

**REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED BY TITLE:**

**DIOCESAN COUNCIL REPORT  
STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT  
COMMISSION ON MINISTRY REPORT**

**THE 232ND ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS  
CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL,  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**



## **DIOCESAN COUNCIL REPORT TO CONVENTION AUGUST 2016 - JUNE 2017**

The Diocesan Council met ten times during the 2016-2017 program year. On a regular basis, Council received reports from the bishops and updates from committees and task forces. All meetings were held at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston, unless otherwise noted. The following summarizes particular issues Council considered or discussed at each meeting.

### August, 18, 2016

- Approved clergy housing allowances.
- Reviewed a draft of the proposed diocesan mission strategy and provided feedback.

### September 10, 2016, at Trinity Church, Concord

- Reviewed the latest draft of the proposed diocesan mission strategy.
- Heard a proposal for evaluating the mission strategy once it is approved by Diocesan Convention.
- Heard a report from the Budget Committee chair, the Rev. Stephen Voysey, on the proposed 2017 diocesan budget.
- Voted to adopt the proposed mission strategy for proposal to Diocesan Convention.
- Agreed on the process by which members of the Phase IV Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team would be nominated and elected.
- Voted to adopt the Phase IV Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team charter.
- Voted to accept the recommendation of the Assessment Coordinating Committee to lower the 2017 assessments for 16 parishes by a total of \$75,000.
- Voted to endorse the 2017 proposed budget as presented and to recommend favorable action by Diocesan Convention on the motions presented in the budget book.
- Heard a report from the diocesan treasurer, Lisa Garcia, on the work of the Assessment Formula Review Committee and on Budget Committee vacancies.
- Heard an update on Diocesan Convention nominations, resolutions and proposed amendments to the diocesan Constitution and Canons.
- Heard that the Executive Committee participated in a Visions, Inc., training over the summer; voted to adopt the Visions, Inc., guidelines as its own in members' work with one another; and to review said guidelines annually.

### October 27, 2016

- Elected six members to the Phase IV Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team.
- Voted to approve a budget recategorization submitted by the Boston-Cambridge Mission Hub.
- Voted to approve the Roxbury-Dorchester Mission Hub's second year budget for up to \$141,196.
- Heard an update about the South Shore Mission Hub.
- Voted to approve the following roster for the Mission Hub Implementation Committee: Joyce Harrington, The Rev. Thea Keith Lucas, Isaac Martinez, Stephen Mascoll, The Rev. H. Mark Smith, The Rev. Stephen Voysey, The Rev. Sammy Wood and John Woodard, with five ex-officio members: The Rev. Canon Libby Berman, Cindy Cushman, Diane D'Souza, Jin Min Lee and Steve Matthews. John Woodard was appointed the interim chair of the committee.
- Heard a mission strategy report, including plans for Diocesan Convention.
- Heard a report from the diocesan treasurer, Lisa Garcia.
- Voted to approve a proposed debt repayment plan for Grace Church in North Attleboro.
- Voted to direct the secretary of the diocese to not omit the names of the lay delegates to Diocesan Convention for St. Mary's Church in Rockport for this year; its assessment arrearages would have made it eligible to lose its lay delegates' vote at convention.
- Formed a subcommittee to plan the Jan. 20-21, 2017, Diocesan Council retreat at the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center.
- Thanked outgoing members of Diocesan Council whose terms expire as of Diocesan Convention 2016.

#### November 17, 2016

- Voted electronically on Nov. 17, 2016, to affirm the appointment of Win Treese and the Rev. Nancy Gossling as co-chairs of the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team.

#### December 15, 2016

- Voted to accept the audit of the 2015 financial statements of the Diocese of Massachusetts as prepared by RSN US LLP.
- Heard a report from the development director, Lynd Matt, on the progress of the Annual Fund to date.
- Heard a report from the mission hub program director, Jin Min Lee, on the South Shore Mission Hub and overall hub funding.
- Voted to increase the mission hub program director's position from 20 hours per week to 30 hours per week, effective Jan. 1.
- Heard a mission strategy report from the Implementation Organizing Team's co-chairs, Win Treese and the Rev. Nancy Gossling.
- Voted to approve clergy housing allowances for 2017.
- Voted to approve the assessment arrearage payment plan outlined in a letter to Grace Church in Salem, dated Oct. 12, 2016.
- Voted to change the assessment for the Church of Our Saviour in Arlington from \$12,927 to \$9,893.84, due to an error in a previous parochial report.
- Voted that \$50,000 for expenses related to mission strategy come from the Fund for Congregational Vitality.
- Heard an Executive Committee report that included the vote taken at its Dec. 1, 2016, meeting to forgive charges that the diocese would have incurred during the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's merger with the former Church of St. John the Evangelist in Boston.

