



Wednesday, March 6, 2024

NEWS and INFORMATION for the clergy and leadership of

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

138 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111 / www.diomass.org
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Electing convention preparation underway

Congregations reminded of delegate certification and clergy canonical residency procedures

The special Diocesan Convention to elect the 17th bishop diocesan of the Diocese of Massachusetts takes place on *Saturday, May 18* at Trinity Church in Boston. Online registration will open soon. All attendees must pre-register.

While the electing convention is open to all in the diocesan community, priority seating will be given to voting members and those with assigned credentials. Non-voting attendees will be seated on a first-come, first-served basis and as space allows. All voting will take place in person.

All congregations are reminded to submit their [Congregational Leadership Reports](#), including certification of lay delegates, to make sure that their current convention delegation will receive upcoming convention communications.

In accordance with Diocesan Canon 1, Sec. 3, all clergy desiring to vote must be canonically resident two weeks prior to the start of the convention. Clergy in the process of becoming canonically resident should contact Laura Simons at lsimons@diomass.org to complete this process by *Friday, May 3*.

Questions may be e-mailed to convention@diomass.org.

Reparations Toolkit now includes newly released history report

The Reparations Subcommittee of the diocesan Racial Justice Commission has released a substantive new history report, “And You Will Know the Truth, and the Truth Will Make You Free: A Historical Framework (1620-1840) for Understanding How the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts Benefits Today from Chattel Slavery and Its Legacy.”

The report builds on work already being done in several parishes and is the latest addition to the Reparations Toolkit of resource materials that the subcommittee has been developing and making available since 2021. The 2020 Diocesan Convention called for creation of the toolkit to support congregations as they explore “their historic involvement in and present wealth derived from the forced labor of enslaved people.” The toolkit, including the new report, is available at www.diomass.org/reparations-toolkit.

The report—authored by Alden Fossett, a postulant for ordination to the priesthood and Master of Divinity student at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale—explains in its introduction that it “offers preliminary background historical research and documents trends over time without being exhaustive,” aiming to “inform ongoing work in congregations and other diocesan institutions exploring their connections to slavery.”

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It includes information about 12 Church of England parishes founded in Massachusetts before the American Revolution and the sources of wealth that funded their construction, as well as industries that funded the expansion of the Diocese of Massachusetts during the 19th century.

“As you read this report, our prayer for you is that you will be inspired to courageously explore your own congregation’s history more fully, to not be afraid or embarrassed of what you might find about its connections to slavery and to be willing to share what you find for the sake of our collective journey deeper into freedom. We are with you in this important work of discipleship!” the Reparations Subcommittee says in its preface to the report

Questions may be directed to reparations@diomass.org.

***Ingatherings for 2024
Bishops’ Annual Appeal
invited this month***

The 2024 Bishops’ Annual Appeal now underway is an invitation to everyone to join in deepening covenants formed as the Diocese of Massachusetts. A goal of \$200,000 has been set for the 2024 appeal, in support of shared mission as a diocesan community committed to being disciples of Jesus, seekers of justice and protectors of creation.

While an ingathering may be conducted on any Sunday, the bishops have asked congregations to consider designating the *fourth Sunday in Lent, March 10*, as Bishops’ Annual Appeal Ingathering Sunday. Materials have been mailed directly to church offices and are also available at www.diomass.org/bishops-appeal.

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Brian Raiche, Development Consultant (braiche@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 515).

***Join celebration of Earth
Day and successful pilot
of “Episcopal Path to
Creation Justice”***

The Creation Care Justice Network is inviting everyone to save *Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.*, to join for an Earth Day celebration hosted by St. Mark’s Church in Southborough. It’s being organized as a day of fellowship, learning and celebration to mark the conclusion of the pilot phase of “[An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice](#),” a new initiative from the dioceses of Massachusetts and Western Massachusetts to equip churches for deep and broad creation care work.

