



# Delegate Packet

**The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina**  
235<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention

## **Table of Contents**

3	Letter from the Dean of the Peninsula Deanery
4	Detailed Agenda
8	Committee Appointments
10	Report of the Constitution and Canons Committee
19	Nominations Report
44	Proposed Resolutions
49	Proposed 2026 Budget
52	Reports of Institutions



**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**  
*Living Inclusively, Promoting Justice, Sharing Hope*

*Welcome to the 235<sup>th</sup> Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina!*

As Dean of the Peninsula Deanery, on behalf of the laity and clergy of the Deanery hosting the 235<sup>th</sup> Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, I welcome you to convention.

The theme of this year's convention is "*A New Season.*" Inspired by the words of the prophet Isaiah and led by Bishop Ruth Woodliff-Stanley entering the fifth year of her Episcopacy, we are encouraged to stop dwelling on past events and traumas, and to move forward with faith, trusting that God is doing a new thing in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina. *Do you not perceive it?*

Helping us to do so during convention, we are blessed with the presence and counsel of both The Rev. Carter Heyward and The Rev. Luther E. Smith, Jr., Ph.D. An Episcopal priest, professor, theologian, activist, and writer, Rev. Heyward has throughout her life sought to transform consciousness, proclaim possibilities, and make way for new approaches to connecting the divine to intimacy, justice, and activism. In her most recent book titled, *The Seven Deadly Sins of White Christian Nationalism: A Call To Action*, Rev. Heyward suggests that perhaps only by condemning the destructive culture of white Christian nationalism can we fashion a world full of God's truth, love, and wisdom. Dr. Smith, professor emeritus of Church and Community at the Candler School of Theology of Emory University, has spent his life dedicated to issues of church and society, interfaith cooperation, child advocacy, congregational renewal and Christian spirituality. In his latest book titled, *Hope Is Here! Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community*, Dr. Smith shares relationship as a means by which we move towards a "new awareness and opportunities for coming alive...enlivened by hope, to experience hopefulness, and to live as a people for justice and beloved community."

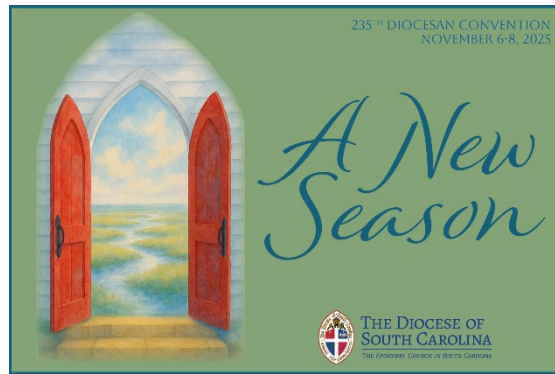
Indeed we in the Diocese of South Carolina are living into "*A New Season.*" Our Strategic Visioning is moving into a new phase. Attention is being given to those congregations who returned following schism and need help, and new churches are being planted in geographical areas in the diocese where there is no Episcopal presence, but one is needed. The historically disenfranchised congregations of our diocese, experiencing the effects of schism long before 2012, our historically African American congregations, are continuing to receive the attention and support they need, in ways never before realized. New amendments and revisions to our Constitution and Canons will be considered to allow for refreshed ways of leading mission and ministry, providing greater opportunity for lay leadership. And we will consider all this gathering at Christ Episcopal Church, Mt. Pleasant, one of ten original parishes established in the province of Carolina following the Church Act of 1706.

James Baldwin, in his famous book published in 1963 titled, *The Fire Next Time*, wrote: "*To accept one's past — one's history — is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it.*" Baldwin understood that acknowledging and learning from history is different from being paralyzed by it. Instead of letting our past weigh us down, we can use it as a tool to understand and strengthen our present and future.

So, join us in convention, becoming beloved community for all, in this "Brand New Historic Diocese" of South Carolina.

*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:18–19*

The Very Rev. Dr. Michael Shaffer  
Dean, Peninsula Deanery  
Rector, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Charleston



**The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina**  
**The 235th Annual Diocesan Convention**  
 Christ Episcopal Church, Mount Pleasant

***Thursday, November 6, 2025***

<b>2:00 pm</b>	Registration begins and continues until 3:45 pm	
<b>4:00 pm</b>	First Business Session: Call to Order	The Right Reverend Woodliff-Stanley
	Appointment of Parliamentarians	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
	Presentation of Agenda	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
	Appointment of Convention Committees	
	Committee on Admission of New Parishes and Missions	
	Committee on Constitutions and Canons	
	Committee on Finance	
	Committee on Elections	
	Committee on Resolutions	
	Committee on Credentials	
	Committee on Necrology	
	Committee on Nominations	
	Report of the Clergy Credentials Committee	The Reverend Deacon Lee Ragsdale
	Certification of Quorum	Ms. Diane Wilson, Secretary of Convention
	Election of the Treasurer	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
	Confirmation the Secretary	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
	Confirmation the Chancellor & Vice Chancellor	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
	Appointment of Regional Deans	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley

Welcome to Special Guests	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
First Report of the Committee on Admission of New Parishes and Missions	Ms. Jane Hart Lewis
First Report of the Committee on Constitution & Canons	Ms. Melinda Kelley Vice-Chancellor
Greetings from the Presiding Bishop's Office	The Reverend Canon Charles Robertson Canon to the Presiding Bishop
Report on the Diocesan Feasibility Study	The Reverend Mieke Vandersall Ms. Erin Weber-Johnson
Recognition of Canon Andrea McKellar	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley The Bishop's Staff
<b>5:20 pm</b>	Opening Eucharist in the sanctuary of Christ Church; reception to follow

***Friday, November 7, 2025***

<b>8:00 am</b>	Registration resumes until 8:45 am	
<b>9:00 am</b>	Morning Prayer	
<b>9:10 am</b>	Second Business Session: Call to Order	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Report of the Lay Credentials Committee		Ms. Laura Marshall
Second Report of the Committee on Constitution & Canons		Ms. Melinda Kelley Vice-Chancellor
Recognition of Institutions		Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Report of Porter-Gaud School		Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Report of Bishop Gadsden Episcopal Retirement Community		The Reverend Charles Jenkins
<i>Break</i>		
Keynote Address		The Reverend Luther Smith, Ph.D.
<i>Break</i>		

Recognition of Seminarians, New Clergy, and Leaders	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Noonday Prayer and Grace	Mr. Charles Jordan
<b>12:00 pm</b> Lunch	
<i>St. Christopher will present an optional session, "Getting to Know Your Camp and Conference Center," in the main Convention room.</i>	
<b>1:00 pm</b> Workshops	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carter Heyward: "Against the Odds"</li> <li>• Luther Smith: "Becoming Persons and Churches Enlivened by Hope"</li> <li>• Furman Buchanan: Tour of the Historic Christ Church</li> <li>• Christ Church Godly Play Team: Introduction to Godly Play</li> </ul>	
<b>2:00 pm</b> Booksigning	
<b>2:30 pm</b> Third Business Session: Call to Order	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Report of the Nominating Committee	The Reverend Rob Spainhour
Elections	The Reverend Furman Buchanan
Appointments to the Disciplinary Board and Commission on Ministry	Bishop Woodliff-Stanley
Report of the Commission on Ministry	The Reverend Charles Jenkins
First Report of the Elections Committee <i>Second ballot if needed</i>	The Reverend Furman Buchanan
First Report of the Resolutions Committee	The Reverend Eric Bash The Reverend Deacon Marionette Bennet
Report of the Chancellor	Mr. Skip Utsey
Second Report of the Elections Committee <i>Third ballot if needed</i>	The Reverend Furman Buchanan
Report of the Standing Committee	The Very Reverend Michael Shaffer
Report of the Treasurer	Mr. Barry Ronan
Report of the Diocesan Council Including the proposed 2026 budget	Mr. Taylor Skardon Vice-chair of Council

Third Report of the Elections Committee  
*Fourth ballot if needed* The Reverend Furman Buchanan

Report on the Strategic Vision and Congregational Vitality The Reverend Canon Ryan Currie  
Canon Ann Fleming

*Break*

Afternoon Devotions

The Bishop's Address Bishop Woodliff-Stanley

**5:00 pm** Reception

### ***Saturday, November 8, 2025***

**8:30 am** Registration resumes until 8:45 am

**9:00 am** Morning Prayer, led by Youth

**9:30 am** Fourth Business Session: Call to Order Bishop Woodliff-Stanley

Report of the Youth Commission The Reverend Will Berry  
Members of the Youth Commission

Fourth Report of the Elections Committee (if needed) The Reverend Furman Buchanan

Report from St. Christopher Camp & Conference Center The Reverend Laura Rezac

Report of the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission Ms. Gail DeCosta  
Ms. Vermelle Simmons

*Break*

Panel Discussion: Bishop Woodliff-Stanley  
"Our Hope and Our Calling in a New Season" The Rev. Carter Heyward  
The Rev. Luther Smith

*Short Break*

Second Report of the Committee on Resolutions: Ms. Ellen Hardin  
Courtesy Resolutions Diocesan Youth

Report of the Committee on Necrology The Reverend Ricardo Bailey

Invitation to the 236th Convention Bishop Woodliff-Stanley

Benediction & Adjournment Bishop Woodliff-Stanley



## Committee Appointments 235th Annual Diocesan Convention

### Constitution and Canons

Ms. Melinda Lucka Kelley, chair  
The Rev. Rob Donehue  
The Rev. Philip Linder  
The Rev. Michael Shaffer  
Mr. Skip Utsey, ex-officio

### Credentials – Clergy

The Rev. Lee Ragsdale, chair  
The Rev. Sr. Miriam Elizabeth (Faith E.) Bledsoe, OSH  
The Rev. Cn. Wilmot Merchant II

### Credentials – Lay

Ms. Laura Marshall, chair  
Mr. Barry Dennis  
Ms. Clara Heinsohn

### Elections (host priest, two non-voting tellers)

The Rev. Furman Buchanan, Chair  
Ms. Jan Bolger  
Ms. Deborah Stevens

### Finance

Mr. Barry Ronan, Chair, ex-officio  
Mr. Bill Beak  
The Rev. Pam Fahrner  
Mr. Mike Jefferson  
The Rev. Cn. Philip Linder

### Necrology

The Rev. Ricardo Bailey

### New Parishes and Missions

Ms. Jane Hart Lewis, Chair  
Mr. James Gettys  
The Rev. Charles Jenkins  
The Rev. Jordan Trendelman  
Ms. Melinda Kelley, ex-officio  
Mr. Skip Utsey, ex-officio

### Nominations

The Rev. Rob Spainhour, Chair  
The Rev. Eunice Dunlap  
Ms. Deb Harris  
Ms. Eleanor Koets  
The Rev. Julia Madden  
Ms. Sally Mayse  
Ms. Cappy Traywick  
The Rev. Bill Watson

### Resolutions

Ms. Ellen Hardin, Chair  
The Rev. Eric Bash  
The Rev. Marionette Bennett  
Ms. Kristi Burch



# REPORT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND CANONS COMMITTEE

## 235<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina

Constitution, Canons and Rules of Order

Constitutional Amendments

### ARTICLE IX Standing Committee

**The Proposed Amendments to Article IX of the Constitution, highlighted in red, received First Reading Approval by majority vote of each Order in Convention November of 2024, and will be presented in Convention November 2025 for Second Reading Approval.**

*Section 1.* There shall be a Standing Committee consisting of six ~~priests~~ **canonically resident clergy** of the Diocese and six laypersons, who are confirmed communicants in good standing of the Church in the Diocese. The Chancellor, unless an elected member of the Standing Committee, shall be an ex-officio member of the Standing Committee without vote. The members of the Standing Committee shall be elected by ballot for a term of three (3) years. At each annual Convention two ~~priests~~ **canonically resident clergy** and two laypersons shall be elected for a term of three (3) years. No ~~priest-clergy~~ or layperson whose term has expired shall be eligible for re-election until the passage of one Convention year from the date of said expiration.

*Section 2.* If there be no Bishop acting as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. In all decisions as the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Standing Committee shall vote by Orders; and a majority vote of the members present from each Order shall be necessary for a decision.

*Section 3.* At their first meeting after the election the Standing Committee shall choose one ~~of the priests~~ of their body to be their president and another member of their body to be their secretary, whose duty it shall be to keep regular minutes of all the proceedings and business of the committee. The committee shall maintain a written record of all of its activities and preserve the records and minutes of its meetings, **and may adopt bylaws.**

Convention Resolution:

Recognition of Returning Mission  
Dated: Nov. \_\_\_ 2025

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**Resolution for Presentation and Adoption at the  
November, 2025 Annual Convention**

**[Recognition and Restoration of St. Peter’s Episcopal Church]**

**Whereas**, prior to 2012, St. Peter’s Episcopal Church was an Episcopal parish, known as Good Shepherd, Charleston, in union with The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, pursuant to the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese; and

**Whereas**, in 2012, disassociated clergy attempted to lead Good Shepherd, Charleston out of The Episcopal Church; and,

**Whereas**, from 2012 through August 17, 2022, loyal Episcopalians in Good Shepherd, Charleston, now known as St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, through no fault of their own, were unable to have the parish comply with the provisions of Canon 4; and,

**Whereas**, the faithful Episcopalians in St. Peter’s Episcopal Church desire to have this Church be recognized as a Mission in union with the Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and in “good standing” with the Convention;

**Now, therefore, be it resolved** that this 235th Annual Diocesan Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina does hereby waive any current canonical provision that would prevent or delay the recognition of this St. Peter’s Episcopal Church as a Mission in union with Convention.

