



The Official Publication of The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi

THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN



VOLUME 148, ISSUE NO. 10 OCTOBER, 2023

Bishop search update

An update from the Diocese of Mississippi Bishop Search Committee

The Bishop Search Committee is taking the final steps to its goal of presenting a slate of three to five candidates to stand for election to become the 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Mississippi. The committee will host a discernment retreat in October where they, along with the chancellor and vice-chancellor of the diocese, will gather to get to know each other better and to discuss the future of the diocese. Semi-finalists were chosen after both written and oral interviews and extensive research by search committee members about each nominee. The committee is excited about the diversity and multiple gifts of the group of nominees and look forward to the final steps in mutual discernment at the retreat. Following the retreat, the search committee will do the important work of prayerfully deciding who will be presented to the standing committee. The standing committee will announce the slate during the first week of November.

On a related matter, the standing com-

mittee passed a resolution on September 22 to establish a petition process. The resolution, provided in full on page 6 of this issue of *The Mississippi Episcopalian*, outlines the petition process in detail. While the search committee process is the way most candidates are brought forward for election, the petition process allows for clergy and lay people to raise up others who may feel called to become a candidate and did not go through the search process. Candidates brought forward through the petition process will be required to submit the same information and agree to an extensive background check like the other candidates.

As the search committee's work comes to an end, the transition committee has already begun to work on its long list of tasks leading to the ordination of the new bishop in July 2024. The transition committee, appointed by the standing committee, is charged with presenting the candidates to the diocese, coordinating meet and greets throughout the diocese, organizing the election, and overseeing the ordination weekend. They will arrange for the bishop-elect's smooth transition into the diocese and honor Bishop Seage and his family.

Transition committee members

Congratulations and thanks go to the people who serve on the transition committee: Katy Pacelli, Chair (St. Peter's by-the-Lake/Brandon), Jill Bullard (St. Philip's/Jackson), The Rev. Canon Chip Davis (Gray Center/Canton), Grace Duckworth (St. Philip's/Jackson), Eric Eaton (Chapel of the Cross/Madison), Jan F. Gadow (St.

Andrew's/Jackson), Julie Goforth (St. Philip's/Jackson), Stephania Jackson (St. James'/Jackson), Barbara Jones

(St. Timothy's/Southaven), Dr. Susan Lee (St. Stephen's/Indianola), Geoffrey Lewis (St. James'/Greenville), The Rev. Austin McGehee (St. Paul's/Meridian), Dan Smith (Holy Innocents/Como), The Rev. Marie Smith (Incarnation/West Point), Lakeisha Thompson (St. Christopher's/Jackson), and The Rev. Deacon Josie Williams (St. Mark's/Raymond).

There are many parts to the transition committee's work, and they will need volunteers from the entire diocese to work with them. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the chair of the committee, Katy Pacelli (katypacelli@gmail.com).

Exciting months lie ahead for the Diocese of Mississippi, and there are several important dates to put on your


2024 calendar. Meet and greets with the candidates will be held around the state the week of January 15 – 20. Exact locations and times will be announced in the coming weeks. The election of our new bishop will be held during the annual council slated for February 2 – 4 at St. Andrew's Upper School in Ridgeland. Finally, ordination/consecration of the 11th Bishop of Mississippi will be July 20, 2024. Please stay tuned to *The Mississippi Episcopalian* and our social media for further announcements of important dates in the process.

As we forge ahead with prayer and cooperating with the Holy Spirit, please continue to pray for those serving on our various committees, the candidates being considered for nomination, diocesan leadership and staff, and your brothers and sisters across the Diocese of Mississippi.

Gracious and loving God, you are our guide and Good Shepherd, in you we place our hope and trust. Hear the prayers of your faithful people. Lead us to one mind and one heart in you, and show us that shepherd who, with compassion and grace, will feed and tend your flock and give glory and honor to your name. Grant this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.




BISHOP SEARCH
Diocese of MS *update*



(BCP 818)

A Prayer FOR THE ELECTION OF A Bishop



Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for this Diocese, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ORDINARY CONCERNS

Sept. 1 – Rabbit, rabbit, I can't believe it's already the first of a new month! After an early workout, I met with Andy Andrews for our weekly breakfast meeting. Later in the morning, I met with Peggy Jones and then a lay leader from one of our congregations. Over lunch and into the afternoon, I met with the Rev. Dr. George Rambow for annual consultation.

Sept. 2 – I watched lots of football throughout the day! In the afternoon, I prepared for the next day's visit at Holy Trinity/Vicksburg.

Sept. 3 – I made the trip to Vicksburg for a meeting with the vestry at Holy Trinity. After the meeting, we worshiped and enjoyed fellowship. I enjoyed working with Fr. Rick Roessler and Dcn. Tami Roessler! In the evening, I met up with Katie for supper.

Sept. 4 – After a morning workout, I enjoyed a calm and quiet Labor Day!

Sept. 5 – The day started with the normal Tuesday morning staff meetings. In the afternoon, I had several phone calls with leadership at one of our churches.

Sept. 6 – I rose early and attended the early workout with GRIT swimmers. After arriving in the office, I met with our CFO, David Martin. The rest of the day was really busy with back-to-back meetings until 2 p.m. In the afternoon, I met with Andy Andrews and Bishop Ronnie Crudup at New Horizon's Church. In the evening, I met with a vestry.

