“Falling into step with God demands a humility so great as to surrender even those convictions and perspectives that often serve most to justify and defend the status quo of self-protection.”
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Most mornings, my day begins with an early walk around Horseshoe Lake with one of our dogs, Rascal. Depending on the time of year, the sky can provide anything from a star-scape to early light. We follow a route that I have either run or walked for many years. Thanks to current technology, I know exactly how long is our course.

When someone asks, I usually round it to two and a quarter miles, but the exact distance is 2.23 miles. Since early May, that distance has taken on a specific meaning. It is the distance that thousands of people across the country and around the world ran or walked on Friday, May 8th, what would have been the 26th birthday of Ahmaud Arbery, the unarmed Black man murdered on February 23 of this year.

It took me a couple of weeks to make the connection between the distance that Rascal and I habitually walk and the distance run on May 8 in memory of Mr. Arbery, but I have not walked it since without thinking of him and of the challenges of institutionalized, systemic racism and racial injustice that face us in this country. Each morning that I walk it now, I am reminded that we will only dismantle this national and individual pandemic of racial inequality one step at a time. Just like our walk, it will only be accomplished by putting one foot in front of the other, taking concrete actions, doing the next right thing again and again and again. To have this truth shed its light on the morning provides a humbling way to begin the day.

As Rascal and I walk our 2.23 miles, my prayers have repeatedly led me to the familiar words of Micah 6:8, particularly in the New International Version translation:

> He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
> And what does the Lord require of you?
> To act justly and to love mercy
> and to walk humbly with your God.

That, according to Micah, is God’s aim for each of us: to act justly and to love mercy. And the strategy for accomplishing that begins with walking humbly with God. One step at a time, just as Jesus did as he traveled from the Galilee to Jerusalem. Micah pointed to a discipline of humility: step by step following God’s path, not our own, a path of merciful love that leads to just action. To walk humbly with God is a confessional practice whose purpose is to surrender ourselves to the divine will, that we might be liberated from our own self-interest and empowered to selfless, merciful, and just action. Falling into step with God demands a humility so great as to surrender even those convictions and perspectives that often serve most to justify and defend the status quo of self-protection.

I am not very good at this. It is hard to let go of the desire to be right and have my perspectives carry the day, or as recovery programs often say, to “let go and let God.” And so, God reminds me of Isaiah’s words:

> “My thoughts are not your thoughts,
> neither are your ways my ways,”
> declares the Lord.

> “As the heavens are higher than the earth,
> so are my ways higher than your ways
> and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
Frequently, now, thanks to our 2.23-mile walk, the day begins with this question, “What is my next step?” It is a good day when the discipline of humility leads me to ask that question of God, and not of myself. If I am both persistent and patient, an answer will come. Often, it comes on the lips or by the actions of someone quite different from me, someone whose story is very unlike mine and acts as a mirror in which I see myself through other eyes, perhaps even Jesus’s eyes, because, of course, the other is always Jesus, the one whom we have promised, in our Baptismal Covenant, to seek and serve in all others.

This edition of *Church Life* features reflections from a variety of our fellow communicants on how they are addressing racial inequity and injustice in our common life. While the contributors reflect some racial diversity, it is important to note that the responsibility for breaking down racism lies principally with the dominant culture and is, therefore, primarily “white work.” Perhaps the companionship offered in these personal accounts will provide each of us with encouragement to take the next step, to do the next right thing, to act justly and love mercy and, with renewed humility, fall into step more and more fully with God.

Gratefully,

Mark

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.
Bishop of Ohio

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**Diocesan Council Commitment to Racial Justice**

The Diocesan Council recognizes that the church, as the body of Christ, has a responsibility to act on behalf of others, especially the marginalized and oppressed. We vow in our Baptismal Covenant to “seek and serve Christ in all persons” and to “strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.” We believe that, in our current day, this includes directly confronting the legacy and reality of racism, both individual and that which is systemic and institutionalized in our society. We must work to end economic, educational, employment, healthcare, housing, and other injustices in our own lives, institutions, communities, and world. To that end, we must be aware and well informed, and thereby better able to determine the actions our faith requires of us—actions that help us to practice justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

All members of the Diocesan Council are required to complete the Anti-Racism Training provided by the Commission for Racial Understanding and, as elected clergy and lay leaders, we continue to seek experiences and understanding to allow us to be effective leaders and positive agents of change. In that effort, the Diocesan Council commits to:

1. Watch and discuss the film *13th*, a documentary which explores the intersection of race, justice, and mass incarceration in the United States. We will discuss this at the August meeting.

