

Episcopal Diocese of Rochester
Convention 90
Saturday, October 30, 2021
Official Reports

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REPORTS REQUIRED BY RULES OF ORDER

STANDING COMMITTEE

Officer(s):

Cameron Miller, president

Carolyn Mok, secretary

Members (Elected):

Floyd Bayley, Joseph DaBoll-Lavoie, Ruth Ferguson, Michael Davis, Leslie Burkardt, Ken Pepin

Reviewed

- ❖ Orientation of New Standing Committee
- ❖ Reviewed Standing Committee Covenant
- ❖ Reviewed a White Paper on the system of Diocesan Deans
- ❖ Served as Council of Advice for Bishop Singh as he navigated new events
- ❖ Received monthly reports from Bishop Singh and discussed items as appropriate and beneficial

Consents to Episcopal Elections

- ❖ The Rev. Canon Chandler Paul Gordon to Wyoming
- ❖ The Rev. Canon Paula Clark, Chicago
- ❖ The Rev. Canon Ruth Woodcliff, South Carolina
- ❖ The Rev. Betsey Monnot, Iowa
- ❖ The Rev. Dr. Ketlen Solak, Pittsburgh

Other Actions

- ❖ Reappointed Harold Kurland as church attorney.
- ❖ Approved bridge loan for Christ Church, Rochester, capital campaign.
- ❖ Approved loan to Zion, Avon.
- ❖ Approved action on Trinity Church, Geneva.
- ❖ Approved online/virtual diocesan convention for 10/30/21.
- ❖ Approved additional time off for Bp. Singh after the fire at his home.
- ❖ Approved sale of parish hall of St. Paul's. Montour Falls.
- ❖ Approved easement for St. James', Watkins Glen.
- ❖ Received Bishop Singh's resignation as of 2/2/22
- ❖ Approved the candidacy of The Rt. Rev. Steve Lane to serve as our bishop provincial, pending confirmation by Diocesan Convention, as we search for a new bishop diocesan.

Respectfully Submitted:

Cameron Miller, Carolyn Mok

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

Officers: Co-Chair- Rev. Georgia M Carney
Co- Chair- Ms. Ellen Ralston
Secretary/ Grants Coordinator- Pat Feeny

Additional Committee Members: Mr. James Garner, Ms. Judith Day, Ms. Kathy O'Leary, Mr. James Cannon, Rev. Jimmie Sue Deppe, Rev. Abidhananthar John, Rev. Andrea Stridiron, Rev. Saundra Cordingley, Ms. Anne Lewis, Rev. Virginia Mozzarella

Ex Officio: The Rt. Rev. Prince G. Singh

Report:

It is our privilege to share with you the continuing work of the Commission on Ministry this past year. The work of the Commission is to shepherd, assess, listen, provide honest feedback, and offer opportunities for spiritual growth and leadership in those pursuing to advance as leaders of ministry in the diocese. We serve those seeking ordination as well as lay ministry leaders. The Commission on Ministry works in close cooperation with the Bishop's Office, The Dean of Discernment, Standing Committee, and parishes. Our updated Vocational Handbook is available on the Diocesan website.

The past year has been a blessing in those we have recommended to our Bishop:

Ordination to the priesthood: Rev. Greg Kremer

Ordination to the priesthood: Rev. Keisha Stokes

Postulancy to the priesthood: David Jutsum

In the past year COM and the Dean for Discernment attended initial parish meetings with discernment groups to encourage and clarify both the work of discernment and the role of the Commission on Ministry in growing leadership in the Diocese. We give thanks for all those who dedicate their time and service to our Diocese both in calls to ministry and to service on the Commission.

Prayerfully for the Commission.

The Rev. Georgia M Carney

Ms. Ellen Ralston

COM Co-Chairs

TRUSTEES OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Duties:

In compliance with a Resolution of the First Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and of the Certificate of Incorporation of said Diocese, providing for the election of nine members to serve with the Bishop as the Board of Trustees, three members are to be elected annually by a plurality vote of the Convention for a term of three years. The general powers, duties and responsibilities of the Trustees shall be as are set forth in Section 5 of the Religious Corporations Law of the State of New York.

Officers: **Chairperson:** Bishop Singh; **Vice Chair:** The Rev. Ronald Young; **Chief Financial Officer:** Todd Rubiano; **Treasurer:** Lyn Omphroy **Assistant Treasurer:** Bliss Owen; **Clerk:** Sarah Bulter

Elected Members: Carl D'Angio, Julie Forney, Les Kernan, Stan Jones, Susan Scanlon, Scott Seabridge, Peter Vogt, Ronald Young, Charles Zettek

Structure:

The Diocesan Trustees are supported by a number of standing committees. In addition to the four scheduled Trustee meetings, the Trustees continue to look for opportunities to collaborate with the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council and the Commission on Ministry. Actions of the Trustees and all committees are found in the minutes of the Trustees located in the office of the Diocese. Committee meetings took place several times during the year.

Audit Committee:

A significant portion of the work of the Trustees is to complete canonical requirements including the Diocesan Audit and assist with parish audits.

Elected members: Charlie Zettek (Chair), Pete Vogt and Stan Jones

Building and Property Committee:

The committee worked on the following diocesan properties and assessed the requirements of parishes.

Elected members: Julie Forney (Chair), Carl D'Angio, Ronald Young.

Outside member: Jay Benesh

Staff Support: Kristy Estey

Investment Review Committee:

The Investment Review Committee monitors the Canandaigua National Bank and Trust Company, who manages combined investment portfolio consisting of the Diocesan Funds and Parish funds.

Elected members: Sue Scanlon, Les Kernan, Scott Seabridge.

Outside members: Doug Lyon, John Johnson, Greg Van Laeken, Chris Moore

An Update of The Diocesan Combined Investment Portfolio

The Committee heard from Canandaigua National's Jason Fitzgerald and Brian Murphy, respectively, on the general market and economy and our portfolio's performance for the first six months of 2021. Across the market, most equity indexes were up 20% and REITs up by 30%, while fixed income (with the exception of high yield) were flat.

The \$35,820,000 portfolio overseen by this committee (as of July 31st) has a target allocation of 70% in equity, 20% fixed income and 10% in alternatives. Of that total, \$25,306,000 are assets of the Diocese, while the balance consists of assets of parishes which have asked this Committee to include the management of their funds along with those of the Diocese.

During the first 6 months of 2021, the entire portfolio increased by 14%, exceeding both performance benchmarks. While a printed report through August was not yet available, Brian stated that it is up over 16% through that month. [The annual performance in the 10 years that Canandaigua has had its management is 9.8%.] The value emphasis (as opposed to growth) which these managers lean toward has been out of favor for several years but that trend is turning. Overpricing of equities in the U.S. large cap category, led to record high P/E ratios for the S&P 500 while value stock returns outperformed growth in large, medium and small cap indices YTD through July.

The Committee received a report from Canandaigua on the accounting and investment services provided to the parishes and a report from Todd on the status of loans made by the Diocese, both of which were satisfactory.

The Committee received a report of the draft budget, which requires a higher draw than 2021 due to the General Convention and a 2% reduction in apportionment income, but with an expected draw still less than 5%, and making progress toward the sustainable goal of 4%.

