Episcopal Diocese of New York
Bishop Search

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE
TO ELECT A BISHOP

updated November 13th, 2022
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Report of the Committee
to Elect a Bishop

The Committee to Elect a Bishop Coadjutor for The Episcopal Diocese of New York has completed its work of selecting nominees. On September 26th, we will nominate the following persons for Bishop Coadjutor:

(in alphabetical order)

The Rev. Matthew Foster Heyd, the Diocese of New York

The Rev. Stephanie M. Johnson, the Diocese of Connecticut

The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead, the Diocese of New York

The Rev. Steven D. Paulikas, the Diocese of Long Island

The Rev. Robert Jemonde Taylor, the Diocese of North Carolina

I. The Committee’s Proceedings

The Committee commenced its work on December 7, 2021, at which time it elected the Rev. Theodora Brooks and the Rev. Michelle Meech as chair and secretary, respectively. As its first order of business, the Committee members spent time in reflection and prayer, learning about each other and sharing their hopes for the Diocese. They also discussed the importance of confidentiality, technology support and the need to select a Committee consultant. After considering the credentials of nominees presented to the Committee for consideration, the Committee unanimously approved the selection of Judy Stark, an experienced consultant to Episcopal bishop search groups.

In March 2022, the Committee sent out a Diocesan-wide survey and embarked upon a series of Listening Lent Zoom sessions which provided input as to the type of person we should be seeking as the next Bishop of New York. The sessions were open to all members of the Diocese, with certain sessions designed to solicit
the views of various Diocesan affinity groups. In addition, the Committee met with members of Diocesan organizations to collect additional information for the Bishop search profile. Specifically, the Committee asked for suggestions regarding what spiritual characteristics, special skills and talent, and priorities the next Bishop of New York should have. The responses that the Committee received in writing and from the Zoom sessions informed the Committee both in preparing the profile and in developing interview questions for the potential candidates. During the Zoom sessions, the Committee also sought prayers from the Diocese in guiding it in its mission.

On April 8, 2022, the Committee, after reflecting on the responses it received to the survey and on the Zoom sessions, the Committee published the Diocesan profile in connection with the Bishop search for the Episcopal Diocese of New York. Subtitled “Who Will Lead Us?,” the profile stressed the need for a new Bishop who can appreciate and lead within a multifaceted range of contexts and bring the grace of God to bear upon our works of love in the next chapter of our Diocesan life. The profile contained organizational, financial and other information about the Diocese, as well as a timeline and summary of the opportunities and challenges faced by the Diocese. Its publication also launched a month-long nominating period during which persons from around the United States and the world submitted letters in support of potential Bishop Coadjutor candidates. The Committee likewise posted the Listening Lent summary and Diocesan profile on its website (bishopsearch.dioceseny.org) and encouraged members of the Diocese to include the Committee in their Prayers of the People every Sunday and in their personal prayers.

Our call for nominations was distributed widely throughout the church, including to sitting bishops and to organizations and agencies of the church. It attracted a rich and diverse pool that reflected The Episcopal Church in gender, race, ethnicity, geography and sexual orientation and was near the top in the number of applicants typical of recent bishop searches. Nominees who agreed to move forward with the process were then sent an application packet. That packet included the Diocesan profile and six essay questions drafted by the Committee. We also requested a cover letter, resumé and an updated Office for Transition Ministry portfolio, the latter of which included eleven essay questions covering a wide variety of topics and experiences in the church. The deadline for submitting application materials to the Committee was May 6, 2022.

The Committee reviewed application materials with names and other identifying information removed. On May 17, 2022, at an all-day retreat at St. Matthew’s, Bedford, the Committee discussed their reflections and thoughts on the packets for each of the candidates who had submitted applications, and identified a smaller group for further consideration.

During the month of June, three-person teams from the Committee conducted Zoom interviews with each of the candidates. The Committee drafted an extensive list of questions, which were used for all interviews, as well as candidate-specific questions that emerged from the respective candidate’s application materials.
At an all-day meeting at St. John’s, Kingston, on June 27, 2022, the Committee met to review the materials submitted by the candidates and to discuss the Zoom interviews. After careful consideration and prayer, the Committee narrowed the field to a smaller group who were invited to a three-day discernment retreat with the Committee, held August 24-26, during which each of the candidates led worship, made presentations and engaged in in-depth discussions with the Committee. Prior to the retreat, the Committee had engaged SSC Background Screening and Investigations to run extensive background checks, enlisted professionals to conduct rigorous psychological testing and undertook thorough reference checks from a variety of persons familiar with the candidate.

On September 8, 2022, the Committee met to digest the information gleaned from the discernment retreat and to ascertain that the background checks and psychological testing had not uncovered any troubling information about any of the candidates. As a result of its deliberations on September 8, the Committee selected 5 nominees for Bishop Coadjutor.

The Committee adopted the Report on September 15, 2022.

II. The Committee’s Statement

The Committee has felt the presence of the Holy Spirit in this process. Reflecting on our work so far, there is much we are thankful for.

The Committee is most grateful for the assistance and support it has received throughout the Diocese and beyond. The diocesan profile is the product of many people. In particular, it is a composite of the many thoughtful and prayerful suggestions, recommendations, and ideas the Committee received in response to the January survey. Your input throughout this process made our work that much easier and you helped set the direction of the search. We could not have done the work we were sent out to do without your help.

Thank you!

The Committee is also extremely grateful to all the candidates. Every candidate helped the Committee refine its focus and see more clearly who it is we are seeking as our next bishop. In a very short amount of time that included Holy Week and Easter, all of them did virtually the impossible — they opened themselves for inspection, presenting eloquently through essays and applications who they are and what they hope for this Diocese. Throughout this process, the Committee found itself humbled by, in awe of, and simply proud of the caliber of the candidates who presented themselves for consideration. More than anything, the Committee routinely was inspired by this incredible and talented pool of clergy who are doing so many wonderful things in the service to God. We are grateful to those who walked with us, whether for a short
time or through the entire process, and for the insights, wisdom and clarity they shared with us. All of you are a credit and blessing to the Church. May God bless each and every one of you!

We are grateful for the dedication of the 9 members of the Committee. Each of us had many obligations, but thanks to Zoom, attendance at our meetings was almost always 100%. And our in-person meetings were even more joyful because we were able to do our work in one another’s presence. Members made themselves available on short notice and allowed their personal lives to be put on hold during the critical months of June, July, and August.

We could not have accomplished all that we did without the deft guidance of our experienced consultant, Judy Stark. Her wit, wisdom and humor gave us direction and perspective in navigating this enriching, yet challenging, process. Thank you, Judy.

Lastly, the Committee is truly grateful for the tireless support that Nicholas Richardson, Geoff Smith, and Sister Faith Margaret, the Communications Officer, Director of Technology, and Treasurer, respectively, of the Diocese of New York, provided throughout this process. So much of our work depended on their exceptional organizational skills and patience. We could not have done this without you. Thank you, thank you, and again thank you!

We believe the guidance of the Holy Spirit has been truly present in this work. While these candidates do not share the same story or journey, they all share in the One Body and the One Spirit. We are honored that these five have offered themselves to stand for election.

**The Rev. Matthew Heyd** comes to us from the Church of the Heavenly Rest within our Diocese where he serves as their Rector. Rev. Matt first came to our Diocese as a lay person who served on a variety of diocesan commissions and committees and worked in a variety of service-based organizations, including Episcopal Charities. In 2003 Rev. Matt began working as the Director of Faith in Action at Trinity Church Wall Street. Rev. Matt helped grow Trinity’s outreach ministry through an increased volunteer involvement and greater congregational buy-in. After a decade at Trinity, Rev. Matt became the Rector of the Church of the Heavenly Rest where he has increased community engagement and annual stewardship.

Rev. Matt has served our diocese in a variety of capacities including Chair of the Social Concerns Commission, Secretary of Convention, and a member of the Bishop’s Advisory Committee on Strategic Planning, amongst others. Rev. Matt is a graduate of The General Theological Seminary, Yale, and UNC Chapel Hill. He is a father of a 14 year-old daughter and a 10 year-old son, a husband to his wife Ann, and is a big reader and runner in his spare time.

**The Rev. Stephanie M. Johnson** is Rector of St Paul’s Episcopal Church in Riverside, CT. She grew up in the Hudson Valley. For nearly 20 years, Rev. Stephanie worked for governmental agencies and engineering companies as a town and environmental planner. Rev. Stephanie formerly worked for the Episcopal Bishops
of New England providing support to seven dioceses with nearly 600 congregations in responding to climate change. In this position, she designed and launched an outreach campaign called “Turn Off the Lights, for God’s Sake.” Additionally, she coordinated a Food, Faith and Farming project for the Episcopal Diocese of New York at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. In May 2013, Rev. Stephanie organized an international climate faith summit in Washington DC for The Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Church of Sweden. She now works as a Convener for the New England Regional Environmental Ministries Network and a lead organizer of the ecumenical Climate Revival in Boston that was attended by over 700 people in April 2013. Rev. Stephanie has led numerous workshops on faith and the environment and regularly participates in interfaith panel discussions about climate change.

Rev. Stephanie holds a bachelor's in history from Fordham, a diploma in public policy from University of Stockholm, Sweden, and an MDiv and MST from Berkeley and Yale.

The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead is Rector of the parish of Christ the Redeemer in Pelham. Rev. Matt is married to Nicole DeCoursy Mead, and they have two school age children, Liam and Nicholas. He is a graduate of the University of Chicago and Yale University.

Rev. Matt serves as one of the Clergy Deputies to General Convention from the Diocese of New York and was the Chair of the 2021 (2022) General Convention Legislative Committee for Stewardship & Socially Responsible Investing. He served as a member of and Secretary of the 2018-2022 Task Force for Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision of the Episcopal Church. He is Chair of the Budget Committee of the Diocese of New York and serves as an ex officio member of both the Finance Committee of the Diocese and the Council of the Diocese. He also serves as a Trustee of the Diocese of New York, a member of the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of New York and one of the Commission’s Parish Discernment Committee Trainers. Rev. Matt enjoys good food, good music, model trains, and golfing (poorly).

The Rev. Steven D. Paulikas is Rector of All Saints’ in Park Slope, Brooklyn. He is a member of the Board of Directors of Episcopal Relief & Development, where he chairs the Advancement and Development Committee and the Pastoral Care Advisory Committee at New York Presbyterian-Brooklyn Methodist Hospital. He previously served on the Board of Governors of the Episcopal Church at Yale and facilitated the process of discernment for holy orders through the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Long Island. Rev. Steven is a candidate for the DPhil in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Oxford. While a Term Member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Rev. Steven co-chaired the New York Term Member Advisory Council. His opinion writing has recently appeared in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Nation, and others, and his essay on the political response to evil is featured in Modern Ethics in 77 Arguments: A Stone Reader. He is a graduate of the General Theological Seminary, the University of Cambridge, and Yale University. Prior to attending seminary, Rev. Steven was a journalist based in Vilnius, Lithuania. He is married to Jesse Lazar.
The Reverend Robert Jemonde Taylor is the eleventh rector of Saint Ambrose Episcopal Church, Raleigh, N.C. Rev. Jemonde recently led Saint Ambrose through a three-year capital campaign raising twice the church’s annual budget while maintaining strong stewardship, with building upgrades emphasizing environmentalism.

Rev. Jemonde is active in the community through his membership as chair of Raleigh’s Stormwater Management Advisory Commission (SMAC), founder and strategy team member of ONE Wake, a community organizing power group, and more. He is active in the Diocese of North Carolina as past president of the Standing Committee, member of Diocesan Council, and Chartered Committee on History and Archives, among other leadership positions. He is active in the larger Church as board member and treasurer for the Gathering of Leaders, the Episcopal Church Foundation Congregational Leadership Initiative (CLI) faculty, and more.

Rev. Jemonde holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from North Carolina State University and an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University. He worked as an automotive engineer for Michelin Tire Company before entering seminary. He earned his M.Div. from the General Theological Seminary. He is married to Kierson Leigh Taylor, and they are the proud parents of two children.

All five of these nominees, in his or her own way, embody whom this diocese is seeking as its next bishop:

- They are grounded in the teachings and life of Christ
- They are persons of prayer and have a spirituality that can easily be witnessed
- They are excellent preachers, writers, and confident public spokespersons
- They have witnessed emphatically against social and economic injustice
- They have the courage to tell us what we need to hear rather than what we want to hear
- They are bridge-builders and unifiers
- They are conversant in technology and its prospects in unprecedented times
- They are listeners
- They can lead the ecumenical and interfaith movements and dialogues of New York
- They are pastors to pastors
- They are strategic planners and entrepreneurs
- They can represent us in the Anglican Communion and they will make us proud
- They have joyful hearts, generative spirits, balanced lifestyles, and a healthy sense of humor
- They are, among the group of highly qualified candidates, the best fit for the Office of Bishop of New York.
III. Meet and Greet Sessions

Monday, November 14: MANHATTAN

· Meet with Manhattan clergy for informal conversation
  Please contact the Dean of your clericus for details.

· Travel to Staten Island via Staten Island Ferry

Monday, November 14: STATEN ISLAND

· Meet with Staten Island clergy for informal conversation
  Please contact the Dean of your clericus for details.

· Tour of Staten Island history and community

· Quiet Prayer

· Public Meet & Greet Session from 7:00-8:30
  St. Mary’s, Castleton
  Livestreaming available: https://youtu.be/eJvlca0-rNI

Tuesday, November 15: MID-HUDSON

· Worship at Holy Cross Monastery, West Park
  A Benedictine community in the Anglican Communion. Learn more at holycrossmonastery.com.

· Meet with Mid-Hudson clergy for informal conversation
  Please contact the Dean of your clericus for details.

