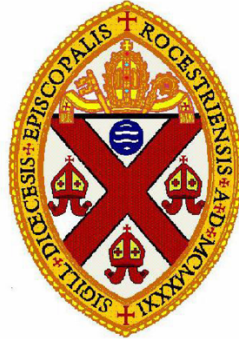


**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF
ROCHESTER**



**OFFICIAL REPORTS
OF THE
92ND CONVENTION**

OCTOBER 28, 2023

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COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
Report to Diocesan Convention 2023
Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Introduction

The Commission on Ministry (CoM) has been very active over the course of the past year. I was elected as chair of the committee after the capable leadership of Rev. Georgia Carney and Ms. Ellen Ralston came to an end and have occupied that role since October of 2022. The committee membership consists of:

James Cannon (lay)	Sandra Cordingly (clergy)
Patricia Feeney (lay)	Abi John (clergy)
Stephen Lane (ex officio)	Michael Laver (clergy)
Ann Lewis (lay)	Virginia Mazzarella (clergy)
Kathy O’Leary (lay)	Andrea Stridiron (clergy)
Sandy Von Wormer (lay)	

We are seeking to replace four members who are transitioning off of the committee: James Cannon, Ann Lewis, Virginia Mazzarella, and Sandy von Wormer.

The charge of the CoM is: “advising and assisting the Bishop in determining present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons in the Diocese; in recruiting and selecting persons for Holy Orders; and in guiding and examining Postulants, Candidates, and Deacons in training for priesthood. The COM provides financial assistance for the continuing education of clergy and lay professionals. The COM also assists parishes in discerning appropriate candidates for Holy Orders.” The following paragraphs will detail how we have lived into our charge over the past year:

People in the Discernment Process for Ordination

There are several people in the various stages of the discernment process. These include:

Lydia Arndt (postulant; priesthood)
David Jutsum (postulant; priesthood)
Travis Prinzy (aspirant; priesthood)
Julie Syracuse (Aspirant; priesthood)
Roch Whitman (candidate; diaconate)
Joel Wilbur (postulant; priesthood)
Carla Aslakson-Yarnal (candidate; diaconate)
Matthew Crow (parish-based discernment)
Lorraine Ndusha (parish-based discernment)
Maria Hartz (parish-based discernment)

Please hold all of these people in your prayers as they continue to discern how God is calling them to ordained ministry. Our job is to serve as a resource for these people, to discern alongside them how God is calling each and every one of us to ministry, and to make sure that those in the process are cared for and supported. Each of the people at the aspirant stage or later has a liaison

on the CoM who checks in regularly with them and reports back to the commission. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Ms. Sarah Herzog for her incredible organizational skills and for her constant help.

Initiatives

There are a number of initiatives that the CoM is working on in order to more fully live into its charge. First of all, we are discerning how best to provide formation for those who have discerned a call to the diaconate. It is not reasonable to expect that future deacons pursue a Masters in Divinity degree, unless they so desire. The canons state that deacons must have proficiency in the following areas: the Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church; diakonia and the diaconate; human awareness and understanding; spiritual development and discipline; and practical training and experience. With the shift to online education, there are several schools that offer courses that would fulfill these requirements in a cost-effective and flexible manner. We also wish to support our relationship with CRCDS and, at the very least, would use that relationship to provide in-person cohort building sessions monthly over the weekend and perhaps can provide some of the academic training deacons would need. And finally, deacons are placed in parishes in the diocese where they can obtain “practical training and experience.”

The CoM is also trying to live into its charge to provide financial assistance towards continuing education for lay and clergy people in the diocese. Hitherto, our budget has reflected the need to help finance the education for those in the discernment process, but our charge is much more general than that. Beginning in fiscal year 2024, we are going to work with the diocese to determine an optimal budget so that we can advertise and provide meaningful financial resources to facilitate continuing education. One model might be a matching grant model where the CoM provides matching funds from a person’s home parish. Another model would provide for a competitive process for accessing development funds from the commission. We are eager to work with our new bishop to make this aspect of our ministry much more robust. Another initiative we are working on is providing a discernment conference for members of the diocese who are interested in exploring a call from God in their lives towards ordained ministry. This conference would take place over a weekend and would involve workshops on discernment, discussion groups, an outside speaker who could lead us in a workshop about spirit filled discernment, the opportunity for quiet reflection, and the opportunity to meet with our bishop and transition officer in a confidential setting. Given the budget situation this coming fiscal year with a general convention and a bishop’s search, we have decided to put this off to the next fiscal year. This will also allow us to include our next bishop in this conference.

Conclusion

In summary, we’ve had a productive year in the CoM and, while we’re sad to see some of our faithful members go, we’re excited to welcome newly elected members. With that I send this report off with all of my well wishes for a wonderful convention and a rejuvenating autumn.

On behalf of the Commission,
Michael Laver

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 Lane; Vice Chair: The Rev. Ronald Young (December 10, 2022 to June 7, 2023) and Carl D’Angio (June 7, 2023 to present); Chief Financial Officer: Todd Rubiano; Treasurer: Lyn Omphroy; Secretary: Sarah Herzog

Elected Members: Julie Forney, John Wallin, Charlie Zettek, The Rev. Ronald Young (December 10, 2022 to June 7, 2023), Bliss Owen (June 7, 2023 to present), Les Kernan, Rick Harrison, Carl D’Angio, Stan Jones, and Julie Cicora.

Structure:

The Diocesan Trustees are supported by several 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.

Investment Review Committee

Les Kernan, Chair
Rick Harrison
John Wallin

Non-Trustee Members

Susan Scanlon
John Johnson
Greg Van Laeken
Chris Moore

Ex. Officio:

Lyn Omphroy, Treasurer
Bliss Owen, Asst. Treasurer
Todd Rubiano, CFO

Audit Committee

Charles Zettek, Chair
Bliss Owen
Stan Jones

Non-Trustee Members

Ex. Officio:

Lyn Omphroy, Treasurer
Bliss Owen, Asst. Treasurer
Todd Rubiano, CFO

Building & Property

Julie Forney, Chair
Julie Cicora
Carl D’Angio

Non-Trustee Members

Ex. Officio:

Lyn Omphroy, Treasurer
Bliss Owen, Asst. Treasurer
Todd Rubiano, CFO

An Update of The Diocesan Combined Investment Portfolio follows this report.

