

Council Agenda September 28 2023	2
Diocesan Council Minutes 5.25.23	3
Proposed 2024 Budget	5
HR Committee Policy Recommendations 9.28.23	18
DioWMA Property Questions v3	19
Diocese WMA Registered Offenders Policy	21

DIOCESAN COUNCIL AGENDA

September 28, 2023

2:30 p.m. Diocesan House

Opening Prayer

Consent agenda: (on portal)

Update on Solar Project (Vicki Ix and Chris Perry)

Resolutions from Budget and Financial Planning (Kim and Mark) (on portal)

Resolutions from Human Resources Committee

Transition Update (Rich)

3:30 Joint Gathering with Standing Committee

Gathering time for all

Update on Human to Human (Mark)

Updated Property Questions document

Bishop's time

Input on Joint Meeting format for 2024 planning

Presentation from Beloved Community Commission (4:00 p.m.)

4:15 Council Adjourns

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Officers and Appointed Members:

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher, President

The Rev. Nathaniel Anderson, Vice President

Ms. Wende Wheeler, Secretary

The Rev. Dr. Richard Simpson, Assistant Secretary

Mr. Mark Rogers, Treasurer

Mr. Frank Minasian, Trustee Representative

Term of Office Expires:

Convention of 2023 - Richard Delorme, Charlotte LaForest, Reynolds Whalen

Convention of 2024 - Eliot Moss, Rick Gore, Tom Callard, Kurt Hultgren

Convention of 2025 – Mary Rosendale, Michael Tuck, vacancy

**Minutes of the Diocesan Council of
the Diocese of Western Massachusetts**

May 25, 2023

3:00 p.m.

Joint meeting with Standing Committee 3:30 p.m.

Present

The Rt. Rev. Doug Fisher, President
The Rev. Tom Callard
Kurt Hultgren
The Rev. Charlotte LaForest
Mark Rogers, Treasurer
The Rev. Mary Rosendale
The Rev. Rich Simpson
The Rev. Michael Tuck
The Rev. Tanya Wallace, Vice-President
Wende Wheeler, Secretary

Absent

Richard Delorme
Richard Gore
Frank Minasian
The Rev. Eliot Moss
Reynolds Whalen

DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. The meeting opened with Wende Wheeler leading the prayer time.

Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda was moved, seconded and passed with corrections to the Rev. Charlotte LaForest's presence at the December and February meetings (she was present at the December meeting, and absent for the February meeting). The minutes have been amended.

Human to Human Budget

The Budget and Financial Planning Subcommittee commended the 2023 Human to Human Budget to the Council, including an additional draw of \$176,000 from the 2023 Mission Vitality Fund to balance the budget. The motion was made by Mark Rogers, seconded, and passed unanimously.

2022 Diocesan Budget Surplus

The Budget and Financial Planning Subcommittee recommended that the 2022 budget surplus in the amount of \$105,000 be transferred as follows: \$35,000 to the Episcopal Transition Fund; \$35,000 to the Rainy Day Fund; \$20,000 to the Mission Vitality Fund; and, \$15,000 to the Creation Care Fund. The motion was made by Mark Rogers, seconded and passed unanimously.

JOINT MEETING WITH STANDING COMMITTEE

Bishop's Time

The Bishop noted:

- A workshop for parishes with big buildings, noting the particular challenges they face and possible opportunities in addressing the issues
- The recent clergy retreat which featured Sarah Anderson from the ELCA
- His recent work on behalf of Bishops Against Gun Violence
- That all the volunteer days available at the Sheffield Appalachian Trail ministry have been spoken for
- Our Building Bridges ministry with veterans could be responsible in part for a decrease in the rate of veterans dying by suicide in the state.
- That the consent process following the second election of the Rev. Charles Holt as Bishop of Central Florida was ongoing, although was potentially not going to be successful due to the issues and controversies around the election process.

Presentation of draft document regarding property questions in the Diocese

In the recent past, following the creation of EMWM (Episcopal Missions of Western Massachusetts), there has been question and lack of clarity around issues pertaining to property and the roles of both Diocesan Council and the Standing Committee. In order to address these questions, a working group comprised of Michael Tuck (Council), Peter Kite (Standing Committee), Rich Simpson (Canon to the Ordinary) and Don Allison (Chancellor) drafted a document to clarify processes and responsibilities (attached).

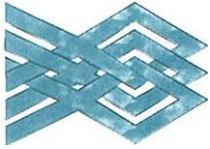
Following discussion of the policy and process, the group agreed that revisions would be made to the document and brought to the next meetings of the two committees for a final vote.

The joint meeting of the Diocesan Council and the Standing Committee concluded with prayer time led by Carolyn Jones (Standing Committee).

The joint portion of the Diocesan Council meeting concluded at 4:15 p.m., and Council was dismissed.

