

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER



OFFICIAL REPORTS OF THE 93RD CONVENTION

OCTOBER 26, 2024

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THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The 2023-24 Standing Committee wasted no time getting to work after Convention 92, starting with electing a president and secretary. We also welcomed Roxanne Gaylord (St. Thomas', Bath) and the Rev. Columba Salamony (St. Mark's, Penn Yan) to the Standing Committee after their election at the Convention. Richard Little (St. James, Hammondsport) joined us to fill a laity opening in February 2024.

In November 2023, as our committee convened, the Discernment and Nominating Committee was in the process of selecting candidates for the IX Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester.

We held two meetings in our first full month together - one regularly scheduled meeting and one meeting with the Discernment and Nominating Committee, led by the Rev. Julie Cicora (Chair) and the Rev. Keisha Stokes (Vice Chair). At the latter November meeting, the Standing Committee learned about the selection process and the potential slate of candidates. We had an idea that the Discernment and Nominating Committee had poured their hearts and souls into this process, but witnessing first hand the intense discussion of and overwhelming commitment to the task that brought them together was breathtaking.

In the end, the Standing Committee presented a slate of three candidates for consideration. The Standing Committee worked with the Presiding Bishop's office to initiate the consent process and set up the petition process. The Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer was elected the IX Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester on February 24, 2024.

During the spring of 2024, the Standing Committee collaborated with Todd Rubiano and Bishop-Elect Kara Wagner Sherer to create her Letter of Agreement. In particular, the Standing Committee drafted the "Roles and Responsibilities" section and incorporated feedback into the final document. We met for the first time in person with the Bishop-Elect in April 2024.

Meanwhile, the Transition Committee continued to work tirelessly, focusing on the Ordination and Consecration, held on July 13, 2024. The Transition Committee ensured it was meaningful and representative of our Diocese. The Standing Committee owes a debt of gratitude to the Rev. Don Schranz and the Transition Committee for an exhausting job well done.

In addition to the important work involving our new Bishop, the Standing Committee was busy with a number of other tasks throughout the year. The Standing Committee interviewed two individuals in the candidacy process, approved several land and building requests, and discussed a parish loan. We also approved consents for Bishops of the Dioceses of California, Tennessee, Massachusetts, and Olympia, WA, as well as for a Bishop Suffragan for West Texas.

Fittingly, one of our last major undertakings as the 2023-24 Standing Committee was to host a Thank-You Barbecue for the Discernment and Nominating Committee and Transition Committee at the Perkin Observatory at Hobart & William Smith Colleges. On a beautiful August evening, many members of the three committees joined for conversation and a meal

together. While we can't hope to adequately thank those committees for their endless hours and emotional labor, we hope they know how much they are appreciated.

Also, thank you to everyone who helped the Standing Committee accomplish its tasks this past year - the Diocesan staff, clergy, laity, and everyone else who made our goals attainable. Many, many thanks to Bishop Steve Lane, who was such a blessing to us. And, of course, we are so fortunate to have Bishop Kara Wagner Sherer guide us as we help our Diocese move forward.

Signed with great hope and gratitude,

Mrs. Elizabeth Salamone (President)

The Rev. Nita Byrd (Secretary)

Mr. Floyd Bayley

The Very Rev. Ruth Ferguson

Mrs. Roxanne Gaylord

Mr. Richard Little

The Rev. Cameron Miller

The Rev. Columba Salamony

DIOCESAN COUNCIL
Report to the 93rd Convention- October 2024

Officer(s):

Chair: The Rt. Rev. Stephen Lane (January-July)

The Rt. Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer (July-October)

Vice Chair: The Rev. Keisha Stokes

Budget Committee Co-Chair: The Rev. Eric Thompson

Congregational Development Partnership Committee Co-Chairs: Mr. Bill Hoehne and Ms. Lynn Ringholz

Mission Partnership Committee Co-chair: The Rev. Keisha Stokes

Elected Members by Districts:

Ms. Sherry Gibbon- NE

Ms. Susan Baldwin - SE

Ms. Elaine VonSon - SW

Ms. Lynn Ringholz - Monroe

Mr. Peter Barker - Rochester

Rev. Don Schranz- NE

Rev. Troy Preston - SE

Rev. Eric Thompson – SW

Rev. Mitch Bojarski – Monroe

Rev. Keith Patterson – Rochester

Elected Members -At-Large:

Rev. Keisha Stokes

Rev. Virginia Mazzarella

Rev. Shanna Hawks

Mr. William Hoehne

Ms. Ann Dawson

Mr. Gilbert Stewart

Members (Appointed):

The Rev. Greg Kremer, Secretary

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, and other updates from Diocesan staff. The members of Diocesan Council are each part of a sub-committee: Budget, Congregational Development Partnership Committee, and Mission Partnerships Committee. The subcommittees met monthly and at other times as needed throughout the year. We heard reports from each of our sub-committees at our monthly meetings. We spent most of our meeting time discussing the best ways to support our parishes with the resources available.

