

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY: 2022

The Canons of the Episcopal Church call for each diocese to have Commission on Ministry to advise and assist the Bishop in making provision for the “affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons.” [Canon III.1.1] I am pleased to report that the Commission on Ministry (or “COM”) continues strong in its work of shepherding and equipping all those who feel a call to ministry in the church, whether in lay or ordained capacities.

This past year saw continued strength in one of the most important parts of the Commission’s work: being of assistance to those who are pursuing a call to lay ministry, rather than ordination. We facilitate discernment for all orders of ministry through “Loving the Questions” (or “LTQ”), a learning community process under the leadership of diocesan staff member the Reverend Jenny Gregg and diocesan evangelist Craig Hammond. As a diocese we should be proud of this robust program that continues to raise up leaders for the church and garner notice from throughout the wider church. For more information about this innovative program, please see their website: <https://www.lovingthequestions.org/>.

While there have been no ordinations in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts since our last convention, we have a record number of postulants and candidates in process. There are nine persons currently engaged in formation for Ordination to the Priesthood: The Reverend Deacon Eric Elley, Jaqueline Galvinhill, Misty Kiwak-Jacobs, Kathy Kopitsky, Silas Kotnour, Christina Leung, , Meghan Mantler, Linda (Elle) Morgan, and Jimmy Pickett. Two persons continue in the formation process through the Province 1 School for Deacons: Sharon Billetter and Margot Sanger. We are grateful to The Reverend Deacon S. Jane Griesbach, Archdeacon, who provides able leadership and support for our postulants and candidates to the diaconate.

Several others are exploring the possibility of ordination within our diocese: on October 22 the Commission on Ministry interviewed three persons pursuing the vocational diaconate, and one pursuing priesthood. God continues to work among us!

I am grateful all who serve on the Commission on Ministry. In addition to interviewing applicants for postulancy in order to make recommendations to the Bishop, Commission members are also shepherds to those in the process of formation and provide advice and guidance for our work equipping all the baptized for ministry. This year we were saddened at the death of long-time Commission member Milt Barnes, as well as the resignation of Christina Loy.

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*

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

The Rev. Megan McDermott

Ms. Tina Page

The Rev. Pat Perkins, *Liaison from Standing Committee*

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

Ms. Amanda Watroba