



**Convention 89**  
**October 31, 2020**  
**Official Reports**

## 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

### Diocesan Council Official Report

**Name of Organization:** Diocesan Council

**Members:**

**Clergy:** Bishop Prince Singh; (Chair)

The Revs. Jay Burkardt; Virginia Mazzarella; Troy Preston (Chair Budget); Gretchen Ratterree (Co-Chair CDPC); Lance Robbins; Lynne Sharp (Co-Chair MPC); Elizabeth Harden; and Padriac Collins-Bohrer.

**Lay:** Floyd Bailey (Co-Chair CDPC); Al Carvill; Marion Ivy (Co-Chair MPC); Julie Syracuse (Vice-Chair); Bob Wilcox; Gilbert Stewart; Adwoa Boateng; and Paul Webster.

**Ex Officio:** Terry Butwid, Diocesan Treasurer; Phil Fileri, Chancellor; Bliss Owen, Assistant Diocesan Treasurer; Todd Rubiano, Chief Financial Missioner; Kristy Estey, Diocesan Operations & Benefits Manager; Steve Richards, Communications Specialist; The Rev. Greg Kremer, Secretary.

During this unprecedented season of pandemics, Diocesan Council has been hard at work in its collaborative efforts to support the congregations and missions of our diocese. Council is made up of sixteen lay and clergy delegates elected from around the Diocese of Rochester. This year council moved to a fully virtual meeting format, which we were already using in conjunction with in-person meetings before Covid-19; the full council met 11 times. The three subcommittees: the Mission Partnership Committee (MPC), the Congregational Development Partnership Committee (CDPC), and the Budget Committee along with the Steering Committee (made up of the Bishop, committee chairs, vice-chair, and key leadership staff) continued their work throughout the year meeting at least monthly.

Diocesan Council's response to Covid-19 was rapid. The MPC released funding in March 2020 for \$300 technology grants. These grants were used to aid congregations in transitioning to online worship and programming. The MPC diligently and thoughtfully reviewed and granted funding to over 20 mission programs for 2021, all the while retaining some funding to answer needs going forward as the pandemic continues. The Budget Committee reviewed our expenses and were able to realize a 3% reduction in costs for 2020. The Budget Committee also recommended that there be a one-time credit of 35% of annual apportionment up to \$1,200 be given to congregations to improve their cash flow situations. The CDPC along with the steering committee recommended accelerated payments of 2020 CDP grants to help offset possible shortfalls of income. The CDPC also worked closely with the 18 congregations currently receiving CDP grants to ensure their needs and concerns were met for the coming year.

To address the pandemic of racism, this year Diocesan Council worked closely with the Racial Reconciliation, Healing and Justice Committee to draft and send a letter from our Diocese to

Gov. Cuomo supporting his initiatives to address racial disparities in response to the pandemic. Members of Council have also participated in many other areas of leadership in the diocese.

**Additional Work of Council and Council Members**

Members of the Council Steering Committee and Trustee Steering Committees met several times this year to strengthen communication and coordinate our responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. Regular meetings and communications are ongoing between both Steering Committees.

In addition to the summary overview provided in this report, regular business at Council meetings includes: Meditation and prayer; Approval of the Agenda/Consent Agenda (as prepared and presented by the Council Steering Committee); Approval of Minutes; Highlights from the Bishop's Activities; Budget and Finance Reports, including the year-to-date status of parish apportionments for approval subject to audit; Reports to Diocesan Council from diocesan committees, staff and Council members; and Reports by the sub-committees of Council.

I would like to personally thank all members of Diocesan Council for their faithful and prayerful work this year. Finally, a tremendous thanks to our Bishop's staff!

**Joy in Christ, as a way of life.**

*Respectfully submitted by Julie Syracuse, Vice Chair*

## 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

### Official Report

**Name of Organization:** The Diocesan Trustees, including the committees of Audit, Building and Property, Investment Review and Prichard Scholarship. In addition, the Human Resources Committee is a shared resource for the Bishop, Staff and all the standing committees of the Diocese.

**Officers:** **Chairperson:** Bishop Singh; **Vice Chair:** Les Kernan; **Chief Financial Officer:** Todd Rubiano; **Treasurer:** Terry Butwid; **Assistant Treasurer:** Bliss Owen; **Clerk:** Lyn Omphroy

**Members:** Carl D'Angio, Julie Fornay, Stan Jones, Susan Scanlon, Scott Seabridge, Peter Vogt, Ron Young, Charles Zettek

**Structure:** The Diocesan Trustees are supported by a number of standing committees, including the Investment Review Committee, the Audit Committee, the Building and Property Committee, the Prichard Scholarship Committee and the Human Resources Committee. 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.

