



IN CHRIST, CALLED TO COLLABORATE

238th Annual Convention
Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Oct. 27-28, 2023

Reports to be Received by Title:

Diocesan Council Report
Standing Committee Report
Commission on Ministry Report

Diocesan Council Report to Convention September 2022 - August 2023

The Diocesan Council met nine times during the 2022-2023 program year. Council received reports from the bishops and updates from committees and task forces. All meetings were held via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, unless otherwise noted. The following summarizes issues Council considered or discussed at each meeting.

September 17, 2022

- Voted to approve the proposed budget of revenue and expenses for 2023, including individual parish and mission assessments and approved adjustments for 2023, to be presented to the Diocesan Convention for its consideration and action.

October 20, 2022

- Heard a report from the treasurer.
- Heard an overview from the secretary about Diocesan Convention.
- Voted (12 in favor, 7 opposed and 2 abstentions) that the Diocesan Council endorse the resolution coming before Diocesan Convention creating a reparations fund.
- Received the 2023 meeting schedule.
- Thanked all outgoing members for their time on Diocesan Council: The Rev. Dan Bell (Alewife Deanery), The Rev. Patrick Ward (Boston Harbor Deanery), The Rev. Hilary Greene (Cape and Islands Deanery), David Sullivan (Mystic Valley Deanery), The Rev. Melanie McCarley (Neponset River Deanery) and The Rev. Maggie Arnold (South Shore Deanery).

December 2, 2022

- Heard a report from the treasurer of the diocese, Ted Ts'o.
- Voted to approve 2023 diocesan staff housing allowances.
- Heard a presentation from the development consultant, the Rev. Brian Raiche, about the Bishops' Annual Appeal.
- Heard a report from the secretary of the diocese, the Rev. Rachel Wildman, on the 2022 Diocesan Convention.

January 15, 2023

- Heard an overview of the Mission Initiatives Funded Program.
- Heard an update about the formation of the Assessment Formula Review working group.
- Voted to approve the 2024 assessment formula and to approve adjustment of the standing motion regarding late assessments.
- Voted to expand the scope of the D7004 endowment fund.
- Voted to approve 2022 assessment adjustments for Old North Church in Boston, St. Paul's Church in Dedham, the Church of the Advent in Medfield, St. Luke's Church in Scituate, Trinity Church in Stoughton and Christ Church in Swansea.
- Voted to approve 2023 assessment adjustments for Old North Church in Boston, the Church of the Advent in Medfield, St. Paul's Church in North Andover, Bristol Trinity Church in North Easton, St. John's Church in Sandwich and Christ Church in Swansea.
- Voted to approve the following Diocesan Council members to the Executive Committee of Diocesan Council: Michael Bent, Helen Gordon, Cris Latorre, David Milam and Joyce Scherer-Hoock. Voted to endorse the appointment of Rowan Larson and Joseph Mumita

to the Budget Committee and confirmed the reappointment of Peter Hughes, Lori Mills-Curran and Lynn Smith.

- Voted to endorse the appointment of Stephen Voysey as the assistant treasurer of the diocese.

February 16, 2023

- Voted to approve the Rev. Walter Connelly to the Executive Committee of Diocesan Council.

March 16, 2023

- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o.
- Voted to approve that the treasurer and Treasurer's Office send a reminder to all congregations to file the Parochial Report in a timely manner.
- Voted to establish a Budget, Strategy and Governance Committee.
- Voted to approve the appointment of Celia Bailey-Ochoa to the Budget Committee. Heard a report from the Collaborative Ministries Working Group.
- Heard a "Religious Neighbors Minute" from the ecumenical officer.

April 20, 2023

- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o.
- Heard a report from the chief financial officer, Debra Thomas.
- Heard a report from the Rev. Dan Bell and the Rev. Greg Perez on the Clergy Wellness Survey (conducted as part of Mission Strategy).

June 17, 2023

- Heard a report from the Budget Committee about 2024 budget planning.
- Heard a report from the Treasurer's Office.
- Voted to approve the following appointments to the Budget, Strategy and Governance Committee: Holly Carter, as chair, and the Rev. Mike Dangelo, the Rev. Hilary Greene, Connie Melahoures, the Rev. Lori Mills-Curran, the Rev. Carol Morehead, the Rev. Derrick Muwina, the Rev. Greg Perez, Tom Phillips, the Rev. Debbie Phillips, Win Treese and Theodore Ts'o as members.
- Voted to approve adjustments to the 2023 assessments for Trinity Parish in Newton Centre, All Saints Parish in Brookline, the Church of Our Saviour in Milton and St. Thomas's Church in Taunton.

