



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> .....	8
<b>Financial Oversight and Audit Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020</b> .....	9
<b>Grants &amp; Loans Committee, July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020</b> .....	10
<b>The Standing Committee Report July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020</b> .....	12
<b>Liturgy Commission Report</b> .....	14
<b>Diocesan Commission on Ministry 2019-2020</b> .....	15
<b>Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM Report for 2019-20 School Year</b> .....	15
<b>Cathedral Church of St. Paul Annual Report to Convention, July 2019 – June 2020</b> ..	17
<b>Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy</b> .....	18
<b>Province I Report</b> .....	18
<b>Global Episcopal Mission Network</b> .....	20
<b>Mission Farm Annual Convention Report 2020</b> .....	21
<b>Green Mountain Witness</b> .....	23
<b>Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center, July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020</b> .....	24
<b>Rock Point Commons report to Annual Convention</b> .....	27
<b>Rock Point Center Report for Convention 2020</b> .....	29
<b>Rock Point Camp Convention Report 2020</b> .....	30
<b>CONVENTION 2020</b> .....	31
<b>BUDGET</b> .....	31
<b>MINUTES</b> .....	36
<b>BISHOP’S ADDRESS</b> .....	56
<b>ATTENDEES</b> .....	59

## 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 printed 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. Empy 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

**Total Funds Granted:** **\$ 84,740.09**

**Bishop Butterfield Revolving Loans Approved:**

Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington	\$ 45,000.00
HVAC System	
St. Stephen's, Middlebury	\$ 20,000.00
Bell Tower Repair and Restoration	
Christ Church, Montpelier	\$ 75,000.00
Critical building repairs	
St. Paul's, Vergennes	\$ 17,500.00
Reconfiguration of land and buildings	
Rock Point Board	\$ 25,000.00
Capital Projects	

**Total Loans Approved:** **\$182,500.00**

**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 1 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 Ditcheos 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>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
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

## **CONVENTION 2020**

### **BUDGET**

#### INCOME

#### INCOME

#### UNRESTRICTED

#### CONTRIB & MISSION SUPPORT

Mission Support Cong	810,000.00
Unit Fund - Admin Support	16,000.00

Bishop - Hunt	0.00
Bishop - Discretionary	0.00
Reserve Funds	0.00
Subtotal Contrib & Misson Support	<u>826,000.00</u>
OTHER INVESTMENT INCOME	
F Johnson TUA	0.00
Subtotal Unrestricted	<u>826,000.00</u>
UNIT FUND DIVIDEND INCOME	0.00
RESTRICTED INCOME	84,950.00
Episcopal Fund Dividend	0.00
FEAF Dividends	0.00
Local Missions Dividends	0.00
Human Needs Fund Dividends	0.00
TEC pledge fund Dividends	0.00
FEAF-NEK Dividends	0.00
Bishop House Mnt Dividends	0.00
Subtotal Restricted Income	<u>84,950.00</u>
UNRESTRICTED INCOME	80,000.00
Endowment Fund Dividends	0.00
Wilder Fund Dividends	0.00
Subtotal Unrestricted Income	<u>80,000.00</u>
Subtotal Unit Fund Dividend Income	<u>164,950.00</u>
Subtotal Income	<u>990,950.00</u>
INTEREST INCOME	0.00
Banking Interest	2,500.00
Investment Interest	0.00
Subtotal Interest Income	<u>2,500.00</u>
OTHER INCOME	0.00
Miscellaneous Income	0.00
Subtotal Other Income	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Subtotal Income</b>	<b><u>993,450.00</u></b>
EXPENSES	
<b>DIOCESAN MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM</b>	
PERSONNEL EXPENSE	
EE COMPENSATION	
Salaries & Wages	275,086.00

Canon for Cultural Tr Res	30,668.00
Payroll Tax Expense	30,385.00
Subtotal Ee Compensation	<u>336,139.00</u>

#### EE BENEFITS

H Insurance Premiums	22,385.00
Life Ins Premiums	308.00
Dental Premiums	2,513.00
ER 403(b) Contribution	27,509.00
HRA expense	5,000.00
Subtotal Ee Benefits	<u>57,715.00</u>

#### BISHOP

Bishop Salary	90,526.00
Bishop Pension	25,061.00
Subtotal Bishop	<u>115,587.00</u>
Subtotal Personnel Expense	<u>509,441.00</u>

#### NON-EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION

Transition Ministry	0.00
Historiographer	1,000.00
PT Clean/Grounds Keeper	0.00
Subtotal Non-employee Compensatio	<u>1,000.00</u>

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION

Cont Ed - Bishop	3,600.00
Prof Development - Staff	1,500.00
Subtotal Continuing Education	<u>5,100.00</u>

**Subtotal Ministry Support Team 515,541.00**

#### WIDER CHURCH SUPPORT

Episcopal Church Covenant	140,794.00
Prov One Share	7,250.00
Prov One Synod Deputies	250.00
VEC-VT Ecumenical Council	1,000.00
Ecumenical Interfaith Off	1,500.00
Global Mission Ntwk Coord	1,200.00
UTO Coordinator	100.00
ERD Coordinator	100.00
RP Commons Support	40,000.00

**Subtotal Wider Church Support 192,194.00**

#### ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE

## FINANCIAL EXPENSES

Accounting & Audit Exp	16,000.00
Liability Insurance	3,200.00
Property Insurance	22,000.00
Workers Comp Insurance	1,900.00
Payroll service fee	5,000.00
Bank Fees	0.00
Vanco processing fees	0.00
DioChancellor & Legal Exp	2,000.00
Subtotal Financial Expenses	<u>50,100.00</u>

DIOCESAN COUNCIL	0.00
Committee & Meeting Exp	1,000.00
Council Retreat	2,000.00
Subtotal Diocesan Council	<u>3,000.00</u>

## BISHOP ADMIN EXPENSES

BISHOP TRAVEL	5,350.00
Bishop mileage/airfare	0.00
Bishop meals/meetings	0.00
Bishop Lodging	0.00
Bishop Registration/Misc.	0.00
Bishop Vehicle Expense	6,800.00
Taxi & Pkg.	0.00
Subtotal Bishop Travel	<u>12,150.00</u>

## BISHOP HOUSE

Bishop house mnt	4,000.00
Bishop house utilities	6,510.00
BH Phones/Internet	2,820.00
Subtotal Bishop House	<u>13,330.00</u>
Subtotal Bishop Admin Expenses	<u>25,480.00</u>

## OFFICE EXPENSES

OFFICE ADMIN TRAVEL	7,100.00
MST Air/Train/Bus	0.00
MST Meals/Meetings	0.00
MST Lodging	0.00
MST Registration & Misc	0.00
MST Mileage & Pkg	0.00
Subtotal Office Admin Travel	<u>7,100.00</u>

## OFFICE EXPENSES

Office exp and supplies	13,500.00
Kitchen Supplies	0.00
Meals & Meetings	0.00
Miscellaneous Off Exp	0.00
Postage	2,500.00
Printing & Copy Expense	1,000.00
Subscriptions & dues	3,200.00
Subtotal Office Expenses	<u>20,200.00</u>

#### SOFTWARE / HARDWARE

Office Software	2,970.00
Hardware & Printers	3,000.00
Subtotal Software / Hardware	<u>5,970.00</u>

#### DIO OFFICE BUILDING

Dio office rental expense	40,000.00
Dio Off Repairs & Maint	4,000.00
Dio office utilities	6,510.00
Subtotal Dio Office Building	<u>50,510.00</u>

#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Dio Off Phone/Cell Phone	3,385.00
Dio Off Internet	1,000.00
Subtotal Telecommunications	<u>4,385.00</u>

#### COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Cantical Communications	48,000.00
Capes & Powers	8,680.00
Other Comm Expense	840.00
Website - Vanco Host Fees	850.00
Zoom/Web Conferencing	2,800.00
Subtotal Comm Services	<u>61,170.00</u>
Subtotal Office Expenses	<u>149,335.00</u>

**Subtotal Administrative Expense** **227,915.00**

#### FORMATION & MISSION SUPPT

Council Priorities	2,000.00
Fresh start program	500.00
Safe church training	4,000.00
Stewardship-TENS	1,000.00
Comm ministry discernment	1,000.00
<b>Subtotal Formation &amp; Mission Supp</b>	<u><b>8,500.00</b></u>

**RESERVES**

Audit Reserves	0.00
Bishop House Maint Reserve	8,500.00
Bishop Vehicle Reserve	4,000.00
Dio Annual Conv Reserve	3,000.00
Dio Sabbatical Reserve	1,000.00
Episcopal Elect Reserve	5,000.00
Lambeth Decennial Reserve	8,200.00
Legal Expense Reserves	1,000.00
Local Mission Reserve	0.00
Office Equipment Reserve	1,200.00
Title IV reserves	100.00
Tri Gen ECW Reserve	15,000.00
TriTrans Min Conf Reserve	800.00
Triennial Chancellor Resv	750.00
Triennial EYE reserve	750.00
<b>Subtotal Reserves</b>	<b>49,300.00</b>
<b>Subtotal Expenses</b>	<b>993,450.00</b>