#### January 20-21, 2017 Retreat at the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center, Greenfield, NH

- Voted to affirm the nominations of the following people to the Executive Committee for one-year terms: The Rev. Rebecca Black, The Rev. Karen Coleman, Carol Friar, Lisa Garcia, Connie Melahoures, The Rev. Tom Mousin and The Rev. Debbie Phillips.

#### February 23, 2017

- Heard a report from the mission hub program director, Jin Min Lee, and voted to accept the Mission Hub Implementation Committee's recommendation of a three-tiered hub budget cut system to close a \$1.6-million funding gap: 70 percent of requested maximum for original requests of \$1 million; 75 percent of requested maximum for original requests of \$750,000; or 80 percent of requested maximum for original requests of less than \$750,000.
- Heard a proposal from Bishop Alan M. Gates for an appeals process to the three-tiered budget cut system.
- Heard a proposal from creation care advocates for funding green grants in 2017.
- Heard a report from the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team's co-chair Win Treese and an update about a proposed evaluation process for diocesan budget items.
- Heard a report from the treasurer, Lisa Garcia, which included an update from the Assessment Formula Review Committee, preliminary financial results for 2016 and a summary of parishes that are in arrears on their 2016 assessments.
- Voted to instruct the Assessment Formula Review Committee to construct proposals for new assessment formulas for 2018 which will result in a 10 percent net decrease in aggregate assessments received, to be reviewed at the March and April Diocesan Council meetings.

### March 23, 2017

- Heard a report from the mission hub program director, Jin Min Lee, and voted not to approve the proposed South Shore Mission Hub budget.
- Heard that Bishop Gates has formed an ad hoc committee to work with the South Shore Mission Hub to review its programming and budget, and an ad hoc committee to review the appeal from the Merrimack Valley Mission Hub regarding the recent overall hub budget cuts.
- Voted against a motion that would have authorized the Treasurer's Office to move \$150,000 from the Green Loans fund into the Green Grants fund for 2017.
- Voted to adopt Visions, Inc., guidelines for use in Diocesan Council meetings.
- Heard an update on plans to improve communication between Diocesan Council and the deaneries.
- Voted to approve a clergy housing allowance adjustment for 2017.
- Heard that the Compensation and Benefits Committee will be conducting a salary survey in 2018.
- Heard a report from the diocesan treasurer, Lisa Garcia, which included three proposals for a new assessment formula that would result in a 10 percent decrease in aggregate assessments received in 2018, to be voted on at the April Diocesan Council meeting.
- Heard a report from the co-chairs of the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team, Win Treese and the Rev. Nancy Gossling, which included an update about the process for evaluating strategic ministries for the 2018 budget, and voted to approve said process as presented.

### April 27, 2017

- Heard an update from the mission hub program director, Jin Min Lee, on several of the mission hubs and voted to approve the Boston-Cambridge Mission Hub's proposed 18-month budget (valid January 2017 through June 2018) for maximum spending of \$236,168.
- Heard an update from the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team co-chairs, the Rev. Nancy Gossling and Win Treese.
- Heard a report from the diocesan treasurer, Lisa Garcia, on proposed 2018 assessment formulas, and voted a new assessment formula for 2018 as follows:  
*Where BASE for 2018 is equal to line 14 ("all other operating expenses") from the 2015 parochial report, less line 7 ("assistance from diocese"), the following rates shall be applied:*
  - 0.15% on expenses from \$0 to \$50,000*
  - 14.5% on expenses from \$50,001 to \$500,000*
  - 15.5% on expenses over \$500,000**For a mission, the 2018 assessment is two-thirds the amount that would be assessed if the congregation were a parish.*

