



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN VERMONT

*Together in Christ...growing locally, serving globally*

# *2020 Convention Journal*

**Reports from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020**

**187<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention**  
**October 31, 2020**

*The Journal of the*  
*230<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the*  
*Episcopal Church in Vermont*  
*being the*  
*187<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention Since the Full*  
*Organization of The Diocese of Vermont,*  
*held virtually on*  
*October 31, 2020*

## Contents

<b>Reports</b> .....	4
<b>Annual Report of Official Acts, The Right Reverend Thomas C. Ely</b> .....	4
<b>Annual Report of Official Acts, The Right Reverend Doctor Shannon MacVean-Brown</b> .....	5
<b>Diocesan Council – Vermont Branch of the Jesus Movement, July 2, 2019 - June 30, 2020</b> .....	6
<b>Board of Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont</b> .....	9
<b>Financial Oversight and Audit Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020</b> .....	11
<b>Grants &amp; Loans Committee, July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020</b> .....	12
<b>The Standing Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020</b> .....	15
<b>Liturgy Commission Report</b> .....	17
<b>Diocesan Commission on Ministry 2019-2020</b> .....	18
<b>Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM Report for 2019-20 School Year</b> .....	19
<b>Cathedral Church of St. Paul Annual Report to Convention, July 2019 – June 2020</b> .	21
<b>Province I Report</b> .....	23
<b>Global Episcopal Mission Network</b> .....	25
<b>Mission Farm Annual Convention Report 2020</b> .....	26
<b>Green Mountain Witness</b> .....	28
<b>Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center, July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020</b> .....	29
<b>Rock Point Commons report to Annual Convention</b> .....	33
<b>Rock Point Center Report for Convention 2020</b> .....	35
<b>Rock Point Camp Convention Report 2020</b> .....	36

# Reports

## **Annual Report of Official Acts, The Right Reverend Thomas C. Ely Tenth Bishop of Vermont**

This report covers the time period from July 1, 2019 to September 28, 2019. Four visits were made to congregations in Vermont. The following congregations were visited during this time:

7/7/2019 St. James' Church, Arlington  
8/3/2019 St. Peter's Church, Lyndonville  
8/4/2019 St. Paul's Church, Canaan  
8/20/2019 Immanuel Church, Bellows Falls

During this time consents were given to the elections of two Bishops Diocesan in the Dioceses of Montana and Taiwan.

On August 18, 2019 Kathleen Moore was ordained a deacon at St. James' Episcopal Church in Arlington, Vermont.

On September 25, 2019, the Reverend Mary Margaret Robinson White was received from the Diocese of Albany.

During this 3-month period 17 Eucharistic Minister licenses were issued.  
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "+ Thomas C. Ely". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name of the signatory.

The Right Reverend Thomas C. Ely  
Tenth Bishop of Vermont

**Annual Report of Official Acts, The Right Reverend Doctor Shannon MacVean-Brown  
Eleventh Bishop of Vermont**

This report covers the time period from September 28, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Twenty visits were made to congregations in Vermont. The following congregations were visited during this time:

10/11/2019	Calvary Church, Underhill
10/13/2019	Gethsemane Church, Proctorsville
10/20/2019	St. Luke's Church, Chester
10/27/2019	St. Andrew's Church, St. Johnsbury
11/3/2019	St. Mary's Parish, Northfield
11/17/2019	St. Michael's Church, Brattleboro
11/22/2019	St. James' Church, Arlington
11/24/2019	St. Andrew's Church, Colchester
12/1/2019	Christ Church, Bethel
12/15/2019	St. John the Baptist Church, Hardwick
1/12/2020	St. Stephen's Church, Middlebury
1/19/2020	St. Paul's Church, White River Junction
1/26/2020	St. Paul's Church, Wells
1/30/2020	St. Paul's Church, Vergennes
2/2/2020	St. Matthew's Church, Enosburg Falls
2/16/2020	St. James' Church, Essex Junction
2/28/2020	St. James' Church, Woodstock
3/1/2020	St. Mary's in the Mountains Church, Wilmington
3/8/2020	Trinity Church, Shelburne
	COVID-19 Pandemic, Under Stay at Home Orders
6/21/2020	St. Martin's Church, Fairlee (Virtual Visitation)

During these visitations one person was confirmed, nine people were received, and one person renewed their baptismal vows.

During this 9-month period consents were given to the elections of seven Bishops Diocesan in the dioceses of Lexington, Missouri, Georgia, Oklahoma, Southern Virginia, Minnesota, and Alabama.

On October 3, 2019, the Rev. Rachel E. Field was received from the Diocese of Connecticut.  
On December 20, 2019, the Rev. Amy L. Spagna was received from the Diocese of Virginia.  
On January 15, 2020, the Rev. Veronika E. Travis was released to the Diocese of Virginia.  
On February 18, 2020, Thom Rock was ordained to the Transitional Diaconate.

During this 9-month period 2 Eucharistic Minister licenses were issued.

Respectfully submitted,



The Right Reverend Shannon MacVean-Brown  
Eleventh Bishop of Vermont

## **Diocesan Council – Vermont Branch of the Jesus Movement, July 2, 2019 - June 30, 2020**

Council Members: The Rt. Rev. Thomas C. Ely (until October 2019), The Rt. Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown (starting in October 2019), Alice Daley, the Rev. Heidi Edson, Colleen Gates, the Rev. Paul Gratz, the Rev. Paul Habersang (resigned in October 2019), the Rev. Kathy Hartman, Dinny Hawksworth, Barbara Johnson, the Rev. Fred Moser, the Rev. Liam Muller, the Rev. Zarina Suárez O’Hagin, Lisa Newton, the Rev. Mark Preece, the Rev. Rob Spainhour, Marjorie Strong, Jean Wilson

Ex officio Members: Lynn Bates (Canon to the Ordinary), Dr. Gerry Davis (Treasurer)

During the reporting period, Council met on July 25, September 7, October 17, January 17-18, February 19, March 18, April 4, May 20, and June 27.

Previous meeting minutes and the Treasurer’s reports were accepted at each meeting.

This is a summary report. Full meeting minutes and Treasurer’s reports are available on the website or by request through the Diocesan Office.

Reports on 2019 Council Priorities were received at each meeting. Included were reports from:

- Commission on Ministry
- Evangelism and Green Mountain Witness
- Grants and Loans Committee
- Racial Reconciliation
- Re-Imagining and Re-Engaging the Future of the Episcopal Church
- Rock Point
- Ecumenical Council/VT Interfaith

The Annual Resolution of Council recommending the 2019 Convention’s approval of the 2020 budget (\$1,013,500) was approved. The Resolution also contained the formula for calculating congregation contributions to the operation of the diocese and to establish a 2020 goal (\$40,000) for the Alleluia Fund. The Resolution required by Canon 6.7 of Diocesan Canons to establish the minimum 2020 full time Total Clergy Compensation was also approved for Convention’s consideration.

Every January, Council members gather for an overnight orientation/planning meeting. Friday evening conversation centered on hopes for the 2020 year, on the tenor of Council meetings, and potential priorities. Discussions lead to the establishment of 2020 Council priorities as noted below. Council members agreed to wrap around its work and way of being together with a focus on joyfulness, open mindedness, and communication.

### Revisioning:

- Mission statements
- Mission districts
- Visioning gatherings (clergy/lay leaders, regional, Convention),
- Mission statements
- Attracting clergy

### Formation & Education:

- Stewardship
- Clergy & Lay

Children  
LMST  
Clergy Gatherings  
Attracting clergy

Stewardship:

Narrative budget  
Money (endowment withdrawals)  
Creation care  
Sustainability  
Spiritual practice

Ecumenical relations

Budget including Alleluia Fund

Racial Reconciliation

Immigration & Refugee issues

Grants & Loans

Discussion of The Manual of Personnel Policies and Benefits Summary resulted in Council's decision to change language regarding the health insurance benefit as follows:

Remove from The Manual the language that states employees are not to receive an incentive if they choose not to take advantage of the health insurance offered by the Diocese. The current policy states, "In cases where a staff member receives health insurance coverage through another person or acceptable plan, no compensation will be paid in lieu of the Diocesan Plan.". The new language as adopted by Council will state that it is appropriate for an employer to offer a modest incentive to employees with a comparable or better alternative health plan than the Diocesan health plan.

Actions and Impact due to COVID-19:

Council authorized the Grants and Loans Committee to provide immediately a no-interest loan ("bridge loan") to parishes for amounts up to 5% of their FY2020 Vestry-approved operating budget. Loans to be used for operating expenses of the church that would otherwise be difficult to pay or require the use of investment equity.

Council authorized the Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, a Vermont nonprofit corporation established by Act 173 of the Acts of the 1880 Vermont General Assembly, acting through its officers, to obtain a bank loan and borrow an amount not to exceed \$140,000, under the federal CARES Act – S.3548 "Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act" - Paycheck Protection Program, for the purposes of funding payroll and healthcare benefits for employees of the Diocese and for the other purposes permitted under the CARES Act. The terms and conditions of the loan will be governed by the conditions of the Act, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the lender institution. The loan request submitted was \$116,000.