The celebration will feature presentations by Mary Evelyn Tucker, co-founder and co-director of the Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology, and, joining virtually, environmentalist and 350.org co-founder Bill McKibben and *Braiding Sweetgrass* author Robin Wall-Kimmerer. The day will conclude with a celebratory Eucharist officiated by Bishop Carol Gallagher. Registration is open, [here](#).

Lenten and Holy Week resources and services

- **Weekly online worship and conversation gatherings continue as part of the joint Lenten-Easter devotional** (available [here](#)) being offered in the dioceses of Vermont and Massachusetts on the theme of “Baptism and Collaboration in the Body of Christ.” The gatherings are hosted via the Diocese of Vermont’s [Green Mountain Online Abbey](#) on *Thursday evenings, March 7, 14 and 21 and April 4, from 5:45 to 7:45 p.m.* All are welcome. RSVPs to the Rev. adwoa Wilson are appreciated: awilson@diovermont.org.
- The **Lenten Preaching Series** continues at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston, featuring messages from preachers in their 20s and 30s. “Preparing for the Great Uprising that is Easter: A Word to the Church from Younger Leaders” is offered on *Tuesdays at 5:15 p.m.* The schedule is [here](#). The sermons are offered within a service of Evening Prayer and followed by supper and conversation with the preacher. Join in person or by livestream via www.stpaulboston.org or the cathedral’s [YouTube channel](#), where recordings of past services are available.
- The Ministry of Immigration Partnership convened by the diocesan Office of Immigration and Multicultural Ministries invites all to join for **“Palm Sunday Eve: Where There is Hatred, Let Me Sow Love”** with guest speaker Bishop Carol Gallagher. Immigrant stories will be shared in the context of Christian worship. The gathering takes place on *Saturday, March 23, 5 p.m.*, at St. John’s Church in Saugus. RSVP to Jocelyn Collen at jcollen@diomass.org.
- Episcopal and ELCA clergy are invited to join with Bishop Alan Gates and Bishop Carol Gallagher for the **Holy Tuesday Service for Renewal of Ordination Vows and Blessing of Chrism**. The service will be offered twice at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston on *March 26, at noon and 6 p.m.* (the 6 p.m. service will be livestreamed via www.stpaulboston.org and [YouTube](#)). Prayers for healing and anointing will be available after each service, as will blessed chrism to take back to congregations for Baptisms (a limited stock of unscented chrism will be available upon request).
Registration to attend is requested by March 18 [here](#). Boxed meals are available by advance purchase (via the registration process) for those who would like to stay after the services for conversation with colleagues. If hiring childcare in order to attend is a hardship, reimbursement is available; contact Brad Rothrock, Cathedral Administrator at brothrock@diomass.org.
- The bishops have authorized a set of **resource materials for use on Good Friday**, including a proposed liturgy for trial use and a translation of the Passion Gospel, available in English and Spanish. “Given the difficult history of Jewish-Christian relations and the contemporary rise in anti-Semitism, the ways in which Jews are portrayed in the Holy Week liturgy is an important issue,” the bishops said in commending the resources, available online [here](#).

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Registration is open, [here](#), for the final sessions in the series of **2024 Clergy Professional Development Days** that include a Part I **workshop on how to avoid anti-Judaism in preaching and worship during Holy Week**, led by the Rev. Dr. Dan Joslyn-Siemiatkoski (*Wednesday, March 13, 5:30-8 p.m.*, via Zoom). All clergy are encouraged to attend this workshop.

Part II is a **Safe Church Review session** (*Tuesday, March 12, 6-8 p.m.*, via Zoom) which fulfills the refresher requirement, along with attendance at a Part I workshop and completion of assigned online training, for those clergy who are due for one this year.

Clergy who are unsure if they are due for Safe Church renewal this year may contact Jennifer Garrett at jgarrett@diomass.org. *FOR INFORMATION: Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation* (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).