Respectfully submitted,

Wende T. Wheeler, Secretary



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

37 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA 01103 P: 413.737.4786 In MA: 800.332.8513 F: 413.746.9873

Date: September 20, 2023
To: Members of Diocesan Council
From: Kimberly Foster, Chief Financial Officer
Subject: **Proposed DRAFT Plan for Use of Diocesan Resources in 2024**

SUMMARY OF DIOCESAN 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

- The proposed 2024 budget forecasts **\$2,682,567** in revenue and **\$2,682,061** of expenditures, resulting in a **\$506** expected surplus (see attached One Page Summary of the Proposed 2024 Budget).
- Reflected in the budget is a projected 5% increase to Health Insurance and a 5% COLA applied to staff compensation.
- We have allocated **\$35,000** to cover costs related to General Convention to be held again in 2024.
- To balance the budget, we are requesting an additional draw from investments of **\$128,200**.

STAFF ALLOCATION CHANGES

A minor change as follows:

- In 2024, Susan Olbon is scheduled to work an average of 22 hours per week with a focus primarily on Human Resource Management and Benefits Compliance matters.

REVENUE BREAKDOWN:

- **Assessment for Common Ministry: \$1,095,567** represents 40.8% of the budget. This is a slight increase of \$5.5K compared to 2023. Of the 49 congregations, 23 (47%) reported a decline in normal operating income, 25 (51%) reported an increase, and one remained unchanged (see pg. 3 for history over six years).
- **Use of Investments – Spending Rule: \$1,414,000** is a conservative estimate representing 52.7% of the budget. **Note:** Quarterly distributions have remained relatively stable despite market fluctuations due to the 20 quarter rolling average adopted by the Trustees to calculate the distribution value each quarter.
- **Use of Investments – Additional Draw: \$125,000** is needed to balance the operating budget. The Rainy Day fund is the 'go to' source for additional draws with a balance of **\$853,722** as of June 30th, 2023.
- **Use of Investments – Additional Draw: \$3,200** to be drawn from the Creation Care fund in support of An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice. The Creation Care Fund balance as of June 30th, 2023 is **\$82,659**.
- **Program Income: \$24,000** in event registration fees generated from Diocesan Convention, Safe Church, Clergy Conference, and Loving the Questions.
- **Other Income:** Of the **\$20,800**, \$5,200 represents grant funding available in support of Creation Care and Young Adult Ministries; **\$5,000** in support of Hispanic Ministries in the Diocese coming from the annual Stickney Trust distribution; and the balance relates to reimbursement from the Trustees for administrative support to Mick Kalber, Executive Director of the Trustees for the Diocese of WMA.

EXPENSE BREAKDOWN AMONG BUDGET CATEGORIES:

- **Bishop's Ministry: \$612,491** includes our communications work with an increased allocation to cover costs related to printing & mailing of Abundant Times, parish visitations, confirmations and ordinations, and representation at the house of Bishops and other communion wide work.
- **Congregational Support: \$438,715** includes funding of **\$130,000** in grant opportunities, significant support to congregations around clergy transitions, Safe Church Training & Prevention, and our budgets for Young Adult Ministry and Hispanic Ministry in the Diocese. Also includes unusual, limited expenditures initiated by Executive Leaders in support of a congregation in need.
- **Formation & Leadership Development: \$328,806** funds Parish Leadership events and other diocesan wide leadership gatherings, Clergy Day(s) and Clergy Conferences, leadership training and coaching, Loving the Questions, Commission on Ministry, Diaconate Formation, Fresh Start, Seminarian Assistance, and support for the Episcopal Service Corps program (Lawrence House) in our diocese at All Saints, South Hadley.
- **Mission in the World: \$518,872** includes support for our outdoor worship communities, Creation Care, our apportionment to the Episcopal Church, Global Mission grants, support of ecumenical organizations, and support of Episcopal Relief and Development.
- **Governance: \$194,563** represents Chancellor's expenses, the cost of Diocesan Convention, General Convention (typically every three years), benefits for lay and ordained retirees, and costs associated with the Title IV disciplinary process. Legal fees are estimated to be \$60,400 based on \$4,200 month retainer, plus \$10,000 for miscellaneous other matters not covered by retainer.
- **Finance & Administration: \$444,467** are costs related to general business office operations including staff compensation and benefits, rent to CCC, repairs & maintenance, internet, telephone, supplies, leased equipment, property & liability insurance, cyber insurance, and the annual audit fee.
- **Agency: Admin & Human Resource Services: \$144,147** covers costs to provide services to the congregations for payroll and benefits administration as well as matters related to insurance.

PRIOR YEAR COMPARISON - CATEGORY RATIO TO OVERALL ANNUAL EXPENSES:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
• <u>Bishop's Ministry</u>	21.8%	22.8%
• <u>Congregational Support</u>	18.1%	16.4%
• <u>Formation & Leadership Development</u>	13.0%	12.3%
• <u>Mission in the World</u>	19.2%	19.3%
• <u>Governance</u>	6.0%	7.3%
• <u>Finance & Administration</u>	16.0%	16.6%
• <u>Agency: Admin & HR Services</u>	5.9%	5.3%

OTHER UPDATES:

2024 Apportionment to the Episcopal Church:

Our 2022 Diocesan Report to the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church has been filed. Based on our 2022 adjusted operating income, our 2024 annual assessment will be **\$342,474**, approximately \$10,000 lower than the six-year average.