Human Resources Committee

outside members: Elizabeth Bakken, Sherry Ralston and Amy Moyer

Prichard Scholarship Committee

Outside members: Ian Prichard, Marti St. George and Scott Seabridge, Staff support: Kristy Estey

Official Actions of the Trustees

Diocesan Trustee Meeting: December 5, 2020

- Organization and the Trustees. The Rev. Ronald Young was elected as Vice Chair of the Trustees. The committee chairs were appointed by the bishop: Audit: Charlie Zettek: Building and Property, Julie Forney: Investment Review Committee, Sue Scanlon.
- **Resolution:** The Trustees revised the Diocesan Loan Rates beginning December 1, 2020 at 3.5% for loans up to 5 years and 4% for loans up to 10 years.
- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved funding a new \$100,000 capital bridge loans for Christ Church Rochester; along with refinancing two CDL loans (totaling # \$100,211), including an acerated payment schedule discount of \$17,041, for a net loan amount of \$183,170, to be financed by a blended rate of 3% over five years.

Diocesan Trustee Meeting: March 6, 2021

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the following: RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve the continued funding of the Lay PostRetirement health benefit, with a maximum annual benefit of \$500.00 per eligible participant for 2021 and authorize the transfer of \$240,803 from the General Endowment Fund (# 002.1107.001) to establish the Lay Post-retirement Health Benefit

Fund (# 002.1107.010); designated for the funding of these benefits, based on the annual actuarial analysis completed by Benefits Management Inc., as of 12/31/2020.

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the following resolution: **RESOLVED:** The Trustees of the Diocese, having reviewed the current Investment Policy Statement (IPS) for invested funds, approve its continued use for the coming year, with the following modifications:
 1. Rename the fund: The Diocesan Combined Investment Portfolio (vs. Endowment).
 2. Scope of Investment Policy: This policy shall apply to funds classified as Investments on the Annual Statement of Financial Position of the Diocese, or as otherwise specified by the Trustees.
 3. Spending Policy: “That is, net of spending, the objective is to grow the value of the Portfolio at or above the rate of inflation”.
- **Resolution: The Trustees approved the following resolution:** **RESOLVED:** The Trustees of the Diocese preliminarily approve a draw of up to \$1,043,000 (4.9% of the trailing 5-Year average balance) to fund the 2022 Diocesan Budget. This preliminary approval will be reviewed in the coming months, as the budget process develops, with the detailed draw (by fund) reviewed for final approval at the September meeting of Trustees, before the proposed 2022 Operating Budget is approved by Diocesan Council.

Special Meeting of the Diocesan Trustees: April 14, 2021

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the Certificate of Resolutions of the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and the Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, regarding the sale of Trinity Episcopal Church, Geneva to a qualified buyer for \$340,000. (This is a synopsis of the resolution)

Special Meeting of the Diocesan Trustees: May 6, 2021

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved this resolution: **RESOLVED:** The Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester approve funding a new, \$28,833.00 Sibley Loan for Zion Church, Avon to replace their church boiler. The new loan to be consolidated with Zion's existing Sibley Loan (# 008.2202.046 current balance of \$48,766.48) and refinanced at a blended interest rate of 2.87% for 7.5 years.

Diocesan Trustee Meeting: June 2, 2021

The Diocesan Trustees have been examining the Property and Liability Insurance of Parishes for a year. Our current canon (9.1.i) for insurance states that “All buildings and their contents shall be kept adequately insured.” The Trustees recognized that liability insurance is now as important as property insurance. The trustees developed a new Canon (9.1.i) and forward it to the Committee on Constitution Canons. Minor changes were made by the committee and the Trustees accepted the changes. The resolution will come before the 90th convention.

Proposed Amendment to Diocese of Rochester Canon 9, Section 1(i)

RESOLVED, that Diocesan Canon 9 be amended as set forth below (in *bold italics*).

Section 1 (i), *The Parish or Mission, including* all buildings and their contents, shall be kept adequately insured, *as reasonably determined by the Trustees of the Diocese.*

Background: Recent lawsuits brought against the Diocese and one of our Parishes, highlight the importance of all churches maintaining strong liability insurance coverage, as well as the need to easily access coverage records and policies from the past. Under the provisions of the NYS Child Protection Act, a lawsuit may be brought against a church for an incident that took place decades ago. Current church leaders must be able to readily access the insurance policies that were in place back at that time of the alleged incident. Plaintiffs in these lawsuits typically bring suit against the Diocese, as well as the Parish. Therefore, Trustees' ability to effectively coordinate legal defense and insurance coverage is greatly enhanced if all churches and the Diocese maintain adequate coverage with a strong, common insurance carrier.

Rationale: Our current Diocesan Canons simply state that "*All buildings and their contents shall be kept adequately insured.*" The Canon should be modified to clarify who is responsible to determine what constitutes "adequate coverage", as the definition is likely to change over time and will then need to be periodically communicated to our churches. In addition, insurance should include property, casualty and liability coverage.

The Trustees of the Diocese are in the best position to determine and communicate these requirements:

- Trustees are responsible for prudent management of the assets of the Diocese (real and personal property, cash, investments, etc.), administered in accordance with applicable law and the rules of the Diocese, for its support and maintenance.
- Trustees have general powers, duties & responsibilities set forth by Section 5 of the Religious Corporations Law of the State of NY.
- Trustees are familiar with proper management of the real property of the Diocese, including property associated with closed churches.
- Trustees are the governing body that engages legal counsel to defend the Diocese and its churches against legal actions, in order to protect the assets of the Diocese and is therefore in the best position to determine the necessary insurance coverage.
- At times Parishes have sought guidance on what is considered to be adequate coverage limits for property, casualty, and liability coverage. Trustees are in a good position to review CPG offerings and to advise on reasonable choices for parishes.

Diocesan Trustee Meeting: September 8, 2021

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the following resolution: RESOLVED: Trustees accept the 2020 Diocesan Audit, as provided by Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co., LLP, and move the audit to Convention for review and acceptance.
- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the Certificate of Resolutions of the Bishop, the Standing Committee, and the Trustees of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, regarding the sale of Parish House in Montour Falls (108 South Genesee St, Village of Montour Falls) to a qualified buyer for \$94,000. (This is a synopsis of the resolution)

- **Resolution:** The Trustees approved the following resolution: RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve a draw of \$988,000, including interest from the unrestricted loan portfolio, to fund the 2022 Diocesan Operating Budget, and an additional \$55,000 for designated Postretirement Health Benefits, as detailed by fund.

Official Actions of the Prichard Scholarship Committee:

Meeting of the Prichard Scholarship Committee: September 9, 2021

- **Resolution:** The Committee approved this resolution: Resolved; the Prichard Scholarship Committee reviewed four (4) applications of children of clergy in the diocese and voted to evenly split the \$5,000 (5% draw) resulting in \$1,250 for each student. Wyles Daniels, Janna Deppe, Anthony Ennis, and George Ennis.