**Be it further resolved** that this 235th Annual Diocesan Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina does hereby recognize that the above named Episcopal Mission is in full union with this Convention and is accorded the full privileges of membership in the Convention, pursuant to Article VIII of the Diocesan Constitution.

**CANON 7**  
**Parish Vestries and Mission Councils**  
*PROPOSED CHANGES TO CANON 7*  
*[EXISTING CANON SHOWN BELOW]*

*Section 1.* In every parish there shall be a vestry composed of two wardens and three (3) to fifteen (15) additional elected vestry members.

*Section 1.1.* Each parish, in its bylaws, shall establish the method of selecting wardens (election at annual meeting, election by the vestry, or appointment by the rector), and the length of the term of office for wardens, if any.

*Section 1.2.* Each parish, in its bylaws, shall establish the number of additional elected vestry members and the length of the term of office for additional elected vestry members. No additional elected vestry member shall serve for more than three consecutive years in office. At the completion of a total of three years of service on the vestry, an additional elected vestry shall not be eligible for election to another term as an additional vestry member until one year after the expiration of such member's term. This limitation shall not affect the additional elected vestry member's eligibility to serve as a warden or, if selected to serve as a warden, the length of her or his term as warden, unless otherwise limited by the parish's bylaws.

*Section 2.* In every mission there shall be a mission council composed of at least one warden and three (3) to fifteen (15) additional elected council members.

*Section 2.1.* Each mission, in its bylaws, shall establish the number of wardens, the method of selecting wardens (election at annual meeting, election by the council, or appointment by the vicar), and the length of the term of office for wardens, if any.

*Section 2.2.* Each mission, in its bylaws, shall establish the number of additional elected council members and the length of the term of office for additional elected council members. No additional elected council member shall serve for more than three consecutive years in office. At the completion of a total of three years of service on the council, an additional elected council member shall not be eligible for election to another term as an additional council member until one year after the expiration of such member's term. This limitation shall not affect the additional elected council member's eligibility to serve as a warden or, if selected to serve as a warden, the length of her or his term as warden, unless otherwise limited by the mission's bylaws.

*Section 3.* The wardens shall always be confirmed communicants of the parish or mission who have attained the age of 18 years and who have communicated at least three times in the year preceding their election. The additional elected members of the vestry or council shall always be confirmed communicants of the parish or mission who have attained the age of 18 years and who have communicated at least three times in the year preceding their election.

**CANON 7**  
**Parish Vestries and Mission Councils**  
*[EXISTING CANON 7]*

*Section 1.* In every parish there shall be a vestry composed of two wardens, and not less than three (3) or more than fifteen (15) persons as the vestry members of the parish, to continue in office for the term elected, which shall not exceed three years, and until their successors are elected. In every mission there shall be a mission council composed of at least one warden, and not less than three (3) or more than fifteen (15) persons as the council members of the mission, to continue in office for the term elected, which shall not exceed three years, and until their successors are elected. The wardens shall always be confirmed communicants of the parish or mission who have attained the age of 18 years and who have communicated at least three times in the year preceding their election. The members of the vestry or council shall always be confirmed communicants of the parish or mission who have attained the age of 18 years and who have communicated at least three times in the year preceding their election.

*Section 2.* The election shall be in accordance with the parish's or mission's bylaws.

*Section 3.* The wardens, and vestry or council thus elected, together with the rector, if there be one, shall constitute the vestry or council and shall be the official representative of the parish or mission. The rector or vicar shall preside at all meetings. In case of the absence of the rector or vicar, one of the wardens shall preside.

**CANON 15**  
**Diocesan Council**  
*PROPOSED CHANGES TO CANON 15*  
*[EXISTING CANON SHOWN BELOW]*

*Section 1.* The Diocesan Council shall administer and carry out the missionary, educational, and social work of this diocese and such other work as may be committed to it by the diocesan Convention. In addition, the Diocesan Council may initiate and develop new work between meetings of Convention, as it may deem necessary. Further, the Diocesan Council shall receive and administer all funds raised for the purpose of diocesan mission and ministry, subject to the provisions of the constitution and canons of this diocese.

*Section 2.* The Diocesan Council shall be composed of these members:

- a.* The Bishop of the Diocese shall be an ex-officio member with seat, voice, and vote, and shall serve as both the president of the Diocesan Council and the executive head of all such work. **The Bishop may appoint a vice-president to serve on the Diocesan Council.**
- b.* In addition to the Bishop of the Diocese, any assistant bishops of the diocese, if there be such, the **Canon to the Ordinary**, the Treasurer of the diocese, **and the regional deans of the diocese shall serve ex-officio, with no vote.**
- c.* **Each deanery convocation shall elect two members per deanery, to serve as members of Diocesan Council. One of the elected members shall be a canonically resident clergy who is currently serving, other than a dean, from each deanery. The second member shall be a layperson, who is a member in good standing of a parish or mission in union with the Convention.**

*Section 3.* Terms for elected members are to be three years or until a successor is elected **by a special deanery convocation.** After serving for a full term, the elected members of Diocesan Council shall be ineligible for membership for the following year.

*Section 4.* **Elected members of Council who were elected by Diocesan Convention prior to 2025 shall continue serving until their three-year term ends, after which their successors shall be elected by their respective deanery convocations prior to or at the annual Diocesan Conventions, in staggered, three-year terms, per an established schedule, and according to the procedures set forth above.**

*Section 5.* The Diocesan Council may enact all necessary bylaws for its governance subject to the provisions of this canon.

*Section 9.6* The Diocesan Council shall meet for organization at such place and time as the Bishop may designate, following the annual Convention. It shall hold other fixed meetings as it may appoint. The Bishop may call additional special meetings as may deem necessary. A majority of the elected members shall constitute a quorum.

*Section 8. 7* The Diocesan Council shall submit to each annual meeting of the diocesan Convention a report of the work done under its supervision during the preceding year, **and a proposed operating budget necessary to implement the programs of the Diocese. The proposed operating budget of the diocese shall be approved by the Diocesan Council before submission to the Convention.**

**CANON 15**  
**Diocesan Council**  
*[EXISTING CANON 15]*

*Section 1.* The Diocesan Council shall administer and carry out the missionary, educational, and social work of this diocese and such other work as may be committed to it by the diocesan Convention. In addition, the Diocesan Council may initiate and develop new work between meetings of Convention, as it may deem necessary. Further, the Diocesan Council shall receive and administer all funds raised for the purpose of diocesan mission and ministry, subject to the provisions of the constitution and canons of this diocese.

The Bishop of the diocese shall be an ex-officio member with voice and vote, and shall serve as both the president of the Diocesan Council and the executive head of all such work.

*Section 2.* The Diocesan Council shall be composed of these members: The Bishop of the Diocese, any assistant bishops of the diocese, if there be such, the Archdeacon of the diocese, the Treasurer of the diocese, the Chancellor of the diocese, six canonically resident clergy and six laypersons, to be elected by the annual Convention, whenever vacancies exist. Terms are to be three years or until a successor is elected.

After serving for a full term, the elected members of Diocesan Council shall be ineligible for membership for the following year. The Diocesan Council shall have power to fill any vacancy in its elected membership until successors are elected by the next diocesan Convention. No person shall serve on the Diocesan Council, who is not a member in good standing of a parish or mission in union with the convention or who is not canonically resident clergy in the diocese.

*Section 3.* The Diocesan Council shall be organized by the Bishop into departments, including a department of finance and such other departments as the Bishop may deem necessary to carry out the program and work of the diocese.

Each department so organized shall include at least one voting member of the Diocesan Council in its membership. The Bishop shall appoint annually a person to serve as chair of each department. Each department may increase its own membership, having representation from the various deaneries, if practicable. The Bishop shall be an ex-officio member of each department.

*Section 4.* The department of finance shall be composed of the chief fiscal officer of the Diocese, as designated by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Treasurer of the Diocese, and not more than four additional members, as may be chosen and confirmed in conformity with Section 3.

The department shall act as a council of advice to the Bishop and to the Diocesan Council in the financial matters of the diocese.

The department may require reports from the Treasurer of the diocese, the Trustees of the diocese, and such other persons as shall be charged with the receipts and custody of funds for any diocesan purposes.

*Section 5.* Other departments of the Diocesan Council shall develop and execute the programs and activities of the diocese assigned by the Diocesan Council, to which they shall report regularly. These departments may organize into as many divisions as may be necessary.

*Section 6.* There shall be maintained a Diocesan Headquarters at a place fixed by the Diocesan Council.

*Section 7.* The Diocesan Council may enact all necessary bylaws for its governance and the governance of its several departments, subject to the provisions of this canon.

*Section 8.* The Diocesan Council shall submit to each annual meeting of the diocesan Convention a report of the work done under its supervision during the preceding year, including the annual report of the treasurer.

*Section 9.* The Diocesan Council shall meet for organization at such place and time as the Bishop may designate, following the annual Convention. It shall hold other fixed meetings as it may appoint. The Bishop may call additional special meetings as may deem necessary. A majority of the elected members shall constitute a quorum. In the absence of the Bishop, the Bishop Coadjutor, if there be one, shall serve as chairman. If neither the Bishop nor the Bishop Coadjutor is present, the Diocesan Council shall choose a chairman from its own membership.

*Section 10.* The Diocesan Council, through its departments, shall submit to the annual Convention a proposed program of activities for the year, together with a proposed operating budget necessary to implement the program. The proposed program of each department and the proposed operating budget of the diocese shall be approved by the Diocesan Council before submission to the Convention.

**CANON 16**  
**Deaneries**  
*PROPOSED CHANGES TO CANON 16*  
*[EXISTING CANON 16 SHOWN BELOW]*

*Section 1.* The Diocese shall be divided into deaneries, as determined annually by the Ecclesiastical Authority and announced at Convention. At the annual Convention, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall announce a member of the clergy, canonically resident within each deanery as Dean, who shall serve as the presiding officer of her or his deanery.

*Section 2.* Each deanery shall hold at least two regular convocations per year, as scheduled by the presiding officer. All canonically resident clergy and all elected members of Diocesan Council shall attend these convocations. All adult communicants of the Diocese have the right to attend deanery convocations. Deaneries may hold additional convocations as scheduled by the presiding officer.

*Section 3:* A majority of clergy and a majority of the most recently elected lay delegates within each deanery shall constitute a quorum in regular convocations and in additional scheduled convocations. All voting members of Convention within each deanery in attendance shall be entitled to vote on matters that require a vote in convocations.

*Section 4:* The deanery convocations shall: i) discuss affairs of diocesan and regional concern, and ii) other matters that will strengthen collegiality and further the work of the church.

**CANON 16**  
**Deaneries**  
*[EXISTING CANON 16]*

*Section 1.* The Diocese shall be divided into deaneries, the number and boundaries of which shall be determined from time to time by the Ecclesiastical Authority. The presiding officer of each deanery shall be a dean appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve for one year, which appointment shall be made at each annual Convention.

*Section 2.* There shall be regular deanery meetings, not less frequently than twice a year, of the clergy in each deanery as scheduled by the presiding officer. It shall be the duty of all clergy to meet as a deanery convocation.

*Section 3.* The deanery convocations shall: i) discuss affairs of diocesan and regional concern, ii) study issues relating to the territory of the deanery, iii) provide input during the formation of the diocesan budget, iv) provide for educational opportunities, and v) other matters that will strengthen collegiality and further the work of the church.

## ***ADDITIONAL PROPOSED REVISIONS TO CANONS***

### **Title I**

**Canon 7 Sec. 6:** (*correction of TEC Canon section number*) The pastoral connection shall not be dissolved except as provided for by Title III Canon ~~9.13~~ **9.9** of the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

**Canon 12: Trustees** – The Chancellor of the Diocese shall serve ~~ex-officio without a vote.~~  
**as advisor to the Trustees.**

**Canon 17 Sec. 2.2:** **Replace correct name for TEC** -The vestry of the cathedral parish shall be elected and function as a parish vestry in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina and the ~~Episcopal Church in the United States of America~~  
**“The Episcopal Church”**

**Canon 17 Sec. 3** **Delete the word Diocesan** **“Executive”** **Council**

**Canon 18** **Delete Committee on** **“Architecture and Construction”**

**Canon 20:** This revision changes parish report due date ~~from February 1~~ **to March 1**, to be consistent with the constitutional change approved in 2024.

### **Title II**

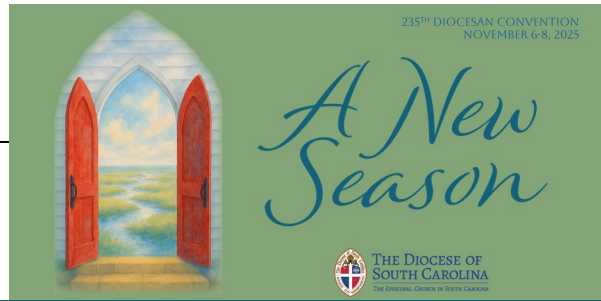
**Canon 2:** **Delete the** **“Committee on the State of the Church”**

**Rules:** Add **Sec 12: Diocesan Council Report at Convention**

[This change would add the Diocesan Council report to the list of Convention reports, along with the reports of the Standing Committee and Trustees, etc.]

# NOMINEES FOR DIOCESAN OFFICES

Report Prepared for the 235th Diocesan Convention  
As of October 19, 2025



## Standing Committee (Three-year terms)

**The Standing Committee** is comprised of six clergy and six lay members. The Standing Committee's responsibilities are: to act as the Standing Committee of the diocese in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church, The Constitution of this Diocese (Article IX), and its Canons, including giving consents to Episcopal elections elsewhere in The Episcopal Church; to act as a Council of advice to the Bishop; and to act as Ecclesiastical Authority in absence of the Bishop.