<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>993,450.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>993,450.00</b>
<b>NET BALANCE</b>	<b>0</b>

*Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Diocesan Convention in 2020 was a virtual convention. Therefore, these minutes/notes of the Convention are a bit more encompassing, covering more than the actual business meeting of Convention.*

**The Pre-Convention Meeting  
Thursday, September 22, 2020  
6:00 – 8:00 p.m. by Zoom**

This convention was held entirely by zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A Pre-Convention Meeting for convention delegates was held on Thursday evening, October 22, 2021, to help facilitate the smooth running of the Convention by familiarizing the Diocesan deputies with procedures for a virtual convention and the resolutions that would be covered during the business meeting of the Convention. In attendance were the delegates to Convention, Bishop Shannon, Lisette Baxter (Chair of the Nominations Committee), Anne Brown (chair of the Resolutions Committee), Joshua Cheney (Secretary of Convention), Treasurer Gerry Davis, Chancellor Tom Little, Rebecca Wilson and Kathleen Moore (Canticle Communications), and Pamela Van de Graaf (Bishop’s Assistant.)

Bishop Shannon welcomed the delegates to the meeting and opened with a prayer. Kathleen Moore offered a zoom explanation and etiquette to follow during the online convention. Joshua Cheney outlined the Convention Day schedule and explained where to find all Convention materials. Chancellor

Little explained updates to the Rules of Order that will be used during the virtual convention. Each of the following sections of the meeting was accompanied by slides.

Anne Brown, chair of the Resolutions Committee, introduced each resolution that will come before Convention and answered questions following discussion of each resolution. She explained the process of moving resolutions at the Convention. They do not need to be seconded. However, if an amendment is made to a resolution, it does require a second.

The Rev. Lisette Baxter, chair of the Nominations Committee, went through all people nominated to the various committees, and pointed out positions still available on some committees.

Treasurer Gerry Davis presented an overview of the budget that will be presented during Convention and answered questions about the budget.

For practice, Kathleen Moore sent out a zoom vote to those present. Bishop Shannon closed the pre-Convention meeting with a prayer.

### **October 31, 2020 Morning Session**

The morning session of the Convention was open to the whole diocese by zoom, starting at 8:45 a.m. At the start of Convention Bishop Shannon acknowledged the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the Abenaki - People of the Dawn with the following:

We honor the Abenaki who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial. We recognize that colonialism and the oppression of Native peoples is a current and ongoing process, thus, we must commit to building our awareness of our present participation.

Honoring the legacy of Vermont's Indigenous people, we give thanks for those who have come before us. It is they who are the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we gather today. In that spirit, we acknowledge that we are guests in this land. We need to respect and help protect the lands within our use.

The Lord be with you. Let us pray:

Great Spirit God, we give you thanks for another day on this earth. We give you thanks for this day to enjoy the compassionate goodness of you, our Creator. You call us to labor with you in tending the earth: Where we lack love, open our hearts to the world; where we waste, give us discipline to conserve; where we neglect, awaken our minds and wills to insight and care. May we with all your creatures honor and serve you in all things, Bind us together in the circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and one another. Amen.

During the morning session, a Morning Prayer service started at 9:00 a.m., during which Bishop Shannon delivered her address. The Bishop's address can be found elsewhere in the Convention Journal. Watch the entire annual address on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oz8nDpCNfvg>

Morning Prayer was followed by the Visioning Team panel presentation and discussion. Chris Chapman introduced the Visioning panelists: Dr. Ann Guillot, Dr. Gerry Davis, the Rev. Angela Emerson, and the Rev. Lisa Ransom. Each panelist presented a part of the Visioning Team's key components for the Future of the Diocese of Vermont. These parts included the crises facing the Episcopal Church and the

Diocese of Vermont, the Diocese's finances, stewardship in a broad sense, and the opportunities that are in the Diocese. Zoom attendees were invited to participate in one of three future Town Hall meetings to discuss the facts, ideas, and visions described by the panelists.

Following the Visioning Team presentation, Davey Gerhard, the Executive Director of TENS (The Episcopal Network for Stewardship) appeared by pre-recorded video to invite members of the Diocese to a year-long conversation about mission, ministry, and mutual learning.

C. J. Spirito, headmaster of Rock Point School, and the Rev. Auburn Watersong shared updates about the newly formed Anti-racism Action Team. A book study for the Diocese, sponsored by the Anti-racism Team, studied Bishop Hopkins book The Biblical Case for Slavery.

Prior to closing the morning session, Joshua Cheney gave clergy and lay delegates instructions for signing on to the afternoon business portion of the meeting. The morning zoom webinar session ended at 10:52. Following a lunch break, registered delegates and participants were welcomed back to a zoom meeting. Guests were able to watch the business portion of the meeting on YouTube.

**Minutes of the 230<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont**  
**Being the**  
**187<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont**  
*This Convention was held entirely by Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

**Saturday, October 31, 2020**

Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown called to order the 230<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont, being the 187<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont at 12:22 p.m.

Establishment of a Quorum

As of 12:15 p.m. the Chair of the Credentials Committee, the Rev. Lisette Baxter, reported that 40 of 45 congregations were represented and 38 of 68 eligible canonically resident clergy were present. A quorum was established.

Election of Secretary of Convention and Recording Secretary

The Bishop appointed Joshua Cheney (All Saints, South Burlington) as Secretary of Convention and Pamela Van de Graaf (Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington) as Recording Secretary. **All voted in concurrence by Zoom poll vote.**

Secretary of Convention Joshua Cheney reviewed several matters for conducting the business meeting by Zoom.

The Secretary reminded those present by Zoom that the proposed Rules of Order for conducting business, Zoom instructions, and other housekeeping announcements were made available on the website by the Secretary of Convention prior to the Convention. The Secretary:

- Reviewed the Proposed Order of Business
- Reminded those present of the ways of addressing the bishop: as Bishop Shannon, or Rt. Rev. Madam.

- Explained Zoom protocol for the meeting asking that people must use the raise hand feature, be recognized by the Zoom host and first clearly state their name and congregation when addressing the convention.
- Requested that any amendments to resolutions be submitted to [communications@diovermont.org](mailto:communications@diovermont.org) by 1:15 p.m. for discussion by convention later in the afternoon.
- Instructed delegates that if anyone had a nomination from the floor for leadership position openings, email Joshua at [jcheney@vitl.net](mailto:jcheney@vitl.net) by 1:15 p.m. to receive a link to the nominations form. Nominee information would then be emailed to convention delegates for consideration.
- Invited Kathleen Moore to review voting procedures for Zoom polling.

### Written Reports

Secretary of Convention Joshua Cheney reminded Convention participants that written reports are in the Pre-Convention Journal. **The motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the written reports as filed.**

### Rules of Order

Diocesan Chancellor Tom Little explained that the changes for the virtual convention adapted Rules of Order were presented at the pre-convention meeting on October 22. He highlighted Rule 6, Special Rule of Order for the 2020 “Remote” Annual Convention of the Diocese. He reminded those present by Zoom how important it would be to identify yourself and the congregation you attend. The Rules of Order for the Diocesan Convention were made available by the Secretary of Convention on the website. **The motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the Rules of Order for this Convention.**

### Clergy Transitions since Last Year’s Convention

#### **Ordained**

Kathleen Moore (St. James’, Arlington) - Ordained a priest on behalf of Bishop Shannon in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania 7/16/2020, where she is now canonically resident. She is the associate priest at The Cathedral of St. Paul and St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Thom Rock (St. Mark’s, Newport) - Transitional Diaconate 2/18/2020; priest 9/12/2020. Thom has been called as rector at Church of the Good Shepherd in Rangeley, Maine.

Jonathan Ross (St. Peter’s, Lyndonville) - Deacon 9/12/2020

#### **Transferred In**

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

On October 2, 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 March 11, 2020, the Rev. Christine Ann Jones was received from the Diocese of New York.

On July 7, 2020, the Very Rev. Greta Getlein was received from the Diocese of Rhode Island.

On September 9, 2020, the Rev. Mary Heller Taggart was received from the Diocese of Northern California.

### **Transferred out**

On January 15, 2020, the Rev. Veronika Travis transferred to the Diocese of Virginia.

On August 19, 2020, the Rev. Duncan Hilton transferred to the Diocese of New Hampshire and became the Priest-in-Charge at St. John's Church in Walpole.