Human Resources Committee Activities

- Reviewed and discussed the 2022 Health Plan updates
- Reviewed and discussed the annual Clergy Salary Ranges and alignment with comparable dioceses.
- Conducted salary range research and analysis for diocesan staff roles as needed.
- Reviewed and discussed the new Diocesan Dean structure and ongoing assessment.
- Recommended updates for the Safe Church and NYSHP training and reviewed diocesan rollout.
- Reviewed and discussed Post-Retirement Health Plan process and status.
- Discussed Covid Task Force recommendations as related to HR legislation and policies.
- Committee member, Amy Moyer, chaired the search process for recruitment and hiring of new Bishop's Assistant.
- Conducted Employee Relations discussions as needed.
- Reviewed and discussed upcoming HR related legal guidelines, both national and state that will potentially effect diocese and parishes.
- Recommended HR consultant to review Diocesan HR Manual on an ongoing basis to update it with changing legal requirements.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Dr. Ronald B. Young
Vice-Chair, Trustees

Reports from Diocesan Deans

DEAN FOR LITURGY AND FORMATION

The Path Forward

This has been a strange year for all of our churches, especially as it relates to spiritual formation. The challenges before us remain ensuring engagement among parishioners at all age levels, especially those who are unable to be physically present for worship or formation opportunities.

What has become clear in conversations among the Formation Team leaders (*Angeline Abidhananthar, Josh Barrett, Liz Salmone, Keisha Stokes, and Julie Syracuse*) is that supporting our leaders is the key to a thriving church. Many of the plans we had been working toward have had to either be postponed or cancelled. We are hopeful moving forward that there will be a youth retreat in the spring and fall, leadership trainings for Sunday School teachers, and much more.

Over the next year, along with a variety of opportunities that will be made available, we are beginning with a ***Spiritual Formation Leaders Workshop*** on Thursday, November 4, 7PM. This will be the first of regular gatherings of leaders across the Diocese to collaborate and even commiserate on how things are working in our local contexts. It will be a time for shared learnings and workshopping of ideas, so to encourage one another in the faith and brainstorm together ways that we might foster and nurture growth among all ages in our churches.

We have also recognized the need for spiritual renewal among both clergy and lay leaders. Our leaders need opportunities to participate in services of worship and spiritual growth that they themselves are not leading or organizing. One form we intend this to take is a Diocesan-wide Revival, three times annually, open to all but intended for those who formally lead in our churches.

The path forward for the Diocesan Formation Team, then, is the path of *revival* and *renewal*. Our work will be focused on encouraging our lay and clergy leaders, fostering collaboration and shared learning, and making spiritual growth opportunities available that revive those who constantly give themselves to the work of the Gospel in our churches. Some of these revival opportunities will be age specific, as well, as we recognize the need to attend with care to families with young children, teenagers, and adults of all ages.

To join us in this good work, begin, if you haven't already, by forming a Spiritual Formation Team in your church, with whom we can collaborate and foster growth in the Spirit.

Respectfully submitted,

Fr. Billy Daniel+
Dean for Liturgy and Formation

DEAN FOR DISCERNMENT

This year we began by holding a day long training for Commission on Ministry members. It included introductory training in the enneagram, spiritual gifts, listening, and discernment led by Revd. Krista Cameron. This was followed by training on the entire discernment process, on the specific charisms of lay ministry, the diaconate and priesthood and we spent some time discussing vocation with Bishop Prince. This was very helpful and will be done on an annual basis with Commission on Ministry members.

We completed 5 parish-based discernment processes this year and accepted one new postulant for holy orders, with 4 others in process. We are exploring the model of Pastoral leader more extensively and continue to look at our processes and models of formation and ministry, seeking to enable the best ministry and leadership formation possible. Lydia Arnts created a study guide to accompany the discernment process for priesthood, which COM will be using themselves over the next year.

This year our provider for psychological assessments retired, and we have interviewed several firms looking at which might best meet our current needs.

Our Circles of Support to offer coaching and supportive, reflective space for our new clergy and will be used for new Pastoral leaders as well.

This year we worked on restructuring the educational funding for leadership and vocational development, which will be managed by Todd Rubiano and the Commission on Ministry. This will allow for a more integrated process of funding management.

I continue to meet with the Commission on Ministry, including meeting with the co-chairs thereof, and Bishop. I also meet regularly with Diocesan Leadership, my fellow Deans and the Diocesan Staff.

Emerging from our Diocesan Dean evaluation process, we implemented the creation of a circle of sustainability for each Diocesan Dean. Our team is a strategic leadership team, which consists of Rob Ferris, Joan Bisset, Revd. Krista Cameron and Revd. Abi John. They have been incredible in offering their wisdom and skills in helping me plan strategically for ministries of discernment within our diocese. They help with the assessing of the effectivity of our current models and training, identifying areas of need or gaps in our current systems. I have so appreciated their providing of collaborative exploratory space. These teams will aid in ensuring the sustainability of this new model of ministry in our diocese.

Thank you to all who serve in so many ways to serve and enable new giftings and leadership to emerge in our Diocese. A special thank you to our Bishop, Prince Singh for the space he has created for us to dream new ways of being, and the encouragement to never stop learning, adapting and seeking better ways of being beloved community. For your wisdom, your leadership and the gift of these last 14 years we give thanks to God.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dean Deborah Duguid-May

12 October, 2021.

DEAN FOR CHURCHES IN SMALL TOWNS & RURAL COMMUNITIES AND PASTORAL DEVELOPMENT

To say this have been a difficult year for the churches in small towns and rural communities would be a gross understatement. And yet, as in ages past, the small church has risen to meet the challenges of COVIDtide and we have done so with integrity, love, and a commitment to these challenges that none of us were adequately prepared to for. From Hilton to Addison I have worked with our smaller churches to address the challenges created by the pandemic and those challenges that would have beset us regardless of the season. The challenges of the pandemic have stretched us spiritually, emotionally, financially, personally, professionally, and pastorally. Yet we have met them with grace, humility, and purpose and how I have admired your efforts.

My Circle of Sustainability has been extremely helpful in planning for a Small Church Conference that was originally slated for October, before being moved to the spring. To that end, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Reverend Eric Thompson, (St. Peter's, Dansville) the Reverend Tom Gramley, (Retired) Ms. Karen Baase, (St. Luke's, Brockport) and Mr. Drew Guild, (St. John's, Catharine).

As I believe I reported last year, I had just begun to work with the Reverend Canon Dr. C. Denise Yarbrough and the people of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Bloomfield in the discernment of their future. This task was eventually placed into the hands of our Bishop, Dean Ratterree, Canon Rubiano, and the Trustees of the Diocese. The church's future existence in Bloomfield, NY is now being placed before this convention in the form of a resolution. Our community presence and mission there continues to be for us a discernment. My hope is that this convention will begin to understand the struggle many of our small churches face and begin a process where our diocesan resources can be brought to bear to better assist the smaller church and bring them into a future that is sustainable, successful, life giving, and a place where the Episcopal voice of joy and inclusivity can remain where it is most needed.

For the retired clergy of our diocese, I have been here as their friend, a pastoral shoulder, confidant, and advisor as they have dealt with everything from sickness, to offering themselves as supply, and caring for a wandering peacock, (beautiful story, thanks to the Reverend Kit Tobin). Each and every contact has brought excitement and joy in just hearing their voice, the reading their messages, and those of their spouse, praying for them, and, with the assistance of Diocesan Dean, Virginia Tyler Smith, connecting many of our churches to them in ways where they continue to use the gifts that called you into God's service in the first place.

