



The Episcopal  
Diocese *of* Vermont

***2021 Convention Journal***

**Reports from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021**

**188<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
November 4<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

*The Journal of the*  
*231<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of the Episcopal*  
*Church in Vermont*  
*being the 188<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention*  
*Since the Full Organization of the*  
*Diocese of Vermont being held virtually*  
*on November 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021*

## Table of Contents

Annual Report of Official Acts, The Right Reverend Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown, Eleventh Bishop of Vermont.....	1
Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center, Annual Diocese Convention Report (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021).....	3
Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Annual Report to Convention, July 2020 – June 2021 .....	7
Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM, Report for 2020-21 School Year.....	8
Diocesan Commission on Ministry, Annual Report to Convention 2020-2021 .....	9
Episcopal Hospital Chaplaincy .....	10
Financial Oversight and Audit Committee, Annual Report to Convention June 2020 – July 2021 .....	11
Global Episcopal Mission Network (GEMN).....	12
Grants & Loans Committee, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 .....	13
Green Mountain Witness .....	15
Liturgical Commission Report.....	16
Mission Farm, Report for Convention July 2020 - June 2021.....	17
Episcopal Province of New England Diocesan Report.....	21
Rock Point Commons: Camp & Conference Center, Annual Report to Convention.....	22
Standing Committee Annual Report, July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 .....	24
The Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont .....	25
Vermont Ecumenical Council Report to Diocesan Convention 2021 .....	26
Budget.....	28
Minutes .....	31
Bishop’s Address .....	65
Attendees.....	69

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

This report covers the time period from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. 11 visits were made to congregations in Vermont. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic many visitations were cancelled, and some were held by Zoom. The following congregations were visited during this time:

7/5/2020	Zion Church, Manchester (Virtual Visitation)
7/12/2020	St. Luke's Church, St. Albans (Virtual Visitation)
7/19/2020	St. Mark's Church, Newport (Virtual Visitation)
7/26/2020	Trinity Church, Rutland (Virtual Visitation)
8/2/2020	Church of the Good Shepherd, Barre (Virtual Visitation)
9/13/2020	All Saints Church, South Burlington Virtual Visitation)
9/20/2020	Church of Our Saviour, Killington (Bishop in person, service zoomed)
10/4/2020	St. Mark's Church, Springfield (Virtual Visitation)
10/11/2020	St. John's Church, Randolph (Virtual)
10/18/2020	St. Peter's Church, Bennington (in-person and virtual)
11/8/2020	Christ Church, Montpelier (Virtual)
6/19/2021	Diocesan Confirmation Service, Mission Farm (in person)

During these visitations 8 people were confirmed and 2 people were received.

During this 12-month period, Bishop MacVean-Brown consented to several episcopal elections, requests for permission to officiate, and requests for permission for marriage after divorce.

On July 9, 2020, the Rev. Greta Getlein was received from the Diocese of Rhode Island.

On July 16, 2020, the Rev. Kathleen A. Moore was ordained a priest in the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania by Bishop Sean Rowe, on behalf of Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown.

On July 17, 2020, the Rev. Kathleen A. Moore was released to Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

On August 19, 2020, the Rev. Duncan L. Hilton was released to the Diocese of New Hampshire.

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

On September 12, 2020, the Rev. Thomas A. Rock was ordained a priest at the outdoor Chapel of Transfiguration at Rock Point by Bishop MacVean-Brown.

On September 12, 2020, the Rev. Jonathan Ross was ordained to the Diaconate at the outdoor Chapel of Transfiguration at Rock Point by Bishop MacVean-Brown.

On February 4, 2021, the Rev. William Muller was released to the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

On March 12, 2021, the Rev. Paul V. Olsson was received from the Diocese of Newark.

On April 8, 2021, the Rev. Norman M. McLeod III was released to the Diocese of Rhode Island.

On June 9, 2021, the Rev. Sarah Ginolfi was received from the Diocese of Olympia.

On June 26, 2021 Jack Mann Karn was ordained to the Diaconate in the Diocese of Texas by Bishop Kathryn Ryan, on behalf of Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown.

The following canonically resident clergy died during this time.

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

The Rev. Alfred A. Cramer died on November 23, 2020.

The Rev. Donald R. Morris died on December 4, 2020.

The Rev. William H. Atkinson died on January 7, 2021.

The Rev. John M. Miller, Jr. died on May 2, 2021.

(The Rev. John S. Mitchell died on August 14, 2021.)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannon MacVean-Brown".

The Right Reverend Dr. Shannon MacVean-Brown  
Eleventh Bishop of Vermont

# **Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center, Annual Diocese Convention Report (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)**

## **Overview**

Brookhaven Treatment and Learning Center was established in 1952 in historic Chelsea, Vermont on over 120 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 Vermont 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 informed 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 frontline 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 Approved 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**

Brookhaven has continued to navigate significant challenges over this reporting period. The ongoing pandemic has impacted both personnel and the population we serve. Fortunately, there is continuity in key staff positions, client success, and quality of Brookhaven's services. Notable staff activity over the period has included the departures of two classroom teachers at the end of their contracts this summer. Kylie Edwards and Art Rufus took advantage of newly earned credentials and pursued opportunities in the public school system. We are grateful for the fine support they offered students during their time at Brookhaven and wish them well as they grow their careers. In terms of arrivals, Brookhaven welcomed clinician Jeff Nykiel and Case Manager Kent Kilpatrick onto our team late last summer. Both have brought considerable energy and ability in their first year toward assuming their duties and establishing positive relationships with our high need youth. Elsewhere, entry level positions like direct care have shown more frequent turnover over the period consistent with historic tendencies in community mental health and current volatility in the job market.

Administratively, Rocky Spino continued in his second year as Executive Director at Brookhaven. He remains inspired at being able to lead the important work being done and committed to maintaining the highest standards of care. Likewise, Rocky is proud of the dedicated Brookhaven team who not only have rallied together through this tough time, but have embraced modifications that have made the program measurably more safe and strong.

Brenda Batten continues in her twenty-year role as Administrative Assistant to the director and Brookhaven programs. Brenda is a friendly first point of contact on the phone and at the front desk, and a steady source of knowledge to both staff and stakeholders. For over seven years, Residential Coordinator Jessica Allen has overseen the personal care of the boys residing at Brookhaven ensuring their 24/7 safety and supervision. These areas include training and scheduling direct care staff, supervising the food and maintenance programs, and planning the daily activities of the residents. Additionally, she continues in the important role of COVID coordinator ensuring that sound procedures and safe practices are maintained 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. Angie also offers Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Training to families of Brookhaven youth (TCIF) to help provide them with the tools to succeed when their children transition back into the home. More recently, Angie has aided substantially in the effort to recruit qualified applicants and fill available vacancies. Finally, Abby Jarvis continues her 8-year tenure at Brookhaven providing skillful counseling to children and families. In her role as lead clinician, Abby continues to assist the Director in monitoring the delivery of clinical services. Together with the Executive Director, these leaders are aided by a highly committed Board of Directors and Diocesan community who care deeply about and constantly strive to support the mission of Brookhaven.

Rounding out the above leadership are the many other professionals and support staff who maintain their strong commitment and hard work every day to help Brookhaven youth work through difficulty, achieve goals, and be at their best. Administrative Assistant Samantha Greer, Behavioral Specialist Scott Hoyt, Classroom Teacher Forrest Teullane, and Interim Special Education Coordinator Brittany Tremblay continue their vital roles on our school team. Head of Maintenance Michael Bogardus keeps Brookhaven's campus looking beautiful and the facility buildings and equipment staying functional. Cook Kana Johnson keeps both kids and crew well nourished by planning regular meals as well as custom menus for events like field trips, birthdays, and specialized diets. Last but not least, the invaluable Direct Care team nurture and guide our youth daily through the program. Among them are staff with numerous years of service including some dedicating over two decades in their positions.

Otherwise, in terms of staffing, Brookhaven continued into this summer with the same workforce shortages being faced by other youth care facilities in the state as well as employers nationwide. Existing staff have tirelessly stepped up their effort and availability as we have strived to fill gaps and find applicants during these unprecedented shortfalls. Ultimately, Brookhaven hopes to retain and recruit the amount of team members necessary to support our essential services.

Over the current reporting period, Brookhaven has continued to make structural, equipment, and other material improvements to maintain operations and meet changeable needs.

Continuing through this year, Brookhaven dorms and other spaces were provided with needed upgrades. Bedroom entrances of residents continued to receive new commercial grade doors and fixtures more suitable for safety and longevity. Dorm bathrooms were remodeled to provide one bathroom with a walk-in shower and maintain another with a bathtub. This not only modernized the bathrooms, but also made them safer and more practical for youth in congregate care. A state grant provided for the upgrade of HVAC systems in the learning center enabling better ventilation and more protections against the coronavirus. Chimney lining also needed to be completed on most buildings to ensure safety and code compliance. Brookhaven also saw the much-needed replacement of our utility pickup truck and lawn mower making the seasonal tasks of snow removal and lawn care much more efficient and dependable. Finally, plans were completed to continue outside fencing that will offer a protective barrier to the nearby river and preserve the positive aesthetic of the Brookhaven campus.

Technological projects included the long overdue improvement of Brookhaven's WiFi network. Outdated wiring was replaced, routers were upgraded, and network security was enhanced to meet industry standards. Brookhaven also received a grant to improve educational resources and was awarded funds to upgrade laptop computers and install smart boards in the classrooms. Looking ahead to the new year, Brookhaven will need to modify its phone systems to accommodate the state's enhanced e-911 system and more reliably broadcast location in times of emergency response.

Lastly, much attention over the year both globally and at Brookhaven has obviously been devoted to COVID response and recovery. Brookhaven's learning center was fortunate to be able to conduct in-person instruction for the school year. Likewise, early and near total vaccination rates among our staff, along with tight protocols on distancing, masking, and health checking, prevented having to impose many restrictions. Unfortunately, COVID infection did make its way to the Brookhaven community in April of this year necessitating brief closures, quarantines, and coordination with the Vermont Dept. of Health to mitigate these issues. Through partnership with our state health officials and the resiliency of our kids and crew, we were able to quickly bounce back and resume regular activity.

### **Moving Forward**

Like the rest of society, Brookhaven continues to cope with the lingering impact of the pandemic. This includes the previously mentioned staff shortages in many Brookhaven positions. Also, there are markedly diminished numbers of day students in our learning center due to area schools conducting remote learning last year and not being able to identify students for referral. As schools return this year to more in-class instruction, it is anticipated that many students may have experienced declines and might benefit from the support available in a specialized education setting like Brookhaven.

On a brighter note, referrals to Brookhaven's residential program have rebounded and numbers of youth being served have returned to capacity. This summer, Brookhaven was able to reinstate on-site family work and visitations again between youth and significant others to normal levels. Also, for the first time since the pandemic, home visits for residents nearing discharge were recently restored. This is very satisfying given the importance of this type of parent-child access and interaction to the treatment process. At the same time, more residents than ever are graduating the program successfully, incidents of property damage and aggression have all but disappeared, and workers compensation claims are at an all time low. Ultimately, this is a credit to a dedicated group of helping professionals who have prioritized supporting our clients and setting conditions necessary for change. As always, we remain thankful for our gifted team, unified in our Brookhaven traditions, and optimistic in our trending success.

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.

Respectfully submitted,

The Brookhaven Leadership Team

## **Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Annual Report to Convention, July 2020 – June 2021**

### **To the People of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont:**

This is my second report to you as Dean & Rector of the Cathedral. Last year at this time, we had great hopes for a return to some sense of normalcy by the end of the year. Of course, that was not to be. If we meet in person for any part of convention this year, please find me to say hello! I look forward to spending time with you.

Much of the past reporting year was devoted to all things digital and virtual: we purchased and installed a video system in preparation for live-streaming which, as of the end of this reporting period, we have not yet begun; we perfected our Zoom skills and offered daily Morning Prayer through Facebook Live; we added a weekly service of Compline each Sunday evening; the choir recorded hymns and anthems from home and Music Director Mark Howe learned to use some new software to bring the individual recordings together into an anthem or a full hymn to offer on our digital platform. Like all of you, this was not the year we wanted to have.

We offered to the Cathedral, Diocesan, and wider communities two opportunities for engaging in anti-racism work: The first was a book study on *The Hate U Give*; and the second a five-week study on the *Scene on Radio: Seeing White* podcast. Both were well-received and many people from the broader community were able to participate. We also organized and hosted a diocesan-wide Virtual Christmas Pageant involving many parishes that was a great deal of fun. The bishop was in residence (virtually) for Holy Week which we offered in coordination with the Green Mountain On-Line Abbey and St. Peter's in Bennington. These all were wonderful opportunities to broaden involvement from and with others that the virtual world of Zoom made possible. One of the real gifts of this pandemic. This past June we coordinated a diocesan-wide service of Confirmation for youth who had been prepared for the same during the pandemic. The service was held at Mission Farm on a beautiful summer day.

We have continued our weekly silent vigil against racism (every Sunday at 1:00 p.m.) which we began on June 7, 2020. We are committed to continuing our witness to the larger community until such time as it is no longer needed. We also had the privilege of hosting a BIPOC vaccination clinic at the Cathedral every Saturday beginning two weeks before Easter and continuing through May. We continue to support, through time, talent, and treasure, Vermont Interfaith Action and the Joint Urban Ministry Project and hope that new relationships developed through the BIPOC clinic will offer more opportunities to engage together in justice work.

Our financial picture was sound as we ended 2020, and we are realizing some recovery from loss of income in 2021. We applied for and received a second PPP loan to carry us through and are happy to report that that loan, along with the first PPP loan has been forgiven. We were fortunate enough, through careful management of the budget, to not have to implement any of the several contingency plans we had developed for significant loss of income. We are heading to the end of 2021 in a strong position and remain deeply hopeful for a healthy year in 2022.

We have made some small progress in moving toward a fully accessible Cathedral. New lighting was installed in the stairwell and motion sensor activation was installed for the lights in the stairwell and the hallway in the lower level. We hope you will soon see how much brighter everything is! We are in the process of installing railings to assist in navigating the steps from the floor of the nave to the sanctuary and are turning our attention to handicapped door systems. Coming into full 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!

As Dean I have endeavored to spend time with every active clergy person in the diocese, either through a Zoom chat or in person (I love driving around Vermont). I have not yet made it to all of you, but hope to have done so by the time I write another of these reports! I serve on the Board of Cathedral Square and was last year elected to the Financial Oversight and Audit Committee (which I now chair) and the Title IV Disciplinary Board, and was appointed to Grants & Loans.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greta Getlein', with a stylized, flowing script.

The Very Revd Greta Getlein (she/her)

*Dean & Rector*

## **Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM, Report for 2020-21 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.

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.

As with churches, CCM did not have in-person gatherings during the academic year. Once a week, Joe hosted a discussion on Zoom around the general topic of progressive Christianity (using Marcus Borg's *Speaking Christian* to guide the discussion). While Zoom will never be the same as in-person meetings, it does offer certain advantages. Among them: one of our regular participants lives in California! She searched online for resources on progressive Christianity, saw our meeting listed, and joined in. Joe provided vital support for her Christian journey at just the time she needed it.

In a wonderful encouragement for our ministry, we applied for and received a \$5,000 grant for 2021-22 from the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministries of the Episcopal Church. The grant will be used to fund a Communications Assistant - Digital Strategies to improve our online and social media presence; provide an honorarium for a speaker for an event focused on gender or racial justice; and subsidize a small part of Joe's compensation.

CCM continued to be 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. The campus food pantry, Rally Cat's Cupboard, continued to operate, although in a curtailed way. A donor gave \$50,000 for infrastructure, staffing, and equipment (e.g., refrigerator and freezer).

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

## **Diocesan Commission on Ministry, Annual Report to Convention 2020-2021**

The Diocesan Commission on Ministry, currently a ten-member body appointed by the bishop, canonically consists of a Committee on Formation (COF) and a Committee on Discernment (COD).<sup>\*</sup> In its current manifestation, however, the Committee on Formation is inactive (as has been the case for many years) and the bulk of the commission's work focuses on shepherding people seeking ordination through the steps of discernment until ordination.

Since the summer of 2020, the commission has met four times via Zoom (November 2020; April, June and October 2021) with people "in the process." Currently four people are in the beginning steps of discernment at the parochial level (with one coming to the DCOM-COD in early October). Two people have been admitted to Postulancy (one of whom will come to the DCOM-COM in early October for Candidacy). Five people are Candidates (of whom one will come to the DCOM-COD in early October for application for ordination to the transitional diaconate en route to the priesthood, while the other has already been approved for ordination to the transitional diaconate en route to the priesthood as of June 2021) and one person has been ordained (the Rev. Deacon Jack Karne, 26 June 2021, in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas).