August 10, 2023

- Voted to approve the Mission Initiatives Committee recommendations for the 2023 funding allocations to new mission initiatives as submitted.
- Heard a report from the Budget Committee about 2024 budget planning.
- Voted to approve a 2023 diocesan staff housing allowance.
- Voted to move into Executive Session to discuss financial topics.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Lias
Administrator for Governance and Grants

Standing Committee Report to Convention September 2022 – June 2023

The Standing Committee's work includes matters pertaining to real estate, Stokes Loans, parish by-laws and/or constitution revisions, and the ordination process. The following is a summary of the actions and votes taken by the Standing Committee over the past year.

ADMISSION OF A NEW PARISH

Pursuant to Art. XIII of the Constitution of the Diocese, the Bishop and Standing Committee hereby convey in writing to the Convention our approval for admission of St. Stephen's, Boston, as a parish in union with the Convention. We recommend that the Convention receive our approval and admit St. Stephen's, Boston, as a parish of the Diocese in union with the Convention.

BISHOP COMPENSATION

In December 2022, we enacted, for the 2023 Diocesan Budget, specific distributions to finalize the work done in 2022 to adjust the compensation packages of the Bishop Diocesan and the Bishop Suffragan to market rate. We also established guidelines for developing future compensation packages.

BISHOP CONSENTS

Diocese of Ohio – the Rev. Anne B. Jolly – consent granted
Diocese of Colombia – the Rev. Elias Garcia Cardenas – consent granted
Diocese of Olympia (Bishop Provisional) – the Rt. Rev. Melissa Skelton – consent granted
Diocese of Central Florida – Rev. Canon Dr. Justin S. Holcomb – consent granted
Diocese of West Texas – the Rev. Dr. David G. Read – consent granted
Diocese of Maryland – the Rev. Carrie Schofield-Broadbent – consent granted
Diocese of Florida – the Rev. Charles Holt – consent withheld
Diocese of Albany – the Rev. Jeremiah Williamson – consent granted

BYLAWS

We addressed matters associated with their bylaws from the following parishes:

- St. Stephen's, Lynn
- St. John's, Holbrook
- St. Andrew's, Ayer
- St. John's, Charlestown
- Trinity, Haverhill
- Our Saviour, Somerset
- St. Mark's, Westford
- Grace, New Bedford
- Messiah, Woods Hole
- St. Bartholomew's, Cambridge
- St. Peter's, Beverly
- St. Andrew's, Framingham

- St. Stephen's, Boston
- Grace, Lawrence
- Trinity, Melrose
- St. John's, Beverly Farms

THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry meet jointly several times this year.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGE

During the summer 2023, the Rev. Dr. Tara K. Soughers resigned her seat on the Standing Committee after accepting a call to a cure in another diocese. Pursuant to Art. IX of the Constitution of the Diocese, the vacancy created by Mthr. Tara's departure was filled by a concurrent vote of the clerical and lay members of the Standing Committee. Elected to fill the vacancy was the Rev. Kit Lonergan. She shall serve until this Convention, when the remainder of the term of that seat shall be filled by election by the Convention.

OLD NORTH CHURCH

- Ratified the election of certain members to the vestry of Old North Church.

POSTULANTS, CANDIDATES, AND ORDINANDS

- Interviewed Nominees and Postulants; reviewed applications for Postulancy and Candidacy; and, when appropriate, approved those applications.
- Received from the Bishop notice of admission of Nominees to Postulancy. Also received from the Bishop all records and other canonically required information for applicants for ordination.
- For Ordinands and (transitional) Deacons, when appropriate: certified that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate and/or Priesthood have been met and that no sufficient objection is present; voted on recommendations for ordination; and issued testimonials of the same to the Bishop.

Specifically...

We approved the following postulants for admission into candidacy: Lisa Faber Ginggen, Faith Mbuthia, William Margraf, Keith Nelson, SSJE, Sarah Neumann, Aaron Ross, and Kevin Vetiac. We recommended the following candidates for ordination into the diaconate: Paddy Cavanaugh, Lisa Faber Ginggen, Katie Hoyer, Margaret Lias, Paul Keene, Keith Nelson, Eva Ortez, Max Sklar, Michael Thompson, and Kevin Vetiac.

REAC and other REAL ESTATE MATTERS

Reviewed the status of REAC membership.
Addressed matters arising from:

- Our Saviour, Somerset
- St. Elizabeth's, Wilmington
- Christ Church, Cambridge
- St. Peter's, Cambridge
- All Saints, Stoneham
- Messiah, Woods Hole
- St. Michael's, Marblehead
- The Solway Development LLC Battery Storage Lease Option
- Grace, Vineyard Haven
- Our Redeemer, Lexington
- St. Paul's, Nantucket
- St. John's, Gloucester

On Feb. 8, 2023, we sent a letter regarding the Church Battery Renewable Energy Storage to all Parish Clergy, Wardens, and Treasurers.

We authorized the discharge of an Aug. 2009 mortgage held by the Diocese from the proceeds of sale of the property in question.

