



The Episcopal Church in Vermont **Charge to the** ***Bishop Discernment and Nominating Committee*** **January 2018**

We have called you to this ministry because we believe each of you has the gifts of collaboration, wisdom and discernment. Your varied experiences in the Diocese equip you to bring unique and important skills to this process and to well-represent our wonderful Diocese.

We have likewise appointed Gary Butterworth as the consultant for this Bishop Discernment and Nominating Process. Gary will work with the Standing Committee, the Bishop Discernment and Nominating Committee (BDNC) and the future Electing/Transition Committee. We believe he will bring resources and insights from outside the diocese and from a broader, national church perspective.

The Standing Committee asks the BDNC to keep in mind the changing nature of the church. Since Bishop Ely's announcement we, the Standing Committee, have spent three days in prayer, reflection and discussion about the next steps for the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont. From that time of our own discernment we ask that you take into consideration, as part of your call to this ministry of discernment, the following:

- Read and inwardly digest the article by Donald Romanik, President of the Episcopal Church Foundation about "New Leadership for a Changing Church" (See: <http://www.ecfvp.org/vestry-papers/article/595/new-leadership-for-a-changing-church>).
- Study, reflect and consider the recent concern at our Diocesan Convention about the financial sustainability of our diocesan structure, budget and ministry.
- Consider ways for the Episcopal Church in Vermont to thrive and be faithful that might include something other than a full-time Bishop over the next phase of our ministry.

Please note that we do not assume what any of these considerations will mean for this process. We ask that you/we explore possibilities.

There is a two-step charge to the *Bishop Discernment and Nominating Committee*:

I. Discernment

- A. Engage the diocese in a process of discernment about the best way to move forward at this time, especially with regard to the Episcopate. Traditionally, this means a Profile that will address something like the following:
 - The character of our history and how that is lived out today.
 - Where we find ourselves as a Episcopal Church in Vermont today.
 - What challenges and opportunities face us.
 - The strengths and abilities we identify.
 - How we hope to move forward.

- B. What gifts and strengths are required in our next Bishop in order to move forward. Use existing data from previous diocesan studies, from State of Vermont forecasts and from the experiences of other dioceses/ecumenical partners to consider best ways to move forward.
- C. Bring forward to the Standing Committee a recommendation for how best to move forward and how best to ensure an Episcopal presence in the diocese no later than September 2019.

II. Next Steps

- A. Publish a Profile and, if appropriate, market the Profile and solicit names of potential candidates for the 11th Bishop of Vermont.
- B. Use a discernment process so that candidates with the needed gifts and skills for the diocese are identified by the Holy Spirit. We encourage this to be more of a “raising up” process than a “screening out” process and that you use models available from the National Church and the Consultant. Normally, this means bringing forward a slate of between 3 and 5 candidates from which the diocese will elect the 11th Bishop of Vermont.
- C. Use of a Discernment Retreat model for indentifying the final slate of candidates.
- D. Present a slate of candidates in collaboration with the Standing Committee and Transition Committee.

III. Possible/Initial Timetable

2018

January/February	Announcement of organizational structure and process for moving forward. Process for and selection of members to the <i>Bishop Discernment and Nominating Committee</i> (BDNC)
March 16-17	Retreat with the <i>Bishop Discernment and Nominating Committee</i> , Standing Committee and Consultant. Attendance is required for membership on BDNC. Location: Franklin Conference Center, Rutland, VT Website: https://www.franklinconference.com/index.html
Spring/Summer	Discernment Process to gain clarity about “Who we are, what God is doing with us and how best to organize and move forward for the next season of ministry,” as per above.
July 15	Initial presentation of the “Profile” to the Standing Committee and, then, publication to the diocese and beyond.
Late Summer/Fall	Process of inviting and gathering the names of potential candidates, as outlined by the final “Profile” as approved by the Standing Committee. Transition Committee appointed.
Late Oct/Early Nov	Diocesan Convention, Burlington

2019

Winter/Spring	Discernment of candidates for the 11 th Bishop of Vermont.
Spring	Candidates announced; Petition Process; Walkabouts
April 14-20 – Holy Week April 21 – Easter	
Late Spring	Possible time for the Electing Convention
Summer	Bishop Ely retires
September 28	Possible date of the Ordination and Consecration of the 11 th Bishop of Vermont

IV. Norms

- Consistent with the Baptismal Covenant, we believe all are welcome in our Church; therefore, no candidate shall be excluded “because of race, color, ethnic, origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities, or age.” (National Canons Title III, Canon 1, Section 2).
- All deliberations of the BDNC are to be held in the strictest confidence; especially the names of persons being considered. At the same time, communication of how the process is moving along and transparency are important. Any breach of confidence will lead to the removal of the person from the BDNC.
- The members of the BDNC will work within the general timeline and budget given them by the Standing Committee.
- The BDNC will use the Search Consultant appointed by the Standing Committee as a primary resource.
- The BDNC will communicate regularly with the Standing Committee and the diocese, as appropriate.
- All diocesan wide communications will be approved by the liaisons appointed by the Standing Committee.
- The BDNC chair shall communicate regularly with the President of the Standing Committee, the Search Consultant, and, when appointed, the chair of the Transition Committee. No serving member of either the Standing Committee or the BDNC may be considered in any part of the process for nomination without first resigning from the committee. A member of either committee whose spouse/partner, sibling, parent or child becomes a candidate must also resign. If the candidate is eliminated from the process, the committee member does not rejoin the committee.
- The Standing Committee will appoint a chaplain as a spiritual resource for the Standing Committee, the BDNC, and the Transition Committee.