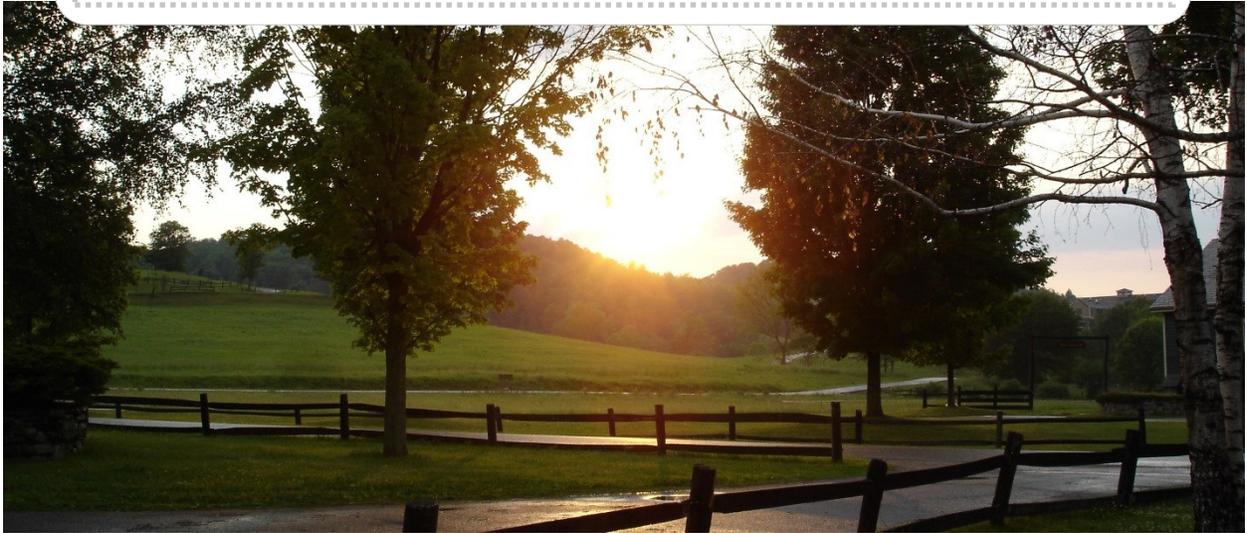




Episcopal Diocese of Albany

Disciples Making Disciples



Diocesan Profile 2022

For the Election of the 10th Bishop of Albany

The Diocese of Albany is One Church fulfilling the Great Commandment and Great Commission, moving from membership to discipleship; equipping, emboldening, and sending disciples to make disciples.

WELCOME

The search for a bishop is a solemn, yet exciting undertaking. It includes a deep look inward, exploring the past along with the events that have shaped our history. Against that backdrop, we seek to define and describe the current landscape, using both objective data and the real time thoughts, feelings, and experiences of our people today.

Moving forward, we are now looking outward for the next shepherd of the Diocese of Albany. This will require inquiry, conversation, prayer, and deep discernment. We acknowledge that our people differ across the theological spectrum with regard to social and political issues. We draw on the wisdom from a theologian long ago: "In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity."^{*} Moreover, we affirm the truth, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8)

So we pray to our Lord to guide us to the one called to be the Tenth Bishop of Albany. May this profile tell our story.

Sue Ellen Ruetsch, Chair, on behalf of the Profile and Search Committee.

August 13, 2022

^{*} Rupertus Meldenius (early 17th century)

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HISTORY



Bishop Oldham described the life of a diocese as “part of that continuous stream of the historic Catholic Church which flows down through the ages – a pure river of the water of life on whose banks grow the trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations”. Just as the waters of the Hudson, Mohawk and St. Lawrence rivers have over time provided their blessings to Northern New York, so too did the Anglican witness to the Gospel, providing the waters of baptism to native and European people who lived here.

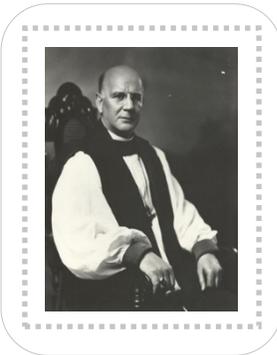
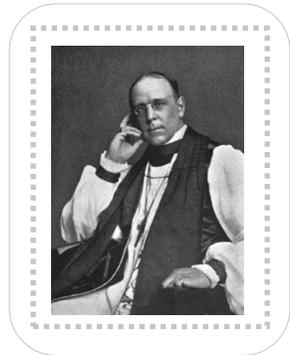
The Anglican Church in Northern New York began in 1704, with missionary work among the Mohawks and services for the garrison at Albany. This was soon followed by the establishment of the parishes of St. Peter’s, Albany, St. George’s, Schenectady, and a church at Fort Hunter. By 1868, with continued growth, it became apparent there was a real need for a Northern New York diocese. In December of that year, a convention was held, and William Croswell Doane, rector of St. Peter’s and a follower of the Oxford Movement, was elected the first bishop of Albany.





William Crosswell Doane (1st Bishop - 1869-1913) was consecrated in 1869, and immediately began building the Diocese of Albany. During his episcopate of more than 40 years he had many accomplishments, including the construction of the Cathedral of All Saints, the first in The Episcopal Church; the establishment of schools; a significant music ministry; a hospital, and a religious order for women. His passing in 1913 left a legacy that is still felt in the diocese today.

Richard H. Nelson (2nd Bishop - 1913-1929) the second bishop of Albany, continued to build upon the foundation established by his predecessor, strengthening existing parishes and founding new missions. A theologian and spiritual leader, Bishop Nelson guided and inspired the clergy and people of the growing diocese through the difficult years of World War I.



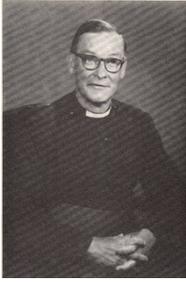
George Ashton Oldham (3rd Bishop - 1929-1950) was installed as Bishop of the Diocese of Albany on October 22, 1929. Two days later, the stock market crashed, and the Great Depression began. By the grace of God, he led the diocese through the devastating years of the depression and World War II. Bishop Oldham was a gifted administrator and fund-raiser. The Cathedral had been deeply in debt; he restored and balanced the budget. He raised money for parochial schools, oversaw the improvement of The Child's Hospital and furthered initiatives to assist the poor. In addition to his inspired work, these endeavors were made possible by the extensive generosity and support of the lay community, which continues today. Like his predecessors, Bishop Oldham was an Anglo-Catholic theologically and spiritually, with a strong social conscience, committed to an ecumenical dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church that continues to this day.