2. Read *White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard For White People To Talk About Racism*, in order to face our implicit and complicit biases and hold ourselves accountable, recognizing that this activity applies predominately to white members. We will discuss this book on an ongoing basis throughout the autumn.

3. Invite all canonical committees and commissions, mission areas, congregations, and communicants of the Diocese of Ohio to join us or engage in a similar discipline for discovering and exploring ways to dismantle racism.

We are cognizant that a book study or film discussion will not alone end racism or eradicate racist violence in the church and the world. Living into our Baptismal Covenant and becoming the Beloved Community is a pilgrimage, and we are each in different places on this journey. For those who are currently involved in organized action or are interested in exploring such involvement, we commend to you the “Learn, Pray, Act” resources provided by The Episcopal Church, and encourage you to contact your local Black Lives Matter and Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) movements.

Join us in our commitment to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world and end the injustice of racism.

*This statement was prepared after the June meeting of the Diocesan Council by an ad hoc group of members and confirmed by the Executive Committee of Council.*
Assisting Bishop of Ohio

“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:24)

“There probably won’t be a place for you in The Episcopal Church.”

“There are enough Black people going down to Selma for the march. You don’t need to be there.”

“I hope you don’t have a (race) chip on your shoulder.”

These and other statements made to me by the then Bishop of Rhode Island convinced me that it was time for me to move on from the place where I was born, formed, educated, and ordained. In March of 1968, eight months after America’s most destructive riot, I accepted a call to Grace Church, Detroit, located six blocks from the Blind Pig speakeasy where the Detroit rebellion had begun in July 1967. Twenty-three people had died and total destruction and devastation surrounded my new parish located on the corner of 12th Street and Virginia Park.

President Lyndon Johnson had established a commission to determine the cause of the urban riots that had spread over 23 cities in our country that summer. Governor Otto Kerner of Illinois, chair, and his commission produced the Kerner Report in March 1968, which concluded that white racism, not Black anger, was the root cause of the urban uprisings. This report was virtually ignored by most American citizens and elected officials, including President Johnson. They could not accept the concept of white racism.

A small group of us in the Detroit area, however, took seriously the Kerner Report’s conclusion regarding white racism and, in the early 1970s, founded New Perspectives on Race. We developed anti-racism curricula to be used primarily in churches and schools and consulted on its implementation. One of our number, Robert Terry, went on to write *For Whites Only* (Eerdman Publishing, 1975), a small but important book.

In the fifty years since, there have been continuing attempts to grapple with white racism by various groups and individuals. Only now, however, does it seem that a majority of Americans acknowledge the presence of white racism, which some have described as “America’s original sin.”

An 18-year-old girl with her cell phone in Minneapolis filmed the murder of George Floyd by a city police officer and brought to the consciousness of Americans across the country what white racism looks like in a most blatant form. Ohioans had already seen it, in the murder of 12-year-old Tamir Rice by a Cleveland police officer who shot him because the toy gun Tamir held looked too real. Incidents such as these and too many others gave birth to the Black Lives Matter movement, which continues to bring concerns about race and white racism to the center of American life. Some of our government leaders in the highest places have chosen not to articulate that Black lives matter, but recent polls indicate that 75% of Americans agree that racism—personal and systemic—is a problem in our society. Protesters challenge us to effect changes in our social structures and institutions.

At a meeting of the House of Bishops last month, the bishops of The Episcopal Church took up this challenge as they put their names to a document produced during this time of Black Lives Matter. Bishop Hollingsworth, Bishop Persell, and I are among those who made a commitment to follow Jesus on the Way of Love, a way that is diametrically opposed to white supremacy. We committed ourselves to tell the whole truth and honestly reckon with our Church’s participation in white racism and racial oppression.

And so the work continues, so that justice may roll down and righteousness flow...
Maureen Wood  
St. Paul's, Canton

As Episcopalians, I feel it is our duty not only to acknowledge racial injustice, but also to actively seek to end the systematic problems in our society. We are called to question our own behaviors and the systems that reinforce them, including our own church systems. If we are in positions of privilege, we cannot stay in hiding to protect ourselves.

