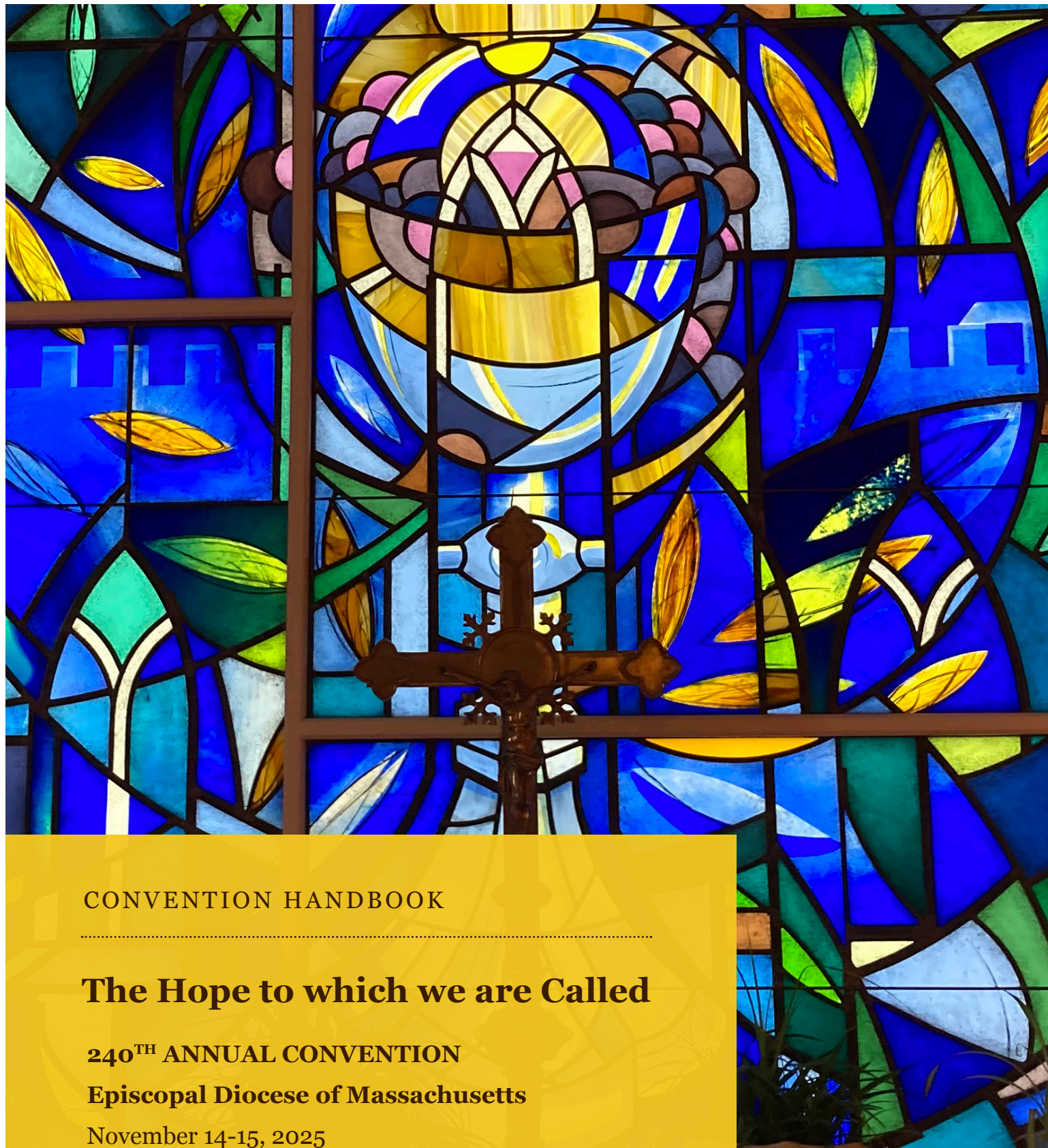




CONVENTION HANDBOOK

The Hope to which we are Called

240TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

November 14-15, 2025

*"May the eyes of your heart be enlightened so you may
know the hope to which God has called you."*

- Ephesians 1:18

CALL TO THE CONVENTION
NOTICE OF THE 240th 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 fortieth annual session of the Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts, which will be called to order at ten thirty in the morning on Saturday, November 15, 2025, in Burlington, Massachusetts.

JULIE SHEA
Secretary of Convention

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ORDER OF BUSINESS

November 15, 2025

- 9:00 a.m.: Procedural Announcements
Land Acknowledgement
Eucharist
- 10:15 a.m.: Break
- 10:30 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 2025 Journal Reports
Report of Qualifications Committee
Introduction of Nominees for Diocesan Election
- 11:15 a.m.: Bishop's Address
- 12:00 p.m.: Lunch Break
- 1:15 p.m.: Greetings and Good Wishes
Honors and Thanks
Report of the Committee on Constitution and Canons
Report of the Budget Committee
Report from the Compensation and Benefits Committee
- 2:45 p.m.: Break
- 3:00 p.m.: Report of the Resolutions Committee
Diocesan Youth Leadership Council Report
Young Adult Discernment Committee Report
Report from the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center
An Episcopal Path to Creation
Report of the Commission on Ministry
Introduction of Postulants and Candidates
Introduction of New and Retired Clergy
Report of Election Committee with Election Results
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 Clerical DEPUTIES to 2027 GENERAL CONVENTION (3-year term) (8 nominees, 4 to be elected)



The Rev. Daniel Dice
St. John the Evangelist, Duxbury

Having served as Lay Deputy in 2006 and Clergy (Alt.) in 2015, it would be my honor to serve the Diocese of Massachusetts in 2027. With experience in Constitution & Canon, on Standing Committee, and with the Title IV processes, I not only have an aptitude for, but an enjoyment of governance work. If given your trust, I take such roles seriously and would represent this wonderful Diocese with fidelity. To God be the glory.



The Rev. Jeremy Froyen
Grace Church, New Bedford

I am the Rector at Grace Church, New Bedford since December 2023 and am currently on Diocesan Council. I previously served parishes in the Dioceses of Chicago (where I served on the: Bishop Search & Nominations Committee, Resolutions Committee, and College of Deans) and Southeast Florida (where I was the Diocesan Youth Chaplain). I have twice served as an Alternate Deputy to General Convention and have completed doctoral level coursework in congregational development and leadership.



The Rev. Megan Holding
Church of Our Redeemer, Lexington

Through serving in various parochial and non -parochial settings and on multiple diocesan committees, I understand the beautiful diversity of ways in which the church is serving Jesus in these complicated times, and the complexity we face as we work together to bring the Gospel to this moment. I would bring my breadth of experience to General Convention and apply insights gained there to the many communities and ministries of our Diocese.



The Rev. Michael Horvath
St. Mary's, Barnstable

I serve as rector of St. Mary's Barnstable. My leadership on the Asian Ministry Conference Board (NY), Congregational Vitality/Mission Committee (TX), Dean of the Aquidneck Deanery (RI), APIA Steering Committee, Strategic Planning Implementation Team (MA), and Gathering of Leaders Board/participant has built skills in discernment, collaboration, and church-wide participation. As Deputy, I would draw

on this experience to strengthen diocesan collaboration with the wider Church and help us further embody God's inclusive, hope-filled vision.



The Rev. Brett Johnson
Emmanuel Church, Wakefield

I serve as a collaborative priest deeply in love with Jesus and our church's prophetic potential. Having co-chaired our Transition Committee and co-convened our Deanery, I bring proven leadership rooted in curiosity, wonder, and courage. I long to attend faithfully to what the Spirit reveals, listening with truth and compassion. At General Convention, I hope to contribute my collaborative servant-leadership

and passion for discerning God's purposes, helping our diocese engage courageously in the church's national mission.



The Rev. Edwin Johnson
Episcopal City Mission

I love Jesus and adore our Church. During these divided times our communities and our world yearn for faithful ministry and leadership. As the church grows smaller our commitment to prayer, joyful beloved community and courageous innovation can grow our impact and our presence as the Body of Christ. As deputy for previous conventions I've focused on patterning our structures and creating the connections to make this so and humbly offer myself again.



The Rev. Sarah Neumann
Christ Church, Cambridge

I've served at two previous General Conventions, in 2012 on the Official Youth Presence and in 2015 as a lay deputy from this diocese. I believe that our church governance is at its best when it works in service of the Gospel rather than the other way around, and I'm guided by the values of hope, honesty, and justice as strive together to bring about the Kingdom of God.