**Committee Members:** Several outside members served on sub-committees, strengthening the committees, and bringing more representation from a broad group of congregations. Included were:

*Human Resources Committee outside members:* Elizabeth Bakken, Sherry Ralston and Amy Moyer

*Investment Review Committee outside members:* Greg VanLaeken, Peter Greaves-Tunnell, John Johnson and Doug Lyon

*Audit Committee outside member:* Aaron Kane

*Building and Property Committee outside members:* Jay Benesh

*Prichard Scholarship outside members:* Diane Prichard, Ian Prichard, Marti St. George and Scott Seabridge, Staff support: Kristy Estey

#### **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.

Mengel Metzger Barr & Co., LLP (MMB) conducted the 2019 audit. At its meeting on September 9, 2020, the Trustees unanimously passed a resolution to accept the 2019 Diocesan Audit and move the audit to Convention for review and approval. The audit is available for review on the Diocesan website.

Two components (not issues) will be addressed.

- HRA funds set aside
- New Audit Requirement that no donors derive benefit for their contribution

A few footnotes that will be included in the report will be:

- HRA
- Unknown liability of the Lawsuit
- COVID-19 2020 Actions

### **Building and Property Committee:**

The committee worked on the following properties and assessed the requirements of each:

#### **Properties Sold:**

- Rectory, St. Thomas, Bath

#### **Church Insurance:**

- Initiating Pilot of Property Insurance Coverage

#### **Lease Extended**

- Diocesan Lease extended for 1 additional year

### **Investment Review Committee:**

The portfolio performance since inception with Canandaigua National Bank on 12/01/11 was an average annual return of 7.0% through August 2020. This performance is somewhat behind our benchmark; however, returns are ahead of our Investment Policy Statement goal of CPI +5.0%.

There is \$1.4M in rolling CDs from the sale of Diocesan House.

CNB Wealth Management continues to provide our parishes with client services, sub-accounting and reporting.

The Trustees continued efforts to ensure that the loan balances are in line with the current endowment level. The total balance of outstanding loans was just around \$1.25M as of 7/1/20.

### **Resolutions:**

- Signatory Approvals
- 2020 Housing Allowances
- Adopted the Cafeteria 125 Plan
- Approved the Endowment draw for the 2021 Diocesan Budget
- Approved the Sale of the Rectory at St Thomas, Bath
- Trustees accepted the 2019 Diocesan Audit
- Authorized continuation of the early payment discount on the congregational development loans
- Authorized fund release from various accounts within the Diocesan Combined Endowment (in accordance with Donor Restricted Funds regulations) to fund the 2020 Diocesan Operating Budget
- Approved Mission and Ministry fund in Allegany County with sale proceeds of Alleghany County paired up with Dermitt Trust distributions
- Approved optional suspension of principle payments on Church loans for up to 3 months
- Approved establishment of a new post-retirement health benefit for lay employees

COVID-19 Efforts validated by the Trustees:

- Small Grants for Technology
- Accelerated Payment of 2020 CDP grants
- 2020 Apportionment Reduction (up to \$1,200 per Parish)

**Prichard Scholarship Committee:**

The Rev. Canon James B. Prichard Memorial Scholarship Fund was created in 1998 in loving memory of James Prichard, who served the Diocese of Rochester so faithfully and effectively for 17 years as Canon to the Ordinary. Its purpose is to assist clergy children of the Diocese with expenses associated with higher education.

Awards of \$715 was awarded to each of the candidates in 2020;

**Wyles Daniel** (1st Year at Sewanee: The University of the South)

**Jana Deppe** (1st Year at Brockport College)

**Lydia Ennis** (3rd Year at Allegheny College)

**Tony Ennis** (2nd Year at Allegheny College)

**Hannah Gandell** (3rd Year at American University)

**Eklan Singh** (2nd Year at SUNY Purchase College)

**Elizabeth Sommers** (2nd Year at Schola Cantorum Basiliensis)

**HR Committee:**

The HR Committee of the Diocese met three times during the past year at which time they:

1. Reviewed employee compensation data
2. Discussed a new Lay Post-retirement Health Benefit
3. Considered adjustments to salaries and benefits for 2021