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

Mr. Bill Hoehne, Co-Chair of the **Congregational Development Partnership** Sub-Committee submitted the following:

Overview of CDP Grant Requests for 2025:

As part of the Proposed 2025 Diocesan Operating Budget, the CDP Committee recommends that the Council approve the following (13) RENEWAL Grants for 2025, totaling \$204,400.

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

Resolved: *Diocesan Council approved the 2025 mission grant awards reviewed and the funds allocated by the Mission Partnership Committee to be included in the 2025 Diocesan Budget.*

<i>-(15) Parish Mission Grants in the amount of:</i>	<i>\$54,400</i>
<i>-(18) Partnership Mission Grants in the amount of</i>	<i>\$69,425</i>
	<i>Total: \$123, 825</i>

Funding for District Grants will continue to be provided as a type of Mission Grant as well. For 2025, each parish is will eligible for \$600.

The Rev. Eric Thompson and the **Budget Committee**, with the assistance of Todd Rubiano, presented the following resolution for the 2025 Annual Diocesan Budget:

Resolved: *Diocesan Council approves the proposed 2025 Diocesan Operating Budget of \$2,011,403, including Apportionment of \$967,403, for distribution to all Diocesan delegates prior to Diocesan Convention.*

In December 2023, Bishop Lane appointed a task force of Diocesan Council charged with researching the history of districts in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and to consider its

functionality in our current context. This task force was chaired by The Rev. Keisha Stokes and its members included The Rev. Troy Preston, The Rev. Virginia Mazzearella, and Lynn Ringholz. Over the first six months of 2024, the task force engaged in research and met to discuss their findings. At the June 2024 meeting of Diocesan Council, the task force proposed a change in structure and organization from 5 districts to 3 convocations. The Council agreed to engage in a pilot period beginning in 2025 to live into what this change could mean for our Diocese.

We supported the Discernment and Nominating Committee and Transition Committee with prayers. Diocesan Council had the privilege of working closely with both Bishop Lane and Bishop Kara during our Episcopal Transition.

Respectfully submitted by,

The Rev. Keisha Stokes, vice-chair

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY
Report to Diocesan Convention 2024
Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Introduction

The Commission on Ministry (CoM) has been very active over the course of the past year. It has been my honor to serve as chair of the committee since October of 2022. 2024 represents the final year for my first term, and while I am running for a second and final term, we may have new leadership next year depending on the will of the group and the movement of the spirit. The committee membership this year consists of:

Sandra Cordingly (clergy)
Patricia Feeney (lay)
Abi John (clergy)
Michael Laver (clergy)
Karen Martin (lay)
Kathy O’Leary (lay)
Kara Wagner Sherer(ex officio)
Kathy Stokes (lay)
Andrea Stridiron (clergy)
Virginia Tyler Smith (ex officio)
Sandy Von Wormer (lay)

We are seeking to replace three members who are transitioning off of the committee: Kathy O’Leary, Michael Laver, and Karen Martin (replacement for the final year of her three year term).

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 Prinzi (aspirant; priesthood)
Julie Syracuse (postulant; priesthood)
Joel Wilbur (transitional deacon; priesthood)

Carla Aslakson-Yarnal (candidate; diaconate)
Matthew Crow (postulant; priesthood)
Lorraine Ndusha (parish-based discernment)
Maria Hartz (postulant)
Carl D'Angio (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. So far this year we have provided funding to three priests who have sought continuing education opportunities.

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 on a Saturday and would involve workshops on discernment, discussion groups, an 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. Please look for this opportunity to be publicized as early as this spring.

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

OFFICIAL ACTS

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Admitted as Postulants for Holy Orders to the Priesthood

None

Admitted as Candidates for Holy Orders to the Priesthood

December 01 23 Joel Wilbur

Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

None

Ordination to the Priesthood

None

Admitted as Postulants for Holy Orders to the Diaconate

None

Admitted as Candidates for Holy Orders to the Diaconate

None

Ordination to the Order of Deacons

None

Received by Letter Dimissory

March	06	23	The Rev. Craig Hacker, Diocese of Albany
June	01	23	The Rev. Shanna Hawks, Diocese of Spokane
December	08	23	The Rev. Thomas Williams, Diocese of Central Florida
December	13	23	The Rev. David Hanselman, Diocese of Central New York

Transferred by Letter Dimissory

December 05 23 The Rev. Carmen Seufert, Diocese of Western New York

Institution of New Ministry

February	18	23	The Rev. Melanie Duguid-May, St. Thomas', Bath
March	19	23	The Rev. Joshua Stubb, St. Peter's, Henrietta
September	09	23	The Rev. Michael Laver, St. Michael's, Geneseo
November	18	23	The Rev. Craig Hacker, St. James', Hammondsport