### May 18, 2017

- Heard from the South Shore Mission Hub Ad Hoc Review Committee that the South Shore Mission Hub has decided to cease its work as a hub.
- Heard an update from the Rev. Canon Libby Berman on behalf of the Task Force for Parish Closings and Mergers.
- Heard an update from the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team co-chairs, the Rev. Nancy Gossling and Win Treese.
- Reviewed a draft of the proposed 2018 diocesan budget.
- Voted to authorize the Assessment Coordinating Committee to consider and receive requests from congregations for adjustments to the 2018 scheduled assessments, with total adjustments not to exceed \$67,500.
- Voted to appoint Rob Kelleher, Connie Melahoures, the Rev. Tom Mousin and Lynn Smith to the Assessment Coordinating Committee.

June 15, 2017

- Voted a letter of gratitude be sent to Win Treese, who is stepping down as co-chair of the Mission Strategy Implementation Organizing Team.
- Heard a mission strategy update from consultant Kristin Hendler.
- Heard a report from the mission hub program director, Jin Min Lee, on several of the hubs, and voted approval of the following hub budgets:
  - Plymouth, Cape and Islands Mission Hub for 2017, maximum spending of \$70,292.28.
  - North Shore Mission Hub for 2017, maximum spending of \$222,195.
  - Metrowest Mission Hub for 2017-2018, maximum spending of \$156,571.
  - Merrimack Valley Mission Hub, allocation of \$70,000, with \$55,000 of that amount to be allocated from the proceeds of unspent funds from the South Shore Mission Hub and \$15,000 granted from the Sears Fund, with the request that the hub reexamine its budget to find possibilities for reduced spending in order to complete its program year.
- Heard possibilities for other uses of the remaining unspent funds from the South Shore Mission Hub.
- Voted that the Executive Committee at its next meeting will review and vote on the budget for the South Coast Mission Hub.
- Voted to accept the audit of the 2016 financial statements of the diocese.
- Reviewed an updated version of the proposed 2018 diocesan budget.
- Voted to allocate 25 percent of assessment revenue from the 2018 operating budget to strategic ministries.
- Voted to authorize the withdrawal of up to \$150,000 from the agency funds of the diocese for severance and outplacement assistance for diocesan staff in 2018.
- Reviewed the positions to be filled by election at this year's Diocesan Convention.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Simons  
Assistant Secretary

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT TO CONVENTION SEPTEMBER 2016 – JUNE 2017**

The Standing Committee's work includes matters pertaining to real estate, Stokes Loans, parish by-laws and/or constitution revisions, and the ordination process. The following is a summary of the votes taken by the Standing Committee over the past year. All meetings took place at the diocesan offices unless otherwise noted.