Below is our Apportionment history paid to TEC over the past six years, averaging **\$352,498**:

• <u>2019</u>	\$351,447
• <u>2020</u>	\$370,129
• <u>2021</u>	\$366,406
• <u>2022</u>	\$349,690
• <u>2023</u>	\$334,843
• <u>2024</u>	\$342,474

Additional Draw History:

• <u>2019</u>	\$ 100,000
• <u>2020</u>	\$ 85,000 (planned; not used)
• <u>2021</u>	\$ 0
• <u>2022</u>	\$ 65,000 (planned; not use)
• <u>2023</u>	\$ 98,200 (actual to be determined)
• <u>2024</u>	\$128,200

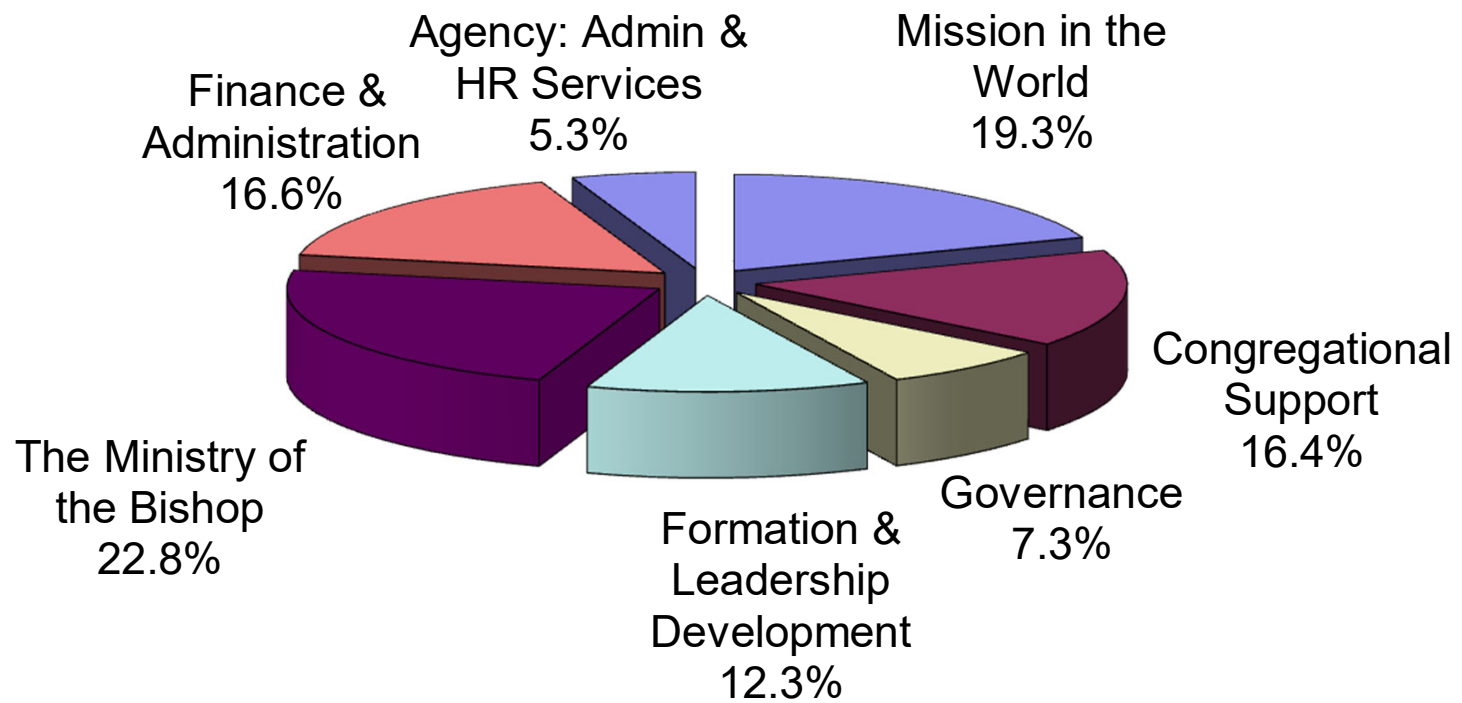
Common Ministry Assessment Revenue History:

• <u>2018</u>	\$1,124,645
• <u>2019</u>	\$1,144,906
• <u>2020</u>	\$1,000,980
• <u>2021</u>	\$1,142,346
• <u>2022</u>	\$1,135,521
• <u>2023</u>	\$1,090,125
• <u>2024</u>	\$1,095,567

The dip in 2020 reflects aide offered to all congregations for the months of April & May, resulting in a reduction of \$141,455. Assessment billings in 2020 were projected to be \$1,142,435, before forgiveness.