### Impacts of COVID-19:

- Worship services and other meetings in church buildings- buildings are closed until further notice except for essential services
- Communications from the Bishop's office- monthly finance meeting is now occurring
- Leadership team meeting regularly during this time to deal with current issues
- Alleluia Fund- launch date uncertain, maybe Pentecost
- Bishop Shannon is doing service 2x/day and it's going well
- After Easter, the Bishop and Lynn will be setting up meetings with each congregation to check in
- Holy Week services- offerings will be available through the Cathedral as a webinar

## **Board of Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont**

The Board of Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont operates according to Canon 11 of the Constitutions and Canons of the Diocese of Vermont. The Trustees meet quarterly. In the 2019 – 2020 period covered by this report, those meetings were held on September 5 and December 5, 2019 (Annual and Regular Meeting) and on February 20 and May 28, 2020.

Report of the Real Estate Committee: According to Canon 10.1(b), title to real property of the Diocese shall be held by the Trustees, except otherwise directed by the Bishop and Standing Committee. The Real Estate Committee oversees all matters related to such property that are to come before the Trustees. Quitclaim deeds from the period of 7/1/2019 – 6/30/2020 were approved for properties in Arlington, Essex, Ferrisburgh, Hinesburg, Essex, St. Albans, and Highgate. Various matters relating to the following properties were also addressed by the Committee during the year: Trinity, Poultney; St. Ann's, Richford; Holy Trinity, Swanton, St. Thomas & Grace Brandon, St. John's Randolph and Christ Church, Bethel.

Report of the Investment Committee: According to Canon 10.2(b), all funds other than operating funds unless otherwise directed shall be invested in the Diocesan Unit Trust Fund (DUT). The Investment Committee of the Trustees oversees the management of the Unit Fund, which includes accounts of the Diocese and many of its congregations, and amounted to \$28,372,715 as of June 30, 2019, a 5.18% gain over the year after sharp market declines earlier in the year. In 2019- 2020, the Trustees approved quarterly distributions from the DUT to investors at the rate of 1.25% of the average value of the Unit Fund for the preceding 12 calendar quarters being an annual rate of 5.0% of these average unit values. Each distribution has increased in value for the last 12 quarters except for March 31, 2020 which declined by a fraction of .01% and which recovered by June 30, 2020. The distribution payment dates are the 20th day of the last month in each calendar quarter of the year. The Committee met with its professional investment management advisors every quarter. Fund performance has continued to improve following the adoption of the revised socially responsive (ESG) Investment Policy in the spring of 2016. The full ISP and the Quarterly Investment Reviews are available at the Trustees pages on the Diocesan website at [www.diovermont.org/trustees/](http://www.diovermont.org/trustees/). On August 29, 2019 (and again on July 22, 2020), the Trustees conducted fourth and fifth annual diocesan-wide zoom video-conferences briefing for Unit Fund investors and stakeholders. These were recorded and are also available on the Diocesan website, at <https://diovermont.org/2018/02/11/diocesan-unit-trust-fund/>.

The Trustees received regular updates from The Rev. Paul Habersang, Executive Director of Rock Point Commons (RPC) including various initiatives taken by RPC since the Pandemic forced everyone to stay home. In December, the Trustees signed the 93.5-acre conservation easement, conserving the final parcel of land at Rock Point. The Trustees encourage you to review the RPS video which will be available during the 2020 Convention.

The Trustees received regular updates from C.J. Spirito, Head of Rock Point School (RPS). In December, RPS requested and Trustees approved a \$650,000 draw on the Wilson-Wright Trust which is invested in the Diocesan Unit Trust to meet their financial needs over the upcoming years while they rebuild their enrollment. RPS reports quarterly to the Trustees regarding its progress toward becoming self-sustaining.

Benjamin Anderson-Ray, of St. Stephen's Middlebury was elected Trustee for a seven-year term at Convention in October 2019. He replaced long-standing and exceptionally appreciated Trustee, Wallace

Good, who completed his multi-term term commitment and who had served as Treasurer and Chair of the Trustee's Investment Committee for several years. Other members of the Trustees in 2019 -2020 include Sarah Cowan, (President and Chair of the Real Estate Committee); Laurel Broughton (Clerk); Steve Smith (interim Chair, Investment Committee); Christopher Chapman; Ellen McCulloch-Lovell; The Rev. Stephen Reynes; Ex officio: Bishop Thomas Ely (ret.) and Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown

Sarah Cowan, President, Board of Trustees

## **Financial Oversight and Audit Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020**

This report covers the activities of the Financial Oversight and Audit Committee for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

The Financial Oversight and Audit Committee meets 6 times a year in January, March, May, July, September, and November. This year we missed two meetings due to snow in November and Covid-19 in May. During this period the members of the committee were Laura Buel, Chad Wohlers, the Rev. Dr. Susan McGarry, Frances Huessy, and Jamison Dunne. There was one open position. Diocesan Treasurer Gerry Davis, Assistant Treasurer the Rev. Dave Ganter, and Financial Administrator Rich Sagui also attend the meetings.

The major responsibility of the Committee is to ensure that all of the parishes and missions of the Diocese conduct an annual audit of their financial statements and a review of their financial practices, usually by a committee of parishioners. Alternatively, the parishes may choose to hire an accounting firm to conduct their audit. The Committee works closely with Rich Sagui and Diocesan Assistant Ann Carroll. Each year the parish audit materials are updated and distributed to the parishes of the Diocese in early March. The completed audits are due back to the Diocese by September 1, after which time the Committee members review the completed audit submissions and issue an acceptance letter with comments to the parishes, in consultation and with the administrative help of the Diocesan Office.

This audit season the audit package instructions were extensively updated. A new Audit Completion Procedure was developed, which replaced and consolidated the important content of three former instructional documents. The 77-question Internal Control Checklist was updated in 2019.

The full responsibilities of the Financial Oversight and Audit Committee can be found in Canon 10, section 3 of the Diocese of Vermont, as well as sections 2.3 (Audits) and 2.4 (Parochial Reports). These include annually engaging an independent certified public accounting firm to audit the financial statements of the Diocese of Vermont, the Trustees of the Diocese (Unit Fund), and the Bishop Booth Conference Center. The Committee is available year round to provide advice and guidance to parish treasurers and audit committees.

Laura Buel  
Financial Oversight and Audit Committee

## Grants & Loans Committee, July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

The Grants and Loans Committee, established by Diocesan Council in 2016, distributes available funds to enhance the vitality of congregations and organizations of the Episcopal Church in Vermont in order to increase engagement in the Mission of God.

Committee Members during this year were: Ben Anderson-Ray (St. Stephen's, Middlebury), Becca Boucher (St. Mark's, Newport), John Hartman (Christ Church, Bethel), The Rev. Todd McKee (St. Paul's, White River Junction), The Rev. Liam Muller (Trinity, Rutland), The Rev. Emphy Schneider (St. Mary's, Northfield), Steve Smith (St. James, Arlington), The Rev. Bob Wilson (St. Mark's, Newport), Canon Lynn Bates (ex officio).

### Guiding Principles

We understand **congregational vitality** to be marked especially by:

- Members who are passionate followers of Jesus Christ
- An ongoing process of discerning, planning, acting and reflecting
- Opportunities for personal and community transformation
- Leadership, labor, and financial support being shared generously by most members
- Members who are equipped and empowered to be ministers in their daily life and work
- A clear sense of vision and active participation in the Mission of God beyond the congregation

We embrace the **Five Marks of Mission** and affirm that the Mission of the Church Is the Mission of Christ

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
- To teach, baptize and nurture new believers
- To respond to human need by loving service
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

To this end, and within the guidelines of the various funds available to us, we will prayerfully and flexibly:

1. Consider grant and loan requests only from an Episcopal entity within Vermont. The Committee will not consider requests from non-Episcopal entities or requests from outside Vermont.
2. Give priority to requests that show promise for enhancing local mission approaches.
3. Give priority to requests that support discernment, planning, promoting, training for, implementing, and evaluating mission (rather than funding the actual mission).
4. Give priority to requests that show sustainability.
5. Give priority to requests that support discerning, planning, promoting, and training of lay people.
6. Give at least 50% to support local mission and give no more than 50% to [non-mission] requests related to buildings.
7. Attempt to distribute funds as widely as possible.

8. Discourage “pass through” grants to other organizations unless there is a clear connection to an actively engaged ministry that enhances congregational vitality and the requesting parish is also providing funds to the ultimate recipient organization.
9. Discourage the use of funds to solve emergencies or to postpone dealing with a long-term problem.
10. Discourage the use of funds strictly for the purpose of historical preservation of buildings.