Respectfully submitted,

Lyn A. Omphroy  
Clerk, Trustees

Les Kernan  
Vice-Chair, Trustees

**89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**  
**Commission on Ministry Official Report**

Name of Organization: Commission on Ministry

Officer(s): Co-Chair – Rev. Georgia Carney, Co-Chair – Ms. Ellen Ralston

Secretary/Grants Coordinator – Pat Feeney

Additional Committee Members: Mr. James Garner, Ms. Kathy O’Leary, Dr. Rob Ferris, Ms. Judith Day, Rev. Jimmie Sue Deppe, Rev. Keith Patterson, Rev. Abidhananthar John, Rev. Andrea Stridiron, Rev. Sandy Cordingley, Rev. Krista Cameron

Ex officio: The Rt. Rev. Prince Singh

Report:

It is both my joy and privilege to share with you the great work of the Commission on Ministry this past year. The work of the Commission is one of shepherding, assessing, listening, providing honest feedback and opportunities for those in the discernment process for leadership ministry in the diocese. We serve those seeking ordination as well as professional lay ministry. Our work is not done in isolation but rather in concert with the Bishop’s office, Dean of Discernment, Standing Committee, and our parishes. An updated Vocational Handbook is now ready and available on the Diocesan website.

This past year has been a blessing in that we have recommended to our Bishop the following:

**Ordination to the priesthood: Josh Barrett**

**Ordination to the transitional diaconate: Greg Kremer**

**Ordination to the transitional diaconate: Keisha Stokes**

**Postulancy to the priesthood: Joel Wilbur**

**Postulancy to the vocational diaconate: Roch Whitman**

In addition, this past year we have worked with parishes who are working with aspirants and postulants in one level of discernment or another. We truly have much to be excited about as a diocese!

For the Commission,

The Rev. Georgia Carney

**89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester  
Official Report**

Name of Organization: The Standing Committee  
Officer(s): The Rev. Canon Robert Picken, President  
Dr. Carolyn Mok, Secretary

Committee Members:

Lay: Susan Woodhouse, Joseph DaBoll-Lavoie, Michael Davis  
Clergy: The Rev. Cam Miller, The Very Rev. Leslie Burkardt, The Very Rev. Ken Pepin  
Report: The Committee met eight (8) times between November 2019 and September 2020.  
Minutes of meetings are published each month as they are approved and are available on the diocesan website.

The Committee consented to following Episcopal Elections:  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Diocesan of Lexington  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Diocesan of Missouri  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Diocesan of Georgia  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Diocesan of Southern Virginia  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Diocesan of Minnesota  
Consent for the election of the Bishop Coadjutor of Alabama

The Committee certified the:  
Ordination to the Diaconate (transitional), Joshua Barrett  
Candidacy for Holy Orders, Gregory Kremer  
Candidacy for Holy Order, Keisha Stokes  
Ordination to the Diaconate (transitional), Gregory Kremer  
Ordination to the Diaconate (transitional), Keisha Stokes  
Ordination to the Priesthood, Joshua Barrett  
Ordination to the Priesthood, Gregory Kremer  
Ordination to the Priesthood, Keisha Stokes

The Committee consented to the:  
The sale of the Rectory of St. Thomas' Church, Bath

The Standing Committee confers and consults with the Bishop on many other matters pertaining to the Diocese. We continue to work closely with Bishop Singh and each year establish a covenant to cooperatively and collaboratively make decisions for the benefit of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester.

Respectfully Submitted,  
The Rev. Canon Robert Picken



**89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**  
**District Official Report**

Name of Organization: Monroe/Rochester Districts

Officer(s):

Deans: The Very Rev'd Ken Pepin, The Very Rev'd Ruth Ferguson, and The Very Rev'd Leslie Burkardt

Wardens: Linda Ketchum-Pompili and Peter Barker

The Rochester and Monroe districts of the Diocese of Rochester hold meetings and function as a team. The 2019-2020 year was a busy and unusual time in our world.

On March 3, about 40 clergy and lay delegates met for a nourishing Evening of Retreat and Reflection at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Rochester. The evening was led by the three Deans. Before the program, representatives of the Monroe District elected Paul Webster (St. Andrew's, Caledonia) to fill a vacancy on Diocesan Council. After supper, we held breakout groups and discussed questions such as "Why do you go to church?" and "What is God/Jesus saying to us these days?" Each group shared their answers, then we blessed each other with water, sprinkling a cross on each other's foreheads.

