



Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021

NEWS and INFORMATION for the clergy and leadership of

The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

138 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02111 / www.diomass.org
617-482-5800 / 617-482-4826

[Events Calendar](#)

[Job Postings](#)

Collaborative Ministries Working Group now forming within diocese

Has your congregation partnered with another in a way that brought new energy and ministry to life? Or can you envision such a partnership in the future? Are you a clergy person who shares your time between a congregation and another vocation or ministry? If so, the Collaborative Ministries Working Group would love to hear about your experiences.

The Collaborative Ministries Working Group, called for by Bishop Alan M. Gates in his Diocesan Convention [address](#), is being formed. The group's first task will be to listen and learn about the variety of collaborative ministries in the diocese. The group will examine past and current collaborations and explore possibilities for future ones, and is looking forward to learning what has worked, what has failed and what is needed to sustain vital collaboration. Come share your wisdom in listening groups (which will be scheduled later this spring) or by being interviewed.

FOR INFORMATION/TO OFFER SUGGESTIONS: The Rev. Canon Kelly O'Connell (koconnell@diomass.org) or The Rev. Megan Holding (theholdings@gmail.com).

Clergy and leadership invited to engage in mission strategy review

The Mission Strategy Committee of Diocesan Council has invited clergy and lay leaders to help refresh the shared [diocesan mission strategy](#), which is canonically due for a review this year. [This document](#) is available to help guide group conversations at annual meetings, vestry retreats or other leadership gatherings. Photos of notes, chat room logs or similar records are all that's needed to give feedback. E-mail those by *Friday, March 19* to missionstrategy@diomass.org. Additional ways to engage in this process will be provided in upcoming days. Questions may be directed to the Mission Strategy Committee at missionstrategy@diomass.org.

Bishops issue guidance for Ash Wednesday

Guidance issued on Jan. 21 from the bishops regarding Ash Wednesday reiterates their continued urging that in-person, indoor worship be suspended, and includes the reminder that the imposition of ashes is an optional portion of the Ash Wednesday liturgy. "Ashes to Go" practices should be forgone this year for public safety reasons, the guidance emphasizes, and it specifies how ashes may be made available to people for self-imposition during a subsequent online Ash Wednesday liturgy or pastoral visit. "Even while advancing our spiritual health, this year's Ash Wednesday observances must also safeguard our physical well-being and that of those in our communities," the bishops said. Find the full guidance [here](#).

Cathedral to offer Ash Wednesday livestream & online “Repentance 2021” preaching series

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston will livestream an Ash Wednesday service on *Feb. 17 at noon*, with Dean Amy E. McCreath preaching and Bishop Alan M. Gates presiding. The livestream and a bulletin for the service will be available at www.stpaulboston.org.

This year, in accordance with current safety protocols, those participating from home are invited to self-impose ashes. (Send name and mailing address to cathedral@diomass.org by Feb. 10 to receive a packet of ashes.) The service also will include the remembrance of those who have died from COVID-19; all are invited to send names to cathedral@diomass.org to be read aloud during the service and written in a memorial book at the cathedral.

“Repentance 2021—Turning back to God here and now”:

The invitation of Lent to repent and return to the Lord is the same every year, but we come to this invitation this year in the wake of the overlapping pandemics of COVID-19, racism, climate change and disinformation. How shall we answer the ancient invitation faithfully in this particular season of our common life?

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston invites everyone to take part in its [annual Lenten Preaching Series](#), via Zoom, on *Thursdays at noon throughout Lent*. This year’s series lifts up voices of leaders who are fairly new to the greater Boston area or who have come to see the area anew. The sermons will be offered within the context of a brief service of noonday prayer. Conversation with the preacher and other attendees follows, with an end time of 1:15 p.m. Register [here](#) to receive a Zoom link.

The schedule of preachers for the series is:

- *Feb. 18*: The Rev. Morgan S. Allen, Rector, Trinity Church, Boston
- *Feb. 25*: The Rev. Gregory G. Perez, Priest-in-Charge, St. Stephen’s Memorial Church, Lynn
- *March 4*: Omalara Fatiregun, Cheng Fellow and doctoral student, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- *March 11*: James Rutenbeck, Filmmaker, Lost Nation Pictures
- *March 18*: The Rev. Kate Bast, Rector, Trinity Parish, Melrose
- *March 25*: Dr. Sujin Pak, Dean, Boston University School of Theology

A publicity graphic is available [here](#) for sharing with congregations and communities.