*On September 8, 2016:*

- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for the following motions:
  - To sell the property located at 1900 Commonwealth Avenue, Auburndale, Massachusetts to an interested buyer at a sales price not less than 90% of the appraised value ( $90\% \times \$3,485,000 = \$3,316,500$ ), with the provision that this buyer will: (i) successfully resolve the remaining lease term in effect with the Brookline Infant and Toddler Childcare (BITC) to the satisfaction of BITC in the event the buyer desires to have BITC vacate the property prior to August 31, 2019, or (ii) permit BITC to remain as a tenant at sufferance until August 31, 2019. The buyer may take whatever legal steps necessary to require BITC to vacate the premises by August 31, 2019, but not sooner;
  - That the proceeds from any sale are to be conditioned as follows: (1) that the net proceeds for the sale shall be deposited in an investment account for safe-keeping under the Trustees of Donations to the Protestant Episcopal Church in a named fund under the name of Trinity Parish of Newton Centre; and (2) that any withdrawal of principal or use of income through a spending policy draw would be subject to the review and approval of the Standing Committee and the Bishop Diocesan, in consultation with the Congregational Development Team and the Real Estate Advisory Committee or its successors or other Standing Committee designated bodies;
  - That this vote supersedes any prior votes taken regarding the sale of the Auburndale property.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent to the placing of an encumbrance on the property of St. Augustine and St. Martin, 29 Lenox Street, Boston, due to their entering into a "Solar Power Purchasing Agreement" with Private Securities Market LLC (PSM) under which PSM will erect and service an 18.2 kW solar array on the church and the church will agree to purchase the array's electricity output for 25 years.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent to sell the property at 138 West Plain Street, Wayland, at a price not below \$603,500 ( $710,000$  (appraised value)  $\times 85\% = \$603,500$ ).
- VOTED, per the recommendation of the Real Estate Advisory Committee, to provide its advice and consent for a Stokes Loan in the amount of \$100,000 for St. Andrew's Church, Ayer, for the restoration of the exterior church envelope, such loan for a term of 15 years at an interest rate of 3.75%, and to the placing of a lien on a property located at 7 Faulkner Street, Ayer; and that the proceeds of this loan only be disbursed upon the satisfactory completion of the work and receipt of final lien waivers from the contractor and any subcontractors acknowledging that the contractor and all his subcontractors have been paid in full and relinquish their right to place liens on the congregation's property.
- VOTED to approve the extension of interest-only payments by Christ Church, Hyde Park on two outstanding Stokes Loans through December 2017, as recommended by the Diocesan Loan Committee. The Standing Committee further urges investigation of debt forgiveness.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Very Rev. Dr. DeDe Duncan-Probe as Bishop Diocesan of the diocese of Central New York.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rt. Rev. Santosh K. Murray as Bishop Diocesan of the diocese of Easton (Eastern Maryland).
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Canon Jose A. McLoughlin as Bishop Diocesan of the diocese of Western North Carolina.

*On October 13, 2016:*

- VOTED to refer the letter sent from Trinity Parish, Newton Centre, dated Thursday, October 6, 2016, to the Real Estate Advisory Committee and to the Canon for Congregations, Rev. Libby Berman, for comment.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for a Green Loan in the amount of \$100,000 for The Parish of St. Paul, Newton Highlands, for the replacement of a very old boiler with a high efficiency boiler and hot water system, such loan for a term of 15 years at an interest rate of 2.75%, and to the placing of a lien on the property located at 1135 Walnut Street, Newton Highlands.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for a Green Loan in the amount of \$21,000 for Trinity Episcopal Church, Stoughton, for the installation of a high efficiency boiler and a green lighting replacement project, such loan for a term of 15 years at an interest rate of 2.75% and to the placing of a lien on the property located at 414 Sumner Street, Stoughton.
- VOTED to approve the following candidates for ordination to the priesthood: Zachary Brooks, Marisa Egerstrom, Isaac Everett, Christopher Whiteman and Charles Wynder, Jr.
- VOTED to approve the by-laws of St. Paul's, Lynnfield as submitted.

*On November 10, 2016:*

- VOTED to appoint the Rev. Pamela Werntz as President of the Standing Committee.
- VOTED to appoint Angela McConney Scheepers, Esq. as Secretary of the Standing Committee.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent that Trinity Church be allowed to place \$768,795 from the sale of proceeds into Trinity's extant DIT account, as outlined in their proposal to the Standing Committee of October 6, 2016.
- VOTED to approve the by-laws dated November 10, 2016 for St. Andrew's, Wellesley, subject to a parish vote of approval on the substantive changes.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Ven. Carl Walter Wright as Bishop Suffragan for Armed Forces and Federal Ministries of The Episcopal Church.
- VOTED to the consent to the election of a Bishop Coadjutor for the Diocese of Haiti.

*On December 8, 2016:*

- VOTED to appoint Constance Perry as Vice President of the Standing Committee.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for an application by Christ Church (Old North), Boston, for landmark status by the Boston Landmarks Commission.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for a Diocesan Loan in the amount of \$6,798 for St. James', Groveland, for the replacement of a very old boiler in their rectory with a 95% efficient gas-fired boiler, such loan for a term of 15 years at an interest rate of 3.75%, and to the placing of a lien on the property located at 167 Washington Street, Groveland, MA 01834.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent under the provisions of Canon 18 to the Bishop and to the Vestry of St. John's Church, Sandwich, to sell land and building abutting church property located at 2 Jarves Street, Sandwich, for an amount not less than \$190,000, a revision to their original floor price request of \$225,000 (dated November 2015), with the net proceeds to be used to make capital improvements to the remaining property of St. John's and if any remaining funds, to pay down other existing real estate debt on church property.
- VOTED to approve the By-laws for St. Peter's Church, Dartmouth as submitted on December 5, 2016.

