

2024

JOURNAL

OF THE

123rd ANNUAL

MEETING OF THE

CONVENTION



The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

SECTION I

JOURNAL OF THE 122nd ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONVENTION

Held @

The UMASS Campus Center

Amherst, MA

Saturday, November 9, 2024

The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

BISHOPS OF THE DIOCESE OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

1902 – 1911	Alexander Hamilton Vinton
1911 – 1936	Thomas Frederick Davies
1937 – 1957	William Appleton Lawrence
1957 – 1970	Robert McConnell Hatch
1970 – 1984	Alexander Doig Stewart
1984 – 1992	Andrew Frederick Wissemann
1993 – 1995	Robert Scott Denig
1996 – 2012	Gordon Paul Scruton
2012 -	Douglas John Fisher

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OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE 2024

Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Douglas John Fisher
37 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA 01103

Secretary of Convention

Ms. Wende Wheeler
St. Andrew's, Longmeadow, MA 01106

Assistant Secretary to Convention

Treasurer of the Diocese

Mr. Mark Rogers
Church of Reconciliation, Webster

Assistant Treasurer

Chief Financial Officer
Mrs. Kimberly Foster

OFFICERS OF THE DIOCESE 2024

Chancellor

Mr. Donald Allison
69 Pleasant Street, Suite 201
Amherst, MA 01002

Church Attorney

Mr. Andrew Levchuk Esq.
1500 Main Street, Springfield, MA 01115

Canon to the Ordinary

The Rev. Steven Wilco
37 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA 01103

OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE DIOCESE FOR 2024

Missioner for Latino/Hispanic Ministries

The Rev. Jose Reyes
50 Wickaboag Valley Road
West Brookfield, MA 01585-2846

Communications Director

The Rev. Victoria Ix
106 North Maple St. Apt 1
Florence, MA 01062-1300

Missioner for Servant Leadership

The Rev. Jennifer Gregg
7 Alexander Ter.
Pittsfield, MA 01201-7313

Missioner for Creation Care

The Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas
109 Orlander Dr Northampton, MA
01060-3586

**OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE DIOCESE
FOR 2024**

Director of Veterans Initiative

The Rev. Christopher Carlisle
11 Laurel Hill Drive
Leverett, MA 01054-9562

Diocesan Intake Officer

The Rev. Molly Scherm
75 Silver Crest Lane
Greenfield, MA 01301

Safe Church Officer

The Rev. Tanya Wallace
14 North Sycamore Knolls
South Hadley, MA 01075

The Standing Committee

President

The Rev. Nathaniel S. Anderson

St. John's, Williamstown

The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher, ex-officio

Clerical Members

Term of office Expires

The Rev. Tanya Wallace

Convention 2026

The Rev. Ann Scannell

Convention 2027

The Rev. Nathaniel Anderson

Convention 2027

The Rev. Patrick Perkins

Convention 2025

Lay Members

Ms. Phyllis Larson

Convention 2026

Ms. Carole Ibsen

Convention 2026

Mr. Peter Kite

Convention 2027

Ms. Wende Wheeler

Convention 2025

Diocesan Council

President
Vice President
Secretary
Asst. Secretary
Treasurer
Asst. Treasurer
Representative Staff

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher
The Rev. Nathaniel Anderson
Ms. Wende Wheeler

Mr. Mark Rogers
Ms. Kimberly Foster
Mr. Frank Minasian

Elected by Convention

<u>Name</u>	<u>Represent's</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Mr. Richard Gore	Berkshire Corridor	Convention 2024
Rev. Mary E. Rosendal	Berkshire Corridor	Convention 2025
Mr. Roland Dolan	Berkshire Corridor	Convention 2026
The Rev. Patricia O'Connell	Pioneer Valley Corridor	Convention 2026
The Rev. Eliot Moss	Pioneer Valley Corridor	Convention 2024
The Rev. Martha Sipe	Pioneer Valley Corridor	Convention 2026
The Rev. Michael Tuck	Worcester Corridor	Convention 2025
Ms. Holly Dolan	Worcester Corridor	Convention 2026
Mr. Kurt Hultgren	Worcester Corridor	Convention 2024

GENERALCONVENTION DEPUTIES

(Terms Expire Convention 2027)

Clerical Deputies

The Rev. Jason Burns

The Rev. Charlotte LaForest
St. Andrew's Church, Longmeadow

The Rev. Elliott Moss

The Rev. Dr. Nina R. Poole
St. Steven's Church, Pittsfield

The Rev. Michael Tuck
Trinity Church, Lenox

Lay Deputies

Ms. Meg Galbreath
St. Mark's, East Longmeadow

Ms. Amanda Watroba Trinity
Church, Lenox

Mr. John Cheek
Grace, Southern Berkshires

Ms. Zina Link
St. Luke's, Worcester

Alternate Clerical Deputes

The Rev. Tanya Wallace

The Rev. Meredyth Ward

The Rev. James Pickett

Alternate Lay Deputies

Micah Walter

Committee on Elections 2024

The Rev. Elliott Moss

Disciplinary Board

Clerical Members

The Rev. Valerie B. Fischer
The Rev. Patricia O'Connell
The Rev. Michael Hamilton

Term	Expires	Convention	2025
Term	Expires	Convention	2025
Term	Expires	Convention	2026

Lay Members

Mr. Donald Allison Esq.
Ms. Mary Martin
Mr. Bob Ware
Ms. Susan Gore

Term	Expires	Convention	2025
Term	Expires	Convention	2025
Term	Expires	Convention	2026
Term	Expires	Convention	2026

Provincial Synod Deputies

The Rt. Rev Douglas Fisher

Deputies

The Rev. Dr. Harvey Hill
Term Expires 2026

Ms. Margaret Sweeney
Term Expires 2025

Alternates

The Rev. Jane A. Beebe
Term Expires 2026

Dean of Clericus

Valley Corridor

The Rev. Tanya Wallace

Berkshire Corridor

The Rev. Michael Tuck

Worcester Corridor

The Rev. Tim Crellin
The Rev. Julie Carson

COMMISSIONS – COMMITTEES – TASK FORCES

Bement/Waterfield Educational Grants Committee

Ms. Laura Caswell, Co-Chair
Ms. Catherine Goodwin, Co-Chair

The Rev. Harvey Hill

Ms. Nancy Denig

The Rev. Joel Martinez The Rev

Dcn. Linda Taupier

Ministry Development Initiatives Team

Mr. Alfred Symonds, III The Rev.

Mr. Sandy Muspratt

Meredyth Ward

The Rev. Mary Rosendal

The Rev. Steven Wilco

The Rev. Elizabeth Washburn

Global Mission Committee

Ms. Sandy Muspratt, Chair

Ms. Delinda Anderson The

The Rev. Dcn. Beatrice Kayigwa

Rev. Joel Martinez

Mr. Peter Prewandowski

Ms. Alice Valentine

The Rev. Dianne Wilson

The Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman

Commission on Social Justice

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher

Ms. Leah Gregg, Chair

The Rev. Victoria Ix

The Rev Meghan Mantler

Ms. Alexizendria Link

The Rev. Christina Rathbone

The Rev. Michael Hamilton

The Rev. Dave Woessner

The Rev. Steven Wilco

Human Resources

Mr. Patrick Turley, Chair

The Rev. James O. Craig III

The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher

Ms. Moira Miller

Mr. Gerry Murray

Mrs. Susan Olbon, Staff

REPRESENTATIVES FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES

Daughters of the King

Ms. Mariana Bauman

St. Peter's Church, Springfield

Mrs. Phyllis Larson

Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield

Episcopal Church Women/UTO

Mrs. Susan Howland

Holy Trinity Church, Southbridge

Episcopal Relief & Development

Ms. Donna Sroka

St. Paul's Church, Holyoke

Girls' Friendly Society

c/o St. Peter's Church, Springfield

Nomination Committee 2024

Wende Wheeler - Chairperson

The Rev. Heather Blais

The Rev. Ronald Crocker

The Rev. Tom Damrosch

Sue Gore

Nancy Lowry

Steven Symes

The Rev. Elizabeth Washburn

Michael Young

Clergy Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Clergy	Parish
Sandra	Albom	Clergy	Westfield - Church Of The Atonement
Nathaniel	Anderson	Clergy	Williamstown - St. John's
Valerie	Bailey	Clergy	Williamstown - St. John's
Michael	Bastian	Clergy	Webster - Church Of The Reconciliation
Jane	Beebe	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Sharon	Billetter	Clergy	Williamstown - St. John's
Heather	Blais	Clergy	Greenfield - Saints James And Andrew
Margaret	Bullitt-Jonas	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Michael	Bullock	Clergy	Easthampton - St. Philip's
Jason	Burns	Clergy	Northampton - St. John's
Chris	Carlisle	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Julie	Carson	Clergy	Sutton - Holy Spirit
Dan	Collier	Non-Canonical Clergy	Milford - Trinity Church
Tim	Crellin	Clergy	Gardner - St. Paul's
Michael	DeVine	Clergy	Springfield - St. Peter's
Aileen	DiBenedetto	Clergy	Leominster - St. Mark's
Rachel (Jac)	Essing	Clergy	Holyoke - St. Paul's
Doug	Fisher	Clergy	Bishop
Jakk	Flanagan	Non-Canonical Clergy	Non-Parochial Clergy
Laura	Goodwin	Clergy	Fitchburg - Christ Church
Jennifer	Gregg	Clergy	Non-Parochial Clergy
Michael	Hamilton	Clergy	Wilbraham - Christ The King - Epiphany
Harvey	Hill	Clergy	Agawam - St. David's
Terry	Hurlbut	Clergy	Agawam - St. David's
Vicki	Ix	Clergy	Ashfield - St. John's
Erik	Karas	Clergy	Sheffield - Christ Trinity Church
Beatrice	Kayigwa	Clergy	Gardner - St. Paul's
Silas	Kotnour	Clergy	Non-Parochial Clergy
Nathan	Leach	Clergy	Williamstown - St. John's
Meghan	Mantler	Clergy	Northborough - Church Of The Nativity
Joel	Martinez	Clergy	Holyoke - St. Paul's
Megan	McDermott	Clergy	Amherst - Grace Episcopal
Jim	Munroe	Clergy	Longmeadow - St. Andrew's
Patricia	O'Connell	Clergy	East Longmeadow - St. Mark's
Margot	Page	Clergy	North Adams - All Saints' Berkshires
Patrick	Perkins	Clergy	Holden - St. Francis'
James	Pickett	Clergy	Athol - St. John's
Bernard	Poppe	Clergy	Springfield - Christ Church Cathedral
Daniel	Purtell	Clergy	Southbridge - Holy Trinity
Jose	Reyes	Clergy	Worcester - San Marcos
Mary	Rosendale	Clergy	Westborough - St. Stephen's
Ann	Scannell	Clergy	Shrewsbury - Trinity Church
Martha	Sipe	Clergy	Wilbraham - Christ The King - Epiphany
Lora	Smith	Clergy	Longmeadow - St. Andrew's
Samuel	Smith	Clergy	Worcester - All Saints Church
Thomas	Synan	Clergy	Amherst - Grace Episcopal
Linda	Taupier	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Jane	Tillman	Clergy	Stockbridge - St. Paul's
Michael	Tuck	Clergy	Lenox – Trinity Church
Samuel	Vaught	Clergy	Stockbridge - St. Paul's

Elizabeth	Wade	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Tanya	Wallace	Clergy	South Hadley - All Saints' Church
Meredyth	Ward	Clergy	Clergy, Retired
Beth	Washburn	Clergy	Worcester - All Saints Church
Anna	Woofenden	Clergy	Northampton - St. John's

First Name	Last Name	Parish
Diana	Anctil	Leominster - St. Mark's
Julie	Anderson	Northampton - St. John's
Beth	Baldwin	Worcester - St. Luke's
Susan	Bastardo	Holden - St. Francis'
Persaram	Batra	Northampton - St. John's
Linda	Blair	North Adams - All Saints' Berkshires
Jo-Ellen	Brodeur	Shrewsbury - Trinity Church
Lorraine	Brumskine	Southbridge - Holy Trinity
Katharine	Burnett	Lenox - Trinity Church
Joseph	Buzzell	North Brookfield - Christ Memorial Church
David	Campbell	Sheffield - Christ Trinity Church
Julie	Carew	Greenfield - Saints James And Andrew
Donald	Chase	Fitchburg - Christ Church
Sheila	Coy	Amherst - Grace Episcopal
Elizabeth	Craver	Webster - Church Of The Reconciliation
Richard	Delorme	Holden - St. Francis'
Donna	Devine	Amherst - Grace Episcopal
Josie	Ellis	Pittsfield - St. Stephen's
Carol	Fabrycki	Agawam - St. David's
Christina	Fairman	East Longmeadow - St. Mark's
Catherine	Foster	Shrewsbury - Trinity Church
Thomas	Galvin	Worcester - St. Michael's-On-The-Heights
John	Garinther	Pittsfield - St. Stephen's
Howard	Gelles	Northborough - Church Of The Nativity
Laurie	Glover	Williamstown - St. John's
Debbie	Goddard	Lenox - St. Helena's Chapel
Warren	Goddard	Lenox - St. Helena's Chapel
Todd	Goodwin	Fitchburg - Christ Church
Susan	Gore	Great Barrington - Grace In The Southern Berkshires
John	Grant	Southbridge - Holy Trinity
Craig	Hammond	Holyoke - St. Paul's
Kristin	Hartness	Worcester - St. Luke's
Lesley	Henley	Athol - St. John's
Cynthia	Holmes	Clinton - Good Shepherd
Susan	Hubbard	Gardner - St. Paul's
Dayna	Hume	Leominster - St. Mark's
Heather	Hutchinson	Springfield - St. Peter's
Christine	Jeffery	Ware - Trinity Church
Sarah-Kate	Johnson	Worcester - St. Michael's-On-The-Heights
Kevin	Keppler	Milford - Trinity Church
Patricia	Keppler	Milford - Trinity Church
Donna	Kimball	Wilbraham - Christ The King - Epiphany
Monique	Kirchoff	Great Barrington - Grace In The Southern Berkshires
Beth	Kronlund	Agawam - St. David's
Julie	Krzanik	North Adams - All Saints' Berkshires
Lisa	Kunhardt	Worcester - All Saints Church
Joanne	LaPlante	Wilbraham - Christ The King - Epiphany
Phyllis	Larson	Springfield - Christ Church Cathedral
Suzanne	Lewandowski	North Brookfield - Christ Memorial Church
Ellen	Lincourt	Worcester - St. Michael's-On-The-Heights

Rachael	Lynch	Northborough - Church Of The Nativity
Judith	Macmunn	Springfield - Christ Church Cathedral
Rebecca	Matteson	South Hadley - All Saints' Church
Elizabeth	McAnulty	Easthampton - St. Philip's
Maureen	McKeown	Rochdale - Christ Church
Steve	McKeown	Rochdale - Christ Church
Jack	McKinnon	Greenfield - Saints James And Andrew
Isaac	Meek	Westborough - St. Stephen's
Joanna	Meek	Westborough - St. Stephen's
John Arthur	Miller	Sheffield - Christ Trinity Church
Gina	Nelson	Holyoke - St. Paul's
Darleen	Newton	Lanesboro - St. Luke's
Jackie	Nicholas	Lanesboro - St. Luke's
Stephanie	O'Brien	Gardner - St. Paul's
Julie	Orvis	Greenfield - Saints James And Andrew
Joyce	Otey	Springfield - St. Peter's
David	Pearson	Stockbridge - St. Paul's
Joseph	Porter	Lenox - Trinity Church
Ruth	Robillard	Williamstown - St. John's
Holly	Rodriguez	Westfield - Church Of The Atonement
Mark	Rogers	Webster - Church Of The Reconciliation
Dawn	Rooke	Holden - St. Francis'
Mimi	Royston	Oxford - Good Shepherd
Kim	Savery	Stockbridge - St. Paul's
Walter	Schiff	Easthampton - St. Philip's
Meg	Schoenemann	East Longmeadow - St. Mark's
Will	Setlik	Worcester - St. Mark's
Debborah	Smyth	Worcester - St. Matthew's
Jerry	Snook	Whitinsville - Trinity Church
James	Stejskal	Sutton - Holy Spirit
Jane	Sterndale	Ware - Trinity Church
Eric	Stone	Clinton - Good Shepherd
David	Taupier	Longmeadow - St. Andrew's
Deb	Terrell	Lenox - St. Helena's Chapel
Charles	Tower	Athol - St. John's
Carol	Uppgard	Oxford - Good Shepherd
Josh	Velez	Westfield - Church Of The Atonement
Sharon	Weeks	Worcester - St. Mark's
Wende	Wheeler	Longmeadow - St. Andrew's
Katharine	Whitemore	Northampton - St. John's
Andrew	Wickline	Ashfield - St. John's
Kristen	Wickline	Ashfield - St. John's
Timothy	Woodcock	Sutton - Holy Spirit
Adrienne	Wootters	Williamstown - St. John's
Shelly	Yarnie	Worcester - All Saints Church
Mike	Young	Longmeadow - St. Andrew's
Bob	Ziomek	South Hadley - All Saints' Church

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Saturday, November 9, 2024

9:00 AM – Convention Eucharist

The Convention Eucharist was streamed for the entire Diocese via YouTube. Bishop Doug Fisher gave his Convention Address in the context of this liturgy. The Bishop's address may be found **in Section 1** of the Convention Journal. The service was designed by the Revs. Heather Blais and Julie Carson, Convention Chaplains, and led by the Bishop and the Chaplains. The music was provided by Kell Julliard.

10:30 AM – 123rd CONVENTION CALLED TO ORDER

The 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts was called to order by The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher.

After brief introductory welcoming remarks, the Bishop introduced those on the Convention dais: Mr. Don Allison (Chancellor), the Rev. Sandi Albom (Chair of Dispatch of Business) and the Rev. Tanya Wallace (Parliamentarian).

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRS OF CONVENTION COMMITTEES

The Rev. Sandi Albom announced the following Chairs of the Committees of Convention:

- The Rev. Harvey Hill – Committee on Resolutions and Bishop's Address
- The Rev. Tim Crellin – Committee on Elections
- The Rev. Deacon Pat O'Connell – Committee on Credentials and Registration
- The Rev. Deacon Terry Hurlbut – Committee on Admission of New Parishes and Missions (no business in 2023)
- Ms. Mary Martin and the Rev. Tom Damrosch – Committee on Nominations
- Ms. Wende Wheeler – Committee on Place for Next Convention

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS AND REGISTRATION

The Chair of Dispatch of Business called on the Rev. Deacon Pat O'Connell to give the following Report of the Committee on Credentials and Registration:

In accordance with Article IX, Section 2 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, we certify that 47 Clergy entitled to seat and vote and representing more than 1/3 of the Clergy entitled to seat and vote, together with 89 Lay Delegates from more than 1/3 of the Parishes and Missions in union with this Convention are registered and present, and that the 123rd Convention has a QUORUM.