Sept. 7 – Morning meetings included staff check-in with Whitney Robinson. Later in the morning, I kept an appointment with my eye doctor. Before finishing work for the day, I met with Bp. Woodliff-Stanley, Bp. Gray, Shannon Gathings, and Roy Decker about the Tougaloo Equity Justice Center.

Sept. 8 – This was a busy day that started with a workout and finished with lots of meetings!

Sept. 9 – I spent most of the day cleaning and doing laundry while watching football.

Sept. 10 – I rose early and drove to Redeemer/Biloxi, for a meeting and worship. I'm grateful for the ministry and witness of this congregation. Kyle arrived for a short visit.

Sept. 11 – Kyle and I drove to Birmingham to celebrate Betsy's 21st birthday. We had an outstanding time at the party hosted by my mother- and father-in-law. Katie and all of the Dice family were in attendance. It's hard to believe Betsy will be 21 tomorrow!

Sept. 12 – We had a nice lunch with Betsy before spending a quiet afternoon and evening at Kyle's parents' house. I spent some time in the afternoon making phone calls for work.

Sept. 13 – While driving home from Birmingham, I made several phone calls to parish and clergy leaders. Upon arrival in Jackson, I met with David Martin. We spent most of our time discussing the next day's finance committee meeting. The rest of the afternoon was spent on back-to-back meetings.



Sept. 14 – I started the day early with a breakfast meeting with Bp. Kopacz of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Jackson and Bp. Sharma Lewis of the UMC Mississippi Conference. After breakfast, I spent the morning preparing for the finance committee and then in the actual meeting. I left that meeting and immediately drove to Olive Branch for visitation at the Church of the Holy Cross. After meeting with the mission committee, we worshiped, confirmed one, and enjoyed fellowship.

Sept. 15 – After an early workout, I made my way to the office for staff meetings. At midday, I drove to the lawyer to sign paperwork to close on our house sale. The rest of the day was filled up with phone calls.

Sept. 16 – I slept later than normal. After a walk with the dog, I jumped onto a Zoom call with Granville Tate and Phillip Carpenter regarding trustee business.

Sept. 17 – I left Jackson really early for the drive to Diamondhead for a visitation at St. Thomas. In the service, I baptized one, received one, and confirmed one from St. Thomas. I also confirmed three new members for St. Paul's/Picayune. In the afternoon, I caught a plane for the West Coast. I'll be visiting with Kyle while attending this week's virtual House of Bishops meetings.

Sept. 18 – I arrived in San Francisco very early in the morning. Kyle and I got out, in the morning, for a walk followed by lunch in Larkspur. In the afternoon, we relaxed at home while also making a couple needed phone calls for our respective ministries.

Sept. 19 – I spent some time in the morning making phone calls. The House of Bishops meeting started at 11 a.m. local time. After worship, we heard from Presiding Bishop Curry. After his words, we offered prayers for his surgery scheduled for the next day. The rest of our meeting time involved statistics from parochial reports and trends. The meeting concluded after about forty minutes of table time in our Zoom breakout rooms. After a Zoom meeting with members of the bishop transition committee, Kyle and I enjoyed supper at home.

Sept. 20 – I had several meetings with staff members during my morning. After connecting with the House of Bishops meeting, we received an immediate report on Presiding Bishop Curry. I was relieved to learn that he remained stable in the ICU following his surgery. Our meeting was focused entirely on Title IV (the disciplinary canon for the church) and several prominent cases currently in the news. Our time

concluded with table discussion about our presentations.

Sept. 21 – I ran a couple errands first thing in the morning and returned in plenty of time for House of Bishops meetings. The day was scheduled to be our normal "fireside chat" but gave way to a meeting of the whole, where we discussed a response to the disciplinary issues currently in the news. Before dismissing to table groups, a working group was assigned to begin drafting a statement to the church from the House of Bishops. We concluded with table discussions. Kyle and I dined out at a great Italian restaurant in Mill Valley. It was delicious!

Sept. 22 – My morning was quite busy and started around 7 a.m. with a conference call. The House convened at our normal time with worship. This was our scheduled business meeting with the vice president of the House of Bishops presiding in the presiding bishop's absence. After the normal business, we moved to discussion of the statement written by the drafting group. Amendments and edits were offered up to the house. In the course of our time, we also discussed this in table breakout groups. We agreed on a statement before moving on to a presentation from the College for Bishops and then a meditation and worship with Stephanie Spellers. The meeting was adjourned following worship and a report on the presiding bishop's continuing recovery.

Sept. 23 – It was a quiet morning at home while I packed and got ready for the bus to San Francisco airport. It was an easy trip the whole way. I watched most of the Alabama-Ole Miss game on the plane. I arrived in Gulfport around 11:45 p.m. and made my way to a hotel.

Sept. 24 – I rose a little bleary eyed due to the late-night arrival and time zone difference. After arriving at Christ Church/Bay Saint Louis, I led a discussion in an adult forum immediately followed by worship where I confirmed three and received one. After some fellowship, I drove home to Jackson.

Sept. 25 – I skipped morning workout to get ready for some special meetings. In the morning, I met with Chancellor Granville Tate followed by another meeting with leaders from Redeemer/Biloxi. In the afternoon, I met with the members of the trustees for a special meeting. In the evening, I received word that Redeemer/Biloxi was moving forward with a property sale. I was overjoyed to learn that they would offer 12% of their sale to the trustees of the diocese!