We have also begun a project with the retired clergy that will allow them to tell the story of the lives and share these recordings with the broader church. The Reverend Linda Leibhart was brave enough to be our first and that video will be ready for release shortly.

Perhaps my greatest pleasure though has been in working with the other three(3) diocesan deans as we strive to offer a collaborative leadership approach in addressing your needs and the concerns of our Bishop. To the Very Reverend Billy Daniel, Debs Duguid-May, and Virginia Tyler Smith, thank you individually and collectively.

So, from Hilton to Addison, and from Brockport to Newark, it is the churches located in small towns and rural communities that make up the majority of the churches in our diocese and what a pleasure it is to serve you and the people in the villages where you “live and move and have (your) being.”

It is also true that, as a result of your labors, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is alive in the most remote portions of New York. Just as important, if not more so, is that these places of worship often offer the only progressive, socially accepting, and openly affirming voice in their context. So to them let us say, “keep up the good work to which you have been called” and please know what an honor it is, privilege and pleasure, to serve you as your Diocesan Dean.

Finally, my work in this area would not be possible without the support and understanding of the people I serve and care for as rector - those who live and worship in town and village of Caledonia, (St. Andrew’s) and Scottsville, (Grace Episcopal). I want thank them as well, from the very bottom of an extremely grateful heart.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Canon Johnnie+

Diocesan Dean & Rector

DEAN FOR TRANSITIONS

Name of Organization: Transitions Ministry

Officer(s): The Very Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith, Dean

Committee Members: Carl D'Angio (St. Peter's Church, Geneseo), Diane Hamilton (St. Michael's Church, Geneseo), Charlotte Harper (Church of the Incarnation, Penfield), the Rev'd Keith Patterson (Two Saints' Church, Rochester), and the Rev'd Troy Preston (Christ Church, Corning).

Report: Transitions Ministry was very busy during 2020 and through the first half of 2021. In the fall of 2020, the Diocesan Deans embarked on a process to deepen our collaboration with each other while also building a stronger focus on lay empowerment and replicability of our work. In the case of Transitions, this included the following activities:

- Engaging with the Dean of Liturgy and Formation to help parishes without permanent clergy understand the richness and opportunities associated with Morning Prayer .
- Working with the Dean of Small Church Development on mentoring a few of our smaller parishes in transition.
- Partnering with the Dean for Discernment to expand leadership opportunities for individuals in the ordination process.
- Recruiting and administering a Circle of Sustainability consisting of: Carl D'Angio (St. Peter's Church, Geneseo), Diane Hamilton (St. Michael's Church, Geneseo), Charlotte Harper (Church of the Incarnation, Penfield), the Rev'd Keith Patterson, and the Rev'd Troy Preston. The Circle's task is to make the transitions process consistent, accessible, and effective for all parishes. The Circle meets every six weeks to review materials for Search Committees and vestries to use in the search process. We have also discussed best practices in committee development and information gathering for transition profiles. The Circle will continue refining our transitions process in the Diocese.

At year end 2020, we had five (5) open searches. During the course of the year, we have had six resignations or retirements, with an additional parish anticipating retirement of their rector in early 2022. At the end of third quarter 2021, we have three (3) parishes receiving names, two parishes seeking an intentional interim, and three (3) parishes in self-study.

Through a thorough vetting process and despite the pandemic, we presented a total 11 candidates for open positions during the past year. This was a remarkable achievement, given the degree to which the COVID pandemic curtailed candidates' searches and the constraints put on in-person visitation.

We placed the following clergy during this time period:

The Rev'd. Joshua Stibb, St. Peter's Church, Henrietta

The Rev'd. Abidhananthar John, Church of the Ascension, Rochester

Additionally, the following clergy who had been priests-in-charge, were called as rector of their parishes:

The Rev'd Ronald Young, Christ Church, Pittsford

The Rev'd Donald Schranz, St. John's Church, Clifton Springs

The Rev'd Keisha Stokes, Zion Church, Palymra

During this period, I also worked with the following parishes on their search activities:

St. John's Church, Catharine

St. James' Church, Hammondsport

St. Mark's Church, Penn Yan

Church of the Good Shepherd, Savona

St. John's Church, Sodus

St. James' Church, Watkins Glen

St. John's Church, Wellsville

I also provided technical support to the following parishes for their Associate Priest searches:

Christ Church, Pittsford

St. Thomas' Church, Rochester

Other Activities:

- Advised local candidates on portfolio preparation, materials presentation, interviewing, and leave-taking.
- Worked with the Transition Ministry Conference to develop training materials that search committees can use to reduce bias.
- Met regularly with the other Diocesan Deans to discuss lay empowerment, engagement with the diocese, areas for partnership across our responsibilities, and other matters related to our respective ministries.
- Continued to develop networking relationships with transition ministers around the country and with the Office for Transition Ministry of the Episcopal Church.

- Reached out to colleagues in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America for potential candidates in the Rochester region, and to enhance local understanding of how the denominations work together in deployment.
- Participated in regional discussions for best practices in transitions ministry during the pandemic.
- Participated in numerous discussions at the national level for identifying, recruiting and supporting clergy of color.
- Expanded our collection of resources from other dioceses that can help inform our transitions process and our letters of agreement.
- Initiated discussions at the regional level on best practices in deploying retired clergy, focusing on expectation management and equity in compensation.
- Acted as a liaison for open parishes with the Congregational Development Grants Committee.
- Attended two week-long meetings of the Transition Ministry Conference.
- Was elected as an at-large member of the Transition Ministry Conference Board

Lastly, let me comment on balancing the role of Dean with my full-time role as Rector of St. John's Honeoye Falls. Transition Ministry requires significant detail management, networking, and relationship development. Working with search committees, vestries, individual clergy, and my transition colleagues is one of the great joys of my career. However, the work does not fit neatly into a single portion of the work week. I am careful to balance the fluidity and demanding nature of the Diocesan Dean role with my role as rector. I believe I have kept the roles sufficiently separate that the parish is not negatively impacted by my other responsibilities. Thanks be to God, St. John's Honeoye Falls continues to thrive, and I am grateful for the support of the parish leadership and my family, who help me to keep boundaries and balance.

Many thanks to Bishop Singh for his continuing support, guidance, and vision in the transitions process. With God's help we will continue to identify, recruit and retain the best possible clergy for the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester.

Reports from District Deans

NORTHEAST DISTRICT

- Clergy Transitions
 - The Rev. Donald Schranz was installed in October, 2021 as Rector of St. John's, Clifton Springs.
 - The Reverend Keisha Stokes was installed in October, 2021 as Rector of Zion, Palmyra. Additionally, she continues to serve St. John's, Canandaigua as Pastoral Associate.
 - The Rev. Michael Laver resigned as the Rector of St. John's, Sodus in May, 2021 but is still available as a Supply Priest.
 - St. John's, Sodus has begun the search process for a new priest for their congregation. In the meantime, several clergy from around the diocese have stepped up in helping them continue their worship life together.