The Deans and Wardens changed the Rochester/Monroe District Grant process for 2020. Instead of congregations submitting a District Grant application form, each of our 20 parishes received \$500 from the Diocesan budget (\$5,000 to each District). Anything the parishes defined as helpful to their mission and unique needs was considered worthy of this grant support.

When the pandemic hit in mid-March, the Deans held biweekly check-ins for the clergy until mid-summer. We returned to once a month gathering via Zoom. We continued to be available for personal support and consult upon request.

Several of us gathered for a public witness of confession and advocacy against racism at St. Luke's and St. Simon's on June 8. This call to make a public witness came out of the clergy gathering the week before. Thank you to the leadership of Bishop Singh, Ruth Ferguson, Debs Duguid-May, Keith Patterson, Kristy Esty, Steve Richards for providing an opportunity and a litany for us.

In addition to the District virtual gatherings, clergy of the Rochester/Monroe districts attended the weekly Zoom check-ins with the Bishop as well as the College for Congregational offerings throughout the late Spring and early Summer.

Respectfully submitted,

Deans and Wardens of the Monroe/Rochester Districts

## **89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**

Southeast District

Officer(s): The Very Reverend Dan Burner

Warden: Pat Selwood

Clerk: Denise Switzer

The Southeast District met, for a potluck supper and business meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at St James' Hammondsport. At this meeting we enjoyed fellowship with one another, reports on activities and ministries of the various congregations, and hearing a presentation from Fr. Billy Daniel on Christian Formation. The meeting concluded with the service of Compline led by the host parish. After the COVID-19 lock down started, we met two more times by zoom and conducted the necessary business. In addition, representatives from the district attended the pre-convention briefing also on zoom.

We rotate the Clerk position each year, in an alphabetical rotation beginning with the June meeting. This year because of COVID, we did not meet in a format that was conducive to a rotation. We give thanks to Denise Switzer, for agreeing to continue to serve.

We approved grants to \$500 for Schuyler County Habitat for Humanity, \$500 for the Steuben County Jail Ministry, \$500 for The Feeding Shed in Catherine and \$1,000 for the Women Serving Women Project at St. James Watkins Glen. Unused funds will be allocated to the District Mission project.

Each year the Southeast District selects a mission and this year we selected to raise money for Rural Migrant Ministries Rural Women's Assembly; asking each parish to attempt to raise \$500. Each parish will send in their donation by November 2<sup>nd</sup> in order to support the event in December.

We nominated and elected Rev. Joshua Barrett, Christ Church Corning/Church of the Redeemer Addison to serve on Diocesan Council.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dan Burner

## **89<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**

### **Official Report**

#### **Report from the Southwest District**

The Southwest District met monthly, first in person, and then virtually once we could no longer meet in person due to the pandemic. We did not meet during the summer. At our meetings we shared news from our churches, as well as information about diocesan events throughout the diocese. Prior to the pandemic the Southwest District also shared a potluck supper before our meetings, which allowed for a time of fellowship for the congregations. With the pandemic virtual meetings made it easier for members of the southwest district to meet, although we missed the time of shared food and fellowship.

During the year the district received and approved local grant requests through the district grant fund. Grants were given to three local food pantries, the Hornell YMCA, Changes and Changes (a battered women's shelter) AA Migrant Mission, funds to complete the concrete work at the bus shelter outside St. John's Wellsville and Community Meals in Wellsville. We elected the Rev. J. Eric Thompson to be the clergy representative for the Southwest District on Diocesan Council.

The clergy of the district met monthly for clericus. Those meetings became virtual once we could no longer meet in person. The clergy met weekly during the early months of the pandemic and discontinued those weekly meetings for the summer months. Our monthly virtual meetings resumed in the fall.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Very Rev. Virginia Mazzarella

## **89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**

### **Report for the Northeast District**

As for everyone, this has been a challenging year for the parishes in the Northeast District. Several of our parishes have had to suspend specific ministries (in addition to services) and nearly all rushed to implement some kind of electronic transmission program to share what services they could.

The Reverend Susan Kohlmeier retired as Rector of Zion, Palmyra, and will be missed. She was an active priest in the diocese for many years. She started out at Zion as her home parish, and ended up at Zion! We welcomed a new priest to St. John's, Clifton Springs – the Rev. Donald Schranz, who has still not been able to meet all his people due to the virus. We have also welcomed the Rev. Keisha Stokes to our district, as part time Pastoral Leader at Zion, Palmyra, and as Pastoral Associate at St. John's, Canandaigua. That arrangement just began in October, but she is off to a great start.