Sept. 26 – The day started with the normal Tuesday staff meetings. I spent the rest of the morning signing papers and returning email and phone calls. In the afternoon, I met, via Zoom, with one of my colleagues from a neighboring diocese.

Sept. 27 – After my early workout, I got busy with work. I spent time returning



THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

Continually Published for Over 140 Years in the Diocese of Mississippi

Official News Publication of the Bishop and the Diocese of Mississippi

118 N. Congress Street • P. O. Box 23107
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3107

The Rt. Rev. Brian R. Seage
Tenth Bishop of Mississippi

The Rev. Dr. John Switzer
Editor

Alareon Media Group, LLC
Graphic Design

The Mississippi Episcopalian (USPS 024755) is published monthly by the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, 118 N. Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Periodical postage paid at Jackson, MS, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to the *Mississippi Episcopalian*, P. O. Box 23107, Jackson, MS, 39225-3107. In giving changes of address, send the old address as well as the new address. We cannot be responsible for the return of manuscripts or photographs.

See **Truckin'** on Page 7

INTERESTING READS

The Connected Life: The Art and Science of Relational Spirituality

by Todd W. Hall

(Intervarsity Press 2022), 198 pages.

Like all Christians (especially us “paid Christians”) I lament the decades-long decline of church attendance. Todd Hall’s book *The Connected Life* explores a major loss in that change: the loss of close relationships found in communities like churches.

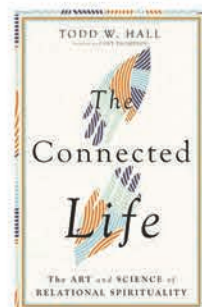
The Connected Life relies heavily on a classic in the area, Robert Putnam’s 2000 book *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Hall quotes Putnam’s observation—even more true 23 years later—that, “Thin, single-stranded surf-by interactions are gradually replacing dense, multi-stranded, well-exercised bonds. More of our social connectedness is one-shot, special-purpose, and self-oriented.”

With that groundwork in place, Todd Hall then explores the weakening of connectedness regarding the individual in the context of a Christian church community. A psychologist, he notes parallels between ways of relating to God and to other people. He writes that “the overall research findings

suggest that when we look at the relational dynamics of our spirituality, our implicit, relational knowledge, our patterns with God, parallel those with our human attachment figures.”

Hall’s book offers a powerful statement of his premise about human and divine relationship, but one which also applies to the goal of the Christian life: “Transformation in our relationship with God comes about directly through our relational experiences with God and others. *We are loved into loving.*”

The Connected Life effectively “names” ways that we adopt to feel better about our spiritual lives in light of declining interest in personal relationship. He says those approaches are, “[the] focus on trying harder (the willpower approach), knowing more (the intellectual approach), and feeling better



(the spiritual, emotional high approach).” He then goes on to give a better way to find what we long for. Hall writes, “The fourth approach to finding meaning is the relational approach that involves living a connected life, a life in

which our spirituality empowers us to face our pain, with the help of loving relationships, and to develop more authentic relationships with God and others.”

The Connected Life concludes with something we will all recognize, but which remains a good reminder: that telling our stories to one another brings meaning and healing. Todd Hall writes, “Through story, an idea or meaning becomes fused with our emotions and implicit knowledge, thus transforming it. How does story change us? It does so by conveying explicit knowledge in the implicit realm through the structure

embedded within it.” He adds, “Jesus’ parables are designed to help us ‘feel God’s truth,’ so we know and inhabit it in a deeper way than just intellectual.”

Hall even touches on the dangers of trying to force deep Christian community—through church—into a consumerist model. He says, “when we become disillusioned, our temptation is to focus on what we are getting or not getting from our community. Although we need this help from other members of the body—because we’re all interdependent—we also need to do our part in refocusing our mindset, in concert with the Holy Spirit, on how we can help create a community that truly shines God’s light. This requires a deep commitment to the community. In order to be part of building something larger than ourselves, we have to stay and remain engaged when things get difficult.”

I loved *The Connected Life*, but longed for it to go one step further. I wanted to have some guidance not only on how to deepen my own spiritual life through connection, but also how to offer that gift to others *outside* of church life. But Todd Hall may have given, in five short words, the way to interest people in being with us in church again. *We are loved into loving.*

The Very Rev. Carol Mead is rector of St. Peter’s by-the-Lake/Brandon and serves as dean of the Central Convocation.

The origin of clergy attire

In this column in previous months, we have explored the origins and significance of ordained and lay ministry, and the importance of each. We Episcopalians recognize our clergy by a distinctive manner of dress, as do other churches (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran among others). This article will explore the origin and history of distinctive clerical clothing, saving the topic of vestments (ceremonial garb worn during liturgy) for another time.