Notice of Inhibition

None

Notice of Deposition

None

Notice of Removal

None

Notice of Renunciation

None

License to Officiate

February	14	23	The Rev. Catherine Volland, Diocese of Rio Grande
April	21	23	The Rev. Gary Schindler, Diocese of Western NY & Northwestern PA

Retirements

March	01	23	The Rev. Dahn Gandell
October	01	23	The Rev. Lynne Sharp

Deaths

May	12	23	The Rev. Sandy Arrington
July	23	23	The Rev. Richard Eckart
September	08	23	The Rev. John A. Andrews
November	03	23	The Rev. Charles H. Tyo Jr.
December	13	23	The Rev. Mary Lucille (Lucy) Parsons Alonzo

Elections & Appointments

February	14	23	Global Misson Advocate	Appointment	The Rev. Abi John
May	23	23	Trustees	Appointment	Bliss Owen
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	The Rev. Shanna Hawks
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	The Rev. Keisha Stokes
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	The Rev. Virginia Mazzarella
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	Elaine VanSon
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	Peter Barker
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	Lynn Ringholz
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	Sue Baldwin
October	28	23	Diocesan Council	Elected	Sherry Gibbons
October	28	23	Standing Committee	Elected	Roxanne Gaylord
October	28	23	Standing Committee	Elected	The Rev. Columba Salamony
October	28	23	Standing Committee	Appointed	Richard Little
October	28	23	Trustees	Elected	Carl D'Angio
October	28	23	Trustees	Elected	Charlie Zettek
October	28	23	Trustees	Elected	Julie Forney
October	28	23	COM	Elected	Kathy Stokes
October	28	23	COM	Elected	Karen Martin
October	28	23	Disciplinary Board	Elected	The Very Rev. Troy Preston
October	28	23	Disciplinary Board	Elected	The Very Rev. Leslie Burkardt

Transitions

January	01	23	The Rev. Melanie Duguid-May, Rector, St. Thomas, Bath
February	01	23	The Rev. Michael Laver, Rector, St. Michael's, Geneseo
March	01	23	The Rev. Craig Hacker, Rector, St. James, Hammondsport
April	01	23	The Rev. Shanna Hawks, Rector, Hornell & Savona
July	01	23	The Dr. Rev. Julianne Buenting, Interim Rector, Christ Church, Pittsford
September	01	23	The Rev. Kremer, Gregory, Rector, Epiphany, Gates
October	01	23	The Very Rev. Johnnie Ross, Diocesan Chaplain to the Retired
November	01	23	The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith, Regional Minister, Angelica, Cuba, Wellsville
November	01	23	The Very Rev. Leslie Burkardt, District Dean
November	01	23	The Very Rev. Troy Preston, District Dean
November	01	23	The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith, Officer for Transitions and Congregational Devel.
November	12	23	The Rev. David Hanselman, Priest-in-Charge Watkins Glen & Odessa

Closing or Secularization of a Church or Chapel

October	28	23	St. Stephen's, Rochester (Closed at Convention 92)
October	28	23	Trinity, Canaseraga (Closed at Convention 92)

BAPTISMS 76

CONFIRMATIONS 31

RECEPTIONS 53

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

Balance as of January 1, 2023	\$11,332.34
Balance as of December 31, 2023	\$21,049.40

TRANSITION MINISTRY
93rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester
Official Report

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

Report:

At year end 2023, we had one (1) parish without dedicated clergy, and an open position for the Missioner to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. In the first three quarters of 2024, the number of parishes in search grew to twelve (12), and the Missioner to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing position remained unfilled. Five clergy retired or announced their intention to retire. Two clergy moved out of the diocese for family reasons. One clergy person took a personal leave from parish ministry. One parish that had an interim began its process to find a permanent clergy person. Additionally, after a year of having me serve as the Regional Priest in Charge for St. Paul's Church, Angelica, Christ Church, Cuba, St. John's Wellsville, we are now seeking a permanent rector.

We have not had the same good fortune in hiring this year that we had in 2022. We had three searches that were restarted because the candidates ultimately were not hired. Since last reporting to this Convention, St. James in Watkins Glen and St. John's in Odessa hired the Rev. David Hanselman part-time. St. John's in Honeoye Falls hired the Rev. Jim Trimble as their full-time rector in January of this year.

At the end of the third quarter 2024, we have a total of twelve (12) parishes seeking their next rector, Episcopal Senior Life Communities seeking their next chaplain and an open position for the Missioner to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. This remarkable increase is largely a function of the baby boom and clerics reaching mandatory retirement age. It should be noted that many of the newly open positions have had long term rectors serving 14 years, 15 years, and 43 years, respectively. Additionally, four of the open positions will be some portion of part-time. Three of the parishes will be moving from a full-time rector to part-time. This reflects recent transition ministry trends wherein most open positions are now part-time, despite clergy needing full-time employment.