Of these people, two postulants are discerning ordination to the priesthood. Of the five candidates, four are 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. Several are currently participating in a diocesan-sponsored program, the "Practicum on Pastoral Ministry," ably led by the Rev. David Hamilton. This program began mid-2021, despite the

complications and restrictions caused by the pandemic. Not surprisingly, there are now many variables for each person in his or her journey; one can no longer assume that people receive a conventional three-year seminary education (which many of the church-wide 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 continues to work 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.

The commission looks forward to working with the Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge, who will mostly closely accompany the commission in its work of discernment. At its June meeting, the commission had a very informative conversation with the Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal about the history, formation and continuation of Local Ministry Support Teams in our diocese. She will assist the commission in its work with Local Ministry Support Teams. Likewise, the commission anticipates that the Rev. Canon Auburn Watersong will be a vital source of support for its work, particularly in conversations about clergy and congregations.

The Chair of the DCOM is most grateful for the commitment and hard work of the members of the Commission on Ministry: the Rev. Deacon Stannard Baker, Beverly Barton, Eric Davis, the Rev. David Hamilton (ex officio), the Rev. Janet Brown, the Rev. Scott Neal, the Rev. Dr. Titus Pressler, the Rev. Shelie Richardson, Lisa Schnell and Candace Vandouris. It has been a pleasure and privilege to work with such faithful, insightful and spiritual people.

Respectfully submitted,

(the Rev. Canon) Lee Alison Crawford, Ph.D.  
Chair, Diocesan Commission on Ministry

## **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, sustained this ministry throughout 2020, navigating the challenges of COVID-19. When allowed, the Chaplains visited patients in person, and when not allowed, contacted patients on the telephone. Visiting, even by family members, was severely limited this year, thus Chaplain visits were particularly appreciated by patients and their families.

The 2020 statistics tell our story:

- As in previous years, Chaplains visited patients three days each week.
- Our Chaplains visited 325 individuals, often multiple times.
- Episcopal patients came from 61 towns in New Hampshire and 57 towns in Vermont.
- Births to Episcopal patients doubled in 2020, up from an average of 4 to 8.

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.”

## **Financial Oversight and Audit Committee, Annual Report to Convention June 2020 – July 2021**

To the People of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont:

The Financial Oversight and Audit Committee met seven times during the reporting year. The primary focus of the FOAC in this reporting year was the continued updating of Audit processes for parishes and internal review processes for the FOAC, particularly as it relates to the review of Parochial Reports submitted by parishes. A great deal of work on audit process was completed by the outgoing chair, Laura Buel, for which the Committee is incredibly grateful.

The FOAC moved its review of Parish Parochial Reports from fall to spring, to allow for immediate feedback and education before final reports must be submitted to the DFMS. Each reviewer worked directly with Parish Treasurers, Senior Wardens, and/or clergy to review, educate, and resubmit reports that meet the full requirements of General Convention as laid out in their guidelines. This experience was a positive one for both the reviewers and the parishes.

The FOAC also moved forward with creating fillable pdf forms (thank you to Ann Carroll and Karen Robinson in the Diocesan office!) for portions of the Audit and looks forward to continuing to provide audit feedback to parishes this fall.

The FOAC is responsible for the oversight of all financial and audit processes for the Diocese, Rock Point Commons, Trustees, and Parishes. As such, the chair has begun to work more closely with the Finance Office of the Diocese and the Bishop's office to review processes and structure. This is a work in progress and you will hear more about this at Convention.

We hope you will consider joining us in our work!

Respectfully submitted,



The Very Revd Greta Getlein, *Chair*

Members: Laura Buel, The Revd Susan McGarry, Chad Wohlers

## **Global Episcopal Mission Network (GEMN)**

As the diocesan liaison for the Global Episcopal Mission Network, I invite Vermont Episcopalians to be in touch about your visions and relationships for mission in the global community. GEMN is a network of dioceses, congregations, mission organizations, seminaries and individuals committed to catalyze global engagement throughout the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Vermont has been a supporting member for many years, and it is a privilege to represent GEMN in our diocese.

The 2020-21 period has been a time of especially acute crises – the coronavirus pandemic, racial turmoil, ecological destruction and political unrest, all of them with global ramifications. GEMN has prayerfully sought to discern the justice-working and reconciling movement of God amid the crises and provide innovative resources for global engagement amid the challenges:

**“Earthkeeping: Creation Care in Global Mission”** was the theme of the 2021 Global Mission Conference as GEMN addressed the urgent planetary crisis of our time. GEMN received a grant from the churchwide Creation Care Task Force to help with the gathering, which was held online in April. Speakers included Melanie Mullen, churchwide creation care staff officer; Rachel Mash of Green Anglicans; Orlando Gomez, bishop of eco-activist Costa Rica; Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, creation care missionary in Western Massachusetts; and Leon Sampson of Navajoland. You can access the conference videos [here](#) on the GEMN [website](#).

**Mission Formation Program** moved online to Zoom in 2020 and 2021 because of the pandemic and each time drew several dozen attendees, including some from abroad. It went so well that an online [interactive version](#) will be standard even when in-person formation becomes possible again. Vermont Episcopalians can easily attend this in future – stay tuned for notices in “The Mountain.”

***Questing: The Way of Love in Global Mission*** was published by GEMN through Amazon on the Kindle platform. The seven-session study series for congregations and individuals applies the now well-known Way of Love to global mission. Co-authored by Grace Burton-Edwards of Georgia and myself, [Questing](#) is a resource for Vermont congregations wanting to explore what global engagement might mean.

**Mission Thursdays with GEMN** last fall gathered mission activists online to network and hear from activists who are adapting global mission to pandemic conditions. As the series resumes on a monthly basis, Vermonters will have opportunity to participate in these live conversations. Notice will appear in “The Mountain.”

**Global Mission Toolkit** of webinars, videos and print resources for catalyzing global mission was recently compiled by a unique partnership among GEMN, the Standing Commission on World Mission, and the Office of Global Partnerships, thanks to a grant from the Constable Fund. It includes videos on a variety of topics, including an interview about mission companionship with Janice Price of the Church of England. You can explore this suite of resources [here](#) on the Episcopal Church website.

**Global Mission Prayer Cycle** lifts up in prayer the mission work of dioceses, organizations and seminaries throughout the church on a monthly basis. The Diocese of Vermont is prayed for on the 27<sup>th</sup> of each month.

The GEMN Board of 12 activists includes laypeople and clergy from all over the Episcopal Church and people who hail from Haiti, Dominican Republic and Costa Rica. It also includes Molly O’Brien, formerly of Trinity Church, Shelburne, who served as interim coordinator for much of 2021. It has been a privilege to serve as Board president for several years, and I look forward to engaging more Vermonters in this work. You can reach me at: 802-326-3157, or [tituspresler@post.harvard.edu](mailto:tituspresler@post.harvard.edu)

The Rev. Dr. Titus Presler

GEMN Diocesan Liaison

## **Grants & Loans Committee, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021**

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: Becca Boucher (St. Mark’s, Newport), The Very Rev Greta Getlein (St Paul’s Cathedral, Burlington), Paul Horn (St Stephen’s, Middlebury), The Rev Christine Jones (St John’s, Randolph) The Rev. Todd McKee (St. Paul’s, White River

Junction), Steve Smith (St. James, Arlington), The Rev. Bob Wilson (St. Mark's, Newport), Canons Auburn Waterson and Walter Brownridge (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

Consider grant and loan requests only from an Episcopal entity sponsored within Vermont. The Committee will not consider requests from non-Episcopal entities or requests from outside Vermont.

Give priority to requests that show promise for enhancing local mission approaches.

Give priority to requests that support discernment, planning, promoting, training for, implementing, and evaluating mission (rather than funding the actual mission).

Give priority to requests that show sustainability.

Give priority to requests that support discerning, planning, promoting, and training of lay people.

Give at least 50% to support local mission and give no more than 50% to [non-mission] requests related to buildings.

Attempt to distribute funds as widely as possible.

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.

Discourage the use of funds to solve emergencies or to postpone dealing with a long-term problem.

Discourage the use of funds strictly for the purpose of historical preservation of buildings.

During this past year there have been \$76,150 in grants and no loans approved and distributed. If you would like more details on the funds granted please contact The Rev. Bob Wilson, Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Bob Wilson

## **Green Mountain Witness**

Green Mountain Witness is the evangelism initiative of the Diocese of Vermont. Its inaugural event was the 2018 diocesan convention, which had the theme “Go Tell It On the Mountains – Evangelism Vermont-Style,” and it was keynoted by Stephanie Spellers, canon to the presiding bishop for evangelism reconciliation and creation care.

Pushy and disrespectful examples of evangelism in the wider world naturally make many Episcopalians wary of evangelism. But here’s the appealing churchwide definition: “Evangelism is the spiritual practice of seeking, naming and celebrating Jesus’ loving presence in the lives of other people – and then inviting them to more.”

In this understanding Christian witness begins with listening, not telling; honoring, not dismissing; exploring, not presuming. What might be shared is not dogma but the story of what God in Christ has done in one’s own life. As another Episcopalian said, “Evangelism is telling one’s own story in light of God’s story.”

The focus of Green Mountain Witness has been to catalyze conversation about evangelism in congregations around the diocese, and a number of talks and workshops took place in 2019 as team members took individual responsibility for being in touch with specific congregations. Activity has slowed to a crawl during the pandemic of 2020 and 2021. It has difficult to spark commitment to exploring this dimension of Christian witness when congregations are struggling simply to maintain worship and community in pandemic conditions.

Yet St. Mary’s in the Mountains in Wilmington undertook the remarkable step of organizing an evangelism conference, assisted by a grant from the churchwide Evangelism Initiative.

Originally planned for September 2020, “Unlocking God’s Grace and Hope” was postponed to September 2021 and, still in prospect at this writing, was planned for both in person and on Zoom. Jerusalem Greer, the churchwide evangelism staff officer, was to keynote the gathering. Leaders known churchwide were engaged to highlight young voices and the role of music in sharing the gospel. Green Mountain Witness team members were among those committed to facilitate hands-on workshops on story-telling, invitation and testimony. Registrants included Vermonters, people from elsewhere in the Province of New England and some from across the country.

The Green Mountain Witness [team](#) has been delighted to welcome as new members Michelle Thomas of St. Andrew’s, Colchester, and the Rev. Bob Leopold of Christ Church, Montpelier, and St. Andrew’s, Colchester. Continuing members are Joe Fortner of St. Mary’s of St. Mary’s, Wilmington, a prime mover in that parish’s conference; Lindsey Huddle of St. James, Essex; Jennifer Ogelby of St. James, Essex; and Katie Runde of Christ Church, Bethel.

We plan to be in touch with congregations during the coming year as pandemic conditions permit. Meanwhile do reflect on how you can encourage such witness in your congregation. I invite you to be in touch: 802-326-3157, [tituspresler@post.harvard.edu](mailto:tituspresler@post.harvard.edu)

The Rev. Dr. Titus Presler, Convener

## **Liturgical Commission Report**

2020 – 2021 has been a challenging year for gathering for liturgies, as we all know. I think that as a diocese, with the creativity offered by our clergy and laypeople, we have worked hard to provide experiences of worship while also trying to keep people safe. Where broadband was readily accessible, online worship was easier but in all corners of our diocese, we have tried to stay faithful. So my thanks to all people of the diocese for the work you have been doing to keep us connected. Here are a few highlights from the past year, of which I am aware.

In 2020 Bishop Shannon founded an online prayer community, now known as the Green Mountain Online Abbey. It currently offers Morning Prayer and Compline Monday – Saturday and Evening Prayer on Sundays. The Rev. Deacon Mary Taggart is the deacon pastor for this online community. It has been a source of comfort and daily discipline that has been helpful to those who attend regularly.

In the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021 the Rev. Angie Emerson, Rev. Canon Susan Ohlidal, Rev. Deacon Lucy Pellegrini, and I taught online workshops for laity in the art of leading Morning Prayer. The purposes were to increase participation of the laity in liturgical leadership and train, support and encourage Morning Prayer leaders to become part of regular worship rotas in their congregations. 52 people have been licensed for leadership in our diocese. We hope these leaders will be employed in their respective congregations, adding their lay leadership voices to our common worship life. If there is enough interest we will be glad to offer another course in 2022.

Our diocese offered a preaching course in 2020 by *Backstory Preaching*. 24 people were trained as lay preachers. We hope they too will be adding their voices, wisdom, and fresh perspectives to their community's worship life.

We did not have as many large group liturgical events as in 2020 but did offer online worship for 2021 Diocesan Convention.

Mark Howe, Director of Music and Canon Precentor of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul facilitated a group conversation of diocesan musicians in January to share stories and discuss how musicians might help one another through this time of pandemic. There was interest from about 19 musicians and 12 attended. We hope such conversations will continue into 2022 as we begin to regather in various configurations.

Michael Hartigan, Parish Musician for Trinity Church, Shelburne who has served as a musician for several of our online worship offerings, has worked with others in our diocese regarding the creation of so called "virtual choirs." He has developed an in-depth tutorial for those who would like to learn how to do this ministry in their congregations.

*Anam Cara Sojourners*, a Celtic spirituality inspired group, offered 40-Day Advent and Lenten morning prayer opportunities for our diocesan community and beyond during those highly reflective seasons.

A Diocesan Confirmation service took place in the summer of 2021 at Mission Farm in Killington.

Representatives from our diocese participated in a national two day masterclass entitled "Being a Top-Notch Hybrid Church" offered by Virginia Theological Seminary. As we begin to come out of the pandemic, many of our communities continue to offer services both in-person and online. It might be interesting to offer a survey about the different ways we are doing this as a diocese and how effective these online worship ministries are becoming. They offer worship and fellowship options for those who cannot be or do not want to be present in-person for reasons of safety, incapacity, and distance. Hybrid church is certainly a rising phenomenon. I would be happy to have feedback from parishes who are experimenting in various ways.

I am grateful to colleagues, both lay and ordained, with whom I do this important work. As we come out of the pandemic we will have more opportunities to strengthen our liturgical ministries in the Diocese of Vermont.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Kim Hardy  
Chair, Liturgical Commission, Diocese of Vermont

## **Mission Farm, Report for Convention July 2020 - June 2021**

Submitted by Rachel Field and Lisa Ransom

## **Emerging Vision**

Our first year at Mission Farm has been one of rapid growth and engagement. We have sought to move boldly into the growing season with the hope in our hearts of building community around food access. From this posture, our many programs and patterns of life have emerged. We believe that a commitment to transformational, intentional and embodied love, can bring new energy, new expression, and new remedies, for the offenses of racism, exploitation of the earth, poverty, and even to new communities in a post-Covid world.

We are not sure where we are being led by the Spirit, and the winter months bring chances for discernment, reflection, and contemplation. Some foundational truths are becoming evident. We will be intentionally anti-racist, earth-minded, and grounded in solidarity with the poor. We will increase food access in partnership with our community members and fellow growers. We will become more whole through in-person spiritual practices of locating our bodies in respectful presence on the land. Finally, we commit to prayerful engagement with each other, our partners and all who join in building our shared future.

## **First Planting**

On a chilly May morning Conne and Ben from neighboring Butternut Ridge Farm drove their tractor to the top of the hill behind Church of our Saviour and began tilling. This was our first major planting effort at Mission Farm in over 30 years, and we prayerfully opened a quarter of an acre for nourishing food for our community. Within weeks we had planted 50 pounds of seed potatoes over 450 feet of bed space, and a variety of seeds gifted from the Nulhegan Tribe of the Abenaki as part of the Abenaki Land Link Project, which is a partnership between the Nulhegan Tribe of the Abenaki, NOFA Vermont, and Rooted in Vermont. All the produce from these seeds - the “three sisters” of corn, beans, and squash - will be returned to the Abenaki community for distribution among their community. Additionally, with the installation of eight garden beds near the church building, we planted a small “kitchen garden” as both a teaching space and a source of food for our summer interns who were in residence.

## **Internship Program**

Beginning on Pentecost Sunday Mission Farm welcomed three interns for a summer program on the Farm. The interns, Jimmy, Caity, and Lizzie, are all Episcopal seminarians. Jimmy came to us from Virginia Theological Seminary where he is a postulant for the priesthood from the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. Lizzie and Caity are both from Yale Divinity School and exploring the possibility of ordination. The three interns lived in the Heminway Guest House, developed a rhythm of daily prayer, and worked closely with the emerging farm practices taking shape at Mission Farm. They planted 450 feet of potatoes, cared for a laying flock of 10 chickens, tended to a wily and rambunctious trio of lambs who led them on a chase for 15 miles across Killington Mountain (you can read all about in in VT Digger!), and planted a quarter of an acre of corn, beans, and squash as part of the Abenaki Land Link Project.