### **Transitions**

The Rev. Mary White was called as Priest-in-Partnership at St. James, Arlington.

The Rev. Canon Lee Alison Crawford, PhD resigned and retired from Church of Our Saviour, Mission Farm, Killington.

The Rev. Justin Lanier resigned from St. Peter's, Bennington.

The Rev. Bob Leopold was called as Priest in Charge at St. Andrew's, Colchester, and as interim Priest at Christ Church, Montpelier.

The Rev. Rachel Field was called as a member of the Core Ministry Team at St. Thomas and Grace, Brandon and as Farm Priest at Mission Farm at Church of Our Saviour, Killington.

The Rev. Amy Spagna was called as Rector to St. James', Woodstock.

The Very Rev Greta Getlein was called as Rector and Dean at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington.

The Rev. Lisa Ransom was appointed as Vicar at Church of Our Saviour, Killington and as Executive Director at Mission Farm at Church of Our Saviour, Killington

The Rev. John Mitchell retired and resigned from Zion, Manchester.

The Rev. Christine Jones was called as Priest-in-Partnership to St. John's, Randolph.

The Rev. Bob Stuhlmann was called as Priest-in-Partnership to Calvary, Underhill.

The Rev. Sherry Osborne was called as Interim Priest to St. Paul's, Vergennes.

The Bishop prayed for those Clergy who died this past year:

The Rev. Stanley Irving, who died on August 26, 2020.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, with whom still live the spirits of those who die in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful are in joy and felicity: We give you heartfelt thanks for the good examples of all your servants, who, having finished their course in faith, now find rest and refreshment. May we, with all who have died in the true faith of your holy Name, have perfect fulfillment and bliss in your eternal and everlasting glory: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A motion was made, seconded, and approved to recess Diocesan Convention and convene as the Annual Meeting of the Incorporators of Brookhaven Home.**

#### Brookhaven Annual Meeting, Brett Murphy

The Bishop explains the history of recessing Diocesan Convention and convening as the Incorporators of Brookhaven Home:

*The principal benefactor of Brookhaven (Sceva Spear) was a Congregationalist. The idea of turning Episcopal delegates into incorporators, who elect Trustees through recessing the*

*Convention for that purpose appealed to him (and the Articles of Incorporation were written that way).*

The Bishop called for a motion to recess Diocesan Convention and convene as the Incorporators of Brookhaven Home. **A motion was made, seconded, and approved to recess Diocesan Convention and convene as the Annual Meeting of the Incorporators of Brookhaven Home.**

The Annual Meeting of the Brookhaven Home was called to order at 12:40 p.m. Bishop Shannon reminded delegates that the Brookhaven report is available as a video on the Diocesan YouTube channel.

The Rev. Lisette Baxter, Chair of the Nominating Committee, reporting for the Committee, shared the names of the nominees for the Brookhaven Board: Dr. Cynthia Dale for a 2-year term and Mr. Steve Dale, Mr. Lucas Krueger, and the Rev. Robert Wilson for 3-year terms.

**The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to elect Cynthia Ruth Dale to a 2-year term and Steve Dale, Lucas Krueger, and the Rev. Bob Wilson to 3-year terms on the Brookhaven Board.**

**The motion was made, seconded, and approved to adjourn the Annual Meeting of the Incorporators of the Brookhaven Home.**

The Bishop called back to order the 230<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont, being the 187<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont at 12:46 p.m.

#### Treasurer's Report and Voting on Resolutions, Dr. Gerry Davis

Dr. Davis presented a slide show which accompanied his verbal report. June through September 2020 account for 75% of the year. However, the usual revenues, which stand at 68%, and total expenses, at 66%, are slightly below budget targets. Contributions from congregations are below target due to missing months because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Expenses are below budget due to reduced use of the Diocesan Office, no continuing education costs for staff, and little to no travel expenses. The CARES Act Payroll Protection Program loan has provided a substantial buffer. FY2020 should finish in a secure position, but FY2021 looks very uncertain.

The FY2021 Budget Committee consisted of Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown, Canon to the Ordinary Lynn Bates, Diocesan Council member the Rev. Rob Spainhour, Diocesan Council member Jean Wilson, Diocesan Financial Administrator Rich Sagui, and Diocesan Treasurer Dr. Gerry Davis. A new approach for FY 2021 is to separate some Restricted Dispersals totaling \$35,800 from the Operating Budget because they are pass-throughs. The pass-throughs come from entirely restricted sources and have external recipients. Removing the pass-throughs from the operating budget will save \$5,370 in assessments paid to the wider Episcopal Church. Highlights of the 2021 budget include the same contribution schedule for parishes as the last three years and a recommended cost-of-living increases of 1.5% for staff. Mission support from congregations is budgeted at \$810,000. Health insurance premiums are projected to increase 6.5% to 7.5% in 2021. The total balanced budget projects revenues and expenses equaling \$993,450. The final course of FY2021 is highly uncertain.

The Alleluia Fund goal of \$40,000 was not met. \$3,000 has been raised to date because there was no general appeal in April and no golf tournament was held due to the pandemic.

Resolution #1: FY2021 Budget and Alleluia Fund

Following Dr. Davis' report the Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee.

**Ms. Brown moved the following F2021 Budget and Alleluia Fund Resolution:**

**Resolution to Adopt the FY2021 Budget for the Diocese of Vermont and Set the goal for the 2021 Alleluia!fund**

SPONSOR: Diocesan Council (Approved unanimously September 5, 2020)

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont approve the recommendation of the Diocesan Council and adopt a balanced diocesan operating budget for the calendar year 2021 in the amount of **\$993,450**; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a congregation's contribution be based on a real time 4-tier percentage of Operating Income reportable on Line A of the Parochial Report, the tier being determined by an average of the preceding 3 years (FY2017, FY2018, FY2019) Line A Parochial Report Operating Income; for 2021, these tiers based on the average above will be **11%** [\$1- \$39,999]; **13%** [\$40,000- \$99,999]; **15%** [\$100,000- \$199,999]; and **16%** \$200,000 or more; and be it further

RESOLVED, That if actual mission support from congregations (budget line 1) is a surplus of greater than 5% or a deficit of greater than 5% compared to Diocesan budgeted revenue, Diocesan Council make an appropriate adjustment with each parish; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 2021 **Alleluia!fund** goal be **\$30,000** to fund mission programs and ministry activities broadly embracing the General Convention priorities of reconciliation, evangelism and creation care, as determined by Diocesan Council.

Following discussion, **the Resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 99% of delegates in support.**

Resolution #2: Minimum Clergy Compensation

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee.

**Ms. Brown moved the following Clergy Compensation Resolution:**

**Resolution Establishing Minimum Clergy Compensation for 2021**

SPONSOR: Diocesan Council (approved unanimously October 14, 2020)

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont approve the recommendation of the Diocesan Council that the minimum 2021 full time Total Clergy Compensation (TCC) for priests receiving compensation in the Diocese of Vermont is proposed to be – \$67,690, of which \$45,826 (67.7%) represents the stipend portion; this proposed increase to be adjusted when the 2019 data is

available from Church Pension Fund for the median TCC in Province One for clergy serving congregations with less than 75 Average Sunday Attendance (ASA); this minimum TCC is all-inclusive and has been designed to compensate for stipend, housing, utilities, SECA reimbursement and equity allowance, when applicable; for clergy living in church provided housing, the actual total value of the Fair Rental Value of the property plus actual utilities provided will be used when determining minimum TCC; travel allowance shall be reimbursed at the current IRS standard rate; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont endorse a corresponding minimal increase for the year 2021 of 1.5% in monetary compensation to all compensated clergy and lay employees throughout the Episcopal Church in Vermont.

RESOLVED, That each parish with a currently serving deacon shall pay \$25 a month to their deacon as remuneration. Each such parish shall also make the required contribution to the Church Pension Fund for the benefit of the deacon.

**EXPLANATION:**

Canon 6.7 of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont requires that Diocesan Council annually review the minimum stipend for full-time equivalent clergy and the travel allowance and make recommendations to the Convention. Such a minimum shall be binding on all parishes and missions upon ratification of the Convention.

The recommended TCC for 2021 represents a 1.5% increase from the 2020 TCC minimum of \$66,690. In adopting this Resolution, Diocesan Council authorize the Bishop and Canon to the Ordinary to revise the numbers, if / when the Church Pension Group information for 2019 is received, and if they are different from what are contained in this document. The figures to be supplied by the Church Pension Fund are of the 2019 median TCC in Province One for clergy serving congregations with less than 75 Average Sunday Attendance (ASA). This was the agreed upon formula for determining minimum Total Clergy Compensation adopted by the 2016 Diocesan Convention.