NEWS & EVENT NOTES:

All clergy of the diocese are invited to attend the annual **Clergy Conference** which will take place *Monday-Tuesday, April 29-30* at the Devens Common Center in Devens. Author, columnist and theologian [Debie Thomas](#) will lead the program, "When the Spirit Comes: The Gifts of Pentecost for the 21st Century Church."

There will be a reception and banquet on Monday evening giving thanks for the episcopate of Bishop Alan Gates. All clergy are invited to attend this special gathering and may register with a guest independently from conference attendance.**

Deacons and part-time, associate, non-parochial and retired clergy registering for overnight conference attendance may use discount code RELIEF24 and receive \$50 off the fee. The overnight registration period ends at noon on *Monday, April 1*. After April 1, discounts expire and a late registration fee of \$25 will apply.

Find more information and registration [here](#).
FOR INFORMATION: Jennifer Garrett, Administrator and Event Coordinator (jgarrett@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 421).

***Please note that a designated celebration planning committee is creating opportunities for the diocesan community as a whole to celebrate and give thanks for Bishop Gates's ministry. Details will be announced. Questions may be directed to the Rev. Margaret Lias, Administrator for Governance and Grants* (mlias@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 229).

- **Updated alcohol-use policy documents** are now available [here](#). Congregations are encouraged to review the model policy provided as well as their own local policies.

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Canon Bill Parnell, Canon to the Ordinary (bparnell@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 205).

- **Training opportunity for clergy, officers, vestry members and treasurers—especially those new to the positions:** For many years, the diocesan Congregational Consultants ran Congregational Business Practices Workshops to educate congregational leaders about their responsibilities for the prudential (business) matters of their churches. After four long years, these in-person workshops will return in May or June.

A four-hour curriculum will be presented on several Saturday mornings at locations around the diocese. It covers vestry duties, bookkeeping and accounting, safeguarding of assets, and administrative responsibilities such as the Parochial Report and clergy compensation. Consultant coordinators Edward Rewolinski and Betsy Blagdon invite those who are interested to **contact them at diiconsultants@diomass.org so that they can plan enough sessions.** Details and registration links will be available in April.

In addition, Congregational Consultant John Woodward is curating a webpage, [here](#), so that technology no longer needed by churches in the diocese can be made available to other churches in need. For **details on the available technology—or to donate technology**—contact him at jplwoodward@gmail.com.

- The Office of Youth Ministry looks forward to celebrating with congregations these upcoming diocesan youth gatherings:
Sign up by March 8 for the Pre-Confirmation Retreat for youth confirmands (grades 8-12) to be held on *Saturday, March 16, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.*, at Grace Church in Newton (register [here](#)). Find the **2024 Confirmation schedule [here](#).**

Youth acolytes and their mentors are invited to gather and celebrate their ministry at the **Acolyte Festival** on *Saturday, April 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.*, at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Mattapan. The time will include lively worship, games, sharing a meal, blessings and a service project. Registration information will be announced. *FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Yolanda Rolle, Missioner for Youth and Young Adult Ministries (yrolle@diomass.org).*

- The rescheduled diocesan **Absalom Jones Service** will be celebrated on *Sunday, April 7 at 4 p.m.* at St. Cyprian's Church in Roxbury. Bishop Alan M. Gates will preside, and the Rev. James Hairston will preach. All are welcome. *FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Canon Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, Canon for Immigration and Multicultural Ministries (jbntagengwa@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 400).*

- The **Diocesan Altar Guild will hold its Annual Meeting and Luncheon** on *Saturday, May 4, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m.*, at St. John's Church in Saugus, with Bishop Alan Gates as celebrant and luncheon guest speaker. RSVPs by April 20 will be appreciated. Those who are new to this ministry at their church and have questions about membership may contact Diane Grondin at dmgrondin@comcast.net or Louise Gant at gantlouis20@gmail.com.

