



IN ALTUM

# Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac

*35 worshipping communities  
in northeast and northcentral Wisconsin*

## **ADVANCE REPORTS 2023**

*Summaries of ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac  
for the period September 2022 – August 2023*

Prepared for the  
149th Convention of the Diocese of Fond du Lac  
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### ABOUT ADVANCE REPORTS

These Advance Reports are a digest of mission and ministry at the diocesan level to inform delegates (and others) about the work of the diocese. Some areas of activity may not be included because no report was received or there was no activity in the past year. Efforts which are primarily local and congregational in focus are not included here. Such reports are typically presented at a congregation’s annual meeting. These reports combined with the Journal of the Convention document a portion of the diocesan history over the course of a year.

### ABOUT THE VISION

A diocesan vision statement was developed soon after Bishop Gunter’s consecration. The statement is “The vision of the Diocese of Fond du Lac is we are becoming a people of God’s mercy and delight through **vital congregations, prayer and worship, and missionary church.**” This statement guides planning and activity of the diocese.

## **ABOUT THE DIOCESE**

The Episcopal Church came to what would become Wisconsin with the Oneida people in 1822 as they were removed from their homelands in upstate New York. What is now the Diocese of Fond du Lac was originally a part of the Episcopal Church's Missionary District of the Northwest and then a part of the Missionary District of Wisconsin. This missionary district became the Diocese of Wisconsin in 1847, just prior to Wisconsin's statehood. The Diocese of Fond du Lac was formed out of the Diocese of Wisconsin in 1875 and was geographically larger than current boundaries. In 1928 with the formation of the Diocese of Eau Claire, the Diocese of Fond du Lac took its current character of the 27 counties of northeast and northcentral Wisconsin.

The 2022 Parochial Report accounts the diocese as having 3,503 active baptized members in 32 congregations worshipping in 35 locations. Roughly half of the churches are in cities with the other half in villages and towns. A few are in rural communities. Membership tends to reflect the demographics of each community. Average Sunday Attendance was 1,162, with a median of 33. Grace, Sheboygan has the greatest ASA (98) with the smallest being Precious Blood, Gardner (6).

The official diocesan clerical register reflects as of September 2023 there were 85 clergy canonically resident (3 bishops, 61 priests and 21 deacons). 33 clergy were parochial with 52 non-parochial. 40 were active with 45 retired.

## **AN EPISCOPAL BISHOP'S TEACHING ON ABORTION**

*Submitted by The Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, VIII Bishop of Fond du Lac*

The 148th Convention of the Diocese of Fond du Lac requested that “the Bishop Diocesan, our Chief Teacher as expressed in the consecration service of the Book of Common Prayer, to provide a series of teachings and theological reflections on the issue of abortion to the members of this diocese.”

In response to that request, I wrote a series of teachings over several months (The teaching begins here: [anodddworkofgrace.blogspot.com/2023/01/the-episcopal-churchs-stated-position](https://anodddworkofgrace.blogspot.com/2023/01/the-episcopal-churchs-stated-position)). I studied extensively sources by theologians of the Christian Tradition and by contemporary authors, including both men and women. I have invited others, within the diocese and beyond, both men and women (but mostly women), holding different perspectives to read each teaching and give feedback before it was published. I have had conversations in person, by phone, and via email. I have heard from people whose views on abortion have evolved over time, and people who have expressed mixed feelings about abortion. I have also engaged in conversation with those who are convinced a fully ensouled human person is present from

the moment of conception and with those who believe that is not the case until birth. I have heard from women who had life-threatening pregnancies in places where procuring an abortion was difficult. I have also heard from many who have simply expressed appreciation for the teaching series.

I set out the recent historical, cultural, and political context of current understandings of the issue which suggest that the contemporary divisions on the issue of abortion do not represent what the Church has always taught or practiced.

The several resolutions passed by the General Convention over the years on the morality of abortion were set out. I explained that those resolutions are not binding on the conscience and behavior of Episcopalians. The Episcopal Church's teaching on this issue is not static. Further reflection and teaching would be welcome. But these resolutions do represent the closest thing we have to an "official" teaching. Because they have been passed by different General Conventions over several decades, they have an ad hoc character. They do not set out one straightforward teaching document. Consequently, there is some tension among them, and one might wonder if there is a lack of consistency or coherence. Taken together, these resolutions do challenge both what is usually referred to as the "Pro-choice" and the "Pro-life" positions.

The Episcopal Church acknowledges that "in this country [the United States] it is the legal right of every woman to have a medically safe abortion" and therefore, "We believe that legislation concerning abortions will not address the root of the problem." (Resolution 1994-A054). General Convention has also asserted on behalf of the Episcopal Church,

"its unequivocal opposition to any legislative, executive or judicial action on the part of local, state or national governments that abridges the right of a woman to reach an informed decision about the termination of pregnancy or that would limit the access of a woman to safe means of acting on her decision."

(Resolution 1994-A054).

The most recent General Convention, in 2022, asserted that it,

"understands that the protection of religious liberty extends to all Episcopalians who may need or desire to access, to utilize, to aid others in the procurement of, or to offer abortion services."

On the other hand, while there is no assertion that we are fully human persons at conception, in the name of the Episcopal Church, General Convention has affirmed that,

"All human life is sacred from its inception until death. The Church takes seriously its obligation to help form the consciences of its members concerning this sacredness. Human life, therefore, should be

initiated only advisedly and in full accord with this understanding of the power to conceive and give birth which is bestowed by God.”  
(Resolution 1994-A054)

Therefore, “We regard all abortion as having a tragic dimension” (Resolution 1994-A054). General Convention has also “strongly condemn(ed) the act of abortion when the sole purpose of such action is the selection of the sex of the child” and that “abortion after the diagnosis of non-serious or trivial abnormalities, or abortion in a case where purely cosmetic abnormalities are discovered, is also strongly condemned” (Resolution 1982-A065). It has also expressed “grave concern about the use in the third trimester of pregnancy of the procedure known as intact dilation and extraction (commonly called "partial birth abortion") except in extreme situations” (Resolution 1997-D065).

General Convention has also counselled that,

“Whenever members of this Church are consulted with regard to a problem pregnancy, they are to explore, with grave seriousness, with the person or persons seeking advice and counsel, as alternatives to abortion, other positive courses of action, including, but not limited to, the following possibilities: the parents raising the child; another family member raising the child; making the child available for adoption.”  
(Resolution 1994-A054)

Episcopalians seek to ground our teaching in scripture and look to the tradition of the Church for guidance in interpreting scripture. So, the teaching series included looking at both the Old Testament and the New Testament to see what instruction they contained on the morality of abortion or the question as to when the life in the womb is a fully human, ensouled person. We saw that there is little or nothing in the Bible that directly addresses or answers those questions.

When we turned to the traditional teaching of the Church, we saw that from its beginning Christianity proclaimed a radically new valuing of all human beings of all sorts and conditions. This included a valuing of children that was more affirming of them as persons than had been common in the ancient world. With that was a clear rejection of infanticide, a common and accepted practice in the ancient Greco-Roman world. Christians treated abortion as similar to infanticide.

But we also saw that most Christian teachers through most of Christian history did not consider the life in the womb in the early parts of a pregnancy to be fully human. This was true in the teaching of most major theologians. It was true in the on-the-ground practice of pastoral care of women who resorted to

abortion. And the life of the mother took precedence if giving birth threatened her life. It was only a little over 150 years ago in 1869 that understanding was reversed in the Roman Catholic Church – mostly due to its teaching on the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Given all of this, I have suggested something consistent with the tradition and in line with the current teaching of the Church of England that “all life is God-given but that [fully ensouled human] life emerges only gradually as does our moral responsibility towards that life.” Though less clearly articulated, this seems to be the direction of the various resolutions of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. I made the case that this seems in keeping with Job 10:11-12 and Psalm 139:12-14. That understanding recognizes that the holy mystery of becoming fully human is a gradual process in the womb and that the pregnant woman is not merely a passive vessel of that process of becoming. The moral balance at first tilts toward the agency of the pregnant woman (usually along with the father) and gradually tilts to include the baby developing in her womb.

We looked at how this applies when looking at the biology of pregnancy and the development of an embryo – fetus – baby. Though this goes beyond what the General Convention of the Episcopal Church has said, I suggested that at around 20 weeks we can be fairly certain that the fetus has developed to the point that it makes sense to speak of it as having the capacity to be a fully ensouled human being. At that point, the rest of the community has more of a stake in its well-being such that it is reasonable for there to be more regulation of abortion beyond that point. In keeping with the teaching of the Church, the pregnant woman’s life still takes precedence if it becomes threatened. Though it was not my intention when I started the teaching, series this is similar to what the law was in Wisconsin before *Roe v Wade* was overturned by the Supreme Court.

I also made the case for moving beyond simply pitting the individual life in the womb against the individual life and choice of the pregnant woman. We are not simply individuals with competing rights. We are interdependent beings in communion with one another with mutual obligations. This is not just about the responsibility a woman (and the man with whom she has gotten pregnant or her partner) has toward the life in the womb. The wellbeing of mothers and children, born and unborn, is the responsibility of the community. There are things we as a community – whether in our churches, our states, or as a country – can do to address the reality of unwanted or difficult pregnancies, reduce the number of abortions, and reduce maternal mortality. This includes things like

better sex education and the availability of birth control, insuring better prenatal and post-natal care, paid parental leave, subsidized daycare, etc.