The resolution that Deacons be paid gives them the opportunity to participate in the benefits of the Church Pension Group services and to invest their own money in qualified retirement plans offered by this Group.

Following discussion, **the Resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 98% of delegates in support.**

Resolution #3: Support for Total Ministry Parish Clergy

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee. Ms. Brown explained that this resolution, which is an outgrowth of discussions at the 2019 Convention, came to the committee after the deadline of September 10, 2020, and the Rules of Order specify that Convention must decide whether to consider late-filed resolutions. The Resolutions Committee recommended that it be considered by Convention.

There being no objection to considering the resolution by those present at Convention, the Bishop recognized the Rev. Shelie Richardson to move the resolution.

**The Rev. Richardson moved the following resolution:**

## Support for Total Ministry Parish Clergy

SPONSORS: The Rev. Dr. Richard R. Swanson, St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe  
The Rev. Shelie Richardson, Christ Church, Bethel

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont, encourage the vestries of Total Ministry Parishes to offer a stipend to locally ordained clergy serving in the congregation, suggested to be no greater than \$25 per month, as well as make the requisite contribution to the Church Pension Group, for the cleric's participation in Church Pension Group benefits; the compensation amount must be approved by the Bishop of Vermont.

### EXPLANATION:

This resolution is intended to support Total Ministry clergy and parishes by offering a nominal stipend to locally ordained clergy, along with the corresponding contribution to the Church Pension Group (CPG), giving locally ordained clerics (priests and deacons) access to the wide range of CPG resources offered to stipendiary clergy and laity.

The Church Pension Group provides multiple resources for clergy and lay employees of churches and institutions of the Episcopal Church. One of the resources is CREDO, a wellness resource offered solely to clergy enrolled in the CPG. CREDO helps both active and retired clergy pension plan participants by presenting a holistic approach to wellness for mind, body, spirit, and heart. Participants examine and evaluate their health and wellness from the spiritual, vocational, physical, emotional health and financial aspects of the individual's wellbeing. The Church Pension Group also provides pension and retirement savings plans, health benefits, and educational services.

Currently, Total Ministry clergy are serving in a non-stipendiary capacity. This resolution allows Total Ministry Parish Vestries to offer a minimal compensation to their clergy for the sole benefit of CPG offerings. The role of the bishop in the life of Total Ministry congregations is vital; therefore this resolution ensures the parish vestry, the bishop and the clergy person(s) are in mutual agreement on the compensation amount. The stipend is solely for access to CPG and is not intended as compensation for ministry as understood in non-Total Ministry parishes in the Episcopal Church in Vermont.

After some discussion, **the Rev. Zarina O'Hagin moved that the first "Resolved" of the resolution be amended to read:**

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont, encourage the vestries of Total Ministry Parishes to offer a stipend to locally ordained clergy serving in the congregation, suggested to be no less than \$25 per month, as well as make the requisite contribution to the Church Pension Group, for the cleric's participation in Church Pension Group benefits; the compensation amount must be approved by the Bishop of Vermont.

**The Rev. John Perry seconded the amended resolution.**

Extensive discussion followed. Ms. Brown pointed out that the purpose of the resolution is to enable local clergy to access CPG.

**The amendment of the resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The amendment carried with 94% of delegates in support.**

**The amended resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The amendment carried with 97% of delegates in support.**

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee to continue the committee's report. Ms. Brown requested that people not make amendments to the resolutions unless necessary.

#### Resolution 4: Land Use History

**Ms. Brown moved Resolution 4 Land Use History and asked the Bishop to recognize the Rev. Rachel Field to speak to the resolution.**

#### **Commission for Land Use History in the Diocese of Vermont**

SPONSOR: The Rev. Rachel Field (Mission Farm, Killington, and St. Thomas and Grace, Brandon)

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont recommend and strongly encourage each congregation, and the diocese as a body, to learn the history of our land as a way of understanding and unearthing our complicity in systems that oppress persons of color and afford privilege to white persons in Vermont; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in commitment to this deep work, this Convention ask for a gathering and sharing of stories from our collective research to be shared as a report at our 189th Convention.

#### EXPLANATION

Acknowledging the history of genocide and land seizure that has made it possible for the Episcopal Church to have properties for us to gather in is a step in the process of learning from our history to make healing and racial reconciliation possible. Entire dioceses, like Rhode Island, and individual churches have explored the history of their buildings to understand the relationship between the land and colonialism. We are inviting congregations to trace the history of their buildings, and also the history of their local ecology and the peoples who have called that land home.

Tracing the relationships among peoples (Abenaki, Black, Latino, White) and the land and between wealth and property will help us to learn together what effects from colonization persist, and how our current structures and systems reinforce a colonial system of thought. We encourage this historical retrospective as a step on the road to healing from racism, which harms all people, including white people, in Vermont today. This resolution is offered in hope. Hope that understanding our history with the land, and how the land informs our spirituality may help us all in this healing; that the door may be further opened to the way that the Spirit moves in our hearts, in the creatures, and in the landscape.

This resolution was prayed over and dwelled in the hearts of: Rachel Field, Lisa Ransom, Earl Kooperkamp, and Auburn Watersong. As a result of drafting this resolution, Mission Farm is committing to exploring, and in conversation about, officially opening the land for hunting and gathering to the Abenaki. We encourage others to come along with us and explore this path as well.

Discussion ensued. The Rev. Lisa Ransom, the Rev. Earl Kooperkamp, and Catherine McCauley spoke in favor of the Resolution. The Bishop asked that any reports by congregations be made to the Anti-Racism Action Team.

**The Resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 97% of delegates concurring.**

## Resolution 5: Transition to Renewable Energy

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee.

**Ms. Brown moved the following Transition to Renewable Energy Resolution and asked the Bishop to recognize Jon Felde to speak to it.**

### **Resolution on the Transition to Renewable Energy**

SPONSOR: Jon Felde (St. Barnabas, Norwich)

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont ask diocesan leadership to offer to the 189<sup>th</sup> Convention in 2021 a plan to end the use of fossil fuels in each of the parishes and properties of the Episcopal Church in Vermont and to transition to 100 % renewable energy by 2030.

#### EXPLANATION

For the better part of two decades the Diocese of Vermont, through its convention and led by its Bishops, has encouraged the transition to renewable energy and away from fossil fuels. This drive has been consistent with policies adopted by The Episcopal Church General Convention. In February of this year, the Diocese of Vermont went on record supporting a bill in the Vermont legislature calling for the state to meet a goal of 100% renewable energy for Vermont by 2030. This resolution confirms that the congregations of Vermont endorse this goal and intend in good faith to make sacrifices and investments to meet this goal within the church.

The Diocese should inventory the use of fossil fuels in each of its parishes and in collaboration with local parishes determine the best way for each parish to forego fossil fuels, consulting with engineers, architects, and preservation experts.

The pandemic offers opportunities to build community and church outside of physical sanctuaries. Remote internet connection for assemblies and meetings reduces reliance on fossil fuel. Fellowship no longer depends upon proximity.

To finance changes, the Diocese should consider whether resources of its Unit Trust endowment fund may further the goal through targeted investments, loans, and financing. Additional resources through private foundations and federal, state, and local government should be considered.

#### *Climate Action Day Statement*

<https://diovermont.org/2020/02/20/faith-climate-action-day-statement/>

Excerpt from statement by Bishop Thomas Ely, retired, on behalf of the Diocese of Vermont: “This threat we are facing is why we are here today. However, environmental issues are not just scientific, political, or economic, but are also profoundly moral and spiritual. In the face of the current climate crisis, people of faith cannot remain silent. It is our conviction that we are called by God to engage, by word and action, in the healing and reconciling work of protecting and caring for, as we say in the Episcopal Church’s Book of Common Prayer, “this fragile earth, our island home.” (BCP page 369)

*Episcopal Church Policy for Action 2018*

Calls upon the Church to practice environmentally sound and energy-efficient living. (GC '97) Calls upon The Episcopal Church to engage the topic of divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in clean energy. (GC'15)

<https://episcopalchurch.org/OGR/general-advocacy-resources>

*Episcopal Public Policy Network Creation Care Series*

Excerpt:

“The Episcopal Church is working toward a future of renewable energy as a both socially and environmentally sustainable source of energy, and we support the government’s ambitious investment in this technology and auxiliary systems such as batteries and a more efficient electric grid. Previous generations of Americans invested in coal and oil, in rural electricity, and other pieces of the technology we take for granted today. We must invest in the systems and technologies to provide for future generations.”

<https://episcopalchurch.org/posts/ogr/eppn-creation-care-series-renewable-energy>

Mr. Felde spoke to the Resolution. Several delegates spoke in support of the resolution. Catherine McCauley (St. Luke’s, Fair Haven), reminded delegates that practical concerns must be considered. Several very small churches have very small membership with bare bones budgets, and a tiny lot that the church building sits on. She would want to see a list of renewable energy options with options for paying for them with grants.