One Page Summary of the Proposed 2024 Budget

	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Proposed Budget	<u>% of Budget</u>
<i>OPERATING REVENUES</i>					
Assessment for Common Ministry	1,139,884	1,137,067	1,090,125	1,095,567	40.8%
Use of Investments - Spending Rule	1,376,328	1,324,680	1,406,000	1,414,000	52.7%
Investment Income - Additional Draw	0	0	98,200	128,200	4.8%
Program Income	8,235	19,945	30,250	24,000	0.9%
Other Income and Gifts	30,429	66,583	32,800	20,800	0.8%
Internal Funding	6,320	5,122	0	0	0.0%
<u>Interest Income</u>	<u>681</u>	<u>254</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUES FOR DIOCESAN OPERATIONS	2,561,877	2,553,651	2,657,375	2,682,567	100.0%
 <i>OPERATING EXPENSES</i>					
The Ministry of the Bishop	544,976	580,719	580,305	612,491	22.8%
Congregational Support	617,163	440,166	480,751	438,715	16.4%
Formation & Leadership Development	127,261	295,759	344,694	328,806	12.3%
Mission in the World	547,275	522,059	509,333	518,872	19.3%
Governance	144,087	158,713	159,431	194,563	7.3%
Finance & Administration	420,561	413,427	425,333	444,467	16.6%
<u>Agency: Administration & Human Resource Services</u>	<u>160,522</u>	<u>142,768</u>	<u>156,778</u>	<u>144,147</u>	5.4%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	2,561,845	2,553,611	2,656,625	2,682,061	100.0%
 OPERATING REVENUE AND EXPENSE					
Operating Income	2,561,877	2,553,651	2,657,375	2,682,567	
<u>Operating Expense</u>	<u>2,561,845</u>	<u>2,553,611</u>	<u>2,656,625</u>	<u>2,682,061</u>	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	32	40	750	506	



		EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN MA					
		PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET					
			Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL	2023 ANNUAL	2024 PROPOSED
			2022		31-Jul-23	BUDGET	BUDGET
<u>REVENUES</u>							
Assessment for Common Ministry			\$1,137,067		\$636,685	\$1,090,125	\$1,095,567
Use of Investment - Trustees			\$1,324,680		\$885,009	\$1,504,200	\$1,542,200
Program Income			\$19,945		\$14,685	\$30,250	\$24,000
Other Income and Gifts			\$66,583		\$19,347	\$32,800	\$20,800
Internal Grant Funding			\$5,122		\$0	\$0	\$0
Interest Income			\$254		\$522	\$0	\$0
		TOTAL DIOCESAN INCOME AND GIFTS	\$2,553,651		\$1,556,248	\$2,657,375	\$2,682,567

			Y/E ACTUAL 2022		YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23		2023 ANNUAL BUDGET		2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
<u>EXPENSES</u>									
<u>BISHOP'S MINISTRY</u>									
PROGRAMS									
	Communications	Wages and Benefits	\$181,711		\$95,909		\$164,318		\$172,546
	Communications	Business Expenses	\$31,511		\$15,916		\$23,735		\$27,035
		Total Communications	\$213,222		\$111,826		\$188,053		\$199,581
	Social Justice		\$1,177		\$3,820		\$4,000		\$4,000
	Retired Clergy Gatherings		\$2,691		\$3,288		\$3,600		\$3,600
	Special Diocesan Events		\$2,212		\$400		\$4,000		\$3,000
	Wanderings and Special Journeys		\$0		\$422		\$1,200		\$0
		Total PROGRAMS	\$219,302		\$119,756		\$200,853		\$210,181
PERSONNEL EXPENSES									
	Wages and Benefits		\$335,986		\$204,617		\$349,124		\$363,610
	Business Expenses		\$25,431		\$21,288		\$30,327		\$38,700
		Total PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$361,416		\$225,905		\$379,452		\$402,310
		TOTAL BISHOP'S MINISTRY	\$580,719		\$345,661		\$580,305		\$612,491

		Y/E ACTUAL 2022	YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23	2023 ANNUAL BUDGET	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT: Mission with Congregations					
GRANTS and SCHOLARSHIPS					
	Clergy Children Educational Grants	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
	College Scholarships	\$40,675	\$28,275	\$40,000	\$40,000
	Continuing Education Grants	\$1,000	\$700	\$5,000	\$4,000
	Deanery	\$710	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000
	Ministry Development Initiatives	\$61,310	\$52,779	\$70,000	\$70,000
	Sabbatical Grants	\$26,209	\$7,500	\$25,000	\$10,000
	Total GRANTS and SCHOLARSHIPS	\$131,405	\$90,754	\$146,000	\$130,000
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES					
	Congregational Assistance	\$500	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$2,000
	Transition Ministry	\$5,529	\$2,288	\$4,650	\$4,650
	Christian Formation Missioner	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Latino Ministries	\$139,386	\$82,505	\$141,838	\$126,522
	Safe Church Training and Prevention	\$5,906	\$3,463	\$5,550	\$5,550
	Stewardship	\$1,000	\$1,199	\$1,750	\$2,500
	Youth Ministry	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,500
	Young Adult Ministry	\$18,425	\$8,448	\$14,000	\$2,000
	Total Operational Expenses	\$170,746	\$98,903	\$170,288	\$145,722
PERSONNEL EXPENSES					
	Wages and Benefits	\$132,281	\$92,815	\$159,964	\$156,993
	Business Expense	\$5,735	\$5,120	\$4,500	\$6,000
	Total PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$138,016	\$97,935	\$164,464	\$162,993
	TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT	\$440,166	\$287,592	\$480,751	\$438,716