While here they explored the mountain and held these questions: “what is the land inviting” and “what is the Spirit inviting in this place?” These are questions that have been carried in the hearts of all the leaders at Mission Farm over the past year as we listen together to what God may be inviting on that mountainside. This internship was a learning experience for all of us - both the interns, regular volunteers, and staff at Mission Farm. We had the opportunity to navigate those early phases of formation in prayer and daily life as the number of people living on the farm doubled overnight! There was a lot to celebrate, and we are looking forward to carrying forward what we can and imagining even more possibilities next year.

## **Events**

In the past year Mission Farm has hosted a robust series of events for the wider community (both within the Episcopal church and outside of the church). These events were largely offered virtually due to the COVID - 19 pandemic, and we did have a few in person outdoor offerings for the community.

**Kiss the Ground Film Screening and American Flatbread** October 18, 2020 - 25 attendees attended Mission Farm for a drive-in movie night in partnership with American Flatbread. We also partnered with Vermont’s Interfaith Power and Light to stream the movie online for a wider audience and were delighted to be a part of VTIPL’s fall program series.

**Celebration of Light Advent Retreat** - 9 attendees for an online contemplative virtual retreat during Advent. We experimented with zoom as a platform for earth-centered spiritual practice with silence, readings, and centering prayer.

**Braiding Sweetgrass Meditation Series** - Lenten Dinner Program (online) with over 60 registrants from 7 different states across the US. This program featured the collaborative efforts of five women leaders, both lay and ordained, Tonita Branan (Seattle, Washington), Karen Brightly (Bridgeport, Vermont), the Rev. Lisa Ransom (Killington, Vermont), the Rev. Rachel Field (Randolph, VT), and t h e Rev. Sheri Osbourne (Vergennes, Vermont). This program offered both a deep dive into Robin Wall Kimmerer’s text as well as embodied ritual and contemplative conversation in small groups. We leaned in and tested the ability of zoom to hold and intimate and physically grounded space.

**Gardening and Land Management as Spiritual Practice** (online) 23 registered including both Episcopal church members and members of the wider community, from Vermont and from outside of the state to work with local farmer Lisa McCrory (Earthwise Farm and Forest) around

developing a spiritual toolbelt for working with the land

**Gardening and Land Management as Spiritual Practice** (in person practicum) 12 attendees from across the state of Vermont met for a morning of practical engagement with a variety of spiritual tools for working in partnership with the land to plan gardens and map landscapes

**Mindful River Walk** June 6 - Yoga walk along the river led by a community leader for any members of the Killington community who were interested. The meditative walk brought 13 guests from the surrounding area to share in an experience of embodied prayer with the land and each other.

### **Everyone Eats**

Mission Farm was able to join with a slew of restaurants, businesses, and farms as a distribution site for the “Everyone Eats” program that offered free prepared meals to all Vermonters as a part of the State’s COVID relief efforts. We gathered food from the Food Hub in Rutland and, every Thursday evening, distributed 75 meals (rain or shine!) to whomever would pass by - no questions and no qualifications. We were so delighted with the connection to the Food Bank through Everyone Eats that when the Food Hub stopped collecting meals this summer, Mission Farm became a direct drop off site for restaurants to deliver. What we did not expect was the nexus of community that developed during these drop offs. Masked, distanced, and often in cars, we became known and were able to know members of our community who normally might not pass along the small farm road off of the highway. We aren’t counting numbers, and this doesn’t necessarily mean that there are more people in the pews (although a few guests have decided to come to church!), but it does remind us that the expansive generosity of God’s love can change hearts and build community anywhere and everywhere.

### **Conclusion**

We, Rachel and Lisa, return gratitude for the many ways that you each have supported Mission Farm in the past year. By completing our initial survey, asking questions about what may be emerging, partnering with us to lead some of our programs, or holding Mission Farm in prayer - all of these tender offerings are so gratefully received. Please know that we are holding you, the Diocese of Vermont, in our prayers as well. In the words of Thomas Merton, “we do not know where we are going...but we believe the desire to please you does in fact please you.”

In gratitude and with the earth,

Rachel and Lisa

## **Episcopal Province of New England Diocesan 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 albeit predominantly over Zoom and not in person. Our New England Province is very active on a broad base of ministries. Some of these activities are highlighted in the bulleted points below.

Formation Network Convener Linnae Peterson is hosting monthly calls for Province 1 folks interested in formation. The first conversation started September 16, with the fabulous Miriam McKenney! Miriam serves on the Becoming Beloved Community Leadership Team. The Province 1 Christian Formation Network will continue with free monthly speakers series.

The new Province I Addiction and Recovery Ministry Network met for the first time in March 2021, convened by Sandi Albom. It was a beautiful session of wondering where the Spirit may be leading our awareness, prayer and action. The group meets online on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7-8 PM. More information on the Province 1 website.

Province I Annual Faith Formation Gathering was online and free this year with Part I on Friday, March 5th from 7-9 featuring The Marriage of Evangelism and Formation, presented by Drs. Patricia Lyons and Lisa Kimball. Then on Saturday, March 6th from 9- noon use the same Zoom link to join the conversation about formation and spiritual practice in New England. Colleagues joined from across Province I to gather digitally to share ideas, resources and community.

Emily Keniston has been a great asset to the Province as a force of bring folks into conversation and coordination of diverse and important missions of the Province. Unfortunately, Emily will be leaving the Province in November of 2021 and a search is in process to find her replacement.

The Executive Committee has been expanded to six plus the Coordinator. This includes President Kit Wang, who is a priest in Maine, the Bishop Ian Douglas of Connecticut as Vice President, and the Rev. Titus Presler of Vermont as Treasurer.

The finances of the Province are healthy and continue to use the services of HarQuin Bookkeeping to handle the finances of the Province.

The Province Ministry 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 2022 provincial budget will be about \$98,000 is funded mostly by diocesan assessments, which are assigned according to a diocese's relative size. The Diocese of Vermont contributes approximately \$7,000 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.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Bob Wilson

**Rock Point Commons: Camp & Conference Center, Annual Report to Convention**

For the past seventeen months, life on Rock Point has been very different, and yet we have adapted to serve the community in a variety of different ways. As you may recall and due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Rock Point summer camp was cancelled for both summers of 2020 & 2021. We realize that this decision disappointed many campers and camp families, so we tried to make the most of a tough situation. As a way to extend hospitality in the middle of a pandemic, we decided to repurpose our camp cabins and welcome Vermont families to Rock Point. While repurposing and outfitting the cabins was an experiment in 2020, it was wildly successful and we again welcomed families back to the Rock Point Cabins during this past summer of 2021. It felt good to again welcome families back to Rock Point this summer and we were almost completely booked from mid-June through September 1<sup>st</sup>. My sense is that this ministry of hospitality will likely establish a new tradition for many families who will want to return summer after summer to enjoy Rock Point's Cabins.

Also, during the summer of 2021, we invited the YMCA to operate two summer day camps on our beautiful property. From mid-June through mid-August, Camp Ignite and Camp Propel ran simultaneously and these camps were also very successful. Camp Ignite was a camp experience for young girls. Ignite's curriculum was STEM based (science, technology, engineering, & mathematics) and the camp counselors facilitated some creative and fun learning experiences for these young ladies. Camp Propel was a co-ed day camp and its curriculum focused on outdoor athletics while also integrating creation care into their program. The inclusion of creation care resonated with many of the campers who found Rock Point to be naturally beautiful and tranquil. We are pleased with the partnership we've developed with the YMCA, as they too are a Christian based non-profit that focuses on the health and well-being of youth and families.

Another organization that Rock Point has partnered with during the summers of 2020 and 2021 was the LGBT non-profit known as Outright Vermont. Outright Vermont has a children and youth program known as "Gender Creative Kids." This group gathers on the second Sunday of every month and they frequently come to Rock Point for some fresh air and recreation. This is another example of a new partnership on Rock Point that supports youth and families through the ministry of hospitality and welcome.

Also, this past summer four seminarians lived on Rock Point while participating in a chaplaincy internship at the UVM Medical Center in Burlington. Alex, Darcey, Marta, and Liz lived on the first floor of the Van Dyck Building while engaging in this internship that ran from June through mid-August. We were pleased to support these folks as they went through their program and it was nice to make new friends who also came to appreciate the beauty of Rock Point.

Finally, Burlington High School's alternative education program, "OnTop," has again begun their second academic year here on Rock Point. You may recall that the Burlington High School facility had to be evacuated due to the presence of dangerous PCBs in the air. While many BHS students are now attending school at the repurposed Macy's department store downtown, twenty-seven "OnTop" students come to school every day here on Rock Point. This alternative education program has a wraparound curriculum that includes academics, counseling, and programs which encourage therapeutic healing. Both teachers and students have commented just how grateful they are, knowing that Rock Point welcomed them during a very challenging time.

As you can see, much has changed here on Rock Point in the past two years. The ways in which we have been able to support so many youths within our community has felt like a gift of Divine Providence. There have been surprises – good surprises – even in the midst of this pandemic. God’s presence is clearly here on Rock Point and that Presence manifests itself in some surprisingly poignant ways. As we now actively plan for Rock Point’s future sustainability, we will be depending on the presence of the Spirit to guide us all into the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Habersang  
Executive Director  
Rock Point Commons

## **Standing Committee Annual Report, July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021**

The Standing Committee, an elected body by Diocesan Convention, comprised of four laypersons and four clergy persons, meets by teleconference or in person monthly, 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, 2020 and June 30, 2021: August 26, 2020; October 7, 2020; October 31, 2020; November 11, 2020; January 6, 2021; March 11, 2021 and May 5, 2021.

The Standing Committee acted on the following items between July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021:

### **Property Matters**

- Approved the sale of the Rectory of St. John’s Church, Randolph, VT
- Approved routine Quitclaims for Ryegate, Leicester, VT; Bangs, Highgate, VT; Mason, Highgate, VT; Jackson, Cornwall, VT; Whitten, Essex, VT; Messenger, Weybridge, VT; Denio, Barnet, VT; Kuhlmann, Fayston, VT; Tam, Essex, Junction, VT; Murphy, Richmond, VT; Milewski, Jericho, VT; and Ruth, Williston, VT
- Approved the sale of St. Ann’s Church property in Richford, VT

### **The Ordination Process**

- Approved Thom Rock being ordained to the priesthood
- Approved Katie Runde becoming a candidate for the priesthood
- Approved Melanie Combs becoming a candidate for the priesthood
- Approved Lars Hunter becoming a candidate for the diaconate
- Approved Jack Mann Karn being ordained to the diaconate
- Approved Darcey Mercier becoming a candidate for the priesthood

### **Consents to Episcopal Elections**

- Gave consent for the election of The Rev. Canon Paul-Gordon Chandler as Bishop Diocesan of Wyoming
- Gave consent for the election of The Rev. Paula E. Clark as Bishop Diocesan of Chicago

### **Other Actions**

- Approved St. Paul's Episcopal church in Wells moving to parish status
- Elected Scottie Emery-Ginn as president and Kim Hardy as Secretary
- Accepted Kim Hardy's resignation and elected Tom Rees as Secretary

Standing Committee members for 2020-2021 were: (Clergy) The Rev. Kim Hardy (Secretary, 2021), The Rev. Jennie Anderson (2022), The Rev. Lisa Ransom (2023) and The Rev. Stannard Baker (2024); (Lay members) Lars Hunter (2021), Scottie Emery-Ginn (President, term expires 2022), Thomas Rees (Secretary, 2023) and Maggie Thompson (2024). 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen "Scottie" Emery-Ginn  
President, 2020-2021

### **The 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 2020-21 period covered by this report, those meetings were held on September 3 and November 11, 2020 (Annual and Regular Meeting) and on March 4 and June 3, 2021.

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 were approved for 5 properties in 2020, with \$9,950 fees collected and to date in 2021, 7 transactions collecting \$5,460 in fees.

Various matters relating to the following properties were also addressed by the Committee during the year:

Sale of St. Ann's Richford (deconsecrated in 2019)

Sale of Currier Hall associated with Immanuel Church, Bellows Falls

Support of concept, St. Paul's White River Jct. efforts to partner with Twin Pine Housing Trust to build affordable housing

Review of boundary adjustment proposal between St. Andrews St. Johnsbury and municipality for renovation of the adjacent property

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 \$37,331,191 as of June 30, 2021, a 32.83% gain over prior the year, exceeding all our benchmarks and goals. The Committee met with its professional investment management advisors from Advisors in Financial Planning, Inc every quarter. Fund performance continued to improve following the adoption of the revised socially responsive (ESG) Investment Policy in the spring of 2016.

In 2020-2021, the Trustees approved quarterly distributions from the DUT to investors at the most recent rate of 1.482% based on the annual rate of 5% of these average unit values over the past 12 quarters. Each distribution has increased in value since March 2020. The distribution payment dates are the 20th day of the last month in each calendar quarter of the year.

Additional Activities of the Trustees included work on a draft Trustee Responsibilities document and Trustee Bylaws, which continue to be works in progress.

Christopher Chapman, St. Michael's, Brattleboro, was elected Trustee for a seven-year term at Convention in November 2020. He now serves a full 7-year term after having served out a partial term ending in 2020.

Sarah Cowan, President of the Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont

Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont 2020-2021 Roster:

Benjamin Anderson-Ray; Laurel Broughton (Clerk); Christopher Chapman; Sarah Cowan (President and Chair, Real Estate Committee); Ellen McCulloch-Lovell (Chair, Investment Committee); The Rev. Stephen Reynes; Steve Smith; Ex officio: Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown; Gerald Davis, Treasurer

## **Vermont Ecumenical Council Report to Diocesan Convention 2021**

As Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer I represent The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont as President of the Vermont Ecumenical Council (VEC), Moderator of the VEC's Executive Committee, a participant in the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) and Annual Meeting of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO), Coordinator of Province 1 Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers, and other ecumenical relationships. I also serve as Chair of the Board of Cooperative Christian Ministry (CCM) – the ecumenical ministry of six Protestant denominations (Episcopal, United Methodist, American Baptist, ELCA Lutheran, Presbyterian, and United Church of Christ) at the University of Vermont.

The past year of the pandemic has been challenging for ecumenical and interreligious relations, as it has for so many ministries. Nonetheless, these relationships continue and this work has

flourished in new and different ways.

While the Vermont Ecumenical Council was not able to observe the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in 2021 with its usual service during the traditional Week (January 18-25, between the Feasts of the Confession of Saint Peter and the Conversion of Saint Paul), the VEC's general Coordinating Committee met on its regular quarterly schedule on Zoom, and the Executive Committee met on Zoom every six to eight weeks to carry on the VEC's work between the quarterly meetings. The VEC's website continues to be maintained regularly with postings of articles and events of ecumenical interest across many Christian traditions. As a "Network for Christian Cooperation" (it's organizing principle), the VEC seeks to offer ways for Christians and Christian churches of many backgrounds to come together around matters of common interest and concern. In addition to the Episcopal and Roman Catholic dioceses and the Vermont District of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church, members include the Society of Saint Edmund, the Sisters of Providence, Vermont Justice for All, Cooperative Christian Ministry at UVM, the Burlington Religious Society of Friends, and more than forty other Christian organizations and individual members.

As a partner organization under the VEC, the Vermont Bible Society has particularly thrived during the pandemic, sustained by regular disbursements from the Greenleaf Fund. The Bible Society generously provides Bibles upon request at no charge to churches and Christian ministries throughout Vermont. Episcopal parishes are encouraged to take advantage of this ample resource when considering their needs for Bibles for worship spaces, study groups, or other ministries. Information can be found on the VEC's website, <https://vecncc.org>.

Since March 2020 the Executive Board of Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO) on which I serve as Province 1 EDEIO Coordinator has met online rather than in-person, but its work continues to thrive in the new environment. The Board helps sustain the ecumenical work of The Episcopal Church and organize the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU). The NWCU gathers ecumenical representatives from Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Evangelical Christian bodies around issues of theological and social concern, and seeks to foster deeper working relationships and articulate grounds for common understandings. As Provincial Coordinator for Province 1, I participated in EDEIO's planning meeting for the 2021 NWCU held in April around the theme, "Welcoming All As Christ." Using the online platform Whova, the 2021 NWCU was able to gather a record number of both participants and presenters, including speakers from the Vatican, owing to both the facility of the online platform and the cost savings it afforded. In addition to Episcopal Church ecumenical and interreligious officers, participants in this year's NWCU included Roman Catholic, Lutheran (ELCA), United Methodist, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Moravian, Greek Orthodox, and Evangelical/Pentecostal representatives, as well as members of several ecumenical advocacy organizations.