Human Resources Committee

Outside members: Elizabeth Bakken, Sherry Ralston and Amy Moyer

Prichard Scholarship Committee

Committee Members:

Ian Prichard (Son of Rev. Canon James & Diane Prichard, Founder & President of Blacktie Ski Rentals)

Dr. Carl D'Angio (Diocesan Trustee, member of St. Peters, Henrietta)

Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith (Diocesan Transitions Officer)

Kristy Estey (Support Staff)

Official Actions of the Trustees

December 10, 2022	Motion	Second	Vote
Appointment of committees & chairs	Carl D'Angio	Charlie Zettek	(6-0) Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve an "early pay-off" loan discount of \$8,125.52 for the pay-off of loan # 014.2203.001 for Frontline Ministries (AKA Safe Harbor), Wolcott, NY.</i>	Charlie Zettek	Julie Cicora	(6-0) Unanimously Approved
Amendment to the above resolution: RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve an "early pay-off" loan discount of \$8,125.52, as detailed in the addendum attached, for the pay-off of loan # 014.2203.001 for Frontline Ministries (AKA Safe Harbor), Wolcott, NY.</i>	Charlie Zettek	Carl D'Angio	(5-0) Unanimously Approved
Motion to postpone the following resolution indefinitely: RESOLVED: <i>Contingent upon the approval of the Bishop and the Standing Committee, the Trustees of the Diocese approve funding of a new Sibley Loan for the Church of the Ascension of up to \$50,000, at 4.5% interest for up to 10 years, The new loan may be consolidated with two existing loans, and then refinanced at a proportional, blended rate of interest.</i>	Carl D'Angio	Julie Cicora	(5-0) Unanimously Approved

March 25, 2023	Motion	Second	Vote
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese, having reviewed the annual actuarial analysis completed by Benefits Management, Inc., as of 12/31/2022 and approve the continued funding of post-retirement	n/a Committee resolution	n/a Committee resolution	(5-0)

March 25, 2023	Motion	Second	Vote
health benefits, with a maximum annual benefit of \$500.00 per eligible participant in the Lay Plan and an HRA contribution of up to \$900.00 per eligible participant in the Clergy Plan.			Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve a draw of \$10,000 from the General Endowment Fund (#002.1107.001) for ongoing maintenance, utilities, insurance, and legal fees associated with selling the real property of St. Peter’s, Bloomfield.	n/a Committee resolution	n/a Committee resolution	(5-0) Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese preliminarily approve a draw of up to \$1,229,600 (5.4% of the trailing 5-Year average balance) to fund the 2024 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 2024 Operating Budget is approved by Diocesan Council. Whereas: Diocesan Council requests the Diocesan Trustees approve the distribution of the \$40,000 TEC Grant (received at year-end 2021, to provide additional support to parishes negatively impacted by COVID), to be added to the current Congregational Development Partnership Grant budget for 2023 (\$305,000)	Les Kernan	John Wallin	(5-0) Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve a draw of \$40,000 from the General Fund (002.1107.001), to provide additional funding for new Congregational Development Partnership (CDP) Grants in the 2023 budget year.	Charlie Zettek	Julie Forney	(5-0) Unanimously Approved

June 7, 2023	Motion	Second	Vote
Appointment of New Trustee <i>Bishop Lane previously appointed Bliss Owen to fill unexpired term of the Rev. Ronald Young 2022-2025.</i>			

<p><i>Confirmation of the Bishop's nomination, Carl D'Angio as Vice Chair.</i></p>	<p>Bishop's Nomination</p>	<p>Julie Forney</p>	<p>(7-0) Approved <i>Carl D'Angio abstained</i></p>
<p>RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve the asking price of \$299,000 for St. Stephen's Church, Rochester.</i></p>	<p>Property Committee</p>		<p>(7-0) Approved <i>Charlie Zettek abstained</i></p>
<p>June 7, 2023</p>	<p>Motion</p>	<p>Second</p>	<p>Vote</p>
<p>RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese, having reviewed the current Investment Policy Statement (IPS) for invested funds, approve its continued use for the coming year.</i></p>	<p>Investment Committee</p>		<p>(7-0) Unanimously Approved</p>
<p>Amendment: Fund for Deaf Ministry Resolution</p> <p><i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve the amendment of the Fund for Deaf Ministry Resolution (added wording, "previously donated funds for this purpose").</i></p> <p>RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve establishing a Restricted Fund for Deaf Ministry, using previously donated funds for this purpose, of \$19,627 currently held in CNB savings and checking accounts, to be invested in the Combined Portfolio of the Diocese.</i></p>	<p>Charlie Zettek</p>	<p>Carl D'Angio</p>	<p>(7-0) Unanimously Approved</p>
<p>RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve establishing a Restricted Fund for Deaf Ministry, using previously donated funds for this purpose, of \$19,627 currently held in CNB savings and checking accounts, to be invested in the Combined Portfolio of the Diocese.</i></p> <p>Further resolved: <i>The Trustees approve a draw of \$5,000 from the Restricted Fund for Deaf Ministry to provide interpreters for worship and programs during the 2023 budget year.</i></p>	<p>Investment Committee</p>		<p>(7-0) Unanimously Approved</p>

<p>June 29, 2023</p>	<p>Motion</p>	<p>Second</p>	<p>Vote</p>
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RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve funding of a new Sibley Loan for the Church of the Ascension of up to \$35,750, at 4.0% interest for up to 5 years. The new loan may be consolidated with two existing Sibley loans (combined balance < \$14,750), and then refinanced at a proportional, blended rate of interest.	Les Kernan	Bliss Owen	<i>Unanimously Approved</i>
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve spending up to \$29,600 of the Allen's Hill Cemetery Fund (#012.2201.004) for tree removal and clean-up of storm damage.	John Wallin	Les Kernan	<i>Unanimously Approved</i>
Amendment: At the 9/6/23 meeting, the Trustees approved the following amendment to the 6/29/23 Minutes: <i>After the June 29th meeting, the Church of the Ascension, Rochester decided to not accept the Sibley Loan under the conditions approved by the Trustees.</i>			

September 6, 2023	Motion	Second	Vote
Amendment to minutes from 6/29/23: After the June 29 th meeting, Church of the Ascension, Rochester decided to not accept the Sibley Loan under the conditions approved by the Trustees.	Charlie Zettek	Rick Harrison	(8-0) Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese accept the 2022 Diocesan Audit, as provided by Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co., LLP, and move the audit to Convention for review and acceptance.	Audit Committee		(8-0) Unanimously Approved
RESOLVED: The Trustees of the Diocese approve a draw of \$15,000 from the Grace Church, Lyons Fund (003.2201.073) to make up for a shortfall in distributions from the Taylor Trust, as the distributions move from a quarterly, to an annual basis.	Charlie Zettek	Rick Harrison	(6-0) Approved Les Kernan abstained
	Investment Committee		(7-0)

September 6, 2023	Motion	Second	Vote
<p>RESOLVED: <i>The Trustees of the Diocese approve a draw of \$1,181,600, including interest from the unrestricted loan portfolio, to fund the 2024 Diocesan Operating Budget; and an additional \$48,000 for designated Post-retirement Health Benefits, as detailed (by fund) in EXHIBIT A</i></p>			<p>Unanimously Approved</p>

Official Actions of the Prichard Scholarship Committee: August 25, 2023

RESOLVED: that the Prichard Scholarship Committee reviewed (3) applications from eligible children of clergy in the Diocese and determined that \$2000 would be awarded to each student.