		Y/E ACTUAL 2022	YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23	2023 ANNUAL BUDGET	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
FORMATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT					
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES					
	Education for Ministry	\$1,750	\$0	\$1,750	\$1,750
	Parish Leadership Day	\$2,760	\$2,100	\$9,800	\$4,500
	Formation and Leadership Development	\$19,261	\$10,486	\$24,200	\$22,950
	Clergy Conferences	\$14,044	\$20,548	\$22,000	\$22,000
	Commision on Ministry	\$4,331	\$5,097	\$7,953	\$7,953
	Diaconate Formation	\$4,488	\$7,379	\$6,671	\$7,600
	Fresh Start	\$2,313	\$0	\$3,000	\$2,300
	Seminarian Assistance	\$8,200	\$10,600	\$12,200	\$9,000
	Lawrence House	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
	TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$67,147	\$66,210	\$97,574	\$88,053
PERSONNEL EXPENSES					
	Wages and Benefits	\$225,129	\$139,272	\$242,620	\$234,753
	Business Expense	\$3,483	\$2,175	\$4,500	\$6,000
	TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$228,612	\$141,447	\$247,120	\$240,753
	TOTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	\$295,759	\$207,657	\$344,694	\$328,806

		Y/E ACTUAL 2022	YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23	2023 ANNUAL BUDGET	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
MISSION IN THE WORLD					
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES					
	Outdoor Worship Communities				
	Wages and Benefits	\$59,207	\$35,624	\$61,088	\$64,054
	Business Expenses	\$10,048	\$10,000	\$11,000	\$10,000
	Total Outdoor Worship Communities	\$69,254	\$45,624	\$72,088	\$74,054
	Creation Care				
	Wages and Benefits	\$42,684	\$24,030	\$43,802	\$42,294
	Business Expenses	\$5,686	\$4,549	\$8,151	\$11,400
	Total Creation Care	\$48,370	\$28,579	\$51,952	\$53,694
	Ecumenical Relations				
	Berkshire Organizing Project	\$3,500	\$2,625	\$3,500	\$3,500
	Ecumenical Officer	\$0	\$0	\$1,800	\$0
	Interfaith Council	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400
	Mass Council of Churches	\$15,000	\$8,750	\$15,000	\$15,000
	Province One	\$9,863	\$4,875	\$9,750	\$9,750
	Total Ecumenical Relations	\$28,763	\$16,650	\$30,450	\$28,650
	The Episcopal Church Apportionment	\$349,690	\$195,325	\$334,843	\$342,474
	Global Mission	\$9,845	\$5,400	\$10,000	\$10,000
	Lambeth	\$6,137	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Sustainable Development Goals	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$10,000	\$10,000
	TOTAL MISSION IN THE WORLD	\$522,059	\$299,078	\$509,333	\$518,873

			Y/E ACTUAL 2022		YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23		2023 ANNUAL BUDGET		2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
GOVERNANCE									
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES									
	Chancellor		\$52,135		\$34,084		\$63,565		\$63,565
	Diocesan Convention								
		Wages and Benefits	\$7,212		\$4,414		\$7,518		\$7,929
		Business Expenses	\$16,724		\$127		\$23,825		\$19,450
		Total Diocesan Convention	\$23,936		\$4,541		\$31,343		\$27,379
	Diocesan Council		\$0		\$0		\$1,800		\$1,300
	General Convention		\$24,306		\$0		\$0		\$35,000
	House of Bishops		\$3,589		\$3,382		\$5,000		\$5,000
	Retired Clergy and Lay Support		\$23,299		\$14,537		\$24,446		\$30,905
	Standing Committee		\$0		\$0		\$300		\$300
	Title IV	Wages and Benefits	\$637		\$204		\$3,000		\$3,000
	Title IV	Business Expenses	\$0		\$0		\$4,800		\$4,250
	Title IV		\$637		\$204		\$7,800		\$7,250
	Governance Admin	Wages and Benefits	\$30,811		\$13,438		\$25,177		\$23,864
		TOTAL GOVERNANCE	\$158,713		\$70,186		\$159,431		\$194,562