At the most recent Transition Ministry Conference¹, the participants noted the following:

In the 31 dioceses represented, 85 clergy are seeking new positions. Of those, 72 seek full-time² and six (6) seek part-time, and seven (7) seek interim employment.

However, of the 84 clergy in search, only 26 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 31 dioceses that submitted data need a total of 251 individual priests, as follows:

¹ Data from Transition Ministry Conference Meeting, September 2024.

Full Time: 85
Part-time: 145
Interims: 21

Multi-point calls are increasing; we anticipate that the number of multi-point calls will increase as church budgets continue to decline and clergy continue to prefer full-time cures. We are also seeing an uptick in the number of partnerships between the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). In our own Diocese we have two active partnerships between the denominations now: the Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry at RIT and the South Wedge Mission. We anticipate additional partnerships, especially in rural areas in the southern and eastern portions of the Diocese.

Based in large part on our network of transition ministry relationships, we were able to present a total of 10 clergy for open positions in the last 12 months.

In addition, we began using interim clergy for some of our open parishes, including those whose long-time rectors left this year. We presented a total of 7 clergy for interim positions in five parishes. Two of the interims came out of retirement and one person returned to the Diocese from out of state.

Interim clergy are (or will be) in place at the following parishes by the end of the fourth quarter:

- St. Peter's, Henrietta
- St. Peter's, Geneva
- St. John's, Canandaigua
- St. George's, Hilton
- Church of the Incarnation, Penfield

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 discussed ways of continuing fellowship and ministry momentum during transition, trends in clergy leave taking, and finding supply clergy. I began a weekly bible study for parishes in search. The Bible Study has a consistent group of about eight people participating from across the Diocese. In November we plan to hold a liturgy planning workshop to help open parishes plan for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

We continue to refine our processes related to search committee development, background checks, reference checks with other dioceses, and refining compensation agreements. In 2025 we will develop a group focusing on Interim Ministry and we hope to train a cohort of clergy as certified interim priests. I continue to be grateful to 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

THE NORTHEAST DISTRICT
93rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

- Clergy Transitions
 - The Rev. James Adams, St. Peter's – Geneva retired this year after over 40 years of service at St. Peter's.
 - The Rev. David Hefling, St. John's – Canandaigua retired this year after 14 years of service St. John's.
- District Grants
 - Rural & Migrant Ministries - Grace, Lyons – Communication and Interpretation initiatives
 - 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 needed clothing and school supplies)
 - 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
 - St. John's – HWS – Student Intern for Christian Ministry
- Bishop Search
 - Several members of the district served on all committees involved with the recent Bishop Search
 - Standing Committee
 - The Rev. Nita Byrd, St. John's – HWS - Geneva
 - The Rev. Cameron Miller, Trinity - Geneva
 - Discernment and Nominating Committee
 - Margi Ashley, St. John's - Canandaigua
 - The Rev. David Hefling, St. John's - Canandaigua
 - The Rev. Keisha Stokes, Zion - Palmyra
 - Transition Committee
 - The Very Rev. Gretchen Ratterree, St. Mark's - Newark
 - The Rev. Don Schranz, St. John's – Clifton Springs
 - St. Mark's – Newark hosted the Northeast portion of the Diocesan Tour

Faithfully submitted,
The Very Reverend Gretchen S. Ratterree

THE ROCHESTER -MONROE DISTRICTS

Well the year of 2023-24 was certainly one of transition. As the diocesan convention laid out the year plan was to elect ourselves a new bishop and certainly we have met that goal in Kara Wagner Sherer who was duly elected in February of 2024 and duly consecrated on July 13th, 2024. What was perhaps less on the radar screens was the work on the part of the entire diocese to get us to that place. And Monroe- Rochester surely stepped to the plate and did its part. We were well represented on the Standing Committee and its sub committees both lay and clergy working together, facing obstacles together and seeking to heal together. As deans we were very proud to have our deaneries fully engaged in this process of electing a new bishop.

In this time of transition following the tumult of COVID and the ramifications that continues to have on our diocese we thought it of importance that the clergy of the deaneries would continue to gather. Leslie came up with a great idea of having us meet the clergy at a coffee shop during the weeks of Lent. While not everyone's cup of joe, the gatherings were helpful. In addition we began to offer a more consistent and regular patterned meeting time for maintaining connections and sharing in bible study. We then came up with the third Thursday of the month from 1pm to 2:30pm at each of our parishes in the deaneries. So far it has been rather successful.