*On January 7, 2017 at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center, Andover, MA:*

- VOTED to approve to amend the Group Agreement as follows:
  6. We will be intentional about claiming our role as diocesan leaders.
  11. We will be accountable and fully engage in deliberations: once a decision is made, we will not undermine it.
  12. We will take time at the end of our meetings to share appreciations and regrets.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Canon Gretchen Mary Rehberg as Bishop Diocesan for the Diocese of Spokane.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows as Bishop Diocesan for the Diocese of Indianapolis.

*On February 9, 2017:*

- VOTED to approve the following ten postulants for candidacy: Daniel Bell, Duncan Hilton, Sonia Hodge, Greg Johnston, Bernie Jones, Amanda March, Helen McKinney, Tamra Tucker, Amy Whitcomb Slemmer and Ruthann Savage-King.
- VOTED to approve the Real Estate Transaction Guide for Congregations as submitted, with the incorporation of the Standing Committee's grammatical revisions.
- VOTED to provide its consent to a request from Trinity, Newton Centre, that the annual dividends from the Messiah-sale DIT account be released to Trinity upon their request, to fund the maintenance, management and capital improvements to their physical plant not otherwise possible through their operating budget. The principal funds in this account remain restricted, and may only be released upon further consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee.

*On March 9, 2017:*

- VOTED to approve the following postulant for candidacy: Marilyn McMillian.
- VOTED to approve the following candidates for ordination to the transitional diaconate: Daniel Bell and Amanda March.
- VOTED to approve the following candidates for ordination to the transitional diaconate: Emily Garcia and Duncan Hilton.
- VOTED to approve the by-laws for Emmanuel Church, Boston, as revised.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Canon Rafael L. Morales as Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese of Puerto Rico.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Canon John H. Taylor as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Los Angeles.
- VOTED to ratify the election of the following members of Christ Church in the City of Boston (Old North Church): Jane Olszewski, Christine Clements, Judy Porteus, Wayne Webster, Anne Gwin, Carol Ball, Jessie Elliot, Sharon Ruatto-Steadman, Bruce Brooksbank, Richard Olsen, and Jennifer Guber.

*On April 6, 2017:*

- VOTED to approve the following candidate for ordination to the transitional diaconate: Amy Whitcomb Slemmer.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Samuel S. Rodman, III as Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese of North Carolina.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson as Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of West Texas.



*On May 11, 2017:*

- VOTED to approve Patrick LaFortune for ordination to the transitional diaconate on June 3, 2017.
- VOTED to approve edits to Section 4.2 and Section 8 of the Model By-laws.
- VOTED to approve a conflict of interest clause, to be numbered Section 14, with the other sections following to be renumbered to reflect this change of the Model By-laws.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent to St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Burlington, MA to enter into a 32-month lease with Growing by Leaps and Bounds, Inc., Burlington, MA, provided that the utilities are separately metered and paid by the tenant, that the tenant provides a certificate of insurance which reflects liability insurance in an amount not less than \$4M per occurrence, and that the following is inserted into the proposed lease: "Lessee shall be responsible for any sales, property or income taxes imposed upon the demised premises or the income from this transaction." Additionally, it is strongly recommended that St. Mark's notify Church Insurance of this proposed lease.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent under the provisions of Canon 18 to the Bishop and to the Vestry of the Church of the Messiah, Woods Hole, MA, to sell the property known as Fisher House under the following conditions: that the property be listed for sale with a licensed real estate broker; that the sales price be no less than \$1.65M, a revision to their original floor prices requested of \$2M (dated March 10, 2016); and that the parish establish an endowment fund from the entire net proceeds, withdrawals from which are subject to a maximum of the total return policy established annually by the Diocesan Investment Trust.
- VOTED to approve the report of the Real Estate Advisory Committee dated March 30, 2017 and detailing membership responsibilities and term limits.
- VOTED to consent to the election of the Rt. Rev. David C. Rice as Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese of San Joaquin.