Massachusetts dioceses co-sponsor “Lent & The Longing for God” retreat

The people of the Episcopal dioceses of Massachusetts and Western Massachusetts are invited to gather with one another for “Lent and the Longing for God,” a co-sponsored morning online retreat on *Saturday, March 6, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*, led by the Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas. The retreat will invite participants to explore their own desires, as well as the desires of the One “to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid.” The program will include presentations and guided meditation, with options for solitary reflection or for small group conversation.

Find online registration [here](#), and a publicity graphic [here](#) to help share the invitation with congregations and communities.

CHURCHWIDE:

- **Absalom Jones Fund assists Episcopal historically Black colleges and universities:** Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry has invited Episcopalians to dedicate offerings at observances of the Feast of Absalom Jones (Feb. 13) and make individual donations to support St. Augustine's University in Raleigh, N.C., and Voorhees College in Denmark, S.C., two historically Black Episcopal institutions of higher education. Find more information [here](#).
- **World Mission Sunday**, traditionally celebrated on the last Sunday after Epiphany, is observed this year on *Feb. 14*, when Episcopalians are invited to focus on the global impact of the baptismal call to "seek and serve Christ in all persons" and the many ways the church participates in God's mission around the world. A sermon for World Mission Sunday by Archdeacon Paul Feheley, Interim Partnership Officer for Africa, is available, along with a Global Mission Digital Toolkit and other resources, [here](#).
- **"From Many, One: Conversations Across Difference":** This newly launched campaign invites Episcopalians and their families, friends and neighbors to engage in the spiritual practice of listening and honest conversation across the many differences that may be a cause for division, starting with four simple questions: What do you love? What have you lost? Where does it hurt? What do you dream? Visit <https://episcopalchurch.org/from-many-one> for resource materials and to learn more.

NOTES:

- **B-SAFE will B-BACK:** St. Stephen's Youth Programs at St. Stephen's Church in Boston invites **B-SAFE summer program partners—new and returning**—to gather on *Sunday, March 7, 1-2:30 p.m.* The gathering will celebrate the successes of last summer and plan for B-SAFE 2021—the program's 22nd summer. Together with more than 50 partner churches, B-SAFE creates a loving and learning-filled community each summer for hundreds of youth and teens who live in the Boston neighborhoods of the South End, Lower Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan.
FOR INFORMATION/TO RSVP: The Rev. Liz Steinhauser, SSYP Director of Community Engagement (liz@ssypboston.org or 617-851-6680).
 - All clergy of the diocese are invited to join Bishop Gayle E. Harris for a brief time of **online devotions and conversation**. Those who are unable to join the gathering for their region are welcome to join another:
 - Southern Region: *Thursday, Feb. 4, 10 a.m.*
 - Northern and Western Region: *Tuesday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m.*
 - Central Region: *Wednesday, Feb. 10, 3 p.m.*
 Zoom links have been e-mailed directly to the clergy.
FOR INFORMATION: David Ames, Executive Assistant to Bishop Harris (dames@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 445).
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- **Clergy Professional Development Days** in 2021 will be offered online via Zoom for all diocesan clergy, in two parts (each part offered four times). All diocesan clergy are encouraged to register for a Part I session, being offered in conjunction with the Diocese of Western Massachusetts; attendance for both Part I and Part II (the Safe Church review) is required for any clergy due for a Safe Church refresher in 2021.

Part I will focus on the topic “Antagonistic People: Dealing with Bullies in the Church” and will feature as guest speakers Patricia Gianotti, PsyD, and Christyn Sieve, PsyD. Part I sessions are scheduled on the following dates:

- *Tuesday, Feb. 9, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. (This session is now filled.)*
- *Saturday, April 10, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*
- *Tuesday, June 15, 12:30-3 p.m.*
- *Friday, Sept. 10, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*

Part II comprises the Safe Church review for Diocese of Massachusetts clergy due for a refresher in 2021, with sessions on:

- *Tuesday, March 2, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*
- *Saturday, April 17, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*
- *Wednesday, June 23, 12:30-3 p.m.*
- *Friday, Sept. 17, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m.*

Find more details and registration links [here](#).