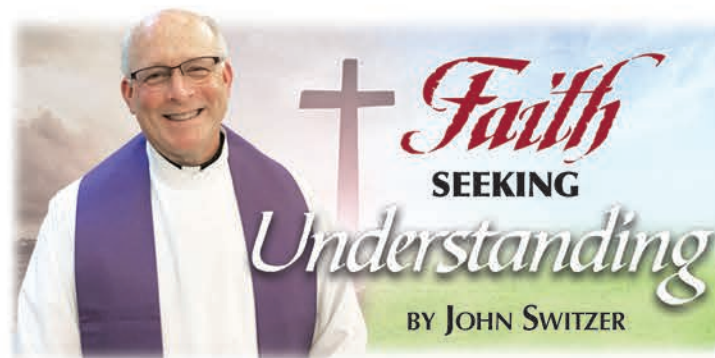
All levels of Episcopalian clergy are usually noted for their use of the clerical collar (with bishops wearing a magenta or purplish-red shirt, large cross on a chain, and a ring bearing the seal of the diocese). The collar comes in multiple forms, almost always including a stiff band of plastic encircling the neck or a simple plastic tab inserted in the front opening of the collar. One can occasionally still find clergy who employ a linen collar, a wise choice that harkens back to the original use of such collars. More on that later in this article.

At times there has been controversy regarding distinctive dress for clergy. Such controversy has been with us for a while now, going all the way back to 428 when Pope Celestine I took issue with the French

clergy of his time and their tendency to distinguish themselves in their attire. He believed that learning, purity, and good conduct should mark clergy rather than their manner of dress. That’s certainly not a bad lesson to remember!

Despite the warning of Celestine, the habit of clerical dress caught on as times changed. We humans have a natural bent for systems of classification. Throughout history many types of offices and professions have been marked by the distinguish-

ing attire of their members. Traditions like these take time to develop because distinguishing symbols and attire—religious and cultural—tend to grow from ordinary items that began as merely useful and mundane. In Christian tradition this can also be seen in the developmental pattern of the sacraments: holy oils are derived from the Mediterranean dependence upon olive oil for both sustenance and health, and the eucharistic banquet is celebrated around the ancient staples of bread and wine.



SHARE YOUR *Good News!*

Please keep us posted about events and activities in your community. The churches and ministries that show up most often in the pages of *The Mississippi Episcopalian* are those who keep in touch with us regularly. Even if it’s brief, send us notices about what’s going on and we’ll get back to you with questions if necessary. A photo with a few sentences of explanation is especially welcome! Send those items to Fr. John Switzer at MissEpiscopal@gmail.com.



Today’s clergy collar probably received its start as a shirt worn under a high-collared tunic or perhaps even as a scarf intended to prevent the tunic’s stiff collar from aggravating the neck. It’s an odd turn of events that something so usefully soft has become a rigid and sometimes irritating symbol adorning its wearer! As mentioned before, it can be found as a simple plastic insert or as a full-neck attachment on a shirt or rabi (a backless garment that covers the chest and stomach and attaches behind the neck and lower abdomen, a sort of backless vest). It is also a prominent part of the cassock (the traditional black robe of clergy (and licensed lay leaders), which originally began as an academic robe.

Whether or not one is a fan of distinctive clerical garb, it can be very helpful when clergy are poking around a hospital or dealing with a major emergency. It automatically explains to others who are present just why that person is in an area where many are denied entry. On the other hand, Celestine had a valid point: clergy should best be known by how faithfully they live and preach the gospel.

The Rev. Dr. John Switzer is professor emeritus of theology at Spring Hill College and editor of The Mississippi Episcopalian. Your ideas for future columns are eagerly invited. Send him your suggestions: MissEpiscopal@gmail.com.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Biloxi beachfront property sold by Redeemer/Biloxi

By John Switzer

The final portion of three beachfront parcels owned by the Church of the Redeemer/Biloxi has been sold, according to the rector of the parish, the Rev. Chris Robinson. The sale closed on September 27. The first of the three parcels sold was the property that once held the historic Vance-Gillis House, destroyed in 2005 by Hurricane Katrina. It had served the parish as a parsonage and was located on the northeast corner of Bellman and Highway 90.

In 2020, the property just north of Water Street sold, including the former parish hall known as DeMiller Hall. The sale closed on the final parcel, which includes the Hurricane Camille Memorial, last month. According to Robinson, the memorial will be moved to the grounds of the Maritime and Seafood Industry Museum in the next six months to a year. After that, the proper-

ty's new owners plan to develop it into a hotel site.

As a sign of faithful stewardship, the vestry of the parish has pledged to send \$150,000 of the sale proceeds to the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi.

According to Bishop Brian Seage, this is in gratitude for the financial assistance given to Redeemer by the diocese after the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina, the second major storm to devastate Redeemer in less than forty years (the other being Hurricane Camille in 1969). According to Bishop Seage, "this generous gift will equip the diocese in the future to help others."

After the destruction of Hurricane Katrina, the parish built a new church in the Cedar Lake area of North Biloxi. In the meantime, congregants worshiped in DeMiller Hall.

The Rev. Dr. John Switzer is editor of *The Mississippi Episcopalian*.



The Hurricane Camille Memorial, located on the property recently sold by Redeemer/Biloxi. It will find a suitable new home at the Maritime and Seafood Museum located on Point Cadet, Biloxi. TME photo.

Falling down and getting up—an Advent retreat discovering your inner resilience and strength

*Life is this repeating journey
from sleep to wakefulness,
from blindness to sight,
from fear to love.*

*No matter how many times
we fall, we are just beginning.*
-Mark Nepo

Mark Nepo is a master teacher who has been convening circles and guiding retreats for fifty years all over the world. Beloved as a poet, teacher, and storyteller, the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Book of Awakening* has been called "one of the finest spiritual guides of our time," "a consummate storyteller," and "an eloquent spiritual teacher." His many books have been translated into more than twenty languages. Based on his new book, this workshop draws on his many years of teaching.