Our Rochester- Monroe deaneries gathered to elect clergy representatives to the Diocesan Council. The Rev Jim Trimble for Monroe and The Rev. Georgia Carney for Rochester were duly elected. May they serve us well. The event itself occurred at St. Luke's Fairport where we had a pizza pandemonium evening. Bishop Kara was one of our judges and Christ Church Rochester was the winner. A \$75.00 gift certificate was given to their favorite food program A Meal and More. (There was a bit of a slip up, in the effort to be completely transparent, the second place winner went to St. Thomas of Rochester; yet their representative did not enter a pizza in the contest. So we were left with either a miraculous event or a slip up in the numbers 😊)

The transition of electing a new bishop was not the only transition we have dealt with this year but was accompanied by several of our clergy going on sabbaticals and others retiring and others taking on new ministries. In late August we were alerted to the fact that our deaneries as we know them may be undergoing a reformation of their own. The diocesan council has been working on a plan to break down our system into three geographical areas requiring 3 districts led by 3 deans. This pilot program will be launched at this convention with hope that more fruitful engagements will result.

We would like to close with a couple of personal notes.

Thank you to Kenneth Pepin for taking over my Dean responsibilities while I was on sabbatical. I give thanks for his sense of humor and collaboration as we led the districts in this past year. I look forward to serving as Dean in our new pilot convocation. Faithfully, Leslie Burkardt

I would like to thank my colleagues for entrusting me with the privilege of serving you as dean. My term is completed at this convention. It has been a pleasure to work with Leslie and Ruth and the collaboration and friendship we have shared over the years.

Blessings, Ken+

THE SOUTHEAST DISTRICT

Report to Diocesan Convention 93 – October 26, 2024

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: Sue Baldwin

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 4, 2024, and June 3, 2024.

Our September 9, 2024, meeting was held in-person at Church of the Redeemer, Addison.

Bishop Kara attended our meeting in Addison which began with a potluck dinner and ended with Compline.

In February 2024, we announced the raising of \$16,300.00 for Ahli Arab Hospital, our 2023 District Mission Project. The Southeast District Mission Project for 2024 is Save Ukraine. The nine Episcopal Churches in the Southeast District are working together to raise much needed funds to assist Save Ukraine in providing LifePacks as part of their efforts to aid families and children affected by war. Thousands of Ukrainian children are suffering from the war and hiding in dark basements from constant shelling. Every day the Save Ukraine teams evacuate them away from hot spots to their centers in safe areas, providing maximum support for children on their way to a new place. 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 2024:

\$500: Schuyler County Habitat for Humanity

\$1000: Church of the Redeemer's Food Pantry

\$1000: Dolly Parton's Imagination Library - United Way of the Southern Tier

\$1000: Episcopal Women of Schuyler County

\$500: Justice Center of the Southern Tier

\$1000: St. Thomas' Red Door Kitchen

The Rev. Craig Hacker from St. James' Church, Hammondsport has been elected to serve as the Clergy District Representative to Diocesan Council after the 2024 Convention. This is a two-year term.

Southeast District clergy and delegates will attend the Pre-Convention Meeting on October 1, 2024. The next regular meeting of the Southeast District is tentatively scheduled for March 3, 2025.

Submitted By:

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

SOUTHWEST DISTRICT
Report to Diocesan Convention 2024
Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Introduction

The Southwest District of the Diocese of Rochester consists of the following parishes:

Saint Paul's, Angelica
Zion, Avon
Christ Church, Cuba
Saint Peter's, Dansville
Saint Michael's Geneseo
Christ Church, Hornell
Saint John's, Wellsville

We hold *clericus* meetings of the district clergy on the second Thursday morning of most months, and full meetings of all clergy and delegates at least quarterly, rotating between the parishes in the district.

The main item of business in the district is to divide up the funding (5000 dollars annually) that the diocese gives to each district. We do that in the SW District by a competitive application process, mainly so that all of the delegates can see the wonderful and impactful ministry that each parish is engaging in. We allocate most of the funds in the spring quarter, but usually reserve a portion for additional need in the fall. You will find below a list of all ministries that were funded this past year.

Ministries funded by the SW District

Requests

Saint Peter's Dansville

\$750 for Laundry Love Ministry

Saint Michael's Geneseo

\$500 for Chances and Changes

\$500 for Alianza Agricola

Saint Paul's Angelica

\$300 for St. Paul's Backpack Program

\$300 for St. Paul's "Share the Harvest" Holiday Food Pantry

\$200 for St. Paul's Youth Sports Equipment

Saint John's

\$700 for Grant request for boot and coat program

Christ Church Cuba

\$750 for Accord

Christ Church Hornell

\$200 for Sunday Meals Program

Saint John's Wellsville

\$500 for Media to Support Programs and Ministry

Descriptions of Ministry**Laundry Love**

Laundry Love was launched by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in 2017 to provide laundry and diaper services to families in need and Medicaid Mothers. This ministry supports approx. 300 distinct individuals (including families with children) per year. It provides detergent, fabric softener, and quarters. Since a change in denominational grant processes and priorities, the funding for this program is community driven, with donations from individuals, civic organizations, and churches, including from St. Peter's. The cost and usage of this ministry has increased substantially, with one month of typical expenses increasing from \$500 in 2023 to over \$800 at present.