It would seem possible to both advocate for safe, legal, and available abortion, at least in the first half of a pregnancy, *and* support efforts to reduce the frequency of abortion including advocating for policies that make it easier for women pursue other options. It would not be inconsistent to also advocate for restrictions on abortion in the second half of a pregnancy. In any event, shaming women is not the way of mercy.

Taking all this together, it appears that the Episcopal Church's teaching is that abortion should be a legal and readily available option for women. But various resolutions passed by the General Convention also suggest that abortion is not necessarily morally neutral or that all abortions at whatever stage of pregnancy are morally equivalent. Some reasons for abortion are morally problematic, others less so. The stage of the fetus' development is also morally significant. But problematic pregnancies are also a reality. Simply criminalizing abortion is not required by the Bible or the broad teaching of the Church's tradition. Nor does it address the complexities of pregnancy and the reasons women resort to abortion. The Episcopal Church has sought to faithfully grapple with those complexities.

I commend [Enriching Our Worship 5 Liturgies and Prayers Related to Childbearing, Childbirth, and Loss](#) which contains liturgies, prayer for discernment, and confession authorized by General Convention regarding various aspects of pregnancy, including abortion.

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*Submitted by the Rev. James Biegler, Diocesan Secretary*

Following the action of the preceding two Diocesan Conventions, the former Executive Council and the Trustees were merged into a single body, the Trustees.

The Trustees, established and described by the Canons of the diocese, functions as the "Vestry" of the diocese and oversees its regular operations. Membership includes the officers of the diocese: The Bishop, The Treasurer (voice only), Jeanine Limberger, St. Anne, De Pere, and The Secretary (voice only), The Rev. James Biegler, Retired; The Deans: The Rev. Meredyth Albright, Wisconsin River Deanery, St. Augustine, Rhinelander, The Rev. Glenn Kanestrom, Green Bay Deanery, St. Paul, Marinette, and The Rev. Ralph Osborne, Lake Winnebago Deanery, St. Thomas, Menasha, succeeded by The Ven. Michele Whitford, St. Paul's, Plymouth; and elected and appointed

persons: Richard Ackley, Holy Apostles, Oneida, The Rev. Paul Coey, St. Peter's, Sheboygan Falls, Chris Eggert-Rosenthal, St. James, Manitowoc, The Rev. Julia Hendrix, St. Mark's, Waupaca, Steve Larson, Grace, Sheboygan, Rick LeMahieu, St. Peter's, Sheboygan Falls, Steve Miller, St. John the Baptist, Wausau, The Rev. Dcn. Sandy Muinde, Retired, The Rev. Diane Murray, St. James, Manitowoc and now Retired, (resigned mid-term), Pat Pfeifer, St. Mark's, Waupaca, Ivy Windorf, St. Augustine's, Rhinelander. The work of the Trustees is supported by diocesan staff, Matthew Payne, Lisa Baltes, and Erin Wolf, for whose ongoing assistance gratitude is given. The Trustees meet monthly, generally via teleconference/Zoom. Regular business includes reports from the Bishop, Diocesan Business Administrator, Youth Coordinator, and Treasurer; updates on clergy and congregations in the diocese; and oversight of the budget and finances of the diocese. Additionally, the Trustees have responsibility for the Diocesan Common Trust, the permanent funds of the diocese (endowment, mission, infirm clergy) and certain temporary funds placed under their supervision. They also oversee the several loan funds of the diocese and approve any sales of real property held by the diocese. Full detail of the activities of the Trustees may be found in the official minutes maintained at the Diocesan Office and open for inspection by any member of the diocese.

## **CAMPUS MINISTRY TASK FORCE**

*Submitted by the Rev. Tyler Richards, Chair*

The Purpose of the Task Force for Campus Ministry in the Diocese of Fond du Lac is to try and establish an Episcopal Presence on the campuses of institutions of higher learning near local Churches. The idea is that 18-24-year-olds are one of the most underserved demographics in the Church and in establishing Campus Ministries, we might seek to reach College Students and other young adults. Members include: The Rev Tyler Richards, SMMS, St. Anne's, De Pere, serving UW Green Bay and St. Norbert's, the Rev. Christopher Wilkerson, All Saints, Appleton, serving Lawrence University, the Rev. Christopher Corbin, Trinity, Oshkosh, serving UW Oshkosh.

It became apparent to the remaining members of the task force that attempting to do meaningful campus ministry required more time than the rectors of the three parishes had available. A consistent presence requiring approximately 36 hours a week for just "face time" had to be established to do effective and meaningful work. This is not work that the rector or priest in charge of a parish can do alone. For campus ministry to occur, each parish must either recruit a team that could commit this amount of time to the effort, or a full-time campus minister would need to be hired. To that end, the Task Force recommends that Campus Ministry become a major area of mission for the diocese and/or an area of discernment that is part of the plan for a reunified



diocese of Wisconsin. The fact remains that this demographic cannot be ignored. We must go to them to connect with them, whether they are in college or not; we cannot expect them to seek us out any longer. We must continue our discernment as individual parishes of what we can do, and what we can offer to Young Adults, and what practices we are willing to take on to make young adults feel welcome in our parishes.

## **CHANCELLOR**

The Chancellor serves as legal advisor to the diocesan bishop, Standing Committee and Trustees under diocesan Canon 2.2., providing legal advice in real estate, contract, human resource, canonical and parliamentary issues. Specifics of such advice and communications are confidential under secular rules governing attorney-client relationship. Services are provided *pro bono* with any direct costs paid for by the diocese.

## **CHAPLAINS TO RETIRED CLERGY & SPOUSES**

*Submitted by the Rev. John Peterson and Kathy Peterson, Chaplains*

The Program for the ministry to retired clients of the church Pension Group is designed to distribute information and services, enhancing pastoral care to all retirees, spouses, and beneficiaries through an appointed Diocesan Chaplain. The role of the chaplain is to develop a pastoral ministry to all retirees, spouses, and beneficiaries.

The goals are: to work with the diocese and CPG to disseminate information and assist with up-to-date retiree information; to maintain the social network of retirees and provide pastoral care and timely communication; to facilitate continuing education and retiree resource network; to provide pastoral care and support to retirees through visits, telephone contacts and correspondence; to attend with other chaplains the annual Provincial and Triennial Conferences organized by provincial coordinators and CPG.

Chaplains meet monthly online with the coordinators from the CPG Pastoral Care office to learn what helpful information may be passed along to the retirees. Retirees in the movement were assisted in changing from a Medicare Supplemental Plan to Medicare Group Advantage Plan and the updating – reenrollment for 2023. Every retiree will be informed that they must decide about the dental part of their insurance in Fall 2023.

We attended the Provincial Chaplains Conference (Province V,VI,VII,VIII) on October 3-6 in Kansas City MO. We continue to send cards at Christmas, Easter, birthdays, and ordination anniversaries. We pray for retirees, spouses and families and assist as much as possible in times of illness and death. We keep the bishop informed of interactions requiring his attention.



## **CHURCH PERIODICAL CLUB**

*Submitted by Karen D. Powers, Chair*

The Church Periodical Club (CPC) was founded in 1888 and its ministry is to provide written materials, both religious and secular through grants to organizations sponsored by the Episcopal Church or Anglican Communion who otherwise cannot obtain them. Individuals make donations through their parish or directly to the diocese or National CPC.

The focus of CPC in Fond du Lac this year was prison ministry. The Winnebago County Jail requested Bibles for the prison library. Donations were secured with the stipulation that if a prisoner chose to keep a Bible, they could. To date the following were distributed: 13 Bible translations (some with Apocrypha) commonly used in the Episcopal Church; 18 Bible translations commonly used in the Roman Catholic Church; 24 King James Version Bible; and 10 Koran. I'm still trying to obtain donations of the Torah. I have promises of more Bibles from various Winnebago County churches.

Churches, Houses of Worship, and Ministries that have donated books of scripture include St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Menasha; Trinity Episcopal Church, Oshkosh; St. Raphael Roman Catholic Church, Oshkosh; Sacred Heart-St. Jude Roman Catholic Church, Oshkosh; Bearing Precious Seed Ministry, Oshkosh; and The Oshkosh NAFIS Mosque, Oshkosh.

Additionally, we were able to grant \$1,500 for Epic Bible translation (approximately 63 graphic Bibles), requested by Chaplain Amy Heimerl for Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake Schools, State of Wisconsin Department of Corrections, the state's Type 1 secure juvenile correctional facility for male and female youth in DOC custody. Episcopalians with ties to St. Thomas, Menasha graciously funded this grant.

## **CLERGY GATHERINGS**

Cultivating collegiality amongst clergy, along with connecting with the bishop, makes for a stronger diocese. Clergy in each deanery gather regularly throughout the year for fellowship and mutual support. A Continuing Education Conference was held at the St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon in the fall. A pre-Lenten Clergy retreat was held. The Chrism Mass, including a renewal of ordination vows, was held. The Diocesan Office schedules a meeting for the bishop to meet with clergy in their birth month for an annual check-in. Prayer requests for clergy are shared regularly via email.