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SEAT, VOICE AND VOTE

In accordance with Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, the following Clergy who are members of a Church with which The Episcopal Church is in Full Communion and who are serving in a Parish or Mission in this Diocese, are entitled to the right to SEAT, VOICE AND VOTE at the 123rd Convention:

The Revs. Michael Bastian, John Marquis, Daniel Purtell and Martha Sipe

SEAT, VOICE, NO VOTE

In accordance with Articles VII.1 and VIII.3 of the Constitution of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, the following persons who are the Treasurer and members of the Standing Committee who are not otherwise entitled to a seat in the Convention, are entitled to a seat at the 123rd Convention with the right to be HEARD, BUT WITHOUT VOTE:

Ms. Carol Ibsen and Mr. Peter Kite (Standing Committee).

In accordance with Canon 2, Section 3 of the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, the following lay persons who are members of the Council, Lay Deputies and Alternate Lay Deputies to General Convention who are not otherwise entitled to a seat in the Convention, and Lay persons who are acting as Vicars of Missions, are entitled to a seat at the 123rd Convention with the right to be HEARD, BUT WITHOUT VOTE:

Ms. Holly Dolan, Ms. Kimberly Foster, Mr. Richard Gore, Mr. Roland Holstead, Mr. Frank Minasian (Diocesan Council), Ms. Meg Galbreath, Ms. Zena Link, Mr. John Cheek, Ms. Amanda Watroba, and Mx. Micah Walter (General Convention Lay Deputies and Alternates).

Pat moved the following Resolutions regarding seat, voice and vote:

RESOLVED, that this 123rd Annual Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts extend the courtesy of SEAT AND VOICE to the following persons:

Ms. Carol Ibsen, Mr. Peter Kite, Ms. Kimberly Foster, Mr. Richard Gore, Mr. Roland Holstead, Mr. Frank Minasian, Ms. Meg Galbreath, Ms. Zena Link, Mr. John Cheek, Ms. Amanda Watroba, and Mx. Micah Walter.

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And to the following clergy, who are not canonically resident, but who are licensed to officiate in this Diocese and who are registered as present at this Convention:

The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith, the Rev. Daniel Collier, the Rev. Ronald Crocker, the Rt. Rev. Martin Field, and the Rev. Jakk Flanagan

And to all elected officers and members of Committees, Commissions, Task Forces and other official organizations of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

The resolutions were moved, seconded and **passed** by show of hands.

ORGANIZATION (CALL TO ORDER)

A constitutional quorum of both orders being present, Bishop Fisher declared the 123rd Convention organized for business on Saturday, November 9, 2024.

ELECTION OF TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER/ELECTION OF SECRETARY

Bishop Fisher called on The Rev. Tim Crellin, Chair of the Elections Committee for nominations for the offices of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Tim nominated Mr. Mark Rogers to the Office of Treasurer, and Ms. Kim Foster as Assistant Treasurer. He also nominated Ms. Wende Wheeler to the Office of Secretary.

Convention **VOTED** by show of hands to elect the nominees for the offices of Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Secretary.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

Bishop Fisher called on The Rev. Tim Crellin, Chair of the Elections Committee for a report from the Committee on Elections. Tim thanked the Committee on Nominations (Ms. Mary Martin and the Rev. Tom Damrosch, co-chairs, Ms. Gilda Garcia, Ms. Sue Gore, Mr. Will Harron, the Rev. Dcn. Pat O'Connell and the Rev. Libby Wade).

The following slate was presented:

For Standing Committee

The Rev. Nathaniel Anderson
Mr. Richard Gore

For Christ Church Cathedral Chapter

Ms. Karen Gladwin

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The Rev. Laura Goodwin
The Rev. Joel Martinez

For Diocesan Council
Mr. Kurt Hultgren
The Rev. Deacon Pat O'Connell
The Rev. Deacon Beth Washburn
Ms. Amanda Watroba

For Disciplinary Board
Mr. Robert Mercurio
The Rev. Deacon Lora Smith

For Provincial Synod
The Rev. Samuel Vaught

ELECTION RESULTS

All balloting was conducted via the Simply Voting platform.

On the first ballot, all nominees for Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, Christ Church Cathedral Chapter, Disciplinary Committee and Provincial Synod were elected. The Bishop thanked all those elected for their willingness to serve the Diocese in these important positions.

COMMISSIONING OF THE LAWRENCE HOUSE INTERNS

The Bishop commissioned Jackson Chamberlain, Rebecca Porter, Ashley Smith, and Allegra Walker as the 2024-2025 community of the Lawrence House Service Corps.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND BUDGET PRESENTATION

The 2023 Treasurer's Report and 2024 Budget Presentation was given by Chief Financial Officer Kim Foster and may be found in **Section 2** of the Convention Journal.

VOTE ON 2025 MINISTRY PLAN AND BUDGET

Bishop Fisher called on Mark Rogers, Treasurer, for the resolution on the 2025 budget. Mark noted that the budget had been approved by the Budget and Financial Planning subcommittee and by the Diocesan Council. Motion was made and seconded to receive the 2025 Budget of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts and was **passed** by a show of hands.

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The Bishop thanked Kim Foster and Mark Rogers for all their hard work in preparing the budget and financial information.

REPORT FROM THE 81ST GENERAL CONVENTION

A four-part video report from the Bishop and the Rev. Tanya Wallace, chair of the Western Massachusetts Deputation, on the proceedings of the General Convention was presented during Diocesan Convention. The video reports may be found on the Diocesan YouTube channel:

(https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkZVRXvbx0MygaAMFpc4bXiVJj_5Q_xFI)

REPORT FROM THE CLERGY COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

The Bishop introduced the Rev. Michael Tuck, who presented a report from the Clergy Compensation Committee on the resolution recently adopted by Diocesan Council. The resolution and report may be found in **Section 1**.

RESOLUTIONS FROM THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

The Bishop introduced the Rev. Harvey Hill, Chair of the Committee on Resolutions, who presented three resolutions from the Committee on Constitution and Canons. These are changes to the articles on the Constitution; this vote represents the first of two necessary readings of the proposed amendments. If approved on first reading and again upon second reading at the 2025 Annual Convention, they will come into effect immediately after that second approving vote. The language which is proposed to be removed is in boldface with a strike-through. Where there is replacement language, it is in italic boldface.

1. Article II, Section 3 (2009)

... [Regarding the number of delegates allowed from each parish] ... Such delegates shall remain in office until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish; the Parish or Vestry to have the power to fill any vacancies which may occur; a certificate of whose appointment signed by the Wardens or Parish Clerk, shall, before their admission to a seat, be laid before the Convention, provided that no persons shall be competent to serve as Lay Delegates unless they be confirmed adult communicants of the Church in good standing, having recorded an active affiliation with the Parish which they represent. _____

Rationale: In the current climate when there are growing demands of the time of a shrinking pool of volunteers, the requirement that one of the delegates to Convention be a member of the Vestry has become a challenge. Additionally, this brings our practice into line with our Lutheran partners: in blended congregations, delegates to the Lutheran convention need not be members of the Vestry.

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2. Article XI, Section 1 (1993):

All elections for which there is a contest shall be by ballot and shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present and voting, except when a vote by Orders shall be duly called for, in accordance with Article IX, but if a system of preferential balloting is in use, then the quota required by such system shall be sufficient for election; and when the vote is by Orders, ***a quota in each Order separately shall be required, except as otherwise allowed in this Constitution.***

Rationale:

"concurrent quota" is not a clearly defined term. This change will clarify the intent.

3. Article XI, Section 2 (2016):

The election of Members of the Standing Committee and of Deputies and Alternate Deputies to the General Convention shall be by ballot and by Orders, provided that there is no contest for the election of the Standing Committee, the election shall be by Orders, but need not be by ballot. ***If, after a third ballot, the required numbers have not been elected, subsequent ballots shall require only a majority of the two Orders taken together in order to elect.***

Rationale:

Three, rather than two, ballots before changing the method will allow better discernment of the preferences of each Order. Furthermore, modern polling methods are much quicker, making three vs two ballots less laborious than in the past.

It might be important to voters to know before voting whether the Orders' votes were going to be combined, so the third ballot will **not** be recounted. Rather, a new ballot will be taken.

Further, though this detail is deferred to the Canons rather than spelled out in the Constitution, the fourth ballot might be by ranked choice (to avoid the need for more than four ballots) and thus might have a different form from the earlier ballots. (The earlier ballots could also be ranked choice, but their criterion for election is different because of the need for a majority in each Order counted separately.)

Committee on Constitution and Canons: Donald Allison (Chancellor), The Rev. Timothy Crellin, Alison Gamache, Robert Mercurio, The Rev. Eliot Moss, The Rev. Patrick Perkins, The Rev. Tanya Wallace, Wende Wheeler (Secretary of Convention)

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Following the reading of the resolutions, Chancellor Donald Allison spoke about the context of the amendments, noting that the Convention periodically needs to make some updates and changes in order to keep the Constitution and Canons current. In particular, the third resolution will make the process of voting for deputies to General Convention less onerous.

The three resolutions were each seconded and **passed** by show of hands.

12:30 PM: BREAK FOR LUNCH

1:15 PM CONVENTION RECONVENES

REPORT FROM THE BELOVED COMMUNITY COMMISSION

The Bishop invited Mr. Eric LaForest and the Rev. Harvey Hill to present a report from the Beloved Community Commission on their work resulting from the resolution passed at last year's convention. The report may be found in **Section 1**.

REPORT FROM HUMAN TO HUMAN

The Rev. Sandi Albom, Chair of the Dispatch of Business, called on Mr. Mark Rogers to give a report on Human to Human. Mark was joined by Ms. Sarah Galvin and the Rev. Chris Carlisle. Their report addressed the impact of Human to Human by the H2H programs including: Building Bridges (meals for veterans), Marie's Mission (diaper ministry), and Laundry Love Worcester. Further report from Human to Human may be found in **Section 1**.

RESOLUTION: DEACONS' MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION OF EPISCOPAL DEACONS

The Bishop called on the Rev. Harvey Hill, Chair of the Committee on Resolutions, who presented a resolution arising from General Convention, pertaining to the membership of Deacons in the Association of Episcopal Deacons.

Resolved, That the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts joins the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church in celebrating and supporting the ministry of deacons and especially the ministry of the Association of Episcopal Deacons (AED), as reflected in General Convention Resolution D023-2024;

Resolved, That this Convention strongly encourages the congregations of this diocese to support the work of AED by paying for membership in AED for each of their assigned deacons during 2025; and

Resolved, That this Convention requests that support for AED be included in the diocesan budget, starting with fiscal year 2026, by paying for membership in AED

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for each of the active and retired deacons canonically resident in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

Rationale: The 81st General Convention passed [Resolution D023](https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/653?house=HD&lang=en) (<https://www.vbinder.net/resolutions/653?house=HD&lang=en>), which states in part: "That the Convention encourage individuals, congregations, seminaries, dioceses, and jurisdictions to support the work of AED by becoming members, participating in its conferences and activities, and engaging the work of *diakonia* in their own contexts." AED (<https://www.episcopaldeacons.org/>) is a membership association within The Episcopal Church whose mission is to increase the participation and involvement of all baptized persons in Christ's diaconal ministry. This organization provides valuable resources for deacons that would otherwise not be available. (It should be noted that, historically, most deacons have been non-stipendiary or have received only nominal stipends; paying professional dues on their behalf would be a good way to support our deacons in their ministry.)

We are calling on the Diocese of Western Massachusetts to help AED in their work of promoting and supporting deacons and their ministry. AED's financial resources are limited, since most of its funding comes from membership dues. One way for the diocese to support AED is to ensure that all our deacons have a membership in the organization. Currently, membership is \$100 per year for deacons under the age of 72 and \$50 per year for deacons over the age of 72. We currently have 14 deacons in our diocese, 4 over the age of 72 and 10 under the age of 72.

The motion was seconded and **passed** on a show of hands.

SPECIAL ORDER VIDEO: EARTH DAY

SPECIAL ORDER VIDEOS: GREETINGS FROM BISHOPS

The Bishop introduced video greetings from two newly elected bishops:

- The Rt. Rev. Julia E. Whitworth, Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
- Bishop Nathan D. Pipho, New England Synod, ELCA

DIOCESAN TRANSITIONS

Bishop Fisher noted two transitions on Diocesan staff: the departure of Canon to the Ordinary Rich Simpson, and the recent arrival of the Rev. Steven Wilco, Interim Canon to the Ordinary, as well as the retirement of the Executive Director of the Diocesan Trustees, Mick Kalber, and the arrival of Robert Perkins who will take on that roll.

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The Bishop then announced the parochial changes that have taken place in the past year:

Appointments:

The Rev. Sandi Albom, Priest-in-Charge, Atonement, Westfield
The Rev. Tim Crellin, Rector, St. Paul's, Gardener
The Rev. Deacon Kate Derosé, Deacon, Christ Church Cathedral
The Rev. Deacon Michael Hamilton, Deacon, CTK, Epiphany, Wilb.
The Rev. Meghan Mantler, Priest in Charge, Nativity/Northboro
The Rev. Deacon Pat O'Connell, St. Mark's, East Longmeadow
The Rev. Jimmy Pickett, Priest in Charge, St. John's, Athol and
Priest Associate, St. James & Andrew's, Greenfield
The Rev. Dan Purtell, Priest-in-Charge, Holy Trinity, Southbridge
The Rev. Mary Rosendale, Rector, St. Stephen's, Westborough
The Rev. Deacon Lora Smith, Deacon, St. Andrew's, Longmeadow
The Rev. Samuel Vaught, Rector, St. Paul's, Stockbridge

Retirements and Farewells:

Interim Dean Bernie Poppe, Christ Church Cathedral
The Rev. Deacon Linda Taupier
The Rev. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas

The Bishop invited the Convention Chaplains to pray for the clergy and parishes in transition. A complete list of parochial changes may be found in the Journal in Section 1.

APPOINTMENT OF EXAMINING CHAPLAINS

The Bishop announced the appointment of the Board of Examining Chaplains as listed below, and indicated that the report was available on the Convention website (see report in Section 1 of the Journal). Membership:

The Rev. Dr. Molly Scherm – Chair
Dr. Tamsin Jones Farmer
The Rev. Deacon Michael Hamilton
Dr. Roland Holstead
Dr. Richard Kimball
The Rev. Deacon Patricia O'Connell
The Rev. Barbara Thrall
The Rev. Dr. Jane Tillman

The Bishops appointments were presented, and was **passed** by show of hands.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Bishop announced his appointment of the following members of the Commission:

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The Rev. Tanya R. Wallace, Chair
The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher
Ms. Lucy Bergin
The Rev. Deacon S. Jane Griesbach
The Rev. Deacon Terry Hurlbut
The Rev. Megan McDermott
The Hon. Tina Page
The Rev. José Reyes
The Rev. Ann Scannell
The Rev. Dr. Molly Scherm
The Rev. Meredyth Ward
Ms. Amanda Watroba
The Rev. Steven Wilco

RESOLUTION FROM THE BISHOP'S ADDRESS AND COURTESY RESOLUTIONS

The Bishop invited the Rev. Harvey Hill to present resolutions arising from the Bishop's Address, as well as the Courtesy Resolutions. He presented the following:

Resolutions of Thanks

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts offer our thanks to our chaplains, The Revs. Heather Blais and Julie Carson and to our musicians, Kell Julliard and Julie Carew for their prayerful support and liturgical creativity throughout our convention.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts offer our thanks to the Rev. Vicki Ix, Canon for Communication for her tireless work to make our Convention a reality.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts offer our thanks to Secretary of Convention Wende Wheeler for her work organizing our Convention.

Convention Greetings

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to the Rev. Nathan Pipho, Bishop of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with gratitude for his greetings, ministry and ongoing prayers for our mutual commitment to live into our Call to Common Ministry.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to the Rt. Rev. Julia Whitworth, Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts, and also to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Carol Gallagher, with prayers for both of them, and in thanksgiving for our growing common mission, and for our mutual ministry of

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proclaiming the love of Christ from the Berkshire mountains to Cape Cod and the Islands.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to Bishop William D. Byrne of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield, with the assurance of prayers and support in our mutual ministry of proclaiming the love of Christ.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to the Most Rev. Robert McManus, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Worcester, with continued hope for companionship and cooperation as we strive together to follow Christ throughout Central Massachusetts.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to Bishop Thomas J. Bickerton, Bishop of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to The Rev. Darrell Goodwin, Executive Conference Minister for The Massachusetts Conference of The United Church of Christ.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to the Most Reverend Sean Rowe, and his wife Carly, as he takes up his ministry as Presiding Bishop and Primate, and prayers for his proclamation of the Good News to the Church and to the World.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to Laurel Stewart, widow of our fifth Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Alexander D. Stewart, with thankfulness for her ongoing ministry of Christ's love in our Diocese.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to Nancy Denig, widow of our seventh Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Robert S. Denig, with heartfelt thanks for her continuing faithful presence and service in our midst.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send warm greetings to our eighth Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Gordon Scruton, and his wife Rebecca, with heartfelt thanks for their ongoing ministry of Christ's love throughout our Church.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to our Anglican Communion partners, the Rt. Rev. Daniel Sarfo, Bishop of the Diocese of Kumasi, Ghana, and his wife Mary and the Most Rev. Cyril Ben Smith, Bishop of the Diocese of Mampong.

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THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to the Rt. Rev. Hosam Naoum, Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East with assurances of our prayers for peace in the Holy Land.

THAT this the 123rd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts send greetings to all the Bishops and people of Province One.

The resolutions were approved by affirmation.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF VESTING OF AUTHORITY TO APPROVE MINUTES OF CONVENTION

Bishop Fisher announced the vesting of authority to approve Convention minutes in the Chairs of the following Committees: Dispatch of Business, Resolutions, Elections, and Constitution and Canons.

CLOSING PRAYER, BLESSING AND DIMISSAL (ADJOURNMENT)

The Convention Chaplains offered closing prayer. Bishop Fisher offered his blessing and dismissal.

2:50 PM CONVENTION ADJOURNED

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The Bishop's Address to the 123rd Diocesan Convention

November 9, 2024

As I give my next to last convention address, I am sure you all have one question on your mind. "What Bruce Springsteen song will be quoted and when will it happen?" It's the "Land of Hopes and Dreams" and will be near the end.

We know why this narrative, the Feeding of the 5000, was important to the early church. It is the only story about the earthly ministry of Jesus that is in all four gospels. By now, many of you know that is my favorite Bible story. I won't repeat all the reasons why that story is meaningful to me, but I will repeat one dimension of it that I have preached on before – the twelve baskets of broken pieces that are left over.

Remember that numbers in the Bible serve as symbols. The number 7 means perfection - creation in 7 days. The number 12 means "the church." There were twelve tribes of Israel. There were twelve apostles. And, in the Book of Revelation, how many will be saved? 144,00 which $12 \times 12,000$. But, let's not go there.

Back to loaves and fishes. At the end of that great day when five thousand people were fed, what was left over? Twelve baskets. The church is left over. And, with what are those baskets filled? "Broken pieces." The church is filled not with perfect people forming a perfect church. We are all broken pieces made whole by God's grace.