About this journey, Mark says, "When asked how they practiced their faith, medieval monks would say, 'By falling down and getting up.' And so, drawn from my many years of teaching, this workshop will explore the course corrections and choice-points we all face in falling down and getting up, such as: surviving and thriving, managing risk and enhancing risk, opening and closing, giving and receiving, living a



Mark Nepo

balance between solitude and community, enlarging our sense of things when pain and fear make us small, and the never-ending practice of course-correcting and tuning as we go. In my teaching, I remain committed to introducing students and readers to their own gifts and wisdom, so we each can walk both close to the bone and close to the light. I hope you can join me as we explore the practice of being human together."

This retreat is set for December 8-10 at St. Andrew's Cathedral/Jackson. For more information, please contact WoodliffKathy98@gmail.com or visit standrews.ms/journeyseries to register. Be sure to bring a journal.



(228) 435-4255 www.asklandmark.com

Wheeler & Associates, Inc.
Residential, Commercial & Property Management
REALTORS®

Jim Wheeler Broker/CEO

St. Philip's/Jackson to celebrate 60th anniversary

By Annie Oeth

St. Philip's Episcopal Church/Jackson is marking its 60th anniversary with a service of celebration at 10:30 a.m. November 12. Former parishioners, choir members, clergy, and friends are invited to attend the service and a reception in the parish hall afterward.

"This is a very special day in the life of our parish," said Bill Burke, senior warden. "St. Philip's has meant so much to so many people. We welcome back



those who were baptized, confirmed, or married at St. Philip's and those who have called our church home."

Plans are still in progress, so check the church website at stphilipsjackson.com and visit the St. Philip's Facebook page. St. Philip's is in northeast Jackson at 5400 Old Canton Road and can be reached (601) 956-5788.



Ms. Annie Oeth is a parishioner of St. Philip's/Jackson.



St. Philip's/Jackson will celebrate 60 years on November 12. Photo courtesy of parish Facebook page.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

"Music with the Master" piano concert

By Carolyn Vance Smith

The upcoming "Music with the Master" piano concert at Trinity Church/Natchez at 7 p.m., Thursday, December 7, will feature internationally acclaimed musical virtuoso Thomas "Tom" Jaber. Selections will be from popular, classical, and sacred music.

Following the concert is a reception at the historic mansion Rip Rap, 411 S. Rankin St., home of Trinity member Dan Hays-Clark. Proceeds benefit the restoration of Trinity's pipe organ.

Jaber, a Natchez native, holds three degrees in music, including one from the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music, located in Philadelphia, PA. Since 1988 he has been professor of music and director of choral activities at The Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, TX. He has performed at major venues around the globe, including a two-month European tour in the summer of 2023.

Concert tickets are for sale online at www.trinitynatchez.org or by sending a check to Trinity Church concert, 305 S. Commerce Street, Natchez MS 39120.



Mr. Thomas "Tom" Jaber



Mrs. Carolyn Vance Smith is a longtime member of Trinity Episcopal Church/Natchez. Most recently she chaired Trinity's bicentennial celebration, 1822-2022.

COLLECT FOR *All Saints Day, November 1st*

Almighty God, you have knit together your elect in one communion and fellowship in the mystical body of your Son Christ our Lord: Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those ineffable joys that you have prepared for those who truly love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.



-From The Book of Common Prayer, page 245



Save the Dates Bishop Search

First Week of November
Announcement of the
Slate of Candidates

January 16 - 20
Meet & Greets Around
the Diocese

February 2 - 3
Election at Council

July 20
Ordination of the 11th Bishop of MS

Advertise With Us!



THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

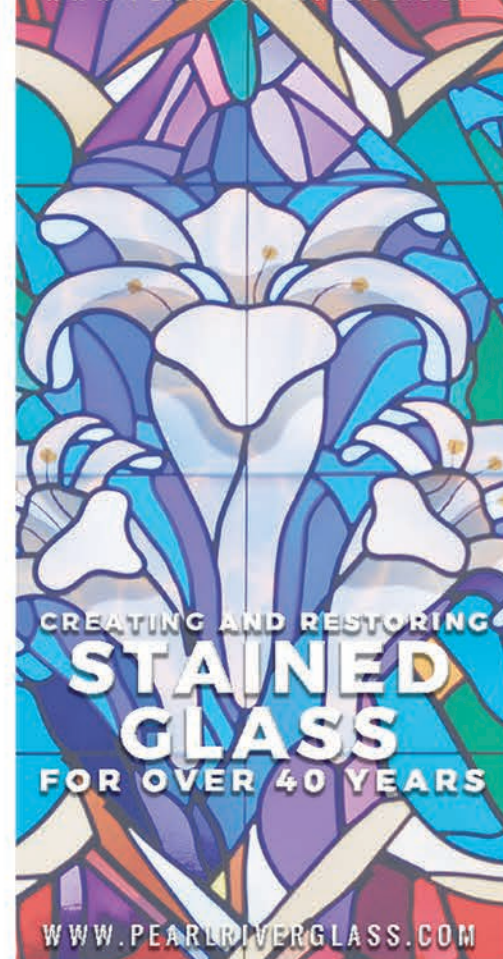
Contact John Switzer
MissEpiscopal@gmail.com