Respectfully submitted,

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS

By: Louise A. Gant

Louise Gant, *President*

The Rev. Kathryn Elledge, *Vice President*

The Rev. Dr. Karen Coleman, *Secretary*

Grace Knowles

The Rev. Kit Lonergan

Suzanne Owayda

The Rev. Dr. Daniel Dice

James Dilday, Esq.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY 2023 REPORT TO CONVENTION

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

Members of the COM serve as liaisons to parish discernment committees and as advisors to postulants and candidates, and they meet regularly with the Bishops and the Canon for Ordained Vocations. They work in collaboration with the Standing Committee to make the ordination process accessible and to improve coordination and communication among all those who participate in the work of discernment in this diocese. The COM is committed to identifying and addressing racial and other biases in our discernment and formation programs, and we look forward to ongoing collaboration with the Standing Committee and the Racial Justice Commission to continue this vital work, which has begun this year with a working group and sub-committees that include members of both the COM, the RJC, and others from our diocese, addressing the discernment process, cross-cultural experiences in the formation process, and the revision of the Handbook for Discernment for Ministry.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance and guidance of many in this diocese and beyond who help to form the women and men who are called to ordained leadership in the church. We particularly value the contributions of clergy and laity in preparing postulants and candidates for diaconal ministry and we give thanks for the collegial support of faculty at seminaries and divinity schools.

We are grateful to all the members of the COM and the chaplains to our postulants and candidates. We are pleased to report that the Rev. Edwin Johnson accepted Bishop Gates' invitation to serve as an additional co-chair of the COM. Expanding the leadership team at this time helps us better respond to the increasing work of the COM as we seek to help equip disciples for God's call to the church today: inviting and forming new deacons and priests to represent the diverse communities they serve, and to explore new paths of ministry in a changing world. We offer special thanks to Ms. Kay Ridgard who served as co-chair and completed a term of service on the COM and the Rev. Eric Litman, who also completed a term of service. We welcome the Rev. Virgilio Fortuna and the Rev. Clifford Goodridge as new members of the COM, and the Rev. Marilee Comerford and the Rev. Marilyn McMillan, who have joined our team of chaplains to postulants and candidates. We would also like to thank the Rev. Dr. Edith Dolnikowski for her unwavering support and wise guidance to both the members of the COM and the postulants and candidates in the ordination process.

COM Statistics for 2023

In 2022 the Commission received commitment forms from sixteen inquirers, eleven of whom submitted applications for postulancy after having worked with their parish discernment committees. Eleven applicants were invited to interview and eleven of them were admitted to postulancy on June 1, 2023, nine for the priesthood and two for the diaconate.

The COM continues to award scholarship assistance to those preparing for Holy Orders. Funding for this assistance comes from a diocesan endowment created in 2001 to support theological education and from donations to the Bishops' discretionary funds received during

parish visitations. This year the COM awarded \$75,000 to eleven postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons. Scholarships ranged from \$3,500 to \$9,000 per person. These scholarships help to address both living expenses during formation and, in some cases, the significant amount of debt incurred by those in the ordination process, which has long-term effects on employment decisions.

The commission reports the following data for the past year:

Since our last Diocesan Convention eight transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood. On June 3, 2023 the Rt. Rev. Carol J. Gallagher and the Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates ordained one candidate to the diaconate and nine to the transitional diaconate at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston.

As of July 1, 2023, there were thirty-four people in the ordination process as postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons – twenty-nine for the priesthood and five for the diaconate. They come from twenty-eight sponsoring congregations throughout ten deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of the eleven new postulants this year:

Year	Priesthood	Diaconate	Combined
2023	39	60	42

The average age of new postulants over the preceding years:

Year	Combined
2022	43
2021	40
2020	38
2019	45
2018	28
2017	42
2016	44
2015	38
2014	50
2013	43
2012	41
2011	36
2010	47
2009	45

Our current membership roster is as follows (as of October 2023): the Rev. Dr. Margaret Arnold, the Rev. Dr. Richard Burden, the Rev. Lynn Campbell, Ms. Rachael Chagat, Dr. Laura Crain, the Rev. Virgilio Fortuna, the Rev. Clifford Goodridge, Dr. Melva James, the Rev. Edwin Johnson, the Rev. Dr. Kapyra John Kaoma, the Rev. Sarah Mato, Mr. Graeme Mills, the Rev. Dr. James Weiss, the Rev. Diane Wong and the Ven. Patricia Zifcak. The Rev. Anoma Abeyaratne, the Rev. Marilee Comerford, the Rev. Dr. David Killian, the Rev. Marilyn McMillan and the Rev. Leslie Sterling serve as chaplains to our postulants and candidates.

We want to thank the members of the COM for their deep commitment to this ministry. Our diocese is blessed to have these wonderful souls at work, discerning the future leadership of the church. It is our privilege and joy to work with them.

Faithfully Submitted by:
Maggie Arnold, Edwin Johnson, and Graeme Mills
Co-chairs, Commission on Ministry