### **Clergy Nominees (2 Clergy Seats):**

The Rev. Julia Madden  
The Rev. Fred Thompson

### **Lay Nominees (2 Lay Seats):**

Barney Forsythe      Jane Hart Lewis  
Christine Jennings      Michael Roberts  
Steve Johnston      Henry Saunders

## Deputies to the 82nd General Convention in 2027 (Two-year term)

**Deputies and Alternates:** Each diocese of The Episcopal Church is entitled to four clergy and four lay deputies at the triennial meetings of the General Convention. Deputies serve any number of three-year terms. The 82nd General Convention will be held July 3-8, 2027, in Phoenix, Arizona. Expectations include being in Phoenix from June 30 through July 8 for the full days at Convention and the preparatory meetings on July 1-2, as well as the two-day Province IV Synod meetings. There will be some diocesan funds available to offset the costs, but additional funds may need to be identified from local parishes and individuals.

### **Clergy Nominees (4 Deputies/Alternates):**

The Rev. Eric Bash  
The Rev. Bill Coyne  
The Rev. Michael Crandall  
The Very Rev. Wilmot Merchant II  
The Very Rev. Michael Shaffer  
The Rev. Adam Shoemaker

### **Lay Nominees (4 Deputies/Alternates):**

Deb Harris  
Veronica Hinkson  
Andrea McKellar  
Jan Schumann  
Vermelle Simmons  
Mark Whitehouse

## Trustee, University of the South (Three-year term)

**The University of the South**, located in Sewanee, TN, is owned by the Episcopal dioceses of the southeast, each of which elects two lay persons and one member of the clergy to its Board of Trustees. The Trustees meet once each year for two days. Between annual meetings, Trustees serve the University by promoting its mission, encouraging enrollment, and supporting it financially.

### **Lay Nominees (1 Lay Seat):**

Helen Britton  
Laura Marshall  
Jan Schumann

**Additional nominations may be presented to the Nominations Committee on or before November 6, 2025, the first business day of Diocesan Convention.**

**Additional nominations must include 150 copies of each nominee's photo, nominator statement, and personal statement (which can be on one page).**

## Standing Committee *Clergy*

**Name:** The Rev. Julia Madden

**Church:** St. Stephen's, Charleston

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Adam Shoemaker



**Nominator statement:** I nominate Julia Madden to serve on the Standing Committee of our diocese to bring a fresh perspective to our common life together. Julia is a newly canonical priest to South Carolina having transferred in from the Diocese of Western North Carolina where she served on the Standing Committee there. She is still in her first year as one of the associate rectors at St. Stephen's with oversight over our pastoral care and parish life ministries but in that time we have already been blessed by her eye for detail, faithfulness, and organizational skills. I believe she would bring these gifts and more to her work on our Standing Committee and be a real asset to this leadership body.

**Personal Statement:** I am honored to be nominated to serve on our diocese's Standing Committee. I currently serve as the Associate Rector for Pastoral Care and Parish Life at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and am a newly ordained priest and lifelong Episcopalian. Over the years, I have been blessed to serve the Church in many ways: on the General Board of Examining Chaplains (Executive Support), the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Western North Carolina, the Cursillo Leadership Team in the Diocese of Southern Virginia, and at the parish level through vestry, pastoral care, worship, and lay leadership roles.

"Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing..." (Isaiah 43:18–19). These words capture the spirit of this moment in our diocese. God is calling us to discern and participate in new ways of being Church—ways rooted in compassion, collaboration, and courage. My thirty-plus years of leadership in environmental remediation and construction have taught me the value of communication, trust, and teamwork in navigating complex challenges and creating sustainable paths forward.

I believe these same skills, together with my pastoral experience, can serve our diocese well as we explore this new season of God doing a new thing among us. It would be a privilege to join with others on the Standing Committee in prayerful discernment, shared responsibility, and faithful leadership for the life of the Church.

## Standing Committee Clergy

**Name:** The Rev. Fred Thompson

**Church:** St. John's, Johns Island

**Nominated by:** Cappy Traywick



**Nominator statement:** Father Fred Thompson was a Godsend, in every sense of the word, to Church of the Holy Communion. Between rectors, our only on-site clergyman having just resigned, we had reached a point of profound discouragement in October 2024. Enter Fr. Fred, who called out of the blue to offer his assistance on Sundays: he celebrated and preached basically every Sunday for the next eight months. We needed help, and he gave it, in spades: his time and energy inputs for Holy Communion's benefits were remarkable.

The effort and care that went into his ministry at Holy Communion was striking. Fr. Fred brought with him a caring spirit, an innate and authentic kindness, and an irrepressible enthusiasm that we badly needed: at a particularly tough moment, amidst a run of tough years. Fr. Fred stepped into our Anglo-Catholic traditions, with which he had limited experience, with a stated determination to do his best to keep things as they have been. It was a tough assignment, under difficult circumstances, and he succeeded- with aplomb.

Fr. Fred's ministry to the parishioners of Holy Communion will always be remembered with love and appreciation: a true leader and teacher, full of intelligence, compassion, and diplomacy with the people of the parish. It is an honor to nominate Fr. Fred Thompson to serve on the Standing Committee.

**Personal statement:** My name is Fred Thompson, and I am a priest in the Diocese of South Carolina and the chaplain assigned to Hollings Cancer Center at the Medical University of South Carolina. I am also the Chaplain to the Retired Clergy of South Carolina along with their spouses and widows. When I have free time, I also enjoy supply preaching around the Sea Islands of Charleston. My past experiences within the diocese have included serving as the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Committee, and the Bishop's Search Committee.

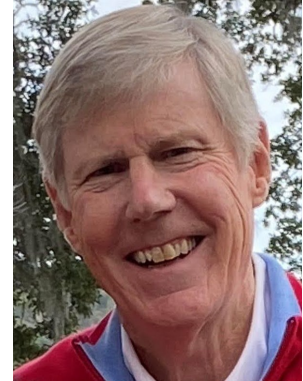
## Standing Committee

### *Lay*

**Name:** Brigadier General Barney Forsythe, US Army (retired)

**Church:** St. Mark's, Port Royal

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Roy Tripp



**Nominator statement:** I have had the pleasure of knowing Barney Forsythe for the past eight years. He has served in various leadership positions at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Port Royal, (Sr. Warden, Chair of the Rector Search Team, Capital Campaign) as well as at the diocese, where he is on the Strategic Planning Team.

Barney brings a deep love for at the Church, along with excellent people and management skills. I believe having Barney serve as a member of the Standing Committee will add guidance and insights as our diocese engages the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

**Personal Statement:** I am a lifelong Episcopalian and member of St Mark's Episcopal Church in Port Royal, where I serve as a lay reader and choir member. I served for six years as the senior warden, during which time St Mark's purchased the Union Church in Port Royal, conducted its first capital campaign, remodeled the church, updated its governance documents, and established an endowment. I now chair St. Mark's Scholarship Committee, which provides a need-based scholarship for a graduating high school student of color, an initiative that my wife and I started after participating in Sacred Ground. For the diocese, I served on the Visioning Committee and am now a member of the Diocesan Feasibility Study Committee.

I served 35 years in the Army, retiring in 2005 as Professor and Vice Dean for Education at West Point. I went on to serve as President of Westminster College in Missouri until 2015. I now do corporate leadership training for Thayer Leadership based out of West Point.

Having served on the Visioning Committee and the Diocesan Feasibility Study Committee, I am excited to help Bishop Ruth and the people of the diocese realize the bold vision and strategic plan that now guide our life in Christ. With my background in education and leader development, I am particularly committed to diocesan initiatives that foster Christian formation for all ages, promote racial reconciliation and social justice, and support the development of lay leaders who are equipped to partner with the clergy in mutual ministry.

# Standing Committee

## Lay

**Name:** Christine Jennings

**Church:** Holy Communion, Charleston

**Nominated by:** Cappy Traywick



**Nominator statement:** I have known Christine Jennings for at least 15 years through our time at the Church of the Holy Communion, Charleston. Chris is a natural leader and communicator. She's a great listener as well as a great contributor. Chris has served on many committees and participated in many ministries of the church. I have had the privilege of working with her on a variety of projects and it is always a pleasure.

Currently, Chris serves on the finance committee with me, on the vestry at Holy Communion (her 3rd term, I believe) and is a cantor in our choir. One of her stints on the vestry was in the role of senior warden, a role to which she brought her characteristic calm demeanor, and tremendous dignity, during a period of great upheaval at Holy Communion. Outside of the Church of the Holy Communion, Chris has held a leadership position in CAJM (Charleston Area Justice Ministry) and has served as a Sacred Ground facilitator. I am confident that Christine Jennings is a well-qualified lay nominee for the diocesan Standing Committee.

**Personal Statement:** I have lived in the South for over 40 years and have raised all three of my children here. I love the history of the Lowcountry, and the wondrous art and music that reflects our diverse heritage. For over 25 years I specialized in Social Security law, representing disabled people of all ages and backgrounds—work that is fulfilling and humbling. I am reminded every day of our to seek justice for those who are in need.

I have been a member of the Church of the Holy Communion since June 10, 2001, the day of my baptism there. I came to Holy Communion as a musician, and I stayed for the deep love of service, community, and the promise we all make in our Baptismal Covenant to “seek justice and peace among all men, and respect the dignity of every person.” Over time, I have served as a vestry member, senior warden, and stewardship chair. I am currently serving a third term on the vestry, and am a member of the Finance and Stewardship Committees. I remain an active member of the Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM).

I am excited at the prospect of serving as a lay member of the Standing Committee as we move forward in our strategic vision for a diocese anchored in justice for our Beloved Community. I believe that meeting the challenges of that vision will take all of us listening deeply to one another, and partnering with other congregations and community shareholders to create a welcoming, loving space for all who come through our doors.

## Standing Committee *Lay*

**Name:** Stephen Johnston

**Church:** St. James, Charleston (James Island)

**Nominated by:** Cappy Traywick



**Nominator Statement:** I met Steve Johnston at the Church of the Holy Communion, Charleston. He was the acolyte warden at the time and both of my children served as acolytes under him. Steve was senior warden and the search committee chairperson. I had the pleasure of serving with Steve on the search committee for a new rector. We had very efficient and meaningful meetings under his leadership. Steve has served all around our diocese in the Charleston area. He has a natural servant's heart and has been proactive in offering his service wherever he is at the time. After Steve's time at Holy Communion he has served at Grace Cathedral Church, Saint John's and presently at Saint James. I was delighted to reconnect with Steve at last year's diocesan convention. We shared memories of Holy Communion and ideas of church internal operating systems. Recently, Steve reached back out to me on a church finance topic we discussed previously. I was delighted to be able to share more of my experience and to guide him in the next steps for his church finance project. Steve is a servant, a doer, a thinker, a connector and would be a great candidate for the lay position on the Standing Committee.

**Personal Statement:** I am a lifelong member of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, baptized and confirmed at Saint Helena's, Beaufort. I now belong to Saint James, James Island, where I serve as senior warden. My leadership has also included service on the vestry of the Church of the Holy Communion, Charleston, as member, junior warden, and senior warden. In addition, I continue to serve at Grace Church Cathedral as an acolyte, reader, and chalice at weekday noon services.

Professionally, I retired from the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center in Charleston in 2011 after 27 years as a Registered Nurse. My final role was Compliance and Business Integrity Officer, a position that required oversight, accountability, and careful stewardship. These skills, combined with a lifelong commitment to the Church, prepare me for service on the Standing Committee.

I am a 2023 graduate of Education for Ministry (EfM) and currently serve on the board of James Island Outreach, where I see firsthand the transformative work of the Church in the community.

It would be an honor to serve on the Standing Committee, supporting the health, integrity, and mission of our diocese. I seek to strengthen collaboration across our diverse congregations and to help guide our common life in faithfulness to Christ. Thank you for your consideration.

# Standing Committee

## Lay

**Name:** Jane Hart Lewis

**Church:** St. Catherine's, Florence

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Eunice Dunlap



**Nominator Statement:** Jane is well known in this Diocese as an extremely detail-oriented person who has served on other committees. She has really good listening skills due to her long term career as a therapist and is very detail oriented. She certainly was an integral part of helping St. Catherine's Church come together after the schism. In my opinion she would be an excellent candidate for Standing Committee.

**Personal Statement:** I am a founding member of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church in Florence. A lifelong Episcopalian, I have served two three-year terms as senior warden. The first term began very quickly after our first gathering of nine displaced Episcopalians, through three temporary locations, the approval of a name, developing bylaws, and achieving mission status. The second term started with COVID and ended after we had both a full-time priest and a permanent location. Currently, I serve as a chalice bearer, lay reader, crucifer, and acolyte. Since the schism, I have also been a member of the Commission on Ministry for eight years, served three three-year terms as lay trustee for Sewanee: The University of the South, and was an alternate delegate to 2024's General Convention.

Professionally, I am a licensed professional counselor and supervisor. I have practiced in the private and public sectors for over 36 years. I provide continuing education training for various organizations and have also been an adjunct professor at Francis Marion University in both the graduate and undergraduate programs.

My husband Donald and our family are my greatest blessing. The people of the Diocese of South Carolina have also given me much. They have been pivotal guides in my experiencing Christ's love in the world. I ask for your vote to serve on Standing Committee. I will work diligently and faithfully to give back to God and the Diocese what can only be a fraction of the love and grace I have received.

# Standing Committee

## Lay

**Name:** Michael Roberts

**Church:** St. Anne's, Conway

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Kevin Sparrow



**Nominator Statement:** It is my great privilege to nominate Dr. Michael Roberts for election to the Standing Committee. Michael brings to this ministry a rare and needed combination of faith, wisdom, and practical experience: qualities that serve the Church well in a season of both discernment and decision in our common life.