I continue to be most grateful for our Diocese's ongoing support of ecumenical and interreligious ministry, particularly its faithful payment of modest annual EDEIO dues (\$350) as requested by the Presiding Bishop, annual support of the VEC and of CCM, and the opportunity to represent us at the NWCU, which is central to all this ministry. As Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer, I

am happy to offer teaching, resources, and other support as requested to any congregation seeking to deepen its ecumenical and interreligious relationships.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Moser

The Rev. Dr. Frederick P. Moser  
 Rector, Trinity Episcopal Church, Shelburne  
 Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer  
 Episcopal Diocese of Vermont  
[fredmoser@trinityshelburne.org](mailto:fredmoser@trinityshelburne.org)

## CONVENTION 2021

### Budget

<b>OPERATING BUDGET - FY2022</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>DRAFT FOR COUNCIL</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>

#### *REVENUES*

Mission Support Cong	810,000	740,000
Unit Fund - Admin Support	16,000	16,800
<b>Unrestricted Income</b>	<b>826,000</b>	<b>756,800</b>
<b>Investment Income</b>	<b>164,950</b>	<b>115,276</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Income</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>15,000</b>
CARES Act PPP Loan - 2022	0	110,465
Episcopal Church COVID Relief		40,000
Hunt Fund Grant used for Operating	0	41,593
<b>Other Income</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>192,058</b>

<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>993,450</b>	<b>1,079,134</b>
---------------------	----------------	------------------



McClure 2000 Funds	0	Currently in Grants & Loans
Bishop's Appeal	50,000	
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	N/A	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>206,933</b>	

***EXPENSES***

<b><i>THRIVE</i></b>		Program expenses
Collaboration Meetings	2,500	
Bishop Coordination Expenses	6,000	
Consultants	5,000	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>13,500</b>	
<b><i>Congregational &amp; Clergy Support</i></b>		
Companion Resource	5,000	Parish supply clergy
Transition Ministry	3,000	Direct expenses
Chaplain to Retired Clergy	11,300	Identify individual
Seminarians	3,000	Tuitions
Clergy Retreats	3,000	Conferences
Lay Preaching	2,000	Coaching, conferences
Clergy Support	25,000	Transition Support
Congregational Discernment	4,000	
Parish Program Support	15,733	New programs
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>72,033</b>	
<b><i>Episcopal Mission &amp; Evangelism</i></b>		
Creation Care	8,000	
Social Justice & Racial Reconciliation	8,000	

Mission Farm	55,000	Mission Support
Rock Point Commons	40,000	Mission support
Campus Ministry	10,400	Promised annual amount?
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>121,400</b>	

**TOTAL 206,933**

**NET BALANCE 0**

## Minutes

**Minutes of the 231<sup>st</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont**  
**Being the**  
**188<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont**  
*This Convention was held entirely by Zoom due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

**Thursday, November 4, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**

Bishop Shannon started Opening Devotions with an acknowledgement of the People of the Dawn with the following:

We acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the Abenaki people on which we are worshipping, praying and celebrating today. We honor the Abenaki people 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, and we commit to building our awareness of our present participation. And so, we give thanks for those who have come before us, honoring the legacy of Vermont's Indigenous people, the Abenaki People of the Dawn. We are grateful for the care and sharing of this land.

### Opening Devotions

Deacon Peggy Mathauer read from Matthew 14:22-23. The Bishop offered a Collect for the Future of the Diocese of Vermont and For a Church Convention.

Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown called to order the 231<sup>st</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont, being the 188<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont at 6:08 p.m.

### Establishment of a Quorum

Bishop Shannon reported that 88 delegates were present representing 38 of 42 congregations and 45 of 71 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 Assistant Secretary. **All voted in concurrence by Zoom poll vote.**

#### Convention Orientation, Joshua Cheney

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 6:30 p.m. for discussion by convention later in the evening.
- Instructed delegates that if anyone had a nomination from the floor for leadership position openings, e-mail [comunications@diovermont.org](mailto:comunications@diovermont.org) to receive a link to the nominations form. Nominee information would then be e-mailed to convention delegates for consideration.

#### Rules of Order

Diocesan Chancellor Tom Little reviewed the Rules of Order.

He highlighted Rule 6, Special Rule of Order for the 2021 “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, with all delegates concurring.**

#### Written Reports

Bishop Shannon called for a motion to approve the written reports found in the Pre-convention Journal.

**The motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the written reports as filed, with all delegates concurring.**

#### Legislative Process and Review of Guidelines

Chancellor Little asked delegates for civility and clarity when addressing the Convention. All questions should be addressed to the Bishop. He explained the types of questions to be asked, asked that delegates be mindful and focused on the resolution before the Convention, and explained that all amendments to resolutions needed to be sent to [communications@diovermont.com](mailto:communications@diovermont.com) He suggested that Convention agree by unanimous consent to limit debate on each resolution to no more than 20 minutes, and to limit each speaker to not more than two minutes, with no delegate speaking a second time until all others have spoken a first time. The limits could be extended by a majority vote of Convention. There were no objections to the Convention proceeding in this manner.

### Clergy Transitions since Last Year's Convention

#### **Ordained**

On June 26, 2021, Jack Mann Karn was ordained to the Diaconate in the Diocese of Texas by Bishop Kathryn Ryan, on behalf of Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown.

#### **Transferred In**

On March 12, 2021, the Rev. Paul V. Olsson was received from the Diocese of Newark and was called as Priest-in-Charge of St. Stephen's, Middlebury.

On June 9, 2021, the Rev. Sarah Ginolfi was received from the Diocese of Olympia and called as Priest-in-Charge of Trinity, Rutland.

On August 12, 2021, the Rev. Canon Walter B. Brownridge was received from the Diocese of Maryland.

On November 3, 2021, the Rev. Kevin Sparrow was received from the Diocese of Massachusetts and called as Priest-in-Charge of Christ Church, Montpelier.

#### **Transferred out**

On February 4, 2021 the Rev. Liam Muller was transferred to the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

On April 8, 2021, the Rev. Norman M. McLeod III was transferred to the Diocese of Rhode Island.

On July 8, 2021, the Rev. Deacon Jack Mann Karn was transferred to the Diocese of Texas.

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

The Rev. Alfred A. Cramer  
The Rev. Donald R. Morris  
The Rev. William H. Atkinson  
The Rev. John M. Miller, Jr.  
The Rev. John S. Mitchell

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.

### Brookhaven Annual Meeting

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 6:26 p.m. Bishop Shannon reminded delegates that the Brookhaven report is available on the Convention website. Jenny Ogelby, Chair of the Nominating Committee, shared the names of the nominees for the Brookhaven Board: Elizabeth Kooperkamp, Brett Murphy, Julie Jones-Susmann, and Nancy Wuttke.

**The motion was made, seconded, and approved to elect all four nominees to the Brookhaven Board.**

There being no further business to come before the annual meeting, **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 231<sup>st</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Church in Vermont, being the 188<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont at 6:30 p.m.

### Treasurer's Report, Dr. Gerry Davis

Using a PowerPoint presentation, Dr. Davis first reviewed FY2021 to date. The budget is right about where the revised budget estimate projected, including the revised estimate of mission support from congregations. Total income is a bit ahead of where projected, due in large part to the Cares Act PPP Loan of \$91,162, which has been forgiven and now appears as part of the operating budget. There is a net positive balance after nine months; if the net income from the Cares Act loan were excluded the current net balance would be in the negative. Several operating expenses, such as Bishop travel and continuing education were lower than budgeted because of the pandemic.

The Bishop's Appeal totals \$61,870 as of 9/30/21.

For FY2022, both an integrated budget and a narrative budget were created. The Narrative Budget can be found on the Diocesan website. Dr. Davis reviewed the integrated budget. The Budget Committee was comprised of Chair Dr. Gerry Davis, Canon to the Ordinary Walter Brownridge, Dean Greta Getlein, the Rev. Rob Spainhour, Melanie Combs, Financial Administrator Rich Sagui, and the Rev. Kathleen Moore and Rebecca Wilson from Canticle Communications. Dr. Davis thanked them for their hard work.

This year, the budget has been divided into three categories: the Operating Budget, the Non-Operating Budget, and the Grants and Loans Budget. In addition to mission support from congregations, the FY2022 operating revenues include another CARES Act PPP Loan of \$110,465, which the Diocese expects will be forgiven. In addition, it includes an expected TEC COVID Relief grant of \$40,000 and additional funds of about \$41,000 from the Hunt Fund. The tier for mission support contributions from parishes remains the same as the last four years. Dr. Davis then reviewed the FY2022 expenses. Although the FY2022 Operating Budget is slightly larger than last year, the request for mission support from congregations is somewhat smaller than last year. Money from the CARES Act PPP Loan has been set aside in reserves to pay the contribution to the Episcopal Church. A Salary Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 2.5% has been included in personnel costs.

The Non-Operating Budget for FY2022 includes revenues from dedicated, restricted funds and grants. These funds are generally passed through. The revenues include sources such as the Hunt Fund Grant, McClure 2000 funds, the Bishop's Appeal, and the Bishop's Discretionary Fund. Expenses in the Non-Operating budget fall into three categories: THRIVE, Congregational and Clergy Support, and Episcopal Mission and Evangelism.

Another component of the Non-Operating budget is the Grants and Loans Budget. These funds come from the dividends of the McClure Discipleship Discovery 2000 Fund, the McClure-Butterfield Grant Fund, and the McClure-Butterfield Revolving Loan Fund. Expenses depend on loans and grants requested during the year.

Following his presentation, Treasurer Davis answered a few questions.

Dick Ward questioned the additional \$100,000 in personnel costs, with addition of employees, seemingly supported by the PPP Loan and TEC grant. He wondered where the funds would come from for supporting these positions in 2023. Dr. Davis and the Bishop addressed his concern. There are a number of funds that could be repurposed. Ultimately, it will be up to THRIVE to determine sources of money for these positions and whether they are tenable in future budgets. The Bishop indicated that to make progress and serve congregations well, these positions were necessary.

The Rev. Titus Presler thanked Dr. Davis for an excellent presentation, and asked the treasurer his thoughts on why mission support has declined in 2021 from the budget predictions. Dr. Davis explained that parishes have fewer pledgers who are also pledging more than they once did. However, because of the pandemic, operating expenses for both the Diocese and parishes decreased. Many parishes rely on a draw from their endowments. The draws taken were less overall because of decreased expenses. Therefore, the percentage of support to the Diocese was less than expected.

Following the Treasurer's report, the Bishop announced that Diocesan Treasurer Davis will be retiring from his position at the close of this Diocesan Convention. She expressed thanks for his six years of service to the Diocese, years which included navigating an episcopal transition, the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and a new look at the fiscal realities of the Diocese.

Dr. Davis thanked the Bishop and the people of the Diocese, stating he believes strongly that a stronger church in Vermont will evolve.

In the Diocese of Vermont, the treasurer is nominated by the Bishop and elected by Diocesan Council to a three-year term. The Bishop announced that she is nominating Paul Horn, a member of St. Stephen's Church, Middlebury, to Diocesan Council as the Diocese's next treasurer.

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown, Chair of the Resolutions Committee, to present and move resolutions. Ms. Brown thanked the members of the Resolution Committee: Anne Brown, Mike Austin, the Rev. Stan Baker, Eric Davis, and Nanci Gordon. She recognized and thanked Eric Davis, who will be moving off the Resolutions Committee.

Ms. Brown reminded delegates of the legislative process agreed to earlier.

#### Voting on Resolutions

#### Resolution 1: FY2022 Integrated Budget

**As chair of the Resolutions Committee, Ms. Brown moved adoption of the following FY2022 Integrated Budget for the Diocese of Vermont.**

### **Adoption of the FY2022 Integrated Budget for the Diocese of Vermont**

SPONSOR: Diocesan Council, adopted October 13, 2021

CONTACT PERSON: Dr. Gerald Davis; mac319@aol.com

RESOLVED, That the Diocesan Council adopt a balanced diocesan operating budget for the calendar year 2022 in the amount of \$1,079,133, a balanced non-operating budget of \$206,933, and a grants & loans budget with up to \$170,470 in revenue available; 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 (FY2018, FY2019, FY2020) Line A Parochial Report Operating Income; for 2022, 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 may make an appropriate adjustment with each parish.

There being no discussion, **the Resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 97% 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 for 2022 Resolution:**

**Establishing Minimum Clergy Compensation for 2022**

SPONSOR: Diocesan Council (approved October 25, 2021)

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont approve the Total Clergy Compensation minimums for 2022, as follows:

<b>Clergy Employment Status</b>	<b>Full-Time</b>	<b>¾ Time</b>	<b>½ Time</b>	<b>¼ Time*</b>
Cash Stipend to include housing allowance/housing	\$ 64,451.78	\$ 48,338.84	\$ 32,225.89	\$ 16,650
SECA Reimbursement (7.65% of Salary plus Housing)	\$ 4,930.56	\$ 3,697.92	\$ 2,465.28	\$ 1,350
Total Cash Plus Housing & SECA (Total Clergy Compensation)	\$ 69,382.34	\$ 52, 036.76	\$ 34,691.17	\$ 18,000
Value of Church Provided Housing (as a percentage of Total Clergy Compensation)	Not More Than 30%	Not More Than 22.5%	Not More Than 15%	Not More Than 7.5%
Equity Allowance for Clergy in Church Provided Housing (as a percentage of Total Clergy Compensation)	Not Less Than 4.74%			

and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont approve the following Remunerations for Locally Ordained Priests serving actively in a parish and (vocational) Deacons serving actively in a parish: a minimum of \$25 per month plus the required contribution to the Church Pension Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont recommend a 2.5% minimum cost of living increase for all compensated clergy and lay employees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont recommend a \$500 merit increase for all compensated clergy and lay employees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont approve the following Reimbursement Guidelines and Supply Clergy Rates:

- Cell Phone Reimbursement: \$ 25 - \$ 75 per month
- Travel Mileage Reimbursement: IRS rate (\$ 0.56 per mile in 2021, 2022 rates not yet released)
- Continuing Education: \$ 500 minimum
- Supply Clergy:
  - One Service: \$ 150 plus mileage and out-of-pocket expenses
  - Two Services: \$250 plus mileage and out-of-pocket expenses
  - Additional Service, such as pastoral coverage, are negotiable

#### 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 Total Clergy Compensation for 2022 represents a 2.5% increase from the 2021 TCC minimum of \$67,690.**

#### **Rationale for Compensation Guidelines:**

- Regarding ¼ Time Clergy: Church Pension Group minimum for one year of credited service is a salary package (cash plus housing) of \$18,000. Maintaining this minimum for ¼ time clergy ensures that one year of ¼ time work equals one year of credited service.
- It is often the case that part-time clergy in church provided housing receive no cash for their service when valuing the housing at 30% of the Total Clergy Compensation. (NB: CPG guidelines do not specifically address housing and part-time clergy.) This is an unsustainable model and creates an injustice for part-time clergy. This resolution proposes a tiered approach to the Value of Church Provided Housing much as salaries are tiered according to Employment Status.
- Clergy who live in church-owned housing do not have the opportunity to benefit from the build-up of equity in their homes that is available to those who own their own homes. This affects their ability to purchase a home for retirement. For that reason, the congregation must pay into a tax-deferred account (such as RSVP) an amount equal to at

least 2.5% of the Total Clergy Compensation each year. This is called a Housing Equity Allowance. It is recommended that this amount start at 2.5% and grow to 10% of Total Clergy Compensation over time. The amount contributed is included in the pension fund assessment calculation (but not in the pension fund's calculation of the value of housing) and is not subject to SECA tax. It is a deferred compensation payment and, therefore, is not subject to Federal income taxes until withdrawn, usually after retirement. Because these are employer contributions, they are not subject to state taxes until withdrawn.  
*(language drawn from the Diocese of Newark Guidelines for Clergy Compensation)*

The resolutions that Deacons and Locally Ordained Priests be paid are in conformance with resolutions adopted by previous Diocesan Conventions that give 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.

The Bishop recognized the Very Rev. Greta Getlein to speak to the resolution. Dean Getlein spoke to the resolution, explaining the thinking and work that went into the resolution. She answered questions.

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

Resolution 3: Establishing a Strategic Task Force on Financing and Governing Structures

The Bishop recognized Anne Brown to move the resolution.