Students:

Gregory Pepin - Attending Corning University, Civil Engineering
1 Kerry Hill
Fairport, NY 14450

Katherine Pepin - Northeastern University, Biochemistry
1 Kerry Hill
Fairport, NY 14450

Lily Gandell - Franciscan University of Steubenville, Theology & Philosophy
1202 Fairway 18
Macedon, NY 14502

Human Resources Committee Activities

Reviewed and discussed the 2024 Health Plan updates
Reviewed and discussed the annual Clergy Salary Ranges and alignment with comparable dioceses.
Reviewed salary range analysis for diocesan staff roles.
Reviewed and discussed future changes to Diocesan staff/structure.
Conducted Employee Relations discussions as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl D'Angio
Vice-Chair, Trustees

DIOCESAN COUNCIL
Summary of Minutes October 2022 - September 2023
Report to Convention 2023

Officer(s):

Chair: the Rt. Rev. Steven Lane
Vice Chair: the Rev. Elizabeth Brooks Harden
Budget Chair: the Rev. Eric Thompson
CDPC Co-Chairs: the Rev. Padraic Collins-Bohrer and Mr. Bill Hoehne
MPC Chair: the Rev. Keisha Stokes

Elected Members by Districts:

Ms. Sherry Gibbon- NE
Ms. Roxanne Gaylord - SE
Mr. Bob Wilcox - SW
Ms. Lynn Ringholz - Monroe
Mr. Peter Barker - Rochester

Rev. Don Schranz- NE
Rev. Troy Preston - SW
Rev. Eric Thompson - SE
Rev. Mitch Bojarski - Monroe
Rev. Keith Patterson - Rochester

Elected Members -At-Large:

Rev. Elizabeth Brooks Harden
Rev. Padraic Collins-Bohrer

Mr. William Hoehne
Ms. Ann Dawson
Mr. Gilbert Stewart

Members (Appointed):

the Rev. Greg Kremer, clerk

Ex-Officio:

Mr. Paul Greene (chancellor)
Ms. Lyn Omphroy (treasurer)
Ms. Bliss Owen (assistant treasurer)
Mr. Todd Rubiano (staff)
Mr. Steve Richards (staff)
Ms. Kristy Estey (staff)

Summary:

Diocesan Council met monthly via zoom (with the exception of July and August). Each meeting included prayer and reflection; a report from the bishop; a report from the diocesan Racial Reconciliation, Healing, and Justice Committee; reports from each of the sub-committees; and updates from diocesan staff members. Each subcommittee also met monthly and as needed throughout the year.

This year’s official business included:

- Preparation of 2024 Diocesan Budget
- Administration of Congregational Development Grants, both renewals and new applications
- Administration of Mission Partnership Grants, both new and continued

The Rev. Padraic Collins-Bohrer and Mr. Bill Hoehne, Co-Chairs of the CDP Sub-Committee submitted the following:

Overview of CDP Grant Requests for 2024

A total of (17) churches have applied for 2024 grant funding so far this year. Evaluations for nine of these grants, totaling \$128,000, were completed in time to be included in the proposed 2024 budget, while two grants were withdrawn or suspended (due to clergy departures) and the remainder were still in the review process. Seven additional churches have either expressed their intent to apply or have been identified as likely to apply in the near future.

The total proposed budget for 2024 is \$315,000 (of which \$187,000 is unallocated at this point in time) and in total, should allow for funding approximately 20 grant requests in 2024.

The Rev. Keisha Stokes, Chair of the MPG Sub-Committee, with the assistance of Ms. Kristy Estey, submitted the following:

The 2023 Mission Partnership Committee reviewed mission grant applications and recommended funding for 2024 in the following categories:

Partnership Mission Grants	\$	60,200.00
Parish Mission Grants	\$	66,800.00

Sustainable Mission Grants	\$	15,000.00
ESLC Grant	\$	8,000.00
(5) District Grants	\$	25,000.00
	<hr/>	
Total	\$	175,000.00

Details of the grant distributions may be found in the 2024 Diocesan Budget.

In 2023 Diocesan Council continued to work well under the leadership of Bishop Lane. In addition to routine committee work, members of Diocesan Council this year attended a work day in May which resulted in the proposal for a Regional Minister to serve parishes in the most rural parts of our diocese. This new position is represented in the 2024 Diocesan budget proposal being submitted at this convention.

We have offered prayerful support to the Standing Committee and the Discernment and Nominating Committee as they undertake the search for our next bishop. We look forward to the continued growth and vibrant ministry of our diocese as we prepare to conclude this transition period next year.

As always, it has been a privilege to witness the deep commitment of each person and each committee as we seek to carry out the work before us.

Respectfully submitted by,

the Rev. Elizabeth Brooks Harden, vice-chair

STANDING COMMITTEE

(The image that represents our Standing Committee is of the disciples on a boat on the lake as a storm is rocking them to and fro and Jesus is chilling out in the back resting on a pillow...telling them in the end "Do not be afraid. I am with you.")

The Standing Committee of 2022 to 2023 has had a rigorous schedule of monthly zoom meetings, a few in person gatherings, a whole lot of subcommittee work and a plethora of emails and conversations. We got our start right after the Convention with a meeting to elect a new president and secretary. We launched into holding listening sessions throughout the diocese in order to re-establish trust, and to instill greater communication. These sessions happened throughout the diocese at fifteen different locations and two or three over zoom.

The data collected from the listening sessions was used to formulate a document that was made accessible to all entitled "What We Heard." This document opened up an awareness that there was much healing to be done among some of our clergy and lay members, requiring our attentive listening and action. It also prompted responses from the Singh family which developed into accusations of domestic abuse of our former bishop and a Title IV investigation which remains pending at this time. These were definitely unexpected and uncharted waters for the Standing Committee to navigate. We believe we have responded to this situation as best we could given all the variables concerned.

We formulated two focus groups of the SC to handle the work needed to get our Search process underway. We met monthly as a full team and the subcommittees met as needed between these monthly meetings. In all it was rather intense and hopefully worth our efforts..

In the midst of this storm in February 2023 we have managed to plow on and elect a Nominating and Discernment Committee charged with presenting a slate of 3 or 4 candidates to us next month with the hope of having an Electing Convention in February 2024. We appointed The Very Rev. Ginny Mazarella as chaplain to the entire search process. Later in June we elected a Transition Committee who will work with the candidates, go on a tour of the diocese, and complete all the necessary work connected to the pending consecration.

In addition to our search process for a new bishop we also consented to Diocese of Central Florida; Diocese of Ohio, Diocese of New Jersey, Armed Forces and Federal Ministries, Diocese of Maryland, (*Diocese of Arkansas and the Diocese of Albany*) and we withheld consent of the Diocese of Florida with one abstention and one absent.

We approved a variety of land requests, Sibley loan grants etc.

We as a Standing Committee have been buoyed by the support of all we have encountered in our ministry to the diocese. We acknowledge the timely and committed presence of our provisional Bishop Steve Lane and his staff. They have been so instrumental in this process and we deeply appreciate their support. We are also appreciative of the fine work of Gary Butterworth, our consultant.

We also want to thank all those who we have visited far and wide who courageously shared their stories and experiences. Your trust and commitment have been a hallmark for our diocese. Last but not least our committees of Discernment and Nomination and Transition are doing an incredible job for which we are so very thankful.