The Rev. Eva Orteza
St. Stephen's, Boston

I believe I am qualified for this position because I care deeply about the life of the church, both now and in the future. As a young Latina leader, I carry the wisdom and experiences of the diverse communities I represent. Often one of the few from my community at decision-making tables, I am committed to ensuring our church not only welcomes all people but intentionally creates space for everyone who walks through its doors.

Nominees for Clerical Member of STANDING COMMITTEE (4-year term)
(3 nominees, 1 to be elected)



The Rev. Lauren Lukason
St. Mark's, Foxboro & Trinity, Wrentham

I have the uncommon experience of serving as a priest exclusively in shared/collaborative calls, which, data tells us, will become a more normative experience in years to come. I also serve on the Strengthening Worshipping Communities Team. For 20+ years before ordination, I worked in church administration in congregations across the spectra of size, resources, culture, and liturgical flavor. I look forward to bringing these points of view to conversations of the Standing Committee.



The Rev. Isaac Martinez
Trinity Parish, Melrose

I have served our diocese in many leadership positions, including as a deputy to General Convention and co-chair of our Hispanic Ministry Committee. As a former church-planter and current priest of a growing and redeveloping congregation, I will bring a joy-filled, Jesus-centered, and future-oriented perspective to the work and duties of the Standing Committee as a partner to our bishop and as we live into our new values, mission, and strategy.



The Rev. Nick Myers
Parish of the Epiphany, Winchester

I am hopeful for the future of our diocese as we seek to strengthen our congregations, equip one another, and work for God's love in this world. My experience in helping congregations discern purpose and create partnerships after conflict or decline can help our diocese step into a new, challenging, and exciting chapter. I believe today invites us to work together, discern partnership, steward our fear, share our courage and welcome God's new life together.

UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS
The following nominees were unopposed:

Lay Deputies to General Convention (3-year terms)

Bill Boyce, Grace Church, New Bedford
Brian Litzenberger, Trinity, Concord
Kevin Miller, Epiphany Parish, Walpole
Betsy Ridge, Church of the Advent, Boston

Lay Member of the Standing Committee

Thomas Buie, St. Andrew's Church, Framingham (4-year term)

Clerical Members of the Diocesan Disciplinary Board

The Rev. Katharine Black, Retired (3-year term)
The Rev. Michael Horvath, St. Mary's Church, Barnstable (3-year term)
The Rev. Aaron Ross, St. John the Evangelist, Duxbury (3-year term)

Lay Member of the Diocesan Disciplinary Board

Patrick Groulx, Trinity Parish, Melrose (3-year term)
Liz Levin, Emmanuel Church, Boston (3-year term)

Treasurer of the Diocese

Ted Ts'o, Church of Our Saviour, Arlington (1-year term)

Secretary of the Diocese

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

Clerical Member of the Cathedral Chapter

The Rev. Andrew Sutter, St. Elizabeth's, Sudbury (3-year term)

Lay Member of the Cathedral Chapter

Sandra Soto, St. Mark's, Dorchester (3-year term)

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

The Rev. Jon Eden, Emmanuel Church, West Roxbury (3-year term)

Member of the Trustees of Donations

Jacquelyn VanderBrug, Trinity Church, Boston (5-year term)

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 Clerical Member of STANDING COMMITTEE (4-year term)

(3 nominees, 1 to be elected)

The Rev. Lauren Lukason	()
The Rev. Isaac Martinez	()
The Rev. Nick Myers	()

Nominees for Deputy to 2027 GENERAL CONVENTION (3-year term)

(8 nominees, 4 to be elected)

The Rev. Daniel Dice	()
The Rev. Jeremy Froyen	()
The Rev. Megan Holding	()
The Rev. Michael Horvath	()
The Rev. Brett Johnson	()
The Rev. Edwin Johnson	()
The Rev. Sarah Neumann	()
The Rev. Eva Ortez	()

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The Constitution and Canons Committee met several times this work cycle to review proposals for changes to our governing documents as a Diocese. Our committee is presenting one proposed change to the Constitution of the Diocese, and two proposed changes to the Canons. The process for amending these two documents differs slightly. Proposed Constitutional changes require passage of the amendment (in the same form) at two Diocesan Conventions in a vote by Orders before the amendment becomes effective. This year is the first year for the one proposed Constitutional change. Proposed Canonical changes must also be voted on by Orders, but become effective immediately upon passage at a single convention.

The proposed Constitutional amendment seeks to address the exclusion of deacons from eligibility to serve on the Standing Committee of the Diocese. At present, only presbyters (priests) or lay persons may run for election. This change would allow deacons as well as presbyters for the seats allocated to clergy. The composition of the Standing Committee remains half lay and half clergy. If passed at this Convention, it would require passage at another Convention before it becomes effective.

The first proposed canonical amendment seeks to update the language in the canon related to Mission Strategy to more closely match the language of Diocesan Mission and Strategic Vision, which we have been using for the past year as we renew our strategic vision as a Diocese. This will prevent the need for our Diocese to spend another year engaged in Mission Strategy, having just spent significant time and resourcing doing that same work this year. The amended canon makes clear that the strategic vision must guide the mission of the diocese and be approved by Convention, while also removing language requiring that all expenses in the budget must be accounted for within the strategy (which has not been the case for some time).

The second proposed canonical amendment adds a new section to Canon 2, enabling the Rules of Order that we use for Convention. Upon review, the Committee noticed that the Rules of Order that we use at Convention are not, in fact, authorized anywhere in our canons for use beyond the time that Convention is meeting. Because the rules specify things such as timelines for pre-Convention submissions, nominations, and distribution of materials, the rules should have standing effect. Though we have used them for many years as a Diocese, they should rightly be officially designated as our Rules of Order by the Canons. This canon would make that change and provide the mechanism for amending those rules.

Respectfully submitted,
THE COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The Rev. Daniel S. Dice, J.D., Chair
Eleanor A. Evans, Esq.
David Montgomery, Esq.
The Rev. Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, Esq.
The Rev. Michael Thompson, Esq.

Amendment A

BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to Article 18 of the Constitution of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Article 9 of the same shall be amended as follows, with additions in **bold**:

There shall be a Standing Committee consisting of four **clergy, being** presbyters **or deacons**, canonically and actually resident in the Diocese, and four lay persons, confirmed communicants of the Church of at least eighteen years of age and having a domicile in the Diocese. At each annual session of the Convention one presbyter **or deacon** and one lay person shall be elected to serve for four years. Vacancies in said Committee shall be temporarily filled by the concurrent vote of the clerical and lay members of the Committee until the next annual session, when such vacancies shall be filled by election for the remainder of the respective terms. The names of persons temporarily chosen for such vacancies shall be immediately certified to the Secretary of the Corporation. No member of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election until one year has elapsed after he or she has served a term of four years.

Amendment B

BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to Canon 21 of the Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Canon 10 of the same shall be amended as follows, with deletions in ~~striketthrough~~ and additions in **bold**:

Sec. 1. Purpose

The Diocese allocates financial and other resources to provide support for Diocesan and congregational mission. **To that end, the Diocese recognizes an ongoing Diocesan Mission and Strategic Vision process.** The purpose of a Diocesan Mission ~~Strategy~~ and **Strategic Vision process** ~~budget~~ is to ~~provide for help~~ **guide** the allocation of resources by the Convention, ~~the~~ Diocesan Council, and the Bishop **which reflects the mission of the Diocese.**

Sec. 2. Mission ~~Strategy~~ **of the Diocese**

- (a) Diocesan Council and the Bishop shall prepare **a strategic vision to guide the mission of the Diocese,** ~~the Diocesan Mission Strategy~~ for approval of the Convention.
- (b) **This strategic vision** ~~The Diocesan Mission Strategy~~ shall identify and prioritize **all** Diocesan programmatic and administrative activities in sufficient detail to guide the allocation of resources by the Convention, Diocesan Council and the Bishop.
- (c) **This strategic vision** ~~The Diocesan Mission Strategy~~ shall be distributed annually prior to Convention, ~~in conjunction with the Diocesan budget and list of assessments.~~
- (d) From time to time as determined by the Diocesan Council and the Bishop, ~~but in any event no less frequently than once every five years, the Diocesan Council and~~ the Bishop shall review the Diocesan Mission **and Strategic Vision process** ~~Strategy~~ and submit it to the Convention for **consideration and** approval ~~with such amendments, if any, as the Diocesan Council and the Bishop may determine are necessary or desirable.~~

Sec. 3. The Diocesan Budget

- (a) The Treasurer and Diocesan Council, prior to each annual session of the Convention, shall prepare an itemized budget for the income and expenses of the Diocese in the next calendar year. Sources of income include the assessment, endowment and investment income, gifts, grants and undesignated fund balances. ~~All expenses in the budget must be for purposes enumerated in the Diocesan Mission Strategy.~~ Projected expenses may not exceed projected income.
- (b) The budget shall be presented to Diocesan Council for its approval no later than September prior to the effective year of the proposed budget.
- (c) The proposed budget shall be printed and sent, not less than four weeks prior to the annual session of Convention, to each member of the clergy, each congregation's treasurer, and to each delegate to the Convention. The Convention, without further reference to committee, shall consider and shall act on the same.
- (d) Diocesan Council may amend the budget between the sessions of Convention, provided that ~~new expenses conform to the Diocesan Mission Strategy, and that~~ specific sources of income are identified to provide for ~~such~~ **any new** expenses.
- ~~(e) In the year 1995, in the absence of approved Diocesan Mission Strategy, the Treasurer and Diocesan Council shall prepare the budget following the guidelines established in Sec. 1 of the 1992 amendment to Canon 9, as printed on pages 35 and 36 of the Journal of Convention, 1992.~~

Amendment C

BE IT RESOLVED that, pursuant to Canon 21 of the Canons of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Canon 2 of the same shall be amended by adding a new section, designated "Section 5," which shall be as follows:

Canon 2

Sec. 5. Rules of Order.