· Tour Rural and Migrant Ministry, Cornwall on Hudson
  RMM stands with rural and farmworking communities statewide to overcome prejudices and poverty that degrade and debilitate people within rural New York by celebrating diversity, achieving true mutuality, and fighting for dignity and opportunity for all. Learn more at ruralmigrantministry.org.
· Meet with Diocesan Reparations Commission
  This group collects and documents information on the complicity of the Diocese of New York in the institution of slavery and its subsequent history of segregation and discrimination. Learn more at reparations.dioceseny.org.

· Meet with Grace Year Fellowship
  Grace Year is a spirited, imaginative community of young adults living simply in intentional community, working for social change, deepening their spiritual lives, and developing leadership skills for a transformed future. Learn more at graceyear.org.

· Quiet Prayer

· Public Meet & Greet Session from 7:00-8:30

  St. George’s, Newburgh

  Spanish interpretation available

  Livestreaming available: https://youtu.be/g3nCsU2BANo

Wednesday, November 16: MANHATTAN

· Work with volunteers to pack food and serve clients at Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen
  Holy Apostles Soup Kitchen nourishes hungry New Yorkers in an atmosphere of respect and hospitality. Learn more at holyapostlesnyc.org.

· Walking tour through Chelsea and West Village

· Meet with Canterbury NYC and Young Adults
  CanterburyNYC is a gathering of faith communities of the Episcopal Church focused on higher education throughout New York City. Learn more at canterburynyc.org.

· Travel via subway to St. Edward the Martyr

· Tour El Barrio Angels
  El Barrio Angels is a partnership of the Church of St. Edward the Martyr, Monkworx, and local nonprofits and community organizers whose mission is to provide a safe space and network of resources and support to immigrants, regardless of status or ability to pay. Learn more at stedwardthemartyr.com/pages/los-angeles-de-el-barrio
· Meet with Episcopal Charities
  Episcopal Charities provides critical funding, operational support, and volunteers to strengthen nearly 100 local programs working to transform the lives of more than 1 million people in need each year. Learn more at episcopalcharities-newyork.org.

· Quiet Prayer

· **Public Meet & Greet Session from 7:00-8:30**

  **St. Andrew’s, Harlem**

  Spanish and ASL interpretation available

  Livestreaming available: [https://youtu.be/PzPH5kZSGHQ](https://youtu.be/PzPH5kZSGHQ)

**Thursday, November 17: WESTCHESTER**

· Meet with Westchester clergy for informal conversation
  
  *Please contact the Dean of your clericus for details.*

· Meeting with all Diocesan Latino leadership, clergy and lay
  
  *Please contact Canon Victor Conrado for details.*

· Quiet Prayer

· **Public Meet & Greet Session from 7:00-8:30**

  **Trinity St. Paul, New Rochelle**

  Livestreaming available: [https://youtu.be/fY54TKCUso8](https://youtu.be/fY54TKCUso8)

**Friday, November 18: BRONX**

· Meeting with Bronx clergy
  
  *Please contact the Dean of your clericus for details.*

· Quiet prayer

· Tour building project at St. James, Fordham
  
  *St. James inhabits a building with landmark status designed in 1863 for a rural parish complete with Tiffany windows. They are currently going through a redevelopment of the property.*

· Bronx Clergy presentations
Public Meet & Greet Session from 7:00-8:30

St. Margaret’s, Longwood

Spanish interpretation available
Livestreaming available: https://youtu.be/RSwp87zpJec

Saturday, November 19: THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE

- Tour Cathedral of St. John the Divine
- Quiet prayer

We pray this report has been informative and garners excitement for the journey we have ahead of us, as a Diocese, as we prepare to elect our bishop coadjutor!

In peace, hope, and love,

Committee for the Election of a Bishop

The Rev. Trevor Babb - Christ Church, Staten Island
The Rev. Mary Barber - St. George’s, Newburgh, & St. Paul’s, Poughkeepsie
The Rev. Theodora (Teddy) Brooks - St. Margaret’s, The Bronx
De Young Chan - Episcopal Church of Our Savior, Manhattan
Nick Gordon - St. John’s in the Village, Manhattan
The Very Rev. Michelle Meech - St. John’s, Kingston
Yvonne O’Neal - Church of the Holy Trinity, Manhattan
Alice Yurke, Chancellor of the Diocese - St. Bartholomew’s, Manhattan
The Rev. John Zahl - St. Matthew’s, Bedford
The Rev. Matthew Foster Heyd
We live in a Kairos moment— Dean Kelly Brown Douglas describes this time as a “moment of grace and opportunity, a time in which God issues a challenge to decisive action.”

I completely believe that’s true.

This moment is hard. Congregational leaders feel abandoned, lonely, and exhausted. The pandemic tumult of the last several years is joined to historic endemic racism and the increasing chaos of American civic life. The mechanics of doing church are more complicated for communities of all sizes. Healing is an aching need, in New York and globally.

This moment is defined by possibility. The key question isn’t how we handle decline. The question is how we handle change. The Holy Spirit is active right now—as active as 10 or 50 or 2,000 years ago. We can care for each other through difficult times. We can build new tools for changing needs. We can move from exhaustion to renewal.

I learned what renewal means from leaders in the Diocese of New York.

I grew up in North Carolina but I was raised up for ministry in the Diocese of New York. I’ve now spent my entire adult life working for the renewal of the Episcopal Church at the congregational, diocesan, and national levels.

My vocation has been possible because of the care and support from friends here in New York. My life and faith has been shaped by the community of the Church. I moved at age twenty-five from far away without friends or family nearby. Now it’s home. It’s where my children were baptized. It’s where I’ve served the church, both as lay leader and as priest. My daughter was confirmed in the Cathedral where I was ordained. We’ve lived through responses to 9/11 and the pandemic. Our whole family marched with Black Lives Matter after George Floyd’s murder.

A decade ago I was part of a bishop election back home in North Carolina. I’ve said “no” to every nomination since in both congregational and bishop’s searches.

But New York is home and I owe an enormous debt to the Church here. I believe deeply in our people and our possibilities. I know that we can thrive—if we change together.

The Diocese is our people and our communities, not principally the bishop and the bishop’s staff. The bishop can serve as a champion of street-level ministries in congregations, chaplaincies, schools, and affiliated agencies and an organizer of our witness together to a world that deeply needs to hear a message of grace, hope, and love. We have an incredible opportunity. I’m excited about our conversations for what’s possible in the Diocese of New York.

Grace and Peace,
Matthew Heyd+
Answers to Application Essay Questions

1. Describe your relationship with Christ and how it shapes your ministry.

In my mid-20s I was completely lost. I’m not sure I seemed lost. I had graduated from seminary. I had a job. I was about to get married.

But I weighed much more than I should, my ADHD was disrupting my life, and I had begun to deal with the rising anxiety that I’ve now experienced in my entire adult life. Finding a practice of the presence of God changed my life. I have a wonderful little book that my mother and I have read for a very long time that is a modern translation of Benedictine spirituality. There’s one line at the beginning of the book that goes like this, *It is for us to train our hearts to live in grace and, when we fail, to begin again each day.* Practice opens us to Grace. A rhythm of life opens us to experience the dynamic transcendence of a living God.

This practice of the presence of God deeply reflects the Incarnation of Jesus Christ in my life. Incarnation lived in the present tense. I recently read a book about Billy Graham that said all of Dr. Graham’s sermons were about John 3:16. For me my whole life is about Galatians chapter 2: *It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.* The abiding presence of Christ in my life is a guiding force. I find this in my daily ritual rhythm and practice of prayer. I’m both a mystic and deeply attracted to ascetical theology.

Actually, when I pray that verse from Galatians I pray it this way: *It is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us.* We live Christ’s Incarnation most fully together.

Nothing is possible alone. I found, and continue to find, the love of God within the liturgies and prayers of Christian community. I’ve been deeply influenced by Michael Battle’s recounting of Archbishop Desmond Tutu’s theology of Ubuntu: *We are made to be together.*

Incarnational community is always aspirational. Christ abides in us and yet we are broken and live our faith in communities that are broken (and sometimes break us). Kelly Brown Douglas writes so powerfully about moral imagination. Seeking and serving Christ in each other— listening to each other’s stories— reminds us what’s possible and what’s needed.

2. What is it about our profile that gets you excited and how do you think your skills and experiences are well-suited to serve the Diocese of New York as Bishop Diocesan?

I have spent my entire adult life working for the renewal of Episcopal Church. This journey has been deeply collaborative and focused on how we listen and learn together.

I moved to my current diocese when I was 25 years old to help start Episcopal Charities in the Diocese of New York. I learned about Church by visiting summer programs for children, soup kitchens, small shelters, and an extraordinary range of activities that connected congregations back to their neighborhoods. Everywhere I went I found incredible creativity, innovation, and perseverance. And I found kindness. All
through my life people have been willing to share what they know to help me learn.

My congregation now works with an Irish poet who says that listening is a sacrament. I think that’s true. Listening has been the bedrock of my ministry and the key to the renewal of the church.

I’ve been so fortunate to have been involved in projects over 27 years that help the Church try new things. As a new priest I helped my congregation envision hands-on mission in its neighborhood and globally that involved hundreds of parishioners and engaged our neighbors.

As rector I’ve helped my congregation re-imagine its ministry three times in a decade as we follow the Holy Spirit—launching ministries in arts and prison reentry and forming a daily online prayer community in the pandemic. We used the strange and difficult limits of the pandemic time to be creative in who we invited to join our ministries and lead our programs.

I play four roles as rector: pastor, strategist, storyteller, and organizer. All four roles support a healthy and dynamic pastoral fabric that cares for our people, engages their gifts in ministry, and invites our neighbors into Christian community. Pastoral fabric feels like a better way to describe “congregational system.” It’s organic, connected, dynamic, and Incarnational.

The Diocese is our people and our communities. The bishop and the bishop’s staff support these street-level communities. The role of a bishop is to support a healthy pastoral fabric across a Diocese, serve street level ministries, and to organize those communities together to witness to the world.

To do this, the bishop has to care for diocesan leaders. To do this, we have to change a diocesan revenue model which is broken, dismantle the inequities in the ordination and deployment process, and find creative ways to care for our aging buildings together. I’ve learned: it doesn’t matter how big or small the community, renewal isn’t possible alone.

3. What new and hopeful perspectives and ideas can you bring to the conversation about church decline that support and encourage long-term solutions?

We are Easter people. The question is always, what do we hope?

The last several years, and the last decade, have been exhausting. Just the basics of doing church keep getting more difficult. The world has been on a roller coaster ride and churches everywhere have been dramatically affected. The numbers are clear.

And yet, the essential question isn’t about decline. The question is about how we adapt and change within our dynamic traditions. Christian communities can look differently than in the past without the shame of failing imagined history. The Holy Spirit is as active now as in the 1950’s or when St. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth.

There’s no easy answer but there are incredible possibilities. How do we draw on our history, organize our
neighborhoods with our gifts, and structure the bishop’s staff to support street-level ministry in congregations, schools, chaplaincies, and affiliated agencies?

We can do all these things because we have amazing people. *We are salt and light together.*

The long history of the Diocese of New York shows courage, leadership, and struggle. The Diocese was born from empire and enslavement. But the Diocese also flourished over two centuries with energy to create a New World through the Gospel. It has always widened invitation into the joy that Christ’s love provides.

The Diocese of New York helped lead women’s ordination and acceptance of LGBTQ+ clergy. It stood with Desmond Tutu in South Africa to fight apartheid and with farmworkers in the Hudson Valley to achieve basic rights. It helped build the South Bronx and Harlem through community organizing. Its cathedral was long a beacon for pageantry and justice. It leads the whole Episcopal Church in addressing reparations for slavery.

The Diocese can recognize where it has been complicit in evil (The Bishop of New York should apologize for the Diocese’ participation in enslavement) and commit itself to repair.

Then, the Diocese has the tools it needs for renewal—beginning with amazing lay leaders, deacons, and priests. Great ministry comes from deep relationships. Deep relationships inspire incredible imagination. The Diocese of New York is too diverse for one answer to how renewal looks. Years ago I helped create an initiative called *Feed the Solution* with the goal of increasing the impact of congregation-based feeding programs. We wanted to engage urban, suburban, and rural congregations. At first, I thought the answer was obvious: soup kitchens and food pantries should help their guests connect with local or federal benefit programs. Our area left billions of dollars in benefits unused.

I was wrong. We listened to participants in the initiative. Each program figured out one next step that fit their community. Some expanded benefit counseling. Others taught cooking classes. The lesson extended well beyond feeding programs. Congregations know their communities best and each community can organize its gifts differently in response to the opportunities they find.

Congregations need support to organize. Leadership has become more lonely. The bishop and the bishop’s staff should be organized around how they support street-level organizing and Diocese-wide witness. The Diocese of Pennsylvania has re-organized exactly this way.

There’s grief and loss. The Diocese has lost familiar faces and centuries-old communities have either been lost or stand at risk. We’re exhausted and there is abundance. That’s the Easter Day Gospel story.

What do we hope? The Diocese of New York can be more vibrant in ten years than it is today, if it changes together. It has the history, gifts, and imagination to make it possible.
4. Given the impact of COVID on the life of our ministry, we are curious about how you will pastor our congregations, both clergy and laity.

I’ve been an amazed and grateful recipient of pastoral care in the Diocese of New York for my entire adult life. I arrived as a twenty-five year old from far away with no friends or family in the area. People within the Diocese immediately invited me into a community that has shaped my adult life. At multiple points—particularly in the ordination process—people offered care and support beyond what I could have imagined.

Throughout my ordained life it’s been my guiding belief that pastoral care is always our most important ministry because it reflects God’s unconditional love. Individual pastoral care weaves into a healthy pastoral fabric for communities. We can do anything when we know that we are loved.

In March 2020 I heard an Episcopal lay leader in public health say the pandemic would present as a health crisis but would actually cause an emotional and spiritual crisis. The key to navigating the difficulty was emotional resilience.

