

Report of the Standing Committee to the 2022 Annual Convention

Bishop Susan Goff, Bishop-Elect Mark Stevenson, and Delegates of the 228th Annual Diocesan Convention,

The Standing Committee is made up of 12 members—six from the lay order and six from the clergy order—and each year Convention delegates elect two new members of each order for a three-year term. The 2021-2022 Standing Committee members are Jessica Atkinson, The Rev. Laura Minnich Lockey, Diane Miller, The Rev. Dr. Cayce Ramey, The Rev. Kristin Wickersham, Tom Baker, The Rev. Christine Love Mendoza, Margaret Woody, Tyson Gilpin, The Rev. Kim Glenn, and The Rev. Martin Geiger with the latter two fulfilling remaining terms for The Rev. Anne Turner and The Rev. Dr. Dorothy White, both of whom resigned during the year. The Rev. Laura Minnich Lockey served as Secretary and I was blessed to serve as your President. We are all grateful for the honor and privilege to be faithful servants of our Diocese.

With the continuing impact of Covid-19, the Standing Committee met virtually, via Zoom, on the first Thursday of each month for most of the year. Once safety protocols allowed us to meet in person, we welcomed the opportunity to gather together for a one day retreat in Richmond and for our last two meetings of the year which were held at St. George's in Fredericksburg.

As set forth by the Canons, the Standing Committee has several responsibilities:

- *Serving as a Council of Advice for the Bishop*
Each month Bishop Goff met with the Standing Committee at its regularly scheduled meetings to provide updates on matters of importance to the Diocese and to seek our advice on various aspects of her work as our Ecclesiastical Authority. As we approach the final months of Bishop Goff's time as our Bishop, we take this opportunity to give special thanks for her dedicated, thoughtful, and wise leadership.
- *Approving Candidates for Ordination to the Priesthood and the Vocational Diaconate*
One very special responsibility of the Standing Committee is interviewing candidates who are seeking ordination to the Priesthood and Vocational Diaconate. This step comes at a point in their journey when they have devoted significant prayer, time, energy and devotion to their call to ordained ministry and, God willing, will stand before God and their loved ones to take their vows. A listing of all of the candidates approved this past year are noted in the *Official Acts of the Standing Committee*. We give thanks and high praise for the incredible support of Ed Keithly, our Vocational Development Minister, who left in August after 12 years with the Diocese to pursue graduate studies at VCU. We also give thanks for the work of The Rev. Dr. Sarah Kye Price, Interim Vocational Development Minister, and Gloria Parham, Administrative Assistant for Episcopal Ministries, who have provided invaluable guidance to our candidacy process. Finally, we are grateful and give praise and thanks to the Committee on Priesthood and the Committee on the Diaconate for their hard work and dedication to this process.
- *Consenting to the Election of Bishops in The Episcopal Church*
The Standing Committee is also responsible for providing consent for the election of bishops in all dioceses of The Episcopal Church. During the 2021-2022 year, the Standing Committee provided consent for 10 new bishops, including our own Bishop-Elect Mark Stevenson.
- *Approving Indebtedness and Requests to Encumber or Sell Property*
One responsibility we take very seriously is the request to encumber or sell property, including requests for refinancing indebtedness. Working in conjunction with our Diocesan Treasurer, Ted Smith, and the leadership of the various parishes in our diocese, we approved the sale of two church properties and the encumbrance of one property during the year.

Other important decisions and approvals by The Standing Committee this past year included the following:

- *Nominating Candidates for the Disciplinary Board to be Elected by Convention Delegates*
Canon 27.2C outlines provisions for the Standing Committee to nominate members to the Disciplinary Board who are then considered for election by delegates to Annual Convention. The Disciplinary Board consists of eleven (11) members, six (6) of whom are priests or deacons and five (5) of whom are lay persons, and it is responsible for dealing with matters pertaining to Ecclesiastical Discipline. For the class of 2025, the Disciplinary Board needs to fill two clergy positions and two lay positions. The nominees approved by the Standing Committee were as follows:

Mr. Julian Bivins, Jr.
Mr. Brian Carr
The Rev. Crystal Hardin
The Rev. Cynthia McKenna

- *Approval of the R-10A Task Force*
The 227th Annual Diocesan Convention adopted Resolution 10A to begin the work of reparations in the Diocese of Virginia. The five-year journey includes identifying and investing already existing Diocesan assets for the work of racial justice and healing, defining what the people of the diocese mean by reparations, educating one another about our history, and determining ways to best use identified resources to overcome the painful legacy of slavery and the broken relationships caused by a long history of racism. In addition to the members noted below, each year a representative from the Standing Committee and the Executive Board will be appointed to the Task Force.