### **Grants and Loans Distributed**

#### **Alleluia Funds Granted:**

Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington	
St. Paul’s Program for Youth (SPY) trip expenses	\$ 3,000.00
Rock Point Camp Scholarships (conditioned on camp occurring)	\$ 3,000.00
Christ Church, Montpelier	\$ 1,000.00
Vermont Interfaith Action	
Camp Agape	\$ 3,000.00
Trinity Church, Shelburne	\$ 500.00
Harbor Place meal program	

#### **Butterfield Grant Funds Granted:**

St. Matthew’s, Enosburg Falls	\$ 4,400.00
Organ Restoration	
St. Stephen’s, Middlebury	\$ 20,000.00
Bell Tower Repair and Restoration	
St. Mary’s, Northfield	\$ 3,750.00
Furnace Repairs in Rectory	
St. Paul’s, White River Junction	\$ 1,912.00
EfM Mentor Training	

#### **Irish Bequest Grants:**

Church of the Good Shepherd, Barre	\$ 4,500.00
Feeding Program	
St. Peter’s, Lyndonville	\$ 8,728.09
Vicarage Electrical Work	
St. Mary’s, Northfield	\$ 2,000.00
Living Supplies Closet	

#### **Local Mission Approach Grants:**

St. Michael’s, Brattleboro	\$ 7,500.00
Experimental Initiatives in Discipleship	

#### **McClure Grants:**

St. Michael’s, Brattleboro	\$ 5,000.00
Audio Visual Equipment	
Christ Church, Montpelier	\$ 2,000.00
Full Ladle Ministry	
St. Mary’s in the Mountains, Wilmington	\$ 3,000.00

Evangelism Conference (conditioned on event occurring)	
Convivia	\$ 11,450.00

<b>Total Funds Granted:</b>	<b><u>\$ 84,740.09</u></b>
-----------------------------	----------------------------

**Bishop Butterfield Revolving Loans Approved:**

Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington HVAC System	\$ 45,000.00
---	--------------

St. Stephen's, Middlebury Bell Tower Repair and Restoration	\$ 20,000.00
--	--------------

Christ Church, Montpelier Critical building repairs	\$ 75,000.00
--	--------------

St. Paul's, Vergennes Reconfiguration of land and buildings	\$ 17,500.00
--	--------------

Rock Point Board Capital Projects	\$ 25,000.00
--------------------------------------	--------------

<b>Total Loans Approved:</b>	<b>\$182,500.00</b>
------------------------------	---------------------

## **The Standing Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020**

The Standing Committee, an elected body by Diocesan Convention, comprised of four laypersons and four clergy persons, meets by teleconference or in person on a monthly basis, or as needed. This body acts in concert with the Board of Trustees regarding diocesan property matters, it works with the Bishop and the Diocesan Commission on Ministry with persons seeking Candidacy and Ordination to the Diaconate and Priesthood, it consents to episcopal elections throughout The Episcopal Church, and it serves as a council of advice to the Bishop.

The Standing Committee met to conduct business on these dates between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020:

July 11, 2019; August 27, 2019; October 3, 2019; October 26, 2019; December 12, 2019; January 2, 2020; February 5, 2020; March 4, 2020; April 1, 2020; June 3, 2020.

The Standing Committee acted on the following items between July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020:

### **Property Matters**

Approved a Quitclaim deed for a boundary adjustment with the Town of Hardwick and St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church

Approved a Rock Point conservation easement with the Lake Champlain Land Trust

### **The Ordination Process**

Approved Jonathan Ross to be a Candidate for the Holy Orders of the Diaconate

Approved Jack Karn to be a Candidate for the Holy Orders of the Diaconate

Approved Kathleen Moore to be Ordained as a Priest

Approved Thom Rock to be Ordained as a Transitional Deacon

### **Consents to Episcopal Elections**

The Rev. Canon Lucinda Ashby as Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real

The Rev. Martha “Marty” Stebbins as Bishop of the Diocese of Montana

The Rev. Dr. Lennon Yuan-Rung Chang as Bishop of the Diocese of Taiwan

The Rev. Susan B. Haynes as Bishop of the Diocese of Southern Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Mark Allan Van Koevering as Bishop of the Diocese of Lexington Kentucky

The Rev. Deon Kevin Johnson as the Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri

The Rev. Canon Frank S. Logue as the Bishop of the Diocese of Georgia

The Rev. Poulsen C. Reed as the Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Oklahoma

The Very Rev. Craig Loya as the Bishop of the Diocese of Minnesota

The Rev. Dr. Glenda S Curry as the Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Alabama

### **Other Actions**

Approved a new budget for the Consecration of Bishop-elect The Rev. Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown

Approved a response to the non-consent from the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Dallas

Elected Scottie Emery-Ginn to serve as President of the Standing Committee for one year.

Elected the Rev. Kim Hardy to serve as Secretary of the Standing Committee for one year.

Authorized the President of the Standing Committee, the Secretary of the Standing Committee and the Canon to the Ordinary to approve quitclaim deeds on behalf of the Standing Committee.

Authorized the President to work with the Diocesan Council to give Bishop Shannon time off commensurate with the Diocesan Handbook and to discuss modifying the Diocesan Handbook to encourage people to use their spouse’s healthcare.

Authorized Tom Rees to be authorized to sign off on Bishop consents in the President's absence.  
Approved 2019 Quitclaims that were inadvertently not sent to the Standing Committee for review  
Approved Tom Rees to be Secretary Pro-Tem while the Secretary is traveling

### **Bishop Search**

Signed the Letter of Agreement with The Rev. Dr Shannon MacVean-Brown July 1, 2019 as Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Vermont

Standing Committee members for 2018-2019 were: (Clergy) The Rev. Dr. Richard R. Swanson (President 2017-2019, term expires 2020), The Rev. Kim Hardy (Secretary 2019-2020, term expires 2021), The Rev. Jennie Anderson (2022) and The Rev. Lisa Ransom (2023); (Lay members) Paul Harrington (2020), Lars Hunter (2021), Scottie Emery-Ginn (Secretary 2018-2019, President 2019-2020, term expires 2022) and Tom Rees (2023). The President is honored to work alongside a talented, dedicated, and faithful committee, offering their work to the glory of God and in service to the Episcopal Church in Vermont.

Scottie Emery-Ginn, President,  
Standing Committee 2019-2020

## Liturgy Commission Report

In February of 2020 Bishop MacVean-Brown reconstituted the Liturgy Commission of the Diocese of Vermont. I was honored to be asked to chair the Commission. The pandemic struck soon after and so much of our work, though not all, has been online.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Bishop MacVean-Brown founded an online prayer community. Each day Morning Prayer and Compline are celebrated. The Rev. Kathleen Moore facilitated the online Zoom room until July. The Bishop led daily prayer. In July the group moved to a model where others take responsibility for leading on a rota. *The Green Mountain Online Abbey* was eventually chosen as a name. The Rev. Deacon Mary Taggart agreed to continue as Zoom facilitator upon Kathleen's departure. This community has a significant faithful following and is a source of strength and consolation for many, not only in our diocese but from other places.

The first major project and creative endeavor was a Zoom diocesan service: *A Pentecost Celebration of Community: An Order of Worship for the Evening*. The planning team included the Rev. Deacon Stannard Baker, the Rev. Lisette Baxter, the Rev. Angela Emerson, Mr. Michael Hartigan, the Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown, the Rev. Kathleen Moore, the Rev. Amy Spagna, and myself as Chair. The project was well received and served not only as an opportunity to worship and celebrate the Church, but also as a model for worship that can be done online.

In July an in-person experimental liturgy was offered at the Rock Point Outdoor Chapel to experience and discern what would be involved in organizing and offering outdoor worship during the pandemic, as well as possible pitfalls. The event was attended by 22 people (with a maximum of 25 allowed) and was by invitation. The Bishop was the Officiant and Preacher. Members of the Restart Team as well as others selected from various parishes were invited and helped organize the event. We were grateful for the hospitality of the Conference Center for this event and will continue to glean information from feedback.

Over the summer a team including the Rev. Angie Emerson, the Rev. Susan Ohlidal, the Rev. Deacon Lucy Pellegrini, and myself as convenor began meeting to prepare a training program for laypeople in the art of leading Morning Prayer. The purposes are to increase participation of the laity in a liturgical leadership role and to train, support and encourage Morning Prayer leaders who will become part of regular worship rotas in their congregations, leading and serving in congregations that have no settled clergy, part-time clergy, and/or when a full-time clergyperson is not available. The course will lead to licensing by the Bishop.

Though not under the organizational purview of the Commission, our diocese is offering a preaching course to take place this summer into the fall, intended to encourage preaching gifts of lay people. The course is offered by *Backstory Preaching*. As of July, forty participants representing nineteen congregations have registered.

Fall plans include work on a Zoom Convention liturgy. I am grateful to have such talented and energetic colleagues, both lay and ordained, with whom to do this important work.

The Rev. Kim Hardy, Chair  
Liturgy Commission

## **Diocesan Commission on Ministry 2019-2020**

The Diocesan Commission on Ministry, currently a ten-member body appointed by the bishop, canonically consists of a Committee on Formation and a Committee on Discernment. In its current manifestation, however, the Committee on Formation is inactive and the bulk of the commission's work focuses on shepherding people seeking ordination through the steps of discernment until ordination.