Frederick L. Barry (4th Bishop - 1950-1960) – was enthroned on January 25, 1950. The great economic prosperity of the post-war years enabled the renovation and expansion of the Cathedral of All Saints. During this time, rapid growth in the suburbs led to the founding of several new congregations, which brought about the expansion of old, and the construction of new, church buildings. Bishop Barry oversaw the creation of a diocesan retreat facility on Brant Lake, and during his episcopate, a total of sixty-two priests were ordained in the diocese. In 1955, a Church and Work Congress was held at the Cathedral to address the Church’s role in helping solve social and international problems. In 1960, Bishop Barry initiated a successful campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to construct a new Child’s Hospital, pay off the debt on the diocesan headquarters and establish a fund to make loans available to parishes for new buildings and renovations. Although his episcopate was cut short by an untimely death, he left a healthy, prosperous diocese, poised for continued mission, spiritual and physical growth, and expansion of social ministries.

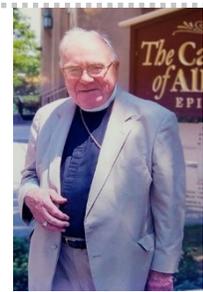


Allen Webster Brown (5th Bishop - 1961-1974) – was enthroned in 1961 at the Cathedral of All Saints. His episcopacy was shadowed by change and unrest, both nationally and in the life of the Church. While the wider culture was deeply divided over issues of race, civil rights and the war in Vietnam, the Episcopal Church wrestled with its own issues surrounding the drafting of a new Prayer Book. Despite these challenges, Bishop Brown served his parishes faithfully, traveling the 19 counties of the diocese to preach, confirm and ordain. He continued Bishop Barry’s fund-raising campaign and carried on with the good work of his predecessor. The church population was growing rapidly. Within a 15-year period, 17 new churches, 26 parish houses and 27 new rectories were built in the Diocese of Albany. With assistance, Bishop Brown expanded the ministry of the diocese and saw to the practical needs of diocesan clergy and parishes, overseeing an improved pension plan and group plans for life insurance, as well as a group insurance plan for church property.



Wilbur Emory Hogg (6th Bishop - 1974-1984) – brought to the diocese a passion for evangelism and ecumenical engagement that has become an important part of our diocesan identity. In 1975, he partnered with the Roman Catholic Diocese in the merger of two schools to form the Doane Stuart School. In 1977, he organized a conference on “Evangelical Catholicism” and sought funding for ecumenical ministry at the Olympic Games. Bishop Hogg was a staunch conservative on the issues of gender and sexuality that were becoming matters of division during his episcopacy. He was known to be antifeminist, and in 1983 he banned the LGBT group “Integrity” from the Cathedral of All Saints. Despite his position on these matters, he ordained some of the first female permanent deacons in the Diocese of Albany.

David Standish Ball (7th Bishop - 1984-1998) – was consecrated in early 1984 and installed that same year. In earlier years, as Dean Ball, he had become increasingly aware of the changing demographics in Albany, and under his leadership the focus of the Cathedral expanded to address the needs of the growing number of poor and homeless in the city. In 1968 he led the Cathedral of All Saints, in partnership with Morningstar Baptist Church, to develop the Dudley Park Housing Authority, raising over five million dollars to fund the project, which provided housing for over 200 families in the Arbor Hill District. As Bishop, he continued to lead the Diocese in its outreach to the poor and needy; his “Step Out In Faith” campaign raised several million dollars for Diocesan projects. As a result of Bishop Ball’s initiatives and influence, the Albany Diocese actively supported hospitals, nursing homes, schools, and St. Margaret’s Center for Children.



Early in his episcopacy Bishop Ball held a traditionally conservative view of the role of women in the Church, opposing women’s ordination. However, his position changed over time. In 1989, despite strong opposition, he began serving with and ordaining female priests and deacons. This validation of God’s calling women to ordained ministry is now an integral part of our diocesan identity, along with evangelism, ecumenism, and care for the poor.



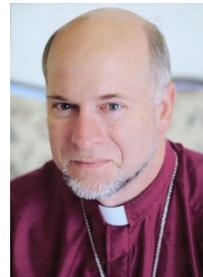
Daniel William Herzog (8th Bishop - 1998-2007) - served as Diocesan Bishop until his retirement in 2007. Charismatic and energetic, Bishop Herzog launched into his episcopate, promoting and supporting such renewal programs as Alpha, Disciple, Cursillo, and New Beginnings and Happening for youth. The mission statement of the Diocese of Albany was, and continues to be, simple and straightforward: "Disciples Making Disciples".

Aware of the vast expanse of the Diocese, Bishop Herzog began restructuring the annual diocesan events, to bring the diocese together physically in order to increase and support lay and clergy participation. A strong supporter of the diaconate, Bishop Herzog's vision was that there should be at least one deacon serving each congregation; to this end, he ordained 48 vocational deacons. Annual retreats for priests and deacons became a mainstay in the Diocese. David Bena was elected Bishop Suffragan in 2000 and assisted Bishop Herzog in the mission work of the Diocese, as well as fostering vocations to the diaconate and priesthood.

Faced with the financial challenges of the maintenance and structural needs of many aging Diocesan facilities, a Futures Committee was formed to determine how best to address these needs. This resulted in the purchase and development of Christ the King Spiritual Life Center in Greenwich, NY.

Bishop Herzog retired in 2007 in opposition to the decision of the 2003 General Convention to affirm and ordain an openly gay man as bishop. After his retirement, he renounced his ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church and returned to the Roman Catholic Church. Three years later in 2010 he requested to rejoin The Episcopal Church and then Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori restored his ordained ministry. In March 2021 Bishop Herzog again left The Episcopal Church and on April 11, 2021, he was received into the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), serving under Bishop Julian Dobbs.