The Reverend Michael Laver has announced that he will be leaving St. John's, Sodus, in the Spring of 2021 to focus on work and family issues. And, due to her work at the Rochester hospitals around those with COVID, the Reverend Patti Blaine is no longer working in the parish at Canandaigua. Both will be greatly missed.

We continue to reach out to one another in support and to share ideas to strengthen the Church in the world. We will welcome the Rev. Gretchen Ratteree, Rector of St. Mark's, Newark, as our new dean, in November.

Faithfully submitted,

The Very Reverend David Hefling, ObJN+

Dean

## **89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester**

### **Diocesan Dean for Discernment Report for Convention 2020**

As this was a new role, I began by updating the administrative records on all our candidates. Carolyn Mc Connell worked tirelessly with me in creating a good administrative record of each of the areas of responsibility, which are now documented and updated. I also helped with the revision and editing updates for our Vocational Handbook.

I have set up 6 parish-based discernment teams this year to begin the process of discernment of candidates for holy orders.

I have worked with Revd. Andrea Stridiron on the support and ongoing education of our deacons and those in process of discernment for the diaconate.

I have recruited over 50 clergy and lay leaders for the coaching ministry for our Circles of Support. These volunteers are currently undergoing training with The Revd. Dr Roy Whitten on coaching. I have set up 7 Circles of Support for our new clergy to assist and be a resource for them as they adapt to ministry here in Rochester.

I have started the Fellowship of Discernment, which is for all our postulants until their final ordination, to support, mentor, educate and pray for each other on a monthly basis.

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.

We are currently planning a day training workshop for all those on the Commission on Ministry.

Respectfully Submitted

Dean Debs Duguid-May

13 October, 2020.

## 89th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

### Diocesan Dean for Churches in Small Towns & Rural Communities and Pastoral Care

*“Let the favor of the LORD our God rest upon us; establish the works of our hands. Yes, establish the works of our hands.”*

*PS 90:17*

It has now been a year since beginning this work, with a title change approximately nine months into it. Not only have I enjoyed being back in a parish, in this case two parishes, but I have immensely enjoyed my role as dean - working to support, equip, and inspire the saints in a small church context, in the practice of ministry.

We have long known both the struggles and joys of the small church, and I see the role of diocesan dean as someone to be there to assist with the struggles, offering the resources and encouragement needed along the way. To better assist churches in small towns and rural communities with the “*every day*” struggles of ministry, we have developed a list of resources and have published them on the diocesan website. These resources range from where the small church can obtain new prayer books, bibles and hymnals at no cost, to capital campaigns and obtaining the funds necessary to establish a children’s library. If you are interested, or have not seen them, please visit

[https://www.episcopalrochester.org/sites/default/files/files/2020%20Resources%20\\_%20Small%20Church%20.docx.pdf](https://www.episcopalrochester.org/sites/default/files/files/2020%20Resources%20_%20Small%20Church%20.docx.pdf)

While COVID has indeed impacted the way we have made ourselves available to respond and work with many of our churches, we have been able to address many of the most pressing needs when it comes to Episcopal ministry in small towns and rural communities in the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier Regions of our state. In a more hands-on approach of offering support in the form of presence, we have made ourselves available as the clergy on-call for emergencies while the rector is on leave, been present to facilitate a way through and into a successful transition, and charting the processes necessary for short-term and long-range planning, to mention a few. At present, we find ourselves actively working with the Reverend Canon Dr. C. Denise Yarbrough and the members of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Bloomfield, NY as they plot the course for ministry in their context, considering both the needs of their community and what they believe to be God’s hopes and dreams for them and us.

In the area of pastoral development, we have discovered in a more intimate way, the gifts and talents of the retired clergy pool in this diocese. On September 17<sup>th</sup>, we gathered for Zoom Noon Day Prayers and a discussion over remote meals/snacks as we shared our thoughts on the blessings and curses of this COVID-TIDE. In doing so, one thing became clear above all others, and that is our belief that we are sustained by the work and prayers of those who have already given so much. May this be all the more true as we move both through and past COVID-TIDE into a more “normal” future.

So, the take-away? From Hilton to Wellsville, and Brockport to Newark, it is the churches in small towns and rural communities that make up the majority of the churches in our diocese. It is also true that, because of their 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 churches often offer the only progressive, socially accepting, and openly affirming voice in their area and it is my honor, privilege, and pleasure to serve as their first diocesan dean. Yet my work in this area would not be possible without the support and understanding of the people I serve with and care for the most - those who live and worship in Caledonia, (St. Andrew's) and Scottsville, (Grace Episcopal) so want thank you as well, from the very bottom of an extremely grateful heart.