Since summer of 2019, the commission has met five times (July, December 2019; March, June and August 2020) with people "in the process." Currently four people are in the beginning steps of discernment at the parochial level; six people have been admitted to Postulancy, two people are Candidates and three people have been ordained (the Rev'ds Kathleen Moore, Jonathan Ross and Thomas Rock). Of these people, six postulants are discerning ordination to the priesthood and one the diaconate. Of the candidates, one is seeking ordination to the priesthood and one the diaconate. Some are going to seminary (these days either virtually or in person or both), and some are reading on their own. Surprisingly, there are now many variables for each person in his or her journey because one can no longer assume that people participate in a conventional three-year seminary education (which many of the canons still presume). The commission spends a lot of time discussing these variants, which enrich our life and ministry here in Vermont.

Consequently, the commission is working on revisions of the handbooks for ordination to the priesthood (last revised in 2006) and discernment and ordination for Local Ministry Support Teams. The commission published a revised version of the handbook for ordination to the diaconate in 2017. The 2006 and 2017 handbooks can be found on the diocesan website.

I am grateful for the commitment and hard work of the members of the Commission on Ministry and their flexibility to meet in person or via Zoom: (the Rev'd Deacon) Stannard Baker, Beverly Barton, Eric Davis, (the Rev'd) David Hamilton (ex officio), (the Rev'd) Janet Brown, (the Rev'd) Scott Neal, Lisa Newton, (the Rev'd Dr) Titus Pressler, (the Rev'd) Shelie Richardson and Candace Vandouris. During this time-period, I am also grateful for the two Standing Committee members who served as liaisons, (the Rev'd) Kim Hardy and (the Rev'd) Lisa Ransom.

(the Rev'd Canon Dr) Lee Alison Crawford, Chair,  
Diocesan Commission on Ministry

## **Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM Report for 2019-20 School Year**

Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM (CCM) is an ecumenical and progressive campus ministry supported by six Protestant denominations: The Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian Church, American Baptist Church, and United Methodist Church. The Campus Minister, Rev. Joe Cotner, embodies CCM's ecumenical spirit: he is an ordained ELCA minister and a member of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Episcopal).

CCM's vision is to explore higher meaning in higher education at UVM. Our mission is to create a community that engages the mind, nurtures the spirit, inspires service, advances justice, and cares for creation.

The centerpiece of our engagement at UVM is a ministry of presence. Rev. Cotner attended events of the Prism Center, UVM's LGBTQ center, including their welcoming event at the start of the semester and a Pride Interfaith Service. The LGBTQ community is encouraged by the support and affirmation his presence brings. He also participated in a number of events hosted by the Interfaith Center, including a monthly Interfaith Dinner where participants enjoy a meal and discussion around selected topics. The Interfaith Coordinator and students from the different religious groups appreciate his openness to other traditions. Rev. Cotner also attended events of the Women's Center (now called Women & Gender Equity Center) and various academic talks on campus. Through this ministry of presence, Rev. Cotner has become a familiar face on campus, which has led to some private conversations with individual students, staff, and faculty.

Another emphasis of CCM's ministry is addressing food insecurity. We held monthly dinners open to everyone at UVM. Members from our supporting churches took turns preparing and bringing home-cooked meals to the Interfaith Center. We have no program or guided discussion at these dinners. The purpose is simply to provide a meal and allow for informal conversation, both of which the students really appreciate. For 2019-20, we had about a dozen students attend each month, which was up from 5-6 the previous couple of years.

CCM is also part of UVM's Food Insecurity Working Group. Katie Huggett, a member of our Board, participates on the Group. We are the only religious group that is part of this work. One of the main outcomes of the group's work was the Swipe Out Hunger program, in which students can donate dining hall meals for other students to use for free. The other major development was the opening of a campus food pantry, Rally Cat's Cupboard, on February 24. The pantry serves anyone on campus; students and staff have regularly utilized it. Even after campus shut down in March, the pantry continued to operate, although in a curtailed way, to serve staff and off-campus students. One of our supporting congregations is conducting a food drive for donations to the pantry, and we hope to involve our other congregations in the same way.

We conducted two discussion programs. A Bible study attended by students and faculty met in August at Vermont Pub and Brewery and in September at UVM's Davis Center (the student union). A discussion on faith and politics, emphasizing that not all Christians are politically conservative, took place in the fall. Entitled Spirituality on Tap, the program met in Brennan's Pub in the Davis Center.

A student who participates in CCM activities began the process of exploring a call to the Episcopal priesthood. Rev. Cotner and Board members Rev. Fred Moser and Lindsey Huddle are on the student's Discernment Committee.

When campus shut down in March, we switched to meeting via Zoom. For 2020-21, given the constraints of in-person activities, not to mention the risks, we purchased a Zoom account and will use it for all meetings and discussions. Rev. Cotner will use Zoom, FaceTime, or an old-fashioned phone call for individual conversations.

We are grateful for the tremendous support CCM receives from the Episcopal Church in Vermont. Members of our Board include Rev. Fred Moser (Board President) from Trinity, Shelburne; Lindsey Huddle (Treasurer) from St. James, Essex Junction; and Donna Toufexis from Cathedral Church of St. Paul. The diocese has been generous in its financial support as well. We thank God for your partnership in ministering with the UVM community.

Rev. Joe Cotner  
Campus Minister

## **Cathedral Church of St. Paul Annual Report to Convention, July 2019 – June 2020**

This is my first report to you as Dean & Rector of the Cathedral. I began my ministry on May 5 in the midst of the strangest time in my life in the Church, and perhaps in yours as well. Thank you for your warm welcome, and I look forward to serving the Cathedral and you for many years to come.

Much of the past reporting year was devoted to the search for the new Dean & Rector culminating in my call in January of 2020 and the departure of Interim Dean & Rector Laura Bryant on May 3, 2020. This past year also saw so much needed work on and in the building to include necessary upgrades to a portion of the fire system (though more is needed), replacement of some of the large nave windows, and an upgrade of a good portion of the HVAC system. We are hopeful that the HVAC upgrade will not only help us to be warm in winter and comfortable in the warmest months, but will also provide more energy efficiency, lowering our costs a bit. The HVAC work was only completed this summer, so we have yet to realize the gains.

Our financial picture was sound as we ended 2019, but 2020 has brought us the same problems many other churches are facing. We rely heavily on income from our parking lot (it is managed by an outside company and we have generally received around \$24,000-\$26,000 per year from that) which, since March, has been in significant decline. We also rely on a steady stream of guests at our Sunday services and a significant plate contribution, which the pandemic has made impossible. Our concern over income loss was significant enough to lead us to apply for a CARES Payroll Protection Loan from the SBA and a Bridge Loan from the diocese. We received both loans and, as of the end of June, have used the CARES loan and anticipate needing to use the Bridge loan by September. We remain hopeful moving toward 2021 that we will be able to increase our base pledge support, and that the income stream from the parking lot will resume as will in-person worship. But we are also working to manage expectations and developing contingency plans should income continue to fall.

We were thrilled to serve as host for the culminating events in the election of The Rt Revd Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown as the 11<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Diocese of Vermont. From the walk-about to the election convention to the fullness of the events surrounding her consecration and seating, we welcomed hundreds of Episcopalians from the wider church into this beautiful space and, most importantly, welcomed Bishop Shannon to her new Cathedral.

Liturgical offerings remained robust until the pandemic made in-person worship impossible. Sunday Zoom church continued without interruption and, with my arrival, we added virtual Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline services bringing the total weekly worship offerings to nine. We hope to purchase and install live-streaming equipment in the nave so that, when we are able to return there for worship, services will still and always be available on a virtual platform. This will also enable the live-streaming of diocesan events and services as well as major feast days when the Bishop is in residence.

We yet face one very large challenge concerning the full building: it is not accessible for those with mobility issues and is not very friendly for those with visual impairments. Coming into compliance will be a huge undertaking that will stretch forward many years, yet we are committed to making it happen. We look forward to one day welcoming all of you into your beautiful, fully accessible cathedral!

The Very Revd Greta Getlein, Dean & Rector

## **Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy**

Grounded in the love of God, the Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy (EHC) is a joint ministry of The Episcopal Church in New Hampshire and Vermont. Our chaplains offer pastoral presence and spiritual connection for Episcopalians at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) during times of illness and vulnerability.

The current Chaplain, the Rev. James C. Ransom, and Associate Chaplain, the Rev. Lisa M. Ransom, reported the following statistics about their ministry in 2019: The chaplains visited Episcopal patients at DHMC on 151 days, giving 448 hours to this ministry. They visited 447 different individuals, making 671 visits. Episcopal patients came from 76 towns in New Hampshire, and 65 in Vermont, as well as eight other states and one foreign country. The Chaplains extend to patients the Sacramental Ministry of the Church: Holy Communion, the Laying on of Hands and Anointing of the Sick, the Reconciliation of a Penitent, as well as Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child and Ministry at the Time of Death.

The Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy, a 501(c)(3), is governed by its instruments of incorporation, its bylaws, and by a “Letter of Understanding” with the Bishops of the Dioceses of New Hampshire and Vermont which outlines the relationship of EHC to The Episcopal Church. The seven-member Board of Directors, from both New Hampshire and Vermont, is currently composed of Laura Kent, Chair, St. James, Woodstock, VT; Elizabeth Ruml, Secretary, St. Thomas, Hanover, NH; Arthur Young, Treasurer, St. Thomas, Hanover, NH; Elizabeth Lowell, St. Andrew’s, New London, NH; Mark Preece, Rector, St. Martin’s, Fairlee, VT; Paul Glover, St. Thomas, Hanover, NH; Elizabeth Higgins, St. Paul’s, White River Junction, VT.