St. Paul's Backpack Program

St. Paul's works with Genesee Valley Central School to provide school supplies for children returning to school in the fall. We work with the school guidance counselors and social workers to identify those families that need help with school supplies and backpacks.

St. Paul's "Share the Harvest" Holiday Food Pantry

St. Paul's collects food donations to help families during November and December. We donate our collected food to local food pantries and organizations. The money to support this program will be used to purchase turkeys or hams for needy families at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

St. Paul's Youth Sports Equipment

With our location adjacent to the Park Circle and the basketball courts, we would like to purchase basketballs and the supplies to build a container to hold the balls. This will allow all youth access to the basketballs and needed equipment to play at the courts.

Genesee Central School District

There is tremendous need in our local school district. We have given donations for student extracurricular activities, student food security, and school supplies. Many families in our local school district receive free and reduced lunches, a standard measure of poverty.

Chances and Changes

This is an organization that works with battered and abused women and their children. This is from their homepage: "At Chances and Changes, we offer people a chance... to escape the traumas of abuse, to heal the emotional and physical bruises, to live in an environment of comfort and protection, to take the first step in making a change for a better, safer, happier life."

Alianza Agricola

This is a group that works with undocumented immigrants. This is from their website: "The Alianza Agrícola is New York State's only worker-founded, worker-led organized group of undocumented immigrant dairy farmworkers. We are membership based, and all members are directly affected undocumented immigrants, mostly from Mexico, who live and work in isolation and poverty on dairy farms in 5 Western New York counties."

Sunday Meals Program

The 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month, 120 nutritious meals are bagged and delivered. A team plans, purchases, and prepares the meal. The meal is prepared in the kitchen of the church. Other segments of the meal are added before the meal is packed into a large brown bag marked with the name and # of people in that delivery. Each recipient is contacted before each meal. Currently participants are from 3 churches and 2 community groups and 1 church doing the deliveries We request \$200 as we continue to assist in this mission.

Media to support programs and ministry

St Paul's Angelica requests the amount of \$250 to purchase a smart TV and Webcam. The items will be used to support parish programming like: virtual programs (Bible Study and Book Club), partnership with United Way for income tax prep for the underserved in our community, support of Sunday School programming, Community open house history programs, and Parish Zoom meetings.

Conclusion

In summary, we've had a productive year in the SW district and, while we're sad to see some of our faithful delegates 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 SW district,

Michael Laver

ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS OFFICER INTERFAITH MINISTRY AT UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

Official Report of the 93rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

Local Interfaith Activity

In 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 2024 had over 750 participants from city, suburban and rural school districts.

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 LBGTQ 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. Chaplain Sam has also begun working with a Progressive Christian group at RIT and is developing a ministry that brings the students from both campuses together for a number of projects and events.

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. SAIC also takes students off campus to observe worship and rituals in local community religious sites, including the Islamic Center, the Hindu Temple, the Sikh Gurdwara and Compline at Christ Church. This year we will be adding a trip to Temple Sinai for a Friday Shabbat service.

I received a grant from Interfaith America to develop a course in Public Health and Religion which I have taught for two years, preparing students to integrate interreligious competency into health care professions. The course I developed with a grant from Interfaith America, called "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 had another successful year in Spring 2023. We had 15 students who engaged a variety of controversial public issues, including questions about demonstrations and protests on college campuses in the wake of the Israel/Gaza war.

The Episcopal Church (TEC)

The paper on Reconciliation, which was drafted by the Anglican-Roman Catholic bi-lateral dialogue, ARC-USA was presented to and accepted by the General Convention in 2024 and has been commended to the church as a resource.

I served 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 met virtually and in person preparing a variety of resolutions for General Convention 2024. Three documents that we prepared as resources for the church were presented at General Convention and resolutions commending them to the church as sources to guide interreligious dialogue generally, and also specifically for interactions with our Jewish and Muslim neighbors were passed by Convention.

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. 2024 DIOCESAN REPORT

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 2024 Update

Since our beginning in 2020 with a Pilot Group that worked through COVID-19, Crossroads of Caring has conducted ten units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) serving 49 students in western and central NY. Several students have continued on to pursue CPE residencies to work toward professional chaplaincy certification. Others have taken several CPE units with us to meet employment criteria at their hospitals. We started our eleventh unit on October 5th with seven more students receiving training. In March we had an in person site visit by ACPE and we were granted full accreditation. A huge step in our journey. In August we also received accreditation to train Certified Educators. This means we can train more folks in our hybrid approach to spiritual care education that includes BOTH on-line synchronous learning and in-person meetings.

Due to the generosity of several Episcopal congregations in the diocese we were able to offer our compassionate listening workshop, Equipped to Care (E2C), to three cohorts of students for only \$50. This fall we will be starting a fourth cohort and two spaces are still available. As our graduate pool grows with this program, we hope to begin to place them in community listening places. We continue to strive toward having 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. Since 2021 we have offered 19 one hour **Lunch & Learns** to our CPE and E2C 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. To date these videos have had more than 650 views on our YouTube Channel. Our 2024 programs are listed below.