New clergy to the diocese receive an orientation to the diocese by the Human Resources Manager which covers human resource needs as well as overview of the diocese.

## **CLERGY SPOUSES' COUNCIL**

*Submitted by Leslie Gunter, Chair*

The clergy spouse community has had minimal activity due to the impact of adjusting to the Covid world. Informal connections continue. Plans are being made for a luncheon, October 14, 2023.

## **COMMISSION ON MINISTRY (COM)**

*Submitted by the Rev. Monica Burkert-Brist, Chair*

The Diocesan Commission on Ministry strives to provide supportive resources and processes to help people discern their callings in both lay and ordained leadership roles in our diocese, our national church and God's world. We continued to be blessed by people answering the call to serve God in new ways during this past year.

Persons interested in exploring a possible call to deeper lay leadership in the church or a possible call to ordained ministry as a deacon or a priest, may start the process, after discussion with their parish priest by participating in a First Circle of Light process. The First Circle of Light is a series of meetings held regionally among a group of seekers who meet regularly over several months to share their stories of discernment, to pray and learn and engage in fellowship with the help of a facilitator. The goal is to help the seekers further discern God's potential call to deeper ministry in the church and the world. This past year, a group of determined individuals who had completed a First Circle of Light Discernment process at the end of the COVID pandemic began the second phases of their discernment processes by engaging in their local discernment committees (the Second Circle of Light) at the parish level. We currently have five seekers in various stages of the local discernment process this year. This includes three people discerning possible ordination to the diaconate and two to possible ordination to the priesthood.

An additional group of individuals began work as a "First Circle" of seekers earlier in 2023 under the leadership of Canon Ezgi Saribay-Perkins and Deacon Paul Aparicio. We expect them to finish their work soon. A new Circle of Light will likely not convene until late spring of 2024. If you think you would like you learn more about this process, please speak to your parish priest and then email Mother Monica at [revmbb16@gmail.com](mailto:revmbb16@gmail.com). Once enough individuals express interest, a Circle will be organized which will meet in a location and at times which meet the needs of the participants and the facilitator. In addition to its work with individuals discerning potential calls to ordained ministry, your COM is seeking to broaden its role in helping lay leaders develop more resources and tools for lay leadership development and calling in lay ministry.

The COM always welcomes more participation by clergy and lay leaders in COM activities, including leading Circles formation groups and helping train and facilitate discernment committees at the local congregational level. Please let Mother Monica know if you are interested or know folks who would serve well in these roles.

Members: The Rev. Monica Burkert-Brist, Chair, St Paul's Watertown; Chris Shaw, St. Peter's, Ripon; the Rev. John Peterson, Retired; the Rev Dcn Paul Aparicio, Grace, Sheboygan; Cheryl Dobrzynski, St Peter's, Sheboygan Falls, Cathy Cowling, Trinity, Oshkosh; the Rev. Dcn. Nicci Beeck, St Paul's Plymouth, the Rev. Portia Hurney Corbin, St John's, New London, and the Rev. Chris Arnold, Interim, St. Thomas, Menasha. The Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter serves as an ex-officio member.

### **COMPANION DIOCESE TASK FORCE**

*Submitted by Ron Alexander, Chair*

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, Right Reverend Osiward Mapika was consecrated and enthroned as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bishop of Masvingo Diocese.

We were made aware that the new bishop's car was not suitable for the rural roads in his diocese and that they were fund raising for a car. The people of the Diocese of Fond du Lac answered a call to action on Companion Diocese Sunday and during the Eucharistic Festival contributed nearly \$10,000 toward a purchase of a suitable car!

We were saddened to learn of the death of 5 pregnant dairy cows from January disease, a tick-borne parasitic disease common to the region. They had used available vaccinations and dipping treatment to no avail and were devastated! They had only one pregnant cow and one calf remaining and were desperate for any resources to save them. Matthew Payne was able to quickly network and provide connections in the region for best practices assistance. Prayers requested!

Our Companion Diocese relationship with the Diocese of Masvingo was initiated in 2016. The mission is to mutually strengthen the bonds of unity; to journey together in our common call; to encourage and engage, learning from each other as we share our human, spiritual, material, and financial resources. Neither is the "contributor" or the "recipient."

Members: Ron Alexander, Chair; Ascension, Merrill; the Rev. Dcn. Mike Burg, Grace, Sheboygan; Jeanine Limberger, St. Anne's, De Pere; the Ven. Michele Whitford, St. Paul's Plymouth; Peter Thelen, St. Lukes's, Sister Bay; Rev. Dcn. Dale Hutjens, St. Anne's, De Pere; the Rev. Diane Murray, Retired; and the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, ex-officio.

## **CONGREGATIONAL FINANCIAL REVIEW TEAM (CFRT)**

*Submitted by Anne Peterson, Lead Reviewer*

Episcopal Church Canon I.7.1(f) requires all accounts of Parishes and Missions shall be audited annually by an independent Certified or Licensed Public Accountant, or such audit committee as shall be authorized by the Finance Committee or other diocesan authority. Diocesan Canon 4.1(2) permits a financial review of a congregation's financial records by a "competent person approved by the Finance Committee" as an alternative to an audit by a CPA. The CFRT was established in 2006 to help congregations fulfill the canon easily and inexpensively.

The members of the Congregational Financial Review Team (CFRT) are Anne Peterson, Lead Financial Reviewer, Mark Wegner, Fr. James Biegler and Matthew Payne. We are on a three-year cycle for reviews – the first year a Form review, the next year an On-Site review and the third year an informal review with no report. A congregation or cleric may request an on-site visit, if there are concerns or a change in cleric. This year Matthew Payne graciously agreed to do the Form Reviews. Some of our reviewers got a slow start this season for various reasons. We hope to do better next year.

## **CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**

*Submitted by Matthew P. Payne, Chair*

Established under authority of diocesan Canon 3.5, the Constitution and Canons Committee is to consider proposals for amendments to the diocesan Constitution or Canons and other matters referred to it. Changes to the Constitution and Canons approved by the 2021 Convention were concurred in 2022. Over the past year, the Chair has reviewed several parliamentary questions from the bishop and several committee members. Members of the committee are the Rev. Carol Amadio, retired; the Rev. Chris Arnold, canonically resident; the Rev. Dcn. Nicci Beeck, St. Paul's, Plymouth; Mr. Matthew Payne, chair, All Saints, Appleton; Mr. Gordon Stillings, *ex-officio* and the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, *ex-officio*.

## **COVID TASK FORCE**

*Submitted by the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter, Convener*

Revision of the protocols and best practices continued to be adjusted as society adapted to the Covid-19 world. More discretion was allowed to congregations with the most recent guidance based on community-based risk levels as determined by the Centers for Disease Control ([diofdl.org/covid](https://www.diofdl.org/covid)). The Task Force went on hiatus in September 2022 but will reactivate when warranted.

Members of the Task Force are the Rev. Monica Burkert-Brist, canonically resident; Dr. Pamela Glennon, St. John's, Wausau; Dr. Brad Lauderdale, M.D., St. Thomas, Menasha; the Rev. Christopher Wilkerson, All Saints, Appleton.

### **CURSILLO (MONARCH)**

Monarch Episcopal Cursillo is a ministry of the diocese to help those in the Church better understand their calling to be Christian leaders. The method of Cursillo includes three primary activities: ongoing membership in weekly small-group gatherings at the local or congregational level; monthly diocesan gatherings (Ultreyas) to promote fellowship and to build further understanding of the faith; the Cursillo Three Day Weekend for more thorough training in the methods of Piety (relationship with God), Study (relationship with the Word), and Apostolic Action (relationship with neighbor). The Cursillo Secretariat is the group dedicated to the work of Cursillo in the diocese. It is made up of Cursillistas (people who have experienced a Cursillo weekend) from throughout the diocese.

If you are not currently receiving Cursillo news and prayer requests but would like to, contact Lay Director John Barnes, [laydirector@monarchcursillo.org](mailto:laydirector@monarchcursillo.org). Visit [monarchcursillo.org](http://monarchcursillo.org) for more complete information.

### **DEACON COUNCIL**

*Submitted by the Ven. Michele Whitford, Chair*

The Deacon Council members are Mr. Ron Alexander, St. John's, Wausau; the Rev. Nancy Behm, Trinity, Oshkosh; the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter; the Rev. Michael Hackbarth, Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Fond du Lac; the Rev. Dale Hutjens, St. Anne's, De Pere; the Rev. Diane Murray, Retired; the Rev. Lisa Ueda, St. Thomas, Menasha; the Ven. Michele Whitford, St. Paul's, Plymouth, Chair.

The Deacon Council helps the bishop in the care of deacons of the diocese. At present, there are eleven active deacons, eleven retired deacons, two of which live outside the diocese. Deacons spend much of their ministry caring for the physical and mental needs of people in and outside of the church. It is important to care for the deacons in the same way they care for others.

The Council shares oversight of the Deacons' School and seeks continuing education programs for the whole deacon community. The Deacons of the diocese are faithful in ministry. They are busy with pastoral care, teaching, praying, preaching, and encouraging. Deacons serve as chaplains, jail ministry, sit on boards that focus on giving a hand up and finding ways to combat food insecurities and homelessness. These are just a few of the many ways the deacons bring the needs of the world to the church and the church to the world.