Emotional resilience has been a constant question through these several years. We showed up for our parish community every single day. I led online morning prayer and compline daily through the first year of the pandemic so that we could pray together even in lockdown. Though we increased our presence we also made sure that our staff team has flexible work schedules and time for family. Care for ourselves and each other made care for a hurting and anxious community possible. We’ve expanded our pastoral care practices for a changing community—including care for some who now join only online.

As difficult as the two-year COVID pandemic has been, so many have been affected much longer by the trauma of endemic racism. Reparations for generations-long hurts—including in the ordination and deployment processes—are crucial to forming a healthy and caring pastoral fabric in a diocese.

A bishop models care for a diocese and supports a pastoral fabric that supports care for lay and clergy leaders. Care goes well beyond intervening in crisis situations. It means being present in the rhythm of the lives of those serving grass-roots communities. A bishop called me on my first Christmas Eve as a priest. That meant the world to me. The bishop’s staff should be present to the daily cares and concerns of lay and clergy leaders, from stewardship season and Holy Week bulletin preparation.

It also involves working for healthy relationships within communities and between those communities and the bishop’s staff. It’s an anxious time. People are assaulting airline attendants and erupting in supermarket check out lines. This constant tension is excruciating for leaders. It’s important the bishop’s staff have their backs in conflict resolution.

Care for each other is the foundation of healthy communities. With care, we can repair and renew also.
5. Social justice is near and dear to the heart of the Diocese of New York. How has social justice been a part of your ministry? Please give examples.

Four Januarys ago we sat in a New York City court room for the murder trial of a police sergeant who killed our parishioner. The parishioner was a 68-year-old African-American woman who was mentally ill. She was experiencing a schizophrenic episode, and instead of calling for support the neighbors called the police. When the police came, they shot her in her nightgown inside her bedroom. The church—my congregation and others in our city—were her family. So we showed up every day to witness to her wife that she was a child of God and worthy of dignity.

We didn't just witness in a courtroom for our parishioner. Our bishop, a priest friend, and I met with the deputy police commissioner to ask the police to fund stronger mental health training for officers—so that officers wouldn't be put in situations where they don't have the training to respond. The deputy commissioner said “no.”

It is the mission of the church to witness to the dignity of every person. By this you will know that you were my disciples, that you love one another. That means that we witness, that we advocate, that we organize, and that we coordinate really basic logistics that allow the church to be agents of reconciliation and justice in the world. Throughout my ministry I have done all of these things. I have learned these things from mentors in the Diocese of New York.

I helped found Episcopal Charities in New York. I helped organize diocese-wide programs to connect congregations to HIV/AIDS orphans in Africa and with public schools next door to our churches. I led a campaign for the Presiding Bishop to ensure reconciliation with the Episcopal Church in Cuba by fully funding the pensions of Cuban clergy. We've shifted the buying practices in my congregation to favor Black and minority-owned businesses.

It’s the role of the Bishop to advocate and, with the bishop’s staff, to organize witness with congregations and support really basic logistics that make powerful presence possible.

God did not put us on earth to do small things. By this you will know. Our biggest call is to love one another as God has loved us. Social justice is both the Church’s witness to the world and invitation into Christian community.

6. A significant part of episcopal ministry is overseeing administration, property, and financial development. Give some examples of when you have done this kind of work and what you have learned from the work you’ve done.

More than two decades ago I worked with the family of Martin Luther King Jr. to help children carry out service for the MLK Holiday each January. We offered service curricula for 20,000 schools and 5 million
children nationally. We visited schools from all over—Boise and Compton, Austin and suburban Richmond—to learn from their experiences. We made mistakes, some hilarious. We listened and tried to do better the next time. Our best program ideas came from students and teachers. We organized logistics to support very different local schools in very different communities.

The same should be true of a bishop’s staff: great administration means organizing resources for street-level leadership. Saul Alinsky said, leaders organize people and money. Church leaders also organize property.

I’ve led a congregation and served as chief operating officer of two national non-profit organizations designed to catalyze grass-roots leadership in schools. I’ve helped lead strategy development for two Episcopal seminaries. I’ve raised money for congregations, dioceses, and the wider Episcopal Church.

I really enjoy engaging complex systems (pastoral fabric!). I’m a geek. Leadership and strategy are my hobbies. I’ve learned that keeping trains running on time is important but it’s only one dimension of a healthy pastoral fabric that includes strategic narrative, pastoral care for the system, and attention to grounding rituals.

The multi-dimensional approach is really important because administration often means navigating change.

Change and possibility is often possible because of hard, daily work on challenging basic logistics. “Revenue model” sounds like it might involve Lego blocks. The phrase sounds defined and mechanical. Our congregational experience of changing our revenue model to include more earned income is more akin to Hosea. *Sow the wind. Reap the whirlwind.* It could be politely described as “dynamic.” But constant attention to revenue, systems, and property has allowed us to expand our ministries significantly over the last decade and remain financially sound.

Dioceses globally are making the same shift. Communities in the Diocese of New York could benefit from the same attention to shifting how we support our ministries. We have a lot to learn from the entrepreneurial energy of the global Anglican Communion.

Administration and logistics are vital as threads in a wider pastoral fabric that can support care, repair, and renewal for the Gospel.
The Rev. Matthew Foster Heyd Résumé

Canonical residence: New York
Ordained Deacon: March 2009, Bishop Mark Sisk
Ordained Priest: September 2009, Bishop Mark Sisk

EXPERIENCE

Church of the Heavenly Rest 2013-Present Rector

- Focused on community renewal through pastoral care, congregational engagement, and neighborhood invitation.
- Supported congregation to re-imagine ministry three times over the last decade. Supported pivot to online programs during COVID pandemic that doubled the size of the community’s reach to be national as well as local.
- Congregation envisioned and carried out new ministries in prison reentry and the arts. Congregation also made a commitment to anti-racism and inclusion.
- Renewed and restor(ing) 93-year old current church building with biggest capital projects since church moved in 1929.
- Community contributed $14 million for capital projects, including completion of the first two successful capital campaigns in parish history.
- Annual stewardship increased by 30% over three years.
- Revised revenue model to include significant outside rental income, including a new cafe operator named “best cafe in NYC” and catering partnership with Black-owned restaurant. Balanced operating budget for longest period in recent parish history.
- Direct staff of 20 with a total budget of $5 million.

Trinity Church, Wall Street, 2003-2013 Priest and Director of Faith in Action

- Supported congregational health and growth through engagement of congregation and staff in outreach ministries.
- Began as lay staff to coordinate philanthropic efforts in Metropolitan New York and ended by directing all outreach ministries, including the $2.7 million Trinity Grants Program, Anglican Partnerships, local and global volunteer service.
- Tripled the number of volunteers involved in Faith in Action ministries through ministries envisioned and planned by the congregation;
- Supported increase of congregational financial stewardship by 50% over two years; Created volunteer-led mission relationships in New York, New Orleans, Panama, and Burundi; Created
Charlotte’s Place, Trinity’s neighborhood center for Lower Manhattan that received 20,000 visitors in its first year;

- Launched All Our Children public school initiative with the Bishop Suffragan of New York (effort endorsed for whole Episcopal Church by 2009 General Convention, involved Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts-Schori as volunteer, and profiled in a 2017 book);
- Launched initiative seeding Episcopal Service Corps sites, a national funding initiative that created young adult service programs in Episcopal congregations nationally; and
- Directed a staff of eight with a total budget of $5 million.

**National Service-Learning Partnership, 2003** Deputy Director for Strategic Development

- Created strategy, program, and media initiatives for a new national organization advancing service-learning as a core element of the educational experience for every k-12 student in the United States.
- Oversaw 250% increase in Partnership members to 6,000 from all fifty states; and
- Secured three-year, $1.5 million extension of funding from corporate donor.

**Do Something, 1997-2002** Chief Operating Officer

- Directed national k-12 school-based service program for non-profit organization serving 20,000 educators and 5 million students.
- Success of national school program model is profiled in Harvard Professor Robert Putnam’s 2003 book *Better Together*
- Worked with Martin Luther King III on an annual national service-learning event to celebrate the MLK National Holiday with service.
- Managed 15+ staff and multiple interns with $2 million annual budget.

**Episcopal Charities, 1995-1997** Interim Director and Associate Director

- Helped launch organization supporting congregational social outreach in the Diocese of New York.
- With board, crafted first mission statement,
- Launched fundraising activities.
- Created two-cycle annual grants program.

**SELECTED LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

*Chair of the Board*
Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, 2022-
Incoming board chair for group launched by the Diocese of Atlanta to mobilize the Episcopal Church for racial healing. Focused on broadening the Center’s national network.

Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees

Providence Day School, 2022-2023
Board member for school in Charlotte, NC where I grew up.

Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees

Episcopal Divinity School at Union, 2021-
Board member for Episcopal seminary focused on renewal of the Episcopal Church with focus on social justice.

Co-Convener

Strategic Futures Initiative, 2020
Co-Convener with Bishop of Indianapolis for a national group connected with the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes to develop resources for the post-pandemic Episcopal Church by looking cross-sector at possibilities for transformation.

Chair

Berkeley Divinity School at Yale Leadership Initiative, 2019
Chair of planning process for a new initiative focused on strengthening the school’s commitment to lay and clergy leadership for a changing church. Initiative adopted by the school’s board in fall 2019.

President of the Board of Directors

Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes, 2018-2019
Board vice-president and president during strategic planning and executive director search and transition process for national network of Episcopal parishes and seminaries. New strategy focused on outreach and diversity.

Co-Chair

Presiding Bishop’s Campaign for Cuba, 2018-2019
Co-Chaired successful national campaign at the request of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to raise $800,000 to cover the Diocese of Cuba’s reentry into the Church Pension Group, which was a prerequisite to the Diocese’ reconciliation with the Episcopal Church.

Founding Board Chair

United Community Schools, 2013-2019
Board chair and partner for launch of a New York City-wide partnership between labor, business, and the faith community supporting public-private and public-public partnerships in NYC public schools. The organization is now the City’s largest community school organization.
MINISTRY EXPERIENCE

Parish:

Diocese:

EDUCATION

Master of Sacred Theology, 2009
The General Theological Seminary
Thesis: Mission Jazz: How The Dynamic Relationship Between Story, Systems, and Practice Shapes Social Mission

Master of Arts in Religion summa cum laude, 1995
Yale University
Jessie Ball du Pont Scholarship

Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science , 1992
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Morehead Scholar
Student Body President
Order of the Golden Fleece

PERSONAL

Reading, running (completed five marathons). Spouse Ann Thornton is Vice-Provost and University Librarian at Columbia University. Fifteen year-old daughter and eleven year-old son.
The Rev. Stephanie M. Johnson
Greetings, People of the Diocese of New York,

I am delighted to be exploring where God is calling the diocese in the years ahead and honored to be a nominee for bishop coadjutor. As I read the search profile, I was excited about the ways the diocese has already begun to imagine its future.

I have always considered New York to be my home. I grew up in Washingtonville and attended Fordham University, a mix of rural living and city life. My husband, Gordon, and I decided to raise our children in the Hudson River Valley where we worshipped at St. Peter’s Church in Peekskill for a dozen years. During many of these years I worked for the NYC Department of Environmental Protection in Westchester County as an environmental educator, community liaison and planner. Together with government officials and community groups, we sought to protect the fragile yet abundant water supply. Only years later would I begin to reflect that this job was preparing me to talk about the Living Water of Jesus, that sustains and nourishes our souls with unlimited abundance.

Following my ordination, I began an eco-ministry for the Province of New England supporting seven dioceses and hundreds of congregations, while also serving part-time at a congregation in Connecticut. Throughout New England, I met with church leaders in big and small congregations who were acting for God’s good creation. I was blessed to attend numerous diocesan conventions both as a speaker and an educator about care of creation. During these years, it became apparent to me that God is doing amazing things in the church – new creative, Christ-centered ministries in faithful communities and the building of new relationships.

As rector of St. Paul’s Church and Day School, I continue to delight in the new, creative ministries our congregation has developed, even in the midst of the pandemic. As Chair/Co-chair of the Episcopal Church’s Task Force on the Care of Creation and Environmental Racism for seven years, I have seen how God’s church is faithfully responding to issues of ecological-justice and confronting of environmental racism.

While there are many deeply pressing concerns facing the church, I believe that God is showing us a new way forth. Through the movement of the Spirit we are being drawn into a new, faithful direction, steeped in relationships of love and centered on Jesus.

Since I was a young child I have always believed that God is present with every one of us, that we are held tightly in the sorrows and pushed forward to serve in the present Kingdom by our loving God. As each of us are created in the image of God, I rejoice in connecting with others, seeing in their eyes the light of Jesus. It is in personal relationships with each other and God that we can celebrate our humanity and grow together in God’s love.

As for love, I’d like to introduce you to my family. Gordon and I met as teenagers at a bagpipe camp (of all places!) when Gordon became the love of my life. We’ve been married for 32 years. Our adult children, Kyra
and Robert, are the joy of our hearts. We also have a lively rescue pit-bull, Tessa. Our lives are deeply blessed by an incredibly close extended family and lifelong friends who celebrate our past, ground us in the present and share our future dreams.

I've been praying daily for the diocese. I also invite your prayers for all the nominees who have put themselves forth for this time of discernment.

In Christ,
The Reverend Stephanie M. Johnson

Answers to Application Essay Questions

1. Describe your relationship with Christ and how it forms your ministry.

Years ago I walked into a church and saw a radiant resurrected image of Christ with beams of light projecting around the face. The image was both invitational and joy-filled. In ways that I've never been able to articulate yet always sensed, the image clarified who Christ has been and will always be for me. Christ is the One who extends a loving, caring presence when my life gets turbulent. Christ is the One who promises that, through the cross and Resurrection, we are inheritors of eternal salvation. Christ is the One who invites each and every one of us to see the possibility of the Kingdom of God in full fruition here on earth. Christ is the One who offers us forgiveness so that we may know the absolute depth of unconditional love and share that love as we forgive others.