But, wait! In the gospels of Mark and Matthew, there is more to the story. Soon after the feeding of the five thousand in a deserted place, there is a feeding of four thousand in a deserted place. This shows us that even in the days of Jesus, average Sunday attendance was in decline.

All four thousand are fed. And, what's left over? It must be twelve baskets of broken pieces, right? Wrong. Both gospels tell us there are seven baskets of broken pieces left over. And seven means, "perfect."

Now, in Mark's gospel, after the miracle of multiplication, the apostles are in a boat with just one loaf of bread for all of them to share. That leads to Jesus talking about the "yeast" of Herod and the Pharisees. The apostles said to one another, "He is saying that because we have no bread." But they do have a loaf leading Jesus to say, "Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you not understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes and fail to see? Do you have ears and not hear? Do you not remember? When we had 5000 people how many baskets of broken pieces did you collect? Twelve. And with the 4000 how many baskets of broken pieces? Seven. Do you not yet understand?"^[1]

The church is leftover. And, it is filled with broken pieces. And, it is perfect—not in the sense that the church itself is perfect but we have what we need to do Jesus' mission of mercy, compassion and hope in this world. What we have is perfect. We have an abundance of grace. This is what the theme of this convention is lifting up. The apostles in the boat were not out of bread. They had one loaf. Sometimes, we can't see what we do have.

Our churches don't look like they did in the 1950s and '60s. There were more people in church. We had big Sunday schools. Almost every church could afford a full-time priest and maybe, even more than one. (They were also racially segregated so let's not idealize our past.)

Instead, let's open our eyes and see our church in this post-pandemic, challenging, transformative age. Do you know what all fifty of our churches have in common? It's not ASA or budget. Every single church has at least one vital outreach ministry. Every single one. The ministry might

be addressing food insecurity in the neighborhood, or reaching out to immigrants. It might be Laundry Love or teaching English as a second language. It could be after school tutoring for children or going to the women's correctional facility in Chicopee to offer Bible study. Some of our churches are sending backpacks filled with necessary items to those leaving incarceration. Some churches are helping at local schools. We have outdoor "cathedrals," and robust Veterans ministry. Some churches have housing for those in recovery or AA groups. In a time of runaway climate change, so many of you are doing great work in the all-important ministry of creation care. You are on the Path to climate justice.

This is not even close to an exhaustive list. You inspire me every day. There is a saying about churches. If your church closed, would the neighborhood notice? In the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, that is an emphatic, "yes!" for every single one of you. The Holy Spirit is with us and she has been poured out in abundance.

That does not mean following Jesus in our time is easy. That is why I asked our wonderful chaplains to assign Romans 8:31-39 for today. That passage starts out with inspiring words about the love of Christ. It ends with this awesome line: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, not rulers, not things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Wow! What a message! But, look in the middle of the passage: "As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to the slaughter.'" St. Paul is a lot wiser than I am. He knows it is not a smooth road to glory.

When our diocese created a profile for what they were looking for in a new bishop twelve years ago, they wrote in big letters, "We want a bishop who will try 50 new things even if 49 of them fail." I loved that line. It motivated me to pray and allow my name to go forward in this holy process.

Together we have tried things that failed. But, let me give you an example of a failure that led to success. When I was at Grace Church, Millbrook NY, we had another house in addition to the rectory. We used it for many things. I found out that there were numerous houses throughout our country for military men who were experiencing homelessness after discharge. These houses serve as transition communities for those who served their country and needed this place and time. But there was only one such home for women veterans. And it was at an Episcopal Church. I was in the midst of imagining how we might offer that at Grace Church when I was elected to be your bishop.

I transferred my dream of this house to our diocese. We talked about it, sought out different places. For a variety of reasons it did not work. So, we shifted. I had the idea of free meals for veterans. A place where they could gather, share a meal, share stories, talk about their life now. I invited the Rev. Chris Carlisle to take charge of this ministry. Now, Mark Rogers of Human To Human gets the financial backing to make this happen.

Building Bridges is now in seventeen churches in our diocese and beyond. It has been going for 10 years and has served over 100,000 meals to veterans. You heard that right—100,000 meals to men and women who have served our country. And at those meals we often have social workers who can help those experiencing homelessness or poverty. So, you see. Failure was part of the success.

12 years ago, Gordon Scruton—your eighth bishop—told me his spirituality was modeled on St. Benedict—a person I admire, too. He asked me about my spirituality. I told him that St. Ignatius greatly impacts my journey with Christ and still does, but recently, I read Fr. Richard Rohr's critique of one of Ignatius' most well-known statements: "Pray as if everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on you." As a first-born in my family, that really speaks to my heart. It is the way I have lived my life.

But Rohr counters saying this: "I prefer to reverse that line. 'Pray as if everything depends on you. And work as if everything depends on God.'

This means that prayer has to be urgent. God has to do something dramatic if everything depends on me. It also puts our work in the right perspective. If it depends on God, we can let it go. We can work hard but leave the outcome to God. If God is in charge, we can tolerate mixed results and endure failure. We might be lead to a greater plan."^[iii]

Last year we voted at convention to make Mary Magdalene our patron saint. Mary, who on that first Easter Sunday morning just wanted the dead body of her beloved Jesus back when the tomb was empty. Like her, we love Jesus. And, sometimes we just want the 1950s back. Mary's prayer is not answered in that way. She gets something so much better. She gets the Risen Jesus who leads her and the apostles into new life.

This year, I'm proposing another saint for our consideration. In the Acts of the Apostles, we hear about the Risen Jesus leaving Mary Magdalene and the Apostles as he ascends into heaven. But, Jesus first promises them the Holy Spirit. For ten days, there is no Jesus and no Holy Spirit. So what do they do? They stay together as a small church. And, they keep doing the work of the church. Because Judas is no longer with them, they need a 12th apostle. They have two candidates. They roll dice to decide which one. (Not the way this anti-gambling bishop would have done it.) Matthias wins the contest because God knew his heart.

Even in tough times—perhaps, the toughest time—the church stayed together and did the work it was called to do. Matthias was chosen. And, then Pentecost came with wind and fire and every language on earth and the apostles went out and baptized three thousand people. That only happened because Matthias and others stayed faithful in challenging times.

We are in challenging times as a church and as a country. And, we have a God of infinite mercy, compassion and hope. As the prayer book says, we are “surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.” We “run with endurance that race that is set before us.”^[iv] We don't get to choose the race. It is set before us. And you, beloved saints, are running that race with holy and creative endurance.

We are getting near the end here. Closer and closer to the Springsteen quote.

Let's stay with the "great cloud of witnesses" for a minute. You are not running the race set before you alone. You are surrounded by the great cloud of witnesses. We live in a world that needs the gospel more than ever. There is an epidemic of loneliness. Your work of building a community of faith is crucial.

Let's be quiet for a minute and think of those who brought you to the great faith you have in Jesus, who taught you about Jesus. Who lived a life of mercy, compassion and hope as a witness to you. Who prayed with you through the years. Just dwell in that great cloud of witnesses and then I'll invite you to say those names aloud.

Silence

I invite you to say those names aloud. Let's fill this space with that great cloud.

names of our saints spoken aloud

You see, we don't do this alone. As I go into the last 17 months as your bishop, I am deeply conscious of that. We will continue to do new things together to live out the gospel. I will continue to be inspired by you. Sometimes this holy work with you feels like a sprint and sometimes like a marathon, but it is neither. It is about both Mary Magdalene's work of embracing the new life of the Risen Jesus and the staying faithful work of Matthias in challenging times. It is both. It is not a marathon or a sprint. It is more like a relay race. As Bishop Scruton did an awesome job of handing over the crozier to me, it is my job to keep running and hand over the crozier to your next bishop, who will be joining an incredible diocese.

Now to Bruce Springsteen. At my consecration twelve years ago, you played a video showing numerous holy gatherings in our diocese. And the background music was Bruce's "Land of Hopes and Dreams."[\[iv\]](#) Here are some of the lyrics. To me, it sounds like the church.

*This train carries lost souls.
This train dreams will not be thwarted.
This train faith will be rewarded.
This train bells of freedom ringing.
This train carries broken hearted
This train thieves and sweet souls departed
This train all aboard.*

Isn't this the church in all it's many dimensions?
Isn't it all about many, many needs and abundant grace to meet those needs? Aren't we a church of broken pieces and a church in which we believe that God working in us, can do infinitely-infinitely more than we can ask or imagine?

A few months ago, I was at a church, giving out Holy Communion at the altar rail. At one point, I came to a young woman who was holding a toddler who was probably less than two years old. I asked the mother if her son receives communion. She said, "yes." I lifted the host and said, "the Body of Christ, the Bread of Heaven." The little boy held his hand out. I placed the host in his hand and he consumed it. Then I gave communion to his mother. Then I realized he was silently trying to get my attention. I looked at him and he was doing this. *fingers from both hands tapping together* That is the sign little children are taught when they want more of something. The little boy was telling me he wanted more. More Jesus.

Isn't that true for all of us? Jesus is present among us and we need more Jesus. We need him doing *infinitely more than we can ask or imagine*.

Amen.

^[i] Mark 8:14-38

^[ii] Richard Rohr, Daily Meditation from the Center for Action and Contemplation

^[iii] *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1979 Preface for All Saints, p. 380

^[iv] Bruce Springsteen, "Land of Hopes and Dreams," Columbia Records, 27 March 2001

A Resolution to Create a New Compensation System for Clergy in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts

WHEREAS, the current clergy compensation system is no longer effective in helping congregations make good decisions around hiring and ongoing compensation, and

WHEREAS, through the Human Resources Committee, Diocesan Council created a Clergy Compensation Task Force to study clergy compensation and create recommendations, and

WHEREAS the Clergy Compensation Task Force has conducted its study and reported back in the attached Appendix I, a paper entitled you shall love your neighbor as yourself: A New Clergy Compensation System for the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, be it

RESOLVED, that Diocesan Council approve and adopt the new clergy compensation system, to be effective on January 1, 2025, as recommended by the Clergy Compensation Task Force as described in the attached Appendix I, and

RESOLVED, that, under the direction of the Bishop, diocesan staff shall implement the new clergy compensation system through appropriate implementation plans, policy documents, and communications to congregations.

you shall love your neighbor as yourself

A New Clergy Compensation System for the Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Executive Summary

The new system proposed here establishes a minimum recommended compensation level both for clergy who live in church owned housing as well as those who do not. The new system provides a way to have a facilitated conversation about reasons to increase that minimum based on the individual needs of the congregation as well as the skills and experience of the clergy.

Minimum Base Rate x Adjustment Factor = Target Rate

The new system also contains mechanisms for increasing the minimum based on inflation as well as a way to provide periodic reviews.

The new clergy compensation system outlined here represents a shift from a more proscriptive system based on Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) and Operating Budget to a process-based system intended to help congregations make good and fair decisions about compensation for their clergy.

Review of the Process

In the spring of 2023, the Human Resources Committee (a subcommittee of Diocesan Council) created an ad-hoc task force to create recommendations on a new clergy compensation system. The ad-hoc task force was composed of six clergy and two lay people with various backgrounds and levels of experience. The task force was given an open-ended mandate.

The task force began conducting research in three ways. First, we conducted a series of focus groups. We also made a detailed analysis of current practice, and we reviewed the compensation practices of our neighbors in Province I. Finally, we reviewed some outside compensation practices to ensure that our recommendations could be understood in the context of the broader labor market.

Findings

Focus Groups

We held five focus groups among clergy and one among lay leadership. Interestingly, much of the feedback from these focus groups did not center on compensation. Clergy were particularly concerned about health insurance costs as well as the institutional health of the Episcopal Church. There was openness to radical change. There was even some interest of moving to a stipendiary compensation system where all clergy are compensated at the same level. Among the lay leaders, the focus was less on compensation and more on the various pressures (compensation, health insurance, operating costs, etc.) on aggregate budgets.

Internal Equity Analysis

Alongside the qualitative analysis of the focus groups, the task force also did a detailed analysis of the current compensation practices. We found little relationship between compensation tenure in position or time in orders. There was a loose correlation between compensation and ASA and budget. This was likely due to influence from the legacy compensation system as well as the fact that the legacy system used those factors as a proxy for overall complexity for the congregation.

Compensation Systems in Province I

The dioceses in Province I typically use factors like ASA and budget in their compensation systems. The larger dioceses (Diocese of Connecticut and Diocese of Massachusetts) have robust systems that generate quite specific recommendations. These dioceses move people through the system based on tenure. The Diocese of Rhode Island uses a system similar to our legacy system – ASA and budget drive points which then establish a tier with ranges. The Diocese of New Hampshire has a relatively simple system where congregations are effectively divided into large and small (they use ASA and budget, but this seems to be more of a guideline). New Hampshire also requires that congregations provide at least individual health insurance to clergy. For clergy who do not require health insurance, the congregations are required to provide the cash equivalent. This is a particularly interesting feature of their compensation system especially as our efforts to restructure health insurance costs have not been successful.

Outside Labor Market

It is extremely difficult to establish any clear comparators in the labor market for parochial clergy. The closest equivalent might be the executive directors of comparably sized non-profits, but we were not able to acquire this market data. Instead, we looked at education professionals, education administrators, and different types of therapists. Each of these comparators share some characteristics but not others. For example, teachers with MA degrees have similar educational depth, but parochial clergy have a broader administrative and programmatic role. In this comparison, teachers with a MA would reflect a lower comparator for parish clergy. Similarly, education administrators would represent a high comparator base on similarities and difference in the roles.

Based on our review of this data, we believe that the recommended base rate is reasonable, fair, and will allow us to attract clergy and compensate them fairly.

Overview of the System

Basic Principles

High floor; low ceiling

The task force set out to create a system that would reflect the realities of congregations today. There is both a high floor for clergy compensation and also a low ceiling. Clergy in congregations today must both have significant technical depth (e.g., an M.Div. and pastoral

skills) and also considerable breadth of skills (budgets, newsletters, websites, working with volunteers, community relations, and fundraising to name a few). This combination of breadth and depth is less typical in the modern labor market and would indicate potentially valuable skills. We expect most of these skills whether the cleric has been ordained for thirty years or three. That expectation creates a relatively high floor for compensation. At the same time, many of our congregations are facing tight budgets and that creates a low ceiling. There are only so many dollars to go around.

Based in reality

At this point in the life of the church, a proscriptive compensation system detached from the lived experience of congregations will not help us. Over the course of our work, we discovered highly diverse practices. Some congregations regularly provide increases and others do not. We noted that health insurance costs often intersected with these decisions. One commonality is that the diocese is really only involved at the stage of the initial call. After that, congregations and clergy were on their own to make it work. Consequently, the task force tried to create a system that reflected this on-the-ground reality and supported congregations in those conversations.

Encourage good tenures

We appreciate that much of the good work that congregations do together with their clergy happens after five and even ten years. It takes time for clergy and congregations to get to know each other and to trust each other. This is simply part of the work of Christian communities. We want to create a system that encourages congregations to do this important work.

Easy to understand and maintain

Lastly, we wanted to create a system that would be easy for vestries and bishop's committees to understand and use. We also wanted to make the administration for diocesan staff to be as easy as possible.

Proposed Process

The proposed process starts by establishing a reasonable and fair minimum compensation level for clergy. For 2025, we are recommending that the base rate where no housing is provided be set at \$70,000. Where housing is provided, we are recommending a base rate of \$54,000.

Using the base compensation level, diocesan staff work with the vestry or bishop's committee to establish a reasonable and fair target level of compensation when calling a new clergy person.

1. Start with a base rate of compensation
2. Includes only cash compensation and SECA "add on"
3. Add up all appropriate multipliers based on the parish (described below)
4. Add up all appropriate multipliers based on the candidate (described below)
5. This creates the target rate of compensation

We also recommend that compensation be periodically reviewed by diocesan staff and vestry/bishop's committees. We recommend that this happens about every five years. This would coincide with the renewal leave timelines.

We are recommending the base rate for assistants at 80% of rate for rectors/vicars/PIC

The base rate will be increased every year based on inflation. This will carry through the system.

Base Rate

Rector/Vicar/PIC

	No Housing Provided			Housing Provided		
	Cash	SECA "add on"	Base Rate	Cash	SECA "add on"	Base Rate
Cash Compensation	\$64,645	\$5,355	\$70,000	\$49,869	\$4,131	\$54,000
With housing (x 1.3)						\$70,200

At the initial call

When making an initial call, vestries should consider the following factors:

1. Cost of living
 - Is the parish in an area of particularly high cost especially for housing for clergy who do not receive housing?
 - How important is it to the parish that the clergyperson live in or very near the community?
 - This particular factor is very difficult to determine and highly fluid. It may be higher than 10% depending on the local circumstances.
2. Is this an especially large and complex parish?
 - Without being proscriptive, is this parish one of the larger parishes in the diocese? Is it on the cusp of growth?
3. Is there something especially unusual about this parish or call?
 - Part of a partnership or shared ministry?
 - Overseeing an especially large or complex ministry (e.g., Lawrence House Episcopal Service Corps, worshipping communities with multiple languages).

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then the parish should add a multiplier to the base rate.

Similarly, the vestry/bishop's committee should also ask some questions about the experience they require or the experience their preferred candidate brings to the congregation.

In other words, how much experience do you need or do they have?

- Do you anticipate calling a clergy person with more experience, or a specialized skill that needs to be considered in the target compensation.

- Once finalists are determined, these multipliers may also affect the offer.
 1. More than 10 years experience?
 2. More than 20 years experience?

Answering yes will mean that the vestry/bishop's committee should add a multiplier to the base rate.

Over time

Over time, it is reasonable that most clergy will receive increases. Our recommendation is that clergy who serve in a congregation for five years should probably have received about a 10% increase. This represents annual increases of slightly less than 2%. Around the time of clergy renewal leave, vestries/bishops' committees will be encouraged to consider their clergy's current compensation levels based on these recommendations.

Multipliers

Multipliers		
Parish	Cost of Living (at least)	10%
	Larger Parish	20%
	Special Circumstances	10%
Candidate	10+ years in Orders	10%
	20+ years in Orders	20%
Over time	Longer than 5 years	10%
	Longer than 10 years	20%

This proposed process is intended to help vestries/bishop's committees and clergy make good decisions, especially about the call and fit in the beginning of their shared ministry. There may be many good reasons to depart from the recommendations, but we hope this system will help make those decisions easier.

Implementation

The predominant effect of this new system will be felt moving forward, as congregations call new clergy. It is critical for congregations to understand that **a change to the compensation policy does not require the congregation to make any change to actual compensation.** There will be no actions taken for congregations that pay above or below the recommended target level in the new system. However, we do encourage vestries/bishop's committees to use the new system and its implementation as an opportunity to reflect on their shared ministries and the work they do together with their clergy.

Parishes whose clergy are below the recommended level should reflect on the reasons why they might be below and if that makes sense in their context. For example, if clergy require

family health insurance, there simply may not be sufficient funds to compensate clergy at the recommended level.

Parishes whose clergy are above the recommended level should recall that each compensation decision is unique to their circumstance and there are many reasons why departing upward from the recommendation might make sense.