Date	Presenter	Topic
January 18	Leann Patel, RN, <i>Chaplain & URMC Nurse Educator</i>	Nursing and Spirituality
March 21	Regina Carpenter, <i>Professional Storyteller & Chaplain (AOMC)</i>	Once Upon a Time: My Story of Recovery
May 16	Russel Jones, PhD, <i>ACPE Certified Educator</i>	Science of Empathy

July 18	The Rev. Padraic Collins-Bohrer; <i>Chaplain, Heritage Christian Services</i>	Disability Theology
September 19	Susan Daiss, <i>Faculty, University of Rochester, Department of Health & Humanities</i>	Spirituality in the Anatomy Lab
November 21	Speaker TBD	

Our **Journal Club** has been moved to a Facebook group open to anyone who is interested in Evidenced Informed Spiritual Care. We still post an article about every two months and invite comment and/or conversation on-line. A listing of the articles can be found [here](#).

In our last fiscal year (July 2023-June 2024) we raised \$30,926 from individuals, judicatories and congregations, a tremendous testament to the value of the work we are doing. It was gratifying to see many of our former students contributing to our ongoing programs. This spring we offered a new t-shirt design “Just Listen”, as a way to help get our name out into the community. Take a look [here](#). Help us spread the word by wearing one of our shirts. In August we held a 2nd Annual Butterfly release at Genesee Valley Park. Folks donated butterflies to honor friends and family who had been emotional and spiritual supports for them over the last several years. 100 Painted Lady butterflies took to the skies.

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 four 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 not be where we are today. Thank you all.

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



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. Kara Wagner Sherer**, ESLC Board Member Ex-officio
- **Richard Yates**, ESLC Board Chair, Member of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church
- **Michael Lehman**, ESLC Board Member, ECH Foundation Board Chair, Member of Christ Church Pittsford
- **The Rev. Canon Robert Picken**, ESLC Board Member, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- **Paul Greene, Esq.**, ESLC Board Member, EDOR Assistant Chancellor
- **The Rev. Virginia Tyler Smith**, ECH Foundation Board Member, EDOR Officer for Transitions and Congregational Development
- **Dr. Sherry Ralston**, ESLC Human Resources Committee Member, Member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- **The Rev. Mary Ann Brody**, Executive Director of Crossroads of Caring, Program Partner.
- **The Rev. Mark Steigler**, ESLC Chaplaincy Volunteer.
- **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, 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:

Over the last year, Episcopal SeniorLife Communities (ESLC) has continued to grow with support from the leadership team, staff members, board of directors, donors, volunteers, residents, family members, and program participants. We remain focused on four strategic pathways as we serve older adults in and around Rochester.

Enrich the Resident Experience

We are a leader in setting standards for quality services and programs. Our commitment to enhancing offerings drives us to continually evolve and invest in our programs and the physical

environments of each community. This enriches the experience for residents and staff alike, ensuring we provide state-of-the-art, safe, and comfortable places where residents are proud to live and staff are proud to work.

Over the past 12 months, we have made significant improvements to our living spaces, including the launch of a large-scale construction project at Episcopal Church Home. Funded by a New York State Department of Health grant, this initiative will modernize The Home to better serve residents and meet evolving expectations.

In September, we also opened Ellen's Place in partnership with St. Cecilia Catholic Church in East Irondequoit. Ellen's Place, a 74-unit campus modeled after Beatrice Place, combines moderately priced senior housing with ESLC's Neighborhood Program.

Expand Community Opportunities

We create neighborhood-based options that are affordable, improve quality of life, and connect seniors with services that support independent living in the community. ESLC is committed to addressing gaps in senior programs and understanding the unique needs of neighborhoods across the Rochester region. We offer numerous opportunities that support independence, community engagement, and enhance health and welfare for individuals living at home.

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

With the growing number of people living with Alzheimer's or dementia, ESLC is also expanding the Neighborhood Program to offer specialized services for these individuals and their families. Approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) program will launch in 2025, focusing on improving quality of life by addressing behavioral and functional needs, coordinating care, and easing transitions between care settings. The program will also support unpaid caregivers through skills training, access to community resources, a 24/7 support line, and respite services.

Empower Those Who Care for Others

ESLC is special because of the people who dedicate themselves to caring for others. Our engaged and professional workforce ensures quality and consistency in providing care, programs, and services. We are committed to their well-being and professional growth by fostering a work culture based on strong values and offering programs that express gratitude and support continued education, career advancement, and personal development.