Yet this gift of Christ is not solely for individuals to be made whole. Rather, like the image over the altar, Christ shines on the world which is in so much need of love, renewal and compassion. For me, Christ is the One that offers unity in discord and joy rather than despair. Christ of the world shines light as we fight injustices and offers hope in the reality of climate change. Christ of the world offers us abundance when we may feel a sense of scarcity. Christ is the Light whose radiance stretches across time and space into our hearts and souls.

2. What is it about our profile that gets you excited and how do you think your skills and experiences are well-suited to serve the Diocese of New York as Bishop Diocesan?

The Diocese of New York's map is what initially excited me. Having spent more than half my life in the Diocese, I recall the rural roads in Callicoon, the winding Hudson River and the busy city streets. In these landscapes and communities, the thing that strikes me is that we are all bound together in love, hope, and the diversity of God’s creation. The joys and possibilities for a vibrant church rests in the people and places as we put uncertainty behind us, looking forward together to the promise of a new creation in God.

I was raised in Washingtonville when it was a rural community. I attended Fordham University at Lincoln Center. Early in our marriage my husband and I decided to settle in the Mid-Hudson River Valley, where I was working in the environmental field. We found our spiritual home at St. Peter’s, Peekskill. We were welcomed into the congregation known for radical hospitality, outreach, inclusivity and deeply nourishing worship. St. Peter’s is where our children were baptized, my husband served on the vestry and I realized my life-long calling to ordained ministry. In New York, I am home.

Yet I’ve been gone from NY for over a decade and recognize that, just as I have changed, so has the Diocese.
It has faced unprecedented challenges and unexpected opportunities. In this time, I’ve grown as a leader also facing challenges and joy-filled situations which deepened my faith in the living Body of Christ.

At the congregations I have served, I’ve realized the important need to discern what God is calling us to do. At St. Paul’s, our congregation has reimagined our church space as a hub serving the larger community, and bringing in many new community groups to our space. I’ve been intentional about building opportunities for shared ministries with other denominations and faith traditions, which I understand is foundational to the identity of the Diocese of New York.

As the Chair of the Episcopal Church’s Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism, I’ve learned to lead from behind, allowing the extraordinary breadth of experience and knowledge of the members to guide our mission and program. It’s a model of leadership that can serve many facets of Diocesan work, including commissions and boards.

Finally, I have learned by sitting on boards and committees that leadership is about listening and giving room at the table to fully hear other voices. I’ve begun to learn to look around, consider who is not at the table, and extend invitations. I recognize that there is always more growth to do in this area of leading. Yet I know that this type of leadership can be transformative and life giving to any organization, particularly for a Diocese which is socially, economically, geographically and racially diverse.

3. What new and hopeful perspectives and ideas can you bring to the conversation about church decline that support and encourage long-term solutions?

Among the ideas I’ve considered to address the changing church, five seem particularly relevant that may help to inform a vision for the Diocese of New York.

Supporting faith communities in transition

St. Ann’s in Washingtonville, the loving, life-giving church where my parents worshiped for over forty years, is closing. When the doors of the church closes for the final time there will remain faithful, resilient people. I imagine ways of sustaining those faithful people which may include house churches or new shared community spaces. In these and other creative spaces people would gather for the love of God. With the guidance of the Spirit, those “smoldering embers” will be rekindled for all who have and continue to be faithful to the Body of Christ.

Reimagining ministry with youth and young adults

Youth ministry is central to my calling and I still continue leading a youth group at my current church. When developing our annual youth program, I always ask the teens what they would like to do as they know what will nourish and sustain them. My own two children, now young adults, have grown up in the Church. They recognize that God is present in the world and in their hearts, yet feel the church is not always relevant to their lives. Young adults are more than capable to develop their own vision for the Church that honors tradition while speaking to their current realities. I would suggest that the Diocese take a time of faithful discernment, and gather feedback from youth and young adults about what will help their faith flourish. Then, together the entire church commits to help enact their vision.

Formation of diaconal leadership
I’ve been blessed to share ministry with an amazing deacon who has consistently reminded me and our congregation that we are called to be outside the church walls. Having seen the transformative effect a deacon can have on a congregation, I would be honored to help the Diocese expand the discernment process for today’s realities, encouraging people in all stages of life to respond and live fully into their calling.

**Sustaining lay leadership**

Without strong lay leadership, the remarkable changes in our congregation would not have happened, yet juggling busy lives with church ministry takes a toll. We’ve begun to develop short-term efforts for lay leadership to join, while shortening the terms of the wardens. As a Diocese, we can model short-term lay roles in our committees. Recognizing the ministry of all people and responding to those who feel called, we can offer opportunities and training to encourage lay preaching and lay-led Daily Offices.

**Sharing our resources**

There is widespread anxiety about financial resources and human capacity. At St. Paul’s our connection with nearby churches has created shared concerts, programs and services. As we strengthen the bonds of faith with neighboring congregations, we foster frank conversations about how well-resourced churches can share with churches that are not as well-resourced. Building on this work, we may faithfully move forward in collaboration and cooperation.

4. **Social justice is near and dear to the heart of the Diocese of New York. How has social justice been a part of your ministry? Please give examples.**

For as long as I can remember I have been passionate about my love of Jesus and my love of God’s creation. Jesus was present as I camped near the Ashokan Reservoir, walked near the Hudson River and throughout my career educating and protecting the environment in the Hudson River Valley and the NYC watershed.

As I responded to the call to ordained ministry, I felt the tug in my heart to integrate what had been two separate parts of me - my deep love of Jesus and my care for the environment. Over my years as an eco-minister, my understanding of care of creation has evolved. Initially, I saw my role as a steward of creation, caring for the world because of love of God and love for future generations. That still remains true as congregational greening, community gardening and energy efficiency are important to the lives of many congregations and God’s earth.

As I’ve engaged more broadly in the church and nation around the climate emergency, it is apparent that the climate crisis is at the intersection of so many of our social justice ministries: environmental racism, food insecurity, the plight of refugees, immigration and poverty. We have experienced climate driven droughts, fires, floods and hurricanes impacting all people. People of color, indigenous people and those who live in poverty experience the most extreme impacts of climate change. As a church, we have worked to recognize this reality and to create a climate justice movement. I have been part of this growing movement, along with so many strong lay and clergy leadership.

Hoping to foster prophetic preaching, I have led preaching classes on “Hope in the Face of Climate...
Change.” As part of my personal commitment to educate my community around justice issues, I have regularly written newspaper columns about ecojustice and environmental racism. I have participated in lobbying in Washington, DC seeking better renewable energy solutions. Since 2015, I have helped draft resolutions and advocate for fossil fuel divestment and reinvestment for the church, speaking at General Convention legislative hearings. In 2014, I organized a bus called “A Journey of Hope” for people from throughout New England to participate in the People’s Climate March in NYC. As chair of the Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism we have re-focused our grant programs to encourage creative ministries that address the intersection of climate change and environmental racism. In the 2018 General Convention, I was honored to address the joint House of Bishops and Deputies to speak about God’s creation.

5. Given the impact of COVID on the life of our ministry, we are curious about how you will pastor our congregations, both clergy and laity.

In the uncertainties of long COVID and the impact of COVID on countless broken families, the pandemic has hit us harder than we could have ever imagined. However, the sad reality is that COVID is only part of our daily struggles. We are drowning in the ravages of rising gun violence, the long delayed movement to racial reckoning, the realities of living in the midst of the climate crisis and the threat of a widening war in Europe. Some of us are completely exhausted. Some of us are numb. Many of us have righteous anger.

In this new reality, we are best helped by prayer, fasting, rest and rejoicing. As we witnessed after September 11, there is a collective need to lament shared tragedies. I can imagine the Diocese calling for a season of healing with rituals allowing us to reflect, mourn, and acknowledge our dependence on God alone.

From both the pulpit and in communication opportunities, I believe we should strongly encourage people to give themselves permission to turn away for a short time from the constant barrage of overwhelmingly negative news. As Christians, we are without a doubt called to witness and respond to the tragedies of the world; yet if we are continuously beset by the magnitude of the world’s suffering we risk paralysis and despair. A temporary fast may give us emotional space to refocus on goodness and hope.

I’ve also been intrigued by dioceses that encourage church staff to take time off to rest and recover. In my current Diocese, my staff and I have been deeply blessed by having the Fifth Sunday of the month streamed by a different church, letting us worship without leading. Creative ideas like this can build up energy for the journey ahead.

Throughout these past few years I have preached and written newspaper columns about taking time to delight in each other and God to help us heal through what seems like the darkest of times. Pausing to rejoice in all that God has given us and to enjoy the goodness of one another and the earth, allows us to recharge our batteries, and restart with new eyes and hopeful hearts to fully experience that abundant love.

6. A significant part of episcopal ministry is overseeing administration, property, and financial development. Give some examples of when you have done this kind of work and what you have learned from the work you’ve done.

I have found much satisfaction in tackling financial and administrative items facing our congregation. Early in my tenure, it became clear that the nursery school, a centerpiece of the church and community for 60
years, would need transformational change including replacing the school director who had served for three decades. It also became apparent that the financial relationship between the church and school would need to be formalized. With vestry and school leadership, we began a nearly year-long process of developing an Agreement of Understanding outlining a payment structure, areas of individual responsibility and shared expectations.

By re-establishing the lay-led Buildings and Grounds Committee, we have identified capital and operational needs for the next 5 years and developed a list of priorities to be addressed. We then launched a capital campaign for immediate needs. With an aging infrastructure and large campus, we've begun to take the early necessary steps to ensure that our buildings and grounds will continue to be maintained.

Like almost all churches, our congregation has seen a drop in pledges. With a doubling of nursery school enrollment, we've been able to increase the school's annual contribution to the church helping the church's finances to stabilize. We are also now strategically looking at how to leverage our assets, including our property, to decrease the continued withdrawal from our savings and endowment.

One of the hardest parts of leadership is responding to the personal toll some decisions have on individuals. In my first year, it became clear that several staffing decisions were required for the church to function more efficiently. With the support of the leadership team, we identified staff who needed to be let go and developed a pastoral process to implement those decisions.

Throughout these changes and opportunities, I have been reminded again and again that consultation, collaboration and cooperation with lay leadership is the only way forward. I am always mindful that I am a short term steward of the church, while our congregation will continue to be stewards in the decades ahead. Lay leaders are often strained by family, professional and personal commitments so I've focused on Ad Hoc committees and short term assignments for leadership to jump into problem solving and stakeholder support. With God's help and with deeply faithful leadership, our congregation continues to work through the issues that appear in a multi-faceted and engaged community.
Church Ministry

Rector, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and Day School, Riverside, CT (2016- present) Leads a midsized church with a reputation for meaningful worship and robust musical offerings, community outreach, interfaith engagement, strong children’s and youth ministry, and regular social events. Oversees school and church staff of 25 employees.

• Led transformational change in restructuring the St. Paul’s Day (Nursery) School which effectively doubled enrollment, led to financial stability, leading to an anticipated annual surplus over $200,000. Addressed significant tensions and conflict around change in school leadership. Developed and deepened school and church relationships, bringing new families to the church.

• Implemented a vestry driven strategic plan to re-imagine the church campus as a community hub, bringing in community groups including a choral society, additional AA meetings and community groups, resulting in an increased inflow of revenue to the church.

• From the start of the pandemic, provided Sunday live-stream worship and later reimagined worship to safely offer in-person services outside in the Meadow. Steeped in traditional Episcopal worship, our pandemic services invited new young families and neighborhood participation into our congregation.

• Created a “Roaming Rector” initiative to safely visit parishioners on patios and driveways, during the early months of the pandemic, linking the congregation and sustaining community care. Ensured that every parishioner received phone calls, letters and emails regularly from the parish during the first 8 months.

• During the years of the pandemic, invited a local Jewish congregation to host High Holy Days in our Meadow, furthering our interfaith relationships which continue to grow.

• Leveraging a $200,000 match, implemented a stewardship campaign to raise funds for a curate position.

• Reinvigorated the buildings and grounds program to develop a strategic, long-term plan for the nine-acre campus, which includes a sanctuary seating 320 people, a school building with 10 classrooms, and a memorial garden and apiary. Launched a building and grounds fundraising campaign to raise over $100,000 for facility improvement projects.

• Supported the creation of two congregational gardens, which annually contribute hundreds of pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries to address food insecurity. Began an annual blessing of the bees for local beekeepers and oversaw the planting of a pollinator garden. Supported the lay led effort to make contactless weekly food drive collections during the pandemic.

• Expanded adult formation programs to include offerings around the intersection of visual arts, music, and the Bible. Offered weekly parenting and spirituality programs for parents of young children. Expanded youth group programs to include service in the community, nation, and world.

• Addressed personnel challenges, improved efficiency with the implementation of online administrative and personnel engagement tools, and addressed staff capacity with the integration of contracted cleaning and maintenance services.
**Assistant Rector/Director of Children and Youth Ministry**, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Fairfield, CT (2013-2016)

- Preached regularly and led Sunday morning worship.
- Provided pastoral care and administrative leadership, particularly during the rector transition. • Created and oversaw youth, family and children’s formation programs.
- Facilitated youth leadership council to empower youth engagement in God’s church. • Recruited, organized and supported 15 volunteer teachers.
- Co-led youth ministry and confirmation programs with three Episcopal congregations.
- With the neighboring Congregational Church, developed an ecumenical VBS.

**Province I Environmental Missioner (part time)** (2011-2015)

Collaborated with Province I bishops, diocesan leadership and churches to develop green programs for worshiping communities.

- Developed a regional program for networking and coordination around environmental ministry. • Designed and launched “Turn off the lights, for God’s sake” educational campaign. • Attended diocesan conventions to offer guidance on environmental ministries.

**Director of Youth Ministry (part time)**, St. Ann’s Church, Old Lyme, CT (2010-2012)

Officiated and preached at Sunday evening youth worship services. Created weekly educational programs and led confirmation classes. Facilitated regular discussions on current events and faith. Offered pastoral care and mentoring to youth and families.