Most deacons service in a million unseen ways and make Jesus known to a hurting world.

On May 20, 2023, the Tri-diocesan Deacon Retreat entitled *Listening with the Ears of our Hearts* was held at Holy Trinity, Waupun. Deacon Lisa Ueda and the archdeacon were part of the planning team for the event. Twenty-six deacons from all three dioceses attended the day. The retreat leader was Scott Stoner the Executive Director of Living Compass

The deacons are calling the entire diocese to seek out the marginalized, both in our parishes and outside in our communities, and draw them closer to the love of God.

## **DEACONS SCHOOL**

*Submitted by the Rev. Glenn Kanestrom, Dean*

The Deacons School serves the people of the diocese of Fond du Lac by educating and supporting those who may become vocational deacons. Class meetings are typically held once a month for 9 months each year and in two semesters. The school functions on a two-year cycle. Year One offers classes in Old Testament, Church History, Christian Spirituality and Diakonia (practical aspects of the Diaconate). Year Two offers Homiletics, New Testament, Theology and Diakonia. Summers involve Field Education and parish experiences.

Instructors are: Old Testament – the Rev. Tom McAlpine, retired; Spirituality – the Rev. Glenn Kanestrom, St. Paul’s, Marinette; Church History – the Very Rev. Patrick Perkins, St. Paul’s Cathedral, Fond du Lac; Diakonia – the Ven. Michele Whitford, St. Paul’s, Plymouth; New Testament – the Rev. Barb Sajna, retired; Theology – the Rev. Glenn Kanestrom, St. Paul’s, Marinette; Homiletics – the Rev. Rodger Patience, Holy Apostles, Oneida.

The tuition for students is \$500 each semester. Each instructor and the dean receive a modest honorarium. The student is responsible for travel and materials expenses. It is suggested a student’s home congregation provide for half or more of the student’s expenses.

No students were enrolled in Deacons School in the 2022-2023 year. Those interested in exploring the diaconate should begin by talking to their local priest or deacon and then enrolling in the first Circles of Light process through the Commission on Ministry.

## **DEANERIES**

Diocesan Canon 8.1 divides the diocese into five Deaneries: Green Bay, Lakeshore, Lake Winnebago, Northwoods, and Wisconsin River. Congregations are assigned to a deanery by the bishop. Currently no congregations are assigned to the Lake Shore or Northwoods Deanery.



## **GREEN BAY DEANERY**

*Submitted by the Rev. Glenn Kanestrom, Dean*

The Green Bay Deanery gathers for regular clerical meetings (Clericus) and other meetings for lay and clergy of the deanery. The churches in the Green Bay Deanery are the following: St. Agnes, Algoma, St. Anne's De Pere; Atonement, Fish Creek; Precious Blood, Gardner; Blessed Sacrament, Green Bay; St. James, Manitowoc; St. Paul's, Marinette; St. John's, New London; Holy Apostles, Oneida; St. John's, Shawano; St. Luke's, Sister Bay; Christ the King, Sister Bay/Jacksonport; St. Paul's, Suamico; Order of Julian of Norwich, White Lake.

The Clericus meetings were held either via Zoom or in person. This past year we met in person at Anne's, De Pere and St. Luke's, Sister Bay. We met 8 times during the year (typically meeting on months when there were no other clergy meetings or gatherings). These gatherings drew from 4 to 11 clergy and included active and retired deacons, retired and active priests and retired bishops. At the meetings, information was shared about the diocese and individual parishes. The Clericus were also a time for mutual clergy support.

We were very excited to welcome new clergy to our deanery, the Rev. Brian Staude, Rector of St. James, Manitowoc, and the Rev. Brit Frazier, Rector of St. Luke's, Sister Bay. They are wonderful additions not only to our deanery but also to our Diocese!

## **LAKE WINNEBAGO DEANERY**

*Submitted by the Ven. Michele Whitford, Dean*

The Lake Winnebago Deanery consists of All Saints, Appleton; St. Paul's Cathedral, Fond du Lac; St. Thomas, Menasha; Trinity, Oshkosh; St. Paul's, Plymouth; St. Peter's, Ripon; St. Mary's Chapel, Wautoma; Grace, Sheboygan; All Saints Chapel, Elkhart Lake; St. Peter's Sheboygan Falls; and Holy Trinity, Waupun. The goal of clergy is to meet monthly on the fourth Tuesday. We move from church to church and appreciate the hospitality of the host. The clergy spend time together supporting each other and hearing about the happenings in our congregations. Recent conversation has challenged us to find new ways for our churches to work together in evangelism and fellowship. If you would like to do ministry or fellowship with nearby Episcopal churches, help make it happen. We are clear there are limited resources and good stewardship encourages us to share what we have with each other for the good of the Kingdom. Pray for your church and pray for the churches in your deanery.

## **WISCONSIN RIVER DEANERY**

*Submitted by the Rev. Meredyth Albright, Dean*

The best news is that the positions we were hoping to fill at churches in The Wisconsin River Deanery have been filled. Father Sam Cripps began serving at St. John the Baptist in Wausau in June. Mother Deborah Woolsey has been serving St. Matthias in Minocqua since July 1st.

Our second “annual” deanery picnic was hosted by Ascension Episcopal, Merrill on Aug. 20. The Wisconsin River Deanery encompasses the congregations of St. Olaf’s, Amherst; St. Ambrose, Antigo; St. Francis, Eagle River; Ascension, Merrill; St. Matthias, Minocqua; St. James, Mosinee; St. Augustine’s Rhinelander; The Beloved Community of Intercession Episcopal and Redeemer Lutheran, Stevens Point; St. Mark’s, Waupaca; St. John the Baptist, Wausau and St. John the Evangelist, Wisconsin Rapids.

## **DIOCESAN ARCHIVES**

*Submitted by Matthew Payne, Archivist*

An archive determines what items to keep, keeps them well, and shares them with others. Thanks to the diligence of laity and clergy for nearly two centuries, we are blessed with a significant volume of material amounting to over 200 linear feet from congregations, committees, events, bishops, clergy, laity and other Episcopal entities. In addition to paper documents, there are digital files, video and audio recordings, and other ephemera such as statuary, liturgical items and other physical objects. The physical repository is housed at the Diocesan Office in Appleton.

The most common information request is verification of vital records, such as baptisms, marriages, and deaths. Congregations keep their vital records, so many requests are directed to the congregation. The diocese holds records of closed congregations and look those up when requested. It also holds confirmation records of bishops, another source of verification or comparison to other records. When a research request is received, a nominal fee may be charged to support further operations of the archives.

In addition to regular research related to the operation of the diocese, over the past year we have had baptismal record requests (including those from other denominations, something that happens often), genealogy requests, requests for periodicals (diocesan papers have been scanned making digital copies easier to share), and assistance to researchers. Approximately 40 hours have been used in responding to these requests.

Processing records from closed congregations continue. A complete digital spreadsheet of the clergy canonical register makes researching requests more

efficient. Physical objects from the former Blessed Sacrament, Green Bay are stored in the building for distribution to others.

The archivist is a member of the Society of American Archivists, the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church, the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists, the Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Brown County Historical Society.

## **DIOCESAN OFFICE & PROPERTIES**

*Submitted by Matthew Payne, Diocesan Administrator.*

The Diocesan Office supports the mission and ministry of the diocese through its bishop and congregations. It includes the bishop, Lisa Baltes, Office Administrator, and Matthew P. Payne, Business Administrator and Human Resources Manager. It serves as an information hub for communication and canonical requirements. This may be done by answering questions by phone, email and letter from priests, deacons, wardens, or church members. A labor-intensive activity is coordinating diocesan events to help those leading to focus energy on its content and reduce worry about logistics.

The diocese owns and manages two properties fully insured under the diocesan insurance policy. The first is in Fond du Lac. Grafton Hall, located behind the Cathedral, is fully leased to Solutions Center, a social service agency that provides emergency shelter to women, children and men as well as assistance for those who are in crisis. They cover their expenses in addition to paying rent. The diocese is responsible for any capital needs, such as a new roof, and reserves funds each year for this eventuality. A new parking lot was installed in early 2023. There is also a large section of open land that requires regular mowing during the growing season.

The second property is in Green Bay: the former Blessed Sacrament Episcopal Church, closed in 2021. The facility was taken under diocesan management and is currently rented to Amanda's House, a women's and children's transitional housing. The former worship space is used for storage of church contents as we continue to find each item a new home where it will be used. Once this process is complete, we will donate the remaining liturgical accoutrements to St. Mary's Mission, a liturgical disposition ministry in Pennsylvania. Cash assets and rent payments are used to cover expenses of maintaining the building.

## **DISCIPLINARY BOARD OF REVIEW**

*submitted by The Rev. Chris Arnold, President*

The Disciplinary Board is part of the structures created by the Episcopal Church and diocesan canon to promote a fair and just system of ecclesiastical accountability for clerics. The Disciplinary Board works in concert with the

Intake Officer, the Bishop, the Chancellor, and others. The board is composed of lay people and clerics from the diocese. Members of the board are called to sit on Panels that review the disciplinary process as it moves along. All Convention Delegates are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the church's disciplinary process through this website: [www.titleiv.org](http://www.titleiv.org). Concerns about instances of misconduct by members of the clergy should be directed first to the Diocesan Intake Officer.

