



One Body in Christ, Members One of Another:
Reconciliation and Belonging in an Age of Division



239th Annual Convention
Episcopal Diocese of
Massachusetts

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November 9, 2024

Reports to be Received by Title:

Diocesan Council Report
Standing Committee Report
Commission on Ministry Report

Diocesan Council Report to Convention September 2023 - August 2024

The Diocesan Council met 10 times during the 2023-2024 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 16, 2023

- Voted to approve the proposed budget of revenue and expenses for 2024, including individual parish and mission assessments and approved adjustments for 2024, to be presented to the Diocesan Convention for its consideration and action.

October 19, 2023

- Heard an update from a co-chair of the Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations on the situation in the Holy Land.
- Heard an update from Bishop Gates.
- Heard an overview from the secretary of the diocese, the Rev. Rachel Wildman, about Diocesan Convention.
- Heard a request for formation of a January Council Retreat Planning Team.
- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o, including an update on the newly formed Budget, Strategy and Governance Committee.
- Heard a report from the chief financial officer, Debra Thomas, about diocesan conflict of interest and whistleblower policies.
- Received a draft of the 2024 meeting schedule.
- Received instructions on the Executive Committee Nominating Process.
- Thanked all outgoing members for their time on Council: The Rev. Rachel Wildman, Secretary of the Diocese, The Rev. Walter Connelly (Mystic Valley Deanery), Helen Gordon (Cape and Islands Deanery), William Maluil (Mystic Valley Deanery, Bishop Appointee), Cris Latorre (Boston Harbor Deanery, Bishop Appointee), Ed Rewolinski (Boston Harbor Deanery, Bishop Appointee) and Virginia Rogers (Merrimack Valley Deanery).

December 7, 2023

- Heard an update from Bishop Alan Gates and Bishop Carol Gallagher.
- Voted to approve changing the matching requirement for Sending Serving grants from 100 percent to 25 percent for 2024.
- Heard an update on planning for the January Diocesan Council retreat from the secretary of the diocese, Julie Shea.
- Voted to approve the authorizing document to create the Reparations Fund Committee.
- Heard updates from the treasurer of the diocese, Ted Ts'o. Voted to approve 2024 diocesan staff clergy housing allowances.
- Heard an update from the Rev. Walter Connelly on nominations for Diocesan Council's Executive Committee.

January 20, 2024

- Heard an update from Bishop Alan Gates.
- Voted to approve the following Diocesan Council members to the Executive Committee: The Rev. Dr. Matthew Cadwell, Connie Melahoures, Tom Phillips and Jack Wolfe.

- Voted to endorse the appointment of Denise Shea, Celia Bailey Ochoa and the Rev. Joseph Mumita to the Budget Committee.
- Voted to endorse the appointment of the Rev. Stephen Voysey as the assistant treasurer of the diocese.
- Voted to affirm that the Budget, Strategy and Governance Committee continue its work in 2024, and report back to Council no later than the September 2024 Council meeting.
- Voted to approve the Diocesan Whistleblower and Conflict of Interest policies as written.

February 15, 2024

- 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.

March 21, 2024

- Heard updates from Bishop Gates and Bishop Gallagher.
- Heard a report from the diocesan development consultant, the Rev. Brian Raiche, about the Allston Abbey Campaign.
- Heard a report from the Assessment Coordinating Committee.
- Was asked for volunteers to form an Evangelism Working Group.
- Heard a report from the Racial Justice Commission.
- Voted to approve the 2025 assessment formula.
- Heard an update from the secretary, Julie Shea, about the upcoming special Diocesan Convention to elect the 17th bishop diocesan.
- Heard a report from the Executive Committee.

April 18, 2024

- Heard a report about "An Episcopal Path to Creation Justice."
- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o.
- Heard a report from the Assessment Coordinating Committee.
- Heard an update from the secretary, Julie Shea, about the upcoming special Diocesan Convention to elect the 17th bishop diocesan.
- Heard a report from the Executive Committee.