**Church Leadership**

Co-Chair, Diocese of Connecticut Liturgical Commission
Chair/Co-chair, Episcopal Church’s Task Force on Care of Creation & Environmental Racism
Addressed the joint Houses of Bishops and Deputies at the 79th General Convention
Summer Chaplain, Camp Washington, Connecticut
Workshop leader, Jerusalem Peacebuilder Camp for interfaith dialogue between teens
Member, Diocesan Clergy Conference Planning Team
Member, Diocesan Environmental Network
Alternate Deputy, 80th General Convention
Speaker and panelist at numerous conferences on eco-theology including: Yale Divinity School, Episcopal Divinity School, Trinity Church, Wall Street
Coordinator, Presiding Bishop’s Jeffert Schori’s International Summit on Climate Change
Member, Order of St. John
Co-lead class “Preaching Hope in the Face of Climate Change,” Bexley Seabury Theological mentor for numerous seminary students at YDS
Organizer, 2012 Food and Faith Roundtable, Diocese of NY
Guest preacher at various settings including: St. James Cathedral, Diocese of San Joaquin; General Seminary; TEC Deputation to UN Convention on the Status of Women; Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford, CT
St. Francis Prize for Preaching on Creation Care by Earth Ministry (Seattle, WA)
Sunday School co-leader, St. Peter's, Peekskill
Baptismal preparation teacher, St. Peter’s, Peekskill
Lay pastoral visitor, Bethel Nursing Home, Ossining

**Community and National Leadership**
- President, Greenwich Clergy Fellowship, Greenwich, CT
- Member, Town of Greenwich Board of Ethics, Greenwich, CT
- Leadership Circle, Blessed Tomorrow, Eco-America, Washington, DC
- Semi-finalist, 2021 American Climate Leadership Award
- Advisory Board, Center for Earth Ethics, Union Seminary, New York, NY

**Publications**
- Regular columnist, Greenwich Sentinel (weekly print newspaper)

**Secular Employment**
- Town Planning Consultant, Yorktown Planning Department, Yorktown, NY (2002-2007)
  Mediated community conversations on planning issues. Managed a consulting team in the preparation of a 10-year comprehensive plan. Oversaw $500,000 project budget.
  Supervised a staff of 6 professional planners and administrators. Liaison to local community groups and governmental agencies in Westchester and Putnam Counties. Management responsibility and oversight of environmental protection programs. Administered $25 million in capital contracts.

**Education**
- **Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT**
  Master of Sacred Theology, May 2013
  - Full Yale Divinity School Scholarship
  - Episcopal Evangelical Society Teaching Grant, St. Nicholas Seminary, Spring 2011

- **Yale Divinity School/Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, New Haven, CT**
  Master of Divinity/Diploma in Anglican Studies, May 2010
  - Exchange Student, Westcott House, Cambridge UK, Fall 2009
  - Leadership and Honors
    - Elected representative to Episcopal Seminary Leadership Conference
    - Appointed facilitator of St. Luke’s Committee (Seminary Student Council)
    - Society for the Increase of Ministry Scholarship
    - Mercer Scholarship
    - Assisted in developing YDS Sustainability Plan
    - Clinical Pastoral Education, Griffin Hospital (hospice, mental health units)

- **University of Stockholm, International Graduate School, Stockholm, Sweden**
  Diploma in Public Policy, September 1990
Fordham University, New York, New York
Bachelor of Arts in History, September 1988

**Personal**

*Ordination*, Diocese of New York, sponsoring parish St. Peter's, Peekskill, NY

- Priest September 2010
- Deacon March 2010

Married, with two adult children. Piano player, mosaic tile designer, gardener, avid reader
The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead
Dear Friends in Christ,

I have lived in the Diocese of New York for most of my life. My wife Nicole who grew up on Long Island and I were married in New York, and our teenage sons Liam and Nicholas were both born, baptized, and grew up in this diocese. Like my children, I grew up in rectories where my father served in Boston, suburban Philadelphia, and New York City. My first memories are of my mother holding me in a rocking chair singing Away in a Manger. I am a life-long Episcopalian who loves, trusts, and believes in Jesus Christ. Jesus is my rock and the foundation upon which my life, my family, and my calling to ordained ministry are built.

I was ordained in New York in 2004 and have served as priest and pastor in three very different congregations of the diocese in Times Square, Granite Springs, and Pelham. I also serve our diocese and the wider Church in a variety of roles. My work overseeing our diocesan budget and finances and leading part of our strategic plan has provided me with substantial understanding of our systems and resources and the many diverse congregations, campuses, ministries, and communities across New York.

My experience as a rector and a leader in our diocese over the past eighteen years, particularly through the pandemic, has prepared me for this discernment. The Diocese of New York needs and seeks a Bishop and Chief Pastor who thirsts for justice and has the courage to speak with a prophetic voice; who appreciates our diversity, resources, and challenges; who trusts, listens to, and collaborates with laypersons, deacons, and priests; who has a deep faith in Jesus Christ and a love of all God's children; and who can adapt and lead our diocese through the uncharted territory ahead of us. I believe I am so called.

I am excited about our future, and I believe God has given me the experience, wisdom, and gifts to be the next Bishop of New York. Saying “Yes” to a new call, especially Bishop Diocesan, will change my life and the ministries that I love and do in service of the Diocese of New York. Thomas Merton’s prayer rings true: “I cannot know for certain where it will end...” but “I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road.”

I look forward to discerning with you, hearing your stories, and seeking God's will together. You are in my prayers, and I ask that you keep me and my family in yours. May Jesus Christ bless and inspire us all. Amen.

In Christ,
The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead,
Rector, Christ Church Pelham
Answers to Application Essay Questions

1. Describe your relationship with Christ and how it shapes your ministry.

I’m a Preacher’s Kid (PK). I’ve been immersed in Christianity and the Church my entire life, and so I learned about Jesus and the Bible, about the Sacraments, prayer, and worship, and about the strengths and limitations of the Church. I’ve grown to understand that knowledge is not the same as faith. At some point I made the decision to follow Jesus because I know that when I have been full of fear, pride, sorrow, selfishness, despair, doubt, or indifference, Jesus has still been present with me calling me out of darkness and toward his light. My relationship with Christ has proven unbreakable because even when I am not there, Jesus is.

I didn’t realize how important Jesus had become in my life until I chose Disney World over Holy Week – spring break often falls during Holy Week, and so PKs aren’t able to leave town like many other kids can, so I leapt at the opportunity when it came up as an adult. On Good Friday I felt my intentional absence from Church so deeply that I realized I was called to give my life in service of Jesus Christ, and I started discernment for the priesthood immediately. People laugh at me when I tell them this story: “Jesus called you o’er the tumult of Space Mountain.” Fair enough, but I think it says something about my calling that not even the Magic Kingdom could provide a happy place free from the disturbance of the Holy Spirit when I had literally taken a vacation from Christ.

My priestly and pastoral ministry, indeed my life, is meaningless without my relationship with Jesus Christ, and yet there have been more times than I care to admit that I get lost in the churchy work of finishing projects and trying to fix systems and people. Thanks be to God, being part of the Body of Christ also means being reminded by the faithful that the Body of Christ was broken and buried, yet still rose again from the dead.

2. What is it about our profile that gets you excited and how do you think your skills and experiences are well-suited to serve the Diocese of New York as Bishop Diocesan?

The Diocese of New York is wonderfully diverse, large, and complicated: 182 congregations ranging from large to small, from the wealthiest in the world to among the poorest in the nation, worshiping in numerous languages, and located in dense urban areas, in suburbs, in rural areas, and everywhere in between. It is a perfect example of a Spiritual Temple made of living stones founded on Jesus Christ the chief cornerstone. No stone is identical to any other, yet all are essential to the whole. The profile is an excellent summary of the realities, blessings, and challenges shared by the congregations of the Diocese of New York. The profile makes it clear that the Diocese of New York is seeking an experienced, competent, and loving Chief Pastor as its next Bishop who will love every one of the congregations and the laity and clergy who serve them as Jesus loves each of us.

I have served as a priest in a variety of contexts and congregations: as one of several priests on staff in a large, urban congregation; as the rector and sole full-time staff member in a small, rural congregation; and as rector managing assisting clergy and my own staff in a medium-large,
suburban congregation. I also take a very active role in the wider church: I serve or have served as chair of or a member of my diocese’s budget, finance, and real estate committees, on Council and Trustees, on the Commission on Ministry, as a regional dean, as Deputy to General Convention, on committees and task forces of the Episcopal Church, and I oversaw the financial portion of my diocese’s strategic plan.

Every congregation and every Church commission and committee relies on mutual ministry and pastoral collaboration between laity, clergy, volunteers, and staff who work together to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ. Managerial skills, experience, and vision are very important, especially in larger and more complicated systems, but the Church requires and needs pastors who listen, learn, and lead.

I believe that my skills and experience leading, loving, serving, and pastoring in a variety of congregations and ministerial settings on the diocesan and church-wide levels match up very well with the skills and experience that the next Bishop and Chief Pastor of the Diocese of New York will need.

3. What new and hopeful perspectives and ideas can you bring to the conversation about church decline that support and encourage long-term solutions?

The Church is not a building, a corporation, or a parochial report. The Church is people of faith, hope, and love, and we do not face any challenges alone, we share them together with and in Jesus Christ.

Three of my favorite images in all of Scripture are of the Church: the Body of Christ, the Vine and Branches, and the Spiritual Temple made of living stones founded on Christ the chief cornerstone. I love these images because they illustrate so clearly that our identity is rooted in our shared unity in Christ. When we focus on Jesus Christ and the love of God in Christ that unites us, the Church thrives. The challenges of today can and will be addressed through collaboration, pastoral care, community building, and working together. Our polity of mutual, shared ministry is one of our greatest blessings. The bishop is called to know, love, encourage, inspire, and unite the clergy and laity of the diocese so that we can build up the church together. The Diocese of New York has several great examples of “long-term solutions” for addressing church decline. The Indaba program that the diocese embarked on several years ago brought people from different congregations and communities together to identify challenges, share ideas, and work together, and I think that it – or something like it – should be revisited regularly.

The 2015/2016 Strategic Plan was similarly the product of wide collaboration which provided recommendations that can still be acted on and lived into. With the roll-out of Episcopal Futures, there are numerous congregations discussing and living into new types of shared ministry and collaboration. The common thread connecting these solutions is that they are manifestations of the true nature of the Church as the Body of Christ.
I am convinced that our greatest resource is the people who love Jesus Christ and who give themselves in service of the Gospel and the Church because of their faith in Christ. The next Bishop of New York needs to love, love listening to, love collaborating with, love encouraging, and love working alongside the amazing priests, deacons, and laity of the Diocese of New York. The future of the Diocese of New York is bright because with God in Christ nothing is impossible.

4. Given the impact of COVID on the life of our ministry, we are curious about how you will pastor our congregations, both clergy and laity.

My congregation was hit hard and early by the pandemic: dozens of our members contracted Covid-19 in March-June 2020 and several parishioners died. I am proud of the pastoral care that we offered in those first months and the continued care we have given since, and I am grateful that our parish had the staff, volunteers, and resources to renovate our spaces and install equipment to livestream services and events. I believe that we have done our best to tackle the ever-changing and ongoing realities of the pandemic.

The pandemic continues to take a real mental, spiritual, financial, and attendance toll on many laity, clergy, congregations, and communities. It is essential that the next Bishop of New York appreciates that toll and is able to admit that everything and everybody is not ok. It is also crucial that the next Bishop of New York understands that the people and congregations across the Diocese did not have a singular experience of the pandemic but rather experiences that ranged across a large spectrum which often seemed to correlate the pain of the pandemic with how financially secure or not secure you were.

Many congregations that were viable find themselves two years later in worse shape through no fault of their own. Hearing “success stories” from well-resourced parishes doesn’t exactly help when your story is that you don’t have enough money or staff to begin with, let alone “navigate” a pandemic. I appreciate that many of our congregations, clergy, and laity continue to struggle more than two years into Covid, and I believe one of the blessings of our polity is that our Bishop is able to direct the resources and staff of the diocese to address critical pastoral needs.

As Chief Pastor of the diocese, I would need to hear and heed all the stories of how our clergy and congregations experienced the pandemic, and learn what went wrong, what went right, and what still needs to be done. I believe that those conversations must lead to a larger conversation about how we support each other spiritually and pastorally, how we share resources with each other, and how the diocese can most effectively support congregations. May God help us to reform where we were amiss, strengthen where we were right, provide where there is want, and unite where we were divided; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.
5. Social justice is near and dear to the heart of the Diocese of New York. How has social justice been a part of your ministry? Please give examples.

I take my Baptismal Covenant promises to “seek and serve Christ in all persons” and “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being” seriously. I believe that Christian social justice requires that the Church and its leaders speak out for the intrinsic value, meet the basic needs, and encourage the full participation of every person in the Church and in society, and the Bishop of New York has the bully pulpit and responsibility to do that.

The topics of my sermons and pastoral letters, which can be viewed or read on my parish website, have addressed social justice in many forms, including: racism; police brutality; treatment of immigrants, migrants, and refugees; sexual abuse and harassment; and equal access to ordination and marriage. I am called by God and the Church to advocate publicly for those who are oppressed, never keep silent about evil and injustice, and always transition from words to an opportunity for active social justice. I’ve preached about welcoming and helping refugees, and my parish is actively involved in refugee resettlement. I’ve preached against racism, and my congregation has documented and is in the process of publishing the links that our founding family had to the slave trade.

I think it is important to note that small steps matter even if the change we strive for is not reached as quickly as we would wish. In 2019 news broke that same-sex spouses of Bishops were not invited to Lambeth Conference while every other Bishop’s spouse was not only invited but would be provided with significant programs for spouses. I wrote and presented a resolution, passed by diocesan convention, asking the Archbishop of Canterbury to reconsider this decision which caused great pain, not only to the bishops it directly affects but across the entire Church. I note with disappointment that, even though Lambeth has been delayed two times due to the pandemic, the policy remained unchanged for the conference in the summer of 2022. The pain and injustice remain, and so I will continue to advocate for justice and equality.