William Howard Love (9th bishop - 2007- 2021) was consecrated as bishop in 2006 and installed as the 9th bishop of Albany on February 4, 2007. During his episcopate, Bishop Love placed a high priority on the continued development of Christ the King Spiritual Life Center and its many ministries which include Beaver Cross Youth Ministry, Healing Prayer Ministry, the



Welcome Home Initiative and a wide variety of adult retreats and conferences for both clergy and laity.

Theologically orthodox and traditional in his beliefs regarding Christian marriage, Bishop Love prohibited same-sex marriages; this position remained unchanged throughout his episcopate. His refusal to abide by the 79th General Convention (2018) Resolution B012, and make arrangements to provide for another bishop of this Church to provide pastoral support so that the marriage rites for same-sex marriages may be made available where so desired, ultimately led the Hearing Panel/Disciplinary Board, in 2020, to find him guilty of failing to abide by the Discipline and Worship of The Episcopal Church. He resigned as Bishop of Albany, effective February 1, 2021. In the 150th Anniversary of the Diocese of Albany book, published in 2018, the following was written about Bishop Love, "(he) has kept the Diocese focused on Christ, in his belief that in so doing, the Diocese will come through whatever storms it might face. He has been consistent in holding to the basics—the Great Commandment and the Great Commission." On April 3, 2021, Bishop Love was received into the Anglican Church in North America as an assisting bishop.

In Conclusion:

As stated in the profile prepared for the search for the eighth bishop of Albany, "Lakes, rivers, mountains, valleys, and weather isolate, divide and separate the diocesan family. This isolation is a part of our history and a part of our present reality. But there are reasons for hope," as the stream of our faith flows into a promising future.

At our recent 154th Diocesan Convention, we were reminded by Mother Katherine Alonge-Coons, President of the Standing Committee, that our convention's theme was based on Philippians 3:14... "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

She stated that when we become focused on a goal, we don't spend a great deal of time looking back; instead, we propel ourselves forward, focused on the achievement of the goal, one step forward at a time. As we search for our next bishop, despite diverse views within the diocese, we do so as one family looking ahead for opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others. And so, even though there will be challenges and obstacles along the way, we will face them together and press on together in the name of Jesus Christ!

DEMOGRAPHICS



The Episcopal Diocese of Albany incorporates 19 counties (19,656 square miles) in New York State and serves a wide range of congregations-- from small rural churches to larger metropolitan parishes. The diocese's mother church, The Cathedral of All Saints, is located in Albany, the state capital. The people of the diocese are as diverse as its landscape and culture, all joined in an intricate pattern where both unity and individualism are found.

The geography of the diocese is framed by two sets of mountains, the Adirondacks and the Catskills, and three major rivers, the Hudson, St. Lawrence, and Mohawk. There are also many lakes located in the Adirondack Park, which is part of the New York State Forest Preserve and contains six million acres of protected forest and wildlife. Notable lakes include Lake Champlain and Lake George. Two lesser rivers, the Susquehanna and the West Branch of the Delaware, both have headwaters located within the state.

The diocese adjoins Canada and the states of Vermont, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. Although it is large, major highways including the Northway (I-87), the New York State Thruway, and State Highway 88 link all areas of the diocese with one another. The climate is typical of the Northeast, with four distinct seasons and periodic extreme temperatures, especially at higher elevations. Annual snowfall ranges from 60 to 90 inches, and this presents the opportunity for a host of outdoor recreational activities.

From 2010 to 2020, New York State experienced a moderate population growth of 4.2%, but from July 2020 to July 2021 there was a decrease of 1.6%. Overall state population growth is expected to continue over the next few decades, although at a much slower rate than in other states. While the state has been experiencing out-migration to other states, the decrease in population in upstate regions has been balanced by growth in urban areas. These population trends are mirrored in the diocese of Albany where only two deanery regions have experienced population growth as evidenced by the 2020 US Census report. These two, the Metropolitan Deanery and the Upper Hudson Deanery, both include urban centers. The remaining deaneries, which include many small towns and rural areas, have experienced some population declines.

According to the New York State Department of Labor, New York's employment projections for 2018-2028 include an average increase of 10.4%, with the largest employment growth being projected for Health Care and Social Assistance, Education, and Professional/Business Services sectors. The Diocese of Albany is home to well-known educational institutions including Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), Skidmore College, Union College, and the State University of New York with its many campuses throughout the region. There are also large medical centers, business enterprises, and government institutions located throughout the diocese. It is within these employment sectors that many of the people of the diocese work. In addition to its urban centers, the diocese is also made up of many rural areas where the growth of large commercial farms as well as organic farms has taken place. New York State ranks among the largest producers of apples in the country, second only to Washington State, and many of these orchards are located within the diocese.

The many cultural and performing arts centers in the diocese include Proctor's Theater, Saratoga Performing Arts Center (summer home to the New York City Ballet and the Philadelphia Orchestra), The Egg in Albany, and the Glimmerglass Opera House. Historical sites linked to the Revolutionary War, the French and Indian War, and the Industrial Revolution are located throughout the area of the diocese. Museums and art galleries abound, including the New York State Museum, The Adirondack Experience (Museum on Blue Mountain Lake), the Fenimore Art Museum, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, and the famed "Olana", historic home of artist Frederic Church. Recreational opportunities include a vast array of hiking trail systems, many state parks, and more than 44 lakes for boating and fishing. Deanery regions are favorite areas for both summer and winter recreation, and tourism is a growing industry. Notable attractions are Saratoga Race Course, Gore Mountain and Whiteface Mountain for skiing, and Lake Placid, home

of the 1932 and 1980 Olympic Games. Agrotourism is expanding and farm-to-table cuisine is a growing attraction.

The Diocese of Albany is made up of 106 congregations organized into eight deaneries which span 19 counties and vary in geographic size. The deaneries include Hudson Valley, Metropolitan, St. Lawrence, Northern Adirondack, Southern Adirondack, Susquehanna, Upper Hudson, and Western Mohawk.

The Diocese of Albany is a diverse church community, and the demographics of its members reflect that.