The Convention may, from time to time, by majority vote of each Order, voting separately, enact or amend standing Rules of Order, which shall remain in force and effect over and between subsequent Conventions until and unless amended. Nothing in this Section inhibits the ability of any Convention, by majority vote, to enact Special Rules of Order for that Convention.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Rules of Order adopted for the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts shall become and be the standing Rules of Order, remaining so until and unless Convention may, from time to time, amend them.

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 2025

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

Guidelines Updates

A 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 2026 as well.

Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) Standard

Consistent with the goals of the Committee and our long-term practice, we are once again recommending an increase to the 2026 Standard of 3%.

The committee makes use of certain salary surveys and data-points, such as the *World at Work* Annual Salary Budget Survey, the *Payscale* Salary Budget Survey and the Consumer Price Index inflation figures published by the Department of Labor. Our recommendation for the coming year remains consistent with those surveys and is on par with the proposed salary increase for diocesan staff for 2026.

The "TCC" calculation takes specific parish factors into account, including Operating Revenues, Pledging Units and Average Sunday Attendance. Thus, over time a parish's TCC level will change. It is therefore necessary to review and recalculate your TCC Standard *annually*. Also note that any increase to the TCC *Standard* is not considered a fixed "Cost of Living" increase. 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 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, including whether it has engaged fairly with its clergy over time.

Alternative TCC calculation for 2026 The Committee recognizes that recent changes to the format of the *Parochial Report* may have had a material impact on the inputs used by parish leadership when completing its TCC calculation. In an effort to provide administrative

relief, if your parish is one of those affected by these changes and the result is a dramatic variance from previous calculations, you may use your prior year's information and simply advance the current TCC by a fixed 3%. Please contact Diocesan Human Resources if you need any assistance.

Compensation Survey

We are pleased to report that the Committee conducted a new Compensation Survey during 2025, with 71 distinct responses received. We want to extend our thanks to those who replied and encourage those who did not to do so in the future. Having this data to report back to the Diocese is critical for making informed policy recommendations. While we are hesitant to make generalizations based on this sample size, we can share that 35% of the respondents were female, and that the replies seemed to skew towards those in full-time cures. The Committee would also like to note that the Church Pension Group now publishes an interactive tool that breaks down compensation by diocese using data gathered from Pension Assessment information. While the various charts provide additional insights into differences in pay based upon gender, age, full-time vs. part-time status and other factors, it seems that some of the underlying data may be out-of-date or inaccurate. We therefore wish to stress the importance of providing accurate information to CPG for *all* eligible retirement plan participants. **It appears that many parishes may not have updated compensation information – in some cases by as much as 18 months or more.** This has potential consequences in terms of the benefits accrued by participants as well as possible interest charges owed on under-reported incomes for prior periods. Again, please contact Diocesan Human Resources if you need assistance in complying with these requirements.

Health Insurance

The Medical Trust released its 2026 health plan renewal as expected in late August. As required by a 2024 General Convention vote, the 2025 *and* 2026 rates have been realigned to take the underlying claims experience of each plan option more closely into account. As a result, the rates of increase are greater for our richer plan offerings. Thus, the rates of increase for our Blue Card PPO 80, PPO 90 and PPO 100 plans are +6%, +7% and +8% respectively. The HSA-compatible plan option has also increased by 6%, on par with the PPO 80 Plan. There are no plan or benefit changes to report for 2026.

As reported previously, the Medical Trust strives to keep rates of increase below 7% whenever possible, and they have consistently delivered rates below healthcare “trend” or medical inflation. Healthcare trend remains stubbornly high, especially with regard to prescription medication costs. The most recent survey by *Segal* reports that medical costs are currently trending at 7.9% for open-access plans like ours, with rates skewing higher in New England.

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. The CDHP-20/HSA compatible plan remains an option as well, and our

Guidelines require that this plan should be offered with *at least* the minimum required Healthcare Savings Account funding (65%).

Finally, the Committee is aware of the service issues and complaints expressed regarding the Medical Trust's use of the *Quantum* Care Coordinator. Please be assured that we have shared these concerns with Medical Trust, and will continue to monitor their performance and provide feedback.

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 2026 Tax Year* to designate the amount of the Clergy Housing Allowance. This is one of the most important benefits a Clergy person has access to, so please mark your calendars and make sure this action is taken during your December Vestry Meeting at the latest.

Deacons Minimum Assessable Compensation Reminder

The Committee would also like to remind Parishes of the Resolution approved during our 2022 Diocesan Convention that Permanent Deacons be provided with a minimal compensation of \$25.00 per month, with an assessment of 18% (\$4.50) monthly to be forwarded to the Church Pension Fund on their behalf. Please contact Human Resources at the Diocese if you need any guidance.

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 2026.

Members of the Committee in 2025

Mr. Bill Mills-Curran
Mr. Nathaniel Fasman
Ms. Annie Russell

Mr. Jeff Tyrakowski, Chair
The Rev. Lisa Faber Ginggen
The Rev. Canon Christopher Wendell

Adjustments to the Compensation Formulae for 2026

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

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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 2025/26 Guidelines.

Resolved, that the TCC Standard be defined as the minimum TCC for active full-time parochial clergy and, for the calendar year 2026, is determined by the following formula:

$$\text{TCC Standard} = \$88,238 + (181.37 \times \text{Points}) + \$500 \times [\text{years of service}^* \text{ within congregation}]$$

Provided that the minimum TCC Standard for full-time parochial clergy called as rector is \$93,679.

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
+ <u>Average Current Sunday-Attendance</u>	<u>x .30</u>
= 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:

$$\text{TCC Standard (curate)} = [\$88,238 + (181.37 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.60$$

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

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCC Standard (assistant)} &= [\$88,238 + (181.37 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.65 \\ &+ \$350 \times [\text{years of service within the congregation}] \end{aligned}$$

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

$$\begin{aligned} \text{TCC Standard (associate)} &= [\$88,238 + (181.37 \times \text{Points})] \times 0.75 \\ &+ \$375 \times [\text{years of service within the congregation}] \end{aligned}$$

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

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

The committee presents five resolutions, found to be in order in the following form and hereby submitted to the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

A Resolution Affirming Human Rights for All People in U.S. Prisons and Detention Centers

Submitted by:

The Rev. Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, Esq. (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Andrew's, Hanover
Mr. James F. Laprade (Lay Delegate), St. Stephen's, Cohasset
The Rev. Arrington Chambliss (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal City Mission

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts affirms the dignity of every human being, including our siblings in Christ who are incarcerated or detained in jails, prisons, or detention centers within the United States; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention calls upon federal, state, and local authorities to ensure that conditions of confinement meet international human rights standards, including access to adequate medical care, clean water, proper nutrition, legal counsel, meaningful human contact, and protection from abuse or torture; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention decries the inhumane treatment of incarcerated persons, including but not limited to solitary confinement, overcrowding, denial of reproductive and gender-affirming care, excessive force, and the criminalization of poverty, mental illness, and addiction; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention encourages Episcopalians across the Diocese to engage in ministries of prison visitation, reentry support, policy advocacy, and restorative justice, grounded in the Gospel mandate to "visit the prisoner" and to see Christ in those whom the world has cast aside; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Massachusetts submits this resolution to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church, calling upon the wider Church to redouble its efforts in support of incarcerated people and to advocate for a justice system rooted in human dignity, rehabilitation, and mercy.

