations that share clergy with part-time allocations to each.

Shared ministry and worship: Congregations that come together for worship, study, or mission work. Some examples of this from our diocese include joint youth programs, joint confirmation classes, refugee resettlement support, Zoom Bible studies, and other adult formation and environmental study and conservation work.

Shared operations: Congregations that share non-clergy resources, ranging from part-time administrators to shared purchasing of supplies and services, which often reduces costs.

We are in a new missional age, in which collaboration will both be necessary for sustainability and a source of nourishment for our souls. As with all that is new, there is not a known path or how-to book. We are all learning together as we explore models of collaboration that work for our many different congregations. The Holy Spirit is calling us to work together.

Our Work in 2023

We sought to understand what collaborations are currently happening in our diocese and what resources would be most useful to those congregations discerning whether to engage in collaboration. To accomplish this, we invited clergy and lay leaders who are engaged in collaboration to separate conversations in order to hear their candid responses to the following questions:

- What has surprised you or brought you joy in your collaboration?
- What have you struggled with?
- What do you wish you had known or had asked at the beginning?
- What advice would you give to others considering collaboration?
- What in this discussion has resonated most with you? (lay leaders only)

Themes from the Discussions

Collaboration is happening in our diocese in many places and many ways and these stories should be shared.

In our conversations, we heard about many models of collaboration from throughout our diocese and even into neighboring dioceses (Western Massachusetts and Rhode Island). In fact, the extent and variety of the collaborations was a pleasant surprise to many of the participants, who are often only in regular communication with congregations in their deaneries. Participants expressed a wish that we could find more ways to work together and to share how we all are working together.

Those in collaboration were grateful to share and learn from one another and wanted more opportunities to connect; existing structures do not allow time to focus on these common challenges.

In both cohorts of our discussion groups, participants expressed an eagerness to continue the dialogue, whether through a regular experience, sharing meeting or shared contact lists to reach out to one another. Within our sessions, participants were excited to hear how others had addressed their common challenges and to share their own successes and honest struggles.

They expressed that existing diocesan structures did not effectively engage in conversations about the issues facing our congregations today or offer an opportunity to learn and share from each other. Establishing new mechanisms to foster honest conversation will engender deeper and more meaningful relationships that are at the foundation of collaboration.

There was great joy in collaboration, particularly in shared worship.

One of the common themes of our conversations was that the topic of collaboration is too often associated with desperation and scarcity. However, for those engaged in collaboration, a highlight has been in sharing worship. Participants talked about being able to share duties by offering joint classes and finding fulfillment engaging in mission together.

Finding more concrete opportunities for shared worship, study and work together will invite new conversations about collaboration.

Collaboration through shared clergy has challenges that can only be navigated with mutual trust, ongoing intentional conversation and clear expectations.

We heard that the largest challenge in collaboration with shared clergy was having a clear understanding of the many demands, and associated hours of work, of the clergy. Both clergy

and lay leaders expressed that they wished they had spoken more about how they would work together in a part-time model and been clear on the necessary tradeoffs.

- Administrative work and meetings are an additional and often unrecognized burden that falls disproportionately on shared clergy who must handle these responsibilities for two parishes.
- Timing of services for shared clergy is always a struggle and different congregations will find their own compromises, but need to experiment and revisit them.
- ¼ time clergy allocation is particularly challenging; 10 hours per week allows little more than Sunday service.

The shift to more part-time clergy is both culturally and logistically challenging. There needs to be exploration about how congregations can share the burden of administrative tasks and this work must also be assessed in its value to determine what elements are necessary and what can be delegated or discontinued.