I know that “the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” Whether it is through a sermon, letter, resolution, or march, I believe that when we seek and strive for justice, every step we take matters and every sermon, letter, resolution, or march plants a seed which will bear fruit.

6. A significant part of episcopal ministry is overseeing administration, property, and financial development. Give some examples of when you have done this kind of work and what you have learned from the work you’ve done.

My CV details the extensive experience I have overseeing administration, property, and financial development in diverse congregations and for one of the largest dioceses in the Church. One experience that I am confident can be applied to New York is the oversight I had of the strategic plan of my diocese. I was appointed as chair of the strategic plan task force on finances of the diocese because I had served (and still do serve) on various committees and commissions.
that oversee the allocation and management of financial, human, and real property resources across the diocese, including budget, finance, real estate, council, trustees, and congregational support.

The many congregations in the diocese range from very large to very small, from those that are resourced with abundant endowments, property, staff, and/or volunteers, to those with minimal such resources but strategically located and integral to the mission of the diocese. The challenge we faced going into our strategic plan was how to share our resources and collaborate for the common good of the diocese without undermining the mission we were already doing locally. To be clear, the challenge is universal. On the one hand the shared resources of the very large and wealthy congregations enable the diocese to provide campus ministry, property and mission grants, programs, and clergy coverage in communities that cannot afford the expense of a priest.

At the other end of the spectrum, many of the smaller congregations provide the diocese with diversity of cultures, languages, community insights, local ministries, and essential mission. The strategic plan brought together stakeholders across the diocese, led to a series of canonical reforms, and provided a roadmap for shared mission across the diocese. Though progress has been made, there is still work to be done breaking down long-standing silos and living into mutual collaborative mission.

I learned that in the polity of the Episcopal Church the Bishop Diocesan has immense power to articulate a vision, bring people together, and address all sorts of “low-hanging fruit” inside the Bishop’s Office and in support of congregations. I also learned that affecting true systemic and strategic change requires follow-through, continued buy-in by stakeholders, true collaboration and teamwork, ongoing listening and conversation, and strong executive leadership, even – and perhaps especially – after the strategic plan has been adopted.
The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead Résumé

Ministry Statement
My calling is to serve Jesus Christ and spread the Gospel. I am a faithful and engaging pastor, priest, preacher, and teacher. I have a track record nurturing ministries, developing leadership, overseeing complicated systems and strategic plans, and growing congregations.

Leadership in Parishes & Congregations

**Rector, Parish of Christ the Redeemer, Pelham, New York (2015-Present)** Christ Church is a program size parish with 600 members, 175 average Sunday attendance, $650,000 operating budget, and dozens of vibrant lay-led ministries. Our congregation’s vitality and growth has resulted in a new pipe organ, restored slate roofs on our 178-year-old church, a livestreaming and recording system, energy-saving improvements, and accessibility upgrades. [www.christchurchpelham.org](http://www.christchurchpelham.org)

**Rector, Church of the Good Shepherd, Granite Springs, New York (2009-2015)** Good Shepherd is a pastoral size parish – in 2015 it had 250 members, 100 average Sunday attendance, $200,000 operating budget, and $250,000 endowment. Between 2009 and 2015 attendance, membership, and pledging doubled allowing us expand our ministries and do extensive capital improvements. [www.goodshepherdny.org](http://www.goodshepherdny.org)

**Curate, Church of Saint Mary the Virgin, Times Square, New York (2004-2009)** Saint Mary’s is a program/resource size congregation. Between 2004 and 2009 Saint Mary’s grew in membership, attendance, and pledging by about 50 percent. [www.stmvirgin.org](http://www.stmvirgin.org)

Leadership in the Episcopal Church

**Deputy, General Convention of the Episcopal Church (2022 and 2018; Alt. 2015)**

**Chair, Legislative Committee, Stewardship & Socially Responsible Investing (2021-2022)** I served as Chair of the Legislative Committee at General Convention 2022 that receives and proposes Resolutions on stewardship and socially responsible investing.

**Secretary, Task Force for Liturgical and Prayer Book Revision (2018-2021)** I served as Secretary of Task Force overseeing Prayer Book Revision and as Chair of the Subcommittee for Communications which built, [www.episcopalcommonprayer.org](http://www.episcopalcommonprayer.org)

**Secretary, Legislative Committee, Prayer Book Revision & Marriage Rites (2018) Scholarship Committee of the Episcopal Church (2015-2018)**

Leadership in the Diocese of New York

**Chair, Budget Committee (2013-Present) & Finance Committee (2017-Present)** The chair oversees and presents the $12,000,000 budget for the diocese. The Budget Committee includes chairs of the Committees of Council and the Trustees and senior members of the Bishop’s staff. The Budget Chair serves ex officio on the Finance Committee.

**Commission on Ministry (2009-Present)**
I have served successive three-year terms on our diocese’s COM. I also serve as one of the COM’s trainers for parish discernment committees.
Chair, Task Force on Financial Matters, Strategic Plan for the Diocese (2015-2016) I was appointed by the Bishop of New York to oversee all financial matters for the diocesan Strategic Plan and to offer recommendations and a realistic plan to execute the recommendations. We rewrote the diocesan canons that govern funding, apportioned shares, adjustments, remedies, and finance/budget committee structure, and established a new system and funding for Congregations in Strategic Settings.

Trustees of the Diocese (2021-Present)
Council of the Diocese (2007-Present)
Real Estate Committee of the Trustees (2021-Present)
Dean, Westchester Sawmill Deanery (2012-2015)
Congregational Support Plan Committee (2007-2016)
Ecumenical Committee (2009-2014)
Committee to Elect a Bishop (2010-2011)
Hispanic Grants Committee (2008-2010)

Leadership in the Community

Community Sponsor for Hearts & Homes for Refugees (2016-Present) Since 2016 Christ Church has worked with Hearts & Homes for Refugees to help resettle refugees in Westchester County. Christ Church was the sole sponsor for resettling a refugee in 2019-2020, and we have worked as part of larger teams to resettle other refugees.

Co-Chair, Pelham Interfaith Council (2020-Present)

Education & Biographical Information

Yale University: Divinity School (M Div 2004)
Magna Cum Laude; Recipient of “The Jess H. and Hugo A. Norenberg Prize”, awarded each year to a student who excels in preaching and/or the conduct of corporate worship.

University of Chicago (BA Philosophy 1998)

Biographical & Ordination
The Rev. Steven D. Paulikas

Dear Members of Diocese of New York:
Greetings from Brooklyn. I write with humility to offer myself for your discernment of whom God is calling to be your next bishop. It is my prayer that my participation in this process would be a blessing to us both and may in some measure help you clarify the character, temperament, experience, and spirit of the person best suited to this ministry.

I am surprised to be here. It had not occurred to me to participate in this discernment process until a few trusted friends urged me to look at your diocesan profile. As I studied it and prayed with it, I also began having conversations about the future of your diocese that simultaneously excited and humbled me. As a New Yorker, I know the daunting challenges faced by our historic churches, from fighting declining attendance to finding unity in the gift of diversity to sharing vision and hope with the faithful. I also know from my experience leading a parish from near-closure to joyful abundance that God can provide the will, resources, and faith to meet these obstacles. I have discovered that I feel called to share this perspective with you in the hope that my own optimism about the future of our Church can help the diocese feel a sense of holy renewal as it heads into the next chapter of its ministry.

The Diocese of New York can and should be one of the most prominent spiritual and moral leaders in our great city and state. The bishop must be aware that their flock includes those in pre-trial incarceration at Rikers Island, refugees making a new life in Westchester, and upstate residents who find themselves priced out of their own communities. The Bishop of New York stewards a powerful platform that can give voice to these and so many other New Yorkers who deserve justice and ultimately shape changes in policy. As a former journalist, I have sought to use media to apply the values of the Gospel to our society and have, I hope, projected our Christian values to a national and global audience and empowered leaders across the Church to use their own voices.

My intention in participating in this process is to offer myself for service to God and our neighbor. I will continue to pray for the diocese and my fellow nominees. I am as humbled as I am grateful for this opportunity. May Christ bless us in this sacred work.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Steven D. Paulikas
1. Describe your relationship with Christ and how it shapes your ministry.
I began attending an Episcopal parish when I was a teenager. I had been raised mostly outside organized religion but felt a deep desire to connect with something higher, so I asked my parents to take me to a church. I was surprised by the Jesus I met there. Whereas the loudest Christian voices I had heard led me to believe he was a God of rules and judgment, here I was introduced to a messiah who said the most important thing in life is to love God and love your neighbor.

The ministry of The Episcopal Church gave me this way of relating to Jesus, and I have dedicated my life to both living out my faith and attempting to do for others what was done for me in my first parish home. For guidance, I turn to the verse from Ephesians commonly used as an Offertory Sentence: “walk in love as Christ loved us.” I have learned as a Christian and an ordained person that moving through the world in God’s love enables the Holy Spirit to transform the places you visit, wherever you are. Living this way is a precious gift I endeavor never to take for granted.

I renew my faith most mornings by saying the Daily Office and/or practicing centering prayer. I also keep a spiritual journal, which I’ve done since I was a kid. These personal spiritual practices are the bedrock of my daily life and ministry and keep me connected to God. They empower me to be present spiritually and emotionally in leading worship, preaching, pastoral conversation, and in administrative tasks. But I also find God in the personal interests that point to different modes of holiness. I’m an amateur cellist and voracious Spotify listener, read poetry most days, and have always loved travel and languages.

Finally, I have found Christ in embracing my life as a queer person, which has made me a more authentic Christian and effective pastor. LGBTQ+ people brave enough to claim a place in church have no option other than to live out the truth that the Holy Spirit works through all parts of who we are. Someone recently told me that just being a gay priest was all the ministry they needed from me; may we all be so blessed that simply being the people God created us to be is a ministry to others.

2. What is it about our profile that gets you excited and how do you think your skills and experiences are well-suited to serve the Diocese of New York as Bishop Diocesan?
I see in the profile an underlying desire for two fundamental spiritual gifts from the next bishop to the diocese: vision and cooperation. I am moved in large part to participate in this discernment process because I am excited to share my perspective on both.

I have a simple vision for the Diocese of New York: that there be more Episcopalians in the diocese at the end of the next episcopate than there were at the beginning. We can look to the description of the earliest church in the Acts of the Apostles for guidance in making this vision a reality. The first Christians were “filled with awe” at God’s grace, and the love and enthusiasm of their communities drew in ever more people to their fellowship. I share this vision from Acts—of a church so filled with the Spirit that the faithful are uplifted, the skeptical are welcomed as equals, and strangers become family. I have lived this spiritual reality in my own parish as it transformed from a handful of the faithful facing serious challenges to a loving, diverse, and growing Christian community. This type of growth may not be possible in every ministry setting across the diocese, but I would argue that a leader who believes it is possible can do much to create the circumstances for it to happen.
This vision can only become a reality through the spiritual gift of cooperation. Returning to Acts, the first believers saw their individual lives as a common good and strove for unity. The bishop is uniquely positioned to foster the cooperative spirit that the people of the Diocese of New York deserve. I have learned both in my parish and in service to the wider church that decisions reached with input from leaders from a variety of backgrounds have a far greater impact while building trust and a sense of common mission. The tools for creating this type of cooperation are things I happen to find spiritually rewarding: asking people for their opinions, seeking out underrepresented voices, listening before talking, and admitting fault when I inevitably fall short of the mark. A clearly articulated vision for the diocese will naturally bring together a diverse community and inspire cooperation.

3. **What new and hopeful perspectives and ideas can you bring to the conversation about church decline that support and encourage long-term solutions?**

I am one of the oldest Episcopalians only to have known the church in decline. Those born even a few years before me face the difficult challenge of adjusting from a church we could take for granted to our present situation, but anyone my age or younger has never had that privilege. And yet, I believe with my whole heart in the treasures our particular expression of Christianity has to offer the world. Like most people reading this, I have seen how our way of responding to Jesus can transform lives and breathe life into communities. We are stewards of a sacred and unique gift from God, one worth fighting to preserve and pass on to future generations.

In 2011, I became priest-in-charge of All Saints’ Church, where I am currently rector. Our church is one of those grand old places where most things that can go wrong in a church did go wrong, and a previous bishop had planned to close it shortly before I arrived. I accepted the call against the warnings of colleagues and even former diocesan staff because I genuinely loved the people I met there and felt the Holy Spirit calling us to work together.

Our first years were spent learning about each other, healing, and simply enjoying being a church after years of turmoil. We worked on strategies to hone parishioners’ natural charism for welcome and began to build meaningful program life. We introduced discipline and organization to governance and finances as well as liturgy. We started reaching out to community groups and began articulating the gift of our remarkable diversity. Crucially, All Saints’ patiently and graciously nurtured and formed me into becoming a leader, forgiving my mistakes and adjusting to my faults. Through all of this, we had fun—the kind of godly fun that is as attractive as it is infectious.

After more than 11 years of ministry together, our parish is the type of place where you can pretty much feel the love of God the minute you walk through the door. The usual metrics Episcopalians use give a snapshot of growth in attendance and resources. But far more precious is our spiritual growth, which has transformed lives, inspired lay and ordained ministries, offered hope during the pandemic, served our wider community, and restored and deepened faith in God.

Our story cannot necessarily be replicated everywhere, but I am motivated to share it to give hope to other parishes facing similar challenges. Were I to become bishop, I would lead as one who knows our churches can and will grow given the right circumstances and the will to be conduits of God’s grace in the world.
4. **Given the impact of COVID on the life of our ministry, we are curious about how you will pastor our congregations, both clergy and laity.**

All Saints’ is situated directly across the street from a major hospital. For several months during 2020, if the church doors were open, there was a direct view from the altar to two refrigerated morgue trucks. It felt like a Good Friday that would never end.