Since the last Convention, the Disciplinary Board received no referrals and held no meetings. We remain ready to serve when we are needed.

Members: The Rev. Chris Arnold, St. Thomas, Menasha (President); the Rev. Dcn. Nicci Beeck, St. Paul's Plymouth; the Rev. Paul Coey, St. Peter's, Sheboygan Falls; Chris Eggert-Rosenthal, St. James, Manitowoc; Dr. Brad Lauderdale, St. Thomas, Menasha; Martina Mims, St. Thomas, Menasha; the Rev. Rodger Patience, Holy Apostle, Oneida;

## **EUCCHARISTIC FESTIVAL**

Since 1960 we have welcomed members and friends of our diocesan family to an annual Eucharistic Festival. An endowment held in the Diocesan Common Trust provides support for hosting this annual event.

2023's Festival featured the Rev. William Bulson as homilist. Past presiding bishops, our own diocesan bishops and priests, and bishops and priests from the wider church have delivered the sermon at these annual celebrations. The homily which may be viewed at [diofdl.org/ef](http://diofdl.org/ef). Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The time ended with a time for the "Bishop's Picnic" hosted by the good folk of the Cathedral of St. Paul, Fond du Lac.

## **FAITHFUL INNOVATIONS**

*Submitted by Cathy Cowling, team member*

Faithful Innovations is a process designed to help congregation members and leaders develop deeper connections with God, each other, and their neighbors through the introduction of practices of listening, discerning, experimenting, and reflecting. Its purpose is to encourage congregation members and leaders to "behave their way" into new thinking about what it means to be church in a changing world; to seek out where God is already at work in our midst and to join in God's transforming work.

Through a series of three Saturday trainings in a nine-month cycle, members of each congregation's guiding team learn practices to listen to God in their local contexts through dwelling in scripture together, sharing faith stories, and noticing through fresh eyes where God might be at work in their neighborhoods. This deep listening invites discernment of the movement of

God and the development of simple experiments to make connections. The final stage in the process is to reflect on what has been learned and to articulate new questions that begin the action reflection cycle again. As such, Faithful Innovations is not a program but spiritual practices that can affect all levels of congregational life and ministry.

The program is currently on hiatus.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE & TREASURER**

*Submitted by Jeannine Limberger, Diocesan Treasurer*

Members of the Finance Committee are Ms. Jeanine Limberger, Chair (Diocesan Treasurer, ex-officio), the Rt. Rev. Matthew Gunter (Bishop, ex-officio), the Rev. James Bigler (Canonically Resident), John Eggers (St. Anne's, De Pere), the Rev. Patrick Twomey (Retired), the Rev. Canon Wilson Roane (Retired) Rev. Canon Ezgi Saribay Perkins (St. Peter's Ripon & St. Mary's Chapel Wautoma)

In almost all matters, the Finance Committee does not set diocesan policy or direction but makes recommendations about such policies based on due consideration of financial implications. The duties of the Finance Committee are:

- To receive financial reports from the Diocesan Office,
- Make an annual report to the Convention,
- Propose the budget for the diocese,
- Set an asking level for pledges,
- Oversee the Diocesan and congregational audits and the Congregational Financial Review Team, approve non-CPA outside reviewers for congregational reviews,
- Consider and recommend a Minimum Clergy Compensation schedule,
- Recommend Finance Policies for congregations to be approved by the Executive Council.
- Make a recommendation to the Committee on Certification of Lay Delegates regarding compliance of congregations completing their pledge and Financial Review, and filing their Parochial Report,
- Considers other items of financial consequence that may be requested of it by a committee, commission or entity of the diocese.

The year 2023 did not include a Bishop's Appeal. The diocesan budget ended with a deficit which was covered by operating reserves.

The year 2023 has seen us remain much the same as last year when considering attendance on Sundays. Many still watch the service from home. Finances have remained constant throughout the year.

Bishop Godfrey Tawonezvi, Bishop of the Diocese of Masvingo, retired and Bishop Osiward is now the new Bishop of Diocese of Masvingo. He has

reached out to us for help obtaining the funds to buy a reliable vehicle with which to visit the whole Diocese of Masvingo.

The diocese of Fond du Lac manages about 40 non-operating funds which amount to about 300,000. We have around 2.4 million in investments, some of which support the operating budget.

The proposed 2024 Diocesan Budget was built around the vision of building strong congregations that bear witness to God's mercy and delight. Pledges from congregations account for 63% of the diocesan budget and endowments account for 13%. The other 24% comes from other sources. Although the Finance Committee is presenting a deficit budget, there are reserves from 2023 operating expenses to cover the deficit. The 2024 budget as it is presented to the Convention includes a 12% asking, a cost of living adjustment for staff of 5% . The Bishop will be committing 1/3 of his time to the Diocese of Eau Claire and they will be reimbursing us for his time. The Administrative Assistant is now full time and Bus/HR is 3/4 time.

I want to thank the Committee for all their hard work this past year and for the faithful stewardship of all who contribute to the diocese. May God continue to bless us with the grace and resources to continue to be His servants and to be examples of God's mercy and delight in the world.

## **GENERAL CONVENTION**

*Submitted by the Rev. Meredyth Albright, Deputation Chair*

Looking forward to attending the 2024 General Convention of the Episcopal Church are laity: Kate Kipp, St. John the Baptist, Wausau; Beckah Scolare, St. Barnabas, Suamico; Richard Ackley, Holy Apostles, Oneida; and Cheryl Dobrzynski, St. Peter's, Sheboygan Falls; Clergy representatives are The Rev. Meredyth Albright, St. Augustine's, Rhinelander; The Rev. Aimee Heimerl, Ascension, Merrill; The Rev. Tyler Richards, St. Anne's, De Pere and The Ven. Michele Whitford, St. Paul's , Plymouth.

The 81st General Convention will be June 24-28 in Louisville, Kentucky. This convention format is expected to return to the style of conventions prior to the 2022 event. The three-year convention schedule rotation was interrupted by COVID, so the last convention was in 2022, instead of 2021. Attendance at that convention was limited to bishops and deputies only, the next convention should include vendors, observers, and additional participants.

## **HISTORIOGRAPHER**

*Submitted by Matthew P. Payne, Historiographer*

The Historiographer is appointed by the bishop with the duty to assure significant diocesan activities are documented from the past year, especially noting the role of the people in those activities. This documentation will allow

future historians to chronicle the life of the diocese. The methodology used to perform this duty has become more active than passive in the digital age.

In the not too distant past, the diocesan paper served as general chronicler of diocesan activities and was supplemented by a variety of official and unofficial records. These had to be collected and stored. In the present, multiple streams of information serve that purpose. These include the diocesan paper, electronic newsletters, and websites. Digital sources require more effort to assure access for future historians both in terms of quantity and quality. There is no guarantee that digital files of today will be readable in the future, so the Historiographer commits time to reducing the most important digital information to a paper format for placement in the archives.

In addition to documentation activities, the Historiographer has been tasked to serve as managing editor of the history of the diocese. An “update” of the history from 1875-1925 was begun by the Aging Commission in the 1990’s. The bishop has tasked the Historiographer with completing this task to cover the history through 2013. Using the work of the Commission, the Historiographer plans to complete a volume from 1925-1980 (Bishops Weller, Sturtevant and Brady) and then a volume from 1980-2013 (Bishops Stevens and Jacobus).

## **INTAKE OFFICER**

*Submitted by the Rev. Julie Hendrix, Intake Officer*

If you go to the Episcopal Church website and search for Title IV, you will learn about how our denomination addresses disciplinary issues pertaining to clergy. On that site you will read, “Title IV” of the Episcopal Church Canons details the grounds and process for ecclesiastical discipline. It is a church-wide structure to address claims that Bishops, Priests, or Deacons may have engaged in conduct constituting an offense under the Canons. It encourages accountability, justice, reconciliation, restoration and pastoral responses.”

The Episcopal church takes the issue of safety in the church very seriously, and if there is concern about possible misconduct, a report is made to the Intake Officer of the diocese. Title IV is not a substitute for conversations working to heal the normal hurts and stresses of parish life. Conversations with the Intake Officer are welcomed when considering making a report or about understanding the process in advance. Conversations are kept in strict confidence.

As a reminder, if you serve in your local church, check to see if you are up to date with the Safe Church Training offered by our diocese. We all need to do our part to make our churches safe and provide an environment for all of us to grow in our faith.

## **MOSAIC TASK FORCE**

*Submitted by The Rev. Christopher Wilkerson, Co-Chair*

The Mosaic Task Force is charged with helping the diocese to become more fully aware of the presence of structural and institutional racism within the Church; and, in response to that awareness, to become more inclusive and hospitable for all people in an increasingly diverse, and increasingly divided, world.

Mosaic's long-term goals are to help the people and parishes of Fond du Lac to create and sustain communities and churches in which: 1) White privilege is openly acknowledged; 2) an anti-racist identity is intentionally adopted and encouraged; 3) racial and cultural inclusiveness is actively pursued; and 4) congregations and church institutions are continually challenged to become the beloved community of mutuality, justice, and compassion which we are called to be in Christ Jesus.