Collaborative Ministries Working Group: Plan for 2024

1. **Continue to develop model covenant(s) of holy friendship and a set of questions for consideration by congregations contemplating collaborations.** Providing a list of common questions that arise in collaborative relationships and facilitating open and intentional conversation about them at the outset can build the trust and relationships foundational to successful partnerships. In conjunction with others in our diocese who work in clergy deployment and congregational development and support, we will develop and refine these questions and agreements to facilitate those considering and entering collaborative relationships.
2. **Offer training programs for congregational consultants to support congregations in collaboration, particularly in clergy-sharing.** As congregations increasingly move to part-time cures, Congregational Consultants can be a support in the process if they are trained to understand common issues and models of collaboration. We are in conversation with outside experts to plan such a training.
3. **Establish mechanisms for those in or interested in collaboration to connect.** We will create multiple ways for collaborators and potential collaborators to connect, such as:
 - a. Facilitate formation of discussion groups around collaboration. This may include an affinity group for part-time clergy, a network of collaboration coaches to offer support to those considering collaborative opportunities or regular Zoom discussion panels. We would welcome ideas for these groups and sessions.
 - b. Develop and make accessible a list of existing collaborations and contact information for peer companions to provide advice to those exploring collaboration.

- c. Build a list of guided discussion questions and considerations for those beginning the journey of collaboration.

Collaborative Ministries Working Group Members

Tom Barrington	Martha Hubbard
Walter Connelly	Tammy Hobbs Miracky
Helen Daley	Kelly O'Connell
Daniel Dice	Lynn Smith
Martha Gardner	Suzanne Wade
Beth Grundy	Rachel Wildman
Megan Holding	

Past Members

Carol Gallagher
Eric Litman
Helen Pickard
Harry Walton

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT

The Commission on Ministry (COM) has the privilege of working with the bishops as they select and guide the formation of postulants and candidates in preparation for ordination to both the diaconate and priesthood. Our work is supported by many others, including sponsoring parishes and clergy, parish discernment committees, internship and field education parishes, seminaries, spiritual directors, and the families and friends of postulants and candidates.

Members of the COM serve as liaisons to parish discernment committees and as advisors to postulants and candidates, and they meet regularly with the bishops and the canon for ordained vocations. They work in collaboration with the Standing Committee to make the ordination process accessible and to improve coordination and communication among all those who participate in the work of discernment in this diocese. The COM is committed to identifying and addressing racial and other biases in our discernment and formation programs, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration with the Standing Committee and the Racial Justice Commission to continue this vital work, which has begun this year with a working group and subcommittees that include members of both the COM, the RJC, and others from our diocese, addressing the discernment process, cross-cultural experiences in the formation process, and the revision of the Handbook for Discernment for Ministry.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and guidance of many in this diocese and beyond who help to form those who are called to ordained leadership in the church. We particularly value the contributions of clergy and laity in preparing postulants and candidates for diaconal ministry and we give thanks for the collegial support of faculty at seminaries and divinity schools.

We are grateful to all the members of the COM and the chaplains to our postulants and candidates. We are pleased to report that the Rev. Edwin Johnson accepted Bishop Gates's invitation to serve as an additional co-chair of the COM. Expanding the leadership team at this time helps us better respond to the increasing work of the COM as we seek to help equip disciples for God's call to the church today: inviting and forming new deacons and priests to represent the diverse communities they serve, and to explore new paths of ministry in a changing world. We offer special thanks to Ms. Kay Ridgard who served as co-chair and completed a term of service on the COM and the Rev. Eric Litman, who also completed a term of service. We welcome the Rev. Virgilio Fortuna and the Rev. Clifford Goodridge as new members of the COM, and the Rev. Marilee Comerford and the Rev. Marilyn McMillan, who have joined our team of chaplains to postulants and candidates. We would also like to thank the Rev. Dr. Edith Dolnikowski for her unwavering support and wise guidance to both the members of the COM and the postulants and candidates in the ordination process.

COM Statistics for 2023

In 2022 the commission received commitment forms from 16 inquirers, 11 of whom submitted applications for postulancy after having worked with their parish discernment committees. Eleven applicants were invited to interview and 11 inquirers were admitted to postulancy on June 1, 2023, nine for the priesthood and two for the diaconate.