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

- The Diocesan Council thanks all congregations that have submitted completed [Pandemic Impact Reports](#), and reminds those that have not of the importance of doing so, especially if they plan to **request assessment relief in 2021**. The Assessment Coordinating Committee is reviewing completed reports and will contact congregations asking for such relief. Questions may be directed to Chelsea Smith, Assistant for Governance and Administration (csmith@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 406).

- **Special 2020 Parochial Report form:** The filing period for the 2020 Parochial Report opened on Jan. 2. Parochial Reports are due to dioceses by *March 1* (direct questions about diocesan filing to the controller, Tom Hamel, at thamel@diomass.org), and to the General Convention Office by *May 1*. To assist with filing preparation, downloadable forms and instructions, along with a video tutorial, are available on the Episcopal Church website at www.episcopalchurch.org/research/forms-and-instructions.

The 2020 report includes a new narrative section, which invites congregations to reflect on the opportunities and challenges encountered in the midst of the pandemic. Also new are questions about online worship and questions on the impact the pandemic has had on congregational life and finances. The report also asks about the congregation’s involvement in racial justice and reconciliation work. Questions for the General Convention Office about the Parochial Report can be e-mailed to pr@episcopalchurch.org.

- **Congregational Consultants host series of Zoom calls on the practical aspects of congregational leadership:** These will include topics of interest to vestries and particularly to wardens and treasurers. February's topic is "**Making Congregational Leadership Work**" and the roles and relationships necessary for good leadership and coordination, focusing on vestries. Hear suggestions on how to organize and administer a vestry to improve its cohesion and operations, and how to make it fun. The call will be led by Marjorie Temple, longtime parish leader and congregational consultant. This session will be held twice, on *Tuesday, Feb. 16* ([register online here](#)) and *Saturday, Feb. 20* ([register online here](#)), each at 9 a.m.

In March, consultant Terry Robinson will present a session on **how to fill out the financial portion of the Parochial Report**, on *Thursday, March 11 at 9 a.m.* ([register online here](#)) and again on *Saturday, March 13 at 9 a.m.* ([register online here](#)). Sessions will be recorded for later access.

FOR INFORMATION: Chris Meyer, Congregational Consultants coordinator (chris@centrestent.com).

- **Creation Care Justice Network forms working groups:** On Jan. 9, 35 people attended the morning Creation Care Justice Network retreat on Zoom, where they wrestled with the question: How is God calling us to respond to the climate emergency? In the afternoon session, a smaller group developed a structure for moving forward. There are now three working groups: Action and Advocacy; Spiritual Practice and Grounding; and Communications and Networking. Find more information and how to join [here](#).

The network's next full meeting will be *Wednesday, March 3 at noon*. Anyone who would like to attend or get connected with the network is invited to contact the Rev. Lise Hildebrandt (lise.hild@posteo.net).

- The diocesan Lifespan Ministry with Older Adults will present "**Spirituality in Aging,**" a **three-part interactive discussion series** via Zoom on *Saturday mornings, Feb. 6, 13 and 20, from 9:30-10:30 a.m.* Read more about it [here](#), and find online registration, through Feb. 4, [here](#).

FOR INFORMATION: The Rev. Phil Flaherty (philflaherty@outlook.com).

- Many congregations have feeding programs and food pantries and work in various ways to address hunger in their communities, and a new **Food Security Network** is forming in the diocese around these ministries. Join with others for an hour-long initial online gathering on *Wednesday, Feb. 10 at 5 p.m.* (*please note change of date from Feb. 3*).

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

FORMATION Opportunities:

- **Building Bridges Veterans Initiative:** All are invited to join online on *Thursday, Feb. 25 at 5 p.m.* with Bishop Douglas J. Fisher, Bishop Alan M. Gates and retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel John Paradis, for discussion of the multifaceted reality of the veteran experience, and potential ways for others to get involved in bringing greater health to veterans. Click [here](#) to register, and find the event flier [here](#). The Building Bridges Veteran Initiative, now expanding into the Diocese of Massachusetts, was founded by the Diocese of Western Massachusetts five years ago to create veterans communities which enable the trust and camaraderie inevitably lost when soldiers and military personnel come home.