The Chaplaincy, with an annual budget of \$20,000, is dependent on the generous gifts of the bishops, clergy, and congregations of the two dioceses, as well as individuals who value this ministry. Your contributions are welcome and may be directed to the Treasurer at: Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy, 9 W. Wheelock St., Hanover, NH 03755. Checks should be made out to “Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy.”

When coming to DHMC for treatment, please help us find you by registering as an Episcopalian upon admission. You may contact the Chaplain directly: (603) 526-4869 or ransom.james.c@gmail.com. You may also call the DHMC’s Office of Chaplaincy to request an Episcopal Chaplain.

Laura Kent, Chair  
Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy

## Province I Report

The Episcopal Province of New England, which is one of the nine geographical gatherings of dioceses within the Episcopal Church, exists to support the Body of Christ. The mission of the Province, also known as Province I, is to further the work of and deepen relationships in The Episcopal Church in New England. The Province accomplishes this by coordinating the interdependent ministries of the seven dioceses in a spirit of mutual responsibility.

The Coordinator of the Province of New England works with diocesan staff and congregational leaders to coordinate efforts, communicate information, share resources, and make connections to work for God's mission in the world, restoring people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Province I consists of the seven New England dioceses of the Episcopal Church:

[The Diocese of Connecticut](#)

[The Diocese of Maine](#)

[The Diocese of Massachusetts](#)

[The Diocese of New Hampshire](#)

[The Diocese of Rhode Island](#)

[The Diocese of Vermont](#)

[The Diocese of Western Massachusetts](#)

Much has happened in Province I over the past year. Our New England Province is very active on a broad base of ministries. Since the fall of 2019 Province I began significant changes in organization and people. These are highlighted in the bulleted points below

- In the Fall of 2019 the bishops of Province I announced the call of the Rev. Dr. Lynda Tyson to be the new dean of the Province I School for Deacons. Dean Tyson began her ministry on Nov. 1, 2019. She is a priest in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) and formerly Coordinator of the Annand Program for Spiritual Formation at Berkeley and Yale Divinity Schools. The School for Deacons is a foundational mission of the province and is being broadly supported by all the dioceses of New England and is actively being more fully integrated in to diocesan formation.
- Effective November 14, 2019, the Rev. Kit Wang, President of the Province, accepted the resignation of Province I's Executive Director, Dr. Julie Lytle. Wang said, "Julie's tenure as ED has greatly enriched the life of Province I as well as the broader church, particularly enhancing network relationships as we work together to expand ministry and formation opportunities." Julie accepted a position at Bexley Seabury Seminary where she worked half time for the past year. She joins them fulltime as Director of Distributive and Lifelong Learning Initiatives and Associate Professor of Educational Leadership.
- After a months-long search process, on July 1, 2020 the Executive Committee of Province I was delighted to announce the call of Emily Keniston to be the Coordinator of Province I. Emily has now begun her ministry and is eagerly digging into the work of getting to know both the members and ongoing ministries of Province I. Emily specializes in innovative approaches to building community, catalyzing action and addressing emerging issues. "I look forward to celebrating lifelong learning, sharing resources and most especially God's love with all people," she said. "In the early days of this work I have been deeply moved by the depth and breadth of

ministry shared among people in this province.” Her experience and accomplishments in the use of online assets and social networking for faith formation are a great strength for bringing people together in the Province in this pandemic era.

- Emily’s position as Coordinator of Province I reflects a shift of the Province toward a more horizontal structure which include enlarging the Executive Committee from three to six members and ensuring that its membership includes lay as well as clergy. The Fall 2020 Synod on Sept. 26 approved canonical changes to reflect this movement to a more horizontal organization. Each diocese is now authorized and encouraged to elect three delegates to Synod, which is now called the Provincial Conference, instead of the previous two, provided that the three include at least one clergy and one lay person. Elected to the Executive Committee were Kim McAusland of New Hampshire, Maggie Sweeney of Western Massachusetts, and Olive Swinsky of Rhode Island, who join President Kit Wang, who is a priest in Maine, Bishop Ian Douglas of Connecticut as Vice President, and the Rev. Titus Presler of Vermont as Treasurer.
- In its financial management, the Executive Committee has engaged the services of HarQuin Bookkeeping to handle the finances of the province, including accounts payable and the preparation of monthly financial reports. The 2021 budget will be presented at a Province meeting on Thursday, Nov. 19, at 8 a.m. via Zoom. The Province is grateful to Canon Terence Reimer of the Diocese of Maine for handling provincial finances over the past five years.

With the changes in structure and people of the province there is a revitalization going on with the Ministry Networks. These networks are:

Diaconal Ministry	Exploring Diversity/Nurturing Culture
Faith Formation	Stewardship of Creation
Campus Ministries	Human Trafficking
Spiritual Direction/Spiritual Directors	Evangelism
All Our Children	Seed Money for Growing God’s Mission
	Global Mission

The major portion of the 2020 Provincial Conference, which was held on Zoom, consisted of meetings of these networks. This is expected to be the pattern in the future as well.

The 2020 provincial budget of about \$98,548 is funded mostly by diocesan assessments, which are assigned according to a diocese’s relative size. The Diocese of Vermont contributes \$7,224 to the provincial budget.

Province I as an organization and as an active Body of Christ in our region strengthens the mission and work of all the churches and Episcopalians in New England. The resources available through the Province are rich in leading and supporting all of New England’s Episcopalians to Christ’s love. Explore the website (<https://www.province1.org>) and then join in one or more than one of the varying ministry networks. The journey together in New England is rich and diversified in Christ.

Rev. Bob Wilson  
Rev. Titus Presler

## Global Episcopal Mission Network

Vermont's membership in the Global Episcopal Mission Network ([GEMN](#)) supports the church's one network for global mission and gives people of the diocese an opportunity to participate in webinars, formation programs and conferences designed to stimulate global Christian engagement and promote best practices in world mission.

The coronavirus pandemic has prompted GEMN to develop innovative ways to stimulate global work in mission. The annual [Global Mission Conference](#) that was scheduled for April this year at Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis was postponed to April 2021 online. Continuing under the theme of "Earthkeeping: Creation Care in Global Mission," the conference will take place on and around Earth Day 2021, April 22, and will feature Katharine Jefferts Schori, oceanographer, theologian and bishop; Orlando Gomez, eco-activist and bishop of Costa Rica; Rachel Mash, priest convener of Green Anglicans in South Africa and member of the Anglican Communion Environmental Network; and Leon Sampson, eco-activist priest in Navajoland; in addition to numerous workshops.

For the first time the [Mission Formation Program](#) was offered online in April instead of in person, and over 35 people from around the church explored biblical and theological foundation, Anglican and Episcopal mission history, cultural and racial dynamics, and tools for organizing mission teams. The program will be offered online again in spring 2021, and Vermont Episcopalians are invited to participate.

In the spring GEMN published [Questing: The Way of Love in Global Mission](#), a seven-week study course based on the seven steps of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Way of Love. Available on Amazon Kindle, each step includes a story, biblical background, missional learning, prayer suggestions, and action options. This is a good resource for Vermont Episcopalians eager to explore global engagement within the confines of the pandemic.

In September, GEMN launched Mission Thursdays, a series of Zoom webinars with mission activists exploring how they're pursuing global mission during the pandemic. These will become monthly this fall, with notice of them appearing in "The Mountain." A toolkit of online webinars and video resources for global mission will be forthcoming from a collaboration among GEMN, the Standing Commission on World Mission and the Office of Global Partnerships, funded by a \$50,000 [grant](#) from the Constable Fund.

As the diocesan liaison for GEMN, I invite Vermont Episcopalians to be in touch with me about your own interest and involvement in global mission so that we can share resources and support one another in developing missional companionship with Christians in other parts of the world. You can reach me at: 802-326-3157, or [tituspresler@post.harvard.edu](mailto:tituspresler@post.harvard.edu).

The Rev. Dr. Titus Presler, GEMN Liaison

## Mission Farm Annual Convention Report 2020

We are delighted to announce that after deep discernment we, Lisa Ransom and Rachel Field, have been invited by Bishop Shannon to imagine a new ministry for the Diocese at Mission Farm. In so many ways, this present moment contains deep change and longing. Change from indoor physical gatherings, to remote or outdoor gatherings. Longing for connection, for new models, and for the comforts that familiar places and patterns can offer. With this reality in mind, we have been listening deeply with the earth to imagine what God is inviting for our faith community in Vermont at this moment. We have heard themes of **abundance** - the increase of the land brought for the healing of all people, of **access** - the right of every human to have good food and beautiful places to inhabit, **hospitality** - the importance of welcoming the stranger and friend to rest, learn, and renew ourselves together.