May 16, 2024

- Approved that the Church of Our Saviour in Milton be transferred from the South Shore Deanery to the Neponset River Deanery.
- Heard a report from the Healthy Congregations Task Force.
- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o.
- Approved the renaming of the Green Loan Fund to the Bud Cederholm Green Loan Fund.
- Heard a report from the Evangelism Working Group.

- Heard an update from the secretary, Julie Shea, about the special Diocesan Convention to elect the 17th bishop diocesan.
- Heard a report from the Executive Committee.

July 18, 2024

- Voted to approve naming the African ministry center that is taking shape at the former Grace Church in Everett The Bishop Alan M. Gates African Anglican Episcopal Mission Center in The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.
- Heard a report from the treasurer, Ted Ts'o. Voted to approve a 2024 diocesan staff clergy housing allowance.
- Voted to approve the Mission Initiatives Committee recommendations for 2024 funding allocations to new mission initiatives as submitted.
- Heard a report from the chair of the Nominating Committee, the Rev. Dr. Regina Laba Walton.
- Voted to endorse Bishop Gates's appointment of the secretary, Julie Shea, to the Budget Strategy and Governance Committee.
- Heard a report from the Executive Committee.

August 15, 2024

- Heard a report from the Evangelism Committee.
- Endorsed Bishop Gates's appointments of Celia Bailey-Ochoa and the Rev. Brian Raiche to the Diocesan Loan Committee.
- Approved assessment adjustments for Trinity Church in Randolph; the Church of Our Saviour in Somerset; Trinity Church in Stoughton; St. John's Church in Franklin; the Church of the Advent in Medfield; St. Andrew's Church in Methuen; and Bristol Trinity Church in North Easton.
- Heard a report from the Executive Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret Lias
Administrator for Governance and Grants

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE to the 239th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Massachusetts

BISHOP SEARCH PROCESS

The Standing Committee is pleased to report that it has joyfully fulfilled its canonical responsibility for the discernment, nomination, transition, election, and ordination of the next Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese. On May 10, 2023, Right Reverend Alan M. Gates, 16th Bishop of Massachusetts, announced his intention to resign by the end of 2024. Our report to the 238th Annual Convention detailed our actions up to that point, including the appointment of and charge to the Nominating Committee.

As part of the beginning of its work, the Nominating Committee hosted 20 “listening sessions” between September 21, 2023, and October 15, 2023, online and in churches in every region of the diocese, at varying times and days of the week, and for both laity and clergy, including dedicated sessions for affinity groups.

On October 25, 2023, we announced the appointment of a Transitions Committee, the co-chairpersons of which were Betsy Ridge (Church of the Advent, Boston), the Reverend Elizabeth Grundy (St. Peter’s Church, Osterville), and the Reverend Brett Johnson (Emmanuel Church, Wakefield). We also appointed a chairman for the Consecration Committee, the Reverend Michael Dangelo (Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill). The Transition Committee was tasked with arranging “meet and greets” for the final bishop candidates, helping the newly elected bishop and her family make a home here, planning welcoming activities for the new bishop and her family, and planning a celebration of ministry for Bishop Alan Gates and Tricia Harvey as we thank them for their ministry with us. The Consecration Committee was tasked to work collaboratively with the Transitions Committee on these items. Additionally, the Consecration Committee held primary responsibility for working with the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Bishop-Elect, and others to plan and implement the Ordination liturgy and the hospitality and celebration surrounding it.

In November 2023, in addition to its chairperson, the other members of the Consecration Committee were announced: Suzy Westcott (Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill), the Reverend John Clarke (Retired), and the Reverend Sarah Robbins-Cole (Associate, St. Andrew’s, Wellesley).

The Diocesan Profile was released to the public on December 5, 2023, with applications due by January 13, 2024.