		Y/E ACTUAL 2022	YTD ACTUAL 31-Jul-23	2023 ANNUAL BUDGET	2024 PROPOSED BUDGET
<u>DIOCESAN FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION</u>					
	ARCHIVE EXPENSES				
	Wages and Benefits	\$7,086	\$4,276	\$7,296	\$7,692
	Business Expenses	\$145	\$116	\$500	\$500
	TOTAL ARCHIVE EXPENSES	\$7,231	\$4,392	\$7,796	\$8,192
	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES				
	Financial Management	\$32,692	\$27,281	\$31,425	\$33,439
	Property - Plant	\$115,538	\$68,994	\$120,444	\$123,813
	General Operations	\$27,436	\$16,793	\$29,000	\$30,474
	TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$175,666	\$113,067	\$180,869	\$187,726
	PERSONNEL EXPENSES				
	Wages and Benefits	\$227,026	\$135,757	\$232,463	\$245,244
	Business Expenses	\$3,503	\$1,151	\$4,205	\$3,305
	TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$230,530	\$136,908	\$236,667	\$248,549
	TOTAL DIOCESAN FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES	\$413,427	\$254,367	\$425,333	\$444,468
<u>DIOCESAN AGENCY EXPENSES FOR CONGREGATION SUPPORT</u>					
	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$16,013	\$13,611	\$22,240	\$17,700
	PERSONNEL EXPENSES				
	Wages and Benefits	\$125,120	\$76,294	\$133,408	\$124,247
	Business Expenses	\$1,635	\$1,152	\$1,130	\$2,200
	TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$126,754	\$77,447	\$134,538	\$126,447
	TOTAL DIOCESAN AGENCY EXPENSES	\$142,768	\$91,058	\$156,778	\$144,147
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,553,611	\$1,555,598	\$2,656,625	\$2,682,062
	NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$40	\$650	\$750	\$505

Motions Made & Carried by B&FP Committee, Tuesday, August 22nd, 2023:

- **The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to Council the following:**
- **1.** Approval of 2024 Diocesan Annual Budget as presented by Kimberly Foster.
- **2.** An additional draw up to \$125,000 from the Rainy Day fund in support of the 2024 operating budget.
- **3.** An additional draw of \$3,200 from the Creation Care fund in support of An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice.

Recommended policies from the Human Resources Committee of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Presented to Diocesan Council September 28, 2023

Health Insurance Policy:

- Employees must meet specific requirements as defined by policy to be eligible to enroll in the Diocese's group health and dental plan.
- If an eligible employee waives group coverage with the Diocese due to having access to coverage elsewhere, they are entitled to receive additional compensation as follows:

Single - \$6,000 annually

Plus One - \$9,000 annually

Family - \$12,000 annually

- The additional compensation will be included in the retirement benefit calculation for both Clergy and Lay.

Policy Exceptions:

- Existing policies must be followed; otherwise will be considered an exception.
- Management override of a policy, without due process of approval, is considered to be a 'fraud risk'.
- All exceptions to existing policies must go through a formal approval process.
- If the exception relates to an employee benefit, approval of the exception must be presented to and approved by the Personnel Committee and then recommended to Council.
- If there are monetary considerations involved, B&FP Committee must be made aware of the exception and approve any additional cost.

Process: Congregational Property and the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council/EMWM

From time to time in the life of a congregation, God may call that congregation to make decisions about the real property that has been entrusted to their care. Usually, these decisions come in one of three ways:

1. The sale, acquisition, or encumbrance of the congregation's property
2. The merger of two congregations into a new congregation
3. The end of a congregation's ministry and the disposition of their assets

1. The sale, acquisition, or encumbrance of the congregation's property

The sale, acquisition, or other encumbrance of any congregation's property requires the approval of the **Standing Committee**. This includes events such as the sale of a rectory or vicarage, taking out a mortgage or loan, or other major events such as a long-term lease or conservation easements. The **Standing Committee** has policies with regard to these sorts of events and approval must be given prior to the event.

The earlier the **Standing Committee** is involved in the process the easier it will be to ensure an outcome that is most beneficial to the congregation. Even if a congregation is at the beginning of a discussion about the sale, acquisition, or encumbrance of property, it is extremely helpful to include the **Standing Committee**.

2. The merger of two congregations into a new congregation

When several congregations wish to merge in order to more effectively witness to the Gospel, there can be complications with regard to their residual property. If the merged congregation wishes to sell some of their property, they must seek approval from the **Standing Committee** of the diocese. These situations are unique and will require special attention from the **Standing Committee** to ensure that the merged congregation is best positioned for the work God has for them to do.

The congregations should also contact the **Committee on Parishes and Missions** as their status relative to diocesan convention will also be affected.

3. The end of a congregation's ministry and the disposition of their assets

Should a congregation come to believe that their work has been completed, and God is calling the members to live as Christians in another congregation, the vestry or bishop's committee should contact the diocese for assistance in this process of discernment. They should also communicate to the **Standing Committee** and **Diocesan Council** that they are considering this decision. After this period of prayer and discernment, the vestry or bishop's committee would vote to conclude their ministry and notify the **Standing Committee** and **Diocesan Council** of their vote.