The COM continues to award scholarship assistance to those preparing for Holy Orders. Funding for this assistance comes from a diocesan endowment created in 2001 to support theological education and from donations to the bishops' discretionary funds received during parish visitations. This year the COM awarded \$75,000 to 11 postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons. Scholarships ranged from \$3,500 to \$9,000 per person. These scholarships help to address both living expenses during formation and, in some cases, the significant amount of debt incurred by those in the ordination process, which has long-term effects on employment decisions.

The commission reports the following data for the past year:

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Since our last Diocesan Convention eight transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood. On June 3, 2023 the Rt. Rev. Carol J. Gallagher and the Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates ordained one candidate to the diaconate and nine to the transitional diaconate at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston.

As of July 1, 2023, there were 34 people in the ordination process as postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons – 29 for the priesthood and five for the diaconate. They come from 28 sponsoring congregations throughout 10 deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of the 11 new postulants this year:

Year	Priesthood	Diaconate	Combined
2023	39	60	42

The average age of new postulants over the preceding years:

Year	Combined
2022	43
2021	40
2020	38
2019	45
2018	28
2017	42
2016	44
2015	38
2014	50
2013	43
2012	41
2011	36
2010	47
2009	45

Our current membership roster is as follows (as of October 2023): the Rev. Dr. Margaret Arnold, the Rev. Dr. Richard Burden, the Rev. Lynn Campbell, Ms. Rachael Chagat, Dr. Laura Crain, the Rev. Virgilio Fortuna, the Rev. Clifford Goodridge, Dr. Melva James, the Rev. Edwin Johnson, the Rev. Dr. Kapyra John Kaoma, the Rev. Sarah Mato, Mr. Graeme Mills, the Rev. Dr. James Weiss, the Rev. Diane Wong and the Ven. Patricia Zifcak. The Rev. Anoma Abeyaratne, the Rev. Marilee Comerford, the Rev. Dr. David Killian, the Rev. Marilyn McMillan and the Rev. Leslie Sterling serve as chaplains to our postulants and candidates.

We want to thank the members of the COM for their deep commitment to this ministry. Our diocese is blessed to have these wonderful souls at work, discerning the future leadership of the church. It is our privilege and joy to work with them.

Faithfully Submitted by:
Maggie Arnold, Edwin Johnson, and Graeme Mills
Co-chairs, Commission on Ministry

CREATION CARE JUSTICE NETWORK REPORT

The [Creation Care Justice Network](#) welcomes members from both Episcopal dioceses in Massachusetts. All are welcome to [sign up to join our network](#). We are still without formal leadership, but the co-facilitators of the Action & Advocacy subgroup unofficially keep things going, with the active support of the members of the group working on An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice and its project manager.

- (1) Although we have not held any general gatherings this year, we continue to distribute a monthly newsletter, thanks to the diligent work of our editor, Deacon Liz Good, who prepares and sends *Green Justice News* to more than 500 subscribers across the state and the country. You are welcome to [subscribe here](#).
- (2) Responsibility for updating the diocesan [Creation Care webpage](#) is also shared; our goal is to have seasonally appropriate postings about four times per year: Winter=Advent/Christmas/Epiphany; Spring=Lent/Easter/Earth Sunday; Summer=Rogation/Pentecost; Fall=Season of Creation. The webpage links to a [resource list](#) that is more easily updated with emerging opportunities and resources. Special thanks to the Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas for graciously allowing us to borrow from her newsletters.
- (3) Our chief accomplishment this year has been the intensive work done by the small group working to create An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice. This is a structured program of creation care for parishes who wish to respond to the [Bishops' call](#) for a faithful response to the climate emergency. A brochure we distributed at last year's Convention describes the Path and is [available here](#).
- (4) Generous gifts from both dioceses allowed us to hire a project manager late last year. The Rev. John Elliott Lein brought both a theological perspective and technical skills that enabled him to create a visually appealing structure and appearance for the Path. This allowed him to identify and fill gaps in the original spreadsheets. John completed his tenure this past summer and once again, funds were found to hire the Rev. Rachel Field to replace him. She brings expertise and enthusiasm that is inspiring to the volunteers and is moving the Path forward! Her primary responsibility will be to shepherd the project into and through a pilot phase.
- (5) All of this has been wonderfully supported not only by the two dioceses, but also by a \$20,000 grant from The Episcopal Church's Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism, and by a \$10,000 Inter-Diocesan Partnership Grant from Executive Committee of Episcopal Province of New England (Province I). We are both excited and humbled by the positive attention our Path has received from The Episcopal Church's Ministry of Creation Care, Province I, and from dioceses across the country.
- (6) This summer we began recruiting congregations from across Massachusetts to participate in the pilot/trial period. Participants will work with trained companions to discern the Path their community of faith is called to follow in response to the climate emergency. Each parish is at a different point in this journey, but all will explore ways to Pray, Learn, Act, and Advocate. The tiered structure will allow each congregation to

