



THE STANDING COMMITTEE
Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee

Presentation at Diocesan Convention on October 19, 2019

We on the Standing Committee are grateful to be of service to the diocese at this time in our common life. I'd like to thank our bishop for time to offer a brief report

Your Standing Committee members are Dr. Jamie Cairo, Ms. Celia Fine, the Rev. Andy Jones, the Rev. Gary Manning, Ms. Tammy Prather, Dr. Sheryl Slocum, the Rev. Elizabeth Tester and me, the Rev. Scott Leannah. We have worked long and hard this year, and we have acted uniformly and, for the most part, unanimously. Today we will say thank you to two members whose terms are ending: Dr. Jamie Cairo and the Rev. Elizabeth Tester.

On Tuesday, August 13, Bishop Miller and Bishop Todd Ousley, Bishop of the Office for Pastoral Development, met with the Standing Committee. Bishop Miller communicated to us his decision to retire at the end of 2020. Bishop Ousley, the Church's lead person in facilitating such transitions, painted for us in broad strokes the process that that is just now beginning.

In the following weeks, we engaged with the bishop about his timeline for ending his ministry among us and other details related to his retirement. We continue to be in conversation with him about this.

Please look in your packets today and you will find a brief bio and photo of the Rev. Ann Hallisey. When Bishop Ousley was talking with us about hiring a consultant, he expressed hope that the Rev. Hallisey would be open and available to working with us. He expressed admiration for her work in guiding other dioceses through episcopal search processes, and he also expressed the view that many of her other areas of expertise would be especially helpful to us as we embark on this journey. We did our due diligence, interviewed other candidates, and we unanimously chose Mother Hallisey. She readily accepted. We could not be more pleased. To date, I've had two telephonic meetings with her, and we are looking forward to further work with her. She will lead both a Search Committee retreat and our annual Clergy Retreat in January. She is providing us with many tools, insights and suggestions already.

Here is the basic process for an episcopal search as laid out by both Bishop Ousley and Mother Hallisey:

- First, we find and engage a diocesan consultant. This has been accomplished.

- Next we begin to work on the creation of a Search Committee. This group will engage in a variety of tasks that will help us prepare to call a new bishop. We are envisioning a process that will involve deep listening and appreciative inquiry at every parish, take a thoughtful look at the history and systemic issues within our diocese, and we also plan to conduct a diocese-wide survey. Along with this, there will be work on creating a diocesan profile and a host of other tasks related to making known our desire to call a new bishop after Bishop Miller's retirement. This group will ideally have 14 to 15 members, chosen and appointed by the Standing Committee. Aided by our diocesan consultant, we will work to ensure that all the pieces are moving as they should.
- As we get a bit further along in the process, we will create a Transition Committee. This group will be appointed by the Standing Committee and consist of around 12 individuals. This group will work with the details of visits of candidates, walkabouts and meetings (and venues) in the diocese, hospitality, and the other details related to the search. This group will also help with the many logistics that can be a part of this process, including the venue and liturgy of consecration.

You may be wondering about our timeline. The answer is we don't know. We want this to take as long it takes to have a healthy, open process marked by discernment, integrity and clarity. I can say with a good deal of confidence that we'll have a new bishop in the year 2021. Our promise to you is that we will do all we can to ensure that all goes well and is done in accordance with the canons and constitutions of the church, our diocesan canons, and with clear communication and openness.

How much will this cost our diocese? We have been told by Bishop Ousley that for a diocese of our size it is reasonable to expect to spend about \$200,000 for everything, from start to finish. As the bishop indicated earlier in his pastoral address, we have \$75,000 in our diocesan budget earmarked for this expenditure. The plan is to take the remaining funds that we need from diocesan savings for this process. Our sincere hope is that future diocesan budgets will begin to include funds for the consecration of the 13th bishop so that the next time we do this we'll have the funds available for an election process readily available.

Finally, let me thank you for the trust you place in us and our work at this important time in the life of our diocese. Please know that we take this sacred duty very seriously and conscientiously. We will engage in a process that is thoughtful, careful, transparent and founded on our conviction that the Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee is a vibrant and hopeful witness to the presence of Christ in this corner of God's vineyard. Is there a lot to do? Absolutely. Are there some serious situations that require attention? Yes, there are. At the same time, we are in an exciting time in the life our diocese. Creative approaches to worship, service, outreach and formation are taking place all across this diocese. Our goal as we move forward with our important work is that we will communicate both the urgency and hope that define our common life here and now. Thank you and please keep us in your prayers. Know that we pray for you every time we gather.

The Rev. Scott Leannah
Standing Committee President