At St. Paul’s, Canton, we have been engaging in Courageous Conversations for more than a year. I was able to listen to the most recent conversation via Zoom, and I was struck by two comments. One comment was made by the pastor from a neighboring church, and one was made by two parishioners. The pastor remarked that the reason so many of us are responding to racism now, as opposed to five, twenty, or even fifty years ago, is because we no longer have distractions. With the pandemic, we are forced to sit and reflect a lot more than we have in the past.

This is what I mean when I say we cannot stay in hiding—staying busy and concerning ourselves with only our own circle is not the radical movement that Jesus started. We are specifically called to go outside of our own circle and take risks against the status quo. For example, why are our places of worship often still so segregated? This is a question we must ask ourselves.

The second remark from a parishioner couple was the acknowledgement that they had lived an entire lifetime of being racist without even knowing it, and it is their intent to spend the rest of their lives becoming antiracists. It is perpetual, it is ongoing, and it is difficult, but it is the only way to create a world and a church that does not allow for this evil to continue.

Conrad Galyada  
St. Andrew, Mentor

Most of us realize the need for change. Where do we start? How do we start? What do we do? It starts with looking within, doing some self-examination, and seeing what is revealed. It can direct us to change and grow in our daily interactions and lead to embracing all people as children of God to be loved without exception.

Growing up in Painesville for me was idyllic. We played outside until the street lights came on. We walked or rode our bikes all day. I recall passing people that were African-American and Latinx. All I had to do was acknowledge their existence with a smile, wave, or hello, but I did not. Was this a part of racism? Probably. But, thankfully, I have grown from the person that I was.

The unnecessary and senseless death of George Floyd really devastated me. How could this happen? Why did this happen?

As a parish, we began to process George Floyd’s death when our rector invited us to share our personal stories of racism and white privilege, in whatever way we understood those words. She told us that our histories and life experiences are as individual as fingerprints and that every experience, honestly shared, can be a vehicle to understanding, insight, and conversion for all. Her request for introspection struck a chord in me and I felt compelled to undertake the task. What I wrote about was my transformation. I always thought of myself as forward-thinking and accepting. What I found was a deeper understanding of my true self, not a raving racist but definitely someone who embodied white privilege. I have found the core of my journey must contain these two questions: How can I change this pattern? How can I embody this change?

I know I am a work in progress. I have a long way to go and challenges up ahead. I ask for your compassion and forgiveness for my transgressions along the way. I will continue to do the work.
**Allison Fisher**  
*St. Timothy's, Perrysburg*

I grew up in the Midwest in areas that were either rural, very small town, or suburban, providing minimal contact with people who were not like me – white, middle class, and Protestant.

While I may have friends who are of different colors, faiths, sexual orientations, etc., it occurred to me that I actually knew very little about racism. I participated in the initial Sacred Ground series in Perrysburg in the fall and winter of 2019. I saw an opportunity to explore the concept from a faith perspective with people both in and outside my church family.

I gained a great deal of new knowledge about the history of racism in this country. However, I was not prepared for the impact it has had on my personal understanding of racial differences and on my approach to daily life. I realized early on that my views were frequently naïve, simplistic, one-sided, and self-centered. White privilege was a foreign concept and the one topic that continues to define itself in my daily existence.

Thanks to the Undesign the Redline exhibit at Trinity Cathedral, I can recognize the ongoing effects in our cities. Thanks to a gentleman who spoke at our library, my personal understanding of not “seeing color” has drastically changed. He explained “when you ignore my black skin you make me invisible and disrespect me. I’m proud of being Black.” Learning to look at a situation from the perspective of another has been enlightening.

I signed up for Sacred Ground expecting to learn something about the history of racism in our country and came away with heightened awareness of my own part in racism here and now. Becoming aware has been a highly personal experience and one what will continue to shape my way of being in the world.