start where they are and progress along an increasingly challenging program of action at their own pace, drawing upon given suggestions and building on their own situation and experience.

- (7) We plan to launch this pilot project with an announcement at Convention, and to conclude the trial period in April 2024. We are planning an exciting Earth Day weekend celebration for Saturday, April 20. This will feature well-known climate advocates in a joyful and inspiring day of workshops and worship.

We offer deep thanks to both the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts for their ongoing support. Thanks also to the Creation Care Ministry of The Episcopal Church. We are deeply honored to play a role in our Church's "Loving, Liberating, and Life-Giving" response to the climate emergency.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Swanson,
on behalf of the Episcopal Creation Care Justice Network in Massachusetts

MISSION STRATEGY REPORT

Our Mission Strategy is rooted in becoming the people we long to be: ***Disciples of Jesus, Seekers of Justice and Protectors of Creation***. To accomplish that, eight Mission Strategy goals were created and approved at the 236th Convention (2021). At the 237th Convention (2022), we presented four defined priorities for our work in 2023:

- Improve our mental health support for clergy and lay leaders (goal 2)
- Facilitate strong collaborations (goal 4);
- Clarifying and making more accessible the resources of our diocese in advancing Mission Strategy;
- Understand and communicate the Mission Strategy work occurring at congregations

Along with four “quick wins”:

- Initiate joint opportunity for formation and prayer (goal 1)
- Promote Safe Church (goal 2)
- Provide Evangelism training and tools (goal 3)
- Identify baseline and develop tools to measure progress toward our goals (goal 8)

Below are the highlights of the progress made in our diocesan Mission Strategy.

Goal 1 – Invite robust Christian formation at all points of life. In late 2022, the *St. Paul Center for Theology and Prayer* (TSPC) was created. TSPC, a partnership between the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, with regional sites at St. Paul’s, Newburyport and St. Thomas’s, Taunton, has three fundamental avenues: continued education for clergy, lay formation and licensing, and vocational discernment. For more information, visit <https://www.stpaulboston.org/tspc> or contact Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation at mgardner@diomass.org

Goal 2 – Nurture healthy communities where we care for ourselves and each other. Prior to Diocesan Convention in 2022, a wellness survey was sent to all clergy in the diocese, active and retired. The responses were gathered and compiled into a comprehensive report. However, we realized that the responses gathered did not thoroughly represent the clergy of the diocese, e.g., responses from BIPOC clergy were not well represented. A summary of the responses and recommendations were shared with the bishops, canons, and members of Diocesan Council. Work continues on arranging listening sessions with clergy and next steps for 2024.

Goal 3 – Share the Good News. At the 237th Diocesan Convention in October 2022, each congregation was given a copy of the book *Invite, Welcome, Connect*. In addition, the Mission Strategy Committee encouraged congregations to visit the *Invite, Welcome, Connect* website to avail themselves of the videos and resources. Three information webinars were held to discuss the *Invite, Welcome and Connect* program and the Rev. Andi Taylor, co-chair of the Mission Strategy Committee, hosted a three-session class online which went into more detail about the program. If your congregation did not receive its copy of the book and/or you’d like more information about the program, contact Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation, at mgardner@diomass.org.