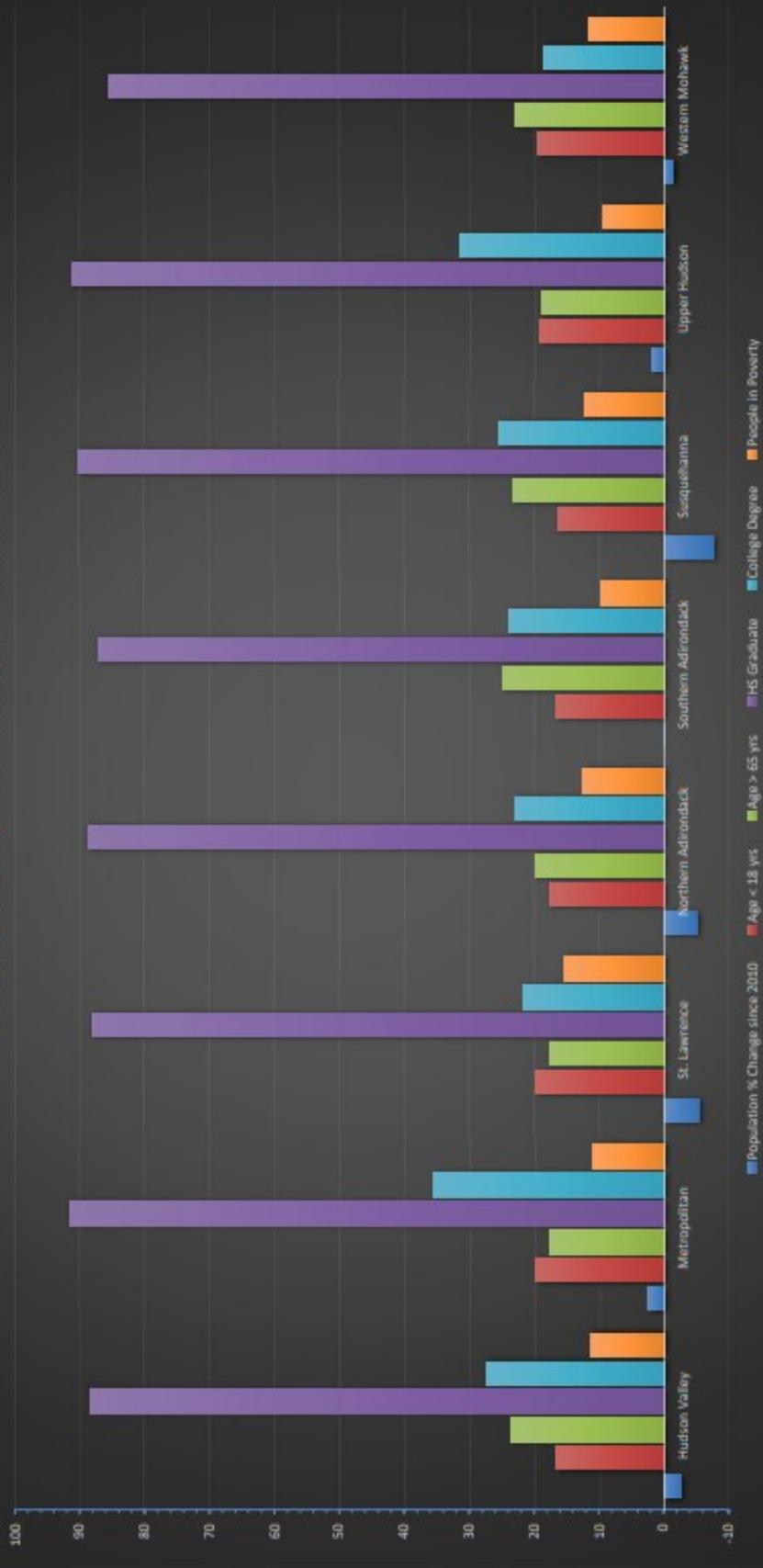
Chart Summary Notes: Average County Demographics by Deanery

Information Source: U.S. Census Data- April 2020.

Population changes for the counties in which the deaneries are located reflect an overall decline except in the counties associated with three deaneries: the Metropolitan and the Upper Hudson where there have been moderate increases and the Southern Adirondack where population change appears flat.

Much of the population in deanery counties is above the age of 65 and has graduated from high school, with a significant concentration of the population holding college degrees. Poverty rates range from 15.9% of the population to 6.3%.

Average County Demographics by Deanery



Average County Race/Ethnicity Demographics (for Diocese)