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**Dan Mason**  
*Christ Church, Warren*

As a law enforcement officer with 33 years of experience, I am horrified at the event that caused the death of George Floyd. Watching the incident unfold on television, shocked and sickened me. I completely understand the frustration from members of our communities, seeing such an act from someone who is supposed to be serving and protecting, not causing harm. Events this year have called our attention to racism that still exists in the 21st century. Racism is prejudice and discrimination against someone merely because of their race. This is completely against everything that God's voice tells us through scripture. This has caused many people to wonder what they can do to make a difference.

I am by no means an expert in this field, however, having served in a racially and ethnically diverse community for most of my career, I have some suggestions that have worked for me. Some of my knowledge comes from having made mistakes and knowing what not to do again. The most important thing to do is to listen. To listen, you need to do more than just hear. You must put aside assumptions because when you assume, you may think you know what the speaker is telling you which keeps you from hearing their message. Something that I find a challenge is not being offended when someone says something I disagree with. We all need to practice this one. I have seen some of the most well-intentioned people take offense when someone says something that opposes their beliefs. To truly respect diversity, we must respect diverse opinions, even when they do not align with ours. We also need to gracefully disagree when someone has an opinion different than ours. These are just a few techniques that I use to interact with people from my community that seem to help me. I believe as members of the community we can attempt to build positive relationships.
This time of lament for the killings of Black people at the hands of those for whom Black lives don't matter causes me great pain. It reminds me of the impact of seeing the names of those lynched from 1877 to 1950 from 12 states at the Lynching Museum in Montgomery. The Lynching Museum is the familiar name of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. This imposing museum founded by Bryan Stevenson is dedicated to personalizing injustices suffered by 4,400 Black souls. It forced me and our pilgrimage group, white and Black, to see desecrated bodies of real people. I was stunned to witness the engraved names, particularly of single women, on the hammered steel bars hanging from the ceiling. It was clear to me the similarity between the souls lynched then and those killed today, the ancestors of George and Breonna and Tanisha and Elijah and…


For all the pain of the Lynching Museum, there is the hope of change. John Lewis’ death occurs in this same period of reflection. His legacy is one of peacefully marching and speaking truth to power. His message is the countercultural to lynching and shooting, a message of the beloved community of hope and faith. Marchers are the counterculture to the police brutality exemplified by the forcible removal of two young Black mothers and their children, including a 6-year-old, who were made to lie in the street at gun point…another case of mistaken identity. John Lewis’ optimism, his love for people (gay, straight, white, black, brown, male, female, cis, gender, Democrat, Republican, religious, and “none”) gives me hope. A rainbow of folks marched peacefully, espousing a message of acceptance, of hope and faith that as a country we might live into our values, that we might lift up each other’s humanity, that hatred and bigotry don’t have to win.

“And now abideth Faith, Hope ….”

Diocese of Washington Bishop Marian Edgar Budde called out the President after his photo op at St. John’s Church. “It seemed to others that I was being very brave. Maybe I was, but in all truth, it felt more like being summoned to speak on behalf of others.”

And… Members of St. Paul’s Church in Harrisburg, PA whose General Convention resolution on community policing, staffing to address mental illness, collecting data on police encounters, increasing accountability are spot on.

And… Dioceses are enforcing the anti-racism training required of leadership in The Episcopal Church since at least 2000, not because anti-racism training is an end, but because it is action, movement along the continuum of the Beloved Community.

And… The Church Pension Group is collecting data on race, ethnicity, and salary so that the compensation disparities of clergy of color are addressed.

And… Some dioceses are focused on hiring staff and clergy of color to ensure balance and create diversity of experience and opinion.

Hope, that people can change….

Terry Allen, the Cuyahoga County Health Department Commissioner, apologized to his family, staff, board, and constituents for his blackface antics 30 years ago. His commitment to public health is clear, his embarrassment real, and his apology sincere. He seriously erred but genuinely sought forgiveness and healing.

The similarities of the deaths of those 4400 George Floyds and Breonna Taylors reflected in the Lynching Museum and the Black souls of the present day cannot be overemphasized. I have felt the pain, the solitude, the joylessness, the fear, and the hatred that caused the loss of life represented by those hammered blocks. Its effects on me are the same watching the national news each night.

But there is hope because of the peaceful, multiracial, multigenerational protests across the country, demanding changes in community policing and the removal of Confederate symbols of white supremacy in cities throughout the nation.