Goal 4 – Seek greater unity as members of one another. Please refer to the report submitted by the members of Goal Group 4, covering their collaborative efforts in our diocese,

with other dioceses, denominations, and the wider community. See also the report submitted by the Collaborative Ministry Working Group.

Goal 5 – Commit to our own growth as people who live in right relationship with one another. This work is happening in many ways in our diocese. Please refer to two reports which highlight examples of this work: one, by the Racial Justice Commission, and the second, the report on efforts to implement the 2022 resolution, *Fostering Right Relationships: The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Indigenous Episcopalians, and Our Indigenous Neighbors*.

Goal 6 – Work together against the climate crisis. Please refer to the report submitted by the Creation Care Justice Network.

Goal 7 – Influence public policy by advocating for all people and for the creation. This has been designated for work in 2024.

Goal 8 – Communicate our progress regularly and transparently. The committee has created a preliminary dashboard to update our diocese about work being done on the parish and diocesan levels towards achieving our Mission Strategy goals. Once finalized, it will be available to all on the Mission Strategy page of the diocesan website.

The Mission Strategy Committee awarded micro-grants to congregations who are implementing the goals of the mission strategy in their congregation and community. Micro-grants awards provided financial assistance to congregations whose initiatives fall within our Mission Strategy goals.

2022 Micro-grants awarded:

- Grace Church, Salem: \$750 towards its “Little Free Antiracism Library,” to restock new titles.
- Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston: \$880 towards its Waiting to Welcoming, Advent to Christmas concert.
- All Saints’ Church, Attleboro: \$900 towards upgrading its lighting and energy efficiency.

Additional Grants made in 2022:

- ProGente Connections, MetroWest Mission Hub: \$12,000 bridge grant for operating expenses.

2023 Micro-grants awarded as of September 1, 2023:

- St. Andrew’s, Ayer: \$1,000 towards its annual display of over 300 Nativity scenes from all over the world.
- St. Stephen’s Memorial Church, Lynn: Kids in Community Summer Program: \$1,000 towards creating a literacy program exploring racially affirming books for Brown and Black children.
- Life Together/ St. Mark’s, Dorchester: \$1,000 towards an event hosted by the young adults of St. Mark’s Church and Life Together fellows, the Dorchester Community Resource Fair.
- St. John’s, Arlington: \$1,000 towards the purchase of an OWL to enhance its hybrid meetings.
- St. John’s, Jamaica Plain: PENDING. \$225 for the honorariums for its free, public social justice event.

- St. Paul's, Hopkinton: PENDING \$1,000 towards the purchase of equipment such as a computer (including monitor), Bluetooth camera, and microphone.

Our Mission Strategy is a plan for our future. It identifies our priorities, so we know how to best use our financial, staff and other resources. Our Mission Strategy is a response to the particular gifts of our diocese and the changing needs of our communities in eastern Massachusetts. It identifies the ways that we hope to answer Jesus' call to be disciples together.

Mission Strategy Committee members:

Claudette Hunt, St. Andrew's, Ayer (co-chair)
 Andi Taylor, St. David's, South Yarmouth (co-chair)
 Michael Bent, St. Peter's, Beverly
 Christopher Capaldo, St. Chrysostom's, Quincy
 Hilary Greene, Church of the Good Shepherd, Wareham (June-September co-chair)
 Amy McCreath, Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston
 Gregory Perez, St. Stephen's, Lynn
 Martha Gardner, Diocesan Staff Liaison

Diocesan Council Goal Group Leaders:

Goal Group 1: Joyce Sherer-Hoock, Diocesan Council, Executive Committee
 Goal Group 2: Dan Bell, St. Mark's, Burlington
 Goal Group 3: Rachel Wildman, Trinity, Stoughton & Trinity, Canton
 Goal Group 4: Lynn Smith, St. John St. James, Roxbury
 Goal Group 5: Nathan Ives, St. Peter's, Salem
 Goal Group 6: Cris Latorre, Trinity Church, Boston
 Goal Group 7: Edward Rewolinski, St. Cyprian's, Roxbury

Appendix: Mission Strategy Goal 4: The 2023 Group Report

Goal Group 4 looks to our Mission Strategy's Goal 4, which calls us "To seek greater unity as members of one another." Our group views this goal as an invitation to us as individuals, as active members of our parishes, and as diocesan leaders to practice collaboration at all levels of our work. Goal Group 4 has documented its findings in a formal report. A few examples of these findings are listed here.

- As individual members of churches we are all familiar with the myriad of shared, creative, and successful examples of working together on church projects.

In our study, Group 4 became aware of innovative approaches to common programs. One example is a Bible study started by colleagues from across several dioceses, internationally within the Episcopal Church, and across churches of the Anglican Communion to develop a Zoom Bible study program that invites and welcomes participation of the clergy and the lay members of the various congregations.

- In our diocesan churches we have fine examples of those whose church experience is enhanced by their neighboring parishes such as in the "One Church, Four Altars," a collaboration in the Fall River area. What began as a joint retreat project has expanded over time to include work together in a food pantry, joint fund-raising efforts, shared holiday services, and an overall sense of mutual support for the clergy and laity alike.

Our diocesan efforts in collaborative Ministry currently foster pairs of congregations to collaborate through the sharing of a minister. Through this common clergy leader, the congregations have an opportunity to discover possible joint ministries and mission. (See the Collaborative Ministry Working Group Report.)

- A particularly successful example of an event jointly hosted through the collaboration of two congregations, one from each of the dioceses of Massachusetts, was last December's "In a Manger: Nativity Scenes." This holiday project was the effort of St. Andrew's of Ayer in the eastern diocese and Trinity Church of Shrewsbury in the western diocese. The receptions presented a festive opportunity for attendees to meet their neighbors while enjoying an impressively curated collection of crèches.

Our diocesan parish, St. Paul's in Hopkinton, and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts' parish, St. Stephen's in nearby Westboro, are raising our diocesan collaborative ministry model to a new level through the sharing of a minister and joint congregational programming across diocesan boundaries.

- Our Group 4 members who have lived in congregations in various countries and were members of various churches of the Anglican Communion shared with our group examples of successful models for youth programs, effective deanery structures, and creative configurations of several-parish collaborations. Our group looks forward to studying these and similar examples of collaboration in greater depth in the coming year.

In summary, our participation in Goal 4 has convinced us that "In Christ, We are Called to Collaborate."

Submitted for Mission Strategy Goal Group 4
Lynn Smith, Group Leader

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

The following is respectfully submitted as a summary of some of the activities and business of the diocesan Standing Committee since the 237th Convention.

BISHOP COMPENSATION

In December 2022, we enacted, for the 2023 Diocesan Budget, specific distributions to finalize the work done in 2022 to adjust the compensation packages of the Bishop Diocesan and the Bishop Suffragan to market rate. We also established guidelines for developing future compensation packages.

BISHOP CONSENTS

Diocese of Ohio – The Rev. Anne B. Jolly – consent granted
Diocese of Colombia – The Rev. Elias Garcia Cardenas – consent granted
Diocese of Olympia (Bishop Provisional) – The Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton – consent granted
Diocese of Central Florida – The Rev. Canon Dr. Justin S. Holcomb – consent granted
Diocese of West Texas – The Rev. Dr. David G. Read – consent granted
Diocese of Maryland – The Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent – consent granted
Diocese of Florida – The Rev. Charles Holt – consent withheld
Diocese of Albany – The Rev. Jeremiah Williamson – consent granted

BISHOP SEARCH

Please see our Supplemental Report on the Bishop Search Process, attached.