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution on Establishing a Strategic Task Force on Financing and Governing Structures.**

**Establishing a Strategic Task Force on Financing and Governing Structures**

SPONSOR: The Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge

CONTACT PERSON: The Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge; [wbrownridge@diovermont.org](mailto:wbrownridge@diovermont.org); (808) 388 8055

RESOLVED, That Diocesan Convention commend Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown's initiative in leading a comprehensive study and analysis of the finances and financial reporting and governing structures at all levels of the Diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Bishop Shannon establish and lead a strategic task force to continue and complete this ongoing study and analysis; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this task force re-think the purpose, role and function of Diocesan Canon 10's Financial Oversight and Audit Committee with an eye towards (a) achieving a better resourced diocesan body structured to achieve coordinated financial oversight and management in the Diocese, (b) addressing overlaps and gaps in current financial oversight and management, (c) defining appropriate roles and functions for the Trustees of the Diocese of Vermont, Diocesan Council and all other diocesan institutions, and (d) assuring strong standards of financial accountability and fiduciary conduct; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the task force consider a model where there would be an overarching Finance Committee or Commission to provide coordinated diocesan-wide oversight and leadership in financial matters at all levels of the diocese; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the task force listen to the concerns and learnings of existing diocesan governing bodies in discerning the structure, mission and scope of such a Finance Committee or Commission, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the task force shall have the assistance and cooperation of all diocesan institutions in this work; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the task force issue progress reports to the Diocese from time to time and, on or about August 15, 2022, a final report, with proposals for changes to diocesan structures, roles, procedures and accountabilities, including changes to diocesan canons, for consideration at the 2022 Diocesan Convention.

The Bishop recognized the Canon to the Ordinary, the Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge, to speak to the resolution.

Following the Rev. Canon's brief explanation and discussion by delegates, **the Resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 96% of delegates concurring.**

#### Resolution 4: Enter Barbara Clementine Harris into the Church Calendar

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

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution to Enter Barbara Clementine Harris into the Church Calendar and noted the Resolution is similar to many resolutions in dioceses across TEC.**

#### **Enter Barbara Clementine Harris into The Church Calendar**

SPONSORS: The Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge, the Rev. Canon Lee Alison Crawford, Anne Clarke Brown

CONTACT PERSON: The Rev. Canon Walter Brownridge; [wbrownridge@diovermont.org](mailto:wbrownridge@diovermont.org);  
(808) 388 8055

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont submit the following resolution to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church meeting in 2022:

RESOLVED, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 80th General Convention include and enter Barbara Clementine Harris, Bishop, to the Calendar of the Church year to be celebrated on March 13.

#### EXPLANATION

Barbara Clementine Harris (June 12, 1930 - March 13, 2020) was the first woman to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church of the United States and the worldwide Anglican Communion. Throughout the Church, Bishop Harris was a courageous pioneer, an outspoken prophet, and an unwavering champion of God's justice and witness to God's grace. For many decades church gatherings were enlivened by her keen wit, consummate storytelling, and improvised musical accompaniment.

As an African-American and a woman, Barbara Harris was a champion of the full inclusion of all the baptized into all corners and levels of the Church. She was crucifer at the ordination of the first women ordained to the priesthood, "The Philadelphia 11," at Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia. Bishop Harris pressed for the integration of historically segregated parishes. In 1968, She was an early member of the Union of Black Episcopalians, founded in 1968, and called for more significant numbers of women in the clergy. Her support of LGBTQ persons paved the way for the 2003 election and consecration of Bishop V. Gene Robinson as the first openly gay bishop in the Church. Since then, several other gay men and women have been elevated to the episcopate.

Barbara Harris was ordained a priest in 1980, and much of her exemplary reputation in the Church in the 1980s was based on her work as a public theologian writing in *The Witness*, a venerable Episcopal journal she served as an editor, writer, and publisher. Her columns under the title "A Luta Continua" were splendidly prophetic.

By the summer of 2022, our diocese, and several other dioceses, will have had two years of local commemorations on March 13. These commemorations can lay the foundation for Church-wide observance. The Church has often found delight through the faithful recollection with gratitude the lives of those in whom Christ's love has been manifest. We commemorate their lives for the inspiration and strength, which we derive from their witness. We turn to them also as continuing companions in the Spirit, forebears of whose love and prayers we remain assured. It is in that Spirit that the Diocese of Vermont offers this resolution.

The Bishop recognized the Rev. Canon Brownridge to speak to the resolution. Canon Brownridge's comments, and the ensuing discussion mostly centered around the early timing of this relative to her being deceased.

**The resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 98% of delegates concurring.**

Resolution 5: Affirmation of Diverse Gender Identities

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

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution for Affirmation of Diverse Gender Identities**

**Affirmation of Diverse Gender Identities**

SPONSORS: The Reverends Rachel Field, Greta Getlein, Lisa Ransom, Chris Jones, and Sarah Ginolfi.

CONTACT PERSON: The Rev. Rachel Field; rachelf2000@gmail.com; (802) 522-6730

RESOLVED, That the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont call upon the church in this diocese to fully embrace, respect and uphold transgender and nonbinary people in all facets of its life, particularly by facilitating access to health care and insurance for employees that wholly affirm the gender identities of nonbinary as well as binary-identified people; by respecting and using individuals' pronouns including "they/them"; avoiding using exclusionary binary language; and by supporting nonbinary and/or transgender youth and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Convention direct the Secretary of the Convention, with a committee of persons to support them in this work if desired, to write to the Church Pension Group (CPG) and the Episcopal Church Medical Trust (ECMT), calling upon them to change internal systems and actively work with healthcare and other benefits providers with which they contract to cease perpetuating harmful and discriminatory practices that force choosing only male or female as a condition of obtaining healthcare and retirement benefits for gender-diverse employees.

EXPLANATION

The Episcopal Church Medical Trust and the Church Pension Group, which administer employment benefits for The Episcopal Church, still require employees to declare their gender as "M" or "F," even when these options are inappropriate or unnecessary, especially for gender-diverse people who are recognized with an X on their state issued IDs (as is legal in many states). This pattern of misgendering – that is, using pronouns (e.g., he, she, him, her, they, them), salutations (e.g., Mr., Ms., Mx., sir, madam) and gender markers (male, female, non-binary) that do not align with an individual's gender identity – causes harm and falls short of our Baptismal Covenant commitment to respect the dignity of every human being.

The resolution also asks the Secretary of this Convention to send a letter conveying this resolution to the Church Pension Group and the Episcopal Church Medical Trust, an important

step in naming the impact of CPG/ECMT’s limited gender options and calling on them to align their practice fully with the policy of The Episcopal Church.

The Bishop recognized the Rev. Rachel Field to speak to the resolution.

**The resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 94% of delegates concurring.**

Resolution 6: Supporting Freedom of Speech and the Right to Boycott

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

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution, explaining what it means to “memorialize” a resolution, as a way to provide information to a legislative committee.**

**Supporting Freedom of Speech and the Right to Boycott**

SPONSOR: John Heermans, the Rev. Craig Smith, Neil Richardson, Mickie Richardson

CONTACT PERSON: John Heermans; heermansjg@yahoo.com; 802-578-8976

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont direct the Secretary of Convention to submit the resolution on Freedom of Speech and the Right to Boycott adopted by the 2018 Convention of the Diocese of Vermont to the General Convention Office of the Episcopal Church ([gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org)) in the form of a memorial for consideration by the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

EXPLANATION

In 2018, the 185<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont adopted the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the 185th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont urge the President of the United States and the Vermont congressional delegation to oppose legislation that would penalize companies and organizations for their participation in nonviolent boycotts on behalf of Palestinian human rights, as such legislation, at both federal and state levels, would be an infringement on First Amendment rights.

General Convention may accept resolutions submitted by diocesan conventions as “memorials” to support proposed legislative actions. They are given to appropriate legislative committees to consider when crafting and amending legislation proposed for consideration by the House of Bishops and House of Deputies. While the resolution adopted in 2018 does not propose action by General Convention, it does address a subject that will be considered by the Legislative Committee on Social Justice and International Affairs for such proposed action. Submission thus indicates that this diocese has discussed and acted on the issue.

***The original explanation offered in 2018 follows:***

*I am writing today to express grave concern about a wave of legislative measures in the United States aimed at punishing and intimidating those who speak their conscience and challenge the human rights violations endured by the Palestinian people. [Desmond Tutu, Statement issued through Oryx Media, April 2, 2014; text is below]*

Archbishop Tutu's letter focused on legislation, now adopted by at least 23 states and proposed at the federal level, in opposition to the movement known as Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), a nonviolent movement directed toward American, Israeli, and other companies that support or enable the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Such legislation labels support for boycott and divestment as anti-Semitic and penalizes supportive companies, organizations, and, in some instances, individuals with fines and the loss of state contracts and assistance.

Boycotts as nonviolent political actions are an American tradition, with roots extending to the pre-Revolutionary boycott of British tea. As far back as the 1955-56 Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Supreme Court has consistently considered boycotts protected speech under the First Amendment. Some examples of effective boycotts include the 1965-66 grape boycott in the Central Valley that birthed the United Farm Workers, the South Africa boycott, which The Episcopal Church supported in 1985 (Res. 1985-D073), and, most recently, the boycott of North Carolina stemming from its anti-LGBT legislation.

The current anti-boycott legislation at the state and federal levels is opposed by, among others, the ACLU, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. In November, 2017, twelve of The Episcopal Church's ecumenical partner churches and twenty-eight activist organizations released a public letter calling the anti-boycott legislation pending in Congress and in state legislatures "a blatant infringement on First Amendment rights," and pledged to defend the right of churches and organizations to use economic measures in the specific case of Israel-Palestine.

The Episcopal Church affirmed in Resolution 1991-D122 that legitimate criticisms of Israeli government policies and actions are not anti-Semitic. While the 79<sup>th</sup> General Convention (2018) did not directly address the anti-boycott legislation, it did adopt Resolution B016 [see text below] to join with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in how it sets investment policy. B016 directs the Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSSR) to develop criteria for Israel/Palestine based on a human rights investment screen and past actions of General Convention and Executive Council; to encourage an increase in positive investment in Palestine; and to encourage continued engagement in shareholder advocacy regarding human rights in Israel and the occupied territories.

Any legislation that suppresses legitimate criticism of public policy, and that restricts freedom of expression and the ability to exercise public witness through boycotts or investment and selective purchasing practices violates the U.S. Constitution. While the Church and its members may not be of one mind about which measures are most effective, the Church must collectively affirm and defend the right of individuals, congregations and organizations to use economic measures in the specific case of Israel-Palestine relations.

**General Convention Resolution 2018-B016, Adopt ELCA Action on Israel/Palestine**

*Resolved*, the House of Bishops concurring, That General Convention join with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's action, CA 16.06.31, "Justice for the Holy Land Through Responsible Investment," and direct our Executive Council's Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility to develop criteria for Israel and Palestine based on a human rights' investment screen and the actions of General Convention and Executive Council over the past seventy years; and be it further

*Resolved*, That General Convention continue to encourage members, congregations, dioceses, and institutions of the Episcopal Church to increase positive investment in Palestine and other under-resourced areas where human rights abuses materially impact the well-being of all people; and be it further

*Resolved*, That General Convention continue to encourage CCSR to engage in shareholder advocacy in support of human rights in Israel and the Occupied Territories, exercising the right of a shareholder to submit resolutions at a corporation's annual meeting.

### **Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Statement on Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS)**

*[This statement was issued for Archbishop emeritus Desmond Tutu by Oryx Media, April 2, 2014]*

I am writing today to express grave concern about a wave of legislative measures in the United States aimed at punishing and intimidating those who speak their conscience and challenge the human rights violations endured by the Palestinian people. In legislatures in Maryland, New York, Illinois, Florida, and even the United States Congress, bills have been proposed that would either bar funding to academic associations or seek to malign those who have taken a stand against the Israeli Occupation of Palestine.

These legislative efforts are in response to a growing international initiative, the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement, of which I have long been a supporter. The BDS movement emanates from a call for justice put out by the Palestinian people themselves. It is a Palestinian-led, international non-violent movement that seeks to force the Israeli government to comply with international law in respect to its treatment of the Palestinian people.

I have supported this movement because it exerts pressure without violence on the State of Israel to create lasting peace for the citizens of Israel and Palestine, peace which most citizens crave. I have witnessed the systematic violence against and humiliation of Palestinian men, women and children by members of the Israeli security forces. Their humiliation and pain is all too familiar to us South Africans.

In South Africa, we could not have achieved our democracy without the help of people around the world, who through the use of non-violent means, such as boycotts and divestment, encouraged their governments and other corporate actors to reverse decades-long support for the Apartheid regime. My conscience compels me to stand with the Palestinians as they seek to use the same tactics of non-violence to further their efforts to end the oppression associated with the Israeli Occupation.

The legislations being proposed in the United States would have made participation in a movement like the one that ended Apartheid in South Africa extremely difficult.

I am also deeply troubled by the rhetoric associated with the promulgation of these bills which I understand, in the instance of Maryland, included testimony comparing the boycott to the actions of the Nazis in Germany. The Nazi Holocaust which resulted in the extermination of millions of Jews is a crime of monstrous proportions. To imply that it is in any way comparable to a nonviolent initiative diminishes the horrific nature of that genocidal and tragic era in our world history.

Whether used in South Africa, the US South, or India, boycotts have resulted in a transformative change that not only brought freedom and justice to the victims but also peace and reconciliation for the oppressors. I strongly oppose any piece of legislation meant to punish or deter individuals from pursuing this transformative aspiration. And I remain forever hopeful that, like the nonviolent efforts that have preceded it, the BDS movement will ultimately become a catalyst for honest peace and reconciliation for all our brothers and sisters, both Palestinian and Israeli, in the Holy Land.

The Bishop recognized the Rev Craig Smith to speak to the resolution. He explained that the Diocesan Convention is not voting on the content of the Resolution. Rather the Convention is voting on whether to forward it to General Convention. The Rev. Smith read a statement from Linda Gaither from the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Discussion ensued.

Chancellor Little reiterated the meaning of a “memorial.” Convention is not voting on the content of the resolution; rather the vote is whether to forward the resolution to the legislative committee of General Convention.

**The resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 86% of delegates concurring.**

#### Resolution 7: Application of the Leahy Laws to Israel

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

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution, Application of the Leahy Laws to Israel.**

### **Application of the Leahy Laws to Israel**

SPONSORS: John Heermans, the Rev. Craig Smith, Neil Richardson, Mickie Richardson

CONTACT PERSON: John Heermans; heermansjg@yahoo.com; 802-578-8976

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont direct the Secretary of Convention to submit the resolution on Application of the Leahy Laws to Israel adopted by the 2018 Convention of the Diocese of Vermont to the General Convention Office of the Episcopal Church ([gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org)) in the form of a memorial for consideration by the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

## EXPLANATION

In 2018, the 185<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont adopted the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the 185th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont request the Office of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church and the Vermont congressional delegation to urge the United States Departments of State and Defense to apply the Leahy Laws to Israel.

General Convention may accept resolutions submitted by diocesan conventions as “memorials” to support proposed legislative actions. They are given to appropriate legislative committees to consider when crafting and amending legislation proposed for consideration by the House of Bishops and House of Deputies. While the resolution adopted in 2018 does not propose action by General Convention, it does address a subject that will be considered by the Legislative Committee on Social Justice and International Affairs for such proposed action. Submission thus indicates that this diocese has discussed and acted on the issue.

### ***The original explanation offered in 2018 follows:***

Since its founding in 1948, Israel has received nearly \$125 billion in aid from the US; the current rate amounts to over \$10 million a day.

The Leahy Laws, or Leahy Amendments, are U.S. human rights laws that prohibit the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense from providing military assistance to foreign security force units that engage in “gross violations of human rights” (GVHR). The laws are named after their principal sponsor, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont). A recent State Department fact sheet on the Leahy Laws notes that, “The U.S. government considers torture, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, and rape under color of law as GVHR when implementing the Leahy law. Incidents are examined on a fact-specific basis.” [The text of the fact sheet is below.]

On May 15, 2018, The Center for Constitutional Rights joined a coalition of Palestinian and U.S.-based human rights groups in submitting a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Pompeo demanding that the State Department investigate Israel’s use of lethal force against Palestinians in Gaza, and halt any further assistance to Israeli military units involved in the shootings. [Excerpts from the letter are below.]

The focus of the letter was the demonstrations leading up to May 15, Nakba Day, which marked 70 years since more than 750,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced from their homes. It notes that human rights organizations documented that since the protests began, the Israeli military killed 103 people and injured almost 7000 others, including children, paramedics, journalists, and people with disabilities. Over 3,500 people were reportedly shot with live fire.