May this journey bring us all closer together

The Very Rev. Kenneth R Pepin (President)

The Very Rev. Ruth Ferguson (Secretary)

Mr. Michael Davis

Mr. Floyd Bayley

Sen. Jeremy Cooney

The Rev. Nita Byrd

The Rev. Cameron Miller

Mrs. Liz Salamone

OFFICIAL ACTS
SUBMITTED THE DIOCESAN REGISTRAR
January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Admitted as Postulants for Holy Orders to the Priesthood
None

Admitted as Candidates for Holy Orders to the Priesthood
None

Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate
None

Ordination to the Priesthood
None

Admitted as Postulants for Holy Orders to the Diaconate
May 10 22 Lydia Arnts

Admitted as Candidates for Holy Orders to the Diaconate
May 02 22 Roch Whitman

Ordination to the Order of Deacons
None

Received by Letter Dimissory
October 14 22 The Rev. R. Columba Salamony, Diocese of Maryland

Transferred by Letter Dimissory
January 18 22 The Rev. Daniel William, Diocese of East Tennessee
August 24 22 The Rev. David G. Smith, Diocese of California
November 01 22 The Rev. Jimmie Sue Deppe, Diocese of Long island

Institution of New Ministry
November 12 22 The Rev. Abidhananthar John, Ascension, Rochester
November 13 22 The Rev. R. Columba Salamony, St. Mark's, Penn Yan

Notice of Inhibition
None

Notice of Deposition
None

Notice of Removal
None

Notice of Renunciation

None

License to Officiate

April 22 22 The Rev. Gary Schindler, Diocese of Western NY & Northwestern PA

Retirements

February 14 22 The Rev. Carol Stewart

Deaths

June 02 22 The Rev. Andrew Johnson

Elections & Appointments

August 23 22 Kathy O’Leary, resigns as UTO Coordinator
September 01 22 Ellen Ralston resigns as the Commission on Ministry Co-Chair
September 01 22 Rev. Michael Laver appointed as Commission on Ministry Chair
September 01 22 The Rev. Gretchen Ratterree appointed as Co-Convenor of Youth Ministry
September 01 22 The Rev. Keisha Stokes appointed as Co-Convenor of Youth Ministry
October 01 22 The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith appointed Diocesan Transition Officer
October 01 22 The Rev. Johnnie Ross appointed Chaplain to the Retired
October 01 22 The Rev. Debs Duguid-May appointed Diocesan Discernment Officer
October 29 22 The Rev. Julie Cicora appointed Trustee
October 29 22 The Rev. Abidhananthar John appointed to the Commission on Ministry
October 29 22 Sandy Van Wormer appointed to the Commission on Ministry
October 29 22 Patricia Feeny appointed to the Commission on Ministry

Transitions

January 22 The Rt. Rev. Prince G. Singh, resignation as Bishop Diocesan
February 01 22 The Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane appointed as Bishop Provisional
September 30 22 Diocesan Dean dissolved

Closing or Secularization of a Church or Chapel

May 12 22 St. Peter’s, Bloomfield

CONFIRMATIONS 51

RECEPTIONS 28

Bishop's Discretionary Fund January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Balance as of January 1, 2022 13,086.34

Balance as of December 31, 2022 11,332.34

TRANSITION MINISTRY

Name of Organization: Transition Ministry
Officer(s): The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith, Transition Officer
Report:

At year end 2022, we had twelve (12) parishes without dedicated clergy, an additional two (2) parishes seeking associates, and an open position for the Missioner to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. In the first three quarters of 2023, three (3) more clergy left their cures: one retired due to health concerns, one left because the parish closed, and one accepted a new call within the Diocese.

Since January 2023, six (6) parishes called a total of four (4) clergy. Three of the priests are new to the Diocese: one from the Diocese of Albany, one from the Diocese of Spokane, and one from the Diocese of Washington, DC. Two (2) priests came out of non-parochial settings to take parish positions. One priest moved between full-time calls. It should be noted that one of those parishes, Church of the Good Shepherd in Savona, had been without a dedicated priest for more than three years.

At the end of the third quarter 2023, we have a total of eight (8) parishes and the Missioner to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing position without a lead cleric. This represents a 43% reduction in the number of 14 open parishes over the course of the year. Six of the currently open parishes will be hiring some portion of part-time. One of the parishes will be moving from a full-time rector to part-time. We also have one (1) opening for a full-time associate.

We are encouraged by the amount of collaboration between parishes that have part-time openings. In Schuyler County, two parishes will be collaborating to share a part-time priest. In Allegany County, we will be experimenting with a new model using a Diocesan-sponsored regional priest in charge to support three (3) parishes while they continue to search for a dedicated full-time priest.

In addition, we anticipate five retirements in 2024, three of which are full-time rectors, one is a part-time rector, and one is a full-time chaplain.

The clergy shortage continues. Data from the Church Pension Group indicates that for every 2 priests retiring, only one person is entering seminary. At the most recent Transition Ministry Conference¹, the participants noted the following:

73 clergy are seeking new positions. Of those, 68 are full-time² and five (5) are part-time³.

¹ Data from Transition Ministry Conference Meeting, September 2023.

² Presented from 31 dioceses.

³ Presented from 28 dioceses.

However, of the 73-searching clergy, only 24 priests were presented for consideration due to family and/or geographic restrictions that limit their search.

In contrast, the number of needed clergy continues to grow. The 28 dioceses that submitted data, need a total of 383 individual priests.

Full Time: 120

Part-time: 235

Interims: 28

Multi-point calls are increasing in prevalence. The 28 reporting dioceses of the Fall Transition Ministry Conference, have 115 serving sharing 80 multi-point calls.⁴ We anticipate that the number of multi-point calls increase as church budgets continue to decline and clergy continue to prefer full-time cures. As a result the above data on clergy needs does not reflect the total number of open parishes, which is far higher.

Based in large part on our network of transition ministry relationships, we were able to present a total of 16 clergy for open positions in the last 12 months.

We placed the following clergy in the last year:

- The Rev. Craig Hacker, St. James' in Hammondsport
- The Rev. Michael Laver, PhD, St. Michael's in Geneseo
- The Rev. Shanna Hawks, Church of the Good Shepherd, Savona & Christ Church, Hornell
- The Rev. Michael Hopkins, Church of the Redeemer, Addison
- The Rev. Julianne Buenting, PhD, (Interim), Christ Church, Pittsford

St. Thomas' in Bath called their Priest-in-Charge, the Rev. Melanie Duguid May, PhD to be their rector. In addition, St. Mark's in Sodus extended their Priest-in-Charge contract with the Rev. Mary Ann Brody and the Rev. Keisha Stokes' contract was extended with Zion Church in Palmyra and St. John's in Canandaigua.