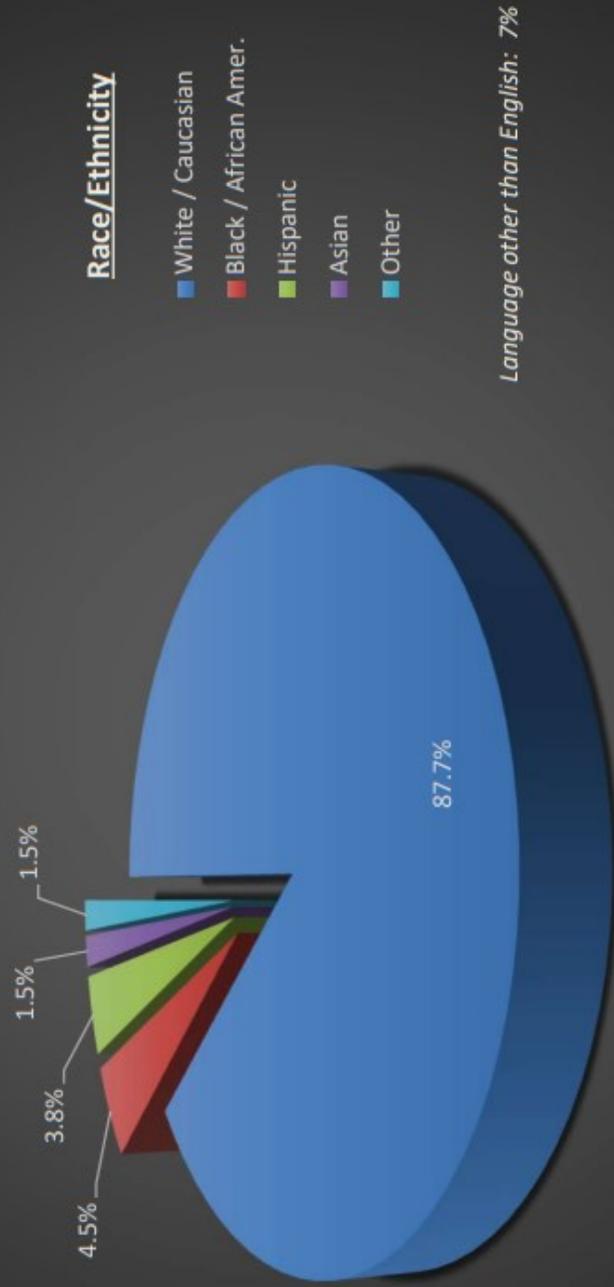


Chart Summary Notes : Average County Race/Ethnicity Demographics

Information Source: U.S. Census Data- April 2020

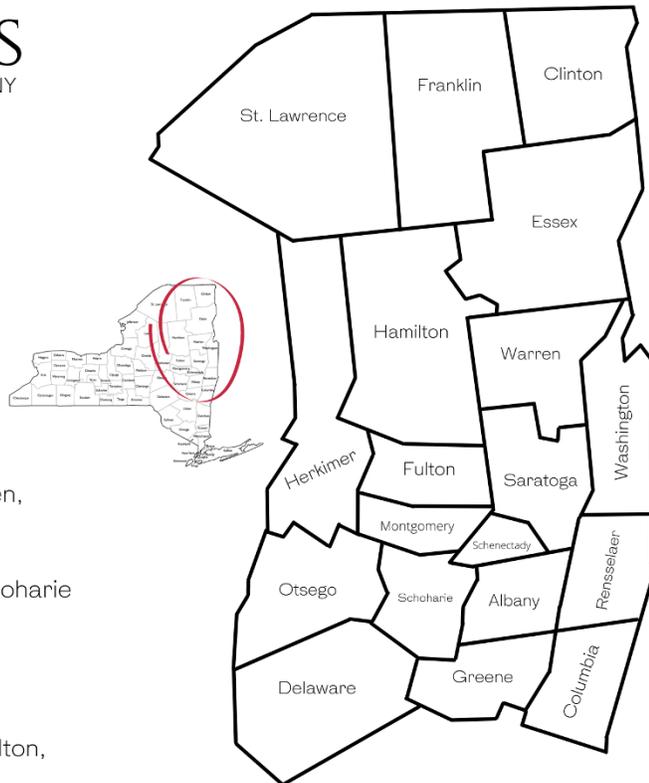
Race/Ethnicity demographics for the counties which make up the diocese reflect that the majority of the population is White/Caucasian. Some race/ethnicity demographics are above the average for the diocese including those for the Metropolitan deanery counties, where 12% of the population is Black/African American, 6% is Hispanic and 5% is Asian. In both the Western Mohawk and Hudson Valley Deanery counties, 6% of the population is Hispanic. While 2020 census numbers were not available, it should be noted that the Akwesane/St. Regis Nation is present in the northern reaches of the Diocese. The population numbered 3,288 in the 2010 census.

While the average percent of diocese county populations using a language other than English is 7%, in the counties associated with the Metropolitan Deanery this percentage is 10%.



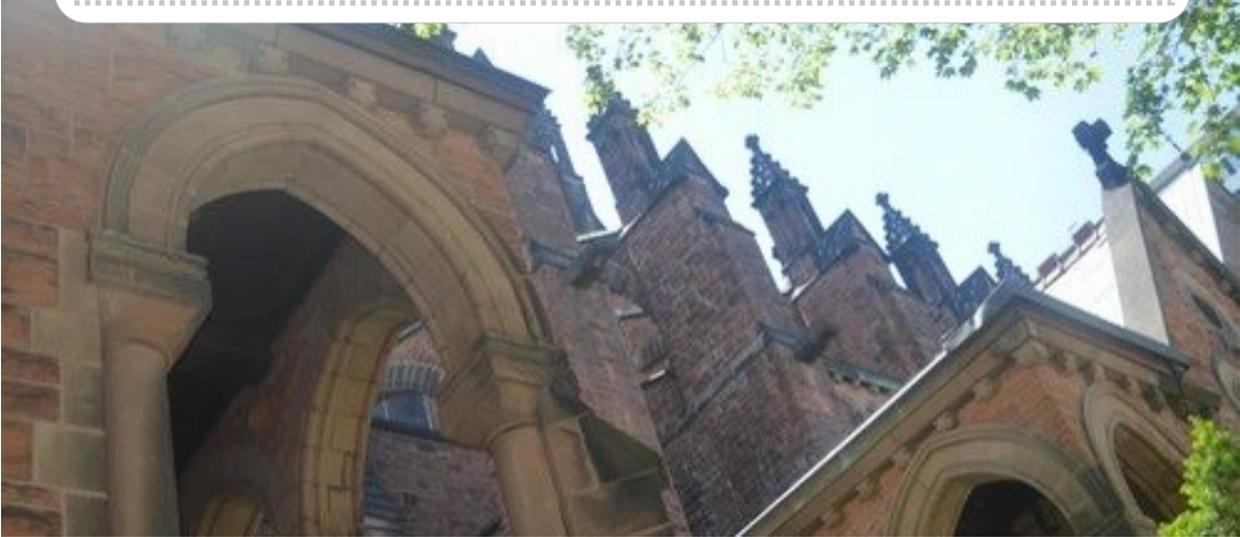
DEANERIES EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALBANY

<u>DEANERY</u>	<u>COUNTIES</u>
Hudson Valley:	Columbia, Greene
Metropolitan:	Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady
St. Lawrence:	St. Lawrence, Franklin
Northern Adirondack:	Clinton, Essex, Franklin
Southern Adirondack:	Essex, Hamilton, Warren, Washington
Susquehanna	Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie
Upper Hudson:	Rensselaer, Saratoga, Washington
Western Mohawk:	Hamilton, Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery



For parishes visit albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/deaneries/

STATISTICAL TRENDS



I. Clergy

In the 19-county Diocese of Albany, as of January 2022, there are a total of 215 clergy listed as active or retired.

Of those, 109 are canonically resident or licensed active Priests, including 19 Priests classified as "retired" who are still active in ministry.

There are 52 active Deacons including one Deacon classified as "retired" still active in ministry.

There are 48 retired Priests listed who are not active.

There are six retired Deacons listed who are not active.

Total Priests and Deacons active, 161.