George Floyd finally receives respect. A worldwide movement has been born. There is a blessing in this time because of the action of so many on multiple fronts. We are all called to DO something. I am clear about my call to DO something and speak up.

“…and love, these three. But the greatest of these is love.”
Cor. 13:13
Darcy Young
St. Paul's, Fremont

I have been a lifelong member of the St. Paul's, Fremont. As I have grown and changed over the years, so has St. Paul's. The past few years have been such an exciting time at our church and more so than ever, I am so proud to be a part of this spiritual family. We have been striving to learn and open our awareness to what may be unfamiliar or unknown to us – to have the uncomfortable conversations, and make the conscious decisions to listen with open ears and hearts. Some of our recent steps towards racial reconciliation have been choosing to read Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates for our weekly book study and partnering with the NAACP to put on a drive-in movie style showing of Harriet in Downtown Fremont with proceeds going to their scholarship fund.

Growth and change are, by their nature, not comfortable, but they are necessary and are very much needed. During this time, we not only seek to be a positive voice for change, but also to know when to listen. I like to think that the Prayer of St. Francis has wise words to remember, especially now. In particular:

O Master, let me not seek as much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love

At St. Paul's, the role of racial reconciliation took an even greater part in our community when at a recent protest rally, the Rev. Matt Wahlgren was the lone clergyman to address the large, diverse crowd. His stirring message of the need for justice, peace, and racial reconciliation not only in Fremont, but our nation as a whole, was a strong testament to the commitment of our parish to community outreach.

Dan Beears
Church of the Epiphany, Euclid

I did not march. I did not demonstrate. I did not carry a sign. I convinced myself that I could not do any of these things due to my work schedule. However, I did want to take some positive action.

At George Floyd’s funeral, I heard a university president challenge his colleagues to establish and expand programs that would assist minority students in being successful within their respective universities.

I do believe that high-quality, relevant education is hugely important for young people—as the university president affirmed. I immediately thought of the high school scholarship program that we have established at the Church of the Epiphany for a graduating senior from Euclid High School. The Euclid school district student body is made up of 92% students of color, even though the city population is 36% white.

As a member of this scholarship committee, I have heard from many applicants who affirm that they want to make the world a better place by tackling various social problems including racial injustice. I chose to donate five hundred dollars to this scholarship fund to ensure that it will be fully funded for next year. This donation may even encourage other parishioners to donate to the fund so that The Church of the Epiphany can either award a larger scholarship or additional scholarships next year.

You may call this donation merely “a drop in the bucket” when you look at the great need among young people throughout the Diocese of Ohio. However, if other churches would develop a scholarship fund for students in their respective high schools, consider how many other young people along with their families could be helped. With all of the problems that young people and their families are facing today, churches need to provide as much support for them as possible. Throughout the Diocese of Ohio, the work of church school teachers, youth group leaders, and other Christian education support staff is truly a blessing. I merely donated to a scholarship program so that some young man or young woman will get financial support so that they will be able to attend college next year.
The Gospel in Action

A long overdue and truthful obituary for the Rev. Walter Payne Stanley, 1890 - 1964

by the Rev. Dr. Brian K. Wilbert

Walter Payne Stanley was born February 18, 1890 in Baltimore, MD. He received a BA in Music from Lincoln College in Missouri in 1916 and entered Western Theological Seminary in Michigan as a student of Theology from the Presbyterian Church. He married Edythe Lockwood Hume on January 12, 1918. On March 3, 1918 he left to serve with the East African Expeditionary Force in Africa and India during WWI. He returned home on April 19, 1919. The Rev. Walter Stanley then served as a Presbyterian Minister in Macon, Georgia before being ordained as a deacon in The Episcopal Church in November 1922 by the Rt. Rev. George H. Kingsolving and as a priest in June 1923 by the Rt. Rev. Clinton S. Quin. After serving as the vicar for St. Clement's Mission in Houston, Texas, he served as rector of St. Andrew's Mission in Lexington, Kentucky from 1924-1927.

In 1928 Bishop Warren L. Rogers brought this “ambitious, virile, and talented young priest” to All Saints' in Toledo, Ohio where he “breathed new life into the congregation,” encouraging them to become self-sufficient. He was active in community life, serving on the Board of the Douglass Community Center, Y.M.C.A., and Toledo Board of Education, the first of his race to be so honored in Toledo. For 12 years he labored as priest-in-charge.