In 2023 we held four celebrations of new ministry:

- The Rev. Melanie Duguid-May, PhD at St. Thomas' in Bath
- The Rev. Joshua Stibb at St. Peter's in Henrietta
- The Rev. Columba Salamony at St. Mark's in Penn Yan
- The Rev. Michael Laver, PhD at St. Michael's in Geneseo

I continue to work with parishes and local candidates on portfolio preparation, materials presentation, interviewing, and leave-taking. The quarterly Zoom meetings of wardens and search chairs is a helpful way for leaders of open parishes to connect. This year we covered topics such as website and social media development, non-monetary incentives for clergy hiring,

⁴ Some of the multi-point calls have retired or bi-vocational clergy job sharing the clergy leadership functions.

and best practices in preparing for supply clergy. We continue to refine our processes for writing letters of agreement, onboarding new clergy, and budgeting for the search process.

Over time, the Transitions Office of this Diocese has become a model and mentor for other Dioceses. We now share our resources widely and collaborate with other dioceses on key issues in clergy deployment. As I begin my fifth year in the role, I am grateful for God for the continued opportunity to share the gifts of this Diocese with those who seek to join it.

Faithfully submitted,

The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith
Transition Officer

OFFICER FOR DISCERNMENT REPORT FOR CONVENTION 2023

For the third year we began with holding a training for Commission on Ministry members. This focused on training on the entire discernment process, on the specific charisms of lay ministry, the diaconate and priesthood, as well as educating members on the role of Commission on Ministry and the various responsibilities therein. We benefitted from Bishop Steve sharing his understandings of ministry and the role of COM.

We currently have 4 parish-based discernment processes taking place in our diocese, with another being started shortly.

We have 3 postulants for the priesthood, and another 2 aspirants for priesthood. We have 1 candidate for the diaconate. Our seminarians are all in formation parishes that complement their theological training and formation. I am grateful to the formation rectors that work with our seminarians, providing them with invaluable learning experiences and hands on mentorship and teaching.

Our Circles of Support continue to offer coaching and supportive, reflective space for our new clergy. Three new circles were formed this year.

Thank you to all who serve in so many ways to enable new giftings and leadership to emerge in our Diocese. A special thank you to Bishop Steve for his wisdom and listening into being what emerges during this ongoing time of transition.

Respectfully Submitted

Deborah Duguid-May, Officer for Discernment

12 October, 2023

REPORTS SUBMITTED BY DISTRICT DEANS

The Rochester and Monroe Districts

The Rochester and Monroe District Deans have served the diocese in several different roles. Until October 2022, we were all serving on the Standing Committee of the Diocese and serving as Dean. This means our time and efforts focused on getting Bishop Lane onboard, starting the search process with a search consultant, holding listening session lead by members of the Standing Committee and the participation from many of our leaders who are involved in the search and transition process of seeking a new bishop.

Our district clergy meetings occurred quarterly with gatherings at St. Thomas, Rochester and St. Paul's, Rochester. Each Dean held pastoral meetings with various members of the clergy throughout the year. The Rochester and Monroe was represented at the Rochester Pride Parade. Thank you to the parishes, clergy and lay members who participated or contributed in some way.

Your deans look forward to planning some time together for fellowship in the Spring, as the Fall and Winter will have Diocesan gatherings for our annual convention and the special election convention. We are committed to monthly clergy gatherings that will facilitate connection and collaboration as we move forward.

Faithfully,
The Very Rev. Leslie Burkardt, Rochester Dean
The Very Rev. Ruth Ferguson, Rochester Dean
The Very Rev. Ken Pepin, Monroe Dean

The Northeast District

- Clergy Transitions
 - We have had no clergy transitions this year.

- District Grants
 - St. John's - Canandaigua – Children and Youth Programming
 - St. John's - Clifton Springs – Winter Coat Closet
 - St. John's - Sodus – Community Dinners
 - St. Mark's - Newark - St. Mark's Baby Closet (provides infant and baby essentials for families in need) and Laura's Baskets (provides basic clothing to Preschool – 1st graders in need)
 - 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 – Geneva Shares a Table
 - Zion - Palmyra – Grace House

- Lay Member of Diocesan Council Election
 - Sherry Gibbons –Trinity Place – Geneva

"On September 11, 2023, the NE District held its first in-person gathering in many years. Almost 40 people from across our district met at Zion Episcopal Church in Palmyra. Parishioners, Delegates, and Clergy from our 8 churches gathered for fellowship and a potluck cookout. We elected Sherry Gibbons from Trinity Place - Geneva as our Lay Representative for Diocesan Council. We also explored some more ways that we could gather as a district. Some of the suggestions were some outings for fun, district dinners, a district worship service, and a district family retreat. We closed our evening with Compline."

Faithfully submitted,
The Very Reverend Gretchen S. Ratterree
Dean – Northeast District

The Southeast District

Officers:

Dean: The Very Rev. Troy Preston

Warden: Mary Lou Hunt-Quintal

Clergy District Representative to Diocesan Council: The Very Rev. Troy Preston

Lay District Representative to Diocesan Council: Roxanne Gaylord

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 Church, Catharine; Christ Church, Corning; St. James' Church, Hammondsport; St. Mark's Church, Penn Yan; Church of the Good Shepherd, Savona; and St. James' Church, Watkins Glen.

Meeting Dates & Report Summary:

Regular Southeast District Meetings were held via Zoom on March 6, 2023, and June 5, 2023.

Our September 11, 2023, meeting was held in-person at St. Thomas' Church, Bath. The people of St. Thomas' Church served a delicious meal prepared from the "Gaza Kitchen" cookbook.

The Southeast District Mission Project for 2023 is Ahli Arab Hospital. Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City is a remarkable, 140-year-old charitable healthcare institution owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Appalling living conditions: widespread water contamination, food insecurity, limited medicine and medical supplies, the lack of fuel for heating and cooking, among other issues are a reality in Gaza. For thousands of people, Ahli Arab Hospital is the only healthcare option. Ahli Arab Hospital is also overwhelmed with casualties from the current Hamas/Israeli conflict. The SED goal is to raise at least \$500 per parish. Funds are being raised by parishes through the end of the year.

The following District Grants were approved for 2023:

1. \$1,000 to St. James' Church, Watkins Glen & St. John's Church, Catherine – Episcopal Women of Schuyler County (EPSC)
2. \$500 to St. Thomas' Church, Bath – Red Door Mission
3. \$500 to Schuyler County Habitat for Humanity, Sponsored by: St. James' Church, Watkins Glen
4. \$3,000 to Ahli Arab Hospital, Sponsored by: All SED Parishes

Sue Baldwin from St. John's Church, Catherine has been elected to serve as the Lay District Representative to Diocesan Council after the 2023 Convention. This is a two-year term.

Southeast District clergy and delegates attended the Pre-Convention Meeting on October 4, 2023. The next regular meeting of the Southeast District is scheduled for March 4, 2024.

Submitted By:

The Very Rev. Troy Preston, Dean of the Southeast District

Southwest District

Having learned from the pandemic that we could meet virtually, this year the Southwest District alternated meeting virtually on Zoom with in-person gatherings. We missed being together in person and sharing a meal, but also appreciated being able to gather virtually when the weather was inclement. While the pandemic was truly awful, the blessing of it was learning how to gather remotely. Whether we met in person or on Zoom our practice was to share news of the diocese, news from our parishes, and a time of prayer.