Total Priests and Deacons retired and not active, 54.

Total, 215

Source: The Diocesan Directory, January 1, 2022

NOTE: clarification as to status of "retired," "Retired" means listed by TEC as retired due to age and/or for purposes of the Church Pension Fund. Of those clergy listed by the Diocese as "retired," 19 Priests and one Deacon are listed in the Directory as still actively working in Diocesan ministry.

In 1994, the Diocese had a total of 223 clergy listed as active or retired. Of these, 77 were active canonically resident priests, 82 were canonically resident priests retired or non-parochial, 39 were priests licensed to officiate in the diocese and 25 were deacons canonically resident.

Source: 1994 Diocese of Albany Profile

I.a.Clergy: Deacons

"The Diocese is blessed with an active and energetic group of Deacons who are assigned to parishes by the Bishop where they exercise ministry at the altar and among congregations. Many also have a servant ministry doing administrative work for the Diocese. Still others have a servant ministry outside the parish in prisons, hospitals, etc. The Deacons are trained in the Diocese."

Source: 1994 Diocese of Albany Profile

II.Ongoing Clergy Searches

In the Diocese of Albany, as of May 2022:

Five congregations are searching for full-time clergy;
Seven congregations are searching for part-time clergy.
Total 12

Source: Transition Minister, The Rev'd Dr. Elizabeth Papazoglakis

III.Congregations

In the 19-county Diocese of Albany, as of May 2022, there are 106 congregations, with three not in union with the Diocesan Convention.

Source: *The Rev. Meaghan Keegan, Director of Administration, e-mail May 26, 2022*

In 2020 there were 108 congregations.

Of the 106 congregations, 65 (60 percent) have fewer than 100 communicants.

In 1991, the Diocese reported 132 congregations.

Source: 1994 Diocese of Albany Profile

Comparison with adjoining and nearby dioceses:

In numbers of Congregations, compared with Upstate New York dioceses, Western Massachusetts and Vermont, Albany has a large number of parishes. New York and Connecticut have many more congregations.

ALBANY:	106
Central New York:	85
Connecticut:	155
New York:	193
Rochester:	51
Vermont:	45
Western Massachusetts:	51
Western New York:	56

Source: 2020, Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics,
www.generalconvention.org/

Sixty (60) percent of congregations have fewer than 100 parishioners.

In 2020, the Diocese reported parish membership as follows:

In 2021, the Diocese reported members as follows:

Active Members: 10,391

Communicants in Good Standing: 7066

# of parish members	2020	2019	2018
400 and up:	4	5	6
300 to 399:	6	6	5
200 to 299:	7	7	9
100 to 199:	26	27	27
99 and under:	65	63	60
Total:	108	108	107

Others Active: 7306

Total: 24,763

Source: 2021 Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports

Comparison with adjoining and nearby dioceses:

In numbers of members, Albany is ahead of Upstate New York dioceses, Western Massachusetts and Vermont. New York and Connecticut have many more members.

Total Active Members, Communicants in Good Standing, and Others Active:

ALBANY:	24,763
Central New York:	18,194
Connecticut:	75,008
New York:	83,871
Rochester:	14,163
Vermont:	10,133
Western Massachusetts:	22,847
Western New York:	13,170

Source: for Albany, 2021 Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports

Source: 2020, Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics,
www.generalconvention.org/

Average Sunday Attendance: 2,963 in 2021

In 2020, 3,974

Average per 106 congregations in 2021: 30

Source: 2021 Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports

Total celebrations of Sunday Eucharist: 9,491 in 2021

In 2020, 4,868

Average per 106 congregations in 2021: 89.5

Source: 2021 Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports

Source: 2020, Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics,
www.generalconvention.org/

IV. Deaneries

The Diocese is divided into eight Deaneries, each chaired by a Dean, who is a Priest appointed by the Bishop. Each Deanery elects a lay representative to the Diocesan Council.

V. Baptisms

In 2021, baptisms nearly doubled from the previous year, probably due to the reopening of churches after the height of the COVID pandemic.

Baptisms for the year 2021:

16 years and older: 23

Under 16 years: 77

Total: 100

Confirmed or received: 11

Source: 2021 Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports

In 2020:

16 years and older: 14

Under 16 years: 37

Total: 51

Confirmed or received: 7

Source: 2020 Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics,
www.generalconvention.org/

In 1994, 48 adults and 484 children were baptized.

Source: 1994 Diocese of Albany Profile

Comparison with adjoining and nearby dioceses:

In numbers of baptisms, Albany ranks ahead of Upstate New York dioceses, Western Massachusetts and Vermont. New York and Connecticut report many more baptisms.

ALBANY:	100
Central New York:	36
Connecticut:	172
New York:	179
Rochester:	31
Vermont:	9
Western Massachusetts:	48
Western New York:	35

Source: Albany data from 2021 Albany Diocese compilation of parochial reports; other dioceses from 2020 Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics, www.generalconvention.org/

VI. Parish Financials

Operating Revenue of Parishes of the Diocese, Years 2018 through 2021

The Diocese of Albany has many small parishes, as measured in operating revenue.

Sixty-five (65) percent of Diocesan parishes have operating revenue of \$99,000 or less.

Forty-one (41) percent of Diocesan parishes have operating revenue of \$50,000 or less.

In the last couple of years, more parishes reported less revenue; the number of parishes with operating revenue of \$99,000 or less has increased.

Only 17 parishes (16 percent of the total) have operating revenue of \$200,000 or more. Only 11 parishes (10 percent) have operating revenue of \$251,000 or more.