**The Rev. Kim Hardy moved that the Rules of Order be suspended to extend debate time on the resolution. The motion was seconded and approved by zoom vote with 67% of the delegates concurring.**

Discussion continued. Treasurer Davis indicated that loans and grants could be available through the Butterfield Grants Fund. Jamison Dunne (Trinity, Shelburne) noted that with a significant decline in membership, visioning such as this might help grow membership. Anne Brown pointed out that the resolution does not ask for a plan, and Jon Felde noted that he deliberately offered the resolution with minimal, vague language to leave it flexible. Raymond Mayer (St. John’s, Randolph) commented that there will not be a “one size fits all” plan.

**The Very Rev. Greta Getlein moved that the resolution be amended to include “Diocesan leadership to appoint a task force.” The motion was seconded.**

**The amendment was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The amendment carried with 95% of delegates in support.**

**Adding the amendment to the Resolution was voting on by zoom polling and approved. Considering the amended resolution carried with 78% concurring.**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont **ask diocesan leadership to appoint a task force** to offer to the 189<sup>th</sup> Convention in 2021 a plan to end the use of fossil fuels in each of the parishes and properties of the Episcopal Church in Vermont and to transition to 100 % renewable energy by 2030.

Jon Felde, David Carey, Cam Featherstonehaugh, Carey Grant, Susan McGarry, Wendy Grace, Julie Sussman-Jones, Eric Fenton, and Ray Mayer expressed interest in being on the task force. **The amended resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The amendment carried with**

**94% of delegates concurring.**

Acknowledgement of Resolutions Committee

The Bishop acknowledged and thanked the members of the Resolutions Committee: Anne Brown (Chair), Mike Austin, Stan Baker, Nanci Gordon, Eric Davis.

St. Paul's, Wells

The Bishop received a petition from the Reverend William Davidson on behalf of the members of St. Paul's in Wells, currently a mission congregation, asking that the mission congregation be allowed to move to parish status under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons. She advised the Standing Committee of her approval of this request and asked the Standing Committee to grant its approval. The Standing Committee met and voted unanimously to approve the request from Wells.

Bishop Shannon asked the Convention to ratify the action of the Standing Committee under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons.

The Bishop recognized Lucas Krueger, St. Paul's Wells, to make a Motion to ratify the action of the Standing Committee.

**Luke Krueger moved:**

**that this convention ratify the action of the Standing Committee approving the request of St. Paul's, Wells, to move to parish status under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons.**

**The motion was seconded. The motion was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 100% of delegates in support.**

The Bishop, noting that the ayes have it, and the convention has ratified the action of the Standing Committee approving the request of St. Paul's, Wells, to move to parish status under the provisions of Article VI of the Constitution of the Diocese and Canons 13.1 and 13.3 of the Diocesan Canons prayed:

In thanksgiving for the ministry of the people of St. Paul's Church, Wells and for their new status as a parish we pray.

Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself: We praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon your Name; for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours for ever. Amen

Nominating Committee Report

The Rev. Lisette Baxter, Chair, reported on behalf of the Nominating Committee. The following nominations were announced:

Financial Oversight and Audit Committee

Elected to 3-year terms

The Very Rev. Greta Getlein

The Rev. Susan McGarry

Provincial Synod

Eric Davis  
The Rev. Linda Maloney  
The Rev. Bob Wilson

Rock Point Board

Elected to a 3-year term to 2022  
Elizabeth Ferries

Rock Point School Trustees

Elected to 3-year terms to 2023  
Harry Frank (2<sup>nd</sup> 3-year term)  
Barton Merle-Smith (2<sup>nd</sup> 3-year term)  
Scott Sheavly (2<sup>nd</sup> 3-year term)  
Robin Lloyd-Miller  
Mo Reilly

Standing Committee

One clergy and one lay; Elected to a 4-year term to 2024  
The Rev. Stan Baker  
Maggie Thompson

Title IV Disciplinary Board

The Very Rev. Greta Getlein

Trustees of the Diocese

Elected to a seven-year term to 2027  
Christopher Chapman

With no additional nominations received by 1:15 p.m., the Bishop announced that with no objections, the Convention will cast one ballot for all uncontested offices.

**The motion to approve all uncontested nominees was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 100% of delegates concurring.**

Report on Mission District Council Elections:

The Bishop recognized current and retiring Council representatives and reported on the elected representative for each District.

**Mission District 1:**

Current Representatives:

Alice Daley (St. Andrew's Church, Colchester), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2021  
The Rev. Rob Spainhour (Holy Trinity Church, Swanton), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2022

Retiring Representative:

Dinny Hawksworth (St. Matthew's, Enosburg Falls)

\*Elected:

Beth Crane (Grace Church, Sheldon), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2023

### **Mission District 2:**

Current Representatives:

Zarina O'Hagin (St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2022

Jean Wilson (St. Mark's, Newport), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2021

Retiring Representative:

Marjorie Strong (Church of the Good Shepherd, Barre)

Elected:

Wendy Besett (St. John the Baptist, Hardwick), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2023

### **Mission District 3:**

Current Representatives:

Kathy Hartman (St. John's, Randolph) 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2020

The Rev. Mark Preece (St. Martin's Church, Fairlee), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2021

Barbara Johnson (St. James Church, Woodstock), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2022

\*Reelected:

Kathy Hartman (St. John's, Randolph), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2023

### **Mission District 4:**

Current Representatives:

The Rev. Dr. Fred Moser (Trinity, Shelburne), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2022

One open spot due to a move, term expires 2021

Retiring Representative:

Lisa Newton

\*Elected:

Eric Davis (St. Stephen's, Middlebury), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2023

### **Mission District 5:**

Current Representatives:

Colleen Gates (St. Peter's, Bennington), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2021

The Rev. Paul Gratz (St. James', Arlington), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2020

The Rev. Heidi Edson (St. Luke's, Chester), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2022

\*Reelected:

The Rev. Paul Gratz (St. James', Arlington), 3<sup>rd</sup> term expires 2023

The Bishop thanked retiring members for their contributions as members of Council.

### Balloting for General Convention Alternate Deputies

Bishop Shannon explained the process for electing alternate clergy and lay deputies to General Convention. With three nominees for four alternate openings in both the clergy and lay deputies, all the nominees will serve as alternate deputies. The vote will rank the alternate deputies. Each delegate was instructed to vote for one person.

**By Zoom vote, the clergy order alternates in rank order are the Rev. Jennie Anderson, the Rev. Dr. Titus Presler, and the Rev. Rob Spainhour.**

**By Zoom vote, the lay order alternates in rank order are Lynn Bates, Jenny Ogelby, and Luke Krueger.**

### Bishop's Appointments

Bishop Shannon announced the following appointments.

**Chancellor:** Tom Little

**Canons Committee:** TBD

**Commission on Ministry:** Beverly Barton (second full term), Titus Presler (second full term), Lisa Schnell (first term)

**Resolutions Committee:** Mike Austin, Stan Baker, Anne Brown, Eric Davis, Nanci Gordon

**Rock Point Board:** TBD

**Grants and Loans Committee:** Paul Horn (St. Stephen's, Middlebury), the Rev. Christine Jones (St. John's, Randolph), and one more TBD

### Courtesy Resolutions

The Bishop called on Anne Brown, chair of the Resolutions Committee, to present the courtesy resolutions.

The first courtesy resolution honoring Lynn Bates was read by Nanci Gordon.

#### **Courtesy Resolution Honoring Canon Lynn Bates**

RESOLVED, That this 187<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont voice its deepest gratitude and admiration to Canon Lynn Bates, as she nears her retirement after over 25 years as a member of the diocesan ministry support team; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this diocese wish Canon Bates a long, happy, healthy retirement—full of good books, art and music, and adventures with Marley—knowing that the warmth of her smile, her contagious laugh, and her gift for balancing the profound with the practical, seemingly without effort, will be sorely missed; thank you, Lynn, and Godspeed.

### BACKGROUND

Serving with Bishops Mary Adelia McLeod, Thomas Ely and now Shannon MacVean-Brown, Canon Lynn Bates has been a source of both continuity and wisdom for our bishops and for all the congregations of this diocese. As Canon to the Ordinary—among the first lay persons to serve in that role in The Episcopal Church—and Transition Minister, she played a pivotal role in building the ministry support team; overseeing the Safer Church program; restructuring operations at what was then called the Bishop Booth Conference Center; and orchestrating the efforts of congregations around Vermont to respond to material needs that emerged from the devastation Tropical Storm Irene caused here—to name but a few of her roles through the years.