- Even as Life Together begins preparing for its sabbath year from July 2024 to June 2025, the current 2023-2024 cohort of fellows invites the broader diocesan community to join them and their partners at St. Mark's Church in Dorchester on *Saturday, May 4, 1-4 p.m.*, for the **second annual Dorchester Community Resource Fair**, to be held on the front lawn of St. Mark's Church. All are welcome to attend.

The Community Resource Fair will bring together a variety of local organizations to provide information and services to the entire neighborhood. The afternoon will also offer delicious food and live gospel music performances by members of both the St. Mark's congregation and the Life Together community. Life Together looks forward to the ways this collaboration will deepen partnerships in the diocese and beyond.

FOR INFORMATION: Kelsey Rice Bogdan, Life Together Executive Director (kelsey@diomassintern.org).

- Life Together and St. Mark's Church in Dorchester are inviting the diocesan community to **donate books for a Little Free Library** they are constructing in front of the church this spring. Their curated list focuses on, but is not limited to, theology, social justice and fiction; check out the [Amazon wishlist](#) they have created to purchase books and have them shipped directly to the Life Together house. Questions and book recommendations may be e-mailed to Life Together fellows Olivia Stanley (stanleyo@diomassintern.org) and Nalitzia Valentin (valentinn@diomassintern.org).

- Share word with your congregations that **registration is open for family and youth summer camps** at the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center in Greenfield, N.H. Families of all configurations can enjoy an extra-long weekend of activities, worship and family-oriented fellowship during the *June 29-July 2* Family Camp session. The summer schedule also includes four week-long youth Overnight Camp sessions, beginning *July 7*, for those completing 3rd through 12th grades. Camperships are available for those who need them. For details and registration, visit bchcenter.org/bchcamp.

Hiring of summer camp staff is also underway: Counselors, lifeguards, nurses, adult volunteers—all positions are available and applications are invited. Apply [here](#).

CHURCHWIDE:

- Though Life Together, the [Episcopal Service Corps](#) program in the Diocese of Massachusetts, will be on sabbath for the 2024-2025 program year, **applications are open** now for eight other programs across the country for young adults ages 21-32. If a young adult in your congregation or community wants to go deeper in faith and service next year, encourage them to consider the Episcopal Service Corps. For more information or to apply, contact Kelsey Rice Bogdan, Life Together Executive Director (kelsey@diomassintern.org) or visit episcopalservicecorps.org/apply.

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- Upcoming **online book discussions** are open to all in the New England dioceses of Province I:
 - *Wednesday, March 13 at 7 p.m.: Lit by Lightning: The Life of Jim Thorpe* by David Maraniss, offered by the Province I Indigenous Peoples' Justice Network (register [here](#)); and
 - *Wednesday, March 20 at 7 p.m.: The General's Son: Journey of an Israeli in Palestine* by Miko Peled (register [here](#)).

FOR INFORMATION: Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).

 - There will be a meeting of the **Province I Conference** on *Wednesday, May 29, 5-9 p.m.*, over Zoom. Please join for a gathering of provincial ministry networks, a discussion with 2024 General Convention deputies and the election of a clergy representative to the Episcopal Church Executive Council. This meeting is open to all Episcopalians and ministry partners in the seven dioceses of New England. More information, registration and a call for nominees will be coming soon (province1.org/conference). E-mail questions to coordinator@province1.org.

 - The Episcopal Church's **Task Force on the Care of Creation and Environmental Racism** is offering an **additional round of grant funding** for up to eight projects that seek to bolster creation care and environmental justice work. Find more information [here](#) and apply by March 22 [here](#).

 - As The Episcopal Church's **Good Friday Offering** prepares to mark 102 years, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has invited the whole church to an **afternoon of sacred music and collective giving** in support of churches, medical programs and schools in the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Recorded at Christ and St. Luke's Church in Norfolk, Va., the concert will air online at 3 p.m. ET on March 29 on The Episcopal Church's [Facebook page](#) and [website](#). Viewers will have the opportunity to make donations during the event to go toward the offering, also frequently gathered by churches during Good Friday services.