Final Thoughts

When looking at human systems like compensation, it's useful to remember that no system is perfect and there is not always a right answer. No system we create will eliminate real people's real circumstances. Clergy will have different needs for housing, health insurance, family circumstances, child care, etc. This will mean that the contours of each compensation package might be a little different.

Because of these individual circumstances, we should not be surprised if there are edge cases that bend (or even break) the system. A congregation may feel strongly about a particular candidate and depart up from the recommended level. A candidate may need family insurance and there simply around enough dollars to meet the minimum.

Our goal is to avoid being proscriptive but to provide good guidance. As a Christian community, we are called to use the whole of our lives as part of our path of discipleship. In this new system we are trying use the stuff of compensation to grow understanding and relationships among clergy and their parishes. We hope that this new system will support parishes and clergy in their life in Christ, as communities and as individuals.

BISHOP'S JOURNAL Oct. 28, 2023- Dec. 31,2024

Convention Held In Person at University of MASS on November 9, 2024

CLERGY RECEIVED FROM OTHER DIOCESE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Reception</u>	<u>From Diocese</u>
Kathryn Derosé	11/30/23	Los Angeles
Samuel T. Vaught	01/01/24	Indianapolis
Megan McDermott	01/10/24	Central Pennsylvania
Ignacio Jose Solano Gomez	08/19/24	Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico
Jakki Flanagan	09/20/24	Connecticut
Keri Aubert	11/15/24	Connecticut

CLERGY TRANSFERRED TO OTHER DIOCESE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Reception</u>	<u>To Diocese</u>
Tom Callard	11/01/23	San Diego
Chad McCabe	12/08/23	Tennessee
Misty Kiwak Jacobs	02/12/24	Maine
Peter Feltman-Mahan	02/14/24	Massachusetts
William "Mac" Murray	02/15/24	Olympia

CLERGY NOT CANONICALLY CONNECTED, BUT LICENSED TO OFFICIATE IN THE DIOCESE

Michael Bastian (ELCA)	John Marquis (ELCA)
Thad Bennett	James McDonald
Marc Britt	Edward Prevost
Judith Clark	Michael Ramsey-Musolf
Edward Cobden	Paula Sage
Michael Corrigan	Martha Sipe (ELCA)
Ronald Crocker	Norman Thornton
David DeSmith	Stephen White
+Martin Field	Randall Wilburn (ELCA)
William Loutrel	Jakki Flanagan

RETIRED

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
Margaret Bullitt-Jonas	05/01/24

APPOINTMENTS IN 2024

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Location</u>
Samuel T. Vaught	Rector	St. Paul's, Stockbridge (1/1/24)
Meghan Mantler	Deacon in Charge	Nativity, Northborough (2/1/24)
Tim Crellin	Dean of Clericus	Worcester North
Tim Crellin	Rector	St. Pauls, Gardner
Jimmy Pickett	Priest-in-charge	Athol & Greenfield
Michael Hamilton	Deacon	CTK/Epiphany, Wilbraham

Kate Derosé	Deacon	Christ Church Cathedral
Pat O'Connell	Deacon	St. Mark's, East Longmeadow
Lora Smith	Deacon	St. Andrew's, Longmeadow
Linda Taupier	Deacon	Diocese of MA
Meghan Mantler	Rector	Nativity, Northborough
Dan Purtell	Priest-in-charge	Holy Trinity, Southbridge
Julie Carson	Dean of Clericus	Worcester South
Aileen DiBenedetto	Diocesan Representative to Mass Council of Churches	
Sandi Albom	Priest-in-Charge	Atonement, Westfield (7/1/24)
Bernie Poppe	Interim	Christ Church Cathedral
Robert Perkins	Executive Director to Trustees	Diocese of Western MA
Mary Rosendale	Rector	St. Stephen's, Westborough (9/1/24)
Steven Wilco	Interim Canon to the Ordinary	Diocese of Western MA (11/1/24)

DEACONS ORDAINED

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
Meghan Mantler	11/05/23
Sharon Billetter	04/27/24
Nathan Leach	06/08/24
Silas Kotnour	06/08/24
Kathleen Kopitsky	12/14/24
Christina Leung	12/14/24
Linda Morgan	12/14/24

PRIESTS ORDAINED

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>
Meghan Mantler	05/11/24
Nathan Leach	12/14/24
Silas Kotnour	12/14/24

PRIESTS RECEIVED

NONE

CELEBRATION OF NEW MINISTRY

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Parish</u>
Julie Carson	11/05/23	Holy Spirit, Sutton
Samuel Vaught	05/08/24	St. Paul's, Stockbridge
Meghan Mantler	05/11/24	Nativity, Northborough
Mary Rosendale	09/07/24	St. Stephen's, Westborough

CLERGY DEATHS

The Rev. Allan Wright	05/11/24
The Rev. John "Ted" Harris	07/28/24

The Rev. Tom Barrington	07/30/24
The Rev. J. Bruce Duncan	09/15/24
The Rev. Frances Hills	11/24/24
The Rev. Fletcher Davis	11/30/24

OTHER DEATHS

Jude O'Hare	10/01/23
Joyce Lewis	01/16/24
Nancy Truesdale	02/04/24
Chris Dolan	06/04/24
Marjorie Wood	07/27/24
Hamilton "Chip" Doherty	11/16/24

CONSENTS GIVEN

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Consent to Election</u>
Kristin Uffelman White	10/03/23	to be Bishop Diocesan - Diocese of Southern Ohio
Austin Keith Rios	12/13/23	to be Bishop Coadjutor – Diocese of California
Dorothy Sanders Wells	2/27/24	to be Bishop Diocesan – Diocese of Mississippi
Julia E. Whitworth	5/21/24	to be Bishop Diocesan – Diocese of Massachusetts
Angela Maria Cortinas	11/1/24	to be Bishop Suffragan – Diocese of West Texas
Amy Dafler Meaux	11/12/24	to be Bishop Diocesan – West Missouri

RE-DEDICATION/DEDICATION BLESSINGS/ SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL ACTS

Services of Confirmation:

- Confirmations – 66
- Received - 62
- Reaffirmed - 17
- Baptisms – 3
- First Communion - 4
- Celebration of New Ministry - 4
- Services of Holy Communion - 56
- Sermons/Addresses - 44
- Other Services - 13

Ordinations:

- Deacons - 2
- Priests - 3
- Reception of Priests - 0
- Weddings - 2
- Funerals – 2

IN ACCORDANCE WITH CANON 15, SECTION 2(c) PRIESTS-PERSONAL REPORTS SUBMITTED 2024

**indicates no personal reports received*

<u>Name</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Name</u>
Bailey Fischer, Valerie *	Davis, Fletcher	Larson, Donna	Seifert, Lavonne
Bean, Kevin	DeSmith, David	Loutrel, William	Senechal, Roger
Beebe, Jane*	Egerstrom, Marisa	McCue, Michael	Signore, Richard

Bellows, Richard	Elvin, Peter	McDonald, James	Strong, Daniel*
Bennett, Thad	Evans, Theodore*	Miner, Robert	Strong, Nancy
Booth, Stephen	Fisher, Elizabeth*	Moss, Eliot	Stroud, Nancy
Bergmann, William	Ford, Janice*	Moss, Frank	Taylor, Paul*
Britt, Marc	Fowle, Elizabeth	Munroe, James	Thrall, Barbara
Bullitt-Jonas, Margaret	Frederick, Warren	Murray, William	Thornton, Norman
Byers, William	Goranson, Paul	Porter, Pamela*	Wade, Libby
Campbell, Kenneth	Hall, Benjamin	Prevost, Edward	Ward, Meredyth
Carlisle, Christopher	Hall, David	Ramsey-Musolf, Michael	Watts, William
Ciannella, J. Domenic*	Hatch, Mark	Rierdan, Jill*	Warren, George*
Clark, Judith	Hills, Frances	Rockwell, Cristine*	White, Kathryn
Clarke, Richard	Hobbs, William	Ryder, Anne	White, Stephen
Cobden, Edward	Hooke, Ruthanna	Sage, Paula	Wilburn, Randall*
Corrigan, Michael	Hooker, John	Schreiber, Mary	Zadig, Alfred
Craig, James	Johnson, Sanford	Scruton, Gordon	Zink Jesse
Crampton, Susan	King, Edward	Seabury, Scott	Zimmerman, Janet
Crocker, Ronald	Knapp, Clayton		

Bishop's Visitation Schedule for 2024

Visit	Church	Town	Proper
01/07/24	CTK/Epiphany	Wilbraham	1 Epiphany (cel. Epiphany)
01/14/24	St. Stephen's	Westborough	2 Epiphany
01/21/24	St. Luke's	Worcester	3 Epiphany
01/28/24	Southwick Community	Southwick	4 Epiphany
02/04/24	St. Andrew's	Longmeadow	5 Epiphany
02/11/24	St David's	Agawam	Last Epiphany
02/18/24	St. Mark's	East Longmeadow	1 Lent
02/25/24	St. Helena's Chapel	Lenox	2 Lent
03/03/24	HOB		3 Lent
03/10/24	Christ Church	Fitchburg	4 Lent
03/17/24	St. Michaels -on-the-Heights	Worcester	5 Lent
03/24/24	Christ Church Cathedral	Springfield	Passion Sunday: Palm Sunday
03/31/24	Christ Church Cathedral	Springfield	Easter Day
04/07/24	Trinity	Ware	2 Easter
04/14/24	Reconciliation	Webster	3 Easter
04/21/24	Christ Trinity	Sheffield	4 Easter
04/28/24	St. Stephen's	Pittsfield	5 Easter
05/05/24	St. Paul's	Gardner	6 Easter
05/12/24	Mother's Day		7 Easter
05/19/24	St. John's	Athol	Day of Pentecost: Whitsunday
05/26/24	Christ Church	Rochdale	1 Pentecost: Trinity Sunday
06/02/24	St. Mark's	Leominster	2 Pentecost
06/09/24	Good Shepherd	Oxford	3 Pentecost
06/16/24	Father's Day		4 Pentecost
06/23/24	81st General Convention		5 Pentecost
06/30/24	Open		6 Pentecost
09/01/24	Labor Day Weekend		15 Pentecost
09/08/24	St. John's	Northampton	16 Pentecost
09/15/24	Leave Open		17 Pentecost
09/22/24	Nativity	Northborough	18 Pentecost
09/29/24	Christ Church Cathedral	Springfield	19 Pentecost
10/06/24	Good Shepherd/Grace Lutheran	West Springfield	20 Pentecost
10/13/24	Indigenous Peoples' Day Weekend		21 Pentecost
10/20/24	St. Luke's	Lanesboro	22 Pentecost
10/27/24	Grace	Amherst	23 Pentecost
11/03/24	St. Paul's	Holyoke	24 Pentecost
11/10/24	Trinity	Lenox	25 Pentecost
11/17/24	St. Matthew's	Worcester	26 Pentecost
11/24/24	St. John's	Millville	Last Pentecost: Christ the King
12/01/24	St. Marks and St. Marcos	Worcester	1 Advent
12/08/24	St. Philip's	Easthampton	2 Advent
12/15/24	Trinity	Shrewsbury	3 Advent
12/22/24	Open		4 Advent
12/29/24	All Saints	Worcester	1 Christmas

APPENDIX A

Reports of:

Committees

Commissions

Task Forces

To the Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Annual Report of the Standing Committee
November 2023 — October 2024

Members

The following are the elected members of the Standing Committee for 2023-2024

Clerical Members:

- The Rev. Ann Scannell, Good Shepherd, Clinton, and Trinity, Shrewsbury (2027)
- The Rev. Tanya Wallace, All Saints' Church, South Hadley (2026)
- The Rev. Nathaniel Anderson, St. John's Church, Williamstown (2024)
- The Rev. Patrick Perkins, St. Francis' Church, Holden (2025)

Lay Members:

- Ms. Carole Ibsen, All Saints' Church, South Hadley, (2027)
- Mr. Peter Kite, St. Stephens' Church, Westborough (2024)
- Ms. Wende Wheeler, St. Andrew's Church, Longmeadow (2025)
- Ms. Phyllis Larson, Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield (2026)

Thanks

Before I lay out the business of this past year, I wish to recognize Mr. Peter Kite who will be concluding his term on Standing Committee at this Convention. Peter has been a key asset in our deliberations, ever willing to ask the tough questions and do the hard work of research and fact-finding. We wish him well and thank him for his service these past 8+ years.

As well, though we'll be paying tribute over the course of the coming year, I wish to say what an honor it has been to work with Bishop Fisher these past four years. Bishop Fisher has been an engaging and receptive partner in the standing committee's function serving as his "council of advice." As a Diocese we owe him a huge debt of gratitude for his faithful and tireless service these past many years.

General

Since last year's Convention the Standing Committee has met on zoom seven times and in person three times, including a joint retreat with Diocesan Council.

During the period since the last Diocesan Convention, we met by Zoom on November 30, 2023; January 18, 2024; March 14, 2024; April 11, 2024; June 13, 2024; October 3, 2024; October 17, 2024. Our in person meetings occurred February 3, 2024; May 23, 2024; September 12, 2024.

Our proceedings are recorded by minutes reflecting each Zoom conference. Votes taken by email, which must be unanimous without abstention or absence, are confirmed at the following meeting. Minutes, and certificates of votes are kept on file at Diocesan House.

Much of our work is consultative in nature. With our Bishop, senior diocesan staff and parish representatives we consider the work and ministry of the Diocese. A summary of our actions follows.

General actions

On November 30, 2023, being the first meeting after Diocesan Convention, we elected the Rev. Nathaniel Anderson as president and Ms. Phyllis Larson as secretary for the coming year.

On February 3, 2024 the Standing Committee commended the preliminary work of the ad hoc Compensation Committee and asked that they move forward with their work. The Standing Committee strongly encourages parishes to cooperate with the Committee when asked for assistance in this work.

Episcopal Elections

We consented to the following elections:

- The Rev. Cn. Kristin Uffelman White as Bishop of Southern Ohio
- The Rev. Austen K. Rios as Bishop of California
- The Very Rev. Kara Anne Marie Wagner Sherer as Bishop of Rochester
- The Rev. Dr. Forothy Sanders Wells as Bishop of Mississippi
- The Rev. Philip N. Labelle as Bishop of Olympia
- The Rev. Julie E. Whitworth as Bishop of Massachusetts

We consented to the holding of an election for a Bishop Suffragen of West Texas

Ordained Ministry in Western Massachusetts

We made the following ordination recommendations to the bishop:

- Silas Kotnour for ordination to the transitional diaconate
- Nathan Leach for ordination to the transitional diaconate
- Sharon Billetter for ordination to the diaconate
- The Rev. Megan Mantle for ordination to the priesthood
- Linda Elle Morgan for ordination to the transitional diaconate
- Chris Leung for ordination to the transitional diaconate
- Kathy Kopitsky for ordination to the transitional diaconate
- The Rev. Silas Kotnour for ordination to the priesthood
- The Rev. Nathan Leach for ordination to the priesthood

Property Matters in our Diocese

Property Sales:

- We authorized Southwick Community Episcopal Church or its successors to sell their property for a price not less than \$680,000 valid for a until November 1, 2024.
- We authorized Church of the Good Shepard, Clinton, to sell their property for not less than \$850,000 within six months.
- We authorized Trinity-Ware to reclassify and draw from their rectors housing funds for the purchase of a property to house their community food pantry.

Encumbrances:

- We approved a request from Christ-Trinity, Sheffield, to borrow \$82,000.00 from NBT Bank the primary purpose for which is to refinance Christ Trinity's existing indebtedness to Berkshire Bank provided; however, that the Corporation's total indebtedness shall not exceed \$357,000.00. And To authorize the Corporation to execute a mortgage on its property in Sheffield, Massachusetts to NBT Bank to secure repayment of the above-described loan from NBT Bank.
- We ratified Christ-Trinity, Sheffield's borrowing \$20,000 as an unsecured line of credit from NBT bank.
- We authorized Trinity-Ware to enter into a mortgage for \$40,000 for the purchase of a property to house their community food pantry.

Other matters:

- We authorized a proposed easement between St. David's Church, Agawam, and Mr. James Lewis.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Nathaniel S. Anderson, President
Standing Committee of the Diocese of WMA

Board of Examining Chaplains: Report to Diocesan Convention 2024

The Board of Examining Chaplains (BEC) works in partnership with the Commission on Ministry (COM) to support candidates for ordination to both the diaconate and priesthood in their formation and to ensure that the academic and intellectual requirements and competencies specified in the Canons as required for ordination are met. The work of the BEC involves assisting those in the formation process, both advising and tracking their academic progress. As each candidate is making final application for ordination, the BEC offers its certification to the COM, Standing Committee, and Bishop that the individual has met the academic criteria for ordination.

Candidates for the vocational diaconate are required by the canons to demonstrate proficiency in five areas: Academic studies including Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church; Diakonia and the diaconate; Human awareness and understanding; Spiritual development and discipline; and Practical training and experience. Candidates are invited to demonstrate their proficiencies through preparation of a Learning Portfolio, compiled over the course of their formation, which they present to members of the BEC.

Candidates for the priesthood are required by the canons to demonstrate competency in seven areas: Holy Scripture, History of the Christian Church, Christian Theology, Christian Ethics and Moral Theology, Christian worship according to the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal and additional Texts authorized for use by the Episcopal Church, and the Practice of Ministry in Contemporary Society. The Episcopal Church administers the General Ordination Examination each January to individuals nominated by their Bishops, who have completed or who are nearing completion of their academic studies. The BEC utilizes the GOE exams in conjunction with the academic records of candidates to certify candidates' competencies.

In 2023 the BEC worked with four individuals in the ordination process. In February we reviewed the Learning Portfolio of Sharon Billeter and followed it with an excellent meeting with Sharon, discussing her formation. In March we read and discussed the GOEs of Silas Kotnour and Nathan Leach, who took the exams in January, making recommendations to the Bishop regarding their demonstrations of competency. We also completed a review of work submitted by Kathy Kopitsky, following up her work on the 2023 GOE.

The ministry of the BEC is important for the Diocese as part of the process of raising up persons to serve in the ministry, and so it is a privilege for all of us who serve on the committee. I am grateful for the diligent and faithful work of BEC members in the past year. Serving on the Board in 2021--22 were Dr. Tamsin Jones Farmer, Rev. Dcn Michael Hamilton, Dr. Roland Holmstead, Dr. Elizabeth Keitel, Dr. Richard Kimball, Rev. Dcn. Pat O'Connell, Rev. Barbara Thrall, and Rev. Dr. Jane Tillman.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dr. Molly Scherm

BCC written report to convention

Beloved Community Commission

The Episcopal Church's long-term commitment to racial healing, reconciliation, and justice

Our mission is: "In the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and in keeping with our baptismal covenant, we join with others to **study up, speak up, stand up, and show up** in order to bring the Beloved Community closer to realization in our time and place."