- The Diocese of Massachusetts will be offering regular opportunities for interested lay people who want to **learn how to lead the Daily Offices, in particular Morning Prayer**. The Rev. Carol Morehead, Rector of Grace Church in Medford, will give an online training on *Sunday, March 14, 1-3 p.m.*, for beginners and as a refresher for those who are being called upon more often during the COVID-19 pandemic. This training is especially appropriate for anyone who wishes to be licensed by the bishop as a Lay Worship Leader. Register online [here](#); space is limited to 20 people. *FOR INFORMATION: Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).*

- The Diocese of Massachusetts now has a **ChurchNext diocesan formation school**, enabling participation in more than 400 available classes offered by ChurchNext at no cost. More than half of the courses are designed for group settings (and can work easily on Zoom), and discussion questions are provided. Congregations can organize classes into particular tracks, depending on their needs. Visit <https://diomass.pathwright.com> to learn more.

Additionally, the diocese has purchased a “season pass” which allows several people to take one or more **2021 Vibrant Faith MasterClasses** at no cost. These are a focused look at one aspect of lifelong faith formation, presented by an expert teacher. The goal is to enhance knowledge, skills and confidence for leading faith formation that transforms people and communities. Learn more [here](#). *FOR INFORMATION/TO REGISTER: Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).*

- This year’s annual **Province I Formation Gathering** for formation colleagues across New England takes place online on *Friday and Saturday, March 5 and 6*. On Friday evening, 7-9 p.m., Lisa Kimball, Associate Dean of Lifelong Learning at Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS), and the Rev. Patricia Lyons, Senior Advisor to the Dean for Evangelism Initiatives at VTS, will speak on “The Marriage of Formation and Evangelism,” with TED-style talks on Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to noon. Register and find more details [here](#). *FOR INFORMATION: Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).*

- All **children's formation colleagues**—paid or volunteer, clergy or lay, full or part-time—are welcome at regular **online gatherings**, scheduled on upcoming *Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m.:* Feb. 4 (joined by Christian formation specialist Sharon Ely Pearson), Feb. 11 and 25, and March 11 and 25. The meeting link can be found [here](#). To be added to the list to receive notices of meetings, events and resources, contact Martha Gardner, Missioner of Networking and Formation (mgardner@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 403).

Youth and Young Adult Ministries:

Questions may be directed to the Rev. H. Mark Smith at hmsmith@diomass.org or 617/482-4826, ext. 215

- **“Arise, Shine,” the five-week sermon series from the Adolescent Mental Health Network** in the diocese, seeks to help teenagers see Christ in themselves and the world at a time when overlapping pandemics make that more challenging. Links to sermon videos are available weekly via www.diomassyouth.org/arise-shine-preaching-series. Congregations can use the pre-recorded sermons as part of their online worship offerings; the sermons are also available for other groups to use at other times and in other settings, including retreats, faith formation classes, youth groups and campus ministries.
- Middle and high school-aged young people are invited to **join the Diocesan Youth Council and Bishop Gayle E. Harris for a virtual half-day retreat** on *Saturday, March 20*. From 2 to 4 p.m., the group will get a chance to talk with Bishop Harris about how our faith impacts the way we interact with the world. Then, the group will break for an hour and return at 5 p.m. for fun virtual games, including the premiere of a new one: “Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader, Bishop Gayle?” Participants can pick one session or the other, or join for both. Registration will be posted [here](#).
- The **ongoing online gatherings for youth workers in the diocese** continue on the *third Thursday of every month at 3:30 p.m.* with the next meeting taking place on *Thursday, Feb. 18*. To suggest topics, or to volunteer to demonstrate a game or activity or lead a discussion, contact the Rev. H. Mark Smith at hmsmith@diomass.org. Visit www.diomassyouth.org/events for meeting links.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL ACTIONS:

At its Jan. 15 meeting, the Diocesan Council:

Heard an overview of the role of Diocesan Council members.

Heard an update about the formation of the Assessment Formula Review working group.

Voted to approve 2021 assessment adjustments for St. John's Church in Charlestown, St. Paul's Church in Natick and St. Anne's Church in North Billerica.

Heard an update about the number of pandemic impact reports received.

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Voted to approve the following Diocesan Council members to the Executive Committee of Diocesan Council: Tamara Sobers, Cris LaTorre, Michael Bent, Phil LaBelle, Betsy Ridge Madsen and Dave Sullivan.

Voted to endorse the appointment of the following members of the Assessment Formula Review working group, as approved by the Executive Committee: Ted Ts'o, Mike Dangelo, Helen Gordon, Phil LaBelle, Connie Melahoures, Lori Mills-Curran, Derrick Muwina, Ed Rewolinski, Dave Sullivan, Andi Taylor, Win Treese and Sarah Van Gulden.