EXPLANATION

The swift creation of detention centers such as "Alligator Alcatraz" and "Lonestar Lockup" and similarly poorly constructed facilities violates standards for human rights and directly violates prisoner's constitutional rights. Since October 2024 thirteen people have died in ICE custody and the deplorable conditions of these massive detention facilities place more lives at risk.

In Matthew 25:36, Jesus says, "I was in prison and you visited me." As Episcopalians, our

Baptismal Covenant commits us to seek and serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being. This includes those who are incarcerated—many of whom are imprisoned due to systemic inequality, racial bias, inadequate access to counsel, or untreated trauma.

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world, with over 2 million people in its prisons and jails. In too many cases, incarcerated individuals suffer in conditions that violate basic human rights and moral decency. These conditions disproportionately affect people of color, the poor, immigrants, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

The Episcopal Church has a long tradition of ministry to and advocacy for people in prison. This resolution recommits the Diocese of Massachusetts to that tradition by calling for humane conditions, systemic reform, and compassionate engagement.

STATEMENT AGAINST

- 1) The Episcopal Church should not be engaged in political issues. This is a governmental policy and inherently political.
- 2) The Episcopal Church should work tirelessly to abolish all jails and prisons. This Convention's energy should be invested not in tinkering around the edges of prison and detention reform, but in the wholesale abolition of these unchristian systems.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

This resolution directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that this Convention's support of this resolution is conveyed in the public square, and proposed to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

A Resolution in Support of Massachusetts' Immigrant Community with Special Emphasis on Those at Risk of Losing Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

Submitted by:

The Rev. Edwin Johnson (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal City Mission
The Rev. Isaac Martinez (Canonically Resident Clergy), Trinity, Melrose
The Rev. Matthew Stewart (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. James, Cambridge
The Rev. Janelle Hiroshige (Canonically Resident Clergy), Epiphany, Winchester
The Rev. John Finley (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Mary's, Dorchester
The Rev. Andrew Switter-Bentley (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Elizabeth's, Sudbury
The Rev. Edgar Gutierrez-Duarte (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Luke's-San Lucas, Chelsea
Mr. Jonathan Grant (Lay Delegate), Grace, Norwood
The Rev. Nathan Ives (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Peter's, Salem
The Rev. Jennifer Daly (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Michael's, Milton
The Rev. Pam Werntz (Canonically Resident Clergy), Emmanuel, Boston
The Rev. Natasha Stewart (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Luke's, Scituate
Ms. Erica Pollard (Lay Delegate), St. Luke's, Scituate
The Rev. M Lise Hildebrandt (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Anne's Billerica
The Rev. Kevin Vetiac (Canonically Resident Clergy), MIT & Northeastern Chaplaincy
The Rev. Canon Edie Dolnikowski (Canonically Resident Clergy), Diocesan Staff
The Rev. Mary Beth Emerson (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John The Evangelist, Duxbury
The Rev. Jennifer Beal (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Anne's, Billerica
Ms. Amelia Slawsby (Lay Delegate), St. Dunstan's, Dover
Ms. Joanne Crispin (Lay Delegate), St. Dunstan's, Dover
The Rev. Arrington Chambliss (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal City Mission
The Rev. Canon Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa (Canonically Resident Clergy), Diocesan Staff
The Rev. Ema Rosero-Nordalm (Canonically Resident Clergy), Community of Oscar Romero
The Rev. Liz Steinhauser (Canonically Resident Clergy), The Crossing
The Rev. Ginger Solaqua (Canonically Resident Clergy), The Episcopal Churches in Lowell
The Rev. Sean T. Leonard (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Dunstan's, Dover

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts re-affirms the dignity and humanity of all people, regardless of their immigration status, to bring power to the witness of our Baptismal Covenant to "seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself" and to "strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being" (Source: Book of Common Prayer, Baptismal Covenant), embodying our covenant by taking a visible stand in solidarity with all immigrant communities being targeted and terrorized; and be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts denounces discrimination against individuals because of their immigration status and upholds the rights of all to attend public worship freely without fear; and be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts recognizes the crucial and unique contribution of immigrants who hold Temporary Protected

Status¹ (TPS) to the Commonwealth² through their contribution to public and human service roles, owning businesses, and being our neighbors, friends, congregations, and contributing members of our communities; and be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts stands in public witness, in conjunction with local and national TPS leaders in support for all immigrants in our community and particularly those with TPS whose current legal status is threatened or, in some cases, already revoked, including those from Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Honduras, Nepal, and Venezuela who have already lost their status and work permits as of October 2025 and Haiti that there are threats to terminate, recognizing that many of our parishioners throughout the diocese are affected by these threats of and actual revocations; and be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that our support of the Massachusetts TPS Committee and National TPS Alliance is conveyed in the public square, having seen when churches stand with the oppressed and voice our commitment to live out our Baptismal call, it is transformative, in that telling people who we are empowers others to join us; and be it further,

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts encourages leaders of worshipping community leaders and members of this Diocese to: re-affirm that their congregations welcomes all to worship without regard to immigration status; engage with local immigrant-led organizations and organizations advocating for immigrants rights, such as the MA TPS Committee, through financial giving, volunteering, and participation in public actions; and encourage the building of meaningful partnerships with congregations with large immigrant populations.

¹ Temporary Protected Status - Those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS holders) in our communities come from 17 different countries, and some have been in the U.S. over 30 years (Somalians), 20 years (El Salvadorians), or 15 years (Haiti), owning property, starting small businesses, and raising citizen children, without ever being given an avenue to regularize their status and become Legal Permanent Residents. Each TPS holder has to renew their status with new extensions every 6-18 months, and are subject to criminal background checks with each renewal, making them some of the most vetted immigrants in the U.S. Consequently, they are also some of the most vulnerable if their status is terminated, because they have provided all of their personal information to the Department of Homeland Security in good faith, including their home addresses.

² A 2025 coalition led by Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Campbell reported that over 27,780 TPS holders in the state contribute approximately \$598 million in household income and pay around \$134 million in taxes, driving nearly \$464 million in spending power locally (Source: [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/news/2025-coalition-report-on-the-economic-contribution-of-temporarily-protected-status-holders)). Nationally, over 1.1 million people have been living and working in the U.S. with TPS. Many among them work in critical public and human services roles that we all rely on. For instance, TPS recipients are a large portion of the Certified Nursing Assistant workforce in hospitals and long-term care settings, and the loss of their contributions put many people receiving long-term care at greater risk (Source: [WBUR](https://www.wbur.com/news/2025/03/11/tps-holders-economy))

EXPLANATION

As Christians, we follow Jesus and the Biblical mandates and examples: "You shall not oppress the stranger for you know the heart of the stranger, having been strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exodus 23:9) and the words of Jesus, "for I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in" (Matthew 25:35). And as Episcopalians, our Baptismal Covenant implores us to commit to "seeking and serving Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves" and "striving for justice and peace among all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being," including by "welcoming the stranger." (Source: [Book of Common Prayer, Baptismal Covenant](#)).

Our sacred duty is to protect, uplift, and embrace those who seek safety and hope in our midst.

Every immigrant is a human being with inherent value and dignity. However, we are living in a place and time where immigrants are being treated with hostility and violence.

Our faith calls us to take a public witness to counter this treatment. And when we stand, good things happen and make the way for others to find courage to follow. We stand with all of our immigrant neighbors and accept the invitation from TPS leaders and communities for Episcopalians to stand with them. If we are silent, we are complicit in the violence and dehumanization of our neighbors.

Those with Temporary Protected Status (TPS holders) in our communities come from 17 different countries. Some have been in the U.S. over 30 years (Somalians), 20 years (El Salvadorians), or 15 years (Haiti), owning property, starting small businesses, and raising citizen children, without ever being given an avenue to regularize their status and become Legal Permanent Residents. Each TPS holder has to renew their status with new extensions every 6-18 months, and are subject to criminal background checks with each renewal, making them some of the most vetted immigrants in the U.S. Consequently, they are also some of the most vulnerable if their status is terminated, because they have provided all of their personal information to the Department of Homeland Security in good faith, including their home addresses. The U.S. government has declared that it intends to cancel TPS for all countries regardless of current conditions, and TPS holders from Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Honduras, Nepal, and Venezuela have already lost their status and work permits as of October 2025.

Additionally, all immigrants in Massachusetts are vital to the Commonwealth's economic stability and public service infrastructure. This is particularly true for TPS holders. A 2025 coalition led by Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Campbell reported that over 27,780 TPS holders in the state contribute approximately \$598 million in household income and pay around \$134 million in taxes, driving nearly \$464 million in spending power locally (Source: [Mass.gov](#)). Nationally, over 1.1 million people have been living and working in the U.S. with TPS. Many among them work in critical public and human services roles that we all rely on. For instance, TPS recipients are a large portion of the Certified Nursing Assistant workforce in hospitals and long-term care settings, and the loss of their contributions puts many people receiving long-term care at greater risk (Source: [WBUR](#)).