Canon Bates has shepherded congregations through their discernment and search processes; responded to the questions and concerns of church leaders; worked closely with Diocesan Council, the Grants and Loans Committee, and other leadership bodies; and received and responded to disciplinary matters. She is, in the words of Bishop Ely, “a team player, who understands and practices collaborative ministry and has deep and profound respect for the ministry of all, especially the ministry of lay persons.”

At the wider church level, Lynn participated in professional organizations, and, at three General Conventions, served as office manager of the Secretariat for the House of Bishops, coordinating key and complex behind-the-scenes legislative work for the bishops.

All who have worked with Lynn in these contexts have benefited from her wisdom and her perspective as a trained mediator—able to understand the perspectives of all involved, and help each person or group understand the other. She is one who listens and is willing to speak truth, even if difficult to hear.

Lynn has taken the administrative skills she honed early in her career as Town Clerk in Sherburne (now Killington), and senior warden at Church of Our Saviour, Killington, and brought them to bear in her ministry, making her exceptionally effective—even when facing major health challenges of her own. Lynn is simply a gentle woman of substance, who has been a most extraordinary Canon to the Ordinary.

The next courtesy resolution, honoring Bishop Shannon, was read by the Rev. Stannard Baker.

### **Courtesy Resolution Honoring the Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown**

RESOLVED, That this 187<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont voice its thankfulness to the Rt. Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown, the eleventh Bishop of Vermont, for her extraordinary and steady leadership during her first year as our bishop during this unique, challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic; her creation of the Green Mountain Online Abbey, a life raft for many in these turbulent times, is an example of her work as nurturing shepherd for the people of the diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we, the people of the Diocese of Vermont, express our appreciation for Bishop Shannon's ability and willingness to share her own experience with racism, modeling for us her passion, while expressing her clear conviction of the necessity to move our diocese forward in taking on the work that we must do on internal and systemic racism in all areas of our lives and our church; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we express our deep gratitude for her work and support in the area of mutual ministry, particularly in opening opportunities for, providing training for, and supporting lay preaching and worship leadership; this work not only empowers the laity, but also results in making the work of the clergy in our diocese, especially part-time clergy, sustainable, as well as opening new ways to be church; we look forward to many years to come.

### **BACKGROUND**

Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown brought to the Episcopal Church in Vermont her liturgical presence and skill, her beautiful chanting voice, and a rich variety of worship styles. Formed in Detroit and Indianapolis, she also brought us a well of powerful and moving music from her childhood, youth, and adulthood, from the churches in which she served, and from her father.

Bishops are always lightning rods for people's distress, and Bishop Shannon has definitely experienced our individual and collective anxiety in the face of the pandemic. In hearing and witnessing our distress, she kept a firm hand on the tiller, and reacted with clarity, guidance, reassurance, comfort, and vision.

Bishop Shannon also brought her wonderful family. Her husband, Phil, has served as "congregation" in so many Zoom meetings, and is a loving and supportive presence at her side. Her daughter, Annaliese, brings grace and beauty – and her own personal style – to Vermont. Her "bonus daughter," Indira Samuels, has jumped into the life of the diocese and already been influenced by us and been an influence on us with her conviction and passion.

Eric Davis read a courtesy resolution commending the ReStart Team.

### **Courtesy Resolution Commending the ReStart Team**

RESOLVED, That the 187th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont commend the members of the Diocesan Restart Team (Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown, Canon Lynn Bates, Dr. Ann Guillot, The Reverends Earl Kooperkamp, Fred Moser, Amy Spagna, Rob Spainhour, Bob Wilson) for their extensive research, consultation, and ongoing work in developing and continually refining guidelines, based on the work of experts in the field of public health, for the reopening of church buildings and the resumption of in-person worship and other activities; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the convention commend the clerical and lay leadership of congregations for working closely with the Restart Term as they develop and implement reopening plans for their own members.

### **BACKGROUND**

Bishop Shannon appointed the Diocesan Restart Team in the spring of this year, as the lockdown of Vermont, imposed at the start of the COVID-19 emergency in March, began to be relaxed and as the State of Vermont and the Centers for Disease Control began to issue guidelines for the reopening of places of worship and other facilities.

The Restart Team's charge was to develop procedures and benchmarks that congregations could use as they reopen their buildings and resume in-person worship and other activities. Relying heavily on CDC and Vermont Department of Health guidance and consulting broadly with experts in public health, the Team issued three sets of reopening guidelines – one in June, one in September and a third in October – that established roadmaps that congregations could follow throughout the reopening process.

Over the past few months, many congregations have begun to offer outdoor worship services in accordance with these guidelines. These services have provided members of those congregations a welcome opportunity to reconnect with each other in person, even while face coverings are being worn and social distancing is being maintained. As colder weather approaches, some congregations are now preparing plans for the resumption of indoor worship and other gatherings, while continuing to adhere to the health and safety requirements mandated by the Restart Team's guidelines. At the same time, Zoom and other forms of online worship continue to be offered, enabling our collective life as the people of God to go forward.

Even as Vermont continues to have one of the lowest COVID-19 case counts in the nation, concerns about the resurgence of the virus, both regionally and nationally, have increased, and Vermonters must remain vigilant in the months ahead. Adherence to guidelines for wearing masks, frequent handwashing and sanitation, and maintaining social/physical distancing will be crucial to maintaining the health of all Vermonters, especially the most vulnerable among us. The Restart Team will continue to monitor the latest guidance from state and national public health authorities and will adapt its guidelines as appropriate in the months ahead.

The Following courtesy resolutions were also given.

### **Courtesy Resolution Commending Congregational Resilience**

## **And Green Mountain Online Abbey**

RESOLVED, That the 187th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont commend congregations and clergy for their resiliency and flexibility as they face the 33rd week of COVID-tide (otherwise known as Coronatide); and be it further

RESOLVED, That this convention applaud congregations and clergy as they navigate the intricacies of worship via Zoom, Facebook and other chat groups; learn how to offer music via the internet; keep a sense of humor when people do not use the “mute” button; and, as congregations move toward in-person worship, find ways to maintain physical distancing, while providing spiritual proximity and hope; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this convention give thanks for Bishop Shannon’s creation of an online community of prayer, now known as the Green Mountain Online Abbey, for the members of that community for their steadfast daily prayer at 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM weekdays and Sunday mornings at 11:00 via Zoom, and for their holding the people of Vermont and the world constantly on their hearts in prayer.

### **BACKGROUND**

In the very early days of the corona virus pandemic, congregations and clergy scrambled to find ways to offer worship. With their buildings closed, congregations and clergy began to explore what it means to be “church,” when forced to gather for worship and meetings virtually. Many people had a crash course on how to manage Zoom or Facebook.

At the same time, Bishop Shannon began to offer daily online prayer, in addition to praying with people on Sundays. Up until June 30th, Bishop Shannon led the worship, but, since then, members of what became known as the Green Mountain Online Abbey have taken turns leading worship. Even now, a core group of about 40 people gathers to pray, share intercessions and even welcome the occasional “photobomb” moments from their pets, including a crowing rooster one morning. The Green Mountain Online Abbey currently is offering a Novena of Prayer for an Election as the country moves toward Election Day.

For more information, go to this article:

<https://diovermont.org/2020/07/08/born-in-a-pandemic-an-online-congregation-prepares-for-its-future/>

For worship links, go here:

<https://diovermont.org/2020/10/17/online-prayer-with-bishop-shannon/>

### **Courtesy Resolution Thanking the Clergy of St. Mark’s, Newport**

RESOLVED, That the 187<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont echo the Vestry of St. Mark’s, Newport, in their wholehearted expression of gratitude to the Reverend Bob Wilson and the Reverend Christine Moseley for their tireless love and care for the parish of St. Mark’s and the communities in which they live and work while receiving little to no monetary compensation for their efforts; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Convention offer its deep thanks to the clergy and lay leaders of all Vermont congregations for their service and flexibility during this year of unexpected challenges.

## **Courtesy Resolution Honoring the Reverend Canon Stanley Irving and Betty Irving**

RESOLVED, That the 187th Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont offer heartfelt thanks and gratitude for the lives and ministries of the Reverend Cannon Stanly H. Irving and Betty Edith Mae (Benoit) Irving.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Reverend Canon Stanley H. Irving, who died August 26, 2020, at the age of 96, served as rector of St. Luke's, St. Albans, Vermont, from March 1961, until his retirement in 1989. His wife, Betty Irving, whom he married in 1949, died in 2017.

Canon Irving oversaw the complete renovation of the interior of St. Luke's, as well as work on the bell tower, the demolition of the rectory to make way for the construction of a parking lot, and the acquisition of a new rectory. He was known as a traditionalist regarding many church issues, but those who knew him respected his ability to discuss a variety of subjects, particularly theology.