The BCC has had an extraordinarily productive year, in all three of our focus areas: Sacred Ground, Racial Reconciliation/Atonement, and Indigenous Peoples' Justice. That work included: Sacred Ground being offered at the diocesan level; follow up on the Atonement Resolution passed at the 122nd diocesan convention; a diocesan-wide Webinar with Peter Jarrett-Schell; and providing the required racism awareness training for ordinands.

It's our goal to draw attention to, and provide resources for, the ongoing work of education and responsive action at all levels of our diocese: individual, congregational, and diocesan.

Sacred Ground

In the fall of 2023, the Beloved Community Commission conducted a survey to assess interest in participating in diocesan-wide Sacred Ground circles via Zoom. As a result, the Commission held 3 Sacred Ground circles in 2024 for 30 interested registrants. At the completion of the 3 circles, participants were invited to provide an evaluation of their experiences in the program and the resulting information will inform future offerings. Overall, the diocesan-wide virtual Sacred Ground program was a success, and we look forward to offering the curriculum again in 2025 or 2026.

Indigenous Peoples' Justice

Members of BCC participate in the Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network of Episcopal Province One (New England) and Massachusetts. As part of the Provincial Network, we participated in the series of book discussions, including leading two of them last year. The series is ongoing. As part of the Massachusetts Network, we hosted a well-attended celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day in Worcester, in 2023. The celebration this year is being held in the Diocese of Massachusetts. Should there be interest and support, we may host an event again in 2025. If you'd like to be involved, please be in touch with any member of our commission.

Racial Reconciliation

In 2023, our commission proposed a resolution on Atonement which was passed at the 122nd Diocesan Convention. Resolved: that the 122nd Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts directs Diocesan Council and invites the congregations and institutions of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts including the Trustees of the diocesan endowment, and others -- in the name of repentance, reconciliation, and accountability to our siblings of color in our Diocese-- prayerfully and purposefully to explore their historic involvement in and present wealth derived from the forced labor of enslaved people, and to explore remedies including the distribution of funds from our unrestricted endowments and from our restricted endowments as

Report to the 123rd Diocesan Convention

From the Canon for Communications

INTRO

There is much to note and celebrate in the last twelve months of communications ministry. There is growth in our reach in nearly all aspects of digital ministry. Stability of staff means greater efficiency and gratifying collaboration. For the first time since the pandemic, the canon and assistant were able to attend the annual meeting of Episcopal Communicators in-person. The 2024 meeting was held in Portland, ME. Excellent workshops and the opportunity to network with colleagues made this experience fruitful for both Alison and me. Our current and ongoing challenge is supporting the work of the episcopal transition—profile, search and transition.

Ministry of Communications Assistant

Alison Gamache is celebrating seven years on staff. She has the distinction, since 2020, of being the first fully remote member of the Bishop's Staff. We meet via Zoom 3-4 days a week for project management and the ongoing work of communicating Jesus' mission. Alison is on the floor at Diocesan House as needed and is an indispensable member of the staff at our annual Diocesan Convention. I continue to lean on Alison to handle many of the day-to-day tasks. This enables me to spend approximately 30% - 40% of my time on areas that fall under my responsibilities as canon.

As site-builder of [our diocesan website](#), Alison continues as webmaster. The new site created with Webflow™ continues to be a blessing. It has streamlined workflow, maintenance, and accessibility. We no longer require ancillary platforms for Diocesan Convention. She continues to be content manager for [humantohuman.org](#).

Alison maintains our databases and oversees the certification of delegate to Diocesan Convention. She is also lead on SimplyVoting™, our online voting platform. Alison continues as layout editor of *ABUNDANT Times* magazine. Each issue is more beautiful than the last. To say that she has grown in the scope of her responsibilities and skillset would be an understatement.

Alison's Portfolio

- "*ABUNDANT Times*" magazine: responsible for consistent style and tone; copy & layout editor
- Move magazine content to ISSU
- Webmaster & Content Manager: *diocesewma.org*
- Content changes for *Human To Human*; Creation Care, BCC pages, Diocesan Council portal)
- *Creation Care Network e-news* with Missioner for Creation Care
- Curate "*Mission Matters*," our bi-monthly communication to diocesan leadership
- Database Manager: update all the diocesan databases
- The assistant is also trained on every platform we utilize: **Eventbrite**, **Survey Monkey**, **Issuu**
- Certification of delegate to Diocesan Convention: **SimplyVoting** platform
- Presence at annual Episcopal Communicators Conference

Ministry of Canon for Communications

Vicki's Portfolio

I. General

- Collaborate with Communications Assistant
- Content manager for social media feeds: **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram**
- Support and format **The Bishop's Blog**
- Coverage of Bishop's ministry
- Videographer for Bishop's Office
- Managing editor, and contributor for [ABUNDANT Times](#) magazine
- Announcements from: the Bishop, Social Justice Commission, Beloved Community Commission, Stewardship, Clergy Resources, YAMN (Young Adult Ministry Network), Mental Health and Substance Misuse Commission, etc.
- Presence at annual **Episcopal Communicators Conference**
- Parish support for digital ministers, communicators, wardens
 - Consult with parish communicators, *as needed*
 - Assistance/advice on website issues, *as requested*
 - Press Releases for Bishop's visitation – *as requested*
 - Lead communications workshops for 2-3 parishes, *as invited*
 - Website and Digital Ministry audits *as requested*
- Member, **WMA Disaster Preparedness Team** & liaison to **US Disaster Program at Episcopal Relief and Development**
- Administrator of the **Episcopal Asset Map**
- *Ex officio* member of the **Social Justice Commission**
- *Ex officio* member of **Beloved Community Commission**
- Coordinate **Wardens and Clergy Formation Opportunities**
- Coordinate **Clergy Days, Clergy Conference** with the Bishop's Executive Assistant
- Meet monthly with our **Deans**
- Other duties, *as assigned by the Bishop*

II. Website: **diocesewma.org**

- Communicate content changes to our webmaster for homepage slider, videos, new builds and updates
- Make minor adjustments, *as needed*

III. **Mission Matters e-newsletter**

- Adjust template with Communications Assistant
- Share incoming content for curation
- Post reach/contacts **3,415 2,695 (-720)** *removal of Creation Care Network subscribers as agreed at retirement of Missioner for Creation Care*

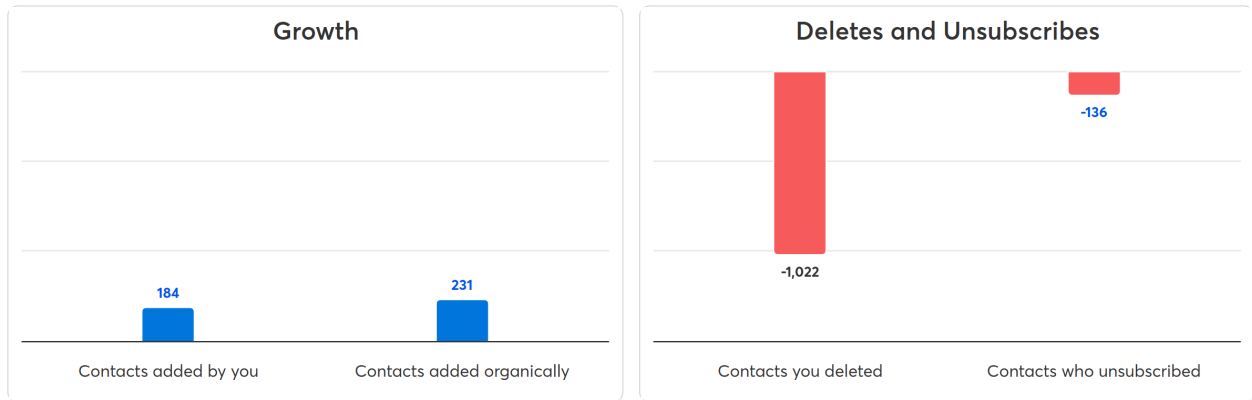
Past 12 Months ▾

Overview

A quick overview of your contacts' activity during the selected time range.

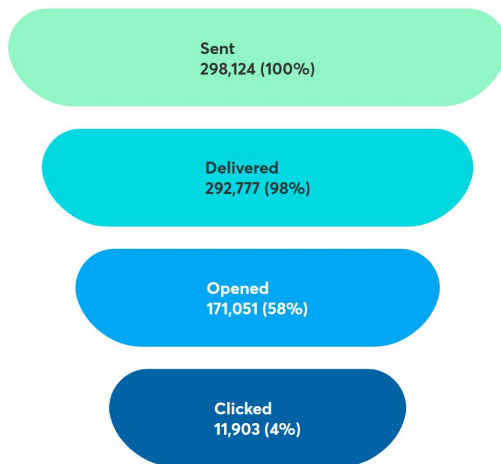
Get Notifications

Download As ▾



Trends

Email marketing funnel ⓘ



*Percentages are based on total emails sent

Overall open rate

+23% vs industry average

Your open rate 58%

vs. previous 12 months 0% —

Overall click rate

+2% vs industry average

Your click rate 4%

Your click-to-open rate 7%

vs. previous 12 months 0% —

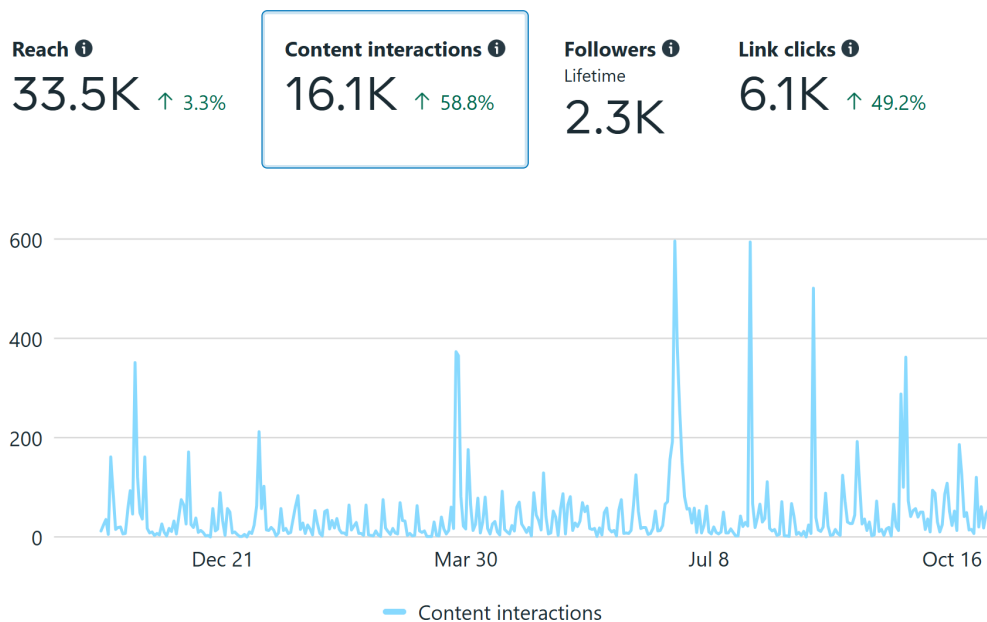
November 2024

IV. “ABUNDANT Times” magazine

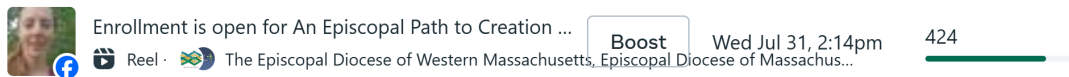
- We produce two issues each year
- AT is our biggest reach delivered directly to **7,193 Episcopalians and Lutherans**
- All issues are housed on [ISSUU](#) – a digital platform for storing and retrieving
- Printer, **Tiger Press, Inc.** continues to speed distribution and upgrade sustainable practices. Local businesses are a priority.
- In spite of rising paper costs, *ABUNDANT Times* continues to be a ministry requiring **no subscription fee** to members of our 50+ congregations

V. Social Media Benchmarks

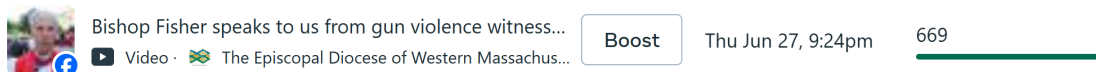
- **Facebook** “likes” and “follows” have gone from 2,150 to **2.3K**
- FB reach is up 3.3% at **33.5K**



- **We manage 4 active FB Groups:** Social Justice, Digital Ministry, Episcopal Diocese of WMA, Creation Care
- **We manage 3 active FB Pages:** Episcopal WMA *official page*, Beloved Community WMA, Digital Ministry WMA
- **TOP reel on Facebook Watch**



- **TOP video on Facebook Watch below**



- X feed has increased from 1224 followers to **1,234 followers**
- We are evaluating our presence on 'X' given the pressure to monetize and the implications of the owner's manipulation of the algorithm

← **Episcopal WMA**
5,915 posts




"GIVING GOD'S ABUNDANCE"

Edit profile

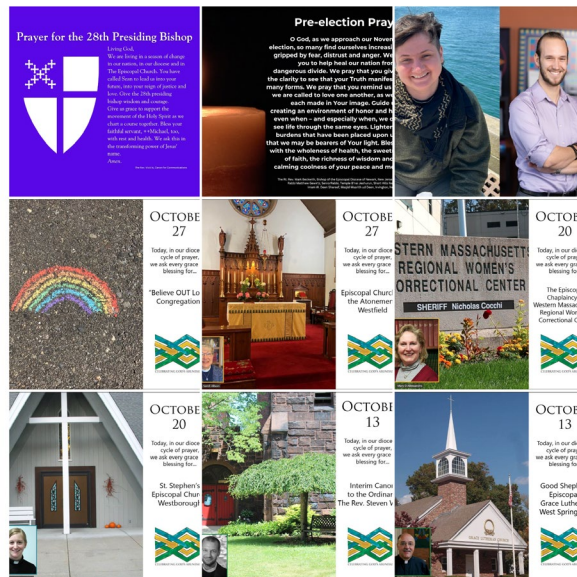
Episcopal WMA  Get verified
@EpiscopalWMA

We are blessed to follow Jesus' mission of mercy, compassion and hope in this beautiful part of God's world. Bishop Doug Fisher

 Community  Springfield, MA  diocesewma.org
 Joined March 2014

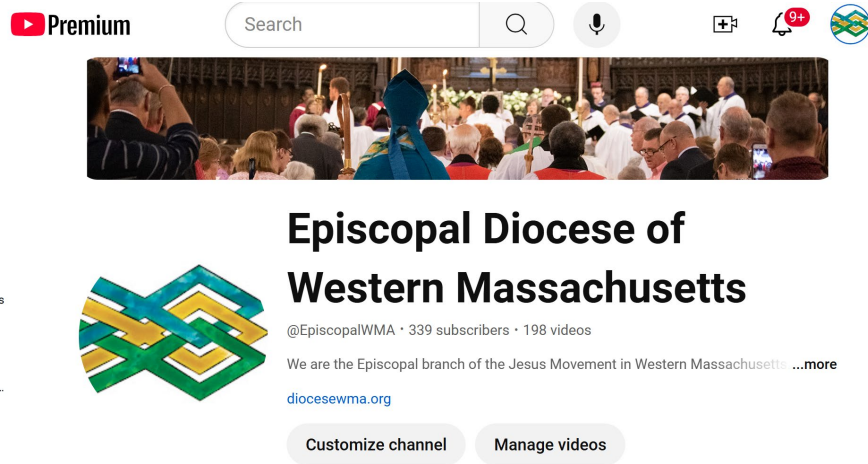
619 Following 1,234 Followers

- Instagram shows growth 877 (+11%)



November 2024

- We are finished moving appropriate content from our [Vimeo channel](#) to our [YouTube channel](#). We retain Vimeo for one-off videos that are no appropriate for YouTube.



- **YouTube** currently features all livestream events, Special Order videos and areas for **Beloved Community Commission, Creation Care, Ending Gun Violence, Human To Human** and **Voices of Faith**. We have **339 (+18) subscribers**.
- Total content: **198 videos**
- TOP VIDEOS of past 12 months

Top videos

Views · Nov 1, 2023 – Nov 1, 2024

	The Bishop's 2023 Christ...	<div></div>	321
	The Bishop's Easter Mess...	<div></div>	178
	Visiting the Merton Memo...	<div></div>	149
	Vestry '101' With Bishop F...	<div></div>	128
	WMA Deputies Send Mes...	<div></div>	119

VI. Livestreams

- **Top Livestream:** Convention Eucharist 2023 18 live (**40 views total**) –72%

Top live streams

Views · Nov 1, 2023 – Nov 1, 2024



Diocesan Convention Eucharist

18

VII. External Media

Between November 1, 2023 and November 1, 2024, our congregations, ministries and diocese were featured in the following media:

Episcopal News Service, Greenfield Recorder, Mass Appeal, The Berkshire Eagle, The Reminder, Worcester Telegram & Gazette, CommonDreams.org, SpectrumNews1, Sentinel & Enterprise, 22News, MassLive, Hampshire Gazette, New England Public Media, Western Mass News

- Coverage resulting from **diocesan press releases** and pitches: **1** (*This does not include coverage of Bishop's Visitations which do not make the Daily Scan at 815.*)
- **Bishop's columns** submitted and published: **2**
- Coverage resulting from **congregational/ministry/clergy press releases** and pitches: **18**

Goals for the Ministry of Communications: 2024-2025

- **Support** the work of episcopal transition: Profile, Search and Transition
- **Increase** subscribers to YouTube Channel
- **Produce** two issues of *ABUNDANT Times* that leverage current missional objectives
- **Increase** our coverage by external media – especially for the public witness of prayer and advocacy.
- **Pitch** contributions from our Bishop to the *Berkshire Eagle*, *The Recorder* and *Worcester Telegram and Gazette*
- **Support** our congregations as they seek to improve digital ministry and online presence

Most importantly, and in every aspect of this ministry, I hope to follow where the Spirit is leading our congregations and our bishop. In this season of transition, we are focused necessarily on the infrastructure for this change in leadership, but there is only one story to be told – the good news of God's love for us in Christ. It continues to be my privilege to serve in support of that mission.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Vicki Ix
Canon for Communications

November 2024

may be permissible in acknowledgment of and repentance for the sin and legacy of slavery. Full text of [the resolution](#).

As set out by that resolution, we submit our current progress of this work for consideration of this Diocesan Convention. The report in its entirety is included here. (link included) A one-page summary follows this report.

Next Steps:

From the resolution: "We can never right the wrong that was done to generations of our sisters and brothers in Christ long gone. But we can acknowledge our history, shine light on its troubling chapters, and recognize its impact on lives today."

At convention this year, in addition to addressing the historical report on the origins of our diocesan endowment, we will profile efforts around the diocese that might serve as models for more parishes to follow or adapt for their own contexts and goals. The members of the commission look forward to discussing feasible, effective next steps in our ongoing efforts at atonement and connection.

In closing, the co-chairs would like to thank all the members of the commission for their on-going commitment to this work. We've enjoyed working with this tremendous team, and appreciate the addition of new members Elizabeth Zipf and Donna Kimball. We are grateful to Jahn Hart and Harvey Hill for their assistance with this report. Additionally, we'd like to thank Harvey Hill and Vicki Ix for their support of the Diocesan Anti-Racism/Reconciliation Training. For more information about this training, see addendum below.