Michael has been a steady and trusted leader from our very beginning. As a founding member of St. Anne's, Conway, he helped to shape the vision, governance, and culture that continue to guide our common life today. Over the years, he has served faithfully as vestry member, junior and senior warden, and now as a participant in Education for Ministry (EFM). His love of thoughtful inquiry, his theological curiosity, and his openness to the movement of the Holy Spirit are evident in all he does. Michael also embodies the humble, practical side of Christian leadership. As our volunteer Sexton, he is the one who quietly changes the lightbulbs, tends to the building, and makes sure that what needs doing simply gets done.

Professionally, Michael brings a wealth of experience as a scientist and university dean at Coastal Carolina University. His background in academic administration has given him a deep understanding of governance, strategic planning, and stewardship. In every setting, he has proven himself to be a clear thinker and careful listener: someone who asks the right questions, weighs options with integrity, and guides others toward wise, shared decisions. But what stands out most is Michael's sense of vocation. He approaches leadership in the Church not as another administrative responsibility but as a ministry of faith. He has a gift of helping the people of God listen for the Spirit's guidance in our common life. As a lifelong Episcopalian, his devotion to the Church is both steady and joyful.

For these reasons, I commend Dr. Michael Roberts with gratitude and confidence. He will bring to the Standing Committee a steady presence, discerning mind, and faithful commitment to the mission of Christ's Church in this diocese and beyond.

**Personal Statement:** I am excited about the opportunity to serve on the Standing Committee of our Diocese. I see this service as a logical continuation of my commitment to the Church; a commitment that began when I was asked to head up the stewardship program at Trinity Episcopal Church in Potsdam, NY just over 35 years ago. I would hope to bring to the Standing Committee my extensive experience as an academic leader—as department chair, associate dean, and dean—with a strong background in financial management, strategic planning, and creative problem solving.

While I am currently retired from my professional career as an academic scientist and administrator, I fill my time serving on several boards. These include the Board of Directors of the Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council which runs Headstart, the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in the local tri-county area of Horry, Georgetown, and Williamsburg counties. I also serve on two boards at Coastal Carolina University: the Retired Employees Group, which serves to keep retirees engaged with the University, and the Research Foundation, which facilitates the purchase of equipment and supplies in support of the scholarly efforts of University faculty and students.

I am the volunteer sexton at St. Anne's, changing lightbulbs, rolling trash dumpsters in and out, and doing light maintenance tasks. On the spiritual side, I am a Year 2 participant in the EfM program at St. Anne's. In my spare time I enjoy Phillies baseball and making home-brew.

# Standing Committee

## Lay

**Name:** Henry Saunders

**Church:** St. Stephen's, North Myrtle Beach

**Nominated by:** The Very Rev. Cn. Wilmot Merchant II



**Nominator statement:** I am delighted to nominate Henry Saunders to serve as a member of the Standing Committee. Henry has served St. Stephen's in many integral leadership capacities. His experience, forward-thinking mindset, leadership skills, and personal qualities have been a blessing to our parish. Now that he has retired from his medical profession and is willing to serve in this capacity, I strongly believe the diocese will share in this blessing of his participation.

**Personal Statement:** I am proud to be a member of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in North Myrtle Beach. I have served as Chairman of our Trust and Endowment Board, Vestry Member, Junior Warden, Senior Warden, Program Director of our Annual Rich Jacobs Golf Tournament, and President of The Episcopal Church Men.

We are a service church of active retirees. I am proud of the church family that we are, and the good we do for the community. Prior to the painful split I was a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Conway where I served as treasurer, junior warden, and vestry member. This experience with two congregations has taught me much about church politics and governance. As a lifelong Episcopalian and grandson of an Episcopal priest, I know the history and traditions of our denomination. Now fully retired from my practice of general internal medicine and hospice medicine in Horry County, I am pleased to have the time to devote to my children, my grandchildren, and to the strength and growth of St. Stephen's and The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina.

Our denomination faces challenges economically, politically, and demographically. I am refreshed by the leadership of Bishop Ruth. I am proud of the efforts of the diocese toward racial and political reconciliation. With Christ as our leader and our focus, our work is to build the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. I seek a position on the Standing Committee to be of service to that mission, and I am grateful for your support.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** The Rev. Eric Bash

**Church:** All Saints, Hilton Head Island

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Denise Trogdon



**Nominator statement:** The Reverend Eric Bash has been serving at All Saints Episcopal Church as an associate rector since June 1, 2025. Rev. Bash was ordained in 2024, and served his first year of ministry at St. Johns, John's Island. Eric has jumped into leadership with energy, passion and grace and he is already well loved among our parishioners. He has shown great commitment and creativity in his various roles. He currently serves on the Resolutions Committee for the diocese, was the head Sacristan at his seminary, Sewanee, and also served as the Assistant to the Dean of Grace Cathedral. I believe General Convention would be a wonderful experience for a relatively new clergyman and Eric would represent the diocese with respect, honor and commitment.

**Personal Statement:** Serving as a delegate to the General Convention represents a unique opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the future of our church. I have a deep sense of responsibility and commitment to The Episcopal Church, and I believe that it would be an amazing experience for a new clergy member. The General Convention is a forum where diverse voices come together to discern God's will, address pressing issues, and chart the course for our church's next chapter. My desire to participate stems from a passion for collaborative decision-making, inclusivity, and the pursuit of justice within our faith tradition.

As a delegate, I hope to listen actively to the concerns of fellow members, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected during important deliberations. I am eager to learn from others, engage in thoughtful dialogue, and participate in matters that affect the entire church. By representing the Diocese of South Carolina, I would carry the words of Bishop Guerry that say, "we should strive for unity, not uniformity." Ultimately, my goal is to serve with integrity, humility, and a servant's heart, making thoughtful decisions that reflect the values and hopes of our community. Being a delegate would be both an honor and a profound responsibility, and I am excited by the possibility of experiencing and contributing to the General Convention.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 Clergy

**Name:** The Rev. Bill Coyne

**Church:** St. Stephen's, Charleston

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Courtney Davis-Shoemaker



**Nominator statement:** Being a deputy at General Convention requires time and expertise. Having served as a clergy deputy for multiple Conventions, Rev. Bill Coyne demonstrates the understanding and desire to do the work that is required prior to attending Convention and the demanding work at the in-person Convention.

Bill's experience makes him an asset to the SC deputation. He is willing and able to dedicate significant time to the pre-convention and in-person activities which can be extensive and complex. Through his experience as a parish priest and on diocesan staffs, Bill understands Episcopal polity and has a strong commitment to the church's mission. His collaborative leadership style strengthens any deputation. Please join me in supporting Rev. Bill Coyne as one of the clergy delegates for the 82nd General Convention in 2027.

**Personal statement:** I have served and been active in two dioceses (WMA & SC) since ordination in 1978 in a variety of congregations and diocesan staff positions. I have served as a General Conventions deputy nine (9) times: 1988, 1991, 1994, 1997, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2022 and 2024.

General Convention has a tradition of long days (pace yourself), leans into seniority (check) and has thrilling moments of grace and mission focus. I have the time, the experience and the willingness to engage this ministry once again.

Prior to moving to SC in 2015 – the Bishop of Western Massachusetts called me to his staff as archdeacon and congregational development officer from 1998 to 2013.

In the Diocese of South Carolina, I have served in the following assignments:

- Interim rector of St. Stephen's, Charleston (2015-2017);
- Priest-in-charge of the East Cooper, Mount Pleasant (2017-2019);
- Diocesan missionary for Returning Congregations (2018-2020);
- Interim priest-in-charge at the Episcopal Church on Edisto (2022-2023);
- Coach / mentor with the Rev. Courtney Davis Shoemaker (Nov.'24 - August '25)
- Diocesan facilitator for Mutual Ministry Reviews for congregations (2025)
- Standing Committee member (term ends 2026)

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** The Rev. Michael Crandall

**Church:** St. George's, Summerville

**Nominated by:** The Rev. John Robert Spainhour



**Nominator Statement:** Father Michael, while a more recently ordained priest in The Episcopal Church and rector of St. George's Episcopal Church, Summerville, has served for many years in ordained ministry in church settings and the military. He brings that wealth of knowledge and experience to our diocese. He is a focused, caring priest with a drive for mission and ministry, personal and congregational growth, and wisdom from his years of service that I believe will serve us well as a representative of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina at General Convention. I believe that his passion for the well-being of all God's beloved and the marginalized represent a voice that will speak boldly for the needs of all our diocesan family.

**Personal Statement:** An avid, life-long learner and native of Tennessee, I attended Union University receiving a Christian Ministry Diploma (2004), Associates of Divinity (2005), and Bachelors of Science in Organizational Leadership (2009). I subsequently completed a Masters of Divinity at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (2014). In May 2024, I earned a Diploma of Anglican Studies at the University of the South, Sewanee, where I am currently working toward a Doctorate of Ministry (anticipated 2025).

My 27 years of ministry began in the Baptist church serving as supply clergy beginning at age 16, and then I served as hospital chaplain, minister of students, and senior clergy. I also served at a convention level in various roles including vice-chair of the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board and vice-president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. In 2017 I was led to continue my ministry serving in the United States Navy Chaplain Corps. During his time as a chaplain, I discerned the call to continue ministry in The Episcopal Church and return to parish ministry.

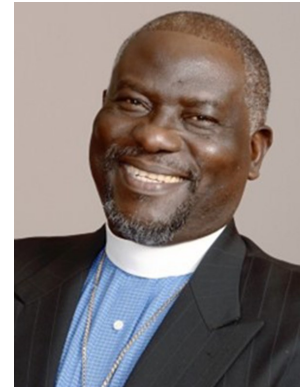
My greatest passions in ministry include meeting people where they are, walking alongside them, and helping parishes discern God's call for them and navigating the path to get there together. Since beginning my tenure at St. George's, Summerville in June 2024, I have worked alongside the church's vestry and other leaders to renovate the entire campus and relaunch several programs that had been dormant. The church has experienced significant growth since June 2024 and currently offers five Sunday services in both English and Spanish. I also currently serve on the Diocesan Council.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** The Very Rev. Canon Wilmot Merchant II

**Church:** St. Stephen's, North Myrtle Beach

**Nominated by:** Henry Saunders



**Nominator statement:** With honor, I nominate the Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant II, rector of St. Stephen's Church in North Myrtle Beach to serve as Deputy to General Convention 2027. I have known Canon Merchant for many years and have been privileged to witness his commitment to the parish, parishioners, and community. His spiritual leadership has inspired St. Stephen's parishioners to actively share their time, talent, and treasure, serving our brothers and sisters in the community for the last 25 years. As a result, this outreach has grown exponentially. He possesses a clear, thoughtful, and common sense approach to critical matters giving him the ability to make informed decisions. I strongly believe he is well-suited to represent this diocese and would be a strong asset as deputy to General Convention.

**Personal Statement:** I have served St. Stephen's since 1999. In 2001, I became the interim priest after the rector retired and in 2002 I was installed as the rector. After the split, my parish and I remained an active member of The Episcopal Church in South Carolina.

In December 2012 I was asked to serve on the Steering Committee for the restructuring of our diocese. I served on that committee as we reorganized and held our first convention. During that convention I was elected a member of the Diocesan Standing Committee, and subsequently elected president which I served for three years. I was elected Deputy to General Convention in 2015 and re-elected first clergy alternate deputy for 2018. In 2019, I served as a member of the Diocesan Council and chair of the Diocesan Nominating Committee.

I currently serve on Executive Council of The Episcopal Church, having been elected by Province IV as the clergy representative. I have been active throughout our community serving as public safety chaplain for The City of North Myrtle Beach, President of Mobile Meals of the Grand Strand and Mobile Meals of the North Strand, and Board Member of North Strand Helping Hand. In addition, I am an active member of the Union of Black Episcopalians, and former Chairperson of the Liberian Episcopal Community in the United States. I am the past Chairperson of the Liberian Covenant Committee of General Convention and Canon of the Anglican Diocese of Cape Coast, Ghana, West Africa.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** The Very Rev. Michael Shaffer

**Church:** St. Mark's, Charleston

**Nominated by:** Lonnie Hamilton III



**Nominator statement:** To the members of the committee, I'm thankful for the opportunity to speak in support of the Very Rev. Dr. Michael Shaffer in his quest for nomination as deputy to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church. I have known Michael since he served as associate rector of Calvary Episcopal, my home church since 1955. I know Michael both as a sincere servant of the Lord, working to bring about racial reconciliation and healing through his service to all three historically black Episcopal congregations in Charleston and also as a shrewd legal mind with special expertise in church canon and constitutional law. For these and other reasons, on which I would be happy to elaborate at length, I enthusiastically nominate the Rev. Dr. Shaffer to serve as deputy.

**Personal Statement:** I am honored to have been nominated to serve as a clergy deputy to the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church by Canon Lonnie Hamilton, III, a six-time General Convention deputy himself. Having been a lifelong Episcopalian and ordained for 25 years, I have never served as deputy to Convention. I believe strongly however, that our "New Historic Diocese" should have fresh voices representing our interests within the larger Church, as we live into the new season of ministry which both our Bishop Ruth Woodliff-Stanley and Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe call us.

