

## REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY: 2019

Since the Diocesan Convention of October 2018, the Commission on Ministry (or “COM”) has undertaken a year of happy endings and new beginnings. We said thank you and farewell to the outgoing COM chair, The Reverend Nancy Baillie Strong, who ended her impressive eight-year tenure when she retired from active ministry. We are grateful for her leadership and the life-giving ways she supported those pursuing ordained ministry. Her legacy lives and breathes in our churches.

An important component of the Commission’s work is to help all God’s people discern their call to ministry, whether as deacons, priests, or lay people. We facilitate that exploration through “Loving the Questions” (or “LTQ”), a learning community process under the leadership of the Reverend Jenny Gregg. In this the fifth year for this ongoing program, a new group is now meeting, with four participants.

In 2019 three Postulants for the Diaconate continued their formation process through the Province 1 School for Deacons; Two of those, Mr. Jason Burns and Ms. Dianne Wilson, have completed their training and are expected to be ordained to the vocational diaconate before the end of the year, while Ms. Rachael Essing continues her study. We are grateful to The Reverend Deacon S. Jane Griesbach, Coordinator for Deacons Formation Commission on Ministry, who provides able leadership and support for our postulants and candidates to the diaconate.

On December 15, 2018 The Rev. Ann Scannell was ordained to the transitional diaconate, followed by ordination to the priesthood on June 19, 2019. She currently serves as priest-in-charge at The Church of the Good Shepherd in Clinton. There are two others engaged in formation for Ordination to the Priesthood: the Reverend Deacon Eric Elley, who has explored an emerging new direction in ministry over the last several years; and Mr. Kevin Antonio Smallwood, who was in the first group of Lawrence House interns a few years ago, as well as participating in LTQ in its pilot program four years ago.

Many others are exploring the possibility of ordination within our diocese; it is a fertile time! Watch for announcements soon of new postulants. This is a vital part of the work of the COM, but we are mindful that our church canons call for us to assist the Bishop in the “determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of *all baptized persons*.” (emphasis added) To that end, this fall the Commission has begun exploring how we might better support lay ministries. Your prayers for this work, as well as your ideas and enthusiasm, are appreciated.

This fall the Bishop appointed five new members to the Commission: Ms. Amanda Fillio, The Rev. Megan McDermott, The Rev. José Reyes, The Rev. Ann Scannell, and The Rev. Meredyth Ward. They join continuing Commission members Mr. Milton Barnes, The Rev. Deacon Jane Griesbach, Ms. Nancy Lowry, Ms. Christina Loy, Ms. Tina Page, The Rev. Molly Scherm, The Rev. Dr. Richard Simpson, and The Rev. Tanya Wallace. Many thanks to Mr. Ed Farrell, Mr. Jeff Pringle and The Rev. Tom Synan, who have completed their tenure with the COM.

For we who serve on the Commission on Ministry, it is a privilege to labor on behalf of God’s Mission and the people of this Diocese toward the future of the church. Please pray for all those who offer their lives to God in service, and also for those (including the COM) who support their call.

- The Rev. Samuel J. Smith, Chair, Commission on Ministry

## COMMISSION ON MINISTRY MEMBERS

The Rev. Samuel J. Smith, *Chair*

The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher, *IX Bishop of Western Massachusetts*

Mr. Milton Barnes

Ms. Amanda Fillio

The Rev. Deacon S. Jane Griesbach, *(ex officio) Deacon Formation Director*

Ms. Nancy Lowry

Ms. Christina Loy, *Liaison from Standing Committee*

The Rev. Megan McDermott  
Ms. Tina Page  
The Rev. José Reyes  
The Rev. Ann Scannell  
The Rev. Molly C. Scherm, (*ex officio*) *Board of Examining Chaplains*  
The Rev. Dr. Richard M. Simpson (*ex officio*) *Canon to the Ordinary*  
The Rev. Tanya Wallace, *Liaison from Standing Committee*  
The Rev. Meredyth Ward