The origin of Temporary Protected Status is closely tied to the efforts of faith communities who, during the Sanctuary Movement in the 1980s, drew attention to the unlivable conditions

that many Central American immigrants were fleeing, arguing that there needed to be a formal mechanism to protect people from deportation when returning home would be unsafe. This led to the creation of TPS as part of the Immigration Act of 1990³.

STATEMENT AGAINST

The church should stay out of political issues, and due to our current climate, immigration is a hot political issue, which could make a public statement controversial.

By its nature, TPS is temporary, and TPS holders are always subject to losing that status.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

This resolution directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that this Convention's support of this resolution is conveyed in the public square.

The implementation of this resolution has no financial requirements.

The resolution only encourages action on behalf of congregations and their members but does not require any.

A Resolution for Due Process for All

Submitted by:

The Rev. Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, Esq. (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Andrew's, Hanover
Mr. James F. Laprade (Lay Delegate), St. Stephen's, Cohasset
The Rev. Arrington Chambliss (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal City Mission
The Rev. Diana Scheide (Canonically Resident Clergy), Holy Nativity, Weymouth

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts affirms the inherent dignity and rights of all people, including immigrants and asylum seekers, as created in the image of God; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention calls upon the United States government to ensure due process protections for all immigrants, regardless of immigration status, and cease the use of arrest and deportation quotas that undermine the integrity of the legal system and perpetuate fear in immigrant communities and beyond; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention denounces all rhetoric, policies, and practices that malign immigrants or ascribe malice to entire groups of people based on nationality, ethnicity, or legal status; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention rejects fearmongering as a tool of public policy and affirm that scapegoating vulnerable populations is anathema to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who calls us to love our neighbor and seek justice for the oppressed; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention urges all Episcopalians, parishes, and ministries within the Diocese of Massachusetts to advocate for immigration policies and local practices that uphold the rule of law, protect family unity, and reflect the biblical imperative to welcome the stranger; and be it further

Resolved, that the Diocese of Massachusetts submits this resolution to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church for consideration, urging the wider Church to adopt a consistent, faith-rooted opposition to unjust deportation practices and to call for legislative and administrative reforms invested in a fair and equitable system of immigration, customs and enforcement.

EXPLANATION

Scripture commands us to “love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 10:19) and to see Christ in the face of those who are hungry, sick, imprisoned, or a stranger (Matthew 25:35–40). As followers of Jesus, we are called to advocate for justice and mercy in the face of fear-based, discriminatory policies.

Deportation quotas, whether formal or informal, incentivize immigration enforcement that prioritizes numbers over justice, frequently resulting in racial profiling, wrongful detentions, and the tearing apart of families. Such practices violate both the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of due process and our Christian commitment to human dignity.

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Equally harmful is the use of rhetoric that casts immigrants as threats or burdens, sowing fear and division for political gain. Such language contradicts our baptismal vow to respect the dignity of every human being and undermines the Gospel witness of inclusion, hospitality, and solidarity with the marginalized.

Across our parishes, worshipping communities and ministries, Episcopalians walk alongside immigrant neighbors and witness firsthand the trauma caused by arbitrary enforcement and hostile public discourse. The Church must not be silent. We call on our Diocese, and our wider Episcopal Church, to use its prophetic voice to ensure that U.S. immigration policy upholds legal fairness, compassion, and respect for human rights.

STATEMENT AGAINST

The Episcopal Church should not be engaged in political issues. This is a matter for the US government, and concerns about these policies can be addressed in other ways.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

This resolution directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that this Convention's support of this resolution is conveyed in the public square, and proposed to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

There are no immediate budgetary requirements for implementing this resolution. Co-sponsors look forward to working with our formation for ministry leaders to incorporate the resolution into diocesan formation curricula, where appropriate.

Cosponsors welcome the opportunity to create a resource list for any worshipping community or leaders who would benefit from learning how to be in touch with or work with front line organizations such as Episcopal City Mission and the Boston Immigrant Justice Accompaniment Network.

A Resolution in Allyship with Those Working on the MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda

Submitted by:

The Rev. Anoma Abeyaratne (Canonically Resident Clergy), All Saints, Brookline
Ms. Rebecca Alden (Lay Delegate), St. David's, South Yarmouth
The Rev. Jennifer D. Beal (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Anne's, North Billerica
Mr. Michael Bent (Diocesan Council), St. Peter's, Beverly
The Ven. Chris Beukman (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John's Holbrook and Bristol
Trinity, North Easton
The Rev. Rebecca Binns (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Paul's, Natick
The Rev. Jacqueline Clark (Canonically Resident Clergy), Trinity Church, Haverhill
The Rev. Jocelyn E. Collen (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Paul's, Brookline
The Rev. Margot Dunlap Critchfield (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Mary's, Barnstable
The Rev. Marya DeCarlen (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John's, Gloucester
The Rev. Kate Ekrem (Canonically Resident Clergy), Christ Church, Cambridge
The Rev. Mary Beth Emerson (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John the Evangelist, Duxbury
The Rev. Jeremy C. Froyen (Canonically Resident Clergy), Grace, New Bedford
The Rev. Andrew Goldhor (Canonically Resident Clergy), Good Shepherd, Watertown
The Rev. Clifford Goodridge (Canonically Resident Clergy), Christ Church, Waltham
The Rev. Holly Hartman (Canonically Resident Clergy), Christ Church (Old North), Boston
The Rev. Edwin Johnson (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal City Mission
The Rev. Greg Johnston (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John's, Charlestown
The Rev. Kathy McAdams (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John's, Franklin
The Rev. Canon Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa (Canonically Resident Clergy), Diocesan Staff
The Rev. Eva Orteiz (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Stephen's, Boston
The Rev. Rita Powell (Canonically Resident Clergy), Episcopal Chaplaincy at Harvard
University
The Rev. Brian Raiche (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Mary of the Harbor, Provincetown
The Rev. Ema Rosero-Nordalm (Canonically Resident Clergy), Community of Oscar Romero
The Rev. H. Mark Smith (Canonically Resident Clergy), Holy Spirit, Mattapan
The Rev. Dr. Barbara Smith-Moran, SOSc (Canonically Resident Clergy), Trinity, Concord
The Rev. Matthew Stewart (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. James's, Cambridge
The Rev. Andrea Taylor (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. David's, South Yarmouth
The Rev. Eleanor Terry (Canonically Resident Clergy), Good Shepherd, Acton
The Rev. Dawn Tesorero, (Canonically Resident Clergy)
The Rev. James Thomas (Canonically Resident Clergy), Christ Church, Plymouth
The Rev. Natalie Thomas, (Canonically Resident Clergy)
The Rev. Tamra Tucker (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. Mary's, Dorchester
Ms. Deborah Gardner Walker (Lay Delegate), St. Peter's, Beverly
The Rev. Dr. Regina L. Walton (Canonically Resident Clergy), Harvard Divinity School and
Epiphany, Winchester
The Rev. Robert G. Windsor (Canonically Resident Clergy), Trinity, Boston
The Rev. Diane Wong (Canonically Resident Clergy), St. John's, Arlington

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts stands with Bishop Julia E. Whitworth of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts and Bishop

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Douglas J. Fisher of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts in supporting the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda; and be it further

Resolved, that in supporting the Agenda, the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church reaffirms our ongoing commitment to walk toward relationship with the peoples Native to these lands by joining them as allies in the Agenda set by a coalition of Native leaders; and be it further

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that our support of the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda is conveyed to the governor of Massachusetts and every state legislator representing portions of the diocese; and be it further

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts directs the Secretary of Convention to ensure that our support of the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda is conveyed to the organizers of the Agenda and invite them to list the diocese as an endorser of the Agenda; and be it further

Resolved, that the delegates to the 240th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts are urged to encourage their worshipping community leaders and individual members to communicate support of the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda to their respective state legislators.

EXPLANATION

As Bishops Whitworth and Fisher pointed out in their joint letter of June 16, 2025⁴, “For generations we have lived, worshipped and engaged God’s mission on the unceded land of native peoples. From the coastal lands of the Wampanoag, Pokanoket, Massachusett and Patuxet, to the central lands of the Nipmuc and Agawam and to the western lands of the Pocumtuc, Nonotuck, Mohican and the Dawnland Confederacy, the artificial borders of states and dioceses have largely ignored the rights of the first people of this place. We wish for this ignorance to end in our time.”