- District Grants
 - Rural & Migrant Ministries - Grace, Lyons - Communication Initiative (provides interpretation services for social media, specifically, for the workers and those with whom they interface at Lyons.
 - St. John's - Canandaigua - Gleaner's Christmas Dinner
 - St. John's - Clifton Springs - Agape Dinners (monthly dinners that offer a hot meal and socialization for those in need.)
 - St. John's - Sodus - using to develop their Sundry Closet for the community
 - St. Mark's - Newark - St. Mark's Baby Closet (provides infant and baby essentials for families in need.)
 - St. Peter's - Bloomfield - Hands of Hope Kitchen
 - St. Peter's - Geneva - Neighbor's Night Ministry (provides dinners to children and their families who live in the downtown neighborhood of Geneva)
 - Trinity - Geneva - A Place at the Table
 - Zion - Palmyra - Building of a Labyrinth for spiritual growth in the parish and community

- Lay Member of Diocesan Council Election
 - Ira Skinner, St. Mark's - Newark

Faithfully submitted,

The Very Reverend Gretchen S. Ratterree

Dean – Northeast District

ROCHESTER/MONROE DISTRICT

The Rochester/Monroe District participated in Diocesan check-ins on a regular basis during the 2020-2021 program year. We met via Zoom on September 16 to vote our Rochester and Monroe Diocesan Representatives to Council. Peter Barker was elected as the lay Rochester District Representative and Paul Webster was elected as the lay Monroe District Representative to Council.

Given the anxieties and challenges of life in pandemic, the Rochester and Monroe deanery focused its efforts on supporting district clergy via zoom check-ins and encouraging district clergy and laity to attend the diocesan check-ins for information, community building, and support.

The deanery also encouraged all in the district to attend the diocesan book studies on "Unsettling Truths" and "Caste," and made ourselves available as supportive presence to our clergy colleagues throughout the year and for pastoral care to parishes without rectors.

Submitted by,

The Rev'ds Leslie Burkardt and Ruth Ferguson deans of Rochester

The Rev'd Ken Peppin, dean of Monroe

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Officer(s):

Dean: The Very Rev. Dan Burner, Oct. 1-May 31; The Very Rev. Troy Preston, June 1-Present

Lay Warden: Pat Selwood, Oct. 1-June 7; Mary Lou Hunt-Quintal, June 8-Present

Clergy District Representative to Diocesan Council: The Rev. Josh Barrett

Lay District Representative to Diocesan Council: Marion Ivy

Secretary: Denise Switzer

Members:

The clergy and delegates in Schuyler, Steuben, and Yates Counties, except for Hornell. The following parishes are located within the Southeast District (SED): Church of the Redeemer, Addison; St. Thomas' Church, Bath; St. Luke's Church, Branchport; St. John's, Catharine; Christ Church, Corning; St. James' Church, Hammondport; St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Penn Yan; Church of the Good Shepherd, Savona; and Saint James' Church, Watkins Glen.

Meeting Dates & Report Summary

Regular Southeast District Meetings were held via Zoom: March 8, 2021, June 7, 2021, and September 13, 2021.

The Southeast District Mission Project for 2021 is House with Heart in Kathmandu, Nepal. It is a home for abandoned children, an education and training center for impoverished women and children, and an outreach program for needy families in and around Kathmandu, Nepal. Our goal is to raise as much money as possible up to at least \$500 per parish. House with Heart may use the funds at their discretion for any of their programs. Funds are being raised by parishes through November 15, 2021. The SED is also applying for a 2021 Sustainable Development Grant to assist House with Heart.

The following District Grants were approved for 2021:

1. \$500 to St. John's, Catherine - Bernie Parker Sharing Shed
2. \$500 to Christ Church, Corning - Steuben County Jail Ministry
3. \$500 to St. Mark's, Penn Yan - New Sharing Shed
4. \$1,000 to St James, Watkins Glen & St. John's Catherine - IWF Program
5. \$500 to St. Thomas' Church, Bath - Community Garden

6. \$500 to Schuyler County Habitat for Humanity, Sponsored by: St. John's, Catherine

7. \$1,500 to Diocesan flood relief collection for the Southern Tier, Sponsored by: All SED Churches

Roxanne Gaylord, St. Thomas' Church, Bath, has been elected to serve as the Lay District Representative to Diocesan Council after Convention. This is a two-year term. Our appreciation was extended to Marion Ivy. Marion has faithfully held this position for the last two years.

Southeast District clergy and delegates attended the June 10, 2021, Diocesan Budget Meeting via Zoom. They will also be attending the Pre-Convention Meeting on October 5, 2021, via Zoom. The next regular meeting of the Southeast District is scheduled for March 7, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted by,

The Very Rev. Troy Preston

Dean of the Southeast District

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT

The Southwest District met virtually last year due to the pandemic. The blessing in this was that all of us could gather together, regardless of the weather. The loss was in time spent in fellowship, sharing a meal, and catching up. Our district did not meet during the summer. Our usual habit during these district meetings was to share news from our churches, and information about diocesan events. We also shared news from throughout the diocese. We closed our meetings with Compline, a time where we could pray together. While clearly our meetings lost something by using Zoom, the consensus was that the group felt we could still enjoy a time of fellowship and sharing in this new format.

In the past year the district received and approved many local grant requests. They are as following: \$500 St. John's Wellsville, Clothing Giveaway for School Children, and \$600 Community Meal Program; Christ Church, Hornell, \$500 YMCA, and \$500 for Southern Tier Flood Relief; St. Michael's Geneseo, \$500 Allianza Agricola, \$500 Community Thanksgiving Garden, \$500 Chances and Changes, and \$500 ESCL Weekly Meal; Zion, Avon, \$500 LED Light Bulb Giveaway, and \$450 Refugee Resettlement Project.

The clergy of the Southwest District met monthly for clericus via Zoom. These meetings were especially helpful as the pandemic stretched on longer than any of us had anticipated and we shared our ways of navigating this unusual time in the life of the church. We did not meet during the summer.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Very Rev. Virginia Mazzarella

Reports from Other Appointed Diocesan Leaders

UNITED THANK OFFERING (UTO)

Report:

The mission of UTO is to expand the circle of thankful people and encourage intentional, daily thankfulness for the abundance of God’s blessings. UTO is a spiritual and financial partner in the mission work of the Episcopal Church. All UTO funds collected each year are distributed in grants which support a variety of domestic and foreign missions.

Ongoing goals for UTO in the Diocese of Rochester include:

1. Work toward 100% participation in Convention In-gathering
2. Promote successful grant applications from the Diocese of Rochester
3. Contribute updates/reminders for publication on Diocesan website and in Diocesan newsletter

Progress & Goals:

Year	2019	2020
Parishes Participating	37 Out of 44 (84%)	9 Out of 44 (20%)
Total In-Gathering for year	\$11,579.62	\$4,534.17

Grant Award

Year	Recipient	Project	Amount
2019	St. Mark’ and St. John’s	Crossroads for Caring	\$36, 914
2020	No grant awarded		

My hope is that our contributions, by Parish, are back up this year since we have opened our doors once again.

Please remember to send your ingathering checks to the Diocesan office.