Over the past several years, having served the worship communities of St. Francis, the Historic Calvary Episcopal Church, St. Stephen's, Charleston and St. Mark's, Charleston, and having served as dean of the Peninsula Deanery, president of the Standing Committee and a member of the Strategic Visioning and Canon and Constitution committees, I believe I have a thorough understanding of our vision and mission in The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, which will be valuable in advocating as a deputy to General Convention for polity and policies which embrace gospel values of diversity, equity and inclusion. I ask for your support, as it would be an honor and privilege to serve as clergy deputy for The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina at the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** The Rev. Adam Shoemaker

**Church:** St. Stephen's, Charleston

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Ricardo Bailey



**Nominator statement:** Father Adam is a proven servant leader within our local diocese as well as in our wider local community. Father Adam has proven himself to be an effective collaborator and listener to the wider ideas and experiences of others. He has served our Diocese as president of the Standing Committee as well as the co-chair of the Diocese's Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission. As the rector of Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, a historic and courageous Episcopal community in the city of Charleston, Father Adam has taken the helm of the call for every Church to exercise radical hospitality, by making Saint Stephen's not only a "safe space" for all people to experience the love and liberation of Jesus, but he has worked to make Saint Stephen's a "brave space" for all who enter in and out of their red doors to fulfill the command of Jesus in Matthew 28: "Go and make disciples of all nations..." As a husband, as a father, as a Christian, as a priest, as a pastor, as a community organizer, but most of all - as a witness - Father Adam Shoemaker will bring wisdom, experience, and the heart of a pastor to the House of Deputies. He will serve the wider Church well because he is aware of the love of Jesus that we are all so in need of.

**Personal Statement:** I am currently in my ninth year as rector of St. Stephen's, Charleston. In that time, it has been my joy not only to serve my wonderful congregation but also our diocese and wider community. I have previously served as dean of the Peninsula Deanery, president of the Standing Committee, and co-chair of the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission. I am a co-founder of the "Three Churches United" in Charleston and also served as co-president of the Charleston Area Justice Ministry and been a Racial Healing Circle facilitator with the Sophia Institute's Social Justice and Racial Equity Collaborative.

I have had the privilege of serving as a General Convention Deputy from South Carolina the last two conventions and feel as though these experiences will help me to engage all the more if elected for the next convention. I served as secretary to the Legislative Committee on World Mission for the 80th General Convention and as a member of the Legislative Committee on Social Justice and International Policy at the 81st General Convention. I would look forward to serving again if elected.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Lay*

**Name:** Deb Harris

**Church:** Holy Cross Faith Memorial, Pawleys Island

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Wil Keith



**Nominator Statement:** Deb Harris joined Holy Cross Faith Memorial 12 years ago, but I cannot remember a time here without her. She has served with just about every ministry here, save singing in the choir. She is utterly dependable in her service and I would not have as good a time of it without her support and her service. Deb is unparalleled at finding nominees for open positions and then supporting them in their roles. She is wonderfully organized and I feel certain this is grounded in a rich prayer life. She has never missed an appointment for anything and is always present and centered well-before any activity that she is either participating in or leading and she is always willing to offer any assistance that might enable others to succeed, as well.

**Personal Statement:** It would be my honor to serve, once again, as a lay member of our deputation to General Convention. I am a lifelong Episcopalian. I was born, raised and spent the majority of my life in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and moved to South Carolina in March 2013. I was an active member of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Springfield, VA for more than 25 years and was involved in many ministries: vestry, altar guild, outreach committee, lay eucharistic minister, Sunday school teacher, EYC leader, delegate to Diocesan Convention, search committees, discernment committees and lay committees for seminarians. I'm involved in many ministries at HCFM: vestry, Stephen Ministry, ECW, acolyte, and verger. I also served on the Diocesan Stewardship and Development Committee and the Strategic Visioning Committee. I am currently serving on the diocesan Feasibility Study Committee. I very much enjoyed my experiences at the abbreviated 80th General Convention in Baltimore and the 81st General Convention in 2024 in Louisville. I have found ministry and connections beyond my parish to be very meaningful and would embrace the opportunity to serve as a lay deputy at the 82nd General Convention.

I am retired from a 35 year career as a system engineer and defense contractor. I have an adult daughter and was very involved in her schools and activities - church, symphonic and marching bands, lacrosse and karate.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Lay*

**Name:** Veronica Hinkson

**Church:** Good Shepherd, Summerville

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Dow Sanderson



**Nominator Statement:** Veronica has served the Church in almost every leadership capacity, including multiple terms on the Standing Committees of the Diocese of Long Island and South Carolina. Her network of connections throughout the entire church is impressive. She would be an outstanding deputy to General Convention.

**Personal Statement:** I have been a member in good standing of the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Summerville since 2018 after moving from New York City where I was employed as Director of Insurance and Claims at Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers. At the church of the Good Shepherd, I am a eucharistic minister, served one term on the vestry, as a delegate to Diocesan convention, and as a member of the Discernment Committee.

I currently serve on Standing Committee and the Board of St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center. In the past I served as a eucharistic minister, vestry member, warden, altar guild member, and delegate to Diocesan Convention, and at the diocesan level I was a certified Safe Church trainer in the Diocese of Long Island and served on the Missional Vitality Committee, Standing Committee, and Cathedral Chapter for the Cathedral of the Incarnation. I was a member of the Episcopal Cursillo Ministry Committee for four years; three as the representative for the Northeast Region and the fourth year as national president. I am also a life member of the Union of Black Episcopalians.

I am excited about the future of The Episcopal Church and welcome the opportunity to use my gifts of discernment, strong ethics, deep faith, and ability to work collaboratively, to represent the Diocese of South Carolina as a delegate to General Convention.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Clergy*

**Name:** Andrea McKellar

**Church:** St. Stephen's, Charleston

**Nominated by:** Deb Harris



**Nominator Statement:** I have had the privilege of serving with Andrea as the chair of The Diocese of South Carolina's deputation to the 80th and 81st General Conventions. She has done an amazing job of organizing, preparing and leading our deputations at both conventions. Her experience serving on our diocesan staff in multiple capacities for over twelve years in addition to serving a full term on Executive Council have prepared her to do an exceptional job serving the wider church. Andrea is also currently serving a term as president of Province IV of The Episcopal Church. In addition to her vast professional experience, Andrea is also an exceptional wife and mother of two amazing children.

**Personal Statement:** I would be honored to serve the diocese as a General Convention deputy in the desert heat of Phoenix in 2027. I have served four times as a deputy previously including two times as deputation chair, as well as on Executive Council, DFMS Audit Committee, and several other interim bodies. I was on Bishop's staff for 12 years before transitioning into church consulting. I live on Johns Island with my husband Mark and our two teenagers and attend St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Charleston. I also support the burgeoning St Peter's, Charleston after many years of working toward an Episcopal presence in the West Ashley area.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Lay*

**Name:** Jan Schumann

**Church:** Holy Communion, Charleston

**Nominated by:** Cappy Traywick



**Nominator Statement:** Jan has been an Episcopalian her whole life. She has held leadership positions in the church, served on committees and has participated in many of its ministries. Jan spent many years as a chorister at the Church of the Holy Communion, then a few years ago she saw that there was a great need for ushers; so she became the lead usher and has served in that capacity almost every Sunday for the last couple of years. Jan has had almost two terms on the vestry and is a Sunday money counter a couple of times a month. Jan is an active network member of CAJM and has served as a parish delegate to the diocesan convention more than once. Jan would be an excellent deputy to the National Convention. She would represent the Diocese of South Carolina well.

**Personal Statement:** I am a lifelong Episcopalian who grew up at St. Stephen's in St. Stephen and I now worship at the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston. I graduated from Sewanee in 1985. I serve on vestry at Holy Communion and am on the altar guild. I participate in the Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM).

Running for a deputy to the National Convention is not something that I planned. However, it popped out of my mouth when discussing with a member of the Nominating Committee. I feel that I am called to run for the House of Deputies. I want to do what the Lord wants of me.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Lay*

**Name:** Vermelle Simmons

**Church:** Calvary, Charleston

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Ricardo Bailey



**Nominator Statement:** Vermelle Simmons is the quintessential church professional. She has served on the Diocesan Council for our diocese, she is currently the vice president of our diocese's Standing Committee, she also serves on our diocese's Racial Justice & Reconciliation Commission as its co-chair, and currently, Vermelle also serves as a member of the vestry of The Historic Calvary Episcopal Church. As an accomplished professional educator in the City of Charleston, she brings years of dedication and class to every task she is a part of. I am confident that Vermelle will represent our diocese well at General Convention, and as a "life-long learner," she will learn the role of deputy and exercise it for the good of all of us as a diocese. Above all of these accomplishments and accolades, as her rector, I have found Vermelle to be a wise and trusted confidant who has the best interests of the Church in everything that she does. Therefore, I enthusiastically ask all of my siblings in the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina to join me in voting for this awesome Woman of God as one of our deputies for General Convention.

**Personal Statement:** "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work." *1 Corinthians 12: 4-6*

I have served in several leadership capacities in the diocese, the government/state, and the school district. Each of these areas of leadership has been a gift from God to share his love with the wider community. Presently, I serve as the vice president of the Standing Committee and co-chair of the Diocesan Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission. Some years ago, I also served on the Diocesan Council. I am an active member of my church (Calvary), where I serve on the vestry and as an usher. I've worked with the U.S. Government as a team leader, traveling the state of South Carolina, teaching communities about their civic duty mandated by the Constitution of the United States to be counted every 10 years. I've also touched the lives of numerous families in the Charleston area as a school administrator.

I believe that, with the many leadership roles I have held, I am equipped through God's grace to be apart of the governance body voting on resolutions, canon changes, and public policy which clarifies our position and dictates how we conduct ourselves in The Episcopal Church. Thank you for your consideration.

## Deputy, 82nd General Convention—2027 *Lay*

**Name:** Mark Whitehouse

**Church:** St. Mark's, Port Royal

**Nominated by:** Sally Mayse



**Nominator Statement:** Mark Whitehouse is a very active and engaged member of St. Mark's, Port Royal, serving on the vestry and usher team. He has a wonderful sense of humor and is an entrepreneur, developing his own company in the health technology field. Mark and his wife Amy have raised four children and are currently being raised by their dog, River.

Mark is attentive to detail, is a good listener and is always willing to entertain new ideas. He has been a genuine asset to St. Mark's and will represent the Diocese at General Convention with the same dedication, energy and insight he shares in his church. I am pleased and proud to nominate Mark as a lay delegate to General Convention 2027.

**Personal Statement:** I would appreciate your consideration in selecting me to represent our diocese at the 82nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2027. I believe that I can make a positive contribution on behalf of our diocese, and I am at a point in my personal spiritual growth where I where I want to serve at a higher level.

I am an active parishioner at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Port Royal, SC, serving regularly as an usher, lay reader and videographer. I represented St. Mark's as a delegate at the Annual Diocesan Convention, Diocese of South Carolina in 2024 and in 2025 I joined the St. Mark's Vestry. As a parish leader I am focused on how St. Mark's engages our local community and how we can expand our influence beyond the church doors.

I consider myself open-minded, progressive and focused on the future. I appreciate the long tradition of our diocese and have a vision where we can leverage this tradition to increase our relevance in the present age. I see The Episcopal Church leading our national future in racial reconciliation and creation care, two critical contemporary issues about which I am passionate.

As a healthcare entrepreneur, I make decisions and then roll up my sleeves to get things done. I am not afraid of conflict, and I resolve by listening, contemplating the long-term impact of actions and clearly articulating the options before us. It helps that I have a sense of humor and that I do not take myself too seriously. I would be honored to serve as a delegate at the General Convention and promise to represent our diocese faithfully.

# Trustee, University of the South

## Lay

**Name:** Helen Britton

**Church:** Grace Church Cathedral, Charleston

**Nominated by:** The Rev. Cn. Rob Donehue



**Nominator Statement:** Helen is a graduate and a long-time supporter of the University of the South. Her knowledge of the University and her commitment to its thriving make her an ideal candidate for the position of trustee. Having worked with Helen on various large-scale projects at the cathedral, I know that Helen is a superb team player and has a high level of organizational expertise. Having served a term as a trustee myself, I can say with great confidence that Helen would be a welcome voice on the board.

**Personal Statement:** I am a native Charlestonian, cradle Episcopalian, and 1992 graduate of Sewanee. My family and I are members of Grace Church Cathedral. My husband, John Britton, and I have two boys, Jack (24) and Heward (22). I have served in many roles over the years— a few of the highlights include teaching Sunday School and VBS, volunteering for Tea Room as a waitress and currently as a co-chair, serving on our vestry, chalice bearing, and making two kneelers.

I started Sewanee in 1988 and loved every minute of my four years on the Mountain. Sewanee gave me the education that led me to graduate school and becoming a Special Education teacher. Our oldest son is on the Spectrum, and I know that the leadership qualities and confidence I developed as a Sewanee student have helped me be a guide and mentor for other families with a child on the Spectrum, which I believe is one of my ministries. My lifelong friends are my Sewanee friends, and I look forward to our girl's weekend every single November where we meet back on the Mountain and fill our souls with time together, love, tears, and laughter.

I am forever grateful for all the gifts that Sewanee has given me and have been delighted to give back with my time as our class agent and with my resources. I am honored to be nominated to serve as a Trustee and look forward to serving the University in this capacity if elected.

## Trustee, University of the South *Lay*

**Name:** Laura Marshall

**Church:** Heavenly Rest, Estill

**Nominated by:** Sally Mayse



**Nominator Statement:** One of the joys of the Diocese of South Carolina is the number of communicants who are eager and willing to serve the Diocese in various capacities. It gives me great pleasure to nominate a faithful member of The Southern Deanery to the position of Trustee for The University of the South, Sewanee. Laura Marshall is the senior warden of the Church of the Heavenly Rest, Estill, SC. Through her tireless leadership and efforts, this small church has established a large footprint in a small rural area of Hampton County. Laura is an officer in a large international banking firm, an enthusiastic Episcopalian, and currently serves as a trustee of Sewanee and of the Diocese of SC. She is deeply interested in the work of the theological school at Sewanee and desires to continue to serve the university as a trustee. She is a very strategic thinker and planner, is a good listener, and has seemingly unlimited energy for the work of the church. The Diocese of South Carolina will be proud and well served to elect Laura Marshall as a trustee of our University of the South, our beloved Sewanee.