Submitted on behalf of the Commission by co-chairs Eric LaForest and Rev. Nina Pooley

Our Membership:

Ex Officio: Vicki Ix

The Berkshires: Nina Pooley; Katharine Burnett

Pioneer Valley: Eric LaForest; Harvey Hill; Pam Porter; Anna Woofenden; Jahn Hart; George Porter; Donna Kimball

Worcester: Tim Crellin; Elizabeth Zipf

Addendums

A) Summary of Report on the Origins of the Endowment of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, Beloved Community Commission, Submitted September 2024

The full Report on the Origins of the Endowment of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts seeks to fulfill the promise made at the 122nd Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts in 2023 to "share a report with the Diocese focusing especially on the diocesan endowment and the originating funds transferred from the Diocese of Massachusetts upon our founding."¹

¹ That resolution as well as further information about the atonement efforts of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts can be found here: <https://www.diocesewma.org/beloved-community-commission/atonement>.

After a discussion of the history of and historical context around the endowment and establishment of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, the report profiles Bishop William Lawrence and Mr. Francis Hunnewell, the two men whose leadership was most indispensable in the creation of the endowment. Bishop Lawrence led the Diocese of Massachusetts at the time of the division, and Mr. Hunnewell chaired the fundraising committee appointed by Bishop Lawrence to raise \$100,000 in new funds for the new western diocese. The report considers archival evidence of Mr. Hunnewell's \$10,000 gift to the endowment as well as other information organized by parish from an essay by Bishop Lawrence. The archival materials of the Trustees of Donations of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts were not consulted. Given the post-emancipation context and investment trends prevalent at the time of the establishment of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, direct involvement with the system of enslavement was not an expected finding; nonetheless, the report discusses how generations of elite Massachusetts families benefited from that system of enslavement and how, after emancipation, they shifted their resources into industries such as railroads and copper mining. The fortunes made and secured by that shift made the endowment possible.

The report concludes with a set of final considerations and lingering questions that could lead to further study and action. Though calls for atonement benefit from as much moral clarity and precision as possible, the history of our nation, our church, and our diocese requires us to acknowledge nuance and to move forward with a shared past that is not always straightforward as we would like.

B) Anti-Racism/Reconciliation Training

Completing Anti-Racism training is mandated by Episcopal Church Canon for those being ordained, required for those serving in church leadership roles, and necessary for laypersons to help eliminate the sin of racism in the world as we Become Beloved Community. Anti-racism training is something that many want to incorporate into their formation programs. But what should that training teach? What should it really accomplish? The Episcopal Church Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism (ECCAR) has identified that there seems to be no consistency in the training that exists on anti-racism. Episcopal theology is missing. Base definitions of concepts such as race, white privilege, and chattel slavery are ill-defined or not defined at all. There is frequently little or no opportunity to practice techniques for dealing with tense situations stemming from racial discrimination or violence. For a pdf, please [click here](#).



***Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Episcopal Church Women and United Thank Offering
Report to Diocesan Convention 2024***



Episcopal Church Women

ECW in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts acts a liaison between parishes, the diocese, and Province 1 ECW. A good resource is the Province 1 ECW Website: <https://www.province1ecw.org/>
The National ECW website is: <https://ecwnational.org/>

Our Diocesan ECW networked with other ECW's in the Province through Zoom meeting. The meetings allowed us to pray for one another, share stories, and keep up to date on current church and world events.

Our available funds were used in 2023-2024 to:

- Support UTO in the diocese
- Support Province I ECW with dues
- Set aside money to send a delegate to Triennial Meeting 2027
- Our outreach funds went to:
 - \$500 to Human to Human
 - \$500 to The Episcopal Church in Navajoland
 - \$500 to Change the Babies (Mampong Babies Home, Kumasi, Ghana)
 - \$500 to *Our Little Roses, Honduras*. 2025 will see the completion of our commitment



to adopt Martha at *Our Little Roses Orphanage* in Honduras until she turned 18. This was a collaboration with the Diocese of Massachusetts ECW. Martha graduated from 9th grade and now attends INCENTA, a special school where she can proceed at her own pace to complete her BACHILLERATO (10th and 11th grades).



Martha is a lovely young lady and very artistic. Her English is good, so if you would like to write her a letter or record a video message, we can send it to her. ECW.wma@gmail.com

If you have questions or need information/advice about the Episcopal Church Women contact Susan Howland at ECW.wma@gmail.com or call Susan Howland at: 508- 612-3198. We can email or mail you information about ECW.



Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Episcopal Church Women and United Thank Offering
Report to Diocesan Convention 2024



United Thank Offering

United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church to nurture the habit of giving daily thanks to God and offering coins in a “Blue Box.” Tangible offerings are then shared with people all over the world in the form of grants for grassroots, self-determined need.

If you don’t already have a United Thank Offering Ministry in your church starting one is easy!

- Information for coordinators available here: <https://unitedthankoffering.com/ingathering/>
- Material available to order or download are available here: <https://unitedthankoffering.com/resources/>
- Share stories about how these coins are joined with others around the world and sent out as grants. <https://unitedthankoffering.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2024-UTO-Grant-Brochure.pdf>
- Along with ordering new materials talk about offering tangible thanksgivings by dropping coins in the box and saying a short prayer.
- Ask people to count up their coins twice a year and ingather them in gratitude for God’s blessings.
- I am available to help ECW.wma@gmail.com or 508-612-3198 Susan Howland.
- More UTO information Here: <https://unitedthankoffering.com/>

Our Combined 2023 United Thank Offering was \$4,727

With 12 Churches participating.

Every penny collected goes out for a grant! Thanks be to God!

Ingathering Information

After your parish ingathering: suggest Spring (planting) and Fall (harvest), make a check to: The Episcopal Diocese of WMA, with UTO in the memo, and mail by June 15 for the Spring and November 30th, for the fall to: The Episcopal Diocese of WMA, ATTN: Kristina Cincotta, 37 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01103. There will also be an “in person” ingathering at the diocesan convention on Saturday, November 9, 2024.

Grant application information:

Each year the UTO Board invites every diocese to submit a grant application. All 2025 information can be found here: <https://unitedthankoffering.com/apply> **Please let us know if you are interested in submitting an application. ECW.wma@gmail.com All applications are screened by the diocese and must be signed by the bishop.**

If you coordinate UTO for your parish, have questions or need information/advice about the United Thank Offering contact Susan Howland: ECW.wma@gmail.com or 508-612-3198

In Gratitude, *Susan Howland*, Diocese of Western Massachusetts ECW President and UTO Missioner
October 13, 2024

Global Missions

Annual Report to Diocesan Convention 2024.

This year has presented some challenges for the members of the committee. In the face of the covid epidemic, we abandoned, appropriately, in-person meetings and resorted to Zoom. This pattern has been continued despite the fading of that threat with the regrettable effect of reducing the vitality and camaraderie of in-person exchange.

With some apprehension we note a perceptible reduction in the requests to the Global Mission Fund. The exception to this is in the arena of re-settlement of refugees, asylum seekers and new immigrants, whose needs are latterly included in the charge to the committee. The four principle disbursements this year were in support of this vital mission. And, in the current environment of some antipathy to immigration, we hope to receive and respond to more such requests in unequivocal response to Christ's call:

"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed mejust as you did it to one of the least of my family, you did it to me" Matthew 25:35,40

The committee earnestly invites our fellow congregants to join this committee to further our efforts.

Sandy Muspratt, convener.

Human to Human Report - 2024

Human to Human continues to spread the words and works of the Jesus Movement by supporting the missions of organizations both within and outside of the walls of our Church.

Over the years Human to Human has evolved into becoming a master incubator of wonderful organizations. At this time our major partnerships are with:

- Building Bridges. Over the last 10 years Building Bridges has been providing meals and community to Veterans in 15 locations. We are closing in on 100,000 meals served! This service has been shown to reduce the incidents of suicide among our Vets.
- Maries Mission out of St Michaels on the Hill has been providing diapers and other services to families in need. This effort helps to diaper 300 families a month and has expanded to a second site, St Mark's in Worcester. Studies have shown that clean diapers reduced the incidence of domestic violence.
- Laundry Love Worcester has been providing the dignity of clean clothing for several years.
- Lydias Closet out of St Andrews in Long Meadow has been providing go bags and other services to children entering

foster care and their sponsors so effectively they often partner with local and state agencies. Recently the mission has expanded by reaching out to refugee families.

- Mary D'Alessandro is a chaplain at the Western Mass Regional Women's Correctional Center. She provides spiritual and practical support to women in and being released from the facility. Her work provides them with more than hope. Mary's work is supported by "Love in a Backpack" a wonderful mission of St John's in Ashfield.

Human to Human provides Bishop Fisher the ability to use his favorite phrase, "GO FOR IT". Human to Human looks to continue to allow him to "go for it", find new missions to support and to pass this on to his successor.

The needs are great and are growing. While fund raising efforts have been more successful we are hoping to get to the point where we can demonstrate a steady flow of contributions. Look for several exciting campaigns in the next few months.

Human to Human helps us to spread the love, justice and mercy of Christ in our world. We look forward to you helping us to continue this mission.

Building Bridges Veterans Initiative Convention Report, 2024

The Building Bridges Veterans Initiative, mandated by Bishop Fisher at the start of his episcopate, continues to expand, as it has since its inception. Now seventeen sites strong, the weekly and monthly gatherings take place in five New England dioceses. The need to address the tragic challenges that face our military veterans—depression, PTSD, and suicide risk—has never been greater. The Diocese of Western Massachusetts has created a highly innovative model to address the debilitating social isolation that so often accompanies military service on and off the battlefield. Within and beyond the walls of our church buildings, the Diocese is bringing God’s healing to those who have risked their lives for us all.

I invite you to learn more about the ministry by visiting the Building Bridges website at www.buildingbridgesveterans.org. Harvard psychologist, Jonathan Shay, who has devoted most of his career to veteran mental health, believes that the most effective healing of veterans happens veteran-to-veteran, and helped to inspire and justify the Building Bridges mission. In his book, *Achilles in Vietnam*, he says, “God's love for humankind is one of our present culture's all-pervasive, invisible, unquestioned, and thus unconscious assumptions. When war shattered this assumption, American soldiers in Vietnam lost a sustaining idea.” In the context of the church, they lost their faith.

Hosting veterans for complementary breakfasts, lunches, and dinners, Building Bridges facilitates peer support among those who know what it means to suffer the traumas of war and to embark on the long road to healing. Having just exceeded 100,000 meals served over the course of its ten-year life, the initiative most recently added sites in Palmer, Monson, Easthampton, and Tiverton, Rhode Island.

In 2022, Building Bridges successfully doubled its 2021 fundraising goal of \$10,000 to \$20,000, and is about to exceed \$30,000 for 2023. Continuing to contribute to its financial effort is Building Bridges’ own New England IPA beer, whereby the purchase of a four-pack of micro-brewed beer buys a veteran a complementary Building Bridges meal. With the help of Mark Rogers and Human to Human, our own localized funding model, and the ongoing pursuit of outside grants, we look forward to continued expansion and program development to cover all seven New England dioceses, making it an authentically trans-diocesan, Province-wide initiative.

It is with deep gratitude that I give thanks for the Diocesan commitment to this critical, crisis-oriented ministry to and with our military veterans. In the words of Congressman Jim McGovern, “I am convinced that if it were not for Building Bridges, the suicide incidence rate for veterans would be much higher.” Closer to home, one of our Vietnam veterans in Greenfield privately confided to Building Bridges’ Associate Director, Chad Wright: “If it weren’t for Building Bridges, I wouldn’t be here today.”

Respectfully Submitted,
The Rev. Christopher Carlisle, Director
Building Bridges Veterans Initiative

Report by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, Missioner for Creation Care Diocesan Convention, October 2024

After serving for 10½ years as your Missioner for Creation Care, I retired on July 1, 2024. I am deeply grateful for the work we were able to accomplish together. I know that our diocesan leadership is committed to carrying the mission forward. I give thanks for all the individuals and congregations that bear witness to God's love for the whole Creation.

Here are some highlights of my last 6 months in diocesan ministry.

• An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice

Our project is taking off! We celebrated successful completion of the pilot phase with a festive Earth Day event in April at St. Mark's, Southborough, featuring speakers Bill McKibben, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and Robin Wall Kimmerer, and a concluding Eucharist with Bishop Doug presiding. Until retiring, I met regularly with the Rev. Rachel Field (Project Manager), Martha Gardner (Missioner for Networking and Formation, DioMA), and the Companions (trained volunteers who guide each parish enrolled in the Path) to make final decisions about the Path, work out kinks, fill in blanks, and generally prepare for its public debut: the transition to Open Enrollment for Province One at the end of the summer. We worked out plans for a long-term budget and an advisory structure.

I step away from diocesan ministry with deep gratitude for all the time and energy that so many people devoted (and continue to devote) to this project. It began as a question to the Creation Care Justice Network – “Can we develop an accessible, comprehensive, four-level program to help congregations amplify and accelerate their response to climate emergency?” Three years later, the Path is launching in Province One and attracting interest from dioceses across the Church. I want to thank our diocesan leadership for its moral and financial support of the Path, without which none of this would have been possible.

For more information about the Path, visit the [website](#) or contact the Rev. Rachel Field and Deb Baker at episcopalcreationpath@gmail.com.

• Season of Creation

The Rev. John Lein and I completed and released the [third edition of our liturgical guide for Creation Season](#), with updates for Year B, an expanded and diversified collection of readings, and a new section on the Daily Office.

Looking back, I note that our first worship guide for Creation Season 2022 was authorized by a handful of dioceses, beginning with the two dioceses in Massachusetts. Last year's guide was [authorized by 28 dioceses](#). This year, John and I decided to go for it -- to ask the churchwide staff if they would be willing to issue an invitation to bishops in every diocese of the Church to authorize [Season of Creation 2024: A Celebration Guide for Episcopal Parishes](#). We were thrilled that they said yes. By the time that Season of Creation began on Sept. 1, 2024, [a full 50 dioceses](#) – almost half of all Episcopal dioceses – had endorsed the celebration guide.

Looking ahead, John and I hope to produce a perennial version that incorporates all three years of the lectionary cycle. We also hope to find ways to incorporate this worship guide into the broader prayers of the Church.

In March I traveled to Assisi, Italy, to join the Anglican delegation at an international ecumenical summit, “The Mystery of Creation and the Feast of Creation.” For General Convention I drafted Resolution #D041 to support adoption of an ecumenical Feast Day of Creation in our liturgical calendar, and I testified in favor of the resolution at Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music’s open hearing. I am delighted that General Convention amended and passed the resolution.

This year we celebrated our diocese’s eleventh annual Season of Creation (September 1-October 4).

- **Creation Care Network e-news**

In this monthly newsletter I shared the latest opportunities to pray, learn, act, and advocate for God’s Creation. Thank you for reading!

- **Renewing God’s Creation: Daily Meditations for Lent**

I assembled text and photos for our third annual Lenten Daily Meditations focused on the beauty and integrity of the natural world and our Christian calling to protect it. The material was beautifully assembled by Ali Gamache.

- **Creation Care Leadership Circle**

It was a joy to meet monthly with a small group of advisors that included Ms. Edith Allison, the Rev. Heather Blais, the Rev. Michael Hamilton, the Rev. John Elliott Lein, the Rev. Dr. Nina Pooley, the Rev. Dave Woessner, and the Rev. Anna Woofenden. I treasured our conversations. Thank you, Anna, for organizing and hosting the party at our final meeting.

- **Collaborating with Diocese of MA**

With the Rev. Ed Cardoza, I completed a 9-month process with Boston Green Ribbon Commission, aiming to draft a climate action plan for DioMA. I submitted a report to DioMA. More work lies ahead, but at least the process has begun.

- **Speaking, teaching, and preaching**

- Co-led a webinar on preaching climate justice, with the Rev. Dr. Jim Antal

- Gave a presentation on Creation care at a North Shore Deanery assembly in Marblehead

- Spoke on a Creation care panel at Episcopal Parish Network’s annual conference, held in Houston, TX

- Invited by the Interfaith Climate Action Team, I led a weekend on Martha’s Vineyard, “One Home, One Future: From Prayer to Action, Taking Heart in the Climate Crisis,” which included speaking at a Shabbat service at the Hebrew Center, preaching twice at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, and leading a multifaith retreat. [One Home One Future](#) banners were ordered and/or hung outside 4 houses of worship, both Jewish and Christian.

- Created a video on “Climate crisis and reorienting to hope” for Episcopal Church in Colorado as part of its Lenten series, “Journey through Lament: Leaning into the Brokenness of Our Communities and World”

- Gave an online presentation for Diocese of Virginia, “Seizing and preaching hope” and continued conversations with their Creation Care Committee

--Preached "[Following the Good Shepherd on Earth Day](#)" at St. Mark's, Southborough
--Preached "[Earth Day: Abide in love](#)" and led a Forum at All Saint's, Worcester
--Delivered a keynote on "Lament and the longing for life: Stories of climate grief and hope" in Gloucester for the multifaith Cape Ann Climate Coalition on Boston's North Shore

- **Publishing**

--Contributed a meditation to a Lent-Easter devotional booklet produced by Diocese of MA and Diocese of VT

- **Blog posts**

[Season of Creation liturgical resource approved for use in 50 dioceses](#)

[Climate grief and resistance: Mourning a livable planet](#)

[Has the time come for a Feast of Creation?](#) (reposted in the Anglican Communion Environmental Network newsletter)

[Climate crisis and reorienting ourselves to hope](#) (text and video link for Colorado talk)

[Follow the thread](#)

- **Social Justice Commission**

--"Bending Toward Justice": led a breakout group with the Rev. Rachel Field for our fourth annual diocesan conference on social justice

--Signed various eco-justice petitions on behalf of the Commission, which included signing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Our Commission also joined the coalition to Stop Expansion of Private Jet Expansion at Hanscom or Anywhere.

- **EV charging stations**

The Rev. Harvey Hill and I explored the possibility of installing EV charging stations in selected church parking lots in the diocese. For a variety of reasons, we decided to suspend the project. Maybe someone else will pick this up.

- **Other affiliations and connections**

The BTS Center: Led a meeting of Adaptive Mind Fellows of The BTS Center to discuss Christian spiritual practice in a climate crisis

Blessed Tomorrow: Met quarterly with Leadership Circle Executive Committee.

ThirdAct.org: continued to be part of this activist network founded by Bill McKibben for people over 60, dedicated to the stability of democracy and the stability of the physical world (= climate).

I continued to serve as a resource for other dioceses. For example, I met twice with the creation care team of Diocese of NY, wrote a partnership letter for their grant application for a Creation care missionary position, and met with their interim Missioner for Creation Care; at the request of Diocese of Long Island, I suggested prayers and songs for a climate rally at Citibank in NYC; and I edited an article on Season of Creation for a Diocese of WA newsletter.