Blessings,

Kathy O’Leary, UTO Diocesan Coordinator

COLLEGE FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The College for Congregational Development completed the virtual weekend format in November of 2020. During the winter COVID-19 surge, we offered several standalone Zoom gatherings highlighting College curriculum with particular relevance for lay and clergy leaders during the pandemic.

The timing of our planned weeklong intensive in July turned out to be fortuitous, occurring just before concerns arose about the Delta variant and breakthrough infections. We had a great week of learning with twenty-eight participants and a training team of six representing nineteen congregations from six dioceses.

We launched the 2021-22 weekend format in September with twelve participants from five congregations in Rochester and Central New York. Due to pandemic restrictions, the first weekend was hybrid, with one day of in-person work and virtual homework. The remaining weekends are in November, February, and April.

I hope you'll join us for next summer's weeklong intensive July 24-30, 2022 at Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua. Please contact me at pfrolick@gmail.com for more information.

Respectfully submitted by,

The Rev. Paul Frolick

ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS OFFICER

Local Interfaith Activity

The pandemic brought a halt to the usual array of interfaith meetings, dialogues and events that typically happen during the year in Rochester. The Rochester Interfaith Network Alive (RINA) has met several times on Zoom mostly to check in with one another and to share concerns and prayer. On January 20, 2021, members of RINA held an online Interfaith Prayer Vigil for the Inauguration of President Joseph Biden. During the early months of the pandemic, members of RINA came together online for prayer vigils lifting up the essential workers and the health care workers who were working so diligently through those very difficult early months.

The Episcopal Church (TEC)

I currently serve as a member of the national church's dialogue team on the Anglican/Roman Catholic dialogue, ARC-USA. We have four meetings a year and are working on a statement on Reconciliation. We have continued to meet during this COVID time, on Zoom and are making progress on our statement on Reconciliation.

I am Vice Chair of the Task Force For Ecumenical and Interreligious Work for the national church, created after our 2018 General Convention which will serve until the conclusion of General Convention 2024. The Task Force is charged with overseeing Ecumenical and Interreligious affairs for the national church and preparing responses, papers, resolutions for General Convention and the like on interreligious and ecumenical issues. I am also Chair of the Theology Subcommittee of that task force. The Task Force meets quarterly as a plenary group via Zoom conferencing and hold our subcommittee meetings monthly. This past year we have drafted an updated Statement on Interreligious Relations, which will be circulated at General Convention next summer. We have also prepared updated and revised Guidelines for Jewish/Christian dialogue and have created a new set of guidelines for interfaith work with the Muslim community. We also continue to monitor various bi-lateral dialogues, particularly our dialogue with the United Methodist Church.

In all of these activities, I represent the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and endeavor to ensure that we remain a serious player in the vibrant interfaith and ecumenical community in Rochester and in the national and international arena.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon Dr. C. Denise Yarbrough

COVID TASK FORCE FOR SACRAMENT AND LITURGY

Officer(s): Chair of COVID Task Force for Sacrament and Liturgy, the Rev. Nita C. Johnson Byrd (Appointed)

Members (Elected): N/A

Members (Appointed): The Rev. Billy Daniel, The Rev. Matthew Nickoloff, The Rev. Joshua Barrett

The COVID Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament primarily met prior to the 2020 convention. The overarching theme that we developed for the diocese to live into during these changing times was *Becoming the Eucharist we Celebrate*. The booklet written by the Rev. Billy Daniel was provided to parishes, where the theme was presented as follows:

BECOMING EUCHARIST *is about becoming responsible to and for the sacrificial love of God in Christ—to be poured out as a libation with Christ (Philippians 2:17), having been buried and raised to new life in the Anointed (Colossians 2:12), so that the image of God we are and the eschatological reality we share in Christ will come to govern our perceptions and sensibilities of the world and others in the present moment of our being in the world.*

Subsequent liturgies developed by the Liturgy and Sacrament Task Force kept this definition of *Becoming Eucharist* at the forefront of planning. Parishes had resumed the celebration of Holy Eucharist with communication in one kind of the sacrament of the Body of Christ during worship, beginning with the ordination of Joshua Barrett on August 16, 2020.

- In October 2020, the committee outlined a virtual liturgy for the 89th Convention of the Diocese of Rochester.
- In November of 2020 the COVID Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament met to discuss guidelines for pastoral visits in nursing homes and other closed population facilities. The Task Force met with Max Whelan, MD, and Steve Robb, MD who offered professional advice.
- In December 2020, the COVID Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament made several recommendations to Bishop Singh recognizing the particular vulnerability of the elderly population to COVID. These recommendations are outlined in the attached document. This was presented to clergy in December and the members of the COVID Task Force were available for questions and discussions in the bi-weekly diocesan Thursday ZOOM meeting in December. The document included an addendum to the liturgy for Communion Under Special Circumstances with scriptures and modified prayers to address the isolation experienced by individuals during the pandemic.

In subsequent months, the COVID Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament has been available as a resource, but has not held additional meetings throughout the year.

Respectfully Submitted by,
The Rev. Nita C. Johnson Byrd

Attachment 1
Long Term Care Facility Visit Recommendations
Presented to Bishop Singh from the
COVID Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament
December 2020

INTRODUCTION

The following document addresses the many questions that clergy in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester have posed regarding nursing home visitations and Communion Under Special Circumstances during the COVID-19 Pandemic. It takes into consideration that residents of long-term care facilities and private homes for the elderly house residents who are among the most medically vulnerable populations while being the most in need of pastoral care during this pandemic. This document addresses a manner for communicating the Sacrament of Christ's Body exclusively. This is based on the understanding that communication of the Sacrament of Christ's Blood is not a practice in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester during the COVID-19 Pandemic until further notice as determined by the bishop.

Additionally, it is prudent to continue a strict observance of safety protocols during and after the distribution of a vaccine for COVID-19 due to the unknown transmission during a period when full immunity has not been achieved in our communities. In an effort to address equity concerns, it is imperative that we follow these protocols until we can discern the population of a given area has full immunity. While we hope that all receiving communion are vaccinated, we acknowledge that some will not receive the vaccine; however, the following protocols will allow all individuals, regardless of being a vaccine recipient, to have access to communion.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Visitors should follow all the protocols of the care facility that they are visiting. The guidelines mentioned here are intended to augment those guidelines. Additionally, those individuals who are part of a nursing home staff where they are regularly tested may have different protocols.

The person administering the sacrament should:

1. wear a mask the entire time
2. wash hands at beginning of the visit
3. use hand sanitizer immediately prior to administering the sacrament and after
4. maintain a 6-foot distance except when administering the sacrament
5. The person receiving the sacrament will wear a mask and only remove it briefly to receive the sacrament. Following this they will place their mask in place immediately.
6. The person who is visiting must be low risk according to indicators for COVID-19 symptoms as outlined by the CDC.

SELF ISOLATION GUIDELINES

Due to the vulnerability of the population in long term care facilities, a period of self-isolation is advisable. **Self-isolation is defined as follows: stay indoors as much as possible and avoid groups over 10 people; if in the presence of other individuals, social distance, wear a mask, and exercise frequent hand washing and sanitizing. Please note that this is not the recommendation of a full quarantine. Self isolation is different than quarantine.**

1. take a COVID-19 test prior to visiting the long-term care facility within 72 hours of a
1. person's visit; please be sure that your test results come back negative prior to your longterm care visit.