**Personal Statement:** I am profoundly honored by your nomination to continue serving as a Trustee of the University of the South, a cherished and sacred institution.

In August 2024, the Board of Trustees adopted *Elevating Mind, Heart, and Place: The Strategic Plan for the University of the South 2024–2030*, the first such plan in twelve years. The privilege of serving another term would allow me to see this transformative vision to its fulfillment.

I feel a profound calling to serve this institution, honoring its rich history, advancing its mission, promoting enrollment, ensuring financial stability, and preserving its treasured traditions for future generations. I am committed to collaborating with fellow Trustees, faculty, and students to strengthen the Seminary School of Theology and the broader University, and supporting the University financially.

With a Bachelor of Science in Finance and 35 years of experience in the financial services industry, currently as Vice President and Corporate Secretary of a large community bank, I bring relevant expertise to support the fiduciary and strategic mandates of Sewanee’s trustees.

Thank you for considering me for another term. I am eager to continue this sacred work and welcome further discussion on how I may best serve Sewanee.

## Trustee, University of the South *Lay*

**Name:** Jan Schumann

**Church:** Holy Communion, Charleston

**Nominated by:** Cappy Traywick



**Nominator Statement:** Jan Schumann and I met at the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston a little over a decade ago. We have worked on several projects and events together at church over many years. I have always been able to depend on Jan to serve where she is needed. Jan graduated from Sewanee in 1985 with a BS in Mathematics. I learned about this wonderful school through Jan—she speaks very fondly of her time there. When it came time for my daughter to explore college campuses, Jan provided a wealth of information to us about Sewanee and has continued to be a great source to me now that I am officially a parent of a Sewanee student. I know that she will be a wonderful addition to the Sewanee Board of Trustees.

**Personal Statement:** I am a lifelong Episcopalian who grew up at St. Stephen's in St. Stephen and now I worship at the Church of the Holy Communion in Charleston. I graduated from Sewanee in 1985 with a degree in Math and was a member of a now defunct local sorority (When you don't insist that your friends join, it's a bit of a problem.). I learned so much at Sewanee both academically and socially. I learned how to be myself and I'm still in touch with many of my Sewanee friends.

If elected to the Sewanee Board of Trustees, my goal is to continue to support the university and allow others to have excellent experiences. Yea! Sewanee's Right!!

## **Proposed Resolutions 235th Annual Convention**

### **#001**

Resolved that the 235th Annual Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of South Carolina publicly express gratitude to our Lutheran siblings in Christ who have shown radical hospitality to Episcopalians of the Diocese of South Carolina who have been displaced due to the 2012 schism.

Explanation: As Episcopal communities needed places to worship after 2012, five Lutheran Churches opened their doors to welcome Episcopal communities to worship in their buildings.

1. Pastors Nathan and Andrea Rice of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Summerville have welcomed The Church of the Good Shepherd since October 2024. Good Shepherd continues to worship at St. Luke's Historic Chapel during the construction of their new church.
2. Pastor Mark Scott of Holy Spirit Lutheran Church on Bees Ferry Road welcomed the West Ashley group of St. Francis to worship in their space beginning in 2019. After Pastor Scott's departure, Pastor Jeff Shealy continued to offer the group space until Fr. Fred Thompson invited the group to begin worshipping with St. Mark's in the fall of 2021.
3. Pastor Ryan Lyles of The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Avondale welcomes worshipers from St. Peter's Episcopal Church (West Ashley) to worship one Sunday a month in their worship space. They also provide office space and meeting rooms as needed.
4. Pastor Jason Lee of St. Philip Lutheran Church in Myrtle Beach welcomed The Episcopal Church of The Messiah from fall 2014 to February 2020.
5. Pastor Steven Gallego of Cross and Crown Lutheran Church in Florence welcomed St. Catherine's Episcopal Church beginning in 2012.

We wish to extend our deep gratitude for the space these Lutheran Churches have provided. These pastors and their communities have modeled radical hospitality over the years. We request that a copy of this resolution be shared with the three Lutheran Congregations, and with Bishop Ginny Aebischer of the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Courtney Davis-Shoemaker  
The Reverend Dow Sanderson

**#002**

Resolved that the 235<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of South Carolina, commend, across the diocese, the observance in worship of the Emanuel Nine, Martyrs on or near June 17 annually, using the attached liturgical resource (see Exhibit “A”), and that said liturgical observance recognize each of the Emmanuel Nine by name: Reverend Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Mrs. Cynthia Graham Hurd, Mrs. Susie J. Jackson, Mrs. Ethel Lee Lance, Reverend DePayne Middleton-Doctor, Reverend Clementa C. Pinckney, Tywanza Kibwe Diop Sanders, Reverend Daniel Lee Simmons, Sr., and Mrs. Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson; and be it further

Resolved, that this observation be forwarded by The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina to the Standing Committee on Liturgy and Music of the Episcopal Church, for consideration of proposing a resolution regarding such observance of the Emanuel Nine at General Convention, for trial use by the Episcopal Church, and ultimate inclusion of the observance of the Emanuel Nine in *Lesser Feasts and Fasts, A Great Cloud of Witnesses* and/or The Book of Occasional Services, other appropriate location.

Explanation:

It has been ten years since a self-avowed White Supremacist gunman shot and killed nine African American church goers, including the church’s pastor, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, at Mother Emanuel AME Church in downtown Charleston. The martyrdom of these nine Christian souls, and the powerful and inspiring way in which the Emanuel Nine family members summoned their faith to reverse the spread of hate with a message of unyielding love and forgiveness, expresses the spiritual excellence, grace, and hospitality that are present in the Church of Jesus Christ within communities of African descent. This horrific event took place in our diocese, and as members of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, we should commemorate their memory and their Christian witness and pray with the universal Church for an end of the fear and of the lies that continue to perpetuate racism and racist acts even to this very day. This resolution aims to memorialize their memory for us and the wider church.

Submitted by the “Three Churches United” (St. Stephen’s, St. Mark’s, and Calvary Episcopal Churches, Charleston), and the Rev. Dr. Adam Shoemaker, The Very Rev. Dr. Michael Shaffer and The Rev. Ricardo Bailey, as commended by the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

## **Exhibit “A” – Emanuel Nine Resolution**

### **THE EMANUEL NINE**

Martyrs – June 17, 2015

Charleston, South Carolina (U.S.A.)

On Wednesday evening, June 17, 2015, at the Mother Emanuel African Episcopal Church in Downtown Charleston, South Carolina, a recently radicalized White Supremacist named Dylann

Roof, age 21, entered into Mother Emanuel that evening and violently murdered:

Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney, (Pastor of Mother Emanuel & SC State Senator) age 41,

Cynthia Graham Hurd, age 54,

Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, age 45,

Tywanza Kibwe Diop Sanders, age 26,

Ethel Lee Lance, age 70,

Susie J. Jackson, age 87,

Rev. DePayne Middleton - Doctor, age 49,

Rev. Daniel Lee Simmons, Sr. - age 74, and

Myra Singleton Quarles Thompson, age 59.

At the time of the massacre, all nine of these Church members were engaged in their regularly scheduled Bible Study. These nine Church members invited Roof into their Church and prayed with him when he, during the prayer, shot the nine members involved in the Bible Study. It was later noted by law enforcement officials that Roof had compiled a list of Black Christian Congregations that he had planned on targeting in the same manner in the metro Charleston area as well.

The martyrdom of these nine Christian souls expresses the spiritual excellence, grace, and hospitality that are present in the Church of Jesus Christ within the communities of African descent. As members of The Episcopal Church, we celebrate their memory and their Christian witness and pray with the universal Church for an end of the fear and of the lies that continue to perpetuate racism and racist acts even to this very day. For the greater glory of God, may their lives and their souls be a blessing to us all.

### **COLLECT (Rite II Language)**

*Almighty and gracious God, you equip your Church in every generation to imitate the hospitality, availability, and love of your Beloved Son. As we remember the lives of the Emanuel Nine of Charleston, South Carolina, help all of us to embrace the call to see one another as bearers of your holy and blessed image. May the liberating gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, empower us to proclaim to the world that hate, false racial ideologies and the narratives of fear have no place in your Kingdom and in your Church. May we be courageous in our journey with your Son and may we also be transformed by the power of your Amazing Grace. This we ask in the name of Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of our faith. Amen.*

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

*Proposed by Reverend Eric S. C. Manning, Sr. Pastor, Mother Emmanuel AME Church*

Lamentations 3:22-25

Psalm 147:1-3

Ephesians 4:32

Matthew 18:21-22

### **Litany of Remembrance, Courage, and Strength For the Emanuel Nine, Survivors, and Congregation**

Leader: Today, we remember. We remember the nine precious lives taken at Mother Emanuel—Their names etched in memory. Their faith, their laughter, their legacy, never forgotten. We honor the Rev. Clementa C. Pinckney, the Rev. Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, Cynthia Hurd, Tywanza Sanders, Ethel Lance, Susie Jackson, the Rev. Depayne Middleton- Doctor, Myra Thompson, and Rev. Daniel Simmons Sr.

Congregation: May their names be spoken always. May their lives inspire justice, peace, and holy perseverance.

Leader: To the survivors who bear the weight of memory, who keep the candle of courage burning, and who are still standing—Polly Shepard, Felicia Sanders, Jennifer Pinckney, and two minor children. We see you, we honor you, we thank God for you.

Congregation: God of comfort, strengthen those who have endured. May they walk with power, wrapped in Your care and peace.

Leader: Psalm 34:18 declares: “The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; He saves those who are crushed in spirit.” Today, we lean into that promise.

Congregation: Draw near to us, O God. Heal every wound. Fill every empty space with hope and healing.

Leader: As a church, as a people, as a city—we commit to walking in the light. We will remember; we will rise; we will not grow weary.

Congregation: We will sow seeds of unity and justice. We will love as Christ loved. We will walk boldly in the Spirit's power.

All Together: God of justice, God of mercy, God of healing— make us instruments of peace, builders of hope, bearers of light, and a people who remember, believe, and proclaim: Love will always have the final word. *Amen.*

**2026 Budget Approved at Diocesan Council on 2025-10-16.xlsx**

**SUMMARY**

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$4,132,253	\$5,104,600	\$972,347
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,873,117	\$5,105,232	\$1,232,115
BALANCE	\$259,136	-\$632	

2026 Account	2026 Account Description	2026 Level 1 Description	2026 Level 2 Description	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta
400000	RECEIPTS	Individuals & Institutions		\$25,000	\$30,000	\$5,000
		Other Income		\$1,500	\$3,500	\$2,000
		Parishes & Missions		\$750,000	\$772,500	\$22,500
		TEC Grants		\$120,000	\$123,600	\$3,600
		Trust Fund Disbursements	Trust Fund Disbursements (Catalytic Budget)	\$2,248,462	\$2,300,000	\$51,538
			Trust Fund Disbursements (Operating Budget)	\$987,291	\$1,875,000	\$887,709
		Trust Fund Disbursements Total		\$3,235,753	\$4,175,000	\$939,247
		RECEIPTS Total				\$4,132,253
800000	EXPENSES			\$3,873,117	\$5,105,232	\$1,232,115
820000	SEEKING JUSTICE	Action Now Outreach Ministries		\$1,000	\$1,030	\$30
		Ecumenical Ministry				
		Other Outreach Ministry		\$12,500	\$12,875	\$375
		Other Outreach Ministry Total		\$12,500	\$12,875	\$375
		Action Now Outreach Ministries Total		\$13,500	\$13,905	\$405
		Canon for Justice and Future Leaders		\$152,753	\$157,336	\$4,583
		Dean of Chapel and Spiritual Engagement		\$100,823	\$103,848	\$3,025
		Episcopal Presence in Education (EPE)		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
		Repair, Rebuild, Renewal Ministry	Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000
			Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage Total	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000
			Other Justice Ministry	\$30,000	\$30,900	\$900
			Partnership with the Province of West Africa	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
			Racial Reconciliation & Social Justice	\$10,000	\$50,000	\$40,000
		Repair, Rebuild, Renewal Ministry Total		\$45,000	\$105,900	\$60,900
SEEKING JUSTICE Total				\$317,076	\$385,988	\$68,912
830000	SPREADING CHRIST'S LOVE	Canon for Congregational Vitality		\$77,484	\$113,300	\$35,816
		Chaplain to the Retired		\$35,400	\$36,462	\$1,062
		Communications		\$20,000	\$8,000	-\$12,000
		Director of Communications		\$107,581	\$110,808	\$3,227
		Education & Training (E&T)	College Ministry Program	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$500
			Conference & Education Fees	\$2,500	\$1,500	-\$1,000
			Development	\$50,000	\$0	-\$50,000
			Leadership Training and Resources	\$7,000	\$9,000	\$2,000
			Scholarships	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$2,000
		Education & Training (E&T) Total		\$71,500	\$25,000	-\$46,500
		Gathering In Faith (GIF)	Clergy Events	\$6,000	\$8,000	\$2,000
			Deanery Meetings	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$2,000
			Retired Clergy Gathering	\$1,000	\$800	-\$200
			Youth Programming	\$5,000	\$22,000	\$17,000
Gathering In Faith (GIF) Total		\$14,000	\$34,800	\$20,800		
Parish & Missions Grants		\$175,000	\$180,000	\$5,000		
SCL Miscellaneous		\$2,500	\$3,000	\$500		
SPREADING CHRIST'S LOVE Total				\$503,465	\$511,370	\$7,905

**2026 Budget Approved at Diocesan Council on 2025-10-16.xlsx**

**SUMMARY**

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$4,132,253	\$5,104,600	\$972,347
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,873,117	\$5,105,232	\$1,232,115
BALANCE	\$259,136	-\$632	