On Nakba day itself, Israel reportedly killed 57 protesters and injured over 2000 more, while they demonstrated against the Trump administration’s decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, stressed their internationally recognized right of return to their homes, and demanded an end to the 11-year closure of Gaza. The letter notes that Israeli military units were likely using U.S.-made Remington M24 sniper rifles to fire on Palestinian protesters.

## “Investigate Israel’s Use of Lethal Force in Gaza and Halt Foreign Assistance to Israeli Military Units”

May 15, 2018, letter to Secretary of State Michael Pompeo (concluding paragraphs)  
From the Center for Constitutional Rights, Amnesty International, and 5 other groups

“Since March 30, 2018, Palestinians in Gaza have been engaged in popular protests leading up to the commemoration of the “Nakba” today, which will mark 70 years since the mass expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians in 1948 from their homes. The protesters have been expressing their right to return, as well as demanding an end to the land, air, and sea blockade on the Gaza Strip which began almost eleven years ago in 2007. Those killed and the more than 7000 injured so far include children, paramedics, journalists, and people with disabilities. Nearly 3,500 people have reportedly been shot with live fire thus far.

“The U.S. provided Israel with more than \$3 billion in military aid in 2017, making it the largest recipient of U.S. foreign military assistance. Human rights organisations have documented that the Israeli military has used the U.S.-made Remington M24 sniper rifle to fire on protesters in Gaza. U.S. law requires that foreign military assistance not be provided to any military units responsible for gross human rights violations, which includes extrajudicial killings. There is ample credible information that these killings in Gaza by Israeli forces constitute extrajudicial killings. Moreover, except in extraordinary circumstances, sec. 502B(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act bars security assistance to any government that engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights.

“The undersigned organizations demand that the U.S. government investigate Israel’s use of lethal force against protesters in Gaza since March 30, 2018, and withhold foreign military assistance to any units for which there is credible information that they have been involved. Furthermore, in order to ensure the adequate implementation of U.S. law, the U.S. State Department should require the U.S. Embassy as well as the Israeli Government to track and publicise which military units receive U.S. financial and other forms of aid.

Fact Sheet

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

March 9, 2018

### 1. What are Leahy laws?

- The term “Leahy law” refers to two statutory provisions prohibiting the U.S. Government from using funds for assistance to units of foreign security forces where there is credible information implicating that unit in the commission of gross violations of human rights (GVHR). One statutory provision applies to the State Department and the other applies to the Department of Defense. The State Department Leahy law was made permanent under section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, 22 U.S.C. 2378d. The U.S. government considers torture, extrajudicial killing, enforced disappearance, and rape under color of law as GVHRs when

implementing the Leahy law. Incidents are examined on a fact-specific basis. The State Department Leahy law includes an exception permitting resumption of assistance to a unit if the Secretary of State determines and reports to Congress that the government of the country is taking effective steps to bring the responsible members of the security forces unit to justice.

- The DoD Leahy law is similar to the State Leahy law. Since 1999, Congress included the DoD Leahy law in its annual appropriations act. The DoD Leahy law is now permanent in Section 362 of Title 10 of the U.S. Code. It requires that DoD-appropriated funds may not be used for any training, equipment, or other assistance for a foreign security force unit if the Secretary of Defense has credible information that such unit has committed a GVHR. The law allows for two exceptions to this restriction. The first is in cases where the Secretary of Defense (after consultation with the Secretary of State) determines that the government of that country has taken all necessary corrective steps. This first exception is also known as “remediation.” A second exception exists if U.S. equipment or other assistance is necessary to assist in disaster relief operations or other humanitarian or national security emergencies.
- The National Defense Authorization Act for FY2015 authorizes DoD to conduct training to promote respect for the rule of law and human rights, including for otherwise Leahy-ineligible units under certain circumstances. This training may be conducted with the concurrence of the Secretary of State and is withheld from any individual of a unit when there is credible information that such individual has committed GVHR (or has commanded a unit that has committed a GVHR).

## 2. How is the law implemented?

- In cases where an entire unit is designated to receive assistance, the Department of State vets the unit and the unit’s commander. When an individual security force member is nominated for U.S. assistance, the Department vets that individual as well as his or her unit. Vetting begins in the unit’s home country, where the U.S. embassy conducts consular, political, and other security and human rights checks. Most often, an additional review is conducted by analysts at the Department of State in Washington, D.C. The State Department evaluates and assesses available information about the human rights records of the unit and the individual, reviewing a full spectrum of open source and classified records.
- When assessing whether information is credible, the following factors should be considered weighing both the credibility of a source and the veracity of an allegation:
  - Past accuracy and reliability of the reporting source as well as original source, if known;
  - How the source obtained the information (e.g., personal knowledge obtained by a witness, witness interviews collected by a non-governmental organization (NGO), descriptions collected from government records, etc.);
  - Known political agenda of a source (both reporting source and/or original source, if known) which might lead to bias in reporting;
  - Corroborative information to confirm part or all of the allegation;

- Information that contradicts part or all of the allegation;
- History of unit and known patterns of abuse/professional behavior;
- Level of detail of the GVHR allegation, including detail in identification of the GVHR, perpetrator (or link to an operational unit), and victim.

3. Can assistance be reinstated to units previously found ineligible for assistance?

- Yes. Consistent with the exception under both Leahy laws, the Departments of State and Defense have adopted a joint policy on remediation that outlines a process for resuming DoD- and State-funded assistance to foreign security force units that are ineligible for assistance under the Leahy laws. This can occur when the Secretaries of Defense and State determine that the government of that country has taken, or is taking, effective measures to bring those responsible to justice. Such measures may include impartial and thorough investigations; credible judicial or administrative adjudications; and appropriate and proportional sentencing.

There was no discussion.

**The resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 80% of delegates concurring.**

Resolution 8: Recognition of Apartheid in Israel/Palestine

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

**Ms. Brown moved the following Resolution, Recognition of Apartheid in Israel/Palestine.**

**Recognition of Apartheid in Israel/Palestine**

SPONSORS: John Heermans, the Reverend Craig Smith, Neil Richardson, Mickie Richardson

CONTACT PERSON: Mr. John Heermans; heermansjg@yahoo.com; 802-578-8976

RESOLVED, That, in light of the passage in Israel of the 2018 Nation State Law that grants self-determination exclusively to the Jewish people, the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Vermont submit the following resolution to the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church meeting in 2022:

RESOLVED, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of The Episcopal Church, acknowledging our continuing struggle in the United States to achieve racial equality, recognize that the State of Israel has passed laws that discriminate against its non-Jewish citizens, particularly Palestinians, and that its military occupation of East Jerusalem and the West Bank and blockade of Gaza impose prejudicial treatment of Palestinians and privilege Israeli settlers, contravening international law and human rights; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Convention recognize that these discriminatory laws and treatment correspond to the definitions of apartheid elaborated in the International Convention on

the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and set out in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Convention affirm that apartheid is antithetical to the Gospel message and to our Baptismal Covenant to “strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being;” and be it further

RESOLVED, that the General Convention of The Episcopal Church call on the U.S. government to withhold military funding from the State of Israel until Israel eliminates apartheid laws, respects Palestinian human rights, and stops violating international law.

#### EXPLANATION

The enjoinder in the Hebrew Scriptures, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Lev.19:18), is repeated by Jesus in the Gospels (Mt.19:19, 22:39; Mk. 12:31; Lk. 10:27) and reinforced in the Epistles (Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8). As Christians mindful of our Judaic heritage, we must be guided by this commandment as we confront systemic discrimination against any group of people.

The crime of apartheid is codified in international law. Article II of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid summarizes apartheid as “an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining that regime.” (See <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201015/volume-1015-i-14861-english.pdf>.) This definition is essentially repeated in the 2002 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. (See Article 7 Crimes against Humanity, paragraph 2(h) <https://legal.un.org/icc/statute/99corr/cstatute.htm>)

When Palestine was partitioned by the United Nations in 1947 to establish a Jewish and an Arab state, Palestinian Arabs made up two-thirds of the total population of Palestine and owned 90% of the land. Nonetheless, the Partition Plan allocated 54% of the land to the new state. By the time the armistice was decreed in 1949, the State of Israel had assumed possession of 78% of the original Mandate Palestine. Some 750,000 Palestinians had fled or been driven from their land, many carrying keys to the homes to which they expected to return.

Palestinians who remained within the boundaries of the new state after the ethnic cleansing of 1948 were eventually allowed to become citizens. Almost immediately, the Knesset, the new Israeli legislative body, began to pass a series of laws that ensured a continuing Jewish majority and legalized discrimination against non-Jewish citizens, particularly Palestinians. These included the Law of Return, the ban on family unification, and some fifty laws regarding marriage, housing, security, land and planning, citizenship, political representation in the Knesset, education and culture. Most recently in 2018, the Israeli Knesset passed the Nation State Law, which states that “the right to exercise national self-determination” in Israel is “unique to the Jewish people”, establishes Hebrew as Israel’s only official language, and establishes “Jewish settlement as a national value” which the state “will labor to encourage and

promote.” (See <https://knesset.gov.il/laws/special/eng/BasicLawNationState.pdf>) Because Israel has no constitution, this so-called Basic Law has the status of a constitutional provision.

The system of control that Israel operates in the occupied West Bank has characteristic apartheid attributes. Israeli Jews residing in the settlements in the Occupied Territories live under Israeli civil law. In contrast, Palestinians are subjected to an arbitrary and discriminatory military regime distinguished by the West Bank barrier fence/wall; an electronic ID system; Israeli-only settlements reached by roads restricted to use only by Israeli settlers; permanent and “flying” checkpoints; a racist marriage law; and inequities between Palestinian residents and Jewish settlers in infrastructure, legal rights, and access to land, water, and other resources. Some two thirds of Palestinian men have been detained in Israeli prisons where torture, lack of access to lawyers, and detention without charge or trial are standard practice. Yearly some 700 Palestinian children under the age of 18 are ripped from their homes in the middle of the night, denied contact with their parents or legal counsel, physically and psychologically abused, and often forced to sign confessions in Hebrew, a language most do not understand.

In 2009 the government of South Africa commissioned a fifteen- month study by an international team of legal and human rights scholars to examine the question: *Do Israel’s practices in occupied Palestinian territory, namely the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza amount to the crimes of colonialism and apartheid under international law?* The study concluded that “Israel, since 1967, is the belligerent Occupying Power in occupied Palestinian territory, and that its occupation of these territories has become a colonial enterprise which implements a system of apartheid.” (The full study is posted at: <http://www.hsrb.ac.zaMediaRelease-378.phtml>)

On March 10, 2014, *The Jerusalem Post* quoted Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu as he compared the conditions of Palestinians with those of South Africans under apartheid:

I have witnessed the systemic humiliation of Palestinian men, women and children by members of the Israeli security forces... Their humiliation is familiar to all black South Africans who were corralled and harassed and insulted and assaulted by the security forces of the apartheid government. (See <https://www.jpost.com/diplomacy-and-politics/desmond-tutu-israel-guilty-of-apartheid-in-treatment-of-palestinians-344874>)

In 2021, in a detailed 213 page report [A Threshold Crossed: Israel Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution](#), Human Rights Watch examines Israel’s treatment of Palestinians and the present-day reality of a single authority, the Israeli government, ruling primarily over the area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, populated by two groups roughly equal size, and methodologically privileging Jewish Israelis while repressing Palestinians, most severely in the occupied territory.

Also, in 2021 B’Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights have declared: *The Israeli Regime enacts in all the territory it controls (Israeli sovereign territory, East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip) and apartheid regime. One organizing principle lies at the base of a wide array of Israeli policies: advancing and perpetuating the supremacy of one group*

*- Jews - over another - Palestinians. B'Tselem rejects the perception of Israel as a democracy (inside the Green Line) that simultaneously upholds a temporary military occupation (beyond it). B'Tselem reached the conclusion that the bar for defining the Israeli regime as an apartheid regime has been met after considering the accumulation of policies and laws that Israel devised to entrench its control over Palestinians.*

In July 2021, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ overwhelmingly condemned Israeli Apartheid, becoming the first mainline denomination to use the term (<https://www.ucc.org/synod-delegates-approve-resolution-decriing-oppression-of-palestinian-people/>). The action was likened to the stand the UCC took against South African Apartheid. Israel's Apartheid was termed a sin against God and God's children. The extensive complicity of the U.S. government in supporting Israel's oppression of the Palestinians was identified as a further reason that American churches are called to speak out.

The Episcopal Church has a history of opposing apartheid. The 68<sup>th</sup> General Convention adopted a resolution calling for an unambiguous, coherent policy in opposition to apartheid in the Republic of South Africa (D029 – 1985).

In view of the overwhelming, irrefutable evidence that Israel's continuing subjugation of the Palestinian people is, without any doubt, apartheid as defined by International Law, the Episcopal church must adhere to its baptismal vows and condemn the apartheid policies of Israel and call on the US government to withhold all aid from Israel until the Palestinians are treated as equal citizens with full access to movement, water, electricity, education, housing and health.

The Bishop recognized the Rev. Craig Smith to speak to the resolution. The Rev. Smith talked about apartheid as a legal description. The Rev. Smith read a letter from a young Palestinian. Several delegates contributed to the discussion both for and against the resolution, some noting they had spent time in Jerusalem.

**The resolution was voted on by Zoom polling and approved. The resolution carried with 68% of delegates concurring.**

There being no additional resolutions received, the Bishop thanked Anne Brown. She then called on Jenny Ogelby, Chair of the Nominations Committee for a report and introduction of nominees.

#### Nominating Committee Report

Provincial Synod

The Rev. Dr. Bob Leopold

Rock Point Board

Elected to a 3-year term to 2024

The Rev. Margaret Mathauer

Rock Point School Trustees

Elected to 3-year terms to 2024

Andrew Beyer  
Ron Chesbrough  
Hannah Mariotti  
Frederic Reamer  
Andrew Rome  
Jean-Marie Severance

#### Standing Committee

One clergy and one lay; Elected to a 4-year term to 2025  
The Rev. Sarah Ginolfi (Trinity Church, Rutland)  
Trisha Ingalls (St. Mark's, Newport)

#### Trustees of the Diocese

Elected to a seven-year term to 2028  
Laurel Broughton (Trinity Church, Shelburne)  
David Bullock (St. Mark's, Newport)  
Ann Guillot (Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington)

With no additional nominations received by 6:30 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:

Beth Crane (Grace Church, Sheldon), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2023  
The Rev. Rob Spainhour (Holy Trinity Church, Swanton), 2<sup>nd</sup> term expires 2022

Retiring Representative:

Alice Daly (St. Andrew's, Colchester)

\*Elected:

The Rev. Kim Hardy (St. James", Essex Junction), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2024

#### **Mission District 2:**

Current Representatives:

Wendy Besett (St. John the Baptist, Hardwick), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2023  
Zarina O'Hagin (St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2022

Retiring Representative:

Jean Wilson (St. Mark's, Newport)

Elected:

Sean Ryan (St. Mark's, Newport), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2024

### **Mission District 3:**

Current Representatives:

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

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

Retiring Representative:

The Rev. Mark Preece (St. Martin's Church, Fairlee)

\*Elected: This opening is yet to be filled.

### **Mission District 4:**

Current Representatives:

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

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

\*Elected:

Bob Wertz (St. Thomas and Grace, Brandon), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2024

### **Mission District 5:**

Current Representatives:

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

Retiring Representative:

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

Retired early due to retirement and leaving Vermont:

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

\*Elected:

Carol Hesselbach (St. Michael's, Brattleboro), 1<sup>st</sup> term expires 2024

Elizabeth McEwan (St. Mary's in the Mountains, Wilmington), filling term that expires 2022

The Bishop thanked the following outgoing members for their contributions as members of Diocesan Council:

Alice Daly (St. Andrew's, Colchester)

Colleen Gates (St. Peter's, Bennington)

The Rev. Mark Preece (St. Martin's, Fairfield)

Jean Wilson (St. Mark's, Newport)

### **Bishop's Appointments**

Bishop Shannon announced the following appointment:

**Chancellor:** Tom Little

Other appointments will be announced in The Mountain.

### Courtesy Resolutions

The Bishop called on Anne Brown, chair of the Resolutions Committee, to present the courtesy resolutions. Ms. Brown presented resolutions recognizing and thanking: Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown, The Diocesan COVID-19 Response Team and Congregational Leaders, THRIVE, Dr. Gerald Davis, Pamela Van de Graaf, the Rev. Canon Lee Alison Crawford, Joshua Cheney, Stephen Burnett, Dr. Catherine Meeks, and Bishop Sean Rowe.