In 2024, ESLC was awarded a workforce support grant to enhance staff development and career progression. This grant supports the creation of a new manager and supervisor training program, expands staff education, and establishes a pathway for certified nursing assistants (CNAs) to become licensed practical nurses (LPNs). It also funded the hiring of a Success Workforce Coach. Currently, two CNAs are actively pursuing their nursing degrees, while the Success Coach is providing valuable support to staff in overcoming work and life challenges,

empowering them for long-term success. This initiative has shown promising results, and we look forward to further progress in 2025.

Embrace Our Faith-Based Culture

ESLC remains dedicated to the Christian values on which it was founded—as a faith-based, nonprofit organization committed to understanding individual and community needs. We support seniors and their families through transitions, honoring each individual’s unique desires, beliefs, and values. Our commitment to providing both care and financial support for seniors is a testament to our mission, unparalleled in the senior living field.

In January, after five years of dedicated service, the Rev. Deven Hubert, ESLC’s chaplain, retired. We are working closely with the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester to find the right candidate to fill this important role. In the meantime, Patti Cummings, lay chaplain, has been instrumental in coordinating services and providing pastoral care across ESLC’s campuses, supported by faithful volunteers, supply clergy, and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) students through Crossroads of Caring. Patti’s dedication to our residents has been invaluable, and we are deeply thankful for her contributions.

We are deeply grateful to be part of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester and thank the community for the support, prayers, and encouragement extended to ESLC over the years. Your continued support is truly appreciated now and in the future.

DIOCESAN PRISON MINISTRY ADVISORY BOARD
93rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester
Report to Convention for 2024

Officer(s):

Britton Hopkin – Secretary

Committee Members:

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 encourage and support ministries within our parishes to assist this community.

Meetings:

During 2024, we have not held any regular meetings of the Prison Ministry Advisory Board, as we currently operate without a chair or interim chair. We continue to be without a chairperson as this is a Bishop appointed position. As per our former interim bishop’s recommendations (The Rt. Rev. Bishop Lane), we are still on “hold” pending discussions with our new bishop, the Rt. Rev. Kara Wagner Sherer. As Secretary for our “Committee-on-Hold”, will be reaching out to her soon for consultation. Despite our current “on-hold” status, we have continued to support our website www.prisonministry-edr.org, and have appointed a new webmaster, Ms. Alexis Kantor to oversee its operation. Through this website, we continue to welcome volunteers to our programs and to be involved with inquiries from people needing help or advice.

Report: October 2023 through September 2024

At the request of Keisha Stokes, I have contacted many of our active members before the Covid shutdown for updates on their work.

Robert Crystal: Bob reports that his programs for our Department of Corrections System and for the Monroe County Jail have been shut down by these facilities.

Dick Laidlaw: Dick Laidlaw is currently a member of the Board of Directors for the Re-entry Association of Western New York (RAWNY). In addition, he is on the Advisory Board of the youth detention center at Industry and is on the Juvenile Justice Council here in Monroe County. He continues his jail work and manages PRAM (Prison Re-entry and Aftercare Ministries) programs, including Scouts Beyond Bars which he initiated for children whose parents are incarcerated as a way to provide structure to the parents and youth affected by incarceration. 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 have not 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 the Northeast District Storybook Project operating in the Ontario County Jail in Hopewell NY, has resumed meetings with inmates on the first Wednesday of every month since December 2023. Pre-pandemic we had one morning for dads and one for moms, but with the lower jail census, it makes sense to see both males and females the same day. Of course, the number of books reaching a child each time has been as high as 34. In the past, we purchased most of our books from Scholastic Warehouse Sales. However, they have unfortunately gone by the wayside, so parents continue to be very appreciative of our program! **The Storybook Project currently has six dedicated volunteers but is eager to welcome additional volunteers to support their program. Those interested should contact Shari Peck at sharipeck57@gmail.com, or through the Diocesan Prison Ministry Website www.prisonministry-edr.org, or phone us at (585) 309-6345.**

Rochester Storybook Project: 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. We are happy to report that despite initially losing many volunteers for our program due to the pandemic, this year we have enjoyed a resurgence of new volunteers who have joined our program. Indeed, many of our new volunteers are graduate students from The University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, and other sources who are looking forward to professional work in fields closely related to Social Work, Counseling, Clinical Psychology, and Corrections. We have also been providing recommendations for volunteers as they apply for further study and special fieldwork opportunities.

We are currently purchasing most of our books from **Hippocampo Children's Books Inc.** 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 the Diocesan Website www.prisonministry-edr.org, or phone us at (585) 309-6345. We have recently received a generous financial grant from Spiritus Christi Church to assist in funding our program. We welcome individual donations as well. Those wishing to donate to our program should contact us at Rochester Storybook Project, c/o St. Peter's Episcopal Church Henrietta, 3825 East Henrietta Road, Henrietta, NY 14467.

Financial Needs for 2025: We are again requesting funding for 2025 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

With this report, there is much good news as some projects have regrouped after the pandemic and in many cases enhanced their services. 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