2026 Account	2026 Account Description	2026 Level 1 Description	2026 Level 2 Description	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta	
840000	WALKING HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD	Canon for Common Mission		\$162,137	\$167,001	\$4,864	
		Canon to the Ordinary		\$77,488	\$79,813	\$2,325	
		External Mission Support	Berkeley Divinity School at Yale	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
			Kanuga	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	
			Porter Gaud Support	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
			Province IV Assessment	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	
			Seminary Support	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0	
			The Episcopal Church	\$116,896	\$120,403	\$3,507	
			University of the South	\$2,000	\$6,000	\$4,000	
			External Mission Support Total		\$131,396	\$138,903	\$7,507
			Internal Congregation Support	Annual Diocesan Convention	\$10,000	\$16,000	\$6,000
				Background Checks	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$1,000
				Commission on Ministry	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$2,500
				EFM	\$1,800	\$1,500	-\$300
				Seminarian Support	\$6,000	\$4,000	-\$2,000
				Internal Congregation Support Total	\$21,800	\$29,000	\$7,200
			WALKING HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD Total		\$392,821	\$414,717	\$21,896
850000	ADMINISTRATIVE	Banking Fees		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	
		Comptroller		\$110,857	\$115,000	\$4,143	
		Contract Services (CS)	Annual Audit	\$14,000	\$15,000	\$1,000	
			Chancellor Expenses	\$1,000	\$100,000	\$99,000	
			Legal Expenses (MOVED TO Chancellor)	\$90,000	\$0	-\$90,000	
			Other Contracted Work	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	
			Payroll Processing	\$2,700	\$10,000	\$7,300	
			Contract Services (CS) Total	\$107,700	\$175,000	\$67,300	
			Director of Finance and Administration	\$54,025	\$91,600	\$37,575	
			Insurance, Liability (Ins-L)	\$1,100	\$110,000	\$108,900	
			Insurance, Property (Ins-P) (Land, Structures, Material)	\$6,500	\$250,000	\$243,500	
			IT Equipment, Software, Subscriptions (IT)	Computer equipment	\$5,000	\$4,000	-\$1,000
				Computer Software	\$6,000	\$8,500	\$2,500
				Telecommunications	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
				TENS Stewardship Platform	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0
			IT Equipment, Software, Subscriptions (IT) Total		\$14,200	\$15,700	\$1,500
			Miscellaneous		\$5,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
			Office Operations (Ops)	Meetings & Meals	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
				Misc Diocesan Gifts & Memorials	\$3,000	\$3,100	\$100
				Miscellaneous Expenses	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
				Office Improvement/Renovation Fund	\$500	\$1,500	\$1,000
				Office Maintenance	\$780	\$700	-\$80
				Office Supplies	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
		Postage & P.O. Box Annual Fee	\$650	\$1,000	\$350		
		Rent Expense - Calvary	\$36,000	\$36,000	\$0		
		Rent Expense - Grace	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0		
	Office Operations (Ops) Total		\$54,930	\$56,300	\$1,370		
	Taxes		\$0	\$250,000	\$250,000		
	ADMINISTRATIVE Total		\$357,312	\$1,076,600	\$719,288		

**2026 Budget Approved at Diocesan Council on 2025-10-16.xlsx**

**SUMMARY**

	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$4,132,253	\$5,104,600	\$972,347
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,873,117	\$5,105,232	\$1,232,115
BALANCE	\$259,136	-\$632	

2026 Account	2026 Account Description	2026 Level 1 Description	2026 Level 2 Description	2025 Budget	2026 Budget	Budget Delta	
860000	EPISCOPATE	Bishop Office, Travel, and Entertainment (Diocesan)		\$12,500	\$12,875	\$375	
		Bishop Salary and Benefits		\$248,542	\$255,998	\$7,456	
		Bishop Travel, Conferences and Retreat (Outside the diocese)		\$15,600	\$16,068	\$468	
		Bishop's Executive Assistant		\$92,219	\$94,986	\$2,767	
		EPISCOPATE Total			\$368,861	\$379,927	\$11,066
870000	CATALYTIC INVESTMENT	Bishop Discretionary		\$10,000	\$10,300	\$300	
		Bishop Search Reserve Fund		\$0	\$0	\$0	
		Long-term Activity Reserve Fund	General Convention	\$15,000	\$5,000	-\$10,000	
			Lambeth Conference	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	
			Sabbaticals	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	
		Long-term Activity Reserve Fund Total			\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0
		Recapitalization Expenses	Tier 1 - Returning Congregations	\$1,208,462	\$1,000,000	-\$208,462	
			Tier 2 - Congregations where churches were not returned	\$675,000	\$800,000	\$125,000	
			Tier 3 - Historically disenfranchised congregations	\$250,000	\$500,000	\$250,000	
		Recapitalization Expenses Total			\$2,133,462	\$2,300,000	\$166,538
CATALYTIC INVESTMENT Total			\$2,158,462	\$2,325,300	\$166,838		



# Report of Institutions

**The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina**  
235<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention

October 24, 2025

Delegates,

It has been some time since Canterbury House touched base. Apologies for our dormant appearance but there is much to report.

As you may be aware, Canterbury House was founded in 1967 as a non-profit, independent living, age-in-place senior community. The Canterbury House campus is comprised of two buildings and available to anyone 62 or older who meets annual income guidelines. Canterbury House East, a four-story building with 46 assisted units, and Canterbury House West, a thirteen-story high-rise with 204 assisted units.

Four years ago, Edmund Rhett, M.D. (Canterbury's Board of Director's chairman at that time) began an initiative to inject new life into the fifty-year-old facility which had become a bit "long in the tooth." His plan was two-fold; replace the aging board of directors and the facility's operational management, while simultaneously restructuring the organization's bylaws to create a foundation on which the Canterbury House could grow and prosper into the future.

As many of you can appreciate, there were numerous challenges, the easiest of which was finding new board members eager to serve our seniors. During this period, Rhett developed a strong working relationship with me, who at the time was the newest of the new board members. Within the next eighteen months (the period of the Canterbury's *renaissance*), Rhett identified a succession plan to his chairman's role, the other aging board members, and the facility's management staff.

The retiring operational management team was replaced, the operational functions outsourced to Southern Development Management Company (SDMC). SDMC with a staff of over 150 employees, operates multiple facilities throughout six regional areas in the southeast providing valuable insights in the operation of our facility.

Yet, the biggest challenge during the *renaissance* was Canterbury's restructuring. The original bylaws were established in 1968 with a subsequent set established for facility expansion (Elderly Housing, Inc.) in 1997. Both sets were in dire need of updating on many levels, tax, governmental, and organizational structure.

During the discovery, we determined that the Canterbury House (West & East) were owned by the non-profit corporations, Episcopal Diocesan Housing, Inc. and Elderly Housing, Inc., both having no members but each sharing a common board of directors. The board engaged an attorney to aid in our restructuring, assisted by input (both spiritually and legally) from the Episcopal and Anglican dioceses.

Now updated, the bylaws once again restated Canterbury's purpose:

Provide, in accordance with the ideals of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, a retirement community for those persons, who, because of age, personal conditions, health, and their express desire, choose to reside in a not-for-profit faith-based community. The Canterbury is committed to a program of stewardship respecting each person's rights, dignity and independence. We are organized to meet the physical, social and physiological needs of the elderly and to contribute to their health, security, happiness and usefulness in longer living.

There were other important changes made during the restructuring of the bylaws. As the end of the Episcopal and Anglican schism neared, Rhett and I sought to formulate bylaws that would bridge our communities (Rhett - Anglican | Fabian - Episcopalian). To that end, the bylaws set forth that of the maximum thirteen (13) seats, four seats would be appointed by the Bishops of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and the Anglican Diocese of South Carolina, one Canterbury resident seat, and the remaining eight seats from the community at large. The bylaws were adopted by the board's unanimous approval.

Since its restructuring in 2023, the Right Reverend Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and the Right Reverend Charles F. "Chip" Edgar III, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of South Carolina have jointly served on Canterbury's Board of Directors. The joint effort between the two Dioceses is a testament to the importance and dedication by both groups to achieve affordable low-income independent living for the community's growing senior population.

In 2025 and with a solid foundation now in place, there was unanimous support from the Board of Directors to embark on a mission addressing the needs of our residents, the community, and the infrastructure of our aging facility to meet the needs of our growing community. No mission is without its limiting factors: maintaining affordability and a paramount intent not to displace any of our current residents.

Our efforts, although preliminary in nature, have offered up an abundance of community and governmental support. After meetings with City of Charleston staff and elected officials, the College of Charleston, local public and private groups the board has the rough outline of a strategic plan moving forward. Although premature in sharing details, the plan incorporates renovation and expansion of our facility on our existing footprint in the Peninsula.

Next, we engaged an independent research firm to perform a "*needs analysis*" beyond the apparent growing needs and demand for low-income independent living senior housing. These efforts incorporated interviews with public and private groups, as well as a confidential survey requested from our residents.

Results of the *Needs Analysis* are to be presented at the October 29<sup>th</sup> board of director's meeting. This information will be the basis for efforts and critical in many ways; first by substantiating the elements incorporated into our overall strategic plan; and equally important, by helping in formulating a feasibility study. The study's design will assist us in the initiative's

financial modeling over the coming decade, including the multitudes of funding sources in order to maintain our plan's fundamental requirement of affordability.

The coordinated movement from the board, staff, and residents in this initiative has been extraordinary. These groups have identified some very promising opportunities, including the possible addition of a subsidized "food pantry," possible food services support from the College of Charleston, and most importantly the help, strategic insights, and guidance from the staff at Bishop Gadsden. We are committed to exploring these joint ventures, the organizations with which I might add have been incredibly gracious in their offering of support.

Our +50-year-old mission resonates throughout the Board and the staff as strongly today as it did in our beginning. We are dedicated to providing safe, comfortable and affordable housing for the Canterbury residents while promoting their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being – now and well into the future.

Thank you for allowing us to provide our updates. Please keep us in mind should *any* opportunity arise, that would benefit the housing of our low-income seniors.

Respectfully submitted,



Frederick T. Fabian  
Chairman & President  
CANTERBURY HOUSE

# ST. CHRISTOPHER *camp & conference center*

## Report for Diocesan Convention, 2025

### A Brief History



St. Christopher Camp and Conference Center is located on 314 acres of coastal wilderness on beautiful Seabrook Island. Our mission is to offer our guests a place for rest, relaxation, and renewal, and to provide a space to encounter the Living Christ. Owned and operated by the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, we fulfill that mission through our summer camp programming, conference center and retreat hospitality, and a robust environmental education program that serves both parochial and secular schools.

The history of this property precedes colonization, with the first known inhabitants likely being the Stono Native Americans. Our history as an institution began in 1938, when the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina sponsored a summer camp for underprivileged children. This summer camping tradition has continued, with brief interruptions for a polio outbreak and WWII, for the past 867 years. In 1951, a larger portion of Seabrook Island was donated to the Diocese by the Morowitz family, including the current St. Christopher property. In 1981, St. Christopher founded the Barrier Island Environmental Education Program, a wildly successful program which serves thousands of students, in South Carolina and beyond, throughout the school year. St. Christopher was operated as an Episcopal institution until the 2012 schism, at which point it was operated by the ACNA Diocese. The Supreme Court decision of 2022 returned St. Christopher to the stewardship of Episcopal Diocese, which has resumed operation and oversight since October 2022. The current Executive Director is the Rev. Laura Rezac, and St. Christopher is operated by a year-round staff of 30 and a seasonal staff that varies in size from 15 to almost 40. All staff who serve at St. Christopher are committed to our mission, and to sharing the love of Christ with all who pass through our gates.

## Conference Center Operations



St. Christopher operates a year-round conference center that offers space for retreats and gatherings of all kinds. We offer hospitality to all kinds of groups, from churches and religious groups, to environmental and governmental organizations, to family reunions, to quilting guilds. We are especially excited to offer special rates for Episcopal groups and would love to host parishes for retreats, beach dates, youth events, or any other event. It is also our pleasure to offer personal retreats for anyone who wants to find a bit of restoration and renewal for themselves. We even have special respite rates for clergy and lay church employees. Many groups and individuals come back year after year to enjoy the warm hospitality and peaceful surroundings.

Our facilities include 44 lodge rooms with two beds in each; the ability to add rollaway beds to rooms to support families staying together; two apartments with full kitchens and seating areas; 16 cabins available for overnight stays; several meeting spaces in a variety of sizes; an outdoor picnic pavilion overlooking the estuary; and three chapels, including a small outdoor chapel.

We are blessed to have new leadership in this aspect of our ministry - Lauren Harris served as interim Director of Reservations in the winter of 2025, and then was hired as the Director of the Conference Center in June 2025. Her educational background is in ministry with children and youth, and she also previously served as a Naturalist and Senior Naturalist at St. Christopher. We also hired Kendall Watson as our Camp and Conference Center Assistant to support our conference center and student ministry departments. With that team in place, we are currently working on expanding our conference center offerings, including organizing an Advent retreat in December and an Artist Retreat in January. We also have bimonthly Sustainability Talks, organized through our Conference Center, that draw from our institutional knowledge on creation care and stewardship in our coastal context. Please see our website for more information on these and other events, and know that our staff would be delighted to welcome you here!

## Summer Camp



I'm pleased to share that we had another wonderful 2025 summer camp season! Our theme was based on Colossians 2:6-7, which says: *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.* We are so grateful to all of our chaplains, and our All-Staff Chaplain Dorothy Holland, for helping us to teach the children at our camp about how they are rooted in God's love always. We also saw continued growth in our sailing program, which we rebuilt last summer, and fostered new leadership among our counselors. Several of them have already applied to return in summer of 2026!