Like clergy and laity in so many places, I stayed put through the depths of the pandemic, streaming liturgies and sermons, keeping pastoral hours in the parish garden, and doing my best to keep our beloved flock together. My parish community and I are exhausted, and our joy is, at best, tentative. We are faced not only with the grief of all we have lost, but the uncertainty of what church will be in the future—and all when we have all been stretched beyond what we previously thought was the limit of stress and anguish.

A wise bishop will approach all personal and institutional encounters with the clergy and laity with the sensitivity that we are all traumatized. Key to the healing of the diocese will be the accessibility of the bishop and the bishop’s staff to the people of the diocese, and especially to clergy. I will admit to having wished from time to time for an encouraging call or text message from staff in my own diocese; I know how much even a small but warm gesture can mean to clergy on the front lines of ministry.

But it will be equally important that the bishop rally the diocese around a shared sense of mission in the post-pandemic world. What our battered and heroic churches most need today is hope for the future—and I’m stubbornly optimistic about our future, because we did the spiritually and ethically right thing when it mattered most. While some other religious and secular institutions denied the danger of the virus or flouted measures that would protect their people, Episcopalians demonstrated our faith in a life-giving God by making self-sacrificial decisions so that all could live. Now that the pandemic is subsiding, I am confident that we possess the very gifts that the pandemic made people aware might be lacking in their lives: genuine community, meaning in the face of tragedy, integrity in word and deed, and the beauty of holiness in an ugly world. We are already seeing this happen at All Saints’, where every week we welcome newcomers who are looking for these very things.

5. **Social justice is near and dear to the heart of the Diocese of New York. How has social justice been a part of your ministry? Please give examples.**

A year after Bishop John Henry Hobart sent the Rev. Eleazer Williams to be a missionary to the Oneida people in 1817, he told Diocesan Convention, “we ought never to forget that the salvation of the Gospel is designed for all the human race,” including “the humble Indian.” By 1822, Williams had maneuvered within Oneida politics sufficiently to convince them to abandon their ancestral lands. Hobart—one of the towering historical figures of The Episcopal Church—believed his ministry to the Oneida was a Christian act of mercy. And yet his failure to imagine them as co-equal partners in ministry caused him to set in motion an irreversible act of injustice.

The Bishop of New York is the spiritual heir of both Bishop Hobart’s significant accomplishments and his ignorance and hubris born of what he perceived to be good intentions. At the same time, New York City and State suffer from a moral vacuum in which the clear voice and advocacy of a spiritual leader are sorely needed. The next bishop is called to be that unequivocal voice while at the same time recognizing the damage...
our church has so often done in the supposed cause of justice. It is possible—indeed imperative—that we do both.

There is a simple formula to threading this ethical needle: abandoning the notion that in true justice there is ever a difference between “us” and “them.” The authority of the bishop’s words rests on the conviction that they are not speaking or acting on behalf of someone else, but rather as a member of the one Body of Jesus Christ, in which the suffering of one member is suffering for all.

New York is enduring an array of social injustices that would make Jesus shudder in disgust. Shocking disparities of wealth in the city are being exported upstate, pricing out people in their own communities; there is a homelessness crisis in our urban areas; two years after George Floyd’s murder our law enforcement system has yet to undergo major reform. These are not partisan issues—they are Gospel issues. The parish is a powerful tool for social change, and I am proud of my parish’s efforts in founding a Racial Justice Initiative and sponsoring an Afghan refugee family for resettlement. As part of my ministry, I have also written about moral issues in national and global media, and I have spent years cultivating relationships with policy experts, activists, and elected officials in New York. In all things related to social justice, it is not someone else’s body that is broken, but ours—and the Gospel compels us to action.

6. A significant part of episcopal ministry is overseeing administration, property, and financial development. Give some examples of when you have done this kind of work and what you have learned from the work you’ve done.

The role of a leader is not simply to manage systems, but constantly to discern if the systems as they exist further the mission they support. Without this vigilance, there is always a risk that preserving systems will become the mission itself. Sadly, this form of idolatry is often something we Episcopalians fall prey to. Moreover, a leader must not be satisfied that the complexity of the system equals the sophistication or effectiveness of the organization; rather, the most efficient organizational patterns are usually the clearest and simplest ones.

We all know that The Episcopal Church is over-governed in such a way that consumes massive resources of talent, effort, and money that do not necessarily aid us in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I believe the next Bishop of New York would be wise to study the governing patterns of other large and diverse dioceses across the Church and the Communion and discern with other ordained and lay leaders in the diocese how to adapt systems that have a proven record of success elsewhere to the New York context. A new episcopate will present an opportunity to scrutinize everything from the ordination discernment process to the parochial assessment to the size and structure of diocesan staff to possibilities for regional oversight. This may seem like a bold agenda, but the challenges of our time dictate that we do not have time to waste in creating rational processes and systems that serve the mission of proclaiming the Gospel.

My experience leading a parish with limited resources has taught me the importance of setting priorities among a menu of equally important needs. At a Vestry retreat in 2017, the leaders of our parish discerned a call to strengthen our ministry with children. We used a process of asset-based community development to inventory what resources we already had for this ministry priority and what more we would need. We decided we would need to fully renovate our program space and hire another full-time priest for ministry with children and youth. As is so often the case, money followed mission, and we raised the money we
needed to fulfill our goals. We now have a beautiful new program space itching for post-pandemic use and a nursery bursting with kids eager to learn about God.

Outside the parish, I have learned much about healthy systems through service on the board of Episcopal Relief & Development, where I chair the Advancement and Communications Committee responsible for supporting staff in raising $12 million annually from individual and church donors. I served on the Commission on Ministry of my diocese for 11 years and administered the discernment process for 6 of those years. I served on the Board of Governors of the Episcopal Church at Yale for 6 years marked by reform and growth while giving me an outlet for my passion for campus ministry.
The Rev. Steven D. Paulikas Résumé

Education

University of Oxford; Oxford, England
D.Phil., Theology, January 2023 (expected)
Thesis title: “Paul Ricoeur’s Theology of Evil”
Thesis supervisor: Prof. Joel Rasmussen

The General Theological Seminary; New York, New York
M.Div. cum laude, May 2008

University of Cambridge; Cambridge, England
M.Phil., Jul. 2002
European Literature

Yale University; New Haven, Connecticut
B.A. cum laude, May 2001
Comparative Literature (with distinction), International Studies (with distinction)

Experience

Led diverse urban Episcopal parish from near-closure to position of spiritual vitality and institutional stability. Renewed parish program life through new adult education, youth ministry, community and global outreach and partnership. Recruited and trained four new professional staff positions. Average Sunday attendance doubled to 139 (pre-pandemic) and pledged annual giving nearly quintupled to $250,000 during eleven-year tenure.

Assistant to the Rector, Grace Church Brooklyn Heights
Shared leadership with Rector in preaching and liturgical duties, pastoral contact, outreach initiatives, and mentorship of seminarian interns. Designed and led adult and youth programs. Expanded youth program and attendance, adult education, and parish communications.

Freelance journalist

Bureau chief, The Baltic Times
Published 2,000-3,000 words of original material per week on national political, economic, and cultural themes for the only English-language weekly in the Baltic states. Created editorial Lithuanian editorial plan. Recruited and coordinated activity of freelance journalists.
Service Member, Client Advisory Council, Church Pension Group (Mar. 2022 – present) Served on committee

Member, Pastoral Care Advisory Committee, New York Presbyterian-Brooklyn Methodist Hospital (Jan. 2019 – present)
Advised hospital pastoral care and CPE staff on community concerns. Mentored chaplain residents.

Member, Board of Directors, Episcopal Relief and Development (Jan. 2018 – present)
Chaired Advancement and Communications Committee for global economic development and disaster relief agency with a $22 million annual budget. Served on ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee, “1000 Days of Love” capital campaign committee, led monthly prayer sessions for staff.

Member, Board of Governors, Episcopal Church at Yale (Sept. 2011 – May 2020)
Designed and executed comprehensive communications and development strategy that doubled individual giving to $42,000 in first year of implementation. Formed and chaired Development Committee. Preached and celebrated at Sunday evening services. Led student retreats.

Advised Bishop on all applications for ordination. Organized and directed discernment process for holy orders.

Co-chaired New York Term Member Advisory Committee for 2016-2017 program year. Advised staff on meeting content and chaired meetings in the Religion and Foreign Policy Initiative.

Recent “Denying Biden Communion is the nuclear option” The Washington Post, Jun. 23, 2021

“Mayor Pete and the Queering of the American Soul” The New York Times, Apr. 17, 2019
“17 Years after September 11, Will We Learn to Love Our Enemies?” The Nation, Sept. 11, 2018
“Want to strengthen American democracy? Exercise your freedom of religion” Quartz, Apr. 16, 2017
“Church is the next frontier for same-sex marriage acceptance” The Guardian, Jul. 1, 2015

Languages Lithuanian (fluent), German (fluent), Russian (proficient), French (proficient), Spanish (conversational), Biblical Hebrew (reading proficiency), Koine Greek (reading proficiency)
The Rev. Robert Jemonde Taylor
Dear Beloved of God:

In the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: One God. Amen.

It is with great enthusiasm, a listening heart, and the Holy Spirit’s guidance that I entered the discernment process to select the next bishop diocesan for the Episcopal Diocese of New York. Your profile clearly states where you are as a diocese, where you want to go, and the type of bishop you desire to journey with you. What you articulated in your profile resonates with me.

What drew me to ministry is the desire to walk with people in their journey with God. I see this as being a spiritual companion who can help read life’s events through the gospel lens. It is the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ that sustains my ministry. I receive immense joy seeing that resurrection change people’s lives.

Your profile states your desire to call someone as bishop who will “bring the grace of God to bear upon our works of love.” I see myself as one who ministers from the abundance of God’s grace and love. It was as a priest missioner in Dallas, TX where I brought together Latinx, African American, and European American communities, bridging racial, ethnic, and economic divides with prayer and worship. In my current role as rector of Saint Ambrose, Raleigh, NC, I started a ministry that partnered church members with students and administrators at a local Title I elementary school. I helped found a new county-wide organization of religious institutions and non-profits to advocate for change in housing, education, and employment.

I fondly remember my three years in New York while a student at the General Theological Seminary and my two-year field education site at Grace/La Gracia in White Plains. The Diocese of New York helped shape and mold me to be the priest I am today. You seek someone anchored in faith and rooted in Jesus. Prayer is what sustains me. I look forward to the opportunity to explore this call with you as your discernment process continues with the Holy Spirit’s grace.

Faithfully,
The Reverend Robert Jemonde Taylor
1. Describe your relationship with Christ and how it shapes your ministry.

Jesus is the homeless man sitting on the sidewalk, begging for money when I stepped over him after Communion at a church I attended as a college freshman. His face and voice came rushing to my mind as a senior reading Matthew 25:45, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” I realized that day I recognized Jesus in Communion on the altar; however, I did not recognize Jesus in that man on the concrete.

I have grown spiritually since then with God’s help. Now my relationship with Jesus Christ is rooted in love. Being present to God through daily prayer and scripture reading, regular spiritual direction, and yearly spiritually directed retreats helps me “see God more clearly, love God more dearly, and follow God more nearly.” During the pandemic, I felt an intense feeling of love that I describe as resurrection with an infusion of new life physically, spiritually, emotionally, vocationally, and relationally after I completed an at-home, twelve-week Ignatian retreat. I believe in the importance of having a therapist. My family brings joy and vibrancy to my life. I value friendship and have a strong network of friends who knew me prior to ordination. It is important for me to take my vacation and engage in continuing education each year. These practices keep me healthy.

The transformative power of the resurrection shapes both my relationship with Jesus Christ and my ministry. In Mark’s gospel, Jesus’ resurrection permeates personal, public, and cosmic realities. Resurrection is essential to ministries I have led bringing transformation to people in recovery, affordable housing, education reform, health and wellness, and workforce development. I see Christ present in the people I serve. I seek to be Christ-like by listening to their needs, taking Archbishop William Temple’s words seriously, that the Church exists primarily for the sake of those who are still outside it.

I continue to search for the individual I encountered in my first year of college. Archbishop Desmond Tutu bowed as he greeted people to acknowledge Jesus’ presence in them in the same manner he bowed, acknowledging Jesus’ presence on the altar. The resurrection empowers me to plow through unjust systems and bow to Jesus made present and visible in the Bread and Wine on the altar as well as Jesus made present in the world.

2. What is it about our profile that gets you excited and how do you think your skills and experiences are well-suited to serve the Diocese of New York as Bishop Diocesan?

I remember being four years old and playing a game with the bishop following one of his visitations. “What is that?” I asked, pointing to the crozier. “This is a staff shepherds use to care for sheep,” the bishop answered. I imitated being a sheep while the bishop pretended to rescue me with the staff. The shepherd’s rod and staff providing comfort in Psalm 23:4 is part of my prayer meditation. You desire your next bishop and shepherd to “bring the grace of God to bear upon our works of love.” I experience Jesus Christ’s love in my life through worship and prayer, being nurtured by the sacraments. God placed the Diocese of New York as a participant in sharing God’s grace and love in a specific geographic location to sow seeds of resurrection and transformation.
The image that communicates my leadership model is monastic, leading from the center with the community forming concentric circles around me. This image of abbot/abbess is rooted in our Anglican identity. This model places the bishop as one in the midst of our diocesan community, providing a listening ministry. The abbot bishop together with the community discerns the needs and choices for life in the diocese as we journey with Jesus together. I lead from the middle, as one among and with the people. There are times I will need to move and lead from the front. Other times I will need to move back and observe. This is the ministry of active listening and presence, seeing God active in the world.