**Greater
love hath
no man
than this.**

JOHN 15:13

WWW.PEARLRIVERGLASS.COM



CREATING AND RESTORING
**STAINED
GLASS**
FOR OVER 40 YEARS

WWW.PEARLRIVERGLASS.COM

PETITION PROCESS

The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi Standing Committee passed a resolution to establish a petition process for the election of our next bishop. While the search committee process is the way most candidates are brought forward for election, the petition process allows for clergy and lay people to raise up others who may feel called to become a candidate and did not go through the search process. Candidates brought forward through the petition process will be required to submit the same information and agree to an extensive background check like the other candidates. See the full resolution below.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MISSISSIPPI RESOLUTION SETTING FORTH THE PETITION PROCESS FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP

September 20, 2023

WHEREAS, the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi (“Diocese”) is conducting a discernment process to elect a new Bishop; and

WHEREAS, the Episcopal transition process occurs under the supervision and jurisdiction of the Standing Committee of the Diocese; and

WHEREAS, a Search Committee and a Transition Committee have been established by the Standing Committee to which specific responsibilities associated with the search/nomination process and the election/transition process, respectively, have been delegated; and

WHEREAS, among other responsibilities, the Standing Committee of the Diocese is specially charged with one important aspect of the election of the new Bishop—the “Petition Process” for which the Standing Committee retains exclusive jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, by these resolutions, the Standing Committee desires to establish the procedures by which nominations may be submitted by means of the Petition Process in the Diocese.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Standing Committee of the Diocese does hereby establish and adopt the following Petition Process to apply to the election of a new Bishop of the Diocese:

ROLE OF THE PETITION PROCESS

The Canons of The Episcopal Church provide for an election process in which laity and clergy join with the Holy Spirit to raise up new episcopal leadership. No one person or group knows whom God will choose, the people consenting, to lead this Diocese. Rather, the invitation to leadership is a process of discerning a call.

The principal method for calling candidates for election in this Diocese is the Search Committee process. Lay persons and clergy alike nominated a group of persons into that process. Priests also heard the call and made direct application themselves. Now that applicants have entered the process they have been embraced by a Search Committee comprised of a group of diverse persons with vast experience to discern, with the nominees, whom to place on a slate of three to five candidates for election to serve as Bishop.

The Petition Process, by contrast, is intended to address the narrow circumstance when a person called to candidacy has not been raised up through the Search Committee process. There could be several reasons why a candidate did not become a discerned candidate but, instead, has a call through the Petition Process. We trust, though, that the Search Committee process will be the process through which most of the candidates ultimately participating in the election will be brought forward.

All Bishops and Priests in or affiliated with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (The Episcopal Church), who will lead the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi in accord with the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention of The Episcopal Church and of this Diocese can be nominated by this Petition Process.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PETITION PROCESS CANDIDATES

The Standing Committee has developed the forms and established the requirements for the Petition Process in this Diocese. Copies of the forms developed by the Standing Committee for the Petition Process are attached to this Resolution as Exhibit A. Only the Standing Committee can waive any of the requirements established.

The slate of candidates identified by the Search Committee for the position of Bishop of the Diocese will be announced by the Standing Committee on the Diocesan website on Wednesday, November 1, 2023. The Petition Period will be open during the five (5) business days immediately following the announcement, beginning no earlier than Thursday, November 2, 2023 and closing at 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on Wednesday, November 8, 2023. Petitions must be supported by valid original signatures of eight (8) active clergy canonically resident in the Diocese and twelve (12) lay communicants in good standing in the Diocese for a total of 20 required signatures. These 20 required individuals must represent at least four (4) different congregations (parishes or active missions). Each congregation must be located within a different convocation of the Diocese.

In order for a Petition candidate to be accepted by the Standing Committee, it is required that the following three (3) forms be complete at the time of filing:

- Petition Nomination Form
- Consent to Nomination Form
- Background Authorization Form

All the forms are located on the Home Page of the Bishop Search at <http://msbishopsearch.com> and on the Home Page of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi at <http://www.dioms.org/>

The fully executed originals of the foregoing three (3) forms must be submitted electronically to the President of the Standing Committee, to the Attention of the Rev. Jody Burnett (jburnett@stpetersoxford.org), with hard copies mailed to the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi (118 North Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39201). If any of these three forms are filed after 5:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, they will be void and rejected by the Standing Committee.

Not every signatory is required to sign the same Petition Nomination Form. Instead, a Petition Nomination Form may be signed in counterpart, which means that all 20 signatories may sign separate Petition Nomination Forms as long as they are all affixed to the Petition Nomination Form at the time of filing. The original signatures of all 20 signatories are required to be affixed to the Petition Nomination Form by 5:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, November 8, 2023 for the filing to be deemed complete. Once all original counterpart signature pages are affixed to the Petition Nomination Form, each separate counterpart signature page will be recognized as an original, but taken together; they will be treated as one and the same original Petition Nomination Form. No signatory may be a member of the Standing Committee, Search Committee or Transition Committee.

Information required. Candidates brought forward in the Petition Process must also submit the same initial information required of candidates discerned through the nominating process. These additional materials then will be used to supplement background checks and to develop published information on candidates on the ballot. In addition to updating your Office of Transition Ministry (OTM) profile, the additional application materials required, in typewritten form, are as follows:

- Cover letter
- Current resume/curriculum vitae
- Current photograph
- Responses to the following three (3) questions, with each response written in 500 words or less:

1. What in our profile stirs your interest and captures your imagination, and how is it related to your strengths as a leader?
2. Describe an experience when you were confronted with a declining or failing ministry of deep significance. What steps did you take to address the ministry? What did you learn?
3. Describe your relationship with your bishop and how it influences your understanding of the Episcopacy in relation to the clergy in the diocese.