However, Bishop Tucker had been approached by several disgruntled parish members who accused the cleric of financial mismanagement, accepting bribes, and masterminding/teaching an underground school to influence “negro voters.” The bishop promised Stanley an advancement, once these false claims were refuted. The bishop then, with hardly any notice, gave him until January 1, 1941 to vacate the parish. He found himself obligated to accept the bishop's transfer. However, this was not an advancement. It was, at best, a lateral move as he was to serve again as priest-in-charge with less salary. In Stanley’s words to the bishop, “Your decision weakens my self-respect, throws a pall over Christmas worship and plans, disrupts my family, and sends me away from Toledo a discredited man.” Communication between Stanley, the bishop, and the Department of Missions completely broke down.

Stanley served as priest-in-charge of St. Augustine's, Youngstown from 1941 until his retirement in 1954. He was beloved by the members of the church. Challenged by health issues and earning far less than his white counterparts forced him to go into debt in order to raise his family. Financial help came from the Bishop's Office, often with the admonishment to live within his means. Regardless, he embarked on an active ministry with the mission and community. He was the first of his race to become president of the Youngstown Ministerial Association. He was appointed to the Mahoning County Welfare Advisory Board in 1943. He was a guest lecturer at Youngstown State University and he was a trustee of the Youngstown Citizen's Council and the NAACP. Stanley received the John H. Chase memorial award for outstanding service in the field of race relations in Youngstown. He was feted with an article entitled “The Gospel in Action” in the Youngstown YMCA/YWCA Pulse magazine. In this article, he shared how the “Gospel in Action” was his personal credo. “I have known what it feels like to be threatened with death, to have my home guarded, and finally to be ordered from a city,” he wrote. “My vows as a priest in The Episcopal Church obligate me to preach and practice the Gospel and I have seen no reason to divorce religion from any activities of humanity.”

Everything he accomplished from church to community work centered around his conclusion that people of his race were to be recognized as human beings, citizens, and Christians “in every expression of [their] personality.” At the time of his death on January 26, 1964, he was survived by his wife, Edythe, two daughters, Edith Powell and Patricia Best; a son, Walter Jr.; and 10 grandchildren. Stanley was buried from St. Augustine's on January 29, 1964 and interred in the Youngstown TOD Homestead Cemetery.

It is more than sad that an obituary for Stanley, who spent 37 years sharing ministry in our diocese, failed to appear in Church Life after his death—even while obituaries appeared for several white clergymen. Articles about growing racial tensions and “the race crisis” in our country appeared in the ensuing editions of Church Life throughout the year. At the 1964 Diocesan Convention, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Nelson Burroughs included a memorial moment that was based solely on Stanley’s biographical material in the Stowe’s Clerical Directory for 1956. A brief obituary, also based on the Stowe’s biography appeared in the April 1964 edition of the Living Church magazine. It is a privilege to include a full and truthful reflection of his life and contribution, amidst the sins of oppression and racism, to the building up Christ's church in this edition of Church Life. His legacy is with us as we choose to respond to and eradicate the sin of racism—beginning with our church.
Convention Nominations

On behalf of the nominating committee for the 204th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Ohio, we encourage you to consider how your commitment to the life of the church may gain more depth through participation in one of our diocese's elected bodies.

As our church continues to grow in faithfulness, work for justice and peace, and live into our calling as Christ's Body in a changing world, your voice can make a difference. We need your time, talents, and leadership to serve the Diocese of Ohio. Particularly during this time of rapid change and uncertainty—thanks to the pandemic, our nation's reckoning with race-based violence, and a whole host of other concerns—your commitment to leading and shaping our church's common life and witness could be invaluable.

This is an opportunity for you to experience our dynamic church in a new and exciting way. Have the courage to pray, contemplate, and nominate yourself, or your neighbor (with their permission), for one of these positions. The reward is well worth the time and effort it takes to serve, because it is an opportunity to shape the life of the church in a changing world.

Please prayerfully consider nominating yourself or another communicant (with their permission) using the following online form: dohio.org/nominations. More information about each of the positions can be found on the website as well. We ask that you submit your nomination before Tuesday, September 15, 2020.