Beginning together in July of this year, we have started to bring together the infrastructure and vision that will enable us to move forward boldly in abundance, hospitality, and with accessibility to all. A new roof was installed on the historic church at Mission Farm, Church of Our Saviour. Despite the pandemic, this church continues to be an icon of grace in the heart of the Green Mountains. It serves as a visible reminder of our presence. We have connected with a half dozen Rutland County non-profit organizations addressing food access and justice who gather together (virtually now!) under the umbrella of the Rutland County Hunger Council. We have raised \$15,000+ in the span of six weeks from state agencies, community organizations, and The Episcopal Church. We have begun to work with Rural Vermont and to become the Rutland County hub for the Abenaki Land Link Project, which is a collaboration with the Abenaki nation and Vermont farmers.

We have also listened and prayed together about the vision of Mission Farm going forward. The renewed vision that we have discerned includes an operational CSA farm that will be available to individuals and parishes with produce, eggs, poultry, bread, and more. In the past few months we have received grants to install an outdoor chapel and classroom for worship, retreat, and educational opportunities. We have reviewed our forest management plan to increase biodiversity and maintain the beauty of our woods so that all those who pass through the trails can see and know the majesty of the trees and our belief that they reveal a part of God's glory.

We have also refreshed our gardens and created 5,000 sq feet of garden space to grow for the 2021 season as well as for teaching and programming. Details in terms of cost, frequency of delivery, and general types of produce for the Mission Farm CSA will be available in January 2021 along with sign up forms so that you, or your parish can purchase a share. Each share purchased will provide an additional share of food for a family or individual in need.

In addition to growing food, we are committed to growing relationships with each other and with the land. Because of this we are offering programming through Mission Farm for people seeking connection. Each Tuesday and Thursday we offer a half hour of silent contemplation and centering prayer through zoom, and all are welcome to rest in the grace of the world. In October, we will offer a pizza and movie night on the grounds (and virtually!) in collaboration with American Flatbread showing the film "Kiss the Ground," which is a documentary describing how regenerative farming can reverse the effects of climate change.

This advent we will offer two days of quiet contemplation - in person and virtually. December 1st from 9-12 am we welcome people looking to set an intention for Advent of this year and to connect with the divine feminine. On December 21st from 4-7pm we welcome folks looking for quiet time to rest in the renewal of the light, and to contemplate the coming of Christ. We will continue to offer retreats, classes,

and opportunities for spiritual deepening with each other and the land and our program schedule is available on our website [missionfarmvt.org](http://missionfarmvt.org). Please reach out to Lisa Ransom or Rachel Field for more information, to schedule a visit, or to have a conversation.

As we continue to live into the imaginings of the Spirit that are taking root here at Mission Farm, we are committed to deep listening. Listening to the land, listening to our bodies, and listening to our neighbors. Through this listening we have been invited to reflect on our work through our Average Weekly Engagement (AWE) rather than commodifying our participation. Our AWE is a way of tracking where the needs and longings are in the community and following those sparks to support the mission of love that God is working in the world.

We invite you to walk with us in this journey of healing. Healing ourselves and our communities with the land and leaning further into the abundance of God that nourishes our souls and bodies. Come and be. Come and learn. Come and grow with us.

Lisa Ransom  
Rachel Field

## Green Mountain Witness

It has been two years since evangelism was the theme of the 2018 Diocesan Convention under the title, [“Go Tell It on the Mountains: Evangelism Vermont-Style.”](#) The Green Mountain Witness Team has since then sought to catalyze evangelism engagement around the diocese through conversations with parish leaders, both lay and clergy.

Significant progress was made, as reported to the 2019 Diocesan Convention. That convention urged congregations to pursue evangelism and affirmed the Episcopal Church’s understanding of evangelism as “the spiritual practice of seeking, naming and celebrating Jesus’ loving presence in the lives of all people, and then inviting them to more.”

The Green Mountain Witness Team made ambitious plans for expanded congregational outreach in 2020, but our work has been hampered by the coronavirus pandemic. Sustaining worship and community life have preoccupied the energies both of congregations and team members during the health crisis. In addition, the personal outreach that is helpful in encouraging evangelism has been difficult to undertake.

St. Mary’s Church in Wilmington planned an evangelism conference for 2020 that would highlight the role of music and be an important venue for dioceses in Province I, and the project received a grant from the Evangelism Initiative of the Episcopal Church. The conference was postponed by the pandemic, and we look forward to supporting some version of it in the future. Bishop Shannon was enthusiastic about joining the Green Mountain Witness Team for a retreat at Rock Point in early 2020, but that also was postponed by the pandemic.

The Green Mountain Witness Team looks forward to engaging opportunities for digital evangelism during the pandemic and beyond. This will include consultations and webinars via Zoom and promotion of online study courses. Meanwhile we recommend the evangelism [resources](#) available on the Episcopal Church website and two books: Kit Carlson’s *Speaking Our Faith*, and David Gortner’s *Transforming Evangelism* in the series “Transformations: The Episcopal Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” Especially helpful is the new six-part digital course, [“Embracing Evangelism.”](#)

The Green Mountain Witness [Team](#) includes Jamison Dunne of Trinity, Shelburne, a senior at UVM; Joe Fortner of St. Mary’s, Wilmington, an attorney and musician; Lindsey Huddle of St. James, Essex, an attorney; Jenny Ogleby of St. James, Essex, former manager of Hopkins Bookshop; and Katie Runde of Christ Church, Bethel, an artist and musician. We have been sorry to lose the Rev. Kathleen Moore, who has moved to a new ministry in Pennsylvania, but we have been delighted to welcome as a new member the Rev. Robert Leopold, interim pastor of Christ Church, Montpelier.

It has been a joy and privilege to convene such a gifted group of evangelists. Please feel free to be in touch with me: 802-326-3157, or [tituspresler@post.harvard.edu](mailto:tituspresler@post.harvard.edu)

The Rev. Dr. Titus Presler, Convener

## **Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center, July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020**

### Overview

Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center was established in 1952 and is located in historic Chelsea, Vermont on 122 acres of beautiful land and woods. At Brookhaven, we are committed to providing quality clinical and educational programming for male youth ages 6 - 13 with emotional/behavioral disturbances and learning difficulties. Trauma informed services offered at Brookhaven include therapeutic residential care, individual, group, and family therapy, case management services, psychopharmacological support, and specialized education.

Brookhaven's campus is made up of a main building, learning center, family retreat, a sports pavilion, and a number of outdoor areas that include playgrounds as well as options for hiking and swimming. The main building houses both administrative and clinical offices, kitchen and cafeteria, a dormitory that accommodates up to 8 youth, staff quarters, and a day room for TV watching, staff training, and other group activity. The Learning Center contains multiple rooms for classes, sensory activities, and individual quiet time, and serves the educational needs of both residents and day students. The Family Retreat provides an opportunity for parents of residents to have overnight and extended visits with their child in a home-like environment as well as to receive education and guided practice in building parenting skills. Brookhaven is committed to providing the services and support needed to help children and families achieve success both during and after treatment.

### Residential Program

As a licensed residential treatment center, Brookhaven specializes in providing therapeutic residential based services for male youth ages 6 - 13. This level of care is intensive and is often the result of chronic difficulty that has created impairment for the child and prevented success within the home, at school, and in the community. Most children who enter Brookhaven present with significant mental health issues and behavioral concerns for which placement into congregate care and clinical services becomes essential.

At Brookhaven, residents are provided with a comprehensive, collaborative, and clinically guided opportunity to heal and correct patterns that have hampered their progress elsewhere. Over an average one year stay, they receive constant supervision, structure, and support within a dormitory milieu. Direct care staff are the front line team members who assist Brookhaven youth with therapeutic programming, individual goals, and daily activities from wake-up to tuck-in. Brookhaven counselors conduct therapy with youth and their families, facilitate group therapy sessions, and closely monitor each child's progress through the program. In addition to regular counseling, Brookhaven youth meet with a child psychiatrist monthly for ongoing evaluation and pharmacotherapy if needed. The full time case manager helps maintain continuity between all services including providing psychoeducational groups, coordinating visits between youth and families, transporting residents to outside appointments, and overseeing the proper packaging and administering of any medications. Finally, Brookhaven administrators and leadership provide program oversight ensuring compliance with all standards of care, quality of services, staff supervision, and that needs are being met of the children, families, and community partners being served.

## Educational Program

The Brookhaven Learning Center is a Vermont Licensed Independent School and provides both general and special education services to attending students. In addition to the youth residing at Brookhaven, students from surrounding school districts also attend classes when identified as needing an alternative education placement. Brookhaven's team of classroom teachers, aides, and behavioral support staff are highly skilled at designing and delivering curriculum to meet the special needs of students who are typically unsuccessful in more conventional settings. Under the guidance of the Special Education Coordinator, teaching staff utilize therapeutic, creative, and highly experiential approaches to individualize instruction and motivate learning. As students progress through the program, plans are coordinated to help them transition back to regular ed classrooms, receive appropriate supports, and achieve long term school success.

## The Year in Review

As has been the case for most of society, Brookhaven has experienced an eventful year. From personnel matters to pandemics, our team has shown their ability to be nimble and adapt to ever-changing situations.