Betty Irving was very active in St. Luke's Altar Guild and Choir. She was greatly respected for her warmth and devotion to God, her children and to the parish.

Born in Brome, Quebec, Canon Irving served in the Royal Canadian Air Force from 1943-1946, and upon discharge, continued his education at Concordia University, McGill University, and Montreal Diocesan College. He was ordained as deacon and priest in the Diocese of Montreal and served congregations in Canada before being called to St. Luke's. After retirement, he served as supply priest in Vermont and Quebec.

Canon Irving's obituary may be found [here](#).

### **2020 Convention Minutes**

Bishop Shannon recognized Joshua Cheney, Secretary of Convention. Mr. Cheney announced that the Dispatch of Business Committee approved the minutes of the 2019 Annual Convention. He requested that this convention authorize the Dispatch of Business Committee to approve the minutes of this convention.

**A motion was made, seconded, and voted on by a Zoom vote to authorize the Dispatch of Business Committee to approve the minutes of this Convention. The motion passed with 100% concurring.**

### **Dates of the Next Convention**

Bishop Shannon announced that the next convention will be held November 5-6, 2021, at the Hilton Hotel in Burlington, Vermont.

### **Adjournment**

The Bishop called for a motion to adjourn.

**A motion was made, seconded, and voted on by Zoom vote to adjourn the 187<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont. The motion passed with 100% concurring.**

Convention adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

## **BISHOP'S ADDRESS**

Woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus 3x  
Allelu, allelu, Alleluia (sung)  
There are other verses like,  
Can't hate your neighbor with your mind stayed on Jesus  
Walking & talking with your mind stayed on Jesus  
Such a simple song. And yet it is powerfully revolutionary if we apply it to our lives.

Our Gospel tells the story of how Peter, and the disciples learned the value of keeping one's mind stayed on Jesus when you find yourself in the storm with a strong wind against you.

In the early church, a boat was a symbol that represented the church. The naves of our church buildings reflect that symbolism. But a boat doesn't just sit still, like our naves. Boats are meant to move forward. Boats are built and meant to weather storms. In some ways, they're a shelter. Boats are a place where sustenance can be gathered and then once taken off the boat, the bounty can be shared with others.

The boat battered by waves and wind in our Gospel is not unlike how the early church saw herself as she began. A band of misfits trying to find their place in a society and culture that was not receptive and also hostile to them. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus they didn't have a plan for how to continue Jesus' work. They started out as devout Jews, but then found themselves trying to figure out how to worship in a way that was true to what they knew, and to follow the way of Love Jesus taught them. They lived through occupation and faced persecution. To say that they felt like they were catching it from every side is an understatement.

As the followers of Jesus began to organize themselves, I bet they thought about Nehemiah and Ezra, who led a massive and ambitious building project to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. They probably thought about how Nehemiah and Ezra didn't simply seek to be stewards of their city, which was in disrepair; they also knew they had to be better stewards of their faith in order to be stewards of their identity as God's people. Hearing scripture and letting it be a guide for their lives was the key to rebuilding their community, and key to their identity.

As the early church began, I'm sure they thought of the times God showed up for their people and how they would always need to remind themselves of their identity as God's beloved. So much going on all at once. So much to balance. Life was hard. I'm sure the early church found it difficult to keep their minds stayed on Jesus at all times. This reality of the early church shows up in Matthew's retelling of Jesus and Peter meeting in the storm.

As the disciples sat on that boat, I imagine, before the storm began to rise, they snacked on the leftover loaves and fishes they'd gathered after the feeding of the 5000. All of them were feeling the grief and shock of John's beheading. They talked about what Jesus might have them do with the people of Gennesaret, whom they weren't sure they wanted to encounter. They talked about what Jesus said and did, and how it felt to be with him. Jesus was known for healing and saying things that challenged them to live differently. As challenging as his teachings were, they were equally affirming.

The disciples were exhausted from all that was going on in their lives. There were several fishermen among them on that boat, and they probably fell asleep fairly easily. With the swaying and rocking of

the boat, several other disciples dozed on and off. Between 4 and 6 in the morning, thunder shook the boat and startled everyone awake. Between the flashing of the lightning, they saw something, no, someone, on the water.

They weren't sure of what they were seeing. They were probably numb by all they had taken in, what Jesus was asking them to do, and the discombobulation of being awakened on the boat.

They didn't recognize Jesus. I'm not sure the disciples were frightened by the storm.

But they were definitely frightened by Jesus walking on water. They had already witnessed his mastery over the waves and storm (back in chapter 8), but this was new. Walking on water, interacting with the most powerful force of nature as if he was God. The God who tamed the void and made the seas. The God who stirred a strong wind to part the sea so the children of Israel could walk on dry ground to freedom.

The disciples did not expect to see Jesus like that. Likewise, I suppose they didn't expect to find themselves in the company of God in this way. Who were they that God would be mindful of them, that God would keep company with them?

Peter was standing between the other terrified disciples and Jesus. Between Jesus and Peter was a raging sea and wind and steps. I have always wondered how Peter got out of the boat. He must have had to go through a lot to get himself over the side and down to the stormy water. Was there a ladder? He had to go through a lot to actually take a step towards Jesus. What gave him the courage to act differently than the others? Was it the sound of Jesus' voice saying, "It's me"? I wonder what the first step felt like. After taking a few steps, it hit him. In a split second Peter engaged in an internal conversation, "This is crazy! What was I thinking and how did I have the audacity to ask Jesus to let me join him in this water?"

"You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

A more accurate word for doubt in this text would be hesitate. Ah, the hesitation.

"Why did you hesitate?" Come on Jesus, Peter didn't really know what he was asking. Of course, he was afraid. He had never walked on water before.

And to Jesus' point, he asked Peter, and he asks us to come to him in the midst of difficulties and to remain focused on him.

For all his foibles, brashness and imperfections, Peter got it right - as right as a human can, anyway.

In the midst of the storm and fear, Peter had great expectations. He expected Jesus to empower him to do something amazing. "If it's you, Jesus, command me to come to you."

At the beginning of the Pandemic I often remarked how we are like the early church finding it necessary to reimagine and reorganize ourselves because so much has changed and so much will never be the same.

After months of civil unrest around the plague of racism, the disorientation of COVID restrictions, grief over the loss of people, and continued uncertainty, the disciples' excursion to Gennesaret also reminds me of the times in which we find ourselves. My friends, our life right now is like being on a boat in the storm. We are catching it from every side.

I keep reminding myself how before the disciples found themselves in the storm and Peter perched on the edge of a boat ready to leave friends behind to join Jesus, they had already seen Jesus calm a storm. And our Gospel says that they were afraid. It is human nature, and actually a gift from God to be able to experience fear. If you encounter something that can kill you or others, fear helps you to take precautions to protect life. We wear a seatbelt for fear of dying from a car crash - a useful application of fear. There is a difference between faithful fear in a storm, vs. being afraid. Feeling afraid and examining why you're feeling it, and letting it inform you is very different from BEing afraid, as in taking it on like an identity.

Faithful fear is placed within the context of how you've seen God show up in the past, and within the context of the challenge, love and promise of the resurrection. Jesus asked the disciples not to be afraid. I would clarify, to not be afraid of experiencing him in a new way that challenged their comfort in the status quo, or the discomfort/dis-ease they had grown accustomed to.

Before the pandemic, the whole church, and our diocese were already asking questions about what we are called to do and be in a time where the world seems to have little need for us. Our ways of being and gathering were mostly for us, and on Sundays. Our buildings were mostly used on Sundays. But aren't there other days of the week? And we have been asking how do we share what we know about the love of Jesus with our neighbors? We spent a lot of time in our boats uncertain about the future, and afraid of what it holds. Then, the waves of the pandemics of the coronavirus and undeniable systemic racism hit, and the wind of political turmoil was blowing us over. Many of us have unspeakable grief as we are physically separated, missing the fellowship of our communities of faith, and longing for Communion, the meal that sustains us.

Oh how we long to be out of the storm, to be done with it and past it. I don't love this storm that we're in right now, but I recognize the abundant opportunities it has brought us.

So I wonder, what would it look like for us here in the Diocese of Vermont to walk on water, towards Jesus, in the face of battering waves and a strong wind? During these difficult months, I've spent lots of time praying, reflecting and in conversation with many of you around the diocese. It seems to me that in this time we have been stirred to face into the winds of change, even as we are being tossed about by circumstances beyond our control.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to stay in the boat. I want to get out of the boat, head into the storm and go towards Jesus.

As we step out in faith and do ministry in new ways,  
as we engage in conversations about racism and white supremacy,  
as we consider sharing ministry across congregations,  
as we deepen and grow our financial stewardship, as we expand our connection to our communities beyond Sunday,  
as we do things we've never done before  
and as we dream new dreams:

We might wonder if doing something new is worth it when we consider the cost to our personal comfort and the risk of upsetting long established ways of being and doing church.