- **The best is yet to come**

Creation Care Justice Network (CCJN) continues to be active in the two dioceses in MA. I hope you will [sign up to join CCJN](#), so that you can connect with other Episcopalians engaged in this

mission and ministry in Massachusetts. [Creation care resources are posted on our diocese's website.](#) A curated list of [Creation care resources and events are posted on the website of Diocese of MA.](#) Please visit our [Creation Care group on Facebook.](#)

In the days ahead, I will post occasional articles and sermons on my website, Reviving Creation ([RevivingCreation.org](#)). Please feel free to subscribe!

-- Submitted by (the Rev. Dr.) Margaret Bullitt-Jonas (mbj@revivingcreation.org)

Report to Diocesan Convention: Intake Officer

The Intake Officer of the Diocese is part of the Safe Church system, helping to, in the words of our Safe Church Policy, “make our Church a safe place: safe for those who worship, safe for those who minister, safe for those who come in need, safe for children, and safe for all who seek or serve Christ.” The Intake Officer receives concerns relating to suspected misconduct under our Safe Church Policy as well as any matter involving clergy misconduct. In receiving concerns, it is the Intake Officer’s responsibility to listen respectfully, offer pastoral care and response, and ensure that appropriate processes for accountability are followed.

My work sometimes involves consultation with both laypersons and clergy who are aware of or find themselves involved in situations that make them uncomfortable and which in some way don’t “feel right” because of the behavior of another member of the Church. Some concerns simply require conversation, processing and clarifying the individual’s own options for resolving a situation, and other more complex cases require involving other persons or systems to re-establish safety for those involved.

As Intake Officer I work closely with Rev. Tanya Wallace, Diocesan Safe Church Officer, Rev. Deacon Pat O’Connell, President of the Disciplinary Board for the Diocese, as well as with other Intake Officers from Province I.

Since the previous Diocesan Convention I have provided two consults to clergy who had encountered situations that they felt concerned about but which were not, in fact, appropriate for a formal complaint; I received one formal complaint regarding alleged clergy misconduct but, with the Bishop’s approval, dismissed it as not actionable under the canons; and I have served in processing a complaint referred to the Diocese from another diocese in Province I.

Molly Scherm

Intake Officer

Reclaiming Hope: The Commission on Mental Health and Substance Misuse

The Commission on Mental Health and Substance Misuse has been in existence for about a year and half and during that time we have been focusing our efforts in two areas. The first is determining what exactly a commission on Mental Health and Substance Misuse actually does, especially when all of its members are very busy professionals. Our primary goals are to be a resource for the people of our diocese and to ensure that mental health and substance misuse are not forgotten by God's church. To that end, we have begun the process of gathering and vetting resources that will soon be shared on our website. These resources will include recommended reading, as well as regional and national resources for getting assistance with mental health concerns and substance misuse. General Convention adopted a resolution declaring the Sunday closest to October 10 as Mental Health Sunday and it is our profound hope that every parish in our diocese will mark that day annually by using the Liturgy resources we published last spring, which is the most comprehensive resource we have pulled together to date. The liturgy resource guide has pulled from many denominations from across the globe. It is not necessary to completely replace the entire liturgy, simply utilizing the provided Prayers of the People or one of the collects would be enough; though working the issue into the sermon would also be wonderful. The goal is not to make mental health the primary social justice issue of our parishes, but at least an issue that gets regular mention in the liturgy in some way. This simple step, the simple step of praying for all affected by mental illness and substance misuse, sends a profound message to everyone in the community, a message of love and support for the 20% of Americans who live with mental illness and the 17% who live with a substance use disorder.

Commission Members

The Rev. Jason Burns, Co-chair
The Rev. Charlotte LaForest, Co-chair
Amanda Watroba
Suzanne Lewandowski
The Rev. Sandi Albom
Jane Morrison
Marion MacDonald

Report to the Diocese from the Missioner for Spirituality and Leadership

It continues to be my honor to serve the Diocese in a part-time capacity. I have been visiting congregations across the diocese – at their invitation, and at the suggestion of the Bishop and Canon. I have served as supply clergy, offered forums, and have met with Vestries. In the past year, at Canon Simpson's request, I have been working with the vestries of Christ Memorial Church, North Brookfield and Trinity Church, Ware, to build relationships, to explore how the two congregations might work collaboratively together. They have experimented in a few joint projects – and in 2025 they are planning to engage in some shared liturgies. Neither congregation has a resident priest, and I have occasionally filled in on Sundays. I meet regularly with Bishop Fisher to continue to discern how I might render my services in dealing with the opportunities and challenges of congregations.

I continue to do spiritual direction for some clergy and lay leaders in the diocese.

I continue to convene a group of clergy who serve two congregations to share insights and learnings, and offer mutual support. There is a unique ministry, and there is much to be learned from one another as the dynamics of congregational life and organization continue to evolve.

I also continue to facilitate a group of clergy serving larger congregations – meeting monthly for support, sharing, reflection and learning.

I am inspired by the passion and commitment of the clergy – and the care, competence and hospitality of Bishop Fisher and his staff.

In addition to my ministry in the diocese, I continue to serve as Bishop Liaison for Bishops United Against Gun Violence; and on the Faith Focused Initiative team of Braver Angels, a national movement created to depolarize America. I am available to work with congregations seeking to engage in gun violence prevention; and/or to help bring Braver Angels' resources to parishes that are interested in organizing reconciliation conversations within the church or in the wider community, around political difference. Braver Angels is developing post-election resources that will be available for congregations.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith
Missioner for Spirituality and Leadership
Retired Bishop of Newark

Report to Convention 2024
The Rev. Jennifer Gregg,
Missioner for Servant Leadership

Cathedral of the Beloved

This fall at Cathedral marks 10 years of worshipping outdoors. We are grateful to God and to all our Berkshire and regional neighbors, especially the diocese, for all the support that has allowed us to come into this milestone. This is some of what the last year offered.



Worship with a shared meal continued to be offered each week on the lawn. During the winter months, we moved into First Methodist (FUMC) dining room. This decision was made in conjunction with our ongoing relationship with ServiceNet and the newly opened shelter at FUMC in former Sunday School space. Residents could easily join us from the shelter as we continued to build relationships. This setting and the warmth of being indoors, allowed us to experiment with hands on formation during our liturgy, using simple visuals, prompts or activities that shaped table discussions based on the gospel and built relationships. We also introduced candle-lighting as a way of inviting the community to surrender and settle into the space. Some members of our communities were raised up as part of our Sunday reflection. These practices allowed the community to rest more deeply into the love of God as they began to also here stories and perspectives of their neighbors in new ways. In the spring, we returned outdoors where our average attendance through this summer was roughly 80 or higher.

Outside of Sunday's, Cathedral continued a weekly Holy Eucharist service at Zion. This space provides a resting place through silence and deep listening to the movement of the Spirit. It has become a consistent place of sanctuary during the week for all join us. We also continue to hold regular Coffee Hour at Dottie's which is an important touchpoint for our community. When asked this year why gathering for this coffee hour is so important to them, they responded, "I love that I have a place to go and talk to someone. This is one of the needs in life to connect with others." We average 18-20 participants on any given Thursday morning.



Our original diocesan grant for Cathedral Cooks, a monthly gathering to bring a small group together to cook and break bread together with the Cathedral community and congregations, this year shifted to what is now entitled, "Big Cooks." Once a month or every six weeks, members of our community along with others gather in FUMC to cook the meals for our Sunday afternoon gatherings. While the community cooks together it is a place of fellowship and story-telling. We have moved toward more locally grown produce. This summer we had a wonderful harvest from various gardens that provided for several different vegetarian meals. The vibrant colors of these meals and incredible seasoning has brought incredible nourishment and conversation around tables on the lawn. Several of our community members have also been ServSafe certified through this procss.



One of the outgrowths of Big Cooks was a desire to make communion bread for congregations throughout the Berkshires for Holy Week. Cathedral, in thanksgiving for the many communities who have provided meals over the years, was able to bake communion bread in return. Our “Be Love” Bread fed 18 communities during Holy Week.

Another focus of this year was to increase trainings and resources to our community. The Rev. Margot Page and Becky Crane, Community Care Coordinator, participated in the Trauma Resource Institute’s, Community Resiliency Model teacher training (www.traumaresourceinstitute.com). Together they are working on teacher certification to bring this Resiliency Model to our community and other organizations and/or congregations in the area. A Peaceful Mind using meditation and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) practices were also offered to the community as a way to teach mindfulness practices that can be utilized during difficult situations. Margot and Emily Chin, a music therapist in the area, also offered spaces to reflect on the power of music to speak and provide balm during daily life. All of these opportunities were grant funded and look to grow the inner resource of all participants, a tangible way to rest in God, when any participant is also trying to manage emotional responses.

Other highlights from Cathedral of the Beloved in this past year include:

- A concert with Misty Blues to help shake off the winter blues with Wanda Houston and her incredible band.
- The participation and celebration of The Rev. Sharon Billetters ordination to the vocational diaconate.
- A growth in working teams on council, focusing on grant writing and fundraising; communication and relationship building; food; and stewardship.

Loving the Questions
The Rev. Jennifer Gregg and Craig Hammond,
Co-Facilitators

Our 2023-2024 Cohort included 14 participants from the Diocese of Western MA, Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

There are three practices that we have come to appreciate in Loving the Questions:

- The practice of Silence
- The practice of Awareness
- The practice of Storytelling

These practices help us listen as we discern what we may be called “to do.” They also give us the tools to cultivate “our being.” In a world that is obsessed with doing, we are aware that the most important thing we offer one another is our “presence” regardless of the outward form it takes. The two go hand-in-hand.

Our teaching of these three practices are shaped through presentation, contemplative practices, including guided meditations, lectio divina and journaling, as well as Group Spiritual Direction.

Craig and I are grateful to continue to partner with Shalem Institute. In 2023-2024, outside of continuing to work with The Rev. Peter Feltman-Mahan, our team of facilitators was also joined by two Shalem trained

facilitators. Their experience in other settings and non-Episcopal roots have offered new depth and an ecumenical opening to our work. We are grateful for their presence and insights.

In July, Craig and I had the gift of going to Holy Cross Monastery to more fully debrief last year's cohort and pray for the cohort that was beginning to take shape for the fall.

This fall (2024-2025 cohort) we have welcomed 16 new participants into the Loving the Questions Space. We continue to be grateful for The Rev. Peter Feltman-Mahan's long-term presence alongside us over the past several years. Peter now brings representation from the Diocese of Massachusetts in his role on our facilitation team. We are grateful he has been able to remain with us as he transitioned into a parish in the Diocese of MA.

We also give thanks for our (former) Canon to the Ordinary, The Rev. Rich Simpson and Archdeacon, The Rev. Jane Greisbach as they have lead breakout sessions for those who are discerning Holy Orders. These sessions have provided those in discernment of Holy Orders to listen to other priests and deacons from the diocese about their call and understanding of their vocation at this time. These spaces provide time for lively discussion and questions. Participants can then bring back their curiosities and noticing's to the LTQ space as they participate in small group spiritual direction.

Outside of these areas of service, I continue to co-lead Fresh Start for new clergy in our diocese and participate in various ecumenical efforts, including the work toward building a downtown campus of congregations in Pittsfield.

Faithfully Submitted,

Jenny+

Community of Deacons

Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

The Community of Deacons is a group of prayerful, spirit led, hard working people. We are now 14 in number with 2 in the Province 1 School for Deacons. Some of the highlights of the year follow.

We spent our retreat at the Society of Saint Margaret in Duxbury for the 4th annual year. Each year a team of two deacons lead the program for the weekend. This year Bishop Fisher joined us for Saturday afternoon. That was a special treat. Then folks visited the beach for some free time – another special treat.

Some of the various ministries our deacons are involved in: outdoor churches, mental health, suicide prevention, online reflections, Laundry Love, street people ministry, refugee resettlement, drop in centers for the housing insecure, hospice work, leading Spanish worship, food for the hungry, LGBTQ youth and more.

Deacon Crawl happened two years in a row, and took a break this year. The Archdeacon, Jane Griesbach, will be visiting churches without a deacon or who hasn't had a deacon in a long time. With the invitation of the priest, Jane will preach or lead an adult formation explaining the diaconate.

This year we're holding a prayer vigil on Nov. 4 for the diocese and a prayer-a-thon (prayer through the hours) on Nov. 5 for a just and fair election with no violence.

The ordained deacons and the parish they serve at are: Audrey Cronin (Good Shepherd, Oxford), Jason Burns (St. John's, Northampton), Dianne Wilson (St. Michaels on the Heights, Worcester), Sharon Billetter (St. John's, Williamstown), Margot Page (All Saints, No. Adams), Pat O'Connell (St. Mark's, East Longmeadow), Beth Washburn (All Saints, Worcester), Jane Griesbach (just left St. Francis, Holden), Kate DeRose (Christ Church Cathedral) Lora Smith (St. Andrew's, Longmeadow), Terry Hurlbut (St. David's, Agawam), Beatrice Kayigwa (St. Paul's, Gardner), Michael Hamilton (Christ the King/Epiphany, Wilbraham) Jac Essing (St. Paul's, Holyoke). Linda Taupier sadly moved to the "eastern" MA diocese to be closer to family. She is now a deacon at St. Anne's, Arlington.

Students: Jaclyn Mayo and Madia Lorraine Brumskine. Jaclyn interned at Good Shepherd, Clinton. Jaclyn will graduate the two-year program of Province 1 Deacon School in December. After that, she will turn in and defend a learning portfolio to the Board of Examining Chaplains. Then we wait to celebrate her ordination. Madia is in her first year of school. We pray, every morning, for God to summon more deacons into the fold.

In Christ,

Ven. S. Jane Griesbach

The Western Mass. Young Adult Ministry Network (YAMN) continues to bring together young adults ages 18-40 from across various parishes for fun, friendship, and development in faith.

This year, the Young Adult Ministry Network transitioned from having a Network Organizer on staff, our founder Will Harron, to being run by volunteer lay and clergy young adult leaders throughout the diocese. This transition was due to a lack of funding. We are very grateful for all Will's work establishing the network and building momentum for collaborative young adult ministry in the diocese and hope it lays the groundwork for greater investment into young adult ministry in the future.

During Lent, YAMN held a retreat day at St. John's, Athol. Young adults had time to pray together individually and communally, enjoy the awesome thrift store ministry of St. John's, create art, and cook and share a meal together. On a more regular basis, YAMN met for Saturday afternoon board game meet-ups at Tree House Brewery in Deerfield, enjoying pizza and games together. Other past activities of YAMN have included an after-convention young adult mixer, hikes, a visit to the Icon Museum and Study Center in Clinton, and multiple years volunteering to do Trail Magic in Sheffield.

Our annual retreat is coming up Nov. 15-17th at Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center in New Hampshire. We strive to make this opportunity for spiritual rest and renewal affordable and accessible for all interested young adults. This year the retreat is being funded through donations and contributions of attendees. Please reach out to mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org if you are interested in helping support us.

If you are a young adult or have young adults in your parish who may be interested in participating in this ministry or collaborating on young adult events, please reach out to mmcdermott@gracechurchamherst.org. I will be happy to talk more with you about this ministry and get you in touch with other organizers of this network!

-Rev. Megan McDermott, Priest Associate at Grace Church Amherst and YAMN volunteer/participant



SECTION II

FINANCIAL AND STATISTICAL REPORTS

The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts

Memorandum

To: Delegates to the 123rd Diocesan Convention
From: Kimberly A Foster, Chief Financial Officer
Subject: **Plan for Use of Diocesan Resources in 2025**
Date: October 10, 2024

On behalf of Bishop Fisher and Diocesan Council I am pleased to present the proposed budget for 2025. I will be available in person to answer questions about this plan at an informal Q & A Budget Hearing offered at 8:00AM on the morning of Convention at the UMass venue. This time has been set aside for those who may still have questions after reviewing this plan. And, you are most welcome to email me in advance with your questions at kfoster@diocesewma.org.

Overview of Current Year - 2024

We're in full swing again this year, often travelling to join together in person for events, trainings, celebrations and our annual convention! What a difference a few years can make!

The Federal Reserve cut its interest rate by 0.5 percentage point on September 18. This was done in the context of economic resilience rather than concerns about a material slowdown.

On the overall, the Diocese's revenues and expenses are running on target for the year, with some minor budget fluctuations. We do expect to take the planned draw from invested funds to balance the 2024 budget; the exact amount to be determined in December.

The fair market value of the Diocese's Interest in net Assets of the Trustees increased by approximately 3.5% during the first six month of 2024.

Essentially, the economy is expanding at a healthy pace while managing to bring inflation under control, without triggering a recession.

The Plan - 2025

Each budget year we strive to align our human, financial, and spiritual resources in support of our common mission. This coming year, the focus continues to be on increasing vitality and vibrancy in our congregations. Our strategy is to continue to invest in leadership formation and development work, and to discover ways to support our congregations in gathered settings within and beyond our buildings.

Our work is guided by priorities and goals set by the Episcopal Church, the Bishop and Diocesan leadership:

- Developing and supporting transformational lay and clergy leaders
- Engaging congregations in processes of honest, healthy self-assessment and renewal
- Encouraging inter-diocesan, ecumenical, and interfaith partnerships in congregations and the Bishop's office
- Providing opportunities for clergy to gather for support and networking
- Committing to Racial Reconciliation, Creation Care and God's justice "on earth as it is in heaven"
- Encouraging and supporting new initiatives in ministry (moving from idea to ministry and from ministry to a movement)

Staff Allocation Changes and Other Adjustments

Each year we review personnel costs in relation to the key budget categories to assure we are accurately representing staff expenses as a reflection of the work we've been given to do. There are no major changes to the expense allocation of existing staff positions and no new positions have been added in 2025.

EXPENSES:

For 2025 planning purposes we are assuming robust travel related activities will continue. A full array of events, programs and gatherings will be offered in person, to include virtual options as necessary.

A 3% cost of living (COLA) increase has been applied to staff compensation.

2024 will require an additional draw of **\$85,000** from invested funds to balance the budget. This draw comes from a fund with the Trustees set up specifically for this purpose and will not impact the spending rule distributions that we rely on from year to year to balance the budget.

Description of Major Budget Categories

- **Bishop's Ministry: \$635,131** includes our communications work, parish visitations, confirmations and ordinations, and representation at the house of Bishops and other communion wide work.
- **Congregational Support: \$443,600** 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.
- **Formation & Leadership Development: \$338,971** funds Parish Leadership events and other diocesan wide leadership events, Clergy Day(s) and Clergy Conference, leadership training and coaching, Loving the Questions, Commission on Ministry, Diaconate Formation, Fresh Start, Seminarian Assistance, and support for the Episcopal Service Corps program in our diocese at All Saints, South Hadley.
- **Mission in the World: \$469,006** includes support for our outdoor worship communities, Province of New England, our apportionment to the Episcopal Church, Global Mission grants, support of ecumenical organizations, and support of Episcopal Relief and Development.
- **Governance: \$182,412** represents Chancellor's expenses, the cost of Diocesan Convention to include a professional AV Tech, benefits for lay and ordained retirees, and costs associated with the Title IV disciplinary process.
- **Finance & Administration: \$458,495** are costs related to general business office operations including staff compensation and benefits, rent to CCC, repairs & maintenance, depreciation associated with computer, server and Wi-Fi equipment, internet, telephone, supplies, leased equipment, property & liability insurance, cyber insurance, and the annual audit fee.
- **Agency: Admin & Human Resource Services: \$153,234** provides full payroll services, benefits administration, and oversight of the property and casualty insurance program for the congregations and programs of the diocese.