At this point, two processes begin – one pastoral and one administrative. These processes are detailed on the following page.

Pastoral

1. Vestry or Bishop's Committee votes to conclude their ministry and notifies the **Standing Committee** and **Diocesan Council**.
2. **Standing Committee** thanks the congregation for their ministry and votes to allow any consecrated buildings to be deconsecrated.
3. The congregation celebrates the work they have done and makes plans for their future work.
4. The congregation works with the diocese to schedule appropriate celebrations.

Administrative

1. If the congregation is a free-standing parish, the **Vestry** votes to petition that they be converted to a mission.
2. The **Bishop** and **Diocesan Council** approve the request.
3. The (now) **Bishop's Committee** votes to make the **Bishop** the sole voting member
4. The **Bishop** casts a vote to merge the congregation with the **Episcopal Mission of Western Massachusetts (EMWM)**.
5. **EMWM** votes to merge with the congregation.
6. **EMWM** works with appropriate real estate professionals to produce a fair value appraisal together with a 'Not less than' price set typically at 80% of the fair value appraisal.
7. The **Standing Committee** approves the sale of the property based on the fair value appraisal and the 'Not less than' price. The **Standing Committee** also includes a sell by date. Should the date pass, the **Standing Committee** must reapprove the sale and may reconsider the price.
8. **EMWM** solicits offers and concludes the sale.
9. The resulting funds will then be used for further mission in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

POLICY FOR PARISH PROTOCOLS FOR INCLUSION OF
REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS
ADOPTED BY THE DIOCESAN COUNCIL [DATE]

This policy consists of three components that are intended to be read and used together:

- A. Statement of Purpose
- B. Protocols
- C. Behavioral Covenant Template

This policy applies to all parishes and worshipping communities in the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

A. Statement of Purpose

The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts (DioWMA) seeks to create a welcoming and safe environment for all of God's people, including those who have committed criminal acts. God makes no distinction between sins or sinners. As we seek to follow The Great Commandment, we welcome all sinners into DioWMA who sincerely seek worship, discipleship, ministry and an opportunity to experience the love of Christ through this church.

We also recognize our responsibility to create and maintain a safe church environment for all. This means we must accept our responsibility to bring people together who have conflicting and diverse life experiences. We aspire to be a place where conversations about accountability, amendment of life, restorative justice, wholeness and healing are engaged, as we deepen our lives of faith.

Both the members of a parish and an offender have responsibilities in this process. It is the responsibility of the leaders and members of the parish to set healthy behavioral boundaries for the offender and to work to support the terms of the Behavioral Covenant (Covenant), thereby reasonably promoting the safety of all persons in a parish including the offender. It is the responsibility of an offender to disclose to parish/worshipping community leaders their inclusion on a sex offender registry and comply with all terms set out in the Covenant. (See below for the Behavioral Covenant Template.)

With that in mind, these protocols are to be followed by all parishes and worshipping communities in DioWMA whenever anyone on any sex offender registry seeks to engage, to any degree, in the life of a parish. Parish leaders may also apply these protocols to those among us who have a criminal conviction history of victimizing others and are not on a sex offender registry.

While it is desired and expected that all registered offenders will self-disclose their status to the clergy or lay leadership, it is acknowledged that some registered sex offenders may attend our churches without our knowledge of their status. Should any of those persons seek to participate in ministries or certain leadership capacities covered by DioWMA policies regarding the Protection of Vulnerable Adults or the Protection of Children and Youth, the requisite public

record background checks should reveal their status on the registry and any other criminal convictions.

B. Protocols

The following protocols apply whenever parish clergy, staff or lay leaders learn of a registered sex offender seeking to worship or otherwise participate in the life of the parish. The diocesan Safe Church Officer should be contacted as soon as possible, so the diocesan leadership knows a process is underway, and to help and support this process.

1. Interview the offender. The interview is conducted by an ordained leader of the parish who may invite a warden to be present during the interview. In the absence of an ordained leader, the wardens are to conduct the interview. During the interview:
 - a. Ask about the offender's desires regarding participation in the parish.
 - b. Review the behavioral boundaries and seek their cooperation as a means of making worship services available to them while maintaining a safe church environment. If an offender does not agree to cooperate with the terms of the Covenant as set out below, preclude that person from attending any parish functions and immediately notify the Safe Church Officer.
 - c. Explain how information concerning their status will be shared with people in the parish (as set out in #6 below). Do not promise confidentiality; inclusion on a sex offender registry is public information.
 - d. Obtain the offender's residence address and telephone contact information, name and contact information for their parole or probation officer to verify terms and conditions or parole/probation and the offender's criminal record, name and contact information for their therapist, if any. Seek permission to speak with both the parole/probation officer and therapist.
2. Call the parole/probation officer to verify the terms of parole/probation and criminal history. Explore whether attending worship services or participating in any parish activities, with or without a monitor/chaperone, would violate the terms of parole/probation.
3. Identify appropriate monitors/chaperones and provide them with explicit training and instructions. This includes having the offender in line of sight at all times, deflecting contact with children and watching for any social invitation by unsuspecting parishioners. Friends and family members of the offender are not eligible to serve as monitors/chaperones with the exception of those who are vetted and approved to serve in this capacity by a probation officer. The probation officer's written verification of such approval must be attached to the Covenant. All monitors/chaperones should sign and receive a copy of the Covenant.
4. Consider talking to the offender's therapist to explore if there are certain behavioral tools the therapist might want the monitors/chaperones or others to know about that would protect the offender from becoming vulnerable.