The deadline for filing all of the additional information required is 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on Monday, November 20, 2023. These documents must be submitted electronically to the President of the Standing Committee, to the Attention of the Rev. Jody Burnett (jburnett@stpetersoxford.org), with hard copies mailed to the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi (118 North Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39201). If any of the additional information is filed after the November 20, 2023 deadline, the Petition candidate’s nomination will be void and rejected by the Standing Committee.

Requirements of Petition Candidate. Any Petition Process candidate must successfully complete the same background check process required also of Search Committee candidates. The names of any Petition Process candidate will be released to the public no later than Friday, December 8, 2023, and any Petition Process candidate will participate in the pre-election processes, such as Meet and Greets, arranged by the Transition Committee. In addition, upon receipt of all required forms and additional information, the Chancellor of the Diocese will meet with any Petition Process candidate as will be done with all Search Committee candidates.

Adopted by the Standing Committee on September 20, 2023.

UPDATES

Diocesan meetings continue by Zoom unless otherwise noted. Though the diocesan staff continues to work in a hybrid model (office and home), the Allin House is staffed daily. Summer hours are Monday-Thur, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.



OCTOBER

- 21 ECW Fall/Annual Conference, Mediator-Redeemer/McComb; 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- 22 Bishop Seage visits St. Luke's/Brandon
- 25 Standing Committee Meeting, location TBA; 11:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- 26 Trustees, Allin House; 1:00 - 4:00 p.m..
- 29 Bishop visits St. Paul's/Corinth

NOVEMBER

- 1 Initial Slate of Candidates for XI Bishop of Mississippi announced
The Mississippi Episcopalian deadline; 12:00 noon
Bishop Seage visits All Saints'/Jackson
- 2 Bishop Search Petition Process Opens (runs through November 8, 5:00 p.m.)
Racial Reconciliation Task Force; 12:00 noon
- 3 Bishop Search Petition Process Closes; 5:00 p.m.
- 3-5 Happening #95 Staff Training, St. Philip's/Jackson
- 5 Daylight Saving Time Ends – Fall back!
Bishop Seage visits All Saints'/Tupelo
- 7 Small Churches Collaborative, 10:00 a.m.
- 8 Bishop Search Petition Process Closes; 5:00 p.m.
- 10-11 A.C. Marble School, online
- 12 Bishop Seage visits St. Mary's/Enterprise
- 17-19 Happening #95, St. Philip's/Jackson
- 19 Bishop Seage visits St. Matthew's/Kosciusko
- 20 Deadline for Lay Leadership Relicensing
- 23 Thanksgiving Day
- 23-24 Allin House staff holiday in observance of Thanksgiving
- 29-Dec 1 Province IV Bishops & Spouses' Conference/Camp St. Christopher (Diocese of SC)

DECEMBER

- 1 *The Mississippi Episcopalian* deadline; 12:00 noon
Deadline for Submission of Budget Requests/Reports to Annual Council
- 3 Bishop Seage visits Grace Church/Carrollton
- 5 Small Churches Collaborative, 10:00 a.m.
Standing Committee Meeting, location TBA; 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- 7 Racial Reconciliation Task Force; 12:00 noon
Finance Committee Meeting, St. Andrew's Cathedral/Jackson, 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- 8 Petition Candidates for XI Bishop of Mississippi announced, if any (tentative)
- 8-9 A.C. Marble School, Solomon Center
- 10 Bishop Seage visits Mediator/Meridian
- 15 Deadline for Submission of Resolutions/Deadline for Pre-filed Nominations
- 16 Ordination of Transitional Deacons
- 17 Bishop visits Christ Church/Bay St. Louis
- 19 Executive Committee Meeting, St. Andrew's Cathedral/Jackson, 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- 22 - 26 Allin House staff holiday in observance of Christmas
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: Christmas Day
- 27-Jan 1 Winter Solstice/Camp Bratton-Green

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
Allin House staff holiday in observance of New Year's Day
- 2 *The Mississippi Episcopalian* deadline; 12:00 noon
- 4 Racial Reconciliation Task Force; 12:00 noon
- 7 Bishop Seage visits St. Mark's/Gulfport
- 8-10 Diocesan Discernment Retreat
- 12-13 A.C. Marble School/online
- 13 A Day of Dialogue for Racial Healing, St. Philip's/Jackson
- 14 Bishop Seage visits St. Mary's/Bolton
Bishop Seage visits St. Alban's/Bovina
- 15 Allin House staff holiday in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 21 Bishop Seage visits Redeemer/Greenville
- 28 Bishop Seage visits St. Paul's/Columbus
Bishop Seage visits Mississippi State/Starkville



Submit Faithful Departed notices to your church for publication

- Ruth E. Yacks, 92, communicant of All Saints', Grenada, died August 4, 2023.
- Frank William "Hank" Burdine, 74, communicant of St. James, Greenville, died August 28, 2023.
- Augusta Mathilde Turner "Tile" Howell, 98, communicant of St. Paul's, Meridian, died September 6, 2023.
- Margie Ahner Scott, 93, communicant of St. Alban's, Bovina, died September 10, 2023.
- James Goodwin, 93, communicant of All Saints', Tupelo, died September 17, 2023.
- Sandra "Sam" Sanderson Chesnut, 80, communicant of St. Paul's, Columbus, died September 19, 2023.
- Barbara Paxton Stott, 98, communicant of St. James', Greenville, died September 20, 2023.