2. self-isolate as much as possible for 3 days prior to the COVID-19 test because it may take
3. 3 days for the test to be positive if you have contracted the virus; self-isolate following the COVID-19 test until the long-term care facility visit.

RESOURCES

The Task Force for Liturgy and Sacrament understands that self-isolation is a sacrifice for many. We view sacramental visits as a gift that we offer willingly as a mission on behalf of Jesus Christ for a population that struggles with a sense of loneliness and abandonment and in many cases are under quarantine-like conditions for their safety and the safety of others during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, it is important to remember that a Eucharistic Visitor embodies the faith community that sends them forth. Therefore, the Body of Christ must express care and nurture for the individual bearing the sacrament to those who will be nurtured both spiritually, emotionally, physically and socially in this difficult time.

ADDITIONS TO COMMUNION UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Note that changes include additional scripture passages that may be read in addition to a Post Communion Prayer for use during the pandemic. It is hoped that these may be a resource to emphasize to the recipient of the sacrament that they are part of the larger Body of Christ, that they may experience the love of God during this time.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. *John 3:16*

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."
John 6:35

Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him." *John 6:51, 55-56*

Jesus said, "Abide in me, as I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." *John 15:4-5a, 8-9*

And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.' *Matthew 28:18-20*

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8:38-39*

After the Reading, the Celebrant may comment on it briefly.

Suitable prayers may be offered, concluding with the following or some other Collect

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who lives and reigns for ever and ever. *Amen.*

A Confession of Sin may follow. The following or some other form is Used

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Priest alone says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

A deacon using the preceding form substitutes "us" for "you" and "our" for "your."

The Peace may then be exchanged.

The Lord's Prayer is said, the Celebrant first saying

Let us pray in the words our Savior Christ has taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Or

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant may say the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God

and may add

Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Sacrament is administered with the following or other words

The Body (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [*Amen.*]

One of the usual postcommunion prayers is then said, or the following prayer adapted for Communion during a Pandemic:

Gracious Father, we give you praise and thanks for this Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of your beloved Son Jesus Christ, the pledge of our redemption; and we pray that it may bring us forgiveness of our sins, strength in our weakness, and the assurance that Jesus our redeemer is with us always; increase our faith with the knowledge that nothing can separate us

from the love of God in Christ Jesus, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The service concludes with a blessing or with a dismissal

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

COVID TASKFORCE: REIMAGINING CHURCH SUBCOMMITTEE

Officer(s): Rev. Keisha Stokes and Julie Syracuse

Members (Appointed): Rev. Dr. Stephen Robb, Dr. Carl D'Angio, Floyd Bayley, Joan Phillips, Rev. Cameron Miller, Rev. Richard Hamlin, Jeremy Cooney, Amanda Dwyer

Report:

The original request of our group was to envision what church would like in the post-covid era. Unfortunately, we are still waiting for that time. Our first meeting was in June 2020 and stopped meeting in March 2021. Our initial conversations how the church had evolved during covid and looked at best practices that should continue within the church. These included: use of technology to bring worship outside our walls and stay connected as communities of faith. We appreciated and celebrated the breadth and depth of our churches' response to the pandemic. As we continued the journey, we brainstormed on mechanisms that would allow churches to collaborate across the diocese. To gather data on the needs of our congregations we sent out a survey in November 2020, *Thriving in a Covid World Sharing Our Resources*. The survey was completed by fifteen churches and gathered information on churches' response to the pandemic, where they saw themselves in the future, and if they would be interested in collaborating with other congregations. As we reached the one-year anniversary of the pandemic, momentum for our group waned as it became increasingly difficult to imagine a post-covid world. The biggest takeaway is the desire for a Diocesan forum to maintain open communication for our parish leaders to share ideas and best practices.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Rev. Keisha Stokes and Julie Syracuse

DIOCESAN PRISON MINISTRY ADVISORY BOARD

Officer(s): Michael Meath – Chair (through June 2021)

Britton Hopkin – Secretary

Committee Members: Precious Bedell; Keturah Cappadonia; Robert Crystal; Rochelle Curtis; Janet Farnsworth; Barbara Fornalik; Keturah Gilbert; Wes Harris; Thomas Jack (Deacon, Rochester Catholic Diocese); Delores Johnson; Claire Kremer; Richard Laidlaw; Gloria Lundberg; Teresa Medero; Dianna Gardener Robinson, PhD; Michelle Thomas; Elsa Schaefer; Sandra St. Martin; Kathy Walczak' Eleanor Welz; Mary White

Meetings:

October 12, 2020: On-line Forum recommended by Mike Meath featuring Episcopal Deacon, Roxy Klingensmith featuring her ministry to prisoners in Billings Montana. This meeting was brought to Mike through Julie Lytle from Bexley Seabury Theological Seminary and the association for Episcopal Deacons. It was noted that the ministry offered to the local jail in Billings Montana was paused as has been the case for many of our programs here in Upstate NY.

Various planning meetings with Mike Meath earlier in 2021.

Mission Statement: Promote within parishes of the dioceses an understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by the incarcerated and re-entering men and women and their families, and to encourage and support ministries within our parishes to assist this community.

Report – Summary of Minutes October 2020 through September 2021:

The Prison Ministry Advisory Board promotes volunteering and involvement of churches within our diocese in helping prisoners and their families. In addition, where the need arises, we occasionally start or manage new ministries. Our website can be accessed at www.prisonministry-edr.org. Currently, board members / friends of the board are reaching out to many area prisoners through involvement with many non-profit agencies including; Judicial Process Commission, Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Northeast District Storybook Project, Rochester Storybook Project, Rochester Interfaith Jail Ministry, we belong to Safer Monroe Area Re-entry Taskforce (SMART), Step-by-Step of Rochester, Boy Scout, and Girl Scout Programs. In addition, one of our members (Christ Church, Corning) celebrates the Holy Eucharist and visits with groups of prisoners in the Steuben County Jail.

As of the end of June 2021 our chair Mike Meath is no longer engaged with services to our diocese including service as Chair for our committee, as he has moved away from our region. Britt Hopkin is continuing as Secretary and will also assume portions of Mike's former role with us pending further direction from our diocese.

In phone conversations between Mike and Britt, we agreed to make several changes to the services provided by the Committee. First, we choose to **terminate publishing e-newsletters**, a service that we began in 2010. While the e-newsletters have been very useful in informing readers (at last count nearly 200) of various topics

regarding prisoners, their families, and services provided, many of the newsletters were inordinately difficult to produce due to the need for extensive research and editing necessary send out “finished” work. We agreed that should someone volunteer to perform these services for us in the future, and to bring us good topics to report, we would be willing to reconsider resuming this service. As a result of ending the production of these e-newsletters, we have cancelled the Constant Contact e-mailing service, and will not need stipend money for some of the source people who were providing inputs (mainly students). However, all of our former e-newsletters will continue to be available for download from our website at www.prisonministry-edr.org.