The Office of Global Partnerships offers downloadable resources—in English, French, Mandarin and Spanish—about the Good Friday Offering, including posters, bulletin covers and inserts, litanies and more. Information about ways to give can be found [here](#).

 - In response to calls for greater clarity and accountability in The Episcopal Church's disciplinary process **for matters involving bishops**, the church [announced](#) on Feb. 22 a **new three-part protocol aimed at increasing trust in and understanding of Title IV**, the church's canons that govern ecclesiastical discipline.

New measures include high-visibility paths on episcopalchurch.org for [reporting misconduct](#); viewing the [procedural status](#) of some current matters involving bishops; and reading an [annual statistical report](#) on complaints involving bishops and their outcomes. Past matters are now posted [here](#).
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GRANTS & LOANS:

- **Congregational Development Grants** are one way the diocesan budget supports worshipping communities in strengthening community vitality and deepening relationships with God. The program challenges congregations to try new programs and prayerfully reflect on current and proposed programs that nurture and reimagine congregational life.

The 2024 guidelines are available [here](#). Letters of intent are due by *March 15* via [this online form](#), with completed applications ([here](#)) due by *May 10*.

The diocesan committee entrusted with the stewardship of these funds seeks to ensure that recipients have followed through with the plans that served as the basis for receiving a grant; 2023 recipients are asked to complete, by *March 11*, the grant report form found [here](#). Recipient congregations become eligible for further funds upon submitting this report.

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Margaret Lias, Administrator for Governance and Grants (mlias@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 229).

- **Recipients of 2023 and 2024 deanery House of Mercy or Sending Serving grants need to submit a brief year-end report**, required before they are eligible to receive deanery grant funds in subsequent years. Recipients should use this opportunity to showcase their project and good stewardship of funds. The 2023 report form is available [here](#). The 2024 report form is available [here](#).

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Margaret Lias, Administrator for Governance and Grants (mlias@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 229).

- The due dates for **grant reporting from 2023 Mission Initiatives grantees and the application process for existing grantees for budget year 2025**, are as follows:

- Written report to the Mission Initiatives Committee: *May 30*.

The online reporting form is available [here](#).

- Applications for the next (budget year 2025) grant round for existing grantees: *May 30*. Find the online form [here](#).
- A recorded report is due by *June 20* (upload it [here](#)).

An amount of **\$30,000 has been set aside in the diocesan budget for new applicants for Mission Initiatives grant funding in 2024**. Application guidelines can be found [here](#), and the application for new applicants can be found [here](#). It is due *April 30*.

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Margaret Lias, Administrator for Governance and Grants (mlias@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 229).

- **Children of clergy** canonically resident or licensed in the Diocese of Massachusetts (and their widows/widowers) are eligible to apply for **scholarship grants for undergraduate degree programs**.

The application deadline for 2024 is *May 13*; notification of award decisions will be made by *June 10*. Find the 2024 grant materials [here](#).

FOR INFORMATION: Laura Simons, Executive Assistant to the Bishop Diocesan (lsimons@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 407).

DIOCESAN COUNCIL ACTIONS:

At its Feb. 15 meeting, the Diocesan Council:
 Heard updates from Bishop Gates and Bishop Gallagher.
 Voted to approve diocesan [alcohol-use policies](#).
 Debriefed from January's Diocesan Council retreat.
 Heard an update about the 2025 assessment formula.
 Voted to confirm the appointment of Rebecca Semambo to fill a term on the diocesan Budget Committee through Diocesan Convention in November.
 Voted to approve 2023 assessment adjustments for All Saints' Church in Attleboro, the Parish of the Epiphany in Winchester, Christ Church in Swansea, the Parish of the Good Shepherd in Waban and Trinity Church in Haverhill.
 Heard a report from the Executive Committee.
Next Council Meeting: *Thursday, March 21, 6 p.m., via Zoom.*
FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Margaret Lias, Administrator for Governance and Grants (mlias@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 229).