Renzi Ricketts, our Director of Summer Camp since shortly after the transition, departed St. Christopher in August to take a position at Bellwether Farm, an Episcopal agrarian retreat center in Ohio. We wish her and her husband Paul (and daughter Kaya) well on their next endeavors.

We are thrilled to welcome Meg Cutshall as our new Director of Summer Camp, who comes to us from the Methodist camping tradition and previously served at Wesley Forest in Pennsylvania. Meg has already been a blessing to our community, and we are so excited for next summer! We are also pleased that Meg will have a returning Assistant Summer Camp Director, Nora Terrill, a cradle Episcopalian who is currently serving as a Senior Naturalist on our staff.

As we look ahead with Meg to summer 2026, we want to share our 2026 camp schedule with the community. **Early registration for Episcopal/ACNA campers will begin on December 1 at 9 am. General registration for all campers will open on January 12, 2025 at 9 am.** We invite all children and youth to join us for a week (or more!) this summer, to grow in their faith, make lots of friends, and have FUN! We are planning to offer all kinds of activities, including sailing, paddling, swimming, archery, rock wall, and of course time to worship and sing in our chapel. Our hope is that through our ministry, campers will come away knowing that they are loved by God, and that they will have new life - a deeply meaningful and wildly loving life - through following Jesus.

Please know also that we are committed to making sure every child can access our programming. Financial aid is available from our institution, and we also encourage all priests to use their discretionary funds as a source of aid for camp tuition for families as well. We do not want finances to be a barrier to attending camp. Every child deserves to learn about God, make new friends, and grow through a camp experience!

Last, but certainly not least, we have opportunities for young adults to work with us this summer. We are hoping to hire a Co-Assistant Director to round out the team, and we still have open spaces for counselors, interns, and counselors-in-training. If you have an older teen or young adult in your life who would enjoy working on the beach at an Episcopal camp this summer, send them our way! For our counselors, we offer competitive pay, room and board, wellness support through spiritual formation and time off, and special training opportunities in sailing, archery, and belaying. Camp is different from many other summer jobs in that we hope to invest in young adults over the course of several years to support their spiritual, personal, and professional goals. If you know someone interested in having the best summer ever, working outdoors on the beach, developing skills that are useful in life and in the workplace, and growing in faith, encourage them to join us! Learn more and apply here:

<https://www.stchristopher.org/work-volunteer-at-camp>



Finally, many thanks to those communities and individuals who supported us through your prayers, your donations, and your time. We also especially thank the parents and guardians who sent their children to camp, and sent their emerging adults to work with us. Thank you for your trust and for partnering with us in your child's Christian formation!

**Camp Saint Christopher** 

**2026 SUMMER CAMP SCHEDULE**

SESSION	DATES	AGES
1	June 1st - 3rd (3 Days)	Rising 1st - 3rd
2	June 5th - 7th (3 Days)	Family Camp
3	June 10th - 12th (3 Days)	Rising 2nd - 5th
4	June 15th - 19th (5 Days)	Rising 6th - 8th
5	June 22nd - 26th (5 Days)	Rising 3rd - 7th
6	June 29th - July 1st (3 Days)	Rising 2nd - 5th
7	July 6th - 10th (5 Days)	Rising 7th - 9th
8	July 13th - 17th (5 Days)	Rising 3rd - 5th
9	July 20th - 24th (5 Days)	Rising 9th - 12th
10	July 27th - 29th (3 Days)	Rising 4th - 6th
11	July 31st - August 2nd (3 Days)	Family Camp

ACNA & EPISCOPAL REGISTRATION 12.1.25 AT 9:00 AM  
 GENERAL REGISTRATION 1.12.26 AT 9:00 AM  
 VISIT [STCHRISTOPHER.ORG](http://STCHRISTOPHER.ORG) FOR PRICING

*we can't wait to see you again!*

# Barrier Island Environmental Education Program



Our Barrier Island Environmental Education Program continues to provide excellent experiential education through this fall season. We are so blessed to have the continued leadership of Jared Crain as Director, and Tyler Harris as Associate Director. They are the dream team of environmental education leadership, and have expertly mentored our team of 7 returning Senior Naturalists and 7 Naturalists. All team members are recent college graduates with a passion for environmental education. In addition to their work with students, they also serve at St. Christopher in a variety of other capacities, including playing music in chapel, controlling invasive plant species, caring for the animals in our Herpetarium and Aquarium, and engaging in local outreach with Title 1 schools. They have even been active supporters in applying for grants, and we are pleased to report that we've received funding for a pollinator garden that will be accompanied by new curricula for our students. We are so proud of each young person who has given this year to growing as professionals and as people of faith.

Depending on the year, our Barrier Island Program reaches between 6000 and 8000 participants who learn about coastal ecology and creation care. Our prayer is that each person that has an experience with our programming will come away with deeper understanding and a love for the natural world that God has made.

If families are interested in a Barrier Island experience together, we have a special opportunity to attend our programming over a weekend! Our Barrier Island Family Camp will be held on January 23-25. See our website for more information here:

<https://www.stchristopher.org/events>

We are also aware that there are many students out there whose families or schools cannot afford a trip to St. Christopher. We have a scholarship program that helps to offset these costs, and we raise money in part through our annual Barrier Island 5K. This year, the 5K will be held on Saturday, April 25. We love seeing so many Episcopalians support that initiative, and welcome everyone to run, walk, amble, or just enjoy the morning on our campus while supporting students in need! Please keep an eye on our social media and website for signup opportunities.

## Outdoor Encounters

Our Outdoor Encounters program, led by our BI naturalists, offers kayaking, birding, orienteering, and low ropes experiences for all ages. Join us for time in the great outdoors on our beautiful campus, led by experienced naturalists and outdoor experts.



# Opportunities

There are several ways to connect with St. Christopher, both to experience rest, reflection, and renewal for yourself, and also to support our mission and ministry.

The most important thing you can do for us is pray for our staff, students, campers, and guests. We ask everyone in the diocese to please remember us in your prayers.

For individuals:

- Join us for the Advent Retreat or for another personal retreat for your own rest, restoration, and renewal
- Encourage the children and youth in your life to come to camp, and any emerging adults to consider applying to be a counselor or counselor-in-training
- Consider serving as a volunteer weekend host - email Rev. Laura for more information! ([lrezac@stchristopher.org](mailto:lrezac@stchristopher.org))
- Ask about our burial ground at St. Christopher if you are looking to make those final arrangements

For parishes:

- Come join us for a retreat of your own at our conference center, either overnight or for the day
- Rally friends to join us for the 5K
- Consider blessing our summer camp team this summer with prayers, cards, snacks, or contributions to bagel bars, pizza parties, or other treats.
- Clergy: please encourage families to come to camp, and use discretionary funds to help! And consider serving as a chaplain for a future summer camp season!
- Also for clergy and lay church professionals: Ask us about our respite rates for Sabbath time here at St. Christopher. Vestries, encourage your staff (including hardworking folks like parish administrators!) to take Sabbath time for their own renewal.

Important Dates!

December 1, 2025 - Summer Camp Registration for Episcopal/ACNA families

December 2, 2025 - Invasive Species Workshop (register now!)

December 12-14, 2025 - Advent Retreat (register now!)

January 12, 2026 - General Summer Camp Registration Opens

January 19-February 1, 2026 - Artist Retreat (apply now!)

January 23-25, 2026 - Barrier Island Family Camp (register now!)

February 3, 2026 - Sustainability Talk on Wildlife Monitoring at St. Christopher

April 25, 2026 - Barrier Island 5K

May 18, 2026 - Summer Camp Counselor Training starts (leaders arrive on 5/16)

(apply now!)

July 11, 2026 - Beach Day!

Please check out our website at <https://www.stchristopher.org> and <https://www.stchristopher.org/events> for more information!

### **Contact information**

Executive Director: The Rev. Laura Rezac ([lrezac@stchristopher.org](mailto:lrezac@stchristopher.org), 843-768-0429, ext 3004)

Director of Summer Camp: Meg Cutshall ([mcutshall@stchristopher.org](mailto:mcutshall@stchristopher.org), 843-768-1337)

Director of the Conference Center: Lauren Harris ([smahaffee@stchristopher.org](mailto:smahaffee@stchristopher.org), 843-768-1337)

Director of the Barrier Island Environmental Education Program: Jared Crain ([jcrain@stchristopher.org](mailto:jcrain@stchristopher.org), 843-768-1337)

Associate Director of the Barrier Island Environmental Education Program: Tyler Harris ([tharris@stchristopher.org](mailto:tharris@stchristopher.org), 843-768,1337)

The University of the South is the only institute of higher education founded and governed by dioceses of the Episcopal Church. The bishops, clergy, and laity of twenty-seven dioceses form the core of the University's Board of Trustees fostering mutually beneficial relationships that make Sewanee a truly unique and special place.

*For more information or to view this report online, visit [episcopal.sewanee.edu](https://episcopal.sewanee.edu)*

## 2023-2024 SEWANEE ALMANAC

### College of Arts & Sciences:

- Total enrollment in the College: **1,681**
- Total aid awarded to College students from Constituent Dioceses: **\$7M**
- Total number of Episcopal College students from all 27 Constituent Dioceses: **1304**

### School of Theology:

- Enrollment in the seminary: **139**
- **100%** of seminarians who applied for financial aid received support
- Constituent Dioceses represented by current seminary student body: **11**

## HOW YOUR DIOCESE SUPPORTS SEWANEE FINANCIALLY

*(Includes Sewanee Fund and capital project gifts for the fiscal year 7/1/2023 - 6/30/2024)*

- Diocesan support in FY24: **\$2,000**
- Support from parishes in the diocese: **\$4,800**
- Percentage of parishes in the diocese that made a gift to Sewanee: **8%**

## HOW YOUR DIOCESE ENGAGES WITH SEWANEE

- College students from the diocesan area: **39**
- Seminarians from the diocese: **0**
- School of Theology alumni currently serving in the diocese: **29**
- EfM groups in the diocese: **6**

## YOUR TRUSTEES

- The Rt. Rev. Ruth M. Woodliff-Stanley, bishop
- The Rev. Ryan Currie (2025)
- Laura Marshall (2026)
- Jean McDowell Martin (2027)

### Staff Contacts:

The Rev. Casey Perkins, T'22, Director of Church Relations • 931.598.1316 | [casey.perkins@sewanee.edu](mailto:casey.perkins@sewanee.edu)  
Mary Catherine Alexander, Assistant Director of Church Relations • 931.598.1237 | [mcalexan@sewanee.edu](mailto:mcalexan@sewanee.edu)



VOORHEES UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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**Voorhees University: *The Next Level of Excellence***  
***An Episcopal HBCU***

**Voorhees University 2025 Updates for  
The Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina and  
The Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina**

**Submitted by:**

**Reverend Marie Carmel Chery  
Dean of the Chapel and Spiritual Engagement and  
Dr. Ronnie Hopkins, 10<sup>th</sup> President and CEO**

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“THE NEXT LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE”

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## *Voorhees University: The Next Level of Excellence* *An Episcopal HBCU*

- I. Fall 2025 **Enrollment** projected to meet or exceed Fall 2024 @ 593. Total On-campus students = 332; 50% students are VU Global/Online; 59 International Students.
- II. **Retention Rate** = 58%; 2% improvement from previous year.
- III. **Graduation Rate:** Ranked #1 in South Carolina for 4-Year Graduation; Ranked #9 of 101 HBCUs nationally for 4-Year Graduation by US News and World Report
- IV. **Safety and Security** remain a priority. VU Office of Campus Safety & Security has systemic affiliations/partnerships with: City of Denmark Police, Bamberg County Sheriff's Office, SC Law Enforcement Division, Homeland Security and FBI (Special HBCU Support).
- V. Focus on **Increasing Revenue Streams** beyond Enrollment. Considerations:
  - Land Management of new property (118 acres)
  - Independent Dining Services
  - Summer Programs
  - Increased Foundations, Grants and Scholarships
- VI. Focus on **Increasing University Endowment**. (Current endowment = \$11.9 million)
- VII. **Renovation Project:** HBA Partnership for Renovation of **5956 Voorhees Road**, White's Family Home as Event/Residential Property.
- VIII. **Student Highlights:**
  - a. Coronation of Mr. and Miss Voorhees University, September 26, 2025:
    - Briana Moore**-- 4.0 GPA, Sports Management, Summerville, SC
    - Ahmad Parker**, 3.8 GPA, Business Administration, Savannah, GA
  - b. SGA Installation: **President Armond Hopkins**-- 3.6 GPA, Biology , Charlotte, NC
  - c. Voorhees University **GEAR UP Students** Featured in Transformative Statewide Exhibition at the South Carolina State Museum

- d. Tigers rose to the top earning the highest score and bringing home a **\$10,000 prize!** Money4Life Regional Conference hosted by NC Central Univ. Sponsored by the Center for Financial Advancement (CFA) and powered by Experian.
- e. **MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD TEAMS 2025 HBCU DIVISION II INDOOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONS AND THE 2025 HBCU ATHLETICS CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS**

IX. **Episcopal Church Engagement**

- a. **Reverend Margaret Bullit-Jonas and the Robert A. Jonas of the Living Springs Foundation** provided a one-time donation of \$50,000.
- b. **Blessed University Campus Chapel Services:**
  - Reverend Canon Ramelle McCall**, Canon for Leadership in the Diocese of South Carolina, September 9, 2025
  - Reverend Raphiell Ashford**, Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Columbia, SC, September 30, 2025
  - Reverend Canon Mia McDowell**, Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina, October 7, 2025
  - Reverend Dr. Adam Shoemaker**, Rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Charleston SC, October 14, 2025
  - Reverend Douglass Puckett**, Diocese of the Upper South Carolina, October 21, 2025