The Reverend Canon Johnnie E. Ross, Rector & Dean



## *Report to the Diocese of Rochester*

Fall 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We give great thanks for your support and prayers throughout this year. It has been a year of mixed blessings. One of the blessings has been your partnership. Thank you. Here are some highlights of our efforts this year of Rural & Migrant Ministry, Inc.

❖ **Responding to the Pandemic.** Through our Centers and rural network, we were positioned to:

- Deliver over 10,000 masks across the State.  
Each mask has been packaged with information about worker's health, rights and contact info. We continue to collect and distribute masks.
- Raise over \$100,000 in foundation support for emergency relief which was distributed to farmworker families.
- Provide food, access to legal and health services, and mental and pastoral support for hundreds of workers, as well as link workers and their families to other support services throughout the State.
- Design and create informational flyers as well as develop several educational videos about the coronavirus and worker rights and shared them across the State, in different languages, and on various media platforms.
- Provide Chrome Books to isolated families without computers
- Participate in and facilitate 'Town Halls' to get necessary legal and medical information to families.
- Create regular phone 'Chat' groups for workers across the State to stay connected and get information they need in their own language.
- Create an English, Spanish & French language Facebook group for the workers, and provide a platform for them to ask questions and get necessary information.

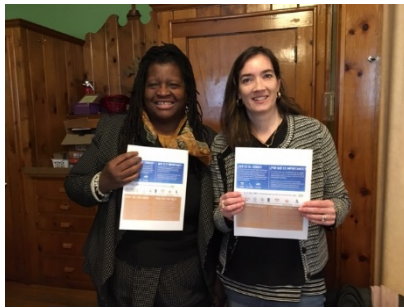




## ❖ Social Transformation

- Through advocacy, we joined others in pushing the State government to recognize the humanity of farmworkers as they were excluded from federal stimulus funds, suffered from a lack of safety protocols within the farms and camps and struggled from exclusion from schools and safety information due to a lack of computers and access to internet.
- We also hosted caravans across the state involving over three hundred cars, thanking farmworkers for their hard work in order to feed us during the Pandemic.

- Worked hard to educate and sign up families to participate in the Census.



- Joined with several prominent unions to begin implementing the Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act, by sustained outreach to farmworkers to tell them of their rights under the new law. We also informed families of their rights to driver's licenses, the NY Dream Act, and DACA.

## ❖ Responding to the Legacy of Enslavement

- RMM joined with the Reparations Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of New York to welcome over two hundred participants as we co-hosted *Knee on My Neck*, a five-week virtual retreat
- Members of our Youth Groups also hosted a virtual presentation, *Unchained: A Panel Discussion on Racial Injustices*.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=283955369706722>

- Members of RMM's Youth Arts Group planned and led a march in Newburgh as a part of the Black Lives Matter movement.
- The Board of RMM has put together a Task Force to carry out a racial audit of RMM's own internal practices and structures.



## ❖ Education

- RMM launched the Rural Academy of the People, a popular education program taking place throughout our Centers for both grass roots people and for those who seek to be allies for rural justice.
- Spoke and preached at numerous congregations, universities and labor locals - first in person and then virtually.
- Reached out to media to raise awareness of the plight of farmworkers, which resulted in numerous articles, as well as pieces on ABC News, Univision and an editorial in the NY Daily News.
- Hosted three Rural Women Assemblies.
- Offered regular ESL-Literacy, Citizenship and Leadership Development classes
- Trained a cohort of college interns.
- We are now developing a sewing cooperative in Sullivan County.



## ❖ Youth Empowerment

Continued our high school Youth Leadership groups virtually, and celebrated the graduation of all of our seniors

- Initiated a new Kids for College program, helping isolated rural youth with the college application process
- Offered two Summer Institutes for youth: College Preparation (five weeks) and *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize*, an eight-week Institute for young people working for change.
- The highlight of the Summer was again offering our Summer Leadership Camp - though this year it was virtual – we still had a campfire! We were able to distribute laptops to our campers and were joined by a host of artists-in-residence.



## ❖ Looking to the Future

- We are honored to partner with Grace! Lyons, and celebrate the emerging Mission Committee as we work to create an amazing center serving the farmworker community and the wider Diocesan community. We invite members of the Diocese to join us for our monthly Justice Celebrations.