The Southwest District continues to support many vital missions in our area. This year the Southwest district gave grants to the following programs and organizations: Alianza Agricola, Geneseo Parish Outreach, Chances and Changes, Christ Church Hornell Food Pantry, St. John's Hats and Coats for school children, the Repair Cafe and the Hope Lunch Program. These different programs and organizations make a difference in our surrounding communities. It is a joy to be able to help them with the good work that they do.

We gained two new clergy in our district this year welcoming the Rev. Shanna Hawks to Christ Church, Hornell and the Rev. Michael Laver to St. Michael's, Geneseo. It is wonderful to have more clergy in our district. Our clergy met monthly for Clericus usually on Zoom with an occasional in person meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Very Rev. Virginia Mazarella

RACIAL RECONCILIATION, HEALING, AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Episcopal Diocese of Rochester's Racial Reconciliation, Healing, and Justice Committee last met on Thursday, September 8, 2022, at the Diocesan Offices in Henrietta. The 2023 Diocesan Celebration of Blessed Absalom Jones took place at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church due to a large event that would affect parking near the traditional celebration site at St. Luke & St. Simon Cyrene. There is nothing significant to report at this time.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Keith Patterson

EPISCOPAL SENIORLIFE COMMUNITIES



92nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Name of Organization: Episcopal SeniorLife Communities (ESLC)

Officer(s): Lisa Marcello, President/CEO and Loren J. Ranaletta, President of the ECH Foundation

Committee Members/ESLC Relationships:

- **The Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane**, ESLC Board Member Ex-officio
- **Michael Lehman**, ESLC Board Member, Member of Christ Church Pittsford
- **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
- **The Rev. Deven Hubert**, ESLC Chaplain
- **Patti Cummings**, ESLC Lay Chaplain/Pastoral Care Administrative Assistant, Diocesan and Convention Volunteer

Programs:

Ashley Woods, Beatrice Place, Brentland Woods, Center for Rehabilitation, Ellen's Place (In Development), 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:

In September 2022, after nearly 40 years as the President/CEO of ESLC, Loren Ranaletta passed the reigns to Lisa Marcello. As the former EVP/CEO, Lisa has a highly sophisticated understanding of ESLC's fiscal structure, program operations and the community landscape. Lisa is passionate about providing the best experience for our residents and program members and encouraging staff development. In her first year as President/CEO, she has proven to be a formidable, inspirational leader, thoughtfully working with teams as we rebound from the impact of COVID-19 and planning for the future.

As the new President of the ECH Foundation, Loren is the driving force behind our advocacy efforts. Although there continue to be shortfalls, his long-term relationships with community

leaders and lawmakers have helped positively impact New York State's contributions to nursing homes.

For more than 21 years, Lisa and Loren have led ESLC through organizational growth, change, challenges, and great successes. Their work continues as the organization forges ahead with the following goals in mind:

Enrich the Resident Experience

ESLC is committed to building upon the strength of current programs and services; this means the continual evolution of programs and investment in the physical environment of each of our communities. Pinehurst and Valley Manor (independent living communities) have had interior and exterior refreshments, and Seabury Woods and Brentland Woods (assisted living) common areas each have a new look. In addition, Seabury Woods Memory Care has undergone a complete renovation to better serve those living with memory loss and dementia.

ESLC looks forward to further improvements in 2024. We offer a special thanks to Senator Jeremy Cooney, who secured state funding to install a backup generator and additional life safety features necessary to expand our scope of care to enhanced assisted living at Brentland Woods. The Episcopal Church Home will also undergo an expansive refresh with funding secured through a Statewide Health Care Facility Transformation Program Grant.

Expanding Community Opportunities

Seeking opportunities to develop safe, affordable housing for the growing population of middle-income seniors remains a primary goal. In June 2023, ESLC broke ground on Ellen's Place, a 74-unit community on the St. Cecilia Catholic Church site in E. Irondequoit. This community is modeled after Beatrice Place, which combines moderately priced senior housing with ESLC's Neighborhood Program.

In partnership with Providence Housing, ESLC will expand our Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative to provide care coordination to residents in a new affordable senior housing community on the campus of St. Leo's Catholic Church in Hilton, which is projected to open in 2025.

Also, ESLC is launching an organizational-wide dementia training program with support from the Mother Cabrini Foundation to better serve those living with dementia on our campuses and in the community through our Neighborhood Program.

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. We are devoted to their well-being and professional development by nurturing a work culture based on strong values and offering programs that support continued education and career advancement.

In 2023, ESLC launched our EMPOWER! Learning Academy. The Academy was established to support a culture of continuous learning and growth for our staff. This summer, we celebrated with the first cohort to graduate from the Management Development Program, which aims to strengthen the skills of new and potential managers throughout the organization. A director training and a mentorship program are also in development.

Embrace our Faith-Based Culture

ESLC is dedicated to the Christian values in which it was founded, as a faith-based, nonprofit organization dedicated to mission and understanding community needs. This year, ESLC's Chaplain, the Rev. Deven Hubert, celebrated five years of service to ESLC. Deven has been instrumental in creating a partnership with Crossroads of Caring (Clinical Pastoral Education Program) and expanding our pastoral care program to serve each campus and community program members, with much support from Lay Chaplain Patti Cummings. This summer, Deven announced her retirement from ESLC; we are incredibly grateful for her work at ESLC.

As we look ahead, we are incredibly grateful to be a part of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester. Thank you for all the prayers, encouragement and support you have given ESLC over the years; we look forward to our continued partnership as we serve seniors across Rochester.

**ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS OFFICER
INTERFAITH MINISTRY AT UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
Report to Diocesan Convention 2023**

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. However, last March the interfaith community stepped up to lead workshops at the Hickey Center for Interfaith Study and Dialogue's annual Global Citizenship Conference for high school students, held every year at Nazareth College. I serve on the planning team for the conference and led two workshops. A number of clergy from our diocese also participate in this very popular and well attended conference. The conference in March 2023 had over 600 participants.

Interfaith Campus Ministry at the University of Rochester

The diocese supports the work of the Protestant Chapel Community (PCC) through partnership mission grants. PCC is governed by a board comprised of representatives from the Episcopal Church, the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the American Baptist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Church of Christ, through Genesee Area Campus Ministries. PCC had a successful year of rebuilding under the leadership of The Rev. Samuel Kinsman, reaching out to the LGBTQ community on campus in an intentional way and offering a safe faith community for all. PCC is starting to grow again after a few years of significant decline and we are excited about the new possibilities for growth as Chaplain Sam continues his work with students.

I oversee interfaith programming on campus, working with the board of the Students Association for Interfaith Cooperation. SAIC does bi-weekly Interfaith Cafes, holds an interfaith banquet each semester, and engages in community service, drawing students from a variety of faith traditions in to participate in outreach ministries. We have worked for a number of years with REACH during the winter months, providing meals for their ministry with homeless citizens in Rochester. This past August I took five students to the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, where they led an intergenerational workshop on interfaith encounter.