Members: Martina Mims, St. Thomas, Menasha; Co-Chair The Rev. Christopher Wilkerson, rector of All Saints, Appleton; Co-Chair; The Rev. Dcn. Brien Beck, St. Barnabas, Suamico; The Rev. Dcn. Lisa Ueda, St. Thomas, Menasha; The Rev. Julie Hendrix, St. Mark's, Waupaca; The Rev. John Throop, Diocese of Fond du Lac

Past Activities: In September 2022, we hosted our first in person meeting since 2020, when the Covid pandemic forced our churches to close down and in-person gathering became impossible. Throughout the rest of 2022 and 2023, changes in membership and recovery from issues created by the pandemic have slowed our progress but not dimmed our enthusiasm. Current status: The task force is meeting on October 7 and throughout the rest of 2023 with the intention of beginning to offer training and resources to the parishes in the diocese in 2024. [diofdl.org/mosaictf](http://diofdl.org/mosaictf).

## **ORDER OF JULIAN OF NORWICH**

*Submitted by the Rev. Hilary Crupi OJN, Prioress of the Order*

The Order of Julian of Norwich is a contemplative religious Order of the Episcopal Church, comprised of nuns, Oblates and Associates. The nuns of the Order live the monastic life together under the vows of stability, conversion of life, and obedience, 'in the spirit of St. Julian of Norwich'.

Life in community is grounded in the prayers of the Eucharist and four-fold Daily (BCP) Office, and, in the tradition of Benedictine/Cistercian monastic life includes times of work and study, solitude and recreation. The practice of enclosure (staying within the monastery grounds unless it is necessary to go out) allows the solitude and liberty to live as deeply as possible into the life of prayer and friendship with God.



Serving God in one another, in guests, and before God’s altar, the nuns are committed to prayer, intercession, and conversion of life, growing up into Jesus Christ through life in common. All services are public, and guests are welcome, especially on Thursday evenings when the Holy Eucharist is celebrated at 5:30 PM. An ADA-compliant guest and retreat space is available for day or overnight guests, and there is no set fee for making a retreat. Spiritual direction and sacramental reconciliation are available, also without charge. For further information about the Order, affiliation with it, or about making a private retreat, see [www.orderofjulian.org](http://www.orderofjulian.org), or write to the monastery c/o the Prioress: Our Lady of the Northwoods Monastery, W704 Alft Rd, White Lake, WI 54491. Community wares: soap, wooden prayer benches, rosaries, bread, and original icons.”

## **PROVINCE V**

*Submitted by Chris Eggert-Rosenthal, Executive Board Representative to Province V*

The Diocese of Fond du Lac is part of Province V- a network of 14 dioceses of the Episcopal Church in the upper Mid-West. Province V’s mission key words are CONNECT. NETWORK. SUPPORT.

- Connect people to people and people to resources.
- Network to build communities across diocesan lines.
- Support each other in a variety of ministries.

The work of the province is to support the people in their local contexts. A few of the Provincial Networks are highlighted below.

Creation Care In May 2023, the Province V and Province IV Creation Care Networks gathered in Louisville, KY. The weekend was designed to help leaders of creation care ministries to have some time of learning and retreat. We learned more about the Biblical foundation of creation care, which can be helpful in teaching people that caring for creation is part of our Biblical mandate, not a political soapbox. We had such a lovely and informative time that we are planning for another event for Sept 12-15, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky. Mark your calendar and watch for info at [province.org/creation2024event](http://province.org/creation2024event)

Young Adult and Campus Ministry Province V is currently discerning if they should hire a person to be a “Campus Ministry Consultant.” This person would work with parish leaders to help them build relationships with the faculty, staff, and/or students of nearby post-high school educational institutions. The province received a development grant from the Episcopal Church and will be working with Ministry Architects to host listening sessions to share ideas and thoughts across the province. If interested, please contact

Heather Barta (Province V Coordinator) 989-413-3229 or provinceVcoordinator@gmail.com.

Big Provincial Gathering (BPG) and Synod, South Bend, IN -April 26-27, 2024, is an opportunity to meet new people and connect with others who share your ministry passions. It is structured like a "ministry fair" so that people may host workshops and conversations to share program and resource ideas with others. Training will run from Thursday afternoon through Friday morning, a community Eucharist Friday night, and workshops on Saturday. EVERYONE is invited to come to this event. Mark your calendar now and revisit province.org to follow the newest information.

Registration is only \$50 for the Friday-Saturday portion and the pre-event training can be added for \$25. (All of the programming is subsidized through sponsorships. Scholarships are available.)

The Province V Executive Board consists of 20 members, including 14 diocesan representatives, 2 members (one lay and one clergy) who also serve on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, and 4 elected officers. Each diocesan bishop appoints a representative. I have been appointed to represent our diocese. You can see the full list of members by visiting [province.org/exboard](http://province.org/exboard).

The board meets monthly via Zoom to share resources from our dioceses and hear about and help develop provincial events and programming. Most board members also serve as a liaison to one of the Provincial networks; I currently serve as a board liaison to Creation Care. The board gathers in-person once per year to make deeper connections and get to know each other and the province better.

The Rev. Heather Barta is the coordinator of Province V. She supports leaders of existing networks and creates opportunities for people across the province to connect and build networks of support.

## **REGISTRAR**

The Registrar maintains the official canonical register of clerical members of the diocese. Since the last Annual Convention, the following have been recorded:

<u>Ordinations to the Diaconate</u>	Barbara Anne Perrin Foster, deacon, 28 January 2023
<u>Ordinations to the Priesthood</u>	None

Letters Dimissory received

Jean Louise Manning, priest, from Northern Michigan, 26 January 2023  
Deborah Jean Woolsey, priest, from Southern Ohio, 29 June 2023 [Rector, St. Matthias, Minocqua]  
Brittany Bjurstrom Frazier, priest, from Pennsylvania, 11 July 2023 [Rector, St. Luke's, Sister Bay]  
Samuel Cassidy Roth Cripps, priest, from Dallas, 20 July 2023 [Rector, St. John the Baptist, Wausau]

Departed Cure

Ralph Osborne, priest, retirement, 31 January 2023

Letters Dimissory sent

Amanda Louise Sampey, priest, to New Hampshire, 1 November 2022

Deaths of Clergy, Canonically Resident

Richard Wilson Bennet, 1 August 2023  
Robert B. Meyer, 2 June 2023

Deaths of Clergy, Previously Canonically Resident

None Known

Deaths of Religious

None

Removal from Ministry

None

**SAFE CHURCH, SAFE COMMUNITIES**

*Submitted by Erin Wolf, Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator*

In January 2023, a new Abuse Prevention Task Force was assembled in order to revise and update current diocesan policies and protocols, as well as to review online modules available through Praesidium Academy. Through this audit of our current practices, the Task Force hopes to better support all Learners, lay and ordained, with the aim to continue in our work to try to create a safer church for all God's children within church settings and settings beyond the walls of our worship spaces. These efforts are reflected in the continued trainings being offered under the auspices of the Safe Church Office of the Episcopal Church, led by Safe Church Manager, Bronwyn Clark Skov, who is a member of the Presiding Bishop's staff.

Also, at the beginning of the year, the Safe Church Office began offering monthly "Train the Trainer" trainings for TWO (2) trainers per diocese, with the ultimate goal being that every diocese within the Episcopal Church has access to *Safe Church, Safe Communities* courses. Erin Wolf and Mthr. Portia Corbin, representing both the Abuse Prevention Task Force and the Diocese of

Fond du Lac, have completed their training and are now able to offer in-person training (*currently available on an “as needed” basis*).

The current Abuse Prevention Task Force for the Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac includes Vickie Richmond Hawkins (St. John’s, Wausau), Dcn. Paul Aparicio (Grace, Sheboygan), Mthr. Portia Corbin (St. John’s, New London), Matthew Payne (All Saints, Appleton/diocesan staff), and Erin Wolf (St. Anne’s, De Pere/diocesan staff). Members were selected based on their previous experience with Abuse Prevention work both within and beyond the Episcopal Church, including Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts of America, classroom and traditional educational settings, and completing similar trainings within other Christian denominations (e.g., Roman Catholic, ELCA).

Looking at Fall 2023, the FDL Abuse Prevention Task Force will continue to encourage members of the diocese to complete online modules through Praesidium Academy (or in-person as needed) while also working to revise and update the diocesan Policy and Procedural Manual. It is our hope that once completed, this manual will be consistent and compliant with the Model Policies laid out by the Episcopal Church and General Convention. We will also be taking this work to the DIOFDL Clergy Continuing Education conference to engage with parochial clergy and other clergy members present.

Enrollment is through [diofdl.org/prevention](https://diofdl.org/prevention), and the webpage also includes multiple resources for background checks and other abuse prevention resources. You may also stay updated with changes regarding *Safe Church, Safe Communities* and [episcopalchurch.org/safe-church](https://episcopalchurch.org/safe-church). If you have further questions or require additional assistance, you may contact the diocesan office at (920) 830-8866 or email Erin Wolf at [ewolf@diofdl.org](mailto:ewolf@diofdl.org).