DEPLOYMENT REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2023

NEW CALLS AND TRANSITIONS

The Rev. William Boyles has accepted the call to serve as priest-in-charge of St. Mark's/Jackson, effective October 1.

CHURCHES / CHAPLAINCIES IN TRANSITION

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| St. John's, Aberdeen | St. Philip's/Jackson – reopened, receiving names through 11/1/2023 |
| St. Luke's/Brandon | Chapel of the Cross/Madison – interviewing candidates |
| Good Shepherd/Columbus | Mediator/Meridian |
| St. Paul's/Columbus | St. John's/Pascagoula – working on profile |
| St. Andrew's/Jackson (canon position) | |

Truckin'

Continued From Page 2



emails followed by a meeting with our CFO, David Martin. The morning also included a phone call with another bishop. The afternoon included meetings with the rector at Rolling Fork and later with members of the Diocesan Altar Guild.

Sept. 28 – It was a really busy day! The morning was taken up with College for Bishops meetings. In the afternoon, I had

back-to-back phone meetings with parish leaders and staff members. Before leaving the office Liz and Tommy Reynolds, from Nativity/Water Valley, stopped by to give me the citation offered by State Legislature. I met over dinner with a friend from a local parish.

Sept. 29 – After an early workout, I met with Andy Andrews over breakfast. Later in the morning, I met with Peggy Jones regarding my schedule for the weekend. I was busy the rest of the day with meetings.

Sept. 30 – I enjoyed a slow Saturday!

DAVENPORT WATTS & DRAKE INVESTMENT ADVISORS, LLC

A REGISTERED INVESTMENT ADVISORY FIRM OFFERING
Financial Planning, Asset Management
And Retirement Plan Services

Sonny Davenport

234 West School Street • Ridgeland, MS
www.DavenportWattsDrake.com
Office 601-898-8069 • Cell 601-672-9202

BELOVED COMMUNITY

Search committee participates in workshop

By Les Hegwood

The mission of the church as stated in our catechism is "to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." The Racial Reconciliation Task Force of the Diocese of Mississippi takes the church's mission seriously and believes that the work being done for racial healing is perhaps the most crucial work God's people can do to further this mission.

Facilitators gathered on September 15 with members of the bishop search committee to lead a three-hour version of the Day of Dialogue for Racial Healing and Relationship Building at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson. These leaders were following the resolution affirmed at the 2023 Diocesan Council that "the lay and ordained leadership of the Episcopal Church, including all ordained persons, professional staff, and those elected or appointed to positions of leader-



Members of the bishop search committee at a recent workshop on racial healing.

ship on committees, commissions, agencies, and boards take anti-racism training."

Many of the participants reflected that they left inspired anew to be agents of racial health and reconciliation and craved a more substantial and comprehensive experience. The facilitators invited them to participate in the next Day of Dialogue for Racial Healing and Relationship Building January 13 at St. Phillip's/Jackson, to deepen their learning and continue to follow the inspiration sparked in their recent session.

If your parish or mission would like to host a day of dialogue to deepen and strengthen relationships in your community and as a way for your leadership to satisfy the required training, please contact the Rev. Andy Andrews at andrews@dioms.org.



The Rev. Les Hegwood is rector of Calvary Episcopal Church/Cleveland, MS.

Pilgrimage to Selma and Montgomery a Sensation!

By Andy Andrews

Nineteen Episcopalians from the Diocese of Mississippi took a three-day pilgrimage September 20-22 to the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma and the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery. Bishop Duncan Gray and the Rev. Jenny Newman were the spiritual leaders.

Pilgrimage is sacred travel, and one of the most ancient forms of spiritual discovery for people of faith. This type of journey invites the traveler to seek the sacred in every step, increasing focus, finding answers to deep questions, and nurturing the soul. This pilgrimage was an offering of the racial reconciliation task force, inviting participants not only to bear witness to the atrocities of the past but also to the work of God's beloved people as they challenge us to a world of justice and equality.

If you are interested in being a part of future offerings that further the Beloved Community movement in the diocese, please contact the Rev. Andy Andrews at andrews@dioms.org.



The Rev. Andy Andrews is missioner for Beloved Community and congregational vitality for the Diocese of Mississippi, and he serves as vicar of St. Christopher's Church of the Ascension/Jackson.



Members of the bishop search committee at a recent Equal Justice Initiative pilgrimage. Photo by: EJI Pilg



The Rt. Rev. Duncan Gray III at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. Photo by: Duncan Gray

A Time of Remembrance and Honor... All Saints Day, November 1st All Souls Day, November 2nd

THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN Statement of ownership

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation form for The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, including fields for publication title, issue frequency, mailing address, and owner information.

Table with 2 columns: Description of circulation metrics (e.g., Total Number of Copies, Paid Circulation) and corresponding numerical values.

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation form for The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, including fields for electronic copy circulation, publication of statement of ownership, and signature of the editor.