One “outward and visible sign” of their commitment was to support the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda, a set of five legislative priorities identified over time by a broad body of Native people in Massachusetts. The Indigenous Legislative Agenda includes leadership from United American Indians of New England, North American Indian Center of Boston, MA Mascot Coalition, Cultural Survival, Universalist Unitarian Mass Action, Massachusetts Peace Action, Italian Americans for Indigenous Peoples Day, Network for Social Justice, and other allies.

As the organizers of the Agenda say, “For too long, Indigenous voices have been ignored in Massachusetts policies. Now, we have the chance to make real change. Our Indigenous-led coalition is pushing for five critical bills that will protect Native heritage, improve education, and end outdated racist practices...”⁵

⁴ [Massachusetts Episcopal Bishops Endorse the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda, June 16, 2025](#)

⁵ <http://mainindigenousagenda.org/>

Their priorities include⁶

1. Remove Racist Mascots: Prohibit Native American mascots in Massachusetts public schools.
2. Honor Indigenous People's Day: Replace Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day to celebrate Indigenous resilience and survival. The change acknowledges the true histories of colonialism, genocide and racism that Native peoples have experienced and continue to face.
3. Celebrate and Teach Native American Culture & History: Ensure that schoolchildren in Massachusetts learn about Native American history, culture, and current issues.
4. Protect Native American Heritage: Ensure Native American funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony held in governmental or non-profit collections are not sold for profit.
5. Support the Education and Futures of Native Youth: Improve educational outcomes and opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native students.

For more on the specific legislation on the agenda, see <http://mainindigenousagenda.org/>.

Those among us who have been exploring what allyship means have come to understand it as establishing relationships “led by Native people’s experience, wisdom, desires, and goals, and the intent of this relational work is to become allies with Native people in achieving their goals. Broadly speaking, we seek to be allies in the efforts of Native people to protect, and in some cases reestablish, their cultures and their rights and their dignity.”⁷ A broad and diverse coalition of Native people have told us what that looks like legislatively in our state and they know better than “the Church” on this and other matters.

While some in our pews will likely oppose one or another of the five priorities set forth in the agenda, adopting this resolution says to our Native neighbors that as a body, The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts stands in support of the agenda as a whole, as allies to Native people’s determined priorities. As our bishops have noted, “We must care about the issues that are of utmost importance to our Indigenous neighbors and be witnesses of the injustices that still harm and scar native youth. These five pieces of legislation will make the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a safer, healthier, more respectful environment for native people.”⁸

By passing this resolution, the 240th Annual Diocesan Convention will stand with our bishops to say that we support “the rights of Indigenous people to be the stewards of their own culture and the keepers of their own sacred stories. This is our first step, but it will not be our last.”⁹

STATEMENT AGAINST

The church should not be political. We should stay out of legislative matters. Let individual Episcopalians decide how to vote without the interference of their Church leaders telling us

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ From the vision statement of the Right Relationships and Allyship working group

⁸ [Massachusetts Episcopal Bishops Endorse the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda, June 16, 2025](#)

⁹ *ibid.*

what we should support. In addition, Native mascots are seen by many as a way of honoring Native people, not denigrating them. People need to understand that and not be so sensitive or quick to take offense. Finally, some Italian Americans see the elimination of the recognition of Christopher Columbus and the beginning of transatlantic settler colonialism as a dishonor to their heritage.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The Secretary of Convention will work with diocesan staff to ensure that the diocese's support of the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda is communicated to the governor and every state legislator of Massachusetts representing portions of the diocese as well as the organizers of the Massachusetts Indigenous Legislative Agenda. Convention delegates will not be required to but will be urged to encourage their worshiping community's leaders and members to contact their state legislators in support of the Agenda.

A Courtesy Resolution in Honor of Jerome Woods Berryman (1937-2024)

Submitted by:

The Rev. Cheryl V. Minor (Canonically Resident Clergy) All Saints', Belmont

The Rev. Maggie Arnold (Canonically Resident Clergy) St. Stephen's, Cohasset

The Rev. Nicholas Morris-Kliment (Canonically Resident Clergy) Christ Church, Needham

THE RESOLUTION

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts gives thanks for the life and ministry of the Rev. Dr. Jerome Woods Berryman (1937-2024), the founder of Godly Play, and a world-recognized theologian with profound and faithful interest in children and their spirituality; and be it further

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts recognizes and acknowledges Dr. Berryman's impact and the impact of Godly Play on generations of Christians, young and old; and be it further

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts gives thanks for Godly Play, which is now practiced in more than 60 countries as a method of education and spiritual formation rooted in Montessori principles and deeply grounded in the liturgical and theological tradition of the Episcopal Church, that has transformed generations of children and their adult mentors across countless Episcopal parishes—including many in the Diocese of Massachusetts—nurturing a lifelong relationship with God that begins in wonder rather than instruction, and grows through participation rather than passive reception; and be it further

Resolved, that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts affirms that the theological insights and pedagogical genius of Dr. Berryman's Godly Play has reshaped the Church's understanding of children's spirituality—not as an afterthought to adult formation, but as a sacred realm of its own; and be it further

Resolved, that in passing this resolution that the 240th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts seeks to honor Dr. Berryman personally and also announce to the Church at large this Diocese's commitment to Christian education and the nurture of the spiritual lives of children around the globe.

EXPLANATION

Dr. Berryman nurtured the faith of both children and adults for more than 50 years. He published 18 books devoted to the principle Jesus taught, that "becoming like a child" is the path to spiritual maturity. Dr. Berryman continued to work and publish prolifically until his death on August 5, 2024, at the age of 87. Dr. Berryman has left an immeasurable impact on clergy, educators, parents, and most of all, children who have encountered the sacred through storytelling, silence, and wonder in a Godly Play circle.

STATEMENT AGAINST

The Diocese of Massachusetts should not make a practice of honoring the life and legacy of one person. Many visionary educators have had an impact on church life.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Passage of this resolution would have no budgetary or personnel implications.

REPORT OF THE RACIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

James Baldwin

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

The Racial Justice Commission (RJC) of the Diocese of Massachusetts (DioMass) spent the last year seeking to face the reality of racism within and among us and to affect change – a task that was pledged to be done in the past and will continue to draw us into our shared future, now more than ever. To that end, RJC members participated in the diocesan listening sessions as well as the summit led by Ministry Architects.

The Commission also held a visioning retreat, during which the subcommittee chairs and RJC co-chairs reviewed the work of the last several years with an evaluative eye at what has worked well, what is still needs doing, and what the vision for the coming years is. Bp. Whitworth was able to join the Commission for much of the day, including having a wide-ranging conversation about how to engage the diocese at large in the work of racial justice.

Forming Anti-Racist Episcopal Communities

Responsibility: Foster active anti-racist Episcopal communities by having theologically grounded antiracist formation offerings; rethinking liturgy through an antiracism lens; and also activating our congregations to act for racial justice in the world.

The Forming Anti-Racist Episcopal Communities subcommittee has worked to create a Formation Toolkit to offer as a resource to parishes and Episcopal communities in the diocese. Through the committee's hard work, the first part of that toolkit is available beginning at this convention. You can find it at the end of this report, and the RJC hopes to have it up on the DioMass website very soon.

Last year's convention saw the passage of a resolution to require wide use of a curriculum for anti-racism training in the diocese, especially among lay and ordained leaders. The subcommittee submitted the curriculum to the RJC, which passed it along to Bp. Whitworth. The project is currently on hold as the bishop envisions revisions to the project.

Financial Systems

Responsibility: Ensure financial resources are located in ways that promote anti-racism--on the diocesan and congregational level. This includes, but is not limited to, how resources are allocated in the diocese, how compensation is set and justly compensating BIPOC for often unpaid volunteer labor.

The Financial Systems subcommittee has successfully rebuilt their membership this year. Their primary focus has been on developing a compensation scheme for BIPOC clergy. The BIPOC clergy are often called upon to staff committees as the diocese pursues diversity in leadership. The subcommittee's work seeks to ensure that these clergy are appropriately compensated. This will also support efforts to recruit and retain a diverse clergy pool in the

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diocese. The logistics of pursuing this goal have proven to be complex but the subcommittee continues to work with the bishop on clarifying outstanding issues and identifying funding sources and amounts to be paid.

The subcommittee has also begun to explore the question of health insurance for DioMass clergy. This is a major expense in the diocese and can adversely impact BIPOC clergy in particular. More equitable models are being explored, including those from other dioceses.