As you consider the call to serve, we commend to you this prayer for the sake of all who seek to discern and live out their service for the sake of the Gospel:

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP, pg. 100)

Faithfully,
Ms. Diane R. Hexter and the Rev. John Drymon
Co-Chairs of the Committee on Nominations
Job Description Overviews

The Diocesan Council serves as an advisory group to the Bishop and the Diocesan staff on financial and other matters. Council oversees the development of the Diocese's operating fund budget and recommends the budget to Diocesan Convention for approval. The group also provides guidance and oversight for the Diocese between conventions as well as works in committees to support Diocesan staff and Diocesan ministries. Members of Council serve as liaisons to parishes and mission areas of the Diocese.

Episcopal Community Services (ECS) Development Council members review grant proposals submitted by Episcopal congregations in the Diocese of Ohio to serve the needs of local communities throughout the diocese and to build Episcopal identity. Grants are funded through the Bishop's Annual Appeal and Church Home funds.

The Standing Committee serves as the Bishop's Council of Advice, bringing diocesan concerns to the Bishop's attention and responding to the Bishop's own thoughts and concerns. The committe also deals with property matters. All parish decisions to sell or encumber property must be approved by the Standing Committee. This group gives consent to candidacy and ordination of deacons and priests and to the election of bishops in other dioceses of The Episcopal Church. Standing Committe is also involved with disciplinary matters pertaining to clergy and designs and manages the search and election process when a new bishop is needed.

The Diocesan Trustees, a group of five lay and clergy, manage and have fiduciary responsibility for the Diocese's Joint Investment Fund and Real Property of the Diocese. Diocesan Trustees serve for a five-year term. Trustees meetings are held quarterly, normally on the third Tuesdays. Please note that until further notice, all meetings will be held via Zoom video conference. Trustees, along with Diocesan representatives and the JIF investment advisor, meet upon request with leaders of parishes that are interested in participating in the JIF.

If there is a case involving potential clergy misconduct, the Regional Disciplinary Board (currently the Diocesan Disciplinary Board) is the pool of individuals from which are selected to serve as members of a Conference or Hearing Panel. The current Title IV canons seek to provide for appropriate and transparent accountability when clergy have committed some sort of misconduct. It also seeks to be built upon a model of reconciliation and healing, as opposed to confrontation. A canonical amendment will be voted upon at convention to replace the current Diocesan Disciplinary with a 13-member body comprising of one lay and one clergy representative from six dioceses.

Clergy and lay members elected to this position serve at the 2021 Province Synod on May 1, 2021, which will be held electronically. At Synod, the delegates will learn about the current and possible future collaborative ministries that support the mission and priorities of the participating dioceses.

Clergy and lay members elected to this position serve as alternate deputies at the 80th General Convention in 2021, or any Special General Convention between their election and the election of their successors. At Convention, the deputies consider amendments to the church’s Constitution and Canons, resolutions on ecclesiastical matters and social issues, adopt a budget for the Ministry of The Episcopal Church, and elect people to various offices in the wider church. The Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies announced in the July General Convention update that General Convention may be postponed until 2022.
“Use your pivot foot!” I can hear my basketball coaches yelling this from the sidelines as if it were yesterday. It’s a phrase I haven’t thought about much in recent years but seems to pop in my head weekly as I explain to people what we’ve been up to at Bellwether Farm. In basketball, a pivot foot is used when a player has the ball and comes to a complete stop. With the pivot foot held down on the floor, a player can spin and move around as long as their pivot foot stays grounded. The pivot foot opens up new possibilities, helps one see different angles, and often allows a player to squeeze out of tight situations. With COVID-19 continually reshaping our communities and personal lives, all of us have, in one way or another, had to use our pivot foot. We’ve had to find new rhythms and perspectives, ask difficult questions, and re-think how we interact with each other in the world.

This summer at Bellwether, one of the difficult decisions we had to make was cancelling summer camp and postponing many retreat groups. Given the fact that much of the food we produce normally goes to the dining hall to feed guests on site, our question was, “How do we pivot this year?” More specifically, “What do we do with all the food coming off the farm?” After discussing this and getting some advice from Bishop Hollingsworth, we decided not to start something completely new, but rather partner with some of our well-established meal programs in the diocese to help get fresh food to people who really need it. We applied for and received an Episcopal Relief & Development COVID-19 emergency grant for the program we named “Feeding the Beloved Community.” The grant has enabled us to leverage a range of valuable assets, including vegetable and pork production at Bellwether, a number of well-established meal programs in the diocese, Bellwether’s summer internship program, and many committed parochial outreach volunteers.