Donna Archer
Jeannette Cadwallendar
Benjamin Campbell
Dennis Carter-Chand
Ernestine Gilpin
Harris Merman Greene, Jr (Jay)
Jabriel Hasan
Malanna Henderson
Davette Himes
Thomas Howard
Wendy Ikezawa
Amy Keenan Amago
Laura Lafayette
Colleen Schiefelbein
Kristin Layng Szakos

The Standing Committee also continued the very special process of overseeing the election of the 14th Bishop Diocesan:

- In November 2021, the Standing Committee called the Transition Committee which shepherds the process of choosing our spiritual leader from the time of the selection of the candidates by the Search Committee through the consecration in December. Through prayer, discernment, and the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, we called a committee of clergy and lay that represents the fullness and diversity of the Diocese of Virginia. The committee chosen by the Standing Committee is as follows:

Cindi Bartol, Christ Church, Alexandria
Ellyn Crawford, St. George's, Arlington
The Rev. David Curtis, St. John's, Richmond
The Rev. Marlene Forrest, St. Phillip's, Richmond
Sherrard Gardner, St. Phillip's, Richmond
Stephanie Hanchey, St. Paul's, Owens
The Rev. Joseph Klenzmann, Holy Comforter, Richmond
Terry Long, Holy Comforter, Richmond
The Rev. Barbara Marques, St. John's, Westpoint
Kathleen Turner, Church of the Resurrection, Alexandria
Carlo Uchello, St. Lukes, Alexandria – Chairperson

The Standing Committee has met with Carlo Uchello on a regular basis to receive updates and insight regarding this very important work.

- In March of this year, after prayer and discernment, the Standing Committee presented a slate of four nominees for our next Bishop Diocesan. We thank the Bishop Search Committee for their earnest and spiritual work. Embracing the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they faithfully and diligently shepherded the Diocese through the search process. The nominees were:

The Rev. Joseph Hensley
The Rev. Alan James
The Very Rev. Gideon Pollach
The Rev. Canon Mark Stevenson

- Following the announcement of the slate of nominees for our next Bishop, the Standing Committee oversaw the Petition Process. While the principal method for calling candidates is through the discernment of the Search Committee, the Canons of The Episcopal Church provide for a wider process in which all laity and clergy can join with the Holy Spirit to raise up a new bishop. Accordingly, the Canons provide a means to nominate a candidate by petition. The Petition Process is used to address those situations where a person may be called to stand for election, but for whatever reason was not part of the Search Committee process or ultimately identified as one of its recommended candidates, to invite members of the diocese to nominate additional candidates for consideration for the slate, to open the aperture to diverse qualified candidates, and to engage the power of the Holy Spirit to lead the hearts and minds of those who may feel called for consideration. The petition nominee had to be endorsed by a wide cross-section of the diocese, and undergo the same application process, interviews, and personal background checks required of other candidates. No candidates were added to the slate from the Petition Process.

The Standing Committee is grateful for this opportunity to serve. The past year presented great challenges for us, particularly during the Bishop Search process. We encountered deep divisions in the Diocese, many born of faithful passion and sincere concern for our church. We recognize some were hurt, as were we, and know that in some situations, those wounds continue to persist. We shall continue to pray and work for repentance, reconciliation, and healing.

We close with this prayer, for the Diocese:

Oh God, by your grace you have called us in this Diocese to a goodly fellowship of faith. Bless Bishop Susan, Bishop-Elect Mark and other clergy and all our people. Grant that your Word may be truly preached and truly heard, your Sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. By your Spirit, fashion our lives according to the example of your Son, and grant that we may show the power of your love to all among whom we live; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Faithfully submitted on behalf of the Standing Committee,

Deb Gandy
President of the Standing Committee (2021-2022)
Episcopal Diocese of Virginia