The Reparations Subcommittee

Responsibility: In the name of repentance for the harm done by enslavement of individuals and systemic racism, provide resources, experiences and leadership for the diocese, its congregations, and its Episcopal communities as we take action to 1) change how we tell our own histories and present-day story and 2) foster a continuous loop of education and training for congregations..

The Reparations Subcommittee continues recording personal testimonies of African American and Afro Caribbean members of the diocese. The goal of this initiative is to create an archive of truth-telling about the historical and present-day experiences of Black and brown individuals. The project will ensure that these experiences that feature both harm and resilience will remain in our collective memory.

The subcommittee is a resource accessible to all Episcopal communities desiring to learn about reparations and how to engage in this movement. An invitation is extended to individuals interested in the Reparations Subcommittee to submit inquiries to reparations@diomass.org.

The Structures and Systems Subcommittee

Responsibility: Work with diocesan staff, clergy and lay leadership to create accountable and transparent structures in our diocese and Episcopal communities. This includes (but is not limited to) hiring practices, committee make-up, search-committee processes, and business practices.

The work of the Structures and Systems Subcommittee focused on supporting the deeper work of the other subcommittees of the RJC as well as connecting with diocesan staff. They continue to offer to be a reference and sounding board as DioMass structural transitions are made, including those centered around hiring, searches, and business practices.

Supporting BIPOC Individuals and Communities

Responsibility: Recognizing lay and ordained black, indigenous, latinx, Asian, and Pacific Islander Episcopal people and communities of our Diocese experience racism, isolation and more difficult paths to leadership than white Episcopal people and communities, we seek to grow support for them and build coalitions and connections amongst our persons of color, allies and co-conspirators.

The subcommittee continued to support people of color in their many ministries across DioMass through regular gatherings and looking to lift up and support people of color in leadership, here in the diocese and in partnership with other Province I dioceses.

Three working groups within the BIPOC subcommittee focus on 1) fostering allyship with Indigenous Persons, which has offered a resolution to this convention; 2) supporting the Black

Churches United (formerly known as the Seven Historically Black Churches); and 3) planning with the Commission on Ministry a recruitment conference for both lay and ordained persons, which included sponsoring time of retreat in collaboration with Province One.

Future activities envisioned by the Supporting BIPOC Individuals and Communities include a retreat, continued regular gatherings, and expanding connections with Province One.

Joint RJC/CoM Task Force on Equipping Ordained Leaders for the Work of Becoming the Beloved Community

The 237th Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts passed, and the 238th Convention affirmed, the formation of a task force consisting of members of the Commission on Ministry and Racial Justice Commission to implement the resolution titled *Equipping Ordained Leaders for the Work of Becoming the Beloved Community*. The task force is also composed of the Office of the Canon for Ordained Vocations and the Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries.

After putting out a Request for Proposal to do the work outlined by the resolution, the RJC/COM Task Force reviewed submissions and made a recommendation to the bishop. The next steps are pending.

Summary

As was noted last year, the Commission continues to be challenged with how best to communicate the work and progress outlined in this report to the wider diocese. With the overall transitions in the diocese, and especially as we see the strides for racial justice made in our country in recent years being clawed back in the current political climate, we remain convicted that the work to which we are called is more important now than ever. As a deep part of our common life of faith, we urge each member of the Diocese of Massachusetts to do all we can individually to both face our own blind spots when it comes to racial injustice and call forth change in our lives, our churches, and our world.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. W. (Will) H. Mebane, Jr. and The Rev. Carol Morehead, *2024-25 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

Forming Active Antiracist Episcopal Communities Co-Chairs: Deborah Gardner Walker, St. Peter's Church, Beverly, and The Rev. James M. Hairston, Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin, Boston

Subcommittee members: The Rev. Chitral DeMel, Church of the Good Shepherd, Dedham; Lang Haynes, St. Peter's, Cambridge; The Rev. Jim Kodera, Wellesley College; The Rev. Ema Rosero-Nordalm; The Rev. Michael Thompson, St. John's Newtonville; The Rev. Canon Edie Dolnikowski, Canon for Ordained Vocations (staff liaison)

Financial Systems and Structures Co-chairs: The Rev. Morgan Allen, Trinity Church, Boston and The Rev. Paul Minor, All Saints' Church, Belmont

Subcommittee members: The Rev. John Gitau, Bristol Trinity, North Easton; Patricia Henderson, Christ Church, Hyde Park; Robert Hess, Trinity Copley Square, Boston; The Rev. Hall Kirkham, St. Michael's Church, Milton; Tamara Sobers, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; Win Treese, St. Elizabeth's Church, Sudbury

Reparations Chair: Louise Gant, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan

Subcommittee members: Michael Bent, St. Peter's Church, Beverly; Leonie Drummond, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; Wayne Kennard, St. Peter's Church, Weston; Constance Perry, Trinity Copley Square, Boston; Timothy Potter, St. Stephen's Church, Lynn; The Rev. Tamra Tucker, St. Mary's, Dorchester.

Structures and Systems Co-Chairs: The Rev. Derrick Muwina, St. Peter's Church, Cambridge and The Rev. Debbie Phillips, Grace Church, Salem

Subcommittee members: Grace Clark, Trinity Church, Boston; Zena Link, Mission Institute; Helen Patmon, St. Stephen's Church, Lynn; Kris Wile, St. Andrew's Church, Framingham

Supporting BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, & Persons of Color) Individuals and Communities Co-Chairs: The Rev. Jennifer Beal, St. Anne's Church, N. Billerica and The Rev. Ted Cole, Jr., St. John's Church, Jamaica Plain

Subcommittee members: The Rev. Zenetta Armstrong, Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan; The Rev. Joel Ives, Church of Our Savior, Brookline; The Rev. Edwin Johnson, Episcopal City Mission; The Rev. Canon Gregory Perez, Regional Canon for the North & West Region; 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)

Report from the Allyship Working Group

Meanwhile, the Right Relations and Allyship Working Group has continued its work of seeking to establish relationships with Native people here with hopes of learning how to become allies with them as they work to establish their goals. In their strategic planning retreat early in 2025, led by The Rev. Deacon Natalie Thomas, the group was able reach consensus that our purpose as a group is cultivating "relationships with Indigenous peoples in our diocese in order to assist congregations to build their own long-lasting relationships with Indigenous peoples native to their areas." Even as we continue the slow and careful work of deepening relationships with Native peoples ourselves, we have reached out to congregations who have expressed interest in becoming part of this movement. In addition, the working group was an active partner with the Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries and the Diocese of Western Massachusetts in last month's commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the beginning of King Philip's War and the expulsion of Nipmucs and others to Deer Island as a part of that conflict. For more information on the group's work, to learn how to get involved, or to learn

how we might be able to support your worshiping community's own ambitions, reach out to the Rev. Deacon H. Mark Smith, convener of the group, at hmsmith46@gmail.com.

REPORT OF THE REPARATIONS FUND COMMITTEE

The Reparations Fund Committee (“RFC”) descends from the work of the Racial Justice Commission and from Diocesan Convention resolutions which include – A Call for Repentance and Reparations (2020), Charting the Long Road Towards Reparations (2021), Establishing the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Reparations Fund (2022), and On the Intent, Purpose, Governance, and Accountability of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Reparations Fund (2023). These resolutions are available at the RFC website (<https://www.diomass.org/reparations-fund>).

Background

The Diocesan Convention in October 2023 approved a resolution from the Racial Justice Commission that called for the creation of a committee to oversee the Reparations investments and activities.

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts formed the RFC following that Convention 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. Eleven members (including both clergy and lay people and a majority of whom identify as African American or Afro - Caribbean) would be appointed by the Bishop Diocesan.

Focusing on systemic solutions to present-day racial disparities whose origins lie in the sin of American slavery, the mission of the Reparations Fund itself 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 Reparations 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. The RFC organizes the Fund to do this.

Getting Organized – November 24 to the Present

The RFC began meeting in November 2024. The priority of these early meetings has been to organize around Working Groups, begin research, draft guidelines for investing funds, and gain clarity on its mission, always with the priority of moving thoughtfully and deliberately. In addition, the RFC places a high priority on community building at each meeting.

In June 2025 the RFC held a strategic planning meeting to connect its Diocesan Convention-driven mission and purpose into a workplan, review its progress to date, and map the path of that workplan through the coming twelve months. It also adjusted the charge and composition of the Working Groups to address more directly those tasks ahead.

As it is currently configured, the RFC has 4 Working Groups that will 1) hold conversations with other and similar diocese to our own about their work in reparations (*Research*), 2) gather ideas from communities within and outside the Diocese that will help to dismantle systemic racism (*Listening Gatherings*), 3) address processes for fundraising, policies for investing assets, and processes for grantmaking (*Development Investment Disbursement*); and 4) create regular communication within the Diocese and among external constituents in the African American and Afro-Caribbean communities about its work (*Communications*).