Each week, volunteers deliver a share of produce and protein from the farm which gets incorporated into hot meal programs in Painesville, Cleveland, Oberlin, Lorain, and Tiffin. When asked about this collaborative partnership during COVID-19, Kelcie Dugger, the Youth Outreach Specialist at St. Luke’s, Cleveland, replied, “Now more than ever it’s important to check on your neighbors and offer them support. Although COVID-19 changed the way we serve food, we’re still serving quality meals that are hot and hearty, even more so with the help of Bellwether Farm. Every week they send fresh produce to be included with our changing menu. We’ve been blessed with spring lettuce, cucumbers, squash, bell peppers, cabbage, and much more. We’ve added some of these fresh vegetables to our meals, but our favorite way of using it all is in preparing 100 fresh salads to accompany our hot dish. Our community has been thankful for this added touch.”
Another important decision was to continue our farm-to-table internship program in the midst of the pandemic. It took a lot of intentionality, flexibility, and coordination among the Bellwether staff to provide a safe environment, but we successfully hosted one culinary intern and three farm interns for eight weeks of the summer. These four college students proved to be an integral part of the “farm-to-parish” Feeding the Beloved Community program, bringing lots of energy and passion to Bellwether, while boosting our farm and culinary work. As a camp, retreat, and education center, these internships provide a great opportunity to tap into the educational heart of our mission. Along with daily animal chores and meal preparation, the interns helped plant, harvest, pack, and deliver food. They served food at Christ Church, Oberlin; loaded food into vehicles at the mobile pantry at the St. Luke’s, Cleveland; and even helped establish a community garden with Church of the Redeemer, Lorain. In an article for the College of Wooster, one of our farm interns, Jenna Smith, noted, “I was able to follow through with my internship because of [Bellwether’s] symptom checking routines, social distancing protocols, and staff quarantine. We diligently ensured one another’s safety by following guidelines for citizens and businesses, and I am incredibly lucky and grateful to have had this opportunity. While I couldn’t give farm tours or convince 8-year-olds to eat tomatoes, I’ve gained a holistic, loving experience through interactions with my amazing team and the beautiful property.”

Personally, this farm-to-parish program has given me a new appreciation for the good work that so many in the Diocese of Ohio are doing. The relationships that have formed and the experiences I’ve had in the wider church have lifted my spirit during this challenging time. While my pivot foot has stayed grounded at Bellwether, I’ve had the chance to stretch and shift my vision outward, seeing fresh possibilities and opportunities for collaboration. It is my hope and expectation that Bellwether will continue to partner with parishes as we re-open our doors to welcome and reach out to feed the Beloved Community.

On Tuesday, July 28, the Bellwether Book Club hosted its first Zoom conversation after reading *Soil and Sacrament: A Spiritual Memoir of Food and Faith.*

Twenty-seven book lovers gathered virtually for an engaging discussion with the book’s author, Fred Bahnson. Readers reflected on a range of topics arising from the numerous stories that comprise Professor Bahnson’s memoir, and learned about his writing process as well as his own spiritual growth along the way.

All participants delighted in the companionship of both reading *Soil and Sacrament* together and sharing our gleanings and gratitudes with one another and the author.

Bellwether Farm also launched an Intergenerational Book Club to bring all ages together over great literature.

The first book was *All Creatures Great and Small* by James Herriot, a delightful classic about a first-time veterinarian in rural Yorkshire. These stories are excellent to read on your own, with your family, or listen to on audiobook.

The book club held a discussion on August 12 which included a conversation with the veterinarian who treats our Bellwether animals!

We are looking forward to the next books!
SAVE THE DATE
NOVEMBER 13-14

The 204th Annual Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

• Convention is virtual which means all delegates must have, or have access to, two devices with an internet connection and webcam or audio:
  • Computer, laptop, iPad, or tablet and WiFi enabled smart phone
• Parishes should certify delegates and alternates as soon as possible, but no later than October 23

More information at dohio.org/convention