Other Notable Lines

- Our 2025 budget for Mission in the World (Outreach) is **\$469,006**. This includes our Apportionment to The Episcopal Church of **\$343,143**
- **\$70,000** for Ministry Development Initiatives
- **\$23,910** for Formation and Leadership Development training and consulting
- **\$10,000** annual grant to support Lawrence House, our Episcopal Service Corps program run out of All Saints' in S. Hadley
- **\$131,723** to support Hispanic Ministry
- **\$68,500** in scholarships for members of our congregations, children of clergy, seminarian assistance and sabbatical grants in support of our clergy.

Expense Summary

The total expense budget in 2025 is **\$2,680,849**. Payroll and pension related expenses make up 49.65% of the budget. The work of the Bishop's office is relational and highly dependent on personnel. Specific services provided by the Administrative Offices of the Diocese to the congregations are payroll & benefits administration, HR support, transition ministry support, congregational development programs and support. Included in the budget is the cost of the diocesan convention, clergy conferences, and diocesan wide leadership development events.

INCOME:

We are expecting **\$2,681,350** in total revenue in 2025, similar to 2024 projections.

Summary of Revenue Breakdown

- **Assessment for Common Ministry: \$1,121,000*** represents 41.8% of the budget. This is an increase of **\$25,000** compared to 2024 projections.
- **Use of Investments – Spending Rule: \$1,424,000** is a conservative estimate representing 53.1% 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: \$85,000** is needed to balance the operating budget. We have a fund invested with the Trustees set up specifically for this purpose to assure that draws do not adversely impact our 5% spending rule distributions.
- **Program Income: \$35,500** in event registration fees generated from Diocesan Convention, Safe Church, Clergy Conference, and Loving the Questions.
- **Other Income: \$15,850** is expected with **\$5,000** coming from the annual Stickney Trust distribution in support of Hispanic Ministries in the Diocese. The balance relates to reimbursement from the Trustees for administrative support to the Executive Director of the Trustees for the Diocese of WMA.

*Assessment Income (Support for Common Ministry) - Assessment income is budgeted using our standard formula (noted below), which uses the average of the most recent three full years of Normal Operating Income as reported on the parochial report.

The first \$50,000 of Operating Revenues are assessed at a rate of 6.75%
Operating Revenues of from \$50,001 to \$75,000 are assessed at a rate of 9.75%
Operating Revenues of from \$75,001 to \$125,000 are assessed at a rate of 10.5%
Operating Revenues of from \$125,001 to \$200,000 are assessed at a rate of 12.25%
Operating Revenues over \$200,000 are assessed at a rate of 13.25%

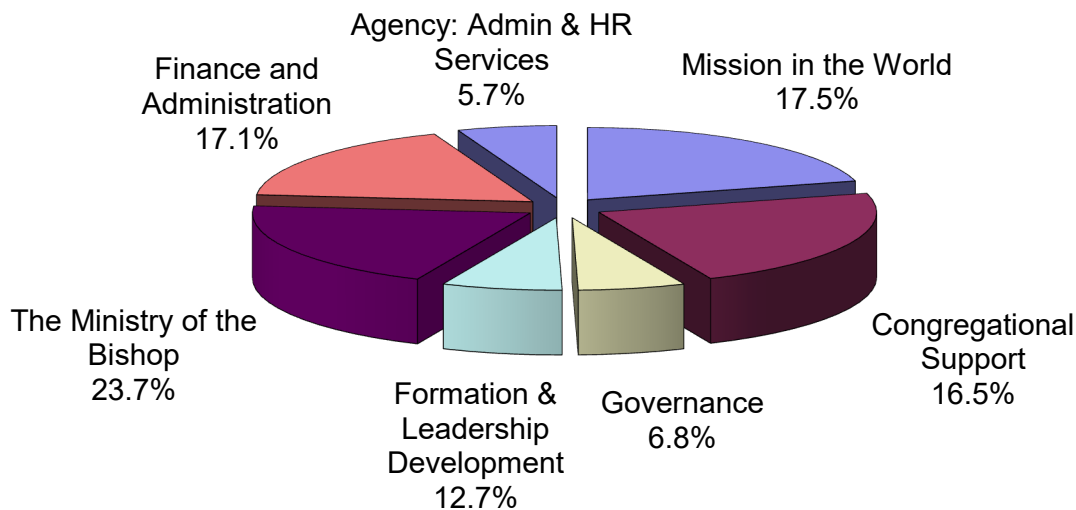
Bottom Line:

The budget for 2025 is balanced with the aid of an **\$85,000** additional draw from our invested funds. We will monitor income and expenses closely and be prepared to adjust the budget as necessary, due to an ever-changing environment.

In conclusion, the diocese is in excellent position to serve its congregations and to serve our ministries as we continue to navigate the challenges related to current economic conditions.

I encourage you to accept this 2025 budget proposal of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts.

Budget Expenses by Category



Members of Diocesan Council: The Rt. Rev. Doug Fisher (President), Mr. Mark Rogers (Treasurer), the Rev. Nathaniel Anderson (Vice President), Ms. Wende Wheeler (Secretary), Mr. Frank Minasian (Trustee Representative), Ms. Holly Dolan, Mr. Richard Gore, Mr. Roland Holstead, Mr. Kurt Hultgren, the Rev. Eliot Moss, Ms. Patricia O'Connell, the Rev. Mary Rosendale, the Rev. Martha Sipe, and the Rev. Michael Tuck

Members of the Budget and Financial Planning Committee: Mark Rogers, Committee Chair (Church of the Reconciliation, Webster), Mick Kalber (Holy Trinity, Southbridge), Wayne Gass (All Saints, South Hadley), Al Symonds (St. Stephen's, Pittsfield), Robert Perkins (Holy Spirit Church, Sutton), the Rev. Mary Rosendale (St. Stephen's, Westborough), the Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman (Berkshire Corridor), and Kimberly Foster (CFO, Assistant Treasurer)

One Page Summary of the Proposed 2025 Budget

	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	% of Budget
<i>OPERATING REVENUES</i>						
Assessment for Common Ministry	1,139,884	1,137,067	1,091,435	1,095,567	1,121,000	41.8%
Use of Investments - Spending Rule	1,376,328	1,324,680	1,431,650	1,414,000	1,424,000	53.1%
Investment Income - Additional Draw	0	0	0	128,200	85,000	3.2%
Program Income	8,235	19,945	25,562	24,000	35,500	1.3%
Other Income and Gifts	30,429	66,583	30,933	20,800	15,850	0.6%
Internal Funding	6,320	5,122	4,598	0	0	0.0%
<u>Interest Income</u>	<u>681</u>	<u>254</u>	<u>2,710</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUES FOR DIOCESAN OPERATIONS	2,561,877	2,553,651	2,586,888	2,682,567	2,681,350	100.0%
 <i>OPERATING EXPENSES</i>						
The Ministry of the Bishop	544,976	580,719	589,002	612,491	635,131	23.7%
Congregational Support	617,163	440,166	449,746	438,715	443,600	16.5%
Formation & Leadership Development	127,261	295,759	338,165	328,806	338,971	12.6%
Mission in the World	547,275	522,059	502,617	518,872	469,006	17.5%
Governance	144,087	158,713	132,979	194,563	182,412	6.8%
Finance & Administration	420,561	413,427	421,953	444,467	458,495	17.1%
<u>Agency: Administration & Human Resource Services</u>	<u>160,522</u>	<u>142,768</u>	<u>150,126</u>	<u>144,147</u>	<u>153,234</u>	5.7%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE	2,561,845	2,553,611	2,584,588	2,682,061	2,680,849	100.0%
 OPERATING REVENUE AND EXPENSE						
Operating Income	2,561,877	2,553,651	2,586,888	2,682,567	2,681,350	
<u>Operating Expense</u>	<u>2,561,845</u>	<u>2,553,611</u>	<u>2,584,588</u>	<u>2,682,061</u>	<u>2,680,849</u>	
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	32	40	2,300	506	501	

		EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN MA							
		PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET							
			Y/E ACTUAL 2023		YTD ACTUAL 30-Jun-24		2024 ANNUAL BUDGET		2025 PROPOSED BUDGET
REVENUES									
Assessment for Common Ministry			\$1,091,435		\$547,769		\$1,095,567		\$1,121,000
Use of Investment - Trustees			\$1,431,650		\$808,813		\$1,542,200		\$1,509,000
Program Income			\$25,562		\$12,968		\$24,000		\$35,500
Other Income and Gifts			\$30,933		\$12,854		\$20,800		\$15,850
Internal Grant Funding			\$4,598		\$0		\$0		\$0
Interest Income			\$2,710		\$1,508		\$0		\$0
TOTAL DIOCESAN INCOME AND GIFTS			\$2,586,888		\$1,383,911		\$2,682,567		\$2,681,350

			Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL		2024 ANNUAL		2025 PROPOSED
			2023		30-Jun-24		BUDGET		BUDGET
EXPENSES									
BISHOP'S MINISTRY									
PROGRAMS									
	Communications	Wages and Benefits	\$164,416		\$86,079		\$172,546		\$177,788
	Communications	Business Expenses	\$30,053		\$19,465		\$27,035		\$32,994
		Total Communications	\$194,469		\$105,544		\$199,581		\$210,782
	Social Justice		\$3,820		\$1,110		\$4,000		\$5,000
	Retired Clergy Gatherings		\$3,288		\$0		\$3,600		\$3,600
	Special Diocesan Events		\$683		\$770		\$3,000		\$2,750
	Wanderings and Special Journeys		\$422		\$0		\$0		\$0
		Total PROGRAMS	\$202,682		\$107,424		\$210,181		\$222,132
PERSONNEL EXPENSES									
	Wages and Benefits		\$349,871		\$183,982		\$363,610		\$374,368
	Business Expenses		\$36,449		\$17,650		\$38,700		\$38,632
		Total PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$386,320		\$201,632		\$402,310		\$412,999
TOTAL BISHOP'S MINISTRY			\$589,002		\$309,056		\$612,491		\$635,131

		Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL		2024 ANNUAL		2025 PROPOSED
		2023		30-Jun-24		BUDGET		BUDGET
CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT: Mission with Congregations								
GRANTS and SCHOLARSHIPS								
	Clergy Children Educational Grants	\$3,750		\$1,250		\$5,000		\$5,000
	College Scholarships	\$38,275		\$16,938		\$40,000		\$40,000
	Continuing Education Grants	\$825		\$0		\$4,000		\$4,000
	Deanery	(\$186)		\$565		\$1,000		\$1,000
	Ministry Development Initiatives	\$57,377		\$58,452		\$70,000		\$70,000
	Sabbatical Grants	\$11,987		\$0		\$10,000		\$10,000
	Total GRANTS and SCHOLARSHIPS	\$112,028		\$77,205		\$130,000		\$130,000
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES								
	Congregational Assistance	\$1,725		\$0		\$2,000		\$10,000
	Transition Ministry	\$4,168		\$3,990		\$4,650		\$6,000
	Christian Formation Missioner	\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0
	Latino Ministries	\$134,811		\$61,939		\$126,522		\$131,723
	Safe Church Training and Prevention	\$8,671		\$2,889		\$5,550		\$9,050
	Stewardship	\$1,199		\$1,199		\$2,500		\$2,500
	Youth Ministry	\$0		\$0		\$2,500		\$2,500
	Young Adult Ministry	\$19,100		\$3,200		\$2,000		\$0
	Total Operational Expenses	\$169,675		\$73,218		\$145,722		\$161,773
PERSONNEL EXPENSES								
	Wages and Benefits	\$157,636		\$79,946		\$156,993		\$144,127
	Business Expense	\$10,407		\$3,553		\$6,000		\$7,700
	Total PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$168,043		\$83,499		\$162,993		\$151,827
	TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT	\$449,746		\$233,922		\$438,716		\$443,600

			Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL		2024 ANNUAL		2025 PROPOSED
			2023		30-Jun-24		BUDGET		BUDGET
FORMATION & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT									
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES									
	Education for Ministry		\$1,750		\$275		\$1,750		\$1,750
	Parish Leadership Day		\$3,600		\$2,500		\$4,500		\$5,000
	Formation and Leadership Development		\$22,394		\$8,302		\$22,950		\$23,910
	Clergy Conferences		\$23,789		\$19,339		\$22,000		\$23,000
	Commision on Ministry		\$6,509		\$4,199		\$7,953		\$7,953
	Diaconate Formation		\$7,685		\$6,818		\$7,600		\$9,000
	Fresh Start		\$99		\$202		\$2,300		\$2,300
	Seminarian Assistance		\$18,600		\$3,000		\$9,000		\$8,500
	Lawrence House		\$10,000		\$0		\$10,000		\$10,000
	TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES		\$94,425		\$44,635		\$88,053		\$91,413
PERSONNEL EXPENSES									
	Wages and Benefits		\$238,814		\$123,179		\$234,753		\$239,758
	Business Expense		\$4,926		\$4,430		\$6,000		\$7,800
	TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES		\$243,740		\$127,609		\$240,753		\$247,558
	TOTAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT		\$338,165		\$172,244		\$328,806		\$338,971

			Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL		2024 ANNUAL		2025 PROPOSED
			2023		30-Jun-24		BUDGET		BUDGET
MISSION IN THE WORLD									
OPERATIONAL EXPENSES									
Outdoor Worship Communities									
		Wages and Benefits	\$61,069		\$31,941		\$64,054		\$66,113
		Business Expenses	\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000		\$10,000
Total Outdoor Worship Communities			\$71,069		\$41,941		\$74,054		\$76,113
	Creation Care	Wages and Benefits	\$40,848		\$21,018		\$42,294		\$0
	Creation Care	Business Expenses	\$6,856		\$9,217		\$11,400		\$0
Total Creation Care			\$47,704		\$30,235		\$53,694		\$0
Ecumenical Relations									
		Berkshire Organizing Project	\$3,500		\$1,750		\$3,500		\$3,500
		Ecumenical Officer	\$350		\$0		\$0		\$1,500
		Interfaith Council	\$400		(\$400)		\$400		\$0
		Mass Council of Churches	\$15,000		\$7,500		\$15,000		\$15,000
		Province One	\$9,750		\$4,875		\$9,750		\$9,750
Total Ecumenical Relations			\$29,000		\$13,725		\$28,650		\$29,750
The Episcopal Church Apportionment			\$334,843		\$171,237		\$342,474		\$343,143
	Global Mission		\$10,000		\$2,000		\$10,000		\$10,000
	Lambeth		\$0		\$0		\$0		\$0
Sustainable Development Goals			\$10,000		\$5,000		\$10,000		\$10,000
TOTAL MISSION IN THE WORLD			\$502,617		\$264,138		\$518,873		\$469,006

[illegible]

			Y/E ACTUAL		YTD ACTUAL		2024 ANNUAL		2025 PROPOSED
			2023		30-Jun-24		BUDGET		BUDGET
DIOCESAN FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION									
	ARCHIVE EXPENSES								
		Wages and Benefits	\$7,317		\$3,232		\$7,692		\$5,598
		Business Expenses	\$116		\$174		\$500		\$400
		TOTAL ARCHIVE EXPENSES	\$7,433		\$3,406		\$8,192		\$5,998
	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES								
	Financial Management		\$33,027		\$23,842		\$33,439		\$35,522
	Property - Plant		\$116,922		\$62,250		\$123,813		\$127,680
	General Operations		\$29,505		\$14,732		\$30,474		\$32,124
		TOTAL OPERATIONAL EXPENSES	\$179,454		\$100,824		\$187,726		\$195,326
	PERSONNEL EXPENSES								
		Wages and Benefits	\$232,769		\$122,759		\$245,244		\$253,361
		Business Expenses	\$2,298		\$1,063		\$3,305		\$3,811
		TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$235,067		\$123,822		\$248,549		\$257,171
	TOTAL DIOCESAN FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		\$421,953		\$228,052		\$444,468		\$458,495
DIOCESAN AGENCY EXPENSES FOR CONGREGATION SUPPORT									
	OPERATIONAL EXPENSES		\$20,381		\$9,593		\$17,700		\$17,300
	PERSONNEL EXPENSES								
		Wages and Benefits	\$127,780		\$64,876		\$124,247		\$133,005
		Business Expenses	\$1,965		\$331		\$2,200		\$2,928
		TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSES	\$129,745		\$65,206		\$126,447		\$135,934
		TOTAL DIOCESAN AGENCY EXPENSES	\$150,126		\$74,799		\$144,147		\$153,234
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$2,584,588		\$1,383,399		\$2,682,062		\$2,680,849
NET INCOME (LOSS)			\$2,300		\$512		\$505		\$501

**Diocese of Western Massachusetts
2024 Executive Staff Compensation Detail**

The following information concerning compensation paid to the Bishop and the members of the Diocesan Executive Staff in 2024 is provided in order to provide full disclosure to the people of the Diocese.

Douglas J. Fisher, Bishop

\$194,934

No residence is provided to Bishop Fisher who has chosen to own his own home. A portion of Bishop Fisher's cash compensation is considered Housing Allowance under the terms allowed by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 107.

Victoria Ix, Canon for Communications

\$ 86,480.

No residence is provided to Canon Ix who has chosen to rent her home. A portion of Canon Ix's cash compensation is considered Housing Allowance under the terms allowed by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 107.

***Richard M. Simpson, Canon to the Ordinary**

\$129,961.

No residence is provided to Canon Simpson who has chosen to own his own home. A portion of Canon Simpson's cash compensation is considered Housing Allowance under the terms allowed by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 107. Canon Simpson left his position as of 10/1/24, so the actual amount paid to him in 2024 was \$97,471.

Steven Wilco, Canon to the Ordinary

\$ 95,000.

No residence is provided to Canon Wilco who has chosen to own his own home. A portion of Canon Wilco's cash compensation is considered Housing Allowance under the terms allowed by the Internal Revenue Code, Section 107. Canon Wilco joined the staff effective 11/1/24 following the departure of Canon Simpson on 10/1/24, so the actual amount paid to him in 2024 was \$15,833.

In addition to the compensation noted above, pension contributions are made for each member of the Diocesan Executive Staff in the amounts listed below. The pension contributions for Bishop Fisher, Canon Ix and Canon Simpson are in the form of assessments paid to the Church Pension Fund to fund its defined benefit pension plan for clergy employees. The pension contributions for Canon Wilco are paid to Portico Benefits Service to fund its defined benefit plan for Lutheran clergy. The 2024 contributions to pension are as follows:

Bishop Fisher	-	\$37,304.
Canon Ix	-	\$16,757.
Canon Simpson	-	\$27,343.
(Canon Simpson left his position as of 10/1/24, actual pension paid was \$20,507.)		
Canon Wilco	-	\$ 2,375.