

# 2026 Bishop's Annual Appeal

Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts



Dear Beloved Friends in the Diocese of Massachusetts,

**Alleluia! Christ is Risen!** The Fourth Sunday of Easter is affectionately known as Good Shepherd Sunday, and this year, our Gospel for that day reminds us that Jesus said, “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.” That is what shepherds do — they guide, support, and walk alongside their flock so that God’s people may live abundant lives.

As bishop, I am reminded of my call to serve as shepherd every time I carry the crozier and walk among you in your congregations. Through your faithful witness and ministries, you remind me again and again of the power of our faith in Christ to transform our lives and the communities in which we live.

During this Easter season, **I invite you to support the Bishop’s Annual Appeal**, which this year highlights key ways we support shepherds, lay and ordained alike, who are strengthening congregational vitality throughout our diocese.

Your generosity helps strengthen congregations and ministries across our diocese. For example, diocesan support is helping to nurture collaborative Latino ministry between **Trinity/Trinidad in Haverhill and St. Anne’s/Sta. Ana in Lowell**, strengthening bilingual worship and outreach in their communities. Through the work of our regional canons, we are offering innovative resources for congregations to discern pathways to vitality. Congregations such as **St. John’s in Sandwich** are growing through tools like Invite, Welcome, Connect. Diverse clergy mutual support groups are serving a wide variety of communities. All of these ministries bind us together as one church, as the collective body of Christ.

Lay leaders are also essential shepherds in the life of our diocese. Through initiatives such as the **Finance Forums** and new **wardens’ gatherings**, we are equipping parish leaders with tools, resources, and connections that strengthen the ministries of local congregations. We are creating a new lay preaching certification program that will help support the development of prophetic voices among our laity.

And perhaps most important of all — our newest shepherds. One of the great strengths of our diocese is that we continue to raise up talented people for ordained ministry — we have 39 people in the ordination process! Yet fewer congregations are able to support clergy in the early years of ministry. Through the **Strategic Curacies Initiative**, we are investing in the formation of newly ordained priests so that they can grow into wise and faithful leaders for Christ’s Church.

In this season of resurrection and renewal, I ask: will you support the growth of our shared ministry by donating to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal? Your Easter gift will help ensure the Church continues to raise up faithful shepherds and vibrant congregations for generations to come.

Together we are already doing important work — and with your help we can do even more to nurture leaders and care for Christ’s flock.

**The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Julia E. Whitworth  
Bishop Diocesan

*“I am the good shepherd.  
The good shepherd lays  
down his life for the sheep.”  
John 10:11*



### Our New Shepherds

Our newly ordained: Revs. Jocelyn Collen, Mary Curlew, Eva Dalzell, Julia Matallana-Freedman, and Aidan Stoddart!



### Our Retiring Shepherds

Father Edgar from St. Lucas Chelsea.



### Our Future Shepherds

In the Diocese of Massachusetts, we are building the church of the future – and maybe even some bishops of the future!



### Our Lay Shepherds



### Our Regional Shepherds

The Rev. Canon Kelly A. O’Connell  
*Regional Canon for the Southern Region*

The Rev. Canon Gregory G. Perez  
*Regional Canon for the Northern & Western Region*

The Rev. Canon Marissa S. Rohrbach  
*Regional Canon for the Central Region*

### Our Shepherds of Hope

Voices of Hope, at the Bishop Alan Gates African Episcopal Mission Center, was a day full of music, strong community spirit, and meaningful connections.



### Our Prophetic Shepherds

In March, our cathedral partnered with Episcopal City Mission to host a morning of prayer and preparation before demonstrations on the Boston Common.



### Our Sainly Shepherds

People from across our diocese joined the John Burgess Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians to celebrate the Feast of Absalom Jones and Barbara C. Harris at our cathedral.



To give by credit card, use the QR code or go to [www.diomass.org/bishops-appeal](http://www.diomass.org/bishops-appeal).  
Make checks payable to “Bishop’s Annual Appeal” and send to the address below.

Contact the Rev. Brian Raiche, Development Consultant, with any questions or to make a gift of securities. [braiche@diomass.org](mailto:braiche@diomass.org) | 617-482-4826 ext. 515



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