CLERGY SEARCH & CALL REPORT:

Please direct inquiries about this report to the [regional canons](#).

Central Region

Regional Canon Gregory Perez
gperez@diomass.org

CLERGY CHANGES:

The Rev. Michael Deegan has completed his term as vicar-in-charge at St. Stephen's Church in Boston as of Feb. 11.
The Rev. Alan Hesse concluded his ministry at Christ Church in Swansea on Feb. 29 and began as rector of St. John's Church in Sandwich on March 1. **The Rev. Barbara Peterson** concluded her interim ministry at St. John's in Sandwich on March 1.
The Rev. Rowan Larson accepted a call to St. James's Church in Bozeman, Mont., which began on Jan. 1.

CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:

BURLINGTON, St. Mark's Church
 NEWTON HIGHLANDS, Parish of St. Paul
 NORWOOD, Grace Church
 SHARON, St. John's Church

RECTOR SEARCHES

CHURCHES IN SELF-STUDY:

BOSTON, St. Stephen's Church
 ROXBURY, St. Cyprian's Church

CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:

BROOKLINE, St. Paul's Church

CHURCHES RECEIVING NAMES: *(Apply directly to parish.)*

BOSTON, Church of the Advent

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PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

None at this time.

INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

None at this time.

OTHER OPEN POSITIONS:BROOKLINE, All Saints Parish: [Family Minister](#)CAMBRIDGE, Christ Church: [Curate/Assistant Rector](#)WABAN, Parish of the Good Shepherd: [Assistant to the Rector](#)**Northern and Western Region**Regional Canon Martha Hubbard
mhubbard@diomass.org**CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:**

DANVERS, All Saints Church of the North Shore

READING, Church of the Good Shepherd

RECTOR SEARCHES**CHURCHES IN SELF-STUDY:**

HUDSON, St. Luke's Church

LYNN, St. Stephen's Memorial Church

ROCKPORT, St. Mary's Church

SHIRLEY, Trinity Chapel

WESTFORD, St. Mark's Church

WOBURN, Trinity Church

CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:

FRAMINGHAM, St. Andrew's Church

CHURCHES RECEIVING NAMES: (Apply directly to parish.)[HOLLISTON, St. Michael's Church](#) 1/2 time**CHURCHES NO LONGER RECEIVING NAMES:**

AYER, St. Andrew's Church

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

WESTON, St. Peter's Church full-time

INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

None at this time.

Southern RegionRegional Canon Kelly O'Connell
is on sabbatical until July 1.For South Shore and Cape and
Islands deaneries, contact
Regional Canon Martha Hubbard
mhubbard@diomass.orgFor Taunton River and Mt. Hope-
Buzzards Bay deaneries, contact
Regional Canon Gregory Perez
gperez@diomass.org**CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:**

SWANSEA, Christ Church

RECTOR SEARCHES**CHURCHES IN SELF-STUDY:**

CHATHAM, St. Christopher's Church

CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:

None at this time.

CHURCHES RECEIVING NAMES: (Apply directly to parish.)[BUZZARDS BAY, St. Peter's Church](#) 1/2 time**CHURCHES NO LONGER RECEIVING NAMES:**

HINGHAM, Parish of St. John the Evangelist

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PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

ATTLEBORO, All Saints' Church *1/4 time*

BROCKTON, Grace Chapel *1/2 time*

FALL RIVER, St. Luke's Church *1/8 time*

HANOVER, St. Andrew's Church *full time*

MARSHFIELD, Trinity Church *full time*

INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS: Contact the regional canon.

None at this time.

Clergy Supply List: To request a copy of the most up-to-date Clergy Supply List, e-mail Jocelyn Collen, Administrator for Congregations and Development, at jcollen@diomass.org.

NEXT fyi:

fyi is published the first Wednesday of the month. The deadline for the April issue is **Wednesday, March 27 at noon**. E-mail submissions to tjs@diomass.org.

Find the newsletter **deadline schedule for 2024** [here](#).