### **Courtesy Resolution Thanking Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont recognize and thank Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown for her exceptional leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, as she led us in prayer, gave counsel to the clergy and lay leaders of the diocese and exemplified, through word and action, a life lived in hope with a strong commitment to justice.

#### **Background:**

Bishop Shannon was not even six months into her episcopacy when COVID-19 brought the world to a standstill. She has demonstrated true leadership and resilience from its earliest days — even before a national emergency was declared on March 13, 2020.

Immediately she gathered us in prayer via Zoom, launching what would become the Green Mountain Online Abbey and leading online Sunday morning worship. Guided both by her ongoing concern for the most vulnerable among us and her sensitivity to the spiritual needs of Vermont Episcopalians, Bishop Shannon gathered a trusted team of volunteers from around the diocese to support new ways of worshipping together online and to create thoughtful reopening guidelines to assist the congregations of our diocese to regather safely.

By the end of March 2020, Bishop Shannon had started to meet weekly with the clergy and those in Local Ministry Support Teams. In these 90-minute Zoom calls, she offered pastoral support, prayer, wisdom, and advice to those entrusted with the “cure of souls,” all of whom were walking in a totally new landscape with no guideposts along the way. Her overarching concern that there be no super-spreader event in the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont became the basis for decisions about gathering in person and having Communion, something which we could only celebrate remotely (with pre-consecrated elements) on Christmas 2020 and Easter 2021, until congregations began to worship together this summer. This sacrifice not only affected our congregations but also affected our bishop, who fasted from the Sacrament as did we!

Bishop Shannon has unflinchingly taken on the difficult aspects of leadership, notably, inviting the diocese to look deeply and carefully at its precarious financial condition. She has opened

conversations with other dioceses to help us find new ways to live out God’s mission in Vermont. Through her leadership and vision, the THRIVE team has begun its work.

Bishop Shannon works unceasingly toward racial reckoning and urges us to do likewise. In her April 20, 2021, letter, she wrote that she prays, “that we face into this work and do not turn back. Because it will not be easy, and it will not be quick. But for today, at least [with the verdict in the George Floyd murder], it feels as though progress is possible, and we have taken a first step toward the kind of reconciliation that leads to Beloved Community in which everyone knows how it feels to be free.” She continues to lead us in the quest to affirm everyone’s God-given dignity.

Through ever-changing conditions, our Bishop “steadied the ship” when we were tossed to and fro with no end in sight—reminding us that as Christians, we are first and foremost a “people of hope.”

Bishop Shannon embodies Romans 12:12 – “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer”— as well as the words of Ernest Hemingway, who said: “Courage is grace under pressure.” The Convention offers its deepest gratitude to her, and to the God who brought her to us.

### **Courtesy Resolution**

#### **Thanking and Commending the Diocesan COVID-19 Response Team and Congregational Leaders**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont thank the members of the Diocesan COVID-19 Response Team (the Reverend Dr. Fred Moser, chair; Dr. Anne Gulliot; the Reverends Earl Kooperkamp, Amy Spagna, Rob Spainhour, and Bob Wilson; and Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown) for their ongoing work to keep us spiritually and physically healthy; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the convention express its gratitude for the on-the-ground efforts of congregational leadership, clergy and lay, in implementation of these safeguards.

#### **Background**

Originally convened in 2020 as the Diocesan Restart Team, the members of what is now the COVID-19 Response Team took on an open-ended commitment to work together to balance the spiritual needs of the people of The Episcopal Church in Vermont with the physical safety of all in Vermont and beyond. For nearly the full duration of the pandemic, the team has met at length on a weekly basis. In the course of their work, the members have developed a five-step guideline for congregations to resume in-person worship safely and reopen our church buildings for other activities. They have evaluated each congregation’s proposal to do so for approval by the bishop and they have continued to adapt safe practices as the coronavirus has evolved.

The clergy members come from Trinity, Shelburne; Good Shepherd, Barre; St. James, Woodstock; Holy Trinity, Swanton; and St. Mark’s, Newport. Dr. Guillot comes from UVM Medical Center and the Larner College of Medicine at UVM, as well as the Cathedral Church of

St. Paul, Burlington. They all have worked collaboratively with — and stood in solidarity with — Bishop Shannon through this trying time.

The Convention thanks each of them for doing an often-thankless job in good faith and staying committed to this work as the pandemic continues longer than anyone would have expected.

Likewise, the Convention thanks all leaders in congregations for their commitment to keep their fellow Episcopalians — and by extension, members of their families and communities—safe by following the guidance of the response team and the bishop. We particularly thank the leadership of those congregations without clergy support who have taken on the same responsibilities for assuring the well-being of members of their congregation.

## **Courtesy Resolution Thanking THRIVE**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont voice its gratitude for the creation of the THRIVE taskforce (Taskforce for Hope, Revitalization, Innovation, Vision, and Efficiency) composed of Diocese of Vermont clergy and lay leaders and chaired by Ellen McCulloch-Lovell of Christ Church, Montpelier, and the Rev. Scott Neal of St. Paul’s, White River Junction; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we give thanks for the leadership and vision of our Bishop, Shannon MacVean-Brown; we hold in prayer those leaders who have taken roles of responsibility in leading the work of THRIVE; we offer prayers for its success at this crucial time in the life of our diocese; and we hold our own hearts and desires open to the leading of the Holy Spirit as we welcome the challenge of implementing the recommendations we will receive at the 189<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont.

### **Background**

Bishop Shannon announced in July (see her letter, [Building a Bridge to the Future](#)) that the diocese faces a financial cliff, and she appointed a task force of clergy and lay leaders to consider “how new models of ministry and new collaborative relationships might offer our diocese ways to discern our future.”

An article posted on the diocesan website on October 13 of this year described the work of the task force (see the full article [here](#)). It notes that in addition to the chairs, THRIVE will “operate through three subgroups focused on key areas of concern: financial sustainability, chaired by the Very Rev. Greta Getlein of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul; missional vitality, chaired by Luke Krueger of St. Paul’s, Wells; and governance and collaboration, chaired by the Rev. Bob Leopold of St. Andrew’s, Colchester.

“At its initial meeting in late July, the task force heard from Bishop Sean Rowe of the Dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York, who made a presentation titled, ‘Adaptive Opportunities in Vermont.’ Rowe, who holds a PhD in organizational learning and leadership, will speak at the diocesan convention on November 6 to share his thinking about

opportunities for adaptive change in the Episcopal Church and his experience leading the partnership between the two dioceses he serves.”

THRIVE’s chairs, Ellen McCulloch-Lovell and the Rev. Scott Neal, will also make a presentation to the convention on November 6.

The task force meetings will be facilitated by Heidi Kim, a Minnesota-based consultant who formerly served on Presiding Bishop Michael Curry’s staff as officer for racial reconciliation. Kim met with the group on September 30 and facilitated online discussions that addressed the group’s hopes and dreams as well as areas of concern. The article says that Kim told participants that “even though this work feels very technical ... that this is a ministry, that you are engaging in discipleship ... and I, for one, am very grateful to you, because I think that what happens in Vermont will set a model for the rest of the Episcopal Church.”

THRIVE’s report to the diocese is due by Pentecost Sunday, June 5, 2022, with a final report and recommendations to be made at next year’s diocesan convention. This resolution asks that members of the diocese hold in prayer the work of the task force and its subgroups over the next year as they consider possibilities of collaboration with other dioceses in northern New England and also look at ways to reshape our parishes and diocese to meet the challenges of the coming “new normal” post-pandemic time.

It also invites us to hold our hearts and desires open to the leading of the Holy Spirit, flowing through the work of the task force, as we welcome the challenge of implementing the recommendations we will receive. It invites us to pray that we may undertake our part of this work with dedication and joy and embrace the possibilities that flow from it. Even as we hold before God our natural anxiety when facing change, we are filled with excitement and hope at the anticipation of a new day to come!

### **Courtesy Resolution** **Thanking and Honoring Dr. Gerald (Gerry) Davis**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont offer its hearty thanks to Gerald (Gerry) Davis, our diocesan treasurer, who retires this year after six years of financial service to the diocese, years which included navigating an episcopal transition, challenges of COVID-19, and a new look at the fiscal realities of our diocese; and be it further RESOLVED, That we wish Gerry, and his wonderful wife, Karin — both long-time members and leaders at our Cathedral — delightful times together as they turn their attention to the next chapters in their lives; may they have many delicious meals, accompanied by lovely wine, as they contemplate their next adventures as a couple.

#### **Background**

Gerry became Diocesan Treasurer during the tenure of Bishop Ely and remained treasurer through the transition to Bishop MacVean-Brown. Throughout his six years as Diocesan Treasurer, he expressed a calm, non-anxious presence. He did this as the diocese took a deeper look at our finances and began to re-assess what new and creative fiscal measures will be needed

in the future to enable our diocese not only to survive, but also to thrive, in the “new normal” that is unfolding.

Gerry brought his intelligence, level-headedness, his skill as a pulmonologist, his talent as a photographer, and his teaching prowess to his role as treasurer. His presence at the podium during Diocesan Convention, and online during the pandemic, helped us relax — and stay awake and alert. His talent as a photographer gave us just the exposure we needed for a clear budget picture and his focused PowerPoint presentations — understandable to the least fiscally sophisticated of his listeners — provided the information needed to make thoughtful decisions.

Having a physician as treasurer for more than half a decade was the medicine needed for our diocese. We were reassured and delighted when photos were posted of our treasurer, Gerry Davis, M.D., administering a COVID jab to our Bishop, Shannon MacVean-Brown — sitting in her Cathedra (the bishop’s chair) as part of the BIPOC clinics at the Cathedral.

We are grateful for Gerry’s calm and re-assuring “bedside manner” — and his gentle humor — at those times our fiscal waters became more turbulent, and we wish Gerry and Karin the very best.

### **Courtesy Resolution** **Thanking and Commending Pamela Van de Graaf**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation to Pamela Van de Graaf for her service as Assistant to the Bishop since June 2017 and send her best wishes on her retirement scheduled for later this year.

#### **Background**

After a 25-year career as a teacher, Pamela Van de Graaf joined the Ministry Support Team of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont as Assistant to the Bishop in June 2017. In that capacity, she served with Bishop Thomas C. Ely until September 2019, and with Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown since that time.

As Assistant to the Bishop, Pamela has been responsible for a wide range of duties, including arranging the bishop’s schedule, organizing the meetings of many diocesan committees and councils, taking minutes for Diocesan Council and at Convention, and organizing and keeping track of the paperwork for the inquirers, postulants, and candidates in the Commission on Ministry process.

Pamela also played a major role in organizing and facilitating the May 2019 Special Convention at which Bishop MacVean-Brown was elected, and the September 2019 service at which she was consecrated. Since March 2020, Pamela has risen to the challenge of helping the bishop and other members of the diocesan staff administer affairs remotely to a dispersed membership. For four plus years, Pamela has carried out all her responsibilities with skill, civility, and congeniality.

The Convention expresses its sincere appreciation to Pamela Van de Graaf for her work as Assistant to the Bishop and sends her prayerful good wishes for a happy and healthy retirement.

### **Courtesy Resolution**

#### **Thanking and Commending the Reverend Canon Lee Alison Crawford**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation to the Reverend Canon Lee Alison Crawford, Ph.D., for her many years of service on the Commission on Ministry for the Diocese of Vermont, including the last six years as chair.

#### **Background**

The Commission on Ministry is one of the important governing institutions of the Diocese of Vermont. For many years, the Reverend Canon Lee Alison Crawford, Ph.D., has served as a member of the Commission, and, since 2015, she has served as chair of the Commission. Her term on the Commission comes to an end at this Convention.

The Commission on Ministry is charged by canon with two responsibilities. First, it must meet with inquirers for ordination, as both deacons and priests, who have been recommended by a parish discernment committee, and determine whether to recommend them to the Standing Committee and Bishop for the status of postulants. Similarly, the Commission meets with postulants who wish to become candidates for ordination after several years in the formation process, and with candidates who wish to be ordained as deacons or priests. At any given time, there are typically between 10 and 20 persons at various stages of this process.

The Commission's second responsibility is to review the procedures and standards for ordination in the Diocese of Vermont, and to recommend changes in those procedures and standards, as appropriate, to the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and/or the Diocesan Convention. These recommendations must be consistent with the churchwide canons as established and modified by General Convention.

As chair of the Commission on Ministry, Lee Crawford has carried out these responsibilities with perspicacity, grace, and good humor. She has been a good counselor and companion to the people in the process, helping them discern their future with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Convention commends her for her diligence, insights, and resourcefulness, and sends her its prayerful best wishes for the years ahead.

### **Courtesy Resolution**

#### **Thanking and Commending Joshua Cheney**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation to Joshua Cheney for his service as Secretary of the annual Convention of the Diocese of Vermont, a role he took on in 2017 and has fulfilled with dedication and admirable flexibility through this, his last convention as secretary, and wish him the very best in his future adventures.

## **Background**

Joshua Cheney has been an Episcopalian from childhood: he grew up at Saint Mary's, Northfield, where his parents and family faithfully attended for years. These days, he attends All Saints', South Burlington. Many of us have seen him grow up in the diocese and were pleased when he joined the Ministry Support Team as administrative assistant in 2010.

Josh remained a valuable member of the team until his departure in 2013. He now works for Vermont Information Technology Leaders, which operates the Vermont Health Information Exchange.

In 2014, Diocesan Convention elected Josh to serve as first lay alternate deputy to the 2015 General Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he helped the deputation monitor legislative committees and had opportunities to serve on the floor of the House of Deputies. His dedication and upbeat attitudes were gifts in the intense and busy environment of General Convention.

In 2017, Josh took on the role of Secretary of Diocesan Convention, and he helped guide us all through a two-day gathering in the unfamiliar environment of the Jackson Gore Resort in Ludlow. The secretary's tasks are year-round and involve follow-up on some convention resolutions, service on the Dispatch of Business Committee (the past year as chair) which plans conventions, and helping to run the current convention.

Josh's first three conventions came during the tenure of Bishop Tom Ely: 2017 at Jackson Gore, 2018 at the Hilton, Burlington, and the special electing convention at the Cathedral in 2019. He was delighted with the election of now Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown and served as secretary at her first convention at the Hilton, Burlington, and then for our first Zoom convention in 2020. He has decided to step down after this year.

Josh has been efficient, good-humored, and perhaps most important, flexible through his tenure as secretary of our annual gatherings. Who can forget Josh's non-poker face at Diocesan Convention in 2018, when he pulled Bishop Tom's name in a raffle of baked goods from Mission Farm? Josh's spontaneous expression of surprise, followed by a huge smile and laughter, delighted those of us watching, even though we did not know until he announced who had won what had provoked such a reaction.

We look forward to any new ways he might find to remain involved in the diocese and hope that he will be able to find time to travel and enjoy many adventures.

## **Courtesy Resolution Thanking and Commending Stephen Burnett**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation to Stephen Burnett for the financial assessment of the diocese that he shared earlier this year with Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown, the diocesan staff, and diocesan committee leadership.

## **Background**

Stephen Burnett is a retired partner of the international accounting firm Deloitte. He served as chair of the Finance Committee for the Diocese of Atlanta for 27 years and has taught accounting and financial administration at two Episcopal seminaries.

In the spring of 2021, Stephen Burnett visited Vermont to consult with Bishop Shannon MacVean-Brown and diocesan leaders on the state of the diocese's finances. He met with the bishop and diocesan staff, reviewed the diocese's financial records for the last several years, met with the diocesan auditors and investment advisors, and met with the committees that have budget, investment, and other financial responsibilities.

Following these meetings and consultations, Stephen Burnett prepared a financial assessment of the diocese that he shared with the bishop, canons, and diocesan committee leadership. That assessment noted that the diocese's revenues and expenditures would be substantially out of balance by early 2023, and that actions needed to be taken over the next year to return the diocese to a sustainable financial condition. A restructuring of the diocese's committees with financial responsibilities was also included among the recommendations in the assessment.

The Convention extends its appreciation to Stephen Burnett for the time he spent on this financial review, and for the depth and candor of his assessment and recommendations, so that, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we may continue spreading God's message and serving God's people.

## **Courtesy Resolution Thanking and Commending Dr. Catherine Meeks**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation, in advance, to Dr. Catherine Meeks, Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, for her presentation sharing her thoughts with us on the dismantling of racism.