Notable staff activity over the period has included the retirement of Executive Director Tony Iazzo over summer 2019, and the departure of Clinical Coordinator Robin Allard in early 2020 to pursue full time private practice. Each had dedicated well over a decade of service in their respective roles at Brookhaven and we wished them well in their future endeavors. Likewise, we congratulated Educational Coordinator Ashley Grote on her new career as an administrator for a large neighboring school district and shared our gratitude for her 8 years of successful leadership at the Learning Center. Classroom teacher Jenna Ditchcos also resigned after a number of years of engaging and inspiring our students in order to accept a position closer to her home. She expressed her strong enjoyment of her Brookhaven career and her high regard for her students, coworkers, and the program.

Rocky Spino was welcomed as Brookhaven's new Executive Director in November 2019. Rocky brings with him over 3 decades of experience providing mental health services to youth in residential, educational, and community mental health settings. His range of experience includes nearly 25 years in private practice as a child therapist, positions of leadership in clinical programs, and 12 years as an adjunct professor of counselor education. Rocky has maintained his license to practice in 5 states, enjoyed publishing and presenting widely on childhood mental health topics and, before returning to Vermont, successfully led a mobile crisis response team across 10 counties in eastern Colorado. Rocky has enjoyed his first year at Brookhaven and is eager to continue to build on its record of success with his enthusiasm for helping children and the people and programs who serve them.

One cornerstone of Brookhaven's success has certainly been its core administrative team who have provided countless years of service, competent leadership, and valuable continuity in their respective roles.

Brenda Batten continues her second decade as Administrative Assistant to the director and the overall Brookhaven program. From fielding phone calls to processing payroll, Brenda is a constant source of knowledge and support to both staff and stakeholders. For over 7 years, Residential Coordinator Jessica Allen has overseen the personal care of the boys residing at Brookhaven ensuring their 24 hour safety and supervision. These areas include training and scheduling direct care staff, supervising the food and maintenance programs, planning the daily activities of the residents and, more recently, acting as

COVID coordinator to adopt procedures and implement safe practices in response to the Coronavirus. Angela Bisson remains in her role of over a decade as Brookhaven's Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) Coordinator. In this position, Angie is responsible for ensuring that all staff involved in the direct care of Brookhaven youth acquire and maintain strong skills in preventing and de-escalating crisis situations. Additionally, Angie has continued to offer Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training to families of Brookhaven youth (TCIF) to help provide them with the tools to be successful when their children transition back into the home. Finally, after 6 years of providing skillful counseling to children and families at Brookhaven, Abby Jarvis recently assumed the position of lead clinician. In addition to continuing her role of therapist, Abby assists the Director in monitoring the delivery of clinical services as well as supporting new clinicians in learning and performing their duties. Together with the Executive Director, these leaders are ever grateful to a highly committed Board of Directors who care deeply about the mission of Brookhaven and always see that the program has what is required to meet the needs of both staff and those being served.

Rounding out the above leadership, of course, are the many other professionals and support staff who maintain their dedicated effort and hard work every day to help Brookhaven youth work through difficulty, succeed in the program, and be their best. Scott Hoyt, Kylie Edwards, and Art Rafus continue their years as fully credentialed and multi-talented Learning Center staff who excel at tailoring instruction to special needs students and helping them achieve. Head of Maintenance Michael Bogardus keeps Brookhaven's campus looking beautiful and the facility buildings and equipment operational. Last but not least, the Direct Care team who guide our youth daily through the program count among them a number of staff approaching up to 20 years of service. Ultimately, Brookhaven is very blessed to have a team devoted to working together and continuing a track record of offering children help and healing.

Over the current reporting period, Brookhaven has continued to make structural modifications in order to meet changeable program needs and enhance services.

Beginning last fall and continuing into the beginning of the year, the Brookhaven dorms and other areas of the building received some much needed upgrades. Residents all received new heavy duty bed frames and mattresses for their bedrooms that offered greater comfort and durability. Additionally, bedroom entrances and other entryways received new commercial grade doors and fixtures more suitable for safety and longevity. A state grant was sought and awarded that enabled conversion of all entrances to the main office, school, and dorm areas to full electronic keyless entry. Staff are provided with FOB type identification cards and authorizations to access areas needed to fulfill their duties. This system not only provides added convenience, but also much enhanced security.

Other technological upgrades included the adoption of an electronic health record system (EHR) to maintain clinical documentation, a platform for Brookhaven's employee email and data management, video conferencing capabilities, and an on-line service for employee time-keeping and payroll. These services in many cases not only replaced more outdated or expensive options, but also continued to organize and automate many tasks in ways that improved staff efficiency and availability.

Various other items have been important to improve and add-on as well in light of the limitations on accessing activities off campus during the pandemic lock downs. Accordingly, day rooms and group rooms in the main building have been furnished with better internet capability and smart TV's to accommodate staff meeting and training needs as well as client recreation and rewards. A highlight to this has been the addition of a home theater to the Family Retreat building complete with a projection system, 10 ft. movie screen, and surround sound. Both students and residents can earn group trips to enjoy movies in this new video room and snacks from the Brookhaven "concession stand" to complete

the cinema experience.

The arrival of COVID, of course, created the need for an abundance of other changes in approaches and equipment. The shutdown of school in March required teaching staff to switch to distance learning through the rest of the academic year as well as clinical and residential staff to accommodate instruction, family therapy, and visits between residents and significant others remotely. This required development of both the technical and staffing infrastructure to support these changes. Moreover, protocols were established to conform to CDC and state guidelines for conducting health checks, sanitizing, and responding to any illness. From cooks and classroom teachers to groundskeepers and counselors, Brookhaven could not be more proud of our entire team who have gone above and beyond to maintain a safe environment for our essential workers and youth during this unprecedented period.

Finally, perhaps even more important than physical upgrades, has come a shift in philosophy not uncommon under changes in leadership. Under the new directorship, greater safety and stability in the program have been prioritized. Although challenging and sometimes dangerous behaviors are not unanticipated from clients being served in residential treatment, aggressive patterns from Brookhaven youth were unfortunately becoming extreme. Through very focused attention on this issue, a zero-tolerance attitude toward violence, strong incentives for cooperative habits, and an expectation that our youth access the abundant support available to them rather than act out destructively, marked and measurable improvement has been realized. Critical incidents have now become isolated rather than routine and have reduced from hundreds of episodes per month to often single digits. For some youth, these occurrences have all but been eliminated. This trend toward less volatility has allowed our boys to enjoy many more freedoms and resulted in less burnout, worker's comp claims, and absenteeism in our staff. Overall, this transformation has been a credit to both our kids and crew who have recognized possibilities and worked together to establish a more adaptive and appealing program.

### Moving Forward

Most of summer 2020 for Brookhaven has been spent refining COVID procedures and preparing to welcome students back in September for the reopening of school. A large grant was awarded to Brookhaven from Efficiency Vermont in order to enhance the school ventilation system and enable a steady flow of filtered air in the building for staff and students. Elsewhere, materials were being gathered and plans were being made to establish areas beyond the building to add the option and benefits of outdoor classrooms. With health check protocols in place, campus-wide sanitizing and handwashing stations, and a chance to carry out all guidelines with both residents and day students over 4 weeks of summer camp in July, a safe and successful in-person start to the school year was anticipated. Despite the unique challenges of the past year, we remain optimistic about our professional team and proud traditions as we continue our special outreach to the youth who come to school at Brookhaven and who call it their home.

It is our pleasure to share this past year's activities with the attendees of the Diocesan Convention. And, on behalf of the children and staff, we offer our heartfelt gratitude to the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont for their ongoing generosity and support.

The Brookhaven Leadership Team  
Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center

## **Rock Point Commons report to Annual Convention**

***Rock Point Vision: To be a welcoming community of spirituality, community, creativity, education, training and environmental care***

The Rock Point Commons is made up of the operating entities at Rock Point: The Rock Point Center, The Rock Point Camps and The Solar Orchard. These operating entities are supported by a full and part time staff consisting of the Executive Director (Paul Habersang), our marketing manager (Carrie Williams Howe), the camp director (Julie Garwood) and our security and property manager (Chuck Courcy).

The activities of the staff are monitored and directed by the Rock Point Board which has been given responsibility for oversight of the Rock Point property and the operations thereon. The Rock Point Board members are Bishop Shannon, Shawn Bryan, Jackie Arbuckle, Allan Carpenter, Bob Wright, Wallace Good, Rev. Rob Spainhour, Frank Guillot, Laurie Broughton and David McKay.

Perhaps the most exciting event for the Rock Point Commons was the decision to call Paul Habersang to be the first Executive Director of Rock Point. Since Paul arrived significant improvements have been made to the Rock Point Center to make it a more inviting space for the groups that use it. These include a thorough deep cleaning of the entire property, new furniture, several weatherization and energy efficiency projects and replacement of failed equipment. As a result of this work the Rock Point Center is a far more inviting venue for meetings and events. We expect that, when this pandemic is behind us, the Center will see increased bookings due to this enhanced appeal.