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

Next Diocesan Council Meeting: *Thursday, Feb. 18, 6 p.m., via Zoom*

FOR INFORMATION: Chelsea Smith, Assistant for Governance and Administration (csmith@diomass.org or 617-482-4826, ext. 406).

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. Congregations intending to apply in 2021 are invited to submit a letter of intent by *March 1* via a new online form, available [here](#). Find a brochure summarizing all diocesan grant and loan programs [here](#).

- **“Wicked Good Idea” Microgrants** will be available again this year, as an invitation to congregations, networks and organizations in the diocese to try something new in their ministry context in support of the [diocesan mission strategy](#). The grants are a way to put some seed-money support behind ideas for how to do the work of Christ in new and creative ways. While ideas of church have shifted somewhat in the current time, mission work continues, and this grant initiative encourages everyone to think creatively about how to do that.

A total of \$15,000 is available for grants in 2021. Applications will be available *April 1*, and will be received on a rolling basis for individual grants of \$500 to \$2,000. Find more information [here](#). Questions may be directed to the Mission Strategy Committee at missionstrategy@diomass.org.

**CLERGY SEARCH &
CALL REPORT:**
CLERGY CHANGES:

The Rev. Bob Malm concluded his ministry at St. Gabriel's Church in Marion on Feb. 1.
 The Rev. James Medley has been called as rector of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Fall River.
 The Rev. Joe Robinson began as interim priest at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Orleans on Jan. 4.
 The Rev. Cara Rockhill has been called as priest in charge of the Parish of St. Paul in Newton Highlands.
 The Rev. Leslie Sterling stepped down as rector of St. Bartholomew's Church in Cambridge as of Jan. 1.
 The Rev. Dr. Monrelle Williams retired as rector of St. Cyprian's Church in Roxbury as of Jan. 1.

Central Region

Regional Canon Carol Gallagher
cgallagher@diomass.org

CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:

CAMBRIDGE, St. Bartholomew's Church
 ROXBURY, St. Cyprian's Church

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

None at this time.

CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:

CAMBRIDGE, Christ Church *full-time*

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

None at this time.

CHURCHES NO LONGER RECEIVING NAMES:

None at this time.

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS:

Contact the regional canon to be considered.
 MEDWAY, Christ Church *part-time*

INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS:

Priests with interim training may contact the regional canon to be considered.

None at this time.

Northern and Western Region

Regional Canon Martha Hubbard
mhubbard@diomass.org

CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:

CHELMSFORD, All Saints' Church
 WAKEFIELD, Emmanuel Church

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

None at this time.

CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:

TOPSFIELD, Trinity Church

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

None at this time.

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CHURCHES NO LONGER RECEIVING NAMES:*None at this time.***PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS:***Contact the regional canon to be considered.*HOPKINTON, St. Paul's Church *quarter-time*METHUEN, St. Andrew's Church *quarter-time***INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS:***Priests with interim training may contact the regional canon to be considered.**None at this time.***OTHER CLERGY POSITIONS:**LINCOLN, St. Anne's-in-the-Fields Church: [Curate/Assistant](#)**Southern Region**

Regional Canon Kelly O'Connell

koconnell@diomass.org**CHURCHES INITIATING DISCERNMENT PROCESS:**ORLEANS, Church of the Holy Spirit *full-time***RECTOR SEARCHES****CHURCHES IN SELF-STUDY:**SOUTH WEYMOUTH, Church of the Holy Nativity *half-time***CHURCHES COMPLETING PROFILE:***None at this time.***CHURCHES RECEIVING NAMES:** *(Apply directly to parish.)*BRIDGEWATER, Trinity Church *half-time*BUZZARDS BAY, St. Peter's Church *half-time*SOMERSET, Church of Our Saviour *two-thirds time***CHURCHES NO LONGER RECEIVING NAMES:**

WHITMAN, All Saints' Church

PRIEST-IN-CHARGE APPOINTMENTS:*Contact the regional canon to be considered.**None at this time.***INTERIM PRIEST APPOINTMENTS:***Priests with interim training may contact the regional canon to be considered.**None at this time.***NEXT fyi:**

fyi is published the first Wednesday of the month. The deadline for the March 3 issue is **Wednesday, Feb. 24 at noon**. E-mail submissions to tjs@diomass.org.