## **Background**

Almost two decades ago, the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta established a commission—the Beloved Community: Commission for Dismantling Racism — to heal the chronic illness of racism in our faith community by creating awareness of its existence in our ongoing spiritual formation. In 2016, following up on the commission's work, the Diocese of Atlanta decided to establish a Center for Racial Healing as a place where clergy, lay leaders, and community members can engage in dialogue that leads to real and lasting change. The center is committed to the principle that changed people can create change in our institutions, which in turn becomes change in our society.

Dr. Catherine Meeks chaired the Beloved Community Commission and is now the Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing. She has more than four decades of

experience in the work of dismantling racism. Catherine Meeks is a professor emerita at Wesleyan College in Macon, Georgia, where she held the Clara Carter Acree Distinguished Professorship of Socio-Cultural Studies. She earned her Ph.D. at Emory University and is the author, co-author, or editor of six books, including *Living into God's Dream: Dismantling Racism in America* and *Passionate for Justice: Ida B Wells as Prophet for Our Times*.

Catherine Meeks has said that “the core of her work has been with people who have been marginalized because of economic status, race, gender or physical ability as they pursue liberation, justice and access to resources that can help lead them to health, wellness and a more abundant life.” She went on to say that this work “grows out of her understanding of her call to the vocation of teacher as well as her realization that all of humanity is one family which God desires to unite.” We look forward to Dr. Catherine Meeks’ sharing her insights on dismantling racism and building a just and beloved community with us.

## **Courtesy Resolution**

### **Thanking and Commending Bishop Sean Rowe**

RESOLVED, That the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont offer thanks and appreciation, in advance, to the Rt. Rev. Dr. Sean W. Rowe, Bishop of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Bishop Provisional of the Diocese of Western New York, for his presentation sharing his thoughts with us on diocesan collaboration and partnerships.

#### **Background**

The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe was ordained Bishop of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania in 2007 and became Bishop Provisional of Western New York in 2019. He previously served as Bishop Provisional of the Diocese of Bethlehem from 2014 until 2018.

A native of western Pennsylvania, Sean Rowe graduated from Grove City College in 1997 with a B.A. in history. After studies at Virginia Theological Seminary, Rowe returned to his home diocese in 2000 after receiving his M.Div. and served as a parish priest in a small town in western Pennsylvania. In 2007, he was elected Bishop of Northwestern Pennsylvania at the age of 32, and for nearly 12 years he was the youngest bishop in the Episcopal Church. Bishop Rowe earned a Ph.D. in organizational learning and leadership at Gannon University in Erie in 2014.

When the Rt. Rev. R. William Franklin announced his plans to retire as Bishop of the Diocese of Western New York, the adjoining dioceses of Western New York and Northwestern Pennsylvania decided to explore a partnership in which the two dioceses would share a single bishop and a single staff. This plan was approved by a special convention of both dioceses held in September 2018. Upon Bishop Franklin’s retirement in April 2019, Bishop Rowe took office as Bishop Provisional of Western New York.

The idea behind the partnership was not simply to save money, but rather to collaborate closely in mission and revitalize the Episcopal Church along the southeastern shores of Lake Erie. We in Vermont look forward to Bishop Rowe’s sharing his thoughts on this partnership with us.

**Convention showed its approval of the Courtesy Resolutions by raising their hands.**

### 2021 Convention Minutes

Bishop Shannon recognized Joshua Cheney, Secretary of Convention. Mr. Cheney announced that the Dispatch of Business Committee approved the minutes of the 2020 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 98% concurring.**

### Dates of the Next Convention

Bishop Shannon announced that the next convention in 2022 will be held Thursday, October 13 online, and Saturday, October 15 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul.

### Reminder about Saturday

The Bishop reminded delegates that the Convention will meet again on Saturday, beginning at 10:00 a.m. for Morning Prayer, the Bishop's address, a meeting with Dr. Catherine Meeks of the Absalom Center for Racial Healing, a meeting with Bishop Sean Rowe of the Dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York, a meeting with the co-chairs of the diocesan THRIVE group, and a meeting with the diocesan Commission for Land Use History.

### Adjournment

The Bishop called for a motion to adjourn.

**A motion was made, seconded, and voted on by Zoom vote to adjourn the 188<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Vermont. The motion passed with 99% concurring.**

Convention adjourned at 8:35 p.m. after a closing prayer from the Bishop.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Van de Graaf

Assistant Secretary of Diocesan Convention 2021

## **Bishop's Address**

At our last convention I invited us to follow the lead of Peter, and get out of the boat, and go toward Jesus, even in the midst of the storms we face at this time.

We have done just that. And this is only the beginning.

As the pandemic has lingered, I am especially grateful for the ways people continue to step up in their efforts to keep the most vulnerable safe and included. This is a ministry we have taken on with dedication, thoughtfulness and love.

We are all tired & disappointed we still need to take such great measures. But we will make it past this time if we continue to support each other. We owe a debt of gratitude for the steadfast research, guidance and support of the members of our COVID restart team, who have now become the COVID response team.

The storms of the ups and downs of the course of corona tide have tested us, and they have taught us lessons about resilience, our need for each other, and the necessity of reminding ourselves about the faith and sacred texts upon which our diocese is founded. You may recall that the visioning team who presented at our last convent identified three priorities for our diocese: congregational vitality, anti-racism work, and stewardship.

I want to highlight that when I use the word stewardship I am referring to a wide range of concepts, the spiritual practice of financial giving & serving, attention to sound practices around the care of all our resources - finances, buildings, spiritual life & time & Creation care.

In the spring - The work of the visioning team was further refined by a meeting of our diocesan leaders & representatives of our diocesan entities. We met for our first annual Same Page retreat.

The goals of this gathering were to increase the cohesion of diocesan leaders & the diocesan household. To articulate who we are as a diocese & to increase our ability to Invite people into leadership, & envisioning, and exploring our future.

I would like to share the belief, mission, vision, & values statement that has distilled over the last year as a result of the work of these groups, and which diocesan council adopted in October.

In the Episcopal diocese of Vermont

### **Belief/Vision**

We live our lives believing in:

- + the abundant love of God shown in creation,
- + the example of Jesus' love, which commits us to speak hard truths and take bold action
- + the Power of the Holy Spirit to stir up curiosity, creativity and fortitude for growth and transformation.

### **Mission**

In the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont, we place our trust in God, finding new ways to serve, worship, care for creation and foster conciliation and reconciliation across our state.

We seek to:

- + Take anti-racist actions
- + Work toward environmental sustainability
- + Develop vital, collaborative, economically sustainable congregations and leaders in our churches and diocesan institutions.

## **Values**

- We commit to standing with the marginalized so that we may transform systems for racial justice and work toward the radical inclusion of all.
- We care for God's creation, dedicating ourselves to protecting the environment in a region that has much to protect.
- We strive for economic justice within our own institutions and the wider community.

## **The way**

We realize our mission will depend on communication, collaboration and participation from all congregations, institutions and individual Episcopalians as we pray, worship, give, learn, discern and serve.

Each of our communities is unique, with its own interests, challenges, and gifts. We honor our individuality and shared identity as Episcopalians in Vermont and commit our congregations to working together to strengthen our collective witness.

This statement is the foundation for how we will discern the future of our diocese, & our life together.

We have committed ourselves to this mission and vision, and to do that, to do the experimentation, evaluation, and reiteration that Bishop Rowe talked with us about this morning, we needed more staff capacity.

This is why instead of having only one canon, I added 1 & and a part time canon to the diocesan staff.

I understand that this increases the budget, but without this additional capacity, we will not be able to find adaptive solutions to the challenges we face.

Our new staff members reflect our commitment to our priorities.

Auburn Watersong, Canon to the Ordinary for transition Ministries - has called together a group of people, lay and ordained from across the diocese to develop a process of ministry discernment for congregations. The discernment tool will assist congregations in re-imagining vital ministry & collaboration across congregations.

Canon Auburn has also worked with me to re-design the transition process for calling clergy

leadership. This new process reflects current best practices across the church as we look to resource small congregations, and establish just and equitable agreements between clergy and congregations.

Walter Brownridge, Canon to the ordinary for cultural transformation, focuses on our ministries of racial reconciliation, & stewardship, most specifically, creation care & congregational & diocesan financial stewardship.

Other areas in his portfolio of responsibilities include assisting me with pastoral oversight of the diocese, including ministry development, personnel matters, and providing oversight to those in the ordination process as he interfaces with the COM.

Canon Walter's connections with the wider church have been such a gift in several areas, but especially as they have led us to Steve Burnett, who did our diocesan financial review and The Rev. Mary Selerud, who will consult with us for transitions while Canon Auburn is on sick leave.

Since joining us in March, Canon Walter has devoted considerable time shepherding the financial restructuring of our diocesan finances. He has represented me & our diocese in our work toward racial healing both locally and nationally. This afternoon, you'll hear from him, and others who participated in a pilgrimage with the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing.

Susan Ohlidal, canon missionary for local ministry, serves on a part time basis on diocesan staff, part time priest in charge @ St. Andrew's, St. Johnsbury, & co pastor of Convivia in St. Johnsbury. She has spent time assessing the status of our local ministry teams and their formation.

In the coming year her work will focus on being a resource to congregations in their use of the congregational discernment tool, & facilitating mutual ministry reviews. Part of her work is funded by a Roanridge grant from The Episcopal Church.

The coming months will be devoted to finding a way forward. Acknowledging our financial reality and forging an unknown path is the epitome of stepping out of the boat in the storm and going toward Jesus.

I do not know exactly what the outcome of our discernment will be.

This is what I know.

We are seeking ways to collaborate with the dioceses of NH & Maine -We are looking for ways to collaborate across dioceses so that our ministries will be strengthened, and to achieve greater efficiency and increased stewardship of our financial resources. We are not working on a merger. I meet regularly with Bishops Brown & Hirschfeld.

In the future we will open up our conversation to include others, starting with members from THRIVE, and leaders from their governing bodies. Bishops Brown, Hirschfeld, & myself are

clear that our collaboration is about more than money, rather it is about strengthening our capacity to be followers of Jesus Christ, in the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement, in Northern New England.

There is no manual or process for how this type of discernment is done. We can look to the collaboration experience and experiment of the dioceses of NWP & WNY. I'm so glad their bishop, Bishop Sean Rowe was able to be with us this morning.

THRIVE has begun their work, and there will be opportunities to hear from more voices and to contribute to the discernment of our diocesan household.

In the walkabouts, I told you that I have experience flying the plane as we build it. This unnerving endeavor wasn't what I had in mind. It is hard to live with uncertainty. It is hard to face a future which will be full of change and the losses it brings. Many will want to relieve the fear, anxiety and grief, but even those emotions are a gift from God.

The fuel in the engine of our plane is this mixture of emotions - which is converted to hope & forward movement as we come together, grounded in our faith and purpose.

The only reason why any of this work is important is because we are followers of Jesus, who have committed to a life of discipleship which draws us closer to Jesus, and out into the world.

Every time THRIVE meets, we begin our work with Bible study. We are not simply trying to save the Episcopal church in Vermont, our traditions are only important in as much as they help us to be a vibrant and life-giving presence throughout our brave little state.

I invite you all to pray daily about our discernment.

- \* Give attention to the spiritual practice of stewardship of your finances and reading scripture
- \* Commit to participating in a formation activity that will increase your capacity to be Jesus' hands and heart in your community
- \* Find every opportunity you can to participate in discerning ways to collaborate across congregations, & then
- \* engage in some courageous experimentation, which requires interdependence and reliance on God

I'm so grateful to be on this journey with you. I'm looking forward to the stories we will be able to share about this moment in the history of our diocese, where we continued to step into the stormy water, because that is where we found Jesus.

## **Attendees**

### **Canonically Resident**

Ven.	Stannard	Baker	Rev.	Zarina	O'Hagin
Rev.	Lisette	Baxter	Rev.	Susan	Ohlidal
Rev.	Betty	Berlenbach	Rev.	Paul	Olsson
Rev.	Janet	Brown	Rev.	Sherry	Osborn
Rev. Canon	Walter	Brownridge	Rev.	Lucy	Pellegrini
Ven.	Catherine	Cooke	Rev.	John	Perry
Rev.	Lee	Crawford	Rev.	Titus	Presler
Rev.	Angela	Emerson	Rev.	Lisa	Ransom
Rev.	Rachel	Field	Rev.	Johnathon	Ross
Rev.	David	Ganter	Rev.	Empy	Schneider
The Very Rev.	Greta	Getlein	Rev.	Craig	Smith
Rev.	Sarah	Ginolfi	Rev.	Amy	Spagna
Rev.	L Paul	Gratz	Rev.	John	Spainhour
Rev.	Paul	Habersang	Rev.	Kevin	Sparrow
Rev.	David	Hamilton	Rev.	Robert	Stuhlman
Rev.	Kim	Hardy	Rev.	Mary	Taggart
Rev.	Kathy	Hartman	Rev.	Larry	Yargbrough
Rev.	Beth	Hilgartner	58/2	Molly	Comeau
Rev.	Chris	Jones	Rev.	Jennie	Anderson
Rev.	Earl	Kooperkamp	Rev.	Jim	Ballard
Rev.	Robert	Leopold	Rev.	William	Davidson
Rev.	Mary	Lindquist	Rev.	Lee	Ferry
Rt. Rev.	Shannon	MacVean-Brown	Rev.	Catherine	Nicols
Rev.	Beth Ann	Maier	Rev.	Mark	Preece
Rev. Dr.	Linda	Maloney	Rev.	Steve	Reynes
Rev.	Peggy	Mathauer	Rev.	Shelie	Richardson
Rev. Dr.	Susan	McGarry	Rev. Sr.	Laurian	Seeber
Rev.	Christine	Moseley	Rev.	Carole	Wageman
Rev. Dr.	Frederick	Moser	Rev.	Bob	Wilson
Rev.	Scott	Neal			

### Lay Delegates

Arlington	Susan	Gratz	Newport	David	Bullock
	Steve	Smith		Shar-Lee	Ryan
Barre	Cindy	Cobb		Penny	Thomas
	Tess	Taylor	Northfield	Karen	Baker
	Linda	Wentworth		Christie	McCann
Bellows Falls	Scott	Belt	Norwich	Jon	Felde
	Marien	Gage		Chris	Winn
Bennington	Gail	Broussard	Randolph	Colleen	Dunn
Bethel	Katie	Runde		Ray	Mayer

	Carol	Sears		Kathy	Perine
	Nancy	Wuttke	Rutland	Nanci	Gordon
Brandon	Cassie	Root		Kathy	Hall
	Bob	Wertz		Dana	Peterson
Brattleboro	Ricky	Davidson	Shelburne	David	Crandall
	Rosie	Wojcik		Lisa	Newton
Burlington	Elizabeth	Cafilisch		Scottie	Emery-Ginn
	Penelope	Pill	Sheldon	Lori	Derry
	Keith	Pillsbury		Jean	Townsend
			So.		
Chester	David	Carey	Burlington	Martha	Chambers
	Jane	Davis		Hilla	Damm
	Elizabeth	Salisbury		Whye	Yap
	Belinda	Whipple Worth	St. Albans	Marilyn	King
Colchester	Alice	Daley		Carolyn	Murray
	Jane	Hamilton	St. Johnsbury	Robin	Bergman
	Michelle	Thomas		Anna	Kennedy
Enosburg	Titus H.				
Falls	H.	Presler		Diane	Montague
	Judith	Rogers	Stowe	Deborah	Clark
Essex					
Junction	Frances	Huessy		Roger	Nicholls
	Heather	Winship		Jerry	Wood
	Charles				
Fair Haven	"Chazz"	Collette	Swanton	Sandi	Kenyon
	Melanie	Combs		Steve	Marshall
	Nancy	Smith		Helen	Short
Fairlee	Ann	Davis	Underhill	John	Koier
	Margaret	Gilmore		Nancy	Todd
Hardwick	Marilyn	May	Vergennes	Lenore	Morse
	Kathleen	Ponder	Waitsfield	Eunice	Fossom
	Terry	Tuthill		Jane	Lolax
Killington	Tonita	Branan		Beth	Phillips
	Susan	Durant	Wells	Annie	Constantinos
	Patricia	Mattson		William	Harrison
Lyndonville	Esther	Agnew		Lucas	Krueger
	Diane	Green	Wilmington	Joseph	Fortner
Manchester	Susan	Bryant		Richard	Ward
	Carlton	Bryant	Woodstock	Isabelle	Bradley
Middlebury	Ben	Anderson-Ray		Barbara	Johnson
	Susan	Anderson-Ray		Katherine	Webster

			White River		
	Carol	Milkuhn	Junction	Andrew	Pillsbury
Montpelier	Joan	Murray		Beverly	Taylor
	Maggie	Thompson		Virginia	Umland