I have experience in a variety of ministry contexts. A rural and historically Black Episcopal small congregation mission formed me as a child. A similar urban mission in a different diocese sponsored me for ordination. I spent two years in field education at a multi-ethnic congregation. I have served two congregations: a suburban-resource-size church; and an urban-transitional-size church. I served as a chaplain to a large, mostly Spanish-speaking neighborhood as well as a chaplain at a Black Episcopal elementary school. I am at ease in a variety of settings and find joy in being with and serving God’s people in a myriad of contexts. Seeing the range of ministry contexts in the Diocese of New York excites me greatly.

3. What new and hopeful perspectives and ideas can you bring to the conversation about church decline that support and encourage long-term solutions?

One priest told me the story of asking the pastor of a different denomination within a stone's throw of the Episcopal congregation, “Would the community feel the impact if my Episcopal church closed?” The pastor shook his head, “No. They would not even notice.” I envision the congregations in the Diocese of New York being so intertwined and interrelated to the larger geographic communities that the notion of an absent diocese is unimaginable. The resurrection is central to my Christian identity. Many Christians understand the resurrection as a past event or something that a select group of people can look forward to in the distant future. Few Christians see resurrection as something that should impinge upon the present moment. If called to be your bishop, I would bring an emphasis on the power of the resurrection to all our work together—especially addressing institutional church decline. Average Sunday Attendance, pledges, and membership do not give a complete picture of health. The church is changing, and this represents an exciting opportunity to move into the future in new ways. I will invite the diocese to prayerfully dream and envision what a resurrected Church, justice system, education system, ecology, and community look like.

The Rev. Dr. Wilda Gafney wrote, “The Holy Spirit [is] the manifestation of God that is active in our world, speaking it into life, breathing through it and through us. The Spirit of God is the Breath of God, a mighty wind moving through the world, stirring up holy trouble, fanning the flames of holy passion. When was the last time you got into holy trouble? When was the last time you were caught in the grip of a holy passion?” With this in mind, I will bring a new imagination to the conversation about church decline. NYU professor Dr. Jason King writes about “ambivalent direction” meaning “finding the fall in the ascent, and the ascent in the fall. This is survival.” A new imagination is living in a paradoxical space shaped by the resurrection. This way of thinking and imagining will lead the diocese to look at examples of abundant life within and explore examples of creativity outside the diocese.
4. Given the impact of COVID on the life of our ministry, we are curious about how you will pastor our congregations, both clergy and laity.

The acolyte warden at my field education church, Grace/La Gracia, White Plains, NY, often said that the bishop’s chair would explode if anyone but the bishop sat there. The bishop's chair is an important unifying diocesan symbol. The language of a see, of having an official bishop’s chair, reminds me how important a sitting ministry is. Jesus sat to teach in the Beatitudes. Sitting is a pastoral care posture. While serving as a chaplain, I once entered a hospital room and pulled up a chair to sit beside a mother who recently lost her teenage son and who spoke only Mandarin. We sat silent for one hour because of a language barrier. We communed through silence. I will pastor the diocesan clergy and laity by active listening and sitting. I will work to provide the spiritual and emotional support clergy need to be healthy. I provided a pastoral support structure by establishing a diocesan Clergy of Color group in 2016 to build community with regular meetings, a yearly spiritual retreat, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. I am a member of a group of clergy who meet quarterly for a day-long retreat of centering prayer, book reflection, scripture reading, and communal pastoral care. I have used both discretionary and personal funds to provide reminders of God’s grace to clergy. Saint Ambrose recently supported two members in their 20s and 30s in the vocational diaconate discernment process and welcomed three vocational diaconate interns. In addition, we sponsored two members in their 20s to the priesthood. Prayer will guide my preaching, teaching, and vision if called to be your bishop.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness” (I Corinthians 12:9). Henri Nouwen wrote that we become effective ministers when we pastor out of our woundedness. COVID-19 continues to inflict new wounds while unmasking old wounds. Healing begins by acknowledging that life’s messiness, conflict, the unknown, and uncertainty are welcomed places to start. Saint Mary Magdalene visited the tomb, entered a messy, uncertain, unknown, and dangerous space, and encountered the Risen Savior. The type of Christian spirituality that is helpful during this time is the apophatic or “way of unknowing.” We, like Moses, can release control to God who heals and transforms when Moses in Exodus 20:21 entered the “thick darkness where God was.”

5. Social justice is near and dear to the heart of the Diocese of New York. How has social justice been a part of your ministry? Please give examples.

“See! Jesus looks just like you!” I witnessed an eight-year-old African American parishioner exclaim that while taking the hand of another eight-year-old boy during his first visit to Saint Ambrose. He pointed at an Ethiopian icon depicting all characters as African. It was a profound theological statement that the divine imprint was on this child. I continue to lead the congregation in examining the legacy of white supremacy within the liturgy and church life by paying attention to the images in the church, images in Christian formation material, racialized language around light and dark, the music we sing, and the theologians and illustrations used in sermons.

The biblical notion of justice concerns right relationship. Environmental, health, and educational justice are essential to Saint Ambrose’s identity. The church is in an urban setting near a flood-prone creek and wetland
where the city dumped raw sewage for decades and then zoned it as an African-American neighborhood. Recently, I helped found a community organizing group of nearly 50 religious and non-profit institutions that challenged the construction of a 150-acre complex only 3,000 feet upstream from the church's neighborhood. It was a David and Goliath story of working directly with the city's rezoning process to ensure environmental considerations to mitigate flooding downstream. In addition, the church recently received a national grant to address decades of environmental racism in the community through a three-phase project: an environmental justice podcast; a labyrinth; and a therapeutic garden to address the community's emotional and mental wellness. The congregation is also responding to gentrification by working with government officials to mitigate the effects of exorbitant property taxes impacting long-term residents. Our congregation responded during the pandemic by delivering thousands of pounds of food and served as a COVID testing and vaccination site multiple times. I forged a relationship between the church and the local Title I school across the street with church members serving as readers and mentors. The litanies during the Eucharist feature monthly themes of LGBTQIA+ advocacy, violence against the Black Transgender community, and mental health. The church views violence and homicide as a public health concern and is building relationships with local government to address the effects of gun violence in historically underserved and underinvested communities. The congregation also co-sponsored an event with Raw Tools, watching them transform a handgun into a garden tool based on Isaiah’s vision of beating swords into plowshares.

6. A significant part of episcopal ministry is overseeing administration, property, and financial development. Give some examples of when you have done this kind of work and what you have learned from the work you've done.

“Can you see Jesus in the D16 Excel spreadsheet cell?” is the question I posed at the Eucharist that preceded the vestry and finance committee meetings at a church I served. Administration, property, and financial development are about stewardship of people, place, and money. People are the most important resource in any organization. Good listening is key to being a good administrator.

Employees and volunteers are part of a church’s administration team. I use a spiritual gifts inventory and book to help people discern their ministry. I also use Frederick Buechner’s quote as a guiding principle: “The kind of work God usually calls you to is the kind of work (a) that you need most to do and (b) that the world most needs to have done.” I believe in using professional resources to help people reach their greatest potential.

My current church has been a multi clergy and multi staff congregation. Understanding a system’s history is essential to understanding the organization to positively affect change. I noticed when I arrived as rector that several previous treasurers served over a decade. I created a one-year staff accountant position to work with the finance ministry and treasurer, helping change the church’s financial software while forged a relationship with a new accounting firm. We began the practice of rotating treasurers by establishing term limits. I recently reorganized the church’s staff for greater efficiency by creating the new position of business manager bringing all the church’s financial management in-house. Creating financial accountability and transparency helped the congregation increase its trust in the church’s financial management. These
financial decisions aided in the success of a three-year capital campaign raising nearly twice the church’s annual budget while maintaining strong stewardship pledges. This capital campaign upgraded the building and property while emphasizing ecological improvements. I provide guidance and oversight of the church’s additional property located in the city’s growing commerce district.

I served the diocese for four years as Chair of Business Affairs and Administration that had oversight for the diocese’s multimillion dollar budget. I serve as treasurer of a national Episcopal organization. I also chair Raleigh’s Stormwater Commission and have oversight of a $12MM yearly budget for projects. I am treasurer of a newly created $2.5MM Southeast Raleigh stakeholder flood mitigation grant fund. These experiences continue to teach me that God is generous and people positively respond to God’s generosity.
ORDINATION IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Deacon: May 6, 2009—The Diocese of Upper South Carolina by the Right Reverend Dorsey Henderson
Priest: November 21, 2009—The Diocese of Dallas by the Right Reverend James Stanton

MINISTRY AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
SAINT AMBROSE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Raleigh, NC 2012—Present
Rector
Spiritual and overall leader of a congregation that consists of 400 parishioners, 140 person average Sunday attendance (ASA), 8 staff members, $500,000 budget; increased budget and giving over $120,000 ■ Worship:
Commitment to experiential, engaging worship ■ Christian Formation: Started seasonal meditative quiet days, weekly bible study, adult education forum, curriculum based children/youth education ■ Outreach:
Established One Church, One School (OCOS) Ministry with 600 student elementary school; Environmental ministry; Habitat for Humanity; ONE Wake Community Organizing ■ Pastoral Care:
Organized communication between 4 ministries to reach parishioners weekly ■ Capital Campaign:
Successful $750,000 campaign for building upgrades, new prayer garden columbarium, and church growth/development ■ Environmental Efforts: wetland restoration, facilities ecological footprint upgrades ■ Built strong online worship and social media presence

SAINT MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, Dallas, TX 2009—2012
The Lilly/Fund for Theological Education Transition into Ministry (TiM) Grant Recipient
Missionary/Evangelism Ministry at 7,200 member congregation ■ St. Michael: 20s & 30s ministry director ■ Chaplain, Jubilee Park—15,000 resident, 62 block neighborhood: Sacraments as evangelism, community organizing and development ■ Chaplain, St. Philip’s School and Community Center

Field Education Placement
Ethnically diverse, pastoral size congregation representing 19 Spanish speaking countries ■ Started new Saturday Evening Prayer Service

THE CHILDRENS HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES, Los Angeles, CA 2007
Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)
400-bed hospital with 80% Spanish speaking patients ■ CPE Project: How Black and Latino/a American Cultures View Sickness and Suffering in the Hospital Setting

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH, New York, NY 2007
Instructor, High School Age Church School
High school religious education ■ Led 60 Harlem youth in Ignatian spiritual exercise on rural NY retreat ■ Malaria Hysteria Outreach Project—300 mosquito nets and one drinking water well for an African Country

MICHELIN TIRE RESEARCH CORPORATION, Greenville, SC 2003-2006
Handling Performance Engineer
Michelin Worldwide Leader (Pôle de Compétence), Truck Handling ■ Oversaw internal/external research and communication related to tractor-trailer eighteen wheeled trucks ■ Tire’s impact on vehicle performance
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, Stanford, CA
Dynamic Design Laboratory—Graduate Research Assistant 2001—2003
Autonomous guided vehicle research ■ 18-wheeler rollover prevention research ■ Publication: Safety Performance and Robustness of Heavy Vehicles, California PATH Research Report

DIOCESAN ACTIVITIES


CIVIC ACTIVITIES

ANGLICAN COMMUNION EXPERIENCES

WIDER EPISCOPAL CHURCH EXPERIENCES
Team Member and Conference leader—8th-12th grade summer camp experience focusing on issues of injustice, prejudices and power systems and how Christians respond (2014) ■ Love God; Love Neighbor Conferences, Indianapolis, IN, Design Team Member and Conference leader for 77th General Convention—Office of Black Ministries middle, high school, and young adult spiritual and vocations conference (2012) ■ The Rising Stars Experience (RISE), Design Team Member—Rites of Passage Experience from the Office of Black Ministries responding to the national school to prison pipeline trend (2011) ■ Everyone, Everywhere Episcopal Conference, Estes Park, CO, Conference Design Team Member: Global mission conference; 400 participants; Over 50 workshops and presentations, Worship Design Team Leader: Planned seven international worship services ■ Lifelong Christian Formation, Contributing writer to A Lifelong Christian Formation Resource for Black Ministries in TEC (2011)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

SPIRITUAL RETREATS

EDUCATIONAL GRANTS AND PROGRAMS
Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Sabbatical Grant ■ Race, Church, and Theological Practices—Member of a Collaborative Inquiry Five Person Research Team: $90,000 Louisville Institute’s Clergy-Scholar Research Team and Duke University’s Center for Documentary Studies to produce a documentary film ■ Henry Luce Foundation $400,000 grant to produce a documentary film on gentrification, race, and Christian practice

SELECTED UNIVERSITY PRESENTATIONS

SELECTED COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

SERMONS
UBE National Conference Opening Eucharist Preacher, Baltimore, MD (2022) ▪ Blessed Martin Luther King, Jr, Episcopal


SELECTED ARTICLES AND PUBLICATIONS

MEDIA MINISTRY
NBC International ■ The News and Observer Newspaper, Raleigh, NC ■ ABC11 ■ On the Record News Show, NBC WRAL TV5 ■ Black Issues Forum Interview, PBS TV ■ WSHA FM and WAUG AM Radio Interviews ■ Weekly radio segment on KKDA, Dallas, TX ■ WYFF NBC TV4 Interview, Greenville, SC ■ TEC Jubilee Ministry Documentary ■ Jubilee Park Documentary, Experience the Transformation ■ Episcopal News Services

AWARDS
2022 School of Theology Award for Service, The University of the South: Sewanee ■ City of Raleigh Stormwater Community Award (2022) ■ The Rev. Thomas Dropper Memorial Green Congregation Award, Diocese of NC (2022) ■ Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Sabbatical Grant

EDUCATION
Honors Thesis: The African Diaspora at GTS

Stanford University, Stanford, CA MS in Mechanical Engineering (2002) Concentration: Control of Dynamic Systems

North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC BS in Mechanical Engineering (2000) Magna Cum Laude

Baden Powell Spanish Institute, Morelia, MX Summer 2011
Spanish Cultural Immersion Language Program Catholic Liturgy in the Mexican Context

Oxford University, Oxford, England Summer 1997 Curriculum: Shakespeare/Modern British History