## **SISTERHOOD OF THE HOLY NATIVITY (SHN)**

*Submitted by the Ven Michele Whitford, President*

The Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity is a women’s religious order of the Episcopal Church with special dedication is to the Incarnation of Jesus. The Sisters traditionally live in community and observe daily monastic offices as well as regular celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

A board of directors has been established to help the sisters reflect on the future of the order as their members continue to age and face health issues. This is done in consultation with Bishop Gunter who is their Episcopal Visitor. The SHN Board of Directors are: the Ven. Michele Whitford, President; Sister Hertha Longo, CSA, Vice President; The Rev. Canon Ezgi Saribay Perkins, Treasurer; Mrs. Stephanie Rogers, Secretary; Sister Charis, SHN; Sister Abigail, SHN; The Rev. Hilary Crupi, OJN.

A history of the Sisterhood of the Holy Nativity is being written by Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook. The book is in final editing and a publisher has been found to print and distribute the book.

Matthew P. Payne, diocesan archivist, serves as a consultant for SHN in taking care of its archives. The archives have been transferred to The DeKoven Center in Racine, which will be their permanent home.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE**

*Submitted by the Rev. Julie Hendrix, President*

The duties of the Standing Committee consist of being Council of Advice to the Bishop, dealing with requests from other dioceses for consents in Episcopal elections, and various other matters dealing with property encumbrances and sales in conjunction with the Trustees and Executive Council. To date, the Standing Committee has voted on the election of five bishops-elect in the Episcopal Church.

Members: The Rev. Julia Hendrix, St. Mark's, Waupaca; Anne Peterson, St. Thomas, Menasha; the Rev. Dr. Christopher Corbin, Trinity, Oshkosh; the Rev. Dr. John Throop, retired; Sarah Gilbert, All Saints, Appleton; the Rev. William Bulson, Grace, Sheboygan; Martina Mims, St. Thomas, Menasha.

## **TRANSITION MINISTRY OFFICER**

*Submitted by the Rev. Meredyth Albright, Transition Ministry Officer*

The Transition Ministry Officer is responsible for guiding and assisting congregations in the transition process that leads to the calling of the next priest. This process may include assisting the congregation in assessing itself and determining the type of priest it needs for the future, as well as in the details of the actual search process to call a next rector.

The past few months have been busy welcoming three new clergy to the Diocese of Fond du Lac. Mother Brit Bjurstrom Frazier was called to St. Luke's, Sister Bay and began her duties in early April. Father Sam Cripps began his call to St. John the Baptist in early June and Mother Deborah Woolsey started serving St. Matthias, Minocqua, July 1.

At the writing of this report, the position for St Thomas, Menasha is about to be posted; and the position for St. James Manitowoc won't be far behind. St. Thomas is a full-time call, while St. James is a part-time call.

## **UNITED THANK OFFERING (UTO)**

*Submitted by: Cheryl Dobrzynski, Diocesan UTO Coordinator*

United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of the Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, men, women and children nurture the habit of giving daily in thanks to God. These prayers of thanksgiving start when we recognize and name our many daily blessings.

Those who participate discover thankfulness leads to generosity. UTO is entrusted to promote thank offerings, to receive the offerings, and to distribute them to support mission and ministry throughout the Episcopal Church and in Provinces of the Anglican Communion in the developing world.

Congregations of the Diocese of Fond du Lac are invited to hold a Spring and Fall Ingathering for the United Thank Offering. Spring Ingathering may be the Sunday following Ascension Day, and Fall Ingathering may be the Sunday closest to All Saints Day, however if it would be more beneficial to your congregation to hold an Ingathering at another time, such as Lent for example, that is fine. Just make sure your Ingathering collection gets sent to the Diocesan office no later than December 1, 2023. Ingathering receipts are sent to the Diocesan Office which records the amount received from each congregation and forwards it to the UTO national office.

UTO held a webinar at the end of August that covered a lot of information for coordinators. The sessions were recorded and will be available on the UTO website sometime in mid-September. They were presented by leaders of three main committees of UTO: Formation and Marketing/Outreach; Finances and Archives; and Grants. The section on grants will be very helpful if you are thinking of applying for a grant.

We also screened the movie “Gratitude Revealed” by Louie Schwartzberg. It was very well done and is available for churches to screen for their congregations. You may access all you need to know about the movie and hosting a screening by visiting [gratituderevealed.com](http://gratituderevealed.com). I highly recommend viewing this movie.

Want to know more about how you can incorporate UTO into your congregational life? Contact the Diocesan UTO Coordinator, Cheryl Dobrzynski at [cheryldob@gmail.com](mailto:cheryldob@gmail.com) for ideas and how to obtain materials, or to schedule a visit. Cheryl loves meeting the people of the Diocese as well as sharing what UTO is all about. Discover more about the United Thank Offering by going to their webpage at [unitedthankoffering.org](http://unitedthankoffering.org).

## **WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)**

The Diocese of Fond du Lac is a regular member of the Wisconsin Council of Churches. The Council meets annually in December. The judicatory leaders

of the various denominations meet in retreat following the Council meeting. The Board of the WCC oversees the work of several program commissions. The WCC advocates for common issues in several ways and sponsors a variety of events. [wichurches.org](http://wichurches.org)

## **YOUTH MINISTRY**

*Submitted by Erin Wolf, Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinator*

In January 2023, Erin Wolf began as the new Diocesan Youth Networking Coordinator between the Episcopal Dioceses of Fond du Lac and Milwaukee, respectively.

Areas of focus:

- Regular visitations to congregations in DIOFDL/DIOMIL
- Episcopal Youth Event 2023 (EYE23)
- Networking in Episcopal & ecumenical circles (e.g., camp, diocesan youth ministry, Abuse Prevention, Province V, etc.)
- EpiscoWisco Camp, the camping ministry of the three Episcopal dioceses in Wisconsin

EYE23 was held at the University of Maryland – College Park and was the first event held since 2017. The “EpiscoWisco” delegation included student Jordan Karstetter (grade 10, St. Anne, De Pere) and chaperones Mthr. Portia Corbin (St. John, New London) and Amma Diane Murray (retired, DIOFDL).

From Jordan: *“EYE23 was an incredible opportunity to discover that there were other students my age in the Episcopal Church around the world with the same questions I have about faith while also sharing our different approaches to learning and discovering answers. I felt very welcome and felt a sense of belonging in a way I’d like other students from Wisconsin to experience with me at the Episcopal Youth Event in 2026. It felt awesome to be a part of an event in the church of this scale that was created by Episcopal youth FOR Episcopal youth. I had a great time, and I’m still in touch with a lot of the students I met this summer!”*

EpiscoWisco Camp 2023 included campers and staff from all three Episcopal dioceses in Wisconsin! Changes this year included a new Counselor-in-Training (CITs) program for high school-aged youth, adding a third week to allow more flexibility in programming and facility usage, and introducing a new, camp-specific *Gender Inclusion Policy* as part of our continued commitment to the inclusion and safety of all campers and staff at EpiscoWisco Camp.

Sessions were held at Waypost Camp in Hatley, WI, part of Crossways Camping Ministries (ELCA). Camper registrations were up by 30% this year from 2022, and even with typical last minute cancellations due to illness and

other extenuating circumstances, camper attendance was also up from 2022, which saw a good blend of new and returning campers. We are encouraged by the steady growth we have seen since the return to in-person camp programs in 2021. Planning for the 2024 season is underway.



# FINANCIAL REPORTS

For the year ending December 31st, 2022. Independent Auditors Report of Erickson and Associates on file.

<b>Budget Summary</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>	
Pledges from Congregations	428,500
Investment Income	83,306
Other Income	100,822
<b>TOTAL</b>	612,628
<b>EXPENSE</b>	
Vital Congregations	11,849
Prayer and Worship	12,134
Missionary Church	123,683
Canonical and Governance*	460,438
<b>TOTAL</b>	608,104
Operating Surplus	4,524
*Grouped for accounting purposes. For program purposes may be divided between other categories.	

<b>Funds Summary</b>	Cash/ Receivable	Invested
Operating Funds	52,457	2,118,368
<b>Non-Operating &amp; Designated Funds</b>		
Altar Guild	701	
Archives	1,544	
Bishop's Discretionary Fund	6,811	76,347
Bishop's Cong Support Discr Fund	17,364	
Companion Diocese	7,550	
Congregational Vitality	33,383	
Convention	2,239	
Deacons School	1,903	
Diocesan Initiatives	22,613	
Episcopal Fund for Human Needs	7,893	
Education for Ministry	1,205	
Faithful Innovation	5,699	
Green Bay Property Holding	-10,469	93,339
Tomahawk Property Holding	12,953	
United Thank Offering	8,826	
WCC Community Investment	0	2,056
Youth Work	9,633	84,277
<b>Reserve Funds</b>		
Fond du Lac Property	-983	
General Convention	2,805	
History Publication	3,530	
Lambeth	1,366	
Outreach	4,408	
Sabbatical	11,188	
Succession	78,225	
<b>Restricted Funds</b>		
Amann Continuing Education	7,059	59,161
Butler Seminarian Support	0	14,017
Cemetery Care	-500	17,009
Diocesan Organ	199	14,767
Eucharistic Festival	463	22,137
Fey Seminarian Support	0	160,905
Stevens Mission	3,181	61,040
Zimmer Seminarian Support	300	12,824
<b>Loan Funds</b>		
Capital Discretionary	6,257	110,101
Roddis Revolving Loan	25,738	101,217
<b>Loans Receivable</b>		
Capital Discretionary	38,974	
Roddis Revolving Loan	52,250	
Tomahawk Land Contract	82,226	8,837
<b>TOTAL</b>	498,991	2,954,354

## **COMMON TRUST FUND**

The Diocesan Common Trust Fund (DCT) is a diversified investment portfolio managed by Graystone Consulting of Morgan Stanley. It is designed to provide income and maintain purchasing power of principal. The DCT allows congregations to invest any amount for their benefit. The end of 2022 market value was \$8,545,895 (\$5,591,541 in congregational investments and \$2,954,354 in diocesan investments). 26 congregations or entities hold investments in the DCT.