Secondly, we agreed to consider an **on-line format for most or all our future meetings**, rather than continuing to meet in person. The advantage of meeting on-line is that we can better include members from distant parts of our diocese such as the Southern Tier, without the need for long distance commuting.

Looking forward to 2022, we intend to continue our website (www.prisonministry-edr.org) as we still entertain numerous inquiries about volunteering, as well as prisoner issues offered by this on-line presence.

Pandemic Update:

Within the last month, our local Monroe County Jail has begun opening up, after being closed to volunteers for over 16 months. It is our understanding that many of the former volunteer programs are now being invited to resume operations in the jail. Those who are being invited to resume are in the “clearance process” to work again in the facility. We believe that many of the other facilities our members serve, have in a similar manor been closed due to the need to reduce the spread of the disease. In short, we’re experiencing a “new normal”. Many volunteers have left our programs, and some people want to resume but are concerned about safety as we are still in a pandemic. These issues are presenting project leaders with many challenges. We expect to begin meeting with project leaders shortly to discuss these challenges, and to try to resume a more normal meeting schedule as we all work through these issues.

Financial Needs for 2022: The operational changes mentioned above will result in a significant reduction in operating costs for this committee. We are suggesting that for financial needs for 2022, we will need financial support from the diocese of \$500, rather than the \$1,500 we have needed in years past.

Visit our website: www.prisonministry-edr.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Britton Hopkin – Secretary

RACIAL RECONCILIATION HEALING AND JUSTICE TASKFORCE

During the past year, the work of the Taskforce has had a two-fold focus: education and training.

1. **Education:** this year the Taskforce selected Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* and hosted three book study opportunities. These discussions were opportunities to deepen last year's conversations around *Unsettling Truths: The Ongoing, Dehumanizing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery*, and with the authors Mark Charles and Soong-Chan Rah. Both texts have been engaged in relation to the events and realities of this diocese and this country and the world relative to race, racism, and the rise of racial hatred.
2. **Training:** the Diocesan training events were held three times, in addition to an early January pilot event. The events were framed, beginning and end, with prayers. Presentations and small group discussions engaged the legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery, the Episcopal Church and racism, as well as structural and systemic racism, toward becoming a community shaped by our Baptismal Covenant to be and become more fully reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers who share God's passion for Beloved Community. The Taskforce is now at work on adapting the template of the training event so it can be used by local parishes and vestries, either in parts or as a whole event. This is an effort motivated by the obligation of all vestries and parish leadership to complete anti-racism training.

The Taskforce has had a third focus for its work during past years: celebration. This has been focused on Absalom Jones Day as an occasion to celebrate our diversity, ethnic and racial, as expressed in worship and in feasting. Of course, because of the pandemic, it was not possible to host this event in February. Hopefully, this will again be a diocesan opportunity for gathering in the new year.

Amid all the restrictions, and the harsh realities of racial hatred that have marked the last year, members of this Taskforce have been exemplary in their faithfulness to this work. We name and honor: Jesse Allen, Floyd Bayley, William Daniels, Ruth Ferguson, Paul Frolick, Keith Patterson, Prince Singh, Hannah Sommers, Andrea Stridiron. Thank you.

Nicole Hercules & Melanie Duguid-May, co-convenors

Report from Partnership Organizations



90th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Name of Organization: Episcopal SeniorLife Communities (ESLC)

Officer(s): Loren J. Ranaletta, President/CEO

Committee Members/ESLC Relationships:

- **The Rt. Rev. Prince Singh**, ESLC Board Member Ex-officio
- **Patti Cummings**, ESLC Lay Chaplain/Pastoral Assistant, Diocesan and Convention Volunteer
- **F. Paul Greene**, ESLC Board Member, Assistant Chancellor of Diocese
- **The Rev. Deven Hubert**, ESLC Chaplain
- **The Rev. Canon Robert Picken**, ESLC Board Member, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- **Dr. Sherry Ralston**, ESLC Board Member, Member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- **Suzanne Spencer**, ESLC Board Member, Former Clinical Pastoral Education Intern at ESLC, Member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- **Richard Yates**, ESLC Board Member, Member of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

Programs

Ashley Woods, Beatrice Place, Brentland Woods, Center for Rehabilitation, Episcopal Church Home, Pinehurst, River Edge Manor, Rockwood Center, Seabury Woods, Upper South Street, Valley Manor, Neighborhood Programs, Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative, Service Coordination

Update

As we reflect upon the past year, we are as bewildered as most regarding the onset and impact of COVID-19. Each of us has had to endure personal and professional hardships as well as insoluble losses, but we have been resilient. We will take this experience, and what we have learned, and apply that to enhance the present and ensure a better future. ESLC remains incredibly strong, and we are meeting the needs of seniors and families in new and innovative ways now more than ever. As we move ahead, we are focusing efforts to:

Enrich the Resident Experience

We are a leader in setting standards for quality services and programs. Over the years, we have been committed to building upon the strength of current programs and services. This means continual evolution of programs and investment in the physical environment at each of our communities in order to enrich the experience of both residents and staff alike. Our goal is to have state-of-the-art, safe, comfortable places where residents are proud to live and staff to work.

Expand Community Opportunities

We create neighborhood-based options that are affordable, improve quality of life and connect seniors with services which support living well in the community. ESLC is dedicated to understanding broad gaps in senior programs as well as the unique needs within neighborhoods across the Rochester region. We are poised to offer a myriad of opportunities to support independence, community engagement, and enhance the health and welfare for individuals living at home.

Empower Those Who Care for Others

ESLC is special because of the people who have made it their life's work to care for others. Our engaged and professional workforce ensures quality and consistency in providing care, programs and services. We are devoted to their well-being and professional development by nurturing a work culture based on strong values and offering programs that express gratitude and support continued education, career advancement and personal assistance.

Embrace Our Faith-Based Culture

ESLC is dedicated to the Christian values in which it was founded—as a faith-based, nonprofit organization committed to understanding individual and community needs. We support seniors and their families through transitions, and honor each individual's unique desires, beliefs and values. Our commitment to support seniors within our continuum from both a care and fiscal perspective is a testament to our mission, and unparalleled in the senior living field.

As we continue to meet the needs of seniors in this community, we were pleased to open Ashley Woods—our newest assisted living and memory care community in Penfield—this past summer. This project is in partnership with Home Leasing who owns 114 affordable independent senior apartments at *The Gardens* located at the front of the property. ESLC provides specialized service coordination for 45 of the residents of *The Gardens* to support their independence, community integration, and enhanced health and welfare by coordinating supports and services in their home. This is a unique collaboration that introduces an innovative option for seniors, providing an opportunity for them to live in their place of choice, remain engaged in their community and thrive.

Our faith remains paramount and continues to ground us. ESLC's Chaplain, The Rev. Deven Hubert, has adapted programs and services over the past year to meet the needs of residents, families and staff. She is committed to the partnership with Crossroads of Caring and the community-based Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program where we have hosted six students. Patti Cummings, former development assistant at ESLC, has transitioned to the role of lay chaplain and pastoral assistant, and will be participating in the CPE program beginning this fall.

We are incredibly grateful to be a part of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and thank you for all the prayers and encouragement you have given to ESLC over the years. We truly appreciate the continued support now, especially, and always.