On January 5, 2024, the Transition Committee was called together and given their charge. Along with the co-chairs, the members of that committee were Leon Brathwaite (Grace Church, Vineyard Haven; the Reverend Clifford Brown (Christ Church, Quincy); the Reverend Marya DeCarlen (St. John’s Church, Gloucester); the Reverend James Hairston (Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin, Boston); the Rev. Cynthia Pape (St. John’s Church, Jamacia Plain); Kate Paradise (Church of the Holy Spirit, Orleans); Kourtnei Patten (Grace Church, Salem); the Reverend Natasha Stewart (St. Luke’s Church, Scituate); and the Rev. Michael Thompson (St. John’s Church, Newtonville).

Between mid-January and mid-March, the Nominating Committee conducted its charge with faithful zeal, and, on March 15, 2024, we announced that the slate of four Nominees for bishop were the Reverend Dr. Brendan J. Barnicle, Rector, St. Francis of Assisi Church, Wilsonville,

OR; the Reverend Canon Jean Baptiste Ntagengwa, Canon for Immigration and Multicultural Ministries, Diocese of Massachusetts; the Very Rev. Gideon L. K. Pollach, Rector, St. John's Church, Cold Spring Harbor, NY; and the Reverend Julia E. Whitworth, Rector, Trinity Church, Indianapolis, IN. Then, pursuant to canon, a period of time opened to allow for the petitioning onto the slate additional candidates. This period was from March 15, 2024, to March 22, 2024, end of day.

On April 19, 2024, it was announced that one additional candidate for bishop had been added through the petition process: the Reverend Edwin D. Johnson, Director of Organizing, Episcopal City Mission, Boston, MA.

On March 25, 2024, the Transitions Committee announced that there would be the following six “meet-and-greet” gatherings: Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at All Saints’ Church, Ashmont St., Dorchester; Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at St. Mary's Church, Barnstable, and, later that day, at St. Thomas’s Church, Taunton; Thursday, May 9, 2024, at Christ Church, Needham; Friday, May 10, 2024, at Christ Church, Andover; and Saturday, May 11, 2024, online. Additionally, there would be “Coffee & Conversations with Clergy, Postulants and Candidates” on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at St. Paul’s Church, Dedham.

On May 16, 2024, we issued the Special Rules of Order for the Electing Convention.

The Electing Convention of the Diocese was held at Trinity Church, Boston, on Saturday, May 18, 2024. For a nominee to be elected, he or she needed to receive a simple majority of votes from each order – the clergy and the lay delegates – on the same ballot, and, on the fourth ballot, the clergy and laity of the Diocese of Massachusetts elected the Reverend Julia E. Whitworth to succeed the Right Reverend Alan M. Gates as the Bishop of Massachusetts. Following the announcement of her election, the Reverend Julia Whitworth joined the Convention by video to offer greetings. She said: “I would like to take a moment to express my deep, deep gratitude for you; for the work that you do to make disciples, protect creation, promote justice and love Jesus; and for the opportunity to join you in that work as your bishop-elect. I am honored – I am flabbergasted – I am overjoyed – I am overwhelmed, and I feel it a deep, deep privilege to be called in this way.” Upon her ordination, the Reverend Julia E. Whitworth will become the first woman to serve as Diocesan Bishop of Massachusetts.

In June 2024, in addition to its other membership, the Consecration Committee would now include: the Reverend John Clarke (retired Rector of St. Paul’s Church, Malden); the Honorable Judith Dilday (St. Cyprian’s Church, Boston); Louise Gant (Church of the Holy Spirit, Mattapan); and – serving from the host parish (Trinity Church, Boston) – Celine Larimer (events manager), Colin Lynch (Director of Music), and the Reverend Abigail Moon, (Senior Associate priest).