The Trustees oversee and provide guidance to Graystone Consulting who provide investment expertise. Target allocations are provided for equity, fixed income and alternative assets with actual weighting at the discretion of the Advisor based on the outlook for investment returns. The conservative portfolio attempts to provide the best return with the least risk. As summarized by one Trustee, “We try to have our lows not be as low as others, which also means our highs may not be as high as others.” This approach has consistently allowed for a regular distribution of 1% of the market value of each fund each quarter while maintaining the purchasing power of the asset vs. inflation. The 2021 performance net of fees was -15.62%. The performance (net of fees) since 2009 is 4.47%.

A fixed distribution of up to 5% of the market value is allowed with participants determining their level of distribution each year.

Participation is open to all congregations and organizations affiliated with the Diocese of Fond du Lac. Individuals may not invest but may contribute to congregational or organizational participants. Contact the Diocesan Office for more details.

The allocation of investments as of the end of August 2023 is 56.99% equity, 31.73% fixed income and 11.28% alternative assets and cash. Included in the allocation is an 8.9% investment in Socially Responsible Investment / Environment, Social, Governance (SRI/ESG) funds. The Trustees approved direct investing in this area in 2019.

## Participant Investments in the Diocesan Common Trust 12/31/2022

Ending Market Value with Accruals	
Algoma, St. Agnes (7 Accounts)	227,372.06
Amherst, St. Olaf's (2 Accounts)	16,422.20
Antigo, St. Ambrose (3 Accounts)	16,533.31
Appleton, All Saints (12 Accounts)	1,190,922.61
De Pere, St. Anne's (1 Account)	93,433.92
Eagle River, St. Francis (1 Account)	43,568.69
Fond du Lac, St. Paul's Cathedral (2 Accounts)	605,449.70
Gardner, Precious Blood (2 Accounts)	3,940.28
Manitowoc, St. James (1 Account)	243,534.68
Minocqua, St. Matthias (6 Accounts)	447,147.73
New London, St. John (1 Account)	7,167.45
Oneida, Holy Apostles (3 Accounts)	549,865.54
Rhineland, St. Augustine (6 Accounts)	54,330.95
Ripon, St. Peter (4 Accounts)	146,038.99
Shawano, St. John (2 Accounts)	38,572.83
Sheboygan Falls, St. Peter (5 Accounts)	569,968.01
Sister Bay, St. Luke's (1 account)	657,104.31
Sisterhood Of Holy Nativity (1 Account)	86,884.10
Stevens Point, Intercession (3 Accounts)	455,891.41
Sturgeon Bay & Jacksonport, Christ The King Holy Nativity (2 Accounts)	26,993.86
Suamico, St. Paul (6 Accounts)	11,961.16
Waupun, Holy Trinity (5 Accounts)	122,857.46
Wisconsin Rapids, St. John (1 Accounts)	11,223.03

### PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA

Each year, Episcopal congregations complete a Parochial Report. 2022 figures continue to reflect the impact of the pandemic, though some recovery of the numbers has been seen. Parochial Report information is used to calculate the Asking for the pledge to the diocese, to provide an external control for accountability for treasurers and to determine the number of lay delegates to the Convention.

## 2022 Diocese of Fond du Lac Vital Statistics

City	Active Members	Communicants In Good Standing	Others in Congregation	Average Sunday Attendance	Sunday Eucharists	Marriages	Burials	Baptisms	Confirmed or Received
Algoma	17	17	0	10	53	0	1	0	0
Amherst	26	18	0	11	38	0	0	0	0
Antigo	10	10	0	8	262	0	1	0	0
Appleton	205	130	0	49	1	0	1	1	1
De Pere	278	145	0	78	51	0	6	1	5
Eagle River	9	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	0
Fish Creek	0	0	0	59	25	0	3	0	0
Fond du Lac	177	116	0	45	54	0	3	1	0
Gardner	8	8	0	6	51	0	0	0	0
Manitowoc	72	68	0	48	0	0	2	0	0
Marinette	85	68	0	29	51	0	1	0	0
Menasha	808	715	0	79	99	5	8	3	6
Merrill	63	60	0	21	42	2	2	4	8
Minocqua	162	142	0	41	52	0	3	0	0
Mosinee	16	13	0	11	40	0	0	0	0
New London	65	58	0	27	47	1	0	1	2
Oneida	262	90	0	59	51	1	23	5	0
Oshkosh	119	86	0	53	0	1	1	4	5
Plymouth	114	99	0	40	0	0	5	4	0
Rhineland	78	74	0	33	51	1	3	1	0
Ripon	74	37	0	27	63	2	3	0	9
Shawano	19	19	0	11	27	0	1	0	0
Sheboygan	139	133	0	98	108	0	2	1	2
Sheboygan Falls	104	52	0	24	53	0	1	2	0
Sister Bay	108	108	0	41	60	0	0	0	0
Stevens Point	131	101	0	61	77	0	4	2	1
Sturgeon Bay	51	51	0	35	45	0	0	0	5
Suamico	30	21	0	18	6	0	0	1	0
Waupaca	93	93	0	49	53	1	5	1	1
Waupun	30	30	0	14	52	0	2	0	0
Wausau	76	76	0	30	52	1	5	1	0
Wisconsin Rapids	74	72	0	38	49	0	1	0	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,503</b>	<b>2,719</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,162</b>	<b>1,613</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>48</b>

## 2023 Diocese of Fond du Lac Financial Information

City	Plate & Pledge	Operating Revenue	Total Revenue	Operating Expense	Total Expense	Cash	Investments
Algoma	52,779	62,491	62,491	52,947	69,500	19,527	188,353
Amherst	35,121	35,121	42,880	19,795	30,419	162,078	50,760
Antigo	16,441	20,991	28,991	25,324	21,219	87,894	14,774
Appleton	274,614	316,036	355,787	304,211	334,346	51,586	1,043,350
De Pere	243,921	271,137	356,338	263,146	373,777	112,017	707,695
Eagle River	29,843	30,013	32,014	24,152	27,875	43,103	38,932
Fish Creek	59,504	76,519	131,577	56,937	105,713	185,906	851,123
Fond du Lac	118,830	210,599	299,054	158,014	290,754	55,015	1,365,651
Gardner	3,787	7,397	7,397	9,160	10,940	30,945	-
Manitowoc	108,473	117,177	122,947	186,506	123,977	69,787	208,125
Marinette	97,965	97,988	97,988	111,225	105,195	106,037	-
Menasha	468,581	583,851	931,033	556,668	849,803	510,728	2,697,709
Merrill	34,655	34,655	41,715	23,847	55,422	41,346	-
Minocqua	199,878	200,728	544,518	156,736	614,209	349,480	399,763
Mosinee	23,295	23,295	23,295	24,927	25,192	25,767	-
New London	54,490	54,490	104,984	54,587	128,356	54,569	6,404
Oneida	75,394	131,319	142,276	113,675	142,292	35,399	475,824
Oshkosh	196,075	289,233	308,902	286,376	351,342	11,353	1,936,221
Plymouth	126,576	135,265	150,983	99,512	132,285	135,353	-
Rhineland	50,111	195,229	197,851	190,873	210,584	17,362	1,391,949
Ripon/Wautoma	34,918	146,480	1,402,881	162,602	190,020	76,395	1,965,964
Shawano	19,990	21,966	21,966	20,356	22,662	12,460	103,825
Sheboygan/Elkhart Lake	306,734	348,469	480,340	366,664	452,923	198,926	-
Sheboygan Falls	94,641	132,080	144,808	153,426	164,451	34,142	479,272
Sister Bay	150,411	187,459	191,351	126,169	137,321	147,250	971,832
Stevens Point	96,164	120,923	214,598	152,712	120,050	32,477	481,542
Sturgeon Bay/Jacksonport	110,597	111,015	111,015	110,913	142,582	145,725	24,121
Suamico	35,806	53,274	57,218	122,769	49,477	48,818	10,688
Waupaca	168,366	168,366	200,576	103,723	219,603	80,033	-
Waupun	17,611	77,733	91,401	70,623	88,752	43,985	120,104
Wausau	138,018	139,587	152,343	162,354	114,166	176,971	1,437,693
Wisconsin Rapids	77,043	84,043	128,595	77,389	113,010	88,442	422,199
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,520,632</b>	<b>4,484,929</b>	<b>7,180,113</b>	<b>52,947</b>	<b>5,818,217</b>	<b>3,190,876</b>	<b>17,393,873</b>