BYLAWS

We addressed matters associated with the bylaws from the following parishes:

- St. Stephen's, Lynn
- St. John's, Holbrook
- St. Andrew's, Ayer
- St. John's, Charlestown
- Trinity, Haverhill
- Our Saviour, Somerset
- St. Mark's, Westford
- Grace, New Bedford
- Messiah, Woods Hole
- St. Bartholomew's, Cambridge
- St. Peter's, Beverly
- St. Andrew's, Framingham
- St. Stephen's, Boston
- Grace, Lawrence

- Trinity, Melrose
- St. John's, Beverly Farms

THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry meet jointly several times this year.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE

During the summer 2023, the Rev. Dr. Tara K. Soughers resigned her seat on the Standing Committee after accepting a call to a cure in another diocese. Pursuant to Art. IX of the Constitution of the Diocese, the vacancy created by Tara's departure was filled by a concurrent vote of the clerical and lay members of the Standing Committee. Elected to fill the vacancy was the Rev. Kit Lonergan. She shall serve until this Convention, when the remainder of the term of that seat shall be filled by election by the Convention.

OLD NORTH CHURCH

- Ratified the election of certain members to the vestry of Old North Church.

POSTULANTS, CANDIDATES, AND ORDINANDS

- Interviewed nominees and postulants; reviewed applications for postulancy and candidacy; and, when appropriate, approved those applications.
- Received from the bishop notice of admission of nominees to postulancy. Also received from the bishop all records and other canonically required information for applicants for ordination.
- For ordinands and (transitional) deacons, when appropriate: certified that the canonical requirements for ordination to the diaconate and/or priesthood have been met and that no sufficient objection is present; voted on recommendations for ordination; and issued testimonials of the same to the bishop.

Specifically...

We approved the following postulants for admission into candidacy: Lisa Faber Ginggen, Faith Mbuthia, William Margraf, Keith Nelson, SSJE, Sarah Neumann, Aaron Ross, and Kevin Vetiac. We recommended the following candidates for ordination into the diaconate: Paddy Cavanaugh, Lisa Faber Ginggen, Katie Hoyer, Margaret Lias, Paul Keene, Keith Nelson, Eva Ortez, Max Sklar, Michael Thompson, and Kevin Vetiac.

REAL ESTATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE and other REAL ESTATE MATTERS

- Reviewed the status of REAC membership.
- Addressed matters arising from:
 - Our Saviour, Somerset

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- St. Elizabeth's, Wilmington
 - Christ Church, Cambridge
 - St. Peter's, Cambridge
 - All Saints', Stoneham
 - Messiah, Woods Hole
 - St. Michael's, Marblehead
 - The Solway Development LLC Battery Storage Lease Option
 - Grace, Vineyard Haven
 - Our Redeemer, Lexington
 - St. Paul's, Nantucket
 - St. John's, Gloucester
- On Feb. 8, 2023, we sent a letter regarding the Church Battery Renewable Energy Storage to all parish clergy, wardens, and treasurers.
 - We authorized the discharge of an August 2009 mortgage held by the diocese from the proceeds of sale of the property in question.

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

2023

The Rev. Rachel Wildman, Secretary

Dispatch of Business

Betsy Ridge Madsen, Chair
Rebecca Alden
The Rev. Margaret Lias

Qualifications

Laura Simons, Chair
Jennifer Garrett

Elections

The Rev. Hilary Greene, Co-Chair
Diane Grondin, Co-Chair
The Rev. Nathan Ives
The Rev. Rachel Wildman

Admission of Parishes and Missions

The Rev. Rebecca Black, Chair
William Boyce
The Rev. Dr. Matthew Cadwell
Spencer Felder

Resolutions

The Rev. Dr. Meghan Sweeney, Chair
Robert Christian
The Rev. Megan Holding
The Rev. Derrick Muwina
The Rev. Michael Thompson

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