I received a grant from Interfaith America to develop a course in Public Health and Religion which I taught in Spring 2023 working with Common Ground Health as a community partner. I have also received a grant from Interfaith America to offer a course "Bridging the Gap" which is an experiential four credit course that helps students develop skills with which to engage in courageous conversations with people who differ from them politically, socially, racially, religiously or otherwise. The students then come together to propose a solution to a pressing social justice issue. I co-taught that course in Spring 2023 with 12 students focusing on the issue of Public Safety/Police Reform.

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 continued to meet during the pandemic on Zoom and most recently met in May 2023 in Baltimore, beginning the final stage of our writing of a bi-lateral document on Reconciliation. We will be presenting our paper on Reconciliation to General Convention in 2024.

I am on the Standing Commission for Interreligious and Ecumenical Relations (SCEIR) which 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. SCEIR has met virtually and in person this past year preparing a variety of resolutions for General Convention 2024. We have written three significant interreligious documents that will be presented to General Convention in 2024 for adoption and dissemination to the national church. One is a general document on interreligious engagement, with a theological foundation and then practical guidance for those engaged in that work. The other two are guidelines for engaging with the Jewish community and another for engaging 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

CROSSROADS OF CARING, INC.

Our Mission

Crossroads of Caring, Inc. is a coalition that cultivates community based spiritual care education and support to foster holistic health and wellness.

Our Vision ...

is to become an integral community-based partner for providing spiritual support to individuals and communities, with particular focus on marginalized populations.

A 2023 Update

Since our last convention, Crossroads of Caring has completed two more cohorts of CPE students. Eight students successfully completed the units. A third unit is in its last two weeks. These six students will graduate in early November. A number of our students have been hired in full-time and part-time positions. Most are being employed in the southern tier in Elmira, Bath and Ithaca in primarily hospital, nursing home and hospice positions.

In Spring 2023 we ran our second cohort of students training to be more compassionate listeners. Six students graduated in June. The group included a United Methodist, a Lutheran, a Roman Catholic, and three Episcopalians. Due to the generosity of several Episcopal congregations in the diocese we were able to offer this three-month program for only \$50. This fall we are running another cohort with five more students. Four of these are Episcopalians. Our goal is to have at least one trained compassionate listener in each Episcopal congregation, and to give participants opportunities to learn from those in other faith traditions as well.

The larger vision of providing support to spiritual care providers is also being met. In late 2021 we began offering one hour **Lunch & Learns** six times a year to our CPE alumni and the staff at our partner organizations where our students serve. These are recorded and posted on our website (www.crossroadsofcaring.org) for anyone to watch for free. Our 2023 programs are listed below.

Date	Presenter	Topic
January 19	Nathan Mockizuki & Sherry Nau, <i>Gavia LifeCare Center</i>	Pandemics, Isolation, and Mental Health: A View from the Field
March 16	John & Judy Messenger	Mental Illness & Suicide: How One Set of Parents Coped
May 18	April Hortman, LMSW, PhD, <i>CareFirst Hospice</i>	Trauma and Loss
July 20	Wayne Gustafson, DMin, LMHC, SIP Trainer	Working with Harmful Spirituality and Religion
September 21	Jonathan Westfall, <i>ROCovery Fitness</i>	Addiction and Spirituality
November 16	Valerie Way, <i>Monroe County Mental Health Association</i>	Wellness and Resilience

Our bimonthly **Zoom Journal Club** resumed in August. It's open to anyone who is a spiritual care provider in a congregation, agency or healthcare institution. Participants register for the year, but come as they are able. Articles are posted on our website and read ahead of time so participants are ready to discuss them in the group. A listing of the articles can be found [here](#).

Early in 2022 we received our 501(c)3 designation from the IRS. That allowed us to enter the world of fund raising. In our last fiscal year we were able to raise \$31,000 from individuals, judicatories and congregations, a tremendous testament to the value of the work we are doing. Our goal in 2023-24 is to build capacity as we move toward financial sustainability. There is a need to expand staffing as we grow, and to look at ways to reduce student cost for the CPE program.

This spring we offered "I Listen" T-shirts for sale, partly as a fund raiser but more importantly to get our name out into the community. This fall we added a store to our website with a second T-shirt design. [Check it out](#). In August we held a Butterfly release for the community. Folks donated butterflies to honor friends and family who had been emotional and spiritual supports for them over the last several years. At an outdoor service held at Genesee Valley Park we celebrated them together, shared present concerns, and in hope for the future released 200 Painted Lady butterflies.

Gifts, like those from the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and our congregations, have been a true blessing and are directly related to all we have been able to accomplish in the last three years. We are grateful for our community partners and their participation on our [Professional Advisory Committee](#). All of this is to say, without our community, including the people of this diocese, we would likely not have made it this far. Thank you all.

Respectfully Submitted by
The Rev. Mary Ann Brody, Executive Director

PRISON MINISTRY

92nd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester Report to Convention for 2023

Name of Organization: Diocesan Prison Ministry Advisory Board

Officer(s):

Britton Hopkin – Secretary

Committee Members:

Precious Bedell
Keturah Cappadonia
Robert Crystal
Janet Farnsworth
Barbara Fornalik
Keturah Gilbert
Wes Harris
Thomas Jack (Deacon, Rochester Catholic Diocese)
Delores Johnson
Richard Laidlaw
Teresa Medero
Dianna Gardener Robinson, PhD
Michelle Thomas
Elsa Schaefer
Sandra St. Martin
Kathy Walczak
Eleanor Welz

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.

Meetings:

During 2023, we have not held any regular meetings of the Prison Ministry Advisory Board, as we are currently operating without a chair or interim chair. However, as Secretary, I reached out to our Interim Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Steven Lane who met individually with me via Zoom on Feb. 8, 2022. We continue to be without a chairperson as this is a Bishop appointed position. As per Bishop Lane's recommendations, we are still on "hold" pending the seating of our next regular bishop with whom we await future direction. However Bishop Lane agreed that as Secretary for this committee, I should continue to be responsible for the maintenance of our committee's website www.prisonministry-edr.org, as we continue to receive both requests for advice from justice involved families, as well as inquiries from potential volunteers wishing to participate with ongoing programs.

Report: October 2022 through September 2023

At the request of Keisha Stokes, I have reached out to as many of our members who were active before the Covid shutdown, for updates on their work.

Robert Crystal has been a member of the Prison Ministry Advisory Board of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester for many years. Since 2009, he has been **director of Rochester Interfaith Jail Ministry** which was active in the Monroe County Jail System until placed on “pause” in March 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. He is active in the **Cephas** organization which assists prisoners as they transition from incarceration to their return to society, and in **Prison Ministries of Upstate NY (PMUNY)**. He reports that **Cephas is still operating in Attica, and he has** been successful in carrying the **RIJM** program “**Houses of Healing**” into the Attica prison facility. He has also introduced the “**Houses of Healing**” program to **Delphi Rise**, an alcohol / drug rehab NGO on whose board he currently sits, and to the **NY Parole Systems** for their use as well.