The RFC currently comprises 8 members, and meets the third Saturday of each month, with both virtual and in-person meetings scheduled through June 2026.

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At June 30th the Reparations Fund totaled \$2,459,317, of which 39% is held in the Fossil Fuel Free fund, 30% in the Stock Fund, and 31% in the Income Fund, all managed by the Trustees of Donations. So far no funds have been distributed.

In October, the Research Working Group is conducting interviews with four Dioceses, similar to our own, that have implemented reparations funds: Maryland, New York, Long Island, and New Jersey. The group will report the results of these interviews back to the RFC at its next or subsequent meeting.

The Listening Gathering Working Group is meeting with regional community foundations who will help us reach non-Episcopal constituents in the African American and Afro-Caribbean communities in the geographic area comprehended by our Diocese whose voices are critical in determining systemic solutions to systemic racism.

Looking Ahead

At this point the RFC plans to schedule its first Listening Gatherings – with constituent communities outside the Diocese – in early 2026. The second group of Listening Gatherings – circling parishes in the Diocese with predominantly African American and Afro-Caribbean – will follow.

The work of our Research and Listening Session Working Groups will generate the focus for the RFC grant-making. We plan to initiate pilot distributions based on what our work has revealed late in 2026, and then to refine our review and discernment process through the fall and into the new calendar year. This will be the work of the Development / Investment / Disbursement Working Group that oversees fund investments, defines criteria for grantmaking, and oversees donations to the fund outside of those directed by Convention.

The Communications Working Group will begin, starting in December 2025, to circulate monthly “Dispatches from the Field” that provide clarity on how the RFC work is progressing and what we are learning. These are intended to be short, clear, and regular. The Dispatches later in 2026 will provide updates on our grant process and the pilot grants we will have made by then.

Please let us know what you think and what questions you have by contacting either of the RFC co-Chairs, the Rev. Hall Kirkham or Constance Perry through the Rev. Hall Kirkham’s email address: hkirkham@stmichaelsmilton.org.

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

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT

The Commission on Ministry (COM) has the privilege of working with our Bishop as she selects postulants and candidates and guides their formation 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 Bishop 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 last year with a working group and sub-committees 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 Discerning Ordained Ministry.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and guidance of many in this diocese and beyond who help to form the people 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 Ms. Louise Gant for agreeing to be appointed to the COM this year and to all the members of the COM and the chaplains to our 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 2025

In 2024 the Commission received commitment forms from fifteen inquirers, eleven of whom submitted applications for postulancy after having worked with their parish discernment committees. Ten applicants were invited to interview and nine were admitted to postulancy on June 1, 2025, five for the priesthood and four 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 \$85,000 to seven postulants and candidates. Scholarships ranged from \$5,000 to \$20,000 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:

Since our last Diocesan Convention five transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood. On June 7, 2025 The Rt. Rev. Julia E. Whitworth ordained one candidate to the diaconate and five to the transitional diaconate, and one transitional deacon to the priesthood at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston. Since the 2024 Diocesan Convention five transitional deacons have been ordained to the priesthood.

As of July 1, 2025, there were thirty-six people in the ordination process as postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons – twenty-seven for the priesthood and nine for the diaconate. They come from twenty-four sponsoring congregations throughout ten deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of the eleven new postulants this year:

Year	Priesthood	Diaconate	Combined
2025	35	51	42

The average age of new postulants over the preceding years:

Year	Combined
2024	42
2023	42
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 September 2025): the Rev. Dr. Margaret Arnold, the Rev. Dr. Richard Burden, the Rev. Lynn Campbell, Dr. Laura Crain, the Rev. Virgilio Fortuna, Ms. Louise Gant, 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

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Standing Committee is pleased to report on our activities for 2025. You can find a reporting of our canonical actions taken below.

This year was particularly focused on joyfully fulfilling our canonical responsibility for welcoming our newly elected Bishop Diocesan The Right Reverend Julia E. Whitworth into her first year of service with us. We were particularly delighted to welcome the whole Whitworth family to Massachusetts during the summer of 2025.

The Standing Committee prayerfully deliberated over and determined that our Diocese would benefit from owning a Bishop's House. We outlined the criteria needed in a Bishop's House and spent much of the late winter and early spring working with Bishop Whitworth and a real estate agent looking at appropriate homes. Given the challenging housing market between 15-20 houses were seen, numerous offers were made, and finally an offer was accepted and a purchase completed on a beautiful family home.

The Standing Committee also spent time reestablishing our relationship with the other Diocesan governing bodies, namely the Diocesan Council and the Commission on Ministry. We also worked with the Real Estate Advisory Committee and the Diocesan Loan Committee to make the loan approval processes more responsive to parishes.

The Standing Committee also reflected upon the recently completed Bishop Search process and financials; we documented our findings. Those findings are available for a future Standing Committee when the time comes for another bishop search, suffragan or diocesan.

In addition, the Standing Committee spent the time since the last Diocesan convention considering its own leadership practices and adjusting them to better serve as a governing body. Finally, we take very seriously our role as advisors to the Bishop. We were pleased to be a part of and to give our advice on the Diocesan Visioning Process that was conducted this past year; it will serve our diocese well.

OTHER NEWS

The following is respectfully submitted as a summary of some of the activities and business of the Standing Committee since the 239th Diocesan Convention.

BISHOP CONSENTS

The Diocese of Dallas - the Rev. Robert Price, consent given.

PRIESTHOOD ORDINATIONS

We certified that the canonical requirements had been met and we recommended that the following be ordained to the priesthood:

Aaron Ross

DIACONAL ORDINATIONS

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We certified that the canonical requirements had been met and we recommended that the following be ordained to the transitional diaconate:

Jocelyn Collen
Mary Curlew
Eva Dalzell
Julia Matallana Freedman
Aidan Stoddart

We certified that the canonical requirements had been met and we recommended that the following be ordained to the diaconate:

Robert Christian

WE APPROVED DIOCESAN STOKES LOANS AND GREEN LOANS TO:

Holy Spirit, Orleans
Christ Church, Needham
St. David's, Yarmouth
St. John's, Newtonville
St. James, Amesbury
St. Mary's, Provincetown
Good Shepherd, Watertown

WE AUTHORIZED THE SALE OF PROPERTY
from that which had been Grace Church, North Attleboro

WE AUTHORIZED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEMORIAL GARDEN BY
St. Chrysostom, Quincy

WE AUTHORIZED THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY
The purchase of a Bishop's House in Newton, MA

WE CONSENTED TO THE LEASING OF PROPERTY BY
St John's, Newtonville

WE CONSENTED TO THE APPOINTMENT TO THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE
DIOCESE:

The Rev. Paul Minor
Ms. Kris Aimone

OLD NORTH CHURCH, BOSTON

We ratified the election of Carol Ball, Anne Sheetz, Wayne Webster, Bruce Rosendahl, Bruce Shaw, Robyn Bostrom, Jim Elliott, April Lepere, Ellen Hume, Nyasha Toyloy, and Mary Beth Davis to the Vestry of Christ Church in the City of Boston (Old North Church).

PARISH BYLAWS

We approved changes to the Bylaws of the following parishes:

St Michael's, Holliston
St Mark's, Foxborough
St Paul's, Malden
Church of the Holy Spirit, Orleans
St Peter's, Beverly

WE GAVE OUR ADVICE AND COUNSEL ON A TITLE III MATTER.

Respectfully submitted,
THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS
Suzanne Owayda, Esq, President
The Reverend Kit Lonergan, Vice President
The Reverend Dr. Daniel Dice, Secretary
James Dilday, Esq.
Kevin Miller
The Reverend Walter Connelly
David Sullivan
The Reverend Natasha Stewart

CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Julie Shea, Secretary

Dispatch of Business

Betsy Ridge, Chair
Rebecca Alden
The Rev. Margaret Lias

Qualifications

The Rev. Margaret Lias, Chair
Jennifer Garrett

Elections

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

Admission of Parishes and Missions

William Boyce, Chair
The Rev. Dr. Matthew Cadwell

Resolutions

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

Constitution and Canons

The Rev. Daniel S. Dice, J.D., Chair
Eleanor A. Evans, Esq.
David Montgomery, Esq.
The Rev. Amy Whitcomb Slemmer, Esq.
The Rev. Michael Thompson, Esq.

Nominating Committee

The Rev. Dr. Regina Walton, Chair
The Rev. Amy McCreath
The Rev. Isaac Martinez
Jane Redmont
The Rev. Diane Wong
The Rev. Ted Cole