On June 27, 2024, the Diocese of Massachusetts received notification from the Presiding Bishop’s Office that Bishop-elect Julia E. Whitworth had received the required majority of consents in the canonical consent process, as detailed in Canon III.11.3. The consents received were certified by the Reverend Canon Michael Barlowe, registrar of the General Convention. In giving consent to the Bishop-elect’s ordination and consecration, the Standing Committees and the Bishops exercising jurisdiction in The Episcopal Church attest to knowing of “no impediment on account of which” Bishop-elect Whitworth ought not to be ordained as bishop, and that her election was conducted in accordance with the canons. At the writing of this Report, the Bishop-elect’s ordination and consecration is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, 2024, at Trinity Church, Boston, with the chief consecrator to be the Most Reverend Michael

B. Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church and Primate. Although the Bishop-elect will succeed Bishop Gates in jurisdiction as our new Bishop Diocesan – the 17th Bishop of Massachusetts – immediately upon her ordination, the traditional seating of the new bishop in her *cathedra* will take place the following day, October 20, 2024, at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston.

In June 2024, we also announced that the plans for celebrating the decade of ministry of the Right Reverend Alan M. Gates and Tricia Harvey in this Diocese were set for Sunday, October 6, 2024, at the New England Aquarium, Boston.

Bishop-elect Julia's first official day of ministry with this Diocese was July 15, 2024, and her first meeting with the Standing Committee as a whole was September 12, 2024.

The Standing Committee did not meet in August 2024.

We are delighted to welcome the Whitworth family to Massachusetts.

In the spirit of thankfulness, it is with sincere humility that the Standing Committee extends its deep gratitude to Louise Gant and to the Reverend Kathryn Elledge, respectively President and Vice President of the Standing Committee in 2022-23, during which time Bishop Gates announced his plans to retire. It was under their leadership that the Standing Committee began its canonical work of shepherding the bishop search process that will have concluded on October 19, 2024.

And there are no words adequate to express the depth of appreciation the Standing Committee has for the chair- and co-chairpersons and the members of the Nominating Committee, the Transitions Committee, and the Consecration Committee. They, and the scores of volunteers who worked with them diligently on the tasks appointed, are those who are truly responsible for the satisfactory accomplishment of the herculean tasks which this Diocese and its people have undertaken over the past 18 months.

Finally, it is impossible to convey the sacrificial scope of effort expended in this process on behalf of the Diocese by the Reverend Dr. Karen Coleman, President of the Standing Committee, and Grace Knowles, Vice President, during 2023-24. The continuing members of the Standing Committee commend to the Diocese expressions of gratitude to these two servant leaders whose commitment was unquestionable, whose full engagement never waned, and whose devotion to this Diocese is true. Karen and Grace...thank you.

OTHER NEWS

The following is respectfully submitted as a summary of some of the activities and business of the Standing Committee since the 238th Convention.

BISHOP CONSENTS

The Diocese of Southern Ohio – the Reverend Kristin Uffelman White – consent given
The Diocese of California – the Reverend Austin J. Rios – consent given
The Diocese of Mississippi – the Reverend Dr. Dorothy Sanders Wells – consent given

The Diocese of Rochester – the Reverend Kara Wagner Sherer – consent given
The Diocese of Olympia – the Reverend Phil N. LaBelle – consent given
The Diocese of Massachusetts – the Reverend Julia Whitworth – consent given, enthusiastically

CONSENT GIVEN FOR THE DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS TO ELECT A BISHOP SUFFRAGAN

Consent given.

PRIESTHOOD ORDINATIONS

We certified that the canonical requirements had been met **and**
we recommended that the following be ordained to the priesthood:

Maxfield Scott Sklar
Eva Ortez
Lisa Faber Ginggen
Paddy Cavanaugh
Katie Hoyer
Paul Keene
Keith Nelson
Michael Thompson
Kevin Vetiac

DIACONAL ORDINATIONS

We certified that the canonical requirements had been met **and**
we recommended that the following be ordained to the diaconate:

Molly Minnerath
Sarah Neumann
Faith Mbuthia
Amanda Rice
Lisa Vickers

WE GRANTED DIOCESAN STOKES LOANS AND GREEN LOANS TO:

Emmanuel Church, Wakefield
St. Mary's Church, Barnstable
St. Paul's Church, Newburyport
St. John's Church, Westwood
Epiphany Church, Walpole
St. Paul's Church, Bedford (Stokes)
St. Paul's Church, Bedford (Green)
Trinity Church, Haverhill
Church of the Messiah, Woods Hole
St. Mark's Church, Rockport
St. Paul's, North Andover

All Saints Church, Attleboro
Church of the Good Shepherd, Waban
Church of the Good Shepherd, Acton
St. James' Church, Somerville

WE AUTHORIZED THE SALE OF PROPERTY
from that which had been St. John's Church, Taunton

WE AUTHORIZED THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY
by the Chapel of St. James the Fisherman, Wellfleet, and adjacent thereto.

WE ALLOWED THE LEASING OF PROPERTY BY

St. Michael's Church, Holliston
Epiphany Church, Walpole
St. Paul's Church, North Andover

WE APPOINTED TO THE DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF THE DIOCESE:
the Honorable Judith Dilday

OLD NORTH CHURCH, BOSTON

We ratified the election Carol Ball, Anne Sheetz, Christine Clements, Wayne Webster, Bruce Shaw, Jim Elliott, Mary Beth Davis, April Lepere, and Ellen Hume to the Vestry of Christ Church, Boston.

PARISH BYLAWS

We approved changes to the Bylaws of the following parishes:

Grace Church, Lawrence
St. Andrew's Church, Framingham
Grace Church, North Attleboro
St. John's, Jamaica Plain
Trinity Church, Melrose

WE FOLLOWED VARIOUS TITLE IV MATTERS.

WE PROMULGATED MEMORIAL GARDEN GUIDANCE WITH AN AGREEMENT
TEMPLATE.

BISHOP LETTER OF AGREEMENT

On July 10, 2024, we approved the Letter of Agreement between the Diocese of Massachusetts and the Bishop-elect, the Reverend Julia E. Whitworth.

ASSISTING BISHOP CAROL GALLAGHER

On September 12, 2024, we received the news that the Right Reverend Carol Gallagher would be retiring at the end of the year, and we consented to the continuation of the system of having an assistant bishop, both for Bishop Carol through the end of the year and for the Diocese following Bishop Carol's retirement.

Respectfully submitted,

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE OF MASSACHUSETTS

The Reverend Dr. Karen Coleman, *President*

Grace Knowles, *Vice President*

Suzanne Owayda, *Secretary*

The Reverend Kit Lonergan

The Reverend Dr. Daniel Dice

James Dilday, Esq.

Kevin Miller

The Reverend Walter Connelly

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY 2024 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 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 2024

In 2023 the Commission received commitment forms from thirteen inquirers, nine of whom submitted applications for postulancy after having worked with their parish discernment committees. Nine applicants were invited to interview and all nine were admitted to postulancy on June 1, 2024, seven 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 eight postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons. Scholarships ranged from \$5,500 to \$15,000 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 1, 2024 the Rt. Rev. Carol J. Gallagher and the Rt. Rev. Alan M. Gates ordained one candidate to the diaconate and four to the transitional diaconate at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Boston. Since the 2023 Diocesan Convention eight transitional deacons have been ordained to the priesthood.

As of July 1, 2024, there were thirty-six people in the ordination process as postulants, candidates, and transitional deacons – twenty-nine for the priesthood and seven for the diaconate. They come from thirty sponsoring congregations throughout twelve deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of the eleven new postulants this year:

Year	Priesthood	Diaconate	Combined
2024	33	50	42

The average age of new postulants over the preceding years:

Year	Combined
2023	42
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 2024): the Rev. Dr. Margaret Arnold, the Rev. Dr. Richard Burden, the Rev. Lynn Campbell, 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