Meanwhile, as a member of **Ascension Episcopal Church in Rochester**, he has made several “**Welcome Home**” kits for releasees who cannot live with their families. Each kit consists of hotel soap, shampoo and body lotion, a face cloth, toothbrush and toothpaste which are all non-food stamp items. Any parish can make these up. It is a good project for Sunday Schools to do, and he can carry them to Parole and Probation to be distributed. They must be in a clear plastic baggie. Since Cephas does not appear to be assembling Christmas gift bags this year, he is not asking for books and candy bars. But he will assemble them himself with help from Ascension in 2024 if Cephas doesn't do it in 2023.

Due to current health issues, Bob is looking for someone in the Diocese to help with these programs, and possibly to replace him. Those wishing to volunteer with any of these programs should inquire on our website www.prisonministry-edr.org., or phone us at (585) 309-6345, and direct your inquiry to Bob Crystal.

Bob reminds us all to “Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering”. Hebrews 13:3

Dick Laidlaw who was active in the Monroe Correctional Facility and later in the Monroe County Jail working as a **volunteer mentor**, and for a while working with principles of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy with incarcerated youth. He has been an active member of the Prison Ministry Advisory Board of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester since its founding in 2004. He is the founder of **Prison Rehabilitation and Aftercare Ministries (PRAM)** and has served on numerous boards associated with incarcerated youth in Monroe County. For several years he has also been serving on the **Board of Directors for the Industry School for Youth in Rush NY**, and on the **Juvenile Justice Council here in Rochester**. Dick has also served on the board of **Safer Monroe Area Reentry Team (SMART)** since its inception in 2008. Recently, SMART has been reorganized, and is now the **Reentry Association of Western New York (RAWNY)**. Dick is presently a member of the Board of Directors for RAWNY.

Note: For an excellent and comprehensive list of agencies and projects currently active in the Rochester area relating to re-entry and other prison ministry services, some of which not having previously interacted with our Diocesan Prison Ministry Committee, refer to the website

www.rawny.org. Inquiries about these services can also be made to individual RAWNY Board members or directly to Dick Laidlaw through this website as well.

Ministry in the Steuben County Jail: Janet Farnsworth has for many years brought the **Eucharist to inmates in the Steuben County Jail near Corning, NY**. In addition to the Eucharist, she facilitated group discussions after each of these worship services. We believe that this ministry may be the oldest jail ministry in our diocese and is a project of Christ Episcopal Church located in Corning NY. This ministry, like so many others, was placed on “pause” in March 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. We believe that it is still on “pause”, but inquiries about this ministry or its future can be made through our website www.prisonministry-edr.org.

Northeast District Storybook Project: **Good News!** Shari Peck, current director of the **Northeast District Storybook Project** reports that operating in the Ontario County Jail in Hopewell, NY (adjacent to Canandaigua NY) is now reopening since having been “paused” by the pandemic. The **Northeast District Storybook Project** donates storybooks to inmates in the Ontario County Jail in Hopewell NY and records them reading the stories to their children. The books and recordings are then sent to their children where they can listen to their parents reading to them. It was the first of its kind in Upstate New York. In 2019, a feature length documentary was made for the project and aired nationally on the **PBS Television Network** entitled “**Turn the Page**”. This project was the mentor and inspiration that helped the **Rochester Storybook Project** get its start in 2015 and was founded by the late Claire Kremer.

Those wishing to volunteer with the **Northeast District Storybook Project** should inquire directly to Shari Peck at bradshari@aol.com, or through our Prison Ministry website www.prisonministry-edr.org. We can also be contacted by phone at (585) 309-6345.

Rochester Storybook Project: Britt Hopkin, director of the Rochester Storybook Project reports that this program that was reopened in September 2022 after a pause caused by the Covid pandemic is continuing to operate in the Monroe County Jail in downtown Rochester. Our program is modeled after the **Northeast District Storybook Project** in which inmates are recorded reading storybooks to their children. Books and recordings are mailed to the children of incarcerated parents. The program continues to be very popular and appreciated by both children and their parents while serving time.

This year, we are enhancing the diversity of our book selection with the help of **Hippocampo Children’s Books** located in Rochester, which provides recently published children’s books featuring stories written for diverse populations. Selections are also made by our volunteers, many of whom are professional teachers. We are also encouraging our participants with very young children (up to 5 years in age) to enroll in the **Rochester Imagination Library Program** which mails carefully selected books free of charge monthly to children residing in the City of Rochester. The program is supported by **Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library Book Gifting Program known as the Dollywood Foundation Inc.**

Those wishing to volunteer with the **Rochester Storybook Project** should inquire on the project website www.rochesterstorybookproject.org., or phone us at (585) 309-6345.

Financial Needs for 2024: We are again requesting funding for 2024 from the diocese of \$500. These funds are needed to maintain our website www.prisonministry-edr.org, as well as other minor incidental expenses.

Some Final Thoughts

As we all know, the Covid pandemic caused a major disruption in many of our prison ministries and projects. However, with this report there is much good news as some projects have regrouped and enhanced their services, while others have reopened. However, virtually all our programs are challenged with aging out issues and are in need of additional volunteers – including potential future program leaders as well. As former Chair of the Prison Ministry Advisory Board for our Diocese, and now as Secretary, I encourage all who have an interest in this field of work to **come join us -- we need you!**

Visit our website www.prisonministry-edr.org or give us a call at (585) 309-6345.

Respectfully submitted,
Britton Hopkin – Secretary

**ANGLICAN STUDIES CERTIFICATE PROGRAM
COLGATE ROCHESTER CROZER DIVINITY SCHOOL**

The significant increase in student enrollment at CRCDS this semester is the highest in over ten years. This has energized our classrooms and ministry. I look forward to moving into our new home, the Sibley Triangle Building at the corner of Main and East Avenues, for the 2024-25 school year. This will expand access to civic, educational, government, and religious organizations. We are eager to be part of the downtown revitalization efforts.

There are currently six students enrolled in the Anglican Studies Certificate program. Five of these students are also working toward their M.Div. degrees. This certificate program works in partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester. Classes are available in-person, online, hyflex (*in-person and via Zoom*), and hybrid (*asynchronous weekly participation and synchronous participation during a residency week*) modalities. A certificate can be earned by completing six courses (Anglican Liturgy and Practice, Episcopal Theology and Ethics, Anglican and Episcopal Church History, Faith Formation and Spirituality, Food Sovereignty and Mission, and Intersectional Theology). All Episcopal students are invited to participate in an in-person, weekly Anglican Cohort group. If you want to learn more about this program, please contact crasmussen@crcls.edu. For those interested, the Anglican course offered this Spring (2024) will be “Anglican and Episcopal Church History.” Visit <https://www.crcds.edu/anglican-studies> to learn more about the program.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Cindy Rasmussen, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Public Theology & Eco-Justice
in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professorship
Director of the Program for Anglican Studies