5. Create a Covenant with the offender using the template provided. The Covenant affirms the mutual desire to make it possible for the offender to attend worship services or other events within these protocols. Any violations of the Covenant will be grounds to deny the offender further access to the parish or its activities. The Covenant should be reviewed periodically (at least every six months).
6. Inform parish clergy, staff, wardens, vestry and ministry leaders (ECW, DRE, etc.) of the content of the Covenant. In small parishes it might be preferable to inform all members of the worshipping community. The information disclosed should focus on the content of the Covenant, not the facts of the underlying conviction or identity of victim(s).
7. Provide copies of the Covenant to the offender, wardens, clergy and all those who have consented to serve as monitors/chaperones.
8. Identify a means by which this information will be preserved and shared with all new clergy, staff and lay leaders as changes in personnel occur.

C. Behavioral Covenant Template Attached

[print on parish letterhead]

BEHAVIORAL COVENANT

between

_____ (Covenantor)

and

_____ Episcopal Church,

_____ (Rector, Clergy-in-charge and/or warden)

Authority and Purpose

The purpose of this Behavioral Covenant is to promote reasonable safety of all persons in the parish, while maintaining a welcoming place of worship for _____.
(Covenantor).

This covenant is written in compliance with the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts' Policy for Parish Protocols for Inclusion of Registered Sex Offenders ("Policy"). The terms are as prescribed by the Policy.

Background

_____ (Covenantor) has met with the Rev. _____.
During this meeting, Policy was reviewed with _____ (Covenantor) who acknowledges awareness of the policy and understands its provisions.

_____ (Covenantor) has clearly expressed their desired to comply with the policy to help ensure that _____ (Name of parish) is a safe place for all who attend.

The Rev. _____ has clearly stated their desire and intention that _____ (Name of parish) be a place of worship and continued healing for _____ (Covenantor) and that _____ (Rector/Clergy-in-Charge) can and will be _____'s (Covenantor) pastor, subject to _____'s (Covenantor) compliance with this covenant.

Information and Confidentiality

_____ (Covenantor) is aware that the Rev. _____ (Rector/
Clergy-in-Charge) is obligated to notify certain members of the parish of
_____'s (Covenantor) status as a Registered Sex Offender, per the Policy.
_____(Covenantor) is aware that, while efforts may be made to keep their
status on a need-to-know basis, confidentiality is not promised beyond the sacrament of
confession.

Agreement and Covenant

_____ (Covenantor) agrees to the following:

1. _____ (Covenantor) will always attend worship services and parish activities with _____, (Names of identified monitors/chaperones) who will remain at Covenantor's side at all times (outside of bathrooms).
2. _____ (Covenantor) will attend worship services on only the following days and times. These are services when children and youth are least likely to be present.

3. _____ (Covenantor) will not initiate contact with anyone under 18 years of age and will actively avoid such contact, including moving to other parts of the building as necessary.
4. If anyone under 18 years of age initiates contact with _____ (Covenantor), _____ (Covenantor) will excuse themselves, and move away as quickly as possible.
5. _____ (Covenantor) will disclose to adult church members their status on the registry before meeting and/or visiting with adults in any setting, if those adults have minors in their households or as frequent guests in their households.
6. _____ (Covenantor) will not attend events outside of the church building where persons under 18 years of age are invited.
7. If _____ (Covenantor) needs to use bathroom facilities at the church, _____ (Covenantor) will request that a monitor/ chaperone ensure no minors are in the bathroom with _____ (Covenantor).

8. If _____ (Covenantor) decides to attend a different church,
_____ (Covenantor) will notify the Rev. _____.

Terms

This covenant is in effect immediately upon signature. It will be reviewed every six months by the Rev. _____ and wardens.

Violations of the Covenant

By signing, _____ (Covenantor) agrees, understands and accepts that violation of any of the provisions of this agreement may result in _____ (Covenantor) being asked to leave _____ (Name of parish) Church by the Rev. _____ (Rector/ Clergy-in-charge, etc.). [If required by the terms of probation, a violation of this covenant may also be reported to Covenantor's probation officer.] The decisions of the Rev. _____ in this regard are to be made in consultation with the Canon for Mission Integrity and Training.

Signatures:

_____ Covenantor

Date: _____

_____ Rector/Clergy-in-charge

Date: _____

_____ Senior Warden

Date: _____

Monitors/chaperones names, phone numbers and signatures:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.