*On June 8, 2017:*

- VOTED to provide its advice and consent for a Diocesan Loan in the amount of \$100,000 for Trinity Chapel, Shirley, MA, to re-finance a loan from Fidelity Cooperative Bank whose proceeds had been used for the purchase of a house next door to the chapel to serve as a rectory, such loan for a term of 15 years at an interest rate of 3.5%, and to the placing of a lien on the property located at 188 Center Road, Shirley, MA.
- VOTED to provide its advice and consent under the provisions of Canon 18 to the bishop and to the vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church, Stoughton, MA, to sell the property located at 81 Seaver Street, Stoughton, MA, under the following conditions: that the property be listed for sale with a licensed real estate broker; that the sales price be no less than \$280,000; that 75% of the net proceeds from the sale be set aside for a clergy housing fund with a spending policy to be established for an annual draw; and that the remaining 25% of the net proceeds be set aside to provide a challenge or matching fund for a future capital projects fund; and further, that this approval is subject to a satisfactory resolution to the relationship with the existing tenants.
- VOTED to consent to the withdrawal of up to \$36,000 for partial funding of the first year of a clergy salary at Bristol Trinity, North Easton, as soon as a Letter of Agreement has been completed with an incoming priest.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Simons  
Assistant Secretary

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY 2017 REPORT TO CONVENTION**

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

Members of the COM serve as liaisons to parish discernment committees, advisors to postulants and candidates and meet monthly with the Bishops and 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.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and guidance of many in this diocese and beyond who help to form the women and men 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 for the support of divinity school faculty.

*In 2017 we welcomed The Rev. Kate Ekrem and Mr. Matthew Hutchings to the COM. We are very grateful to Ms. Karon Gibson-Mueller, co-chair, The Rev. Sara Irwin and Ms. Branwen Smith-King, who completed terms of service on the Commission on Ministry in 2017, and to Rev. Miraim Gelfer, who assumed the role of co-chair in Karon's stead. We would also like to thank the Rev. Dr. Edith Dolnikowski for her unwavering support and guidance to both the members of the COM and the postulants and candidates in the ordination process.*

### **COM Statistics for 2017**

In 2016 the Commission received commitment forms from nineteen inquirers, of which fourteen filed applications for postulancy after having worked with their parish discernment committees. Fourteen were invited to interview and thirteen were admitted to postulancy on June 1, 2017, eleven for the priesthood and two for the diaconate.

The COM continues to award scholarship assistance to those preparing for Holy Orders. Funding for this assistance comes from a diocesan endowment created in 2001 to support theological education and from donations to the bishops' discretionary funds received during parish visitations. This year \$65,000 was awarded to eight postulants and candidates. Scholarships ranged from \$1,000 to \$15,500 per person. These scholarships help to address the significant amount of debt incurred by those in the ordination process, which has long-term effects on deployment decisions.

The commission reports the following data for the past year:

2017 marked the second year in several decades in which transitional deacons were ordained priests in the congregations to which they had been called to serve. Between December 2016 and March 2017 five transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood, three of them in congregations in the Diocese of Massachusetts. In June 2017, five candidates were ordained as transitional deacons.

As of July 1, 2017 there were forty-one people in the ordination process as postulants, candidates and transitional deacons – twenty-nine for the priesthood and twelve for the diaconate. They come from twenty-seven sponsoring congregations throughout eight deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of the seven new postulants this year:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Priesthood</b>	<b>Diaconate</b>	<b>Combined</b>
2017	37	54	42

The average age of new postulants over the preceding seven years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Combined</b>
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 2016): Dr. Laura Crain, The Rev. Kate Ekrem, The Rev. Miriam Gelfer, The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Gibson, The Rev. Edgar Gutierrez-Duarte, The Rev. Eric Hillegas, The Rev. Daniel Horgan, Mr. Matthew Hutchings, The Rev. Edwin Johnson, The Rev. Sarah Mato, Mr. Graeme Mills, Ms. Kay Ridgard, The Rev. Dr. James Weiss and The Rev. Patricia Zifcak. The Rev. Dr. David Killian serves as Chaplain 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:  
Miriam Gelfer and Kay Ridgard  
Co-chairs, Commission on Ministry