While Covid-19 has resulted in cancellation of almost all meetings at the Rock Point Center for the foreseeable future, alternative uses of the property have resulted in some income and significant benefits to our surrounding community. During the first quarter of 2020 we provided housing for the Howard Center and our kitchen was pressed into service to provide meals for people relocated to North Beach as a result of the pandemic. These outreach efforts are an extension of our Christian ministry to our neighbors in the surrounding community.

Preservation of Rock Point is one of the key responsibilities of the Rock Point Board. Through the extraordinary efforts of Craig Smith a comprehensive effort to reconstruct and improve the trails on Rock Point is well underway. In addition, conservation easements have been crafted that will preserve the historic ecological gem that is Rock Point. The easements with the Lake Champlain Land Trust and supported by the City of Burlington and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board will ensure that Rock Point remains an unspoiled wilderness in the heart of Burlington for future generations.

The Solar Orchard continues to provide 100% of the electricity used on Rock Point and continues to meet or exceed all our projections.

The Upon This Rock campaign provided a significant capital infusion that allowed us to make long overdue repairs to the bishop's house and to replace failing roofs at the Center. Future energy saving enhancements now under review include using ground source heat pumps to provide heating and cooling for the bishop's house and perhaps for other facilities at Rock Point, reducing or eliminating our use of heating oil and significantly reducing our carbon and CO2 footprint.

In summary, Rock Point is thriving in the face of many challenges and remains a sanctuary for all who visit. As the following brief financial report shows, even with the cancellation of summer camp and

most of our conference reservations, by spending less and working creatively, Rock Point remains modestly profitable. A partnership now just forming with the Burlington School system will have us house one of their school programs for the balance of this year and perhaps for the rest of the school year since they have been forced to move out of the high school building. This partnership will result in some additional income and just as important, continues our mission of education in a new and creative way.

**2020 Rock Point Commons  
Budget Summary**

*As of August 31, 2020*

Updated: 9.15.2020

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual for Period	2019 Actuals Annual	Percent of Budget	2020 Budget	2020 Actuals
--	----------------	---------------------------	---------------------------	-------------------------	----------------	-----------------

**INCOME**

Rock Point Center	350,001.76	\$154,573.38	\$301,840.73	44%	\$155,817.64	\$61,673.20
Commons Income	234,525.50	\$139,225.60	\$254,942.48	59%	\$229,875.44	\$242,239.38
Rock Point Camp	110,702.01	\$79,340.22	\$86,516.92	72%	\$42,484.20	\$3,168.77
Property Income	28,035.84	\$17,097.13	\$32,805.73	61%	\$37,077.49	\$20,906.83
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>723,265.11</b>	<b>\$390,236.33</b>	<b>\$676,105.86</b>		<b>\$465,254.77</b>	<b>\$327,988.18</b>

**EXPENSES**

Rock Point Center	255,149.17	\$113,133.17	\$215,875.24	44%	\$72,140.42	\$41,857.88
Commons	26,700.00	\$23,445.10	\$28,303.01	88%	\$12,244.98	\$6,342.56
Property	26,677.91	\$23,577.38	\$23,332.09	88%	\$16,415.04	\$21,380.65
Rock Point Camp	26,682.48	\$15,561.01	\$20,529.65	58%	\$2,883.83	\$2,699.34
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>335,209.57</b>	<b>\$175,716.66</b>	<b>\$288,039.99</b>		<b>\$103,684.27</b>	<b>\$72,280.43</b>

<b>Operating Net Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>388,055.54</b>	<b>\$214,519.67</b>	<b>\$388,065.87</b>	55%	<b>\$361,570.50</b>	<b>\$255,707.75</b>
--	-------------------	---------------------	---------------------	-----	---------------------	---------------------

Total Personnel Compensation	429,357.43	\$212,629.64	\$324,351.69	50%	\$306,813.14	\$210,880.89
------------------------------	------------	--------------	--------------	-----	--------------	--------------

<b>Total Net Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>41,301.88</b>	<b>\$1,890.03</b>	<b>\$63,714.18</b>	-5%	<b>\$54,757.36</b>	<b>\$44,826.86</b>
------------------------------------	------------------	-------------------	--------------------	-----	--------------------	--------------------

Shawn Bryan, President  
Rock Point Board of Directors

## Rock Point Center Report for Convention 2020

As you might imagine, life on Rock Point has been very different since the coronavirus pandemic began in the United States earlier this spring. We started the year off very optimistically with many bookings for retreats, meetings, weddings, and other group gatherings. In March when it became evident that it was no longer possible for groups of people to gather safely, most every booking was either cancelled or postponed. It was disappointing to say the least, but the staff on Rock Point understood completely and we did our best to compassionately work with all of our customers. In the midst of this disappointment, we realized that there were also other opportunities to serve our local community and we did so in the following ways:

In early April, we reached out to the Howard Center of greater Burlington to see if we could help them in any way. The Howard Center took us up on our offer by housing several of their clients in the Van Dyck lodging building. This was a way to provide their clients with a safe place to stay while insuring social distancing. Guests of the Howard Center stayed with us from April until early June.

We also offered our commercial kitchen to another social service agency in Burlington known as ANEW Place. The sous chef from ANEW Place, Brian Hofmann, operated the kitchen from early April through the end of July. Brian produced many hot meals for persons currently experiencing homelessness who were located both on North Beach and within ANEW Place's own transitional housing dwellings. We were happy to support ANEW Place and it was a pleasure to have Brian here every day when things were just so quiet on Rock Point.

Because we found it necessary to cancel summer camp, another opportunity to serve local Vermont families came to light. Instead of allowing the camp cabins to remain vacant for the summer, we decided to repurpose the cabins and offer Vermont families the chance to "staycation" on Rock Point. It didn't take long to book the available cabins for the summer! In addition to Vermont families staying in the cabins, we also hosted employees of the Green Mountain Club who lodged with us from June through mid-October. We truly enjoyed all those who were able to be with us.

Most recently, Rock Point Center also became host to Burlington High School's "OnTop" program. Because PCB's were discovered in the air at the BHS facility, it became necessary to evacuate the school and students were again forced back to remote learning. The leadership team who leads "OnTop" felt it was necessary to provide a space for in person learning for students in their program. Principal Bobby Riley reached out to us to inquire about the possibility of transitioning learning from BHS onto the Rock Point. We wanted to help them out and readily agreed. Students are currently safely spread out throughout the Rock Point Center and the faculty is ensuring proper sanitation and social distancing including wearing masks at all times. Rock Point is providing some stability for these students in an uncertain and tumultuous time.

While the pandemic has turned the world upside down, there have been "silver linings" that have shone with glimmers of hope. We at Rock Point are pleased to have supported some of our local neighbors in their times of need and we hope to continue doing so in the future.

Paul Habersang, Executive Director  
Rock Point Commons

## **Rock Point Camp Convention Report 2020**

### **Camp Overview**

As many of you know, Rock Point Camp was cancelled for the 2020 season in light of COVID-19. This decision was made after receiving input from the CDC, State, and medical and health communities. The virus and the state and health restrictions jeopardized our ability to deliver the camp experience parents and staff have come to trust. This was a sad decision, but we continue to believe this was the right choice, prioritizing safety above all else. Campers were all offered full refunds as well as a suggested donation to Rock Point Camp and we were pleased to see that a handful of families graciously donated to our camp in lieu of a refund. We were judicious in our early expenditures, limiting all non-essential costs to minimize any residual debt.

Looking forward, we continue to assess the changing camp landscape and its future at Rock Point Commons. Day camps continue to grow in popularity and have historically filled to capacity during many of our early summer weeks. While we are still unsure what impact the virus may have next summer, we are cautiously optimistic in our plans to welcome children back to the property. We hope to offer even more day camp experiences in 2021 and expand our age group offerings for our older youth, as well. Despite these changes, Rock Point Camp's focus on a small camp atmosphere, outdoor exploration, and mindfulness will all remain a priority.

We also believe it is vital to continue hiring a diverse staff, representative of those we serve and hope to serve in the future. Finally, we expect to continue our legacy of accessibility at Rock Point for all campers, ensuring that no one is turned away due to inability to pay or support. Our scholarship program has remained strong, thanks to generous donors, like you.

### **Rock Point Commons and our Commitment to Diversity**

Our staff has also used this time to address our commitment to diversity. We, at Rock Point Commons, want to do more in our work toward social justice, diversity, and inclusion. In keeping with our vision to be a "welcoming sanctuary of spirituality, creativity, community, education, training, and environmental stewardship" we recognize that there are many opportunities to reevaluate and reassess our practices. We hope to go beyond just words and begin the hard conversations that allow us to expose systemic injustices and learn to be stronger allies. Recognizing that this work must happen on several levels to create effective change, we hope to take a guided, multi-faceted approach toward our commitment on diversity and inclusion.

Our work has only just begun, having recently met as a staff to discuss the book, *White Fragility*, by Robin DiAngelo. We were left with several takeaways both personally and professionally, and hope that our deepened understanding of privilege and racism informs our strategic plan moving forward. We invite our Rock Point Family to engage in these discussions alongside us as well as hold us accountable in our work to become a catalyst for change.

Julie Garwood, Director  
Rock Point Camp