I guarantee you that we will make mistakes.

We will feel unsure.

We will face resistance.

We will also experience fear.

The challenge will be keeping our eyes on Jesus.

Remember how Peter began to sink when he noticed the strong wind, and his faith began to lag? Peter's first reaction after noticing his distraction was to call on Jesus "Lord save me!" Jesus didn't hesitate to reach out his hand to save and steady Peter, and said, "You of little faith, why did you doubt? We need Jesus most when we are in the midst of uncertainty and feeling out of control. These are the moments when Divine imagination and mastery can transform us. It didn't make sense to get into the water, and to be even more out of control, but if he hadn't, Peter would not have experienced God's power working in him in such an astounding way.

Sometimes it's hard to trust God to bring us out of the storm. We forget how God has come through in the past. We get distracted by the challenges of life. Sometimes we forget to keep our hearts, eyes and minds stayed on the one who said come.

We must remember the waters of baptism are stirred by the winds of the Holy Spirit. This is no mild-mannered water and wind that we find in our tidy little baptismal fonts; this is the type that shapes mountains and rocks boats and made a man dare Jesus to harness that power into his unknowing body that had never been used in such a way. "If it is you, Jesus, make me walk on water. If it is you, Jesus, let your power work in me in a way that I cannot comprehend and don't even realize even as I'm asking."

Now is the time for us in the Diocese of Vermont to step out of the boat and go closer to Jesus.

When Jesus said, "Come," he didn't ask Peter to do what he always did, or to do something easy. He asked him to do something that would test his faith and trust in God. "Come."

I am excited and relieved that this call to step out on the water and go toward Jesus is about reliance on God. As we go forward, when the waves of distractions come, we will continue to call on Jesus.

I pray that we will allow Jesus to terrify us with his power working in us! May we feel the water undulating under our feet and lapping around our ankles. May we feel the wind blowing in our faces and causing us to feel unsteady, and when this happens, I pray that we will reach out, call out to Jesus to steady us. His hand is always there, ready to hold us up.

## **ATTENDEES**

### ***CANONICALLY RESIDENT***

The Rev.	Jennie	Anderson	The Rt. Rev.	Shannon	MacVean-Brown
The Rev.	Jackie	Arbuckle	The Rev.	Beth Ann	Maier
The Rev.	Stan	Baker	The Rev. Dr.	Susan	McGarry
The Rev.	James	Ballard	The Rev.	Linda	Maloney
The Rev.	Lisette	Baxter	The Rev.	Margaret	Mathauer
The Rev.	Janet	Brown	The Rev. Dr.	Frederick	Moser
The Rev.	Thora	Chadwick	The Rev.	Christine	Moseley
The Rev.	Diana	Collins	The Rev.	Liam	Muller Jr
Venerable	Catherine	Cooke	The Rev.	Scott	Neal
The Rev.	Lee	Crawford	The Rev.	Catherine	Nichols

The Rev.	William A	Davidson	The Rev. Dcn.	Zarina	O'Hagin
The Rev.	Heidi	Edson	The Rev.	Susan	Ohlidal
The Rt. Rev.	Thomas	Ely	The Rev.	Sherry	Osborn
The Rev.	Angela	Emerson	The Rev.	Lucy	Pellegrini
The Rev.	Rachel	Field	The Rev.	John	Perry
The Rev. Deacon	David	Ganter	The Rev.	Mark	Preece
The Very Revd	Greta	Getlein	The Rev.	Titus	Presler
The Rev.	Paul	Gratz	The Rev.	Lisa	Ransom
The Rev.	Paul	Habersang	The Rev.	Shelie	Richardson
The Rev.	David	Hamilton	The Rev.	Mary	Robinson White
The Rev.	Kim	Hardy	The Rev	Diane	Root
The Rev.	Kathy	Hartman	The Rev.	Jonathan	Ross
The Rev.	Beth	Hilgartner	The Rev.	Empy	Schneider
The Rev.	Victor	Horvath	Sister	Laurian	Seeber
The Rev.	Christine	Jones	The Rev.	Craig	Smith
The Rev.	John P.	Keenan	The Rev.	Amy	Spagna
The Rev.	Earl	Kooperkamp	The Rev.	John	Spainhour
The Rev. Dr.	Bob	Leopold	The Rev. Dr.	Richard	Swanson
The Rev.	Mary	Lindquist	The Rev.	Mary	Taggart
			The Rev.	Carole	Wageman
			The Rev.	Auburn	Watersong
			The Rev.	Bob	Wilson

## ***DELEGATES***

**Alburgh-St. Luke's**  
Terrance Tuck

**Arlington-St. James'**  
Susan Claro  
Susan Gratz  
Steve Smith

**Barre- Church of the Good Shepherd**  
Ron Hirsch  
Tess Taylor  
Linda Wentworth

**Bennington- St. Peter's**  
Collins Sennett  
Carole Stair  
Linda White

**Montpelier- Christ Church**  
Joan Murray  
Maggie Thompson

**Newport- St. Mark's**  
Trisha Ingalls  
Shar-Lee Ryan  
Penny Thomas

**Northfield- St. Mary's Parish**  
Cam Featherstonhaugh  
Julie Jones-Susmann  
Brett Murphy

**Norwich- St. Barnabas**  
Jon Felde  
Deborah Meyer

**Bethel- Christ Church**

Laura Barber  
Eric Richardson  
Katie Runde

**Brandon- St. Thomas & Grace**

Frances Farnsworth  
Rena McDonough  
Kathryn Root

**Brattleboro - St. Michaels**

Cary Gaunt  
Jack Lilly  
Carolyn Taylor Olson

**Burlington- Cathedral Church of St. Paul**

Penelope Pillsbury  
Keith Pillsbury  
Suki Rubin

**Chester- St. Luke's**

David Carey  
Colleen Garvey  
Belinda Whipple Worth

**Colchester- St. Andrew's**

Lynette Appleget  
Jane Hamilton  
Michelle Thomas

**Enosburg Falls-St. Matthew's**

Titus H Presler  
Judith Rogers

**Essex Junction- St. James**

Eric Fenton  
Jennifer Ogelby  
Heather Winship

**Fair Haven-St. Luke's Episcopal Mission**

Michael Austin  
Melanie Combs  
Catherine McCauley

**Fairlee- St. Martin's**

Chris Buhner  
Ann Davis

**Randolph- St. John's**

Ray Mayer  
Mickie Richardson  
Neil Richardson

**Rutland- Trinity Church**

Wendy Grace  
Richard Jones  
Holly Webb

**Shelburne- Trinity Church**

David Crandall  
Jamison Dunne  
Lisa Newton

**Sheldon- Grace Church**

Elisabeth Crane  
Lori Derry  
Jean Townsend

**South Burlington- All Saints**

Martha Chambers  
George Huffman  
Whye Yap

**St. Albans- St. Luke's**

Marilyn King  
Emily O'Connor

**St. Johnsbury- St. Andrew's**

Karen Cheney  
Damian Ryan

**Stowe- St. John's in the Mountains**

Susu Brown  
Deb Clark  
Roger Nicholls

**Swanton- Holy Trinity Church**

Don Fournier  
Sandi Kenyon  
Helen Short

**Vergennes- St. Paul's**

Lenore Morse  
Sarah Stroup

Kathleen Moore

**Hardwick- St. John the Baptist**

Kathleen Ponder  
Terry Tuthill  
Jerry Willard

**Jericho - Cavalry**

Nancy Todd  
Robert Stuhlmann

**Killington- Church of Our Saviour**

Susan Durant  
Pat Mattson  
Tim Owings

**Manchester Center- Zion**

George Howard  
Marcia Meinert

**Middlebury- St. Stephen's**

Eric Davis  
Jim Pugh  
Sharon Tierra

**Waitsfield- St. Dunstan's**

Jane Lolax  
Beth Phillips

**Wells- St. Paul's**

Annie Constantinos  
William Harrison  
Lucas Krueger

**White River Junction- St. Paul's**

Andrew Pillsbury  
Virginia Umland  
Marge White

**Wilmington- St. Mary's in the Mountains**

Liz Marshall  
Elizabeth McEwen  
Richard Wared

**Woodstock- St. James**

Isabelle Bradley  
Barbara Johnson  
Katherine Webster

***GUESTS***

Lisette Baxter  
Anne Brown  
Joshua Cheney  
Gerry Davis  
Greer Duckworth  
Scottie Emery-Ginn  
Jennifer Knowles  
Tom Little

Kathleen Moore  
Jim Naughton  
Chris Naughton  
Ellie Rencher  
Pamela Van de Graaf  
Candace Vandouris  
Rebecca Wilson