Category: Budget	Numbers of parishes in each category:			
\$	2021	2020	2019	2018
600,000 and up	1	0	1	0
500,000 to 599,000	1	1	0	0
400,000 to 499,000	3	2	3	2
300,000 to 399,000	3	4	3	3
251,000 to 299,000	3	2	2	3
200,000 to 250,000	6	10	9	8
151,000 to 199,000	6	7	3	5
100,000 to 150,000	13	8	11	14
51,000 to 99,000	26	25	23	22
50,000 and under	43	31	31	36
Zero or no report	1	19	30	22
Totals	106	109	116	115

Sources: For 2021, Diocese of Albany compilation of parochial reports
 For 2018, 2019, 2020, Excel file from Diocesan office, The Rev. Meaghan J. Keegan,
 Feb. 7, 2022

Average pledge:

Category: Diocese of Albany, average pledge
Comparison with adjoining and nearby dioceses:

Compared with Upstate New York dioceses, Western Massachusetts and Vermont, Albany ranks ahead of Upstate New York dioceses in average pledge, but behind

\$	2020	2019	2018	2017
	2475	2476	2314	2294

New York, western Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Average pledge, 2020, in dollars:

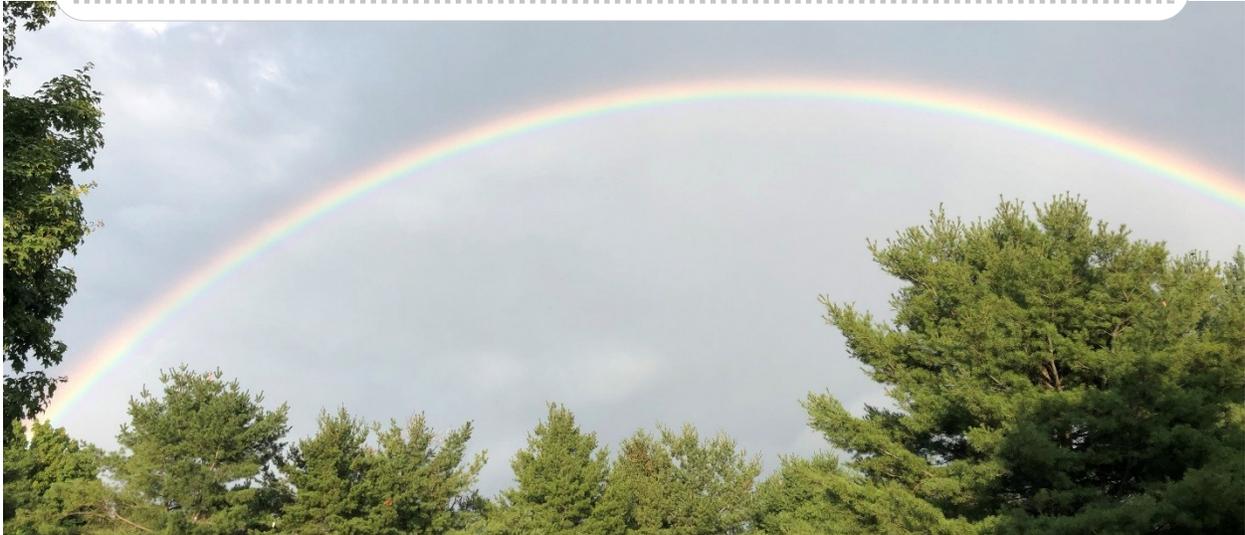
ALBANY:	2475
Central New York:	2048
Connecticut:	2835
New York:	3066
Rochester:	2318
Vermont:	2223
Western Massachusetts:	2523
Western New York:	2156

Source: 2020 Episcopal Church Annual Table of Statistics,
www.generalconvention.org/

In 1994, there were 5,386 pledging units in the diocese, and \$5,309,952 received through plate offerings and pledges. Money spent on work within the congregations was \$7,834,934. Money spent on the diocese and general church was \$881,103. Money spent on outreach was \$201,298.

Source: 1994 Diocese of Albany Profile

SURVEY SUMMARY



The diocese conducted a survey of its members from February 7, 2022, to March 11, 2022. The purpose of the survey was to gather input from respondents about the skills, talents, and vision they hope to see in the future Bishop of the Diocese of Albany. Information was also obtained about priorities for the mission focuses that respondents believe are important to the diocese. There were 895 survey respondents. These included 81 priests, 32 deacons, 516 laypersons and 261 wardens/vestry members.

Nearly 58% of survey respondents have attended a church in the diocese for more than 20 years. 21% of survey respondents have attended a church in the diocese for more than 10 years.

78% of survey respondents attend church services at least weekly and 55% of respondents actively engage in ministry between 1 and 10 hours weekly.

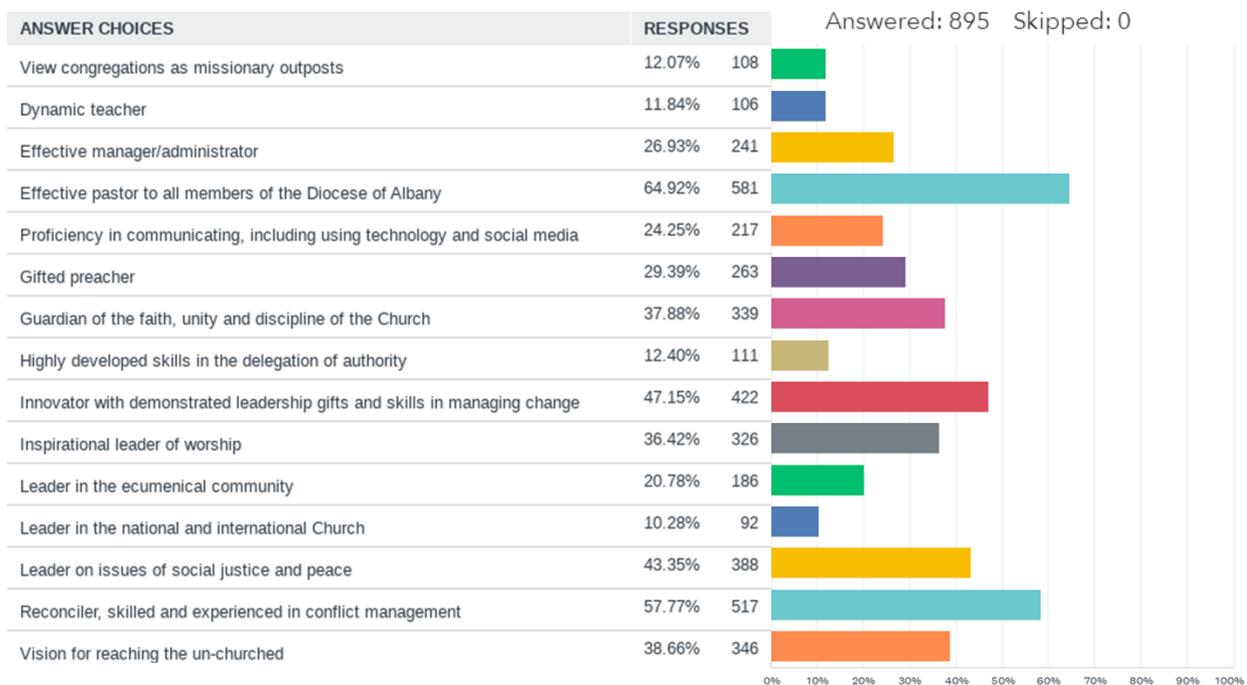
Survey results reflected that the top 5 priorities for the skills, talents, and vision held by the future Bishop of the Diocese of Albany should include:

- Being an effective pastor to diocese members
- Demonstrating leadership skills especially in managing change through innovation
- Experience in effective conflict management
- Leadership on matters of social justice
- Having a clear vision for reaching those who are unchurched

The top 5 diocese mission focus areas that were of most importance to survey respondents included:

- Support of existing congregations
- Conflict resolution between groups
- Ministries to youth and young adults
- Attention to pastoral concerns
- Focus on matters of social justice

What skills and interests should our new bishop have? (Choose up to five).



Access the entire survey

[HERE](https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Final-Results-PPT-basic-info.pdf)

(or visit:

<https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Final-Results-PPT-basic-info.pdf>)

MINISTRIES OF THE DIOCESE



REACHING OUT IN MINISTRY AND MISSION

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:40

The ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany (EDO) are rich in scope and depth, stretching from our local communities to faraway regions of the country and world. Through our outreach, we strive to be the hands and feet of Christ and to share His love with all.

For more than two decades it has been normative in the Diocese of Albany that candidates for Confirmation write the Bishop a letter stating, in their own words, why they wish to confirm their faith, and how they plan to live out their baptismal promise to "seek and serve Christ in all persons." It is with that in mind, that we offer some examples of how the people of our Diocese have felt called to embrace their baptismal ministry.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ALL SAINTS

The Cathedral of All Saints is one of the first structures in America built to serve as an Episcopal cathedral. Modeled on Anglican cathedrals of Great Britain, from its inception it supported a cathedral church, a school for girls, a hospital, a convent, an orphanage, and an industrial school. Its first bishop, William Croswell Doane,

wanted an “instantly ancient” medieval cathedral for the new Albany diocese, created by a division of the Episcopal Diocese of New York in 1868. Today, in the heart of Albany’s Capital District with doors open for weekday Mass, the Cathedral maintains an important Christian witness to the city of Albany and its many visitors.

Consistent with the beauty of the Neo-Gothic cathedral, its mission and outreach are through the charism of beauty of worship and art. The world-class Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys has sung continually since 1872 and was part of the founding vision for the Cathedral. When boys join our Choir, they receive a music education and Christian formation that affect their families and the course of their futures.



In 2018, the Cathedral adapted its part-time missionary position to increase outreach through arts programming; this mission came to be known as Cathedral Arts. As COVID moved programming to Zoom, Cathedral Arts brought the online Hidden Cathedral Poetry Celebration to email inboxes and increased workshops in visual art, contemplation, writing and poetry. These, along with videos of guest speakers, livestreamed services and the Dean’s Forum series have benefited both those within our diocese and those beyond, who gather for learning and Christian fellowship.



Ministry to the diocese includes the hosting of regional confirmations, the Acolyte and Altar Guild Festival, and the Chrism Mass during Holy Week. The Annual Bible Symposium is an ecumenical event receiving support from both the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Dioceses of Albany and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, with whom the

Cathedral of All Saints has enjoyed a long-standing covenant relationship.

The small and faithful congregation and staff are currently engaged in a capital campaign to repair and restore the Cathedral so that its mission to the diocese, to the city of Albany, and to others who need the Gospel can continue.

CHRIST THE KING CENTER



Henry David Thoreau once said, "Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads." These words perfectly describe Christ the King, where a pervasive feeling of serenity, Sabbath and solidarity combined with a warm, welcoming atmosphere have the power to rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit. The Center is nestled in the rolling hills of Washington County, near Saratoga Springs and Albany, and consists of over 400 acres of scenic property. As a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, Christ the King offers people of all ages and denominations retreats, conferences and classes; healing ministry; and youth programs.

The Center is well-equipped for groups of any size, offering a variety of comfortable and affordable lodging: private rooms, couples' suites, family accommodations with adjoining rooms, B&B-style lodging, and dorm-style for larger groups. The three youth lodges, with common areas and bunk boarding, especially lend themselves to team building and youth retreats. There are a multitude of meeting spaces, many equipped with sound and video capabilities. Guests are able to partake in a wide range of activities. The property has a beautiful lake, 18-hole disc golf course, sports courts and fields, a trail system, and a pond for fishing. In the winter, snowshoeing and sledding can be enjoyed. In addition to these self-guided pursuits, there are facilitated activities which include archery and archery tag, axe throwing, bubble balls, ropes courses, team-building games, escape rooms, and campfires with refreshments.

Good food which feeds both the body, and the soul is a valuable addition to any meeting, retreat, camp session or celebration. Christ the King Center offers a wide choice of delicious, nutritious cuisine made with fresh and often locally sourced ingredients. The Community Dinner Series on the first Friday of each month has become a popular and much-anticipated time for many, and special events such as

parties and receptions can also be arranged. In all cases, the meals enhance every experience at the Center and are a vital part of its ministry.

Above all, the staff is eager to help with faith formation and spiritual renewal in every way they can. Their prayer is that all who come there would be able to rest, renew and find peace. Following are descriptions of specific ministries at the Center which further those goals:

Beaver Cross Ministries



Beaver Cross Ministries is a union of the former Beaver Cross Camps and the Youth Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany. Its mission is to Build Community in Christ, and it welcomes youth from any faith background into a relationship with the Risen Lord. Beaver Cross offers a summer camp program, year-round retreat opportunities, and support for diocesan parishes with youth-based programming.

The ministry operates an overnight camp and a day camp program for grades K-12. These sessions run through July and August. About 120 children in total attend the overnight camp sessions, and 100 the day camp sessions. Approximately 20 young people from around the diocese are hired and trained each summer to staff the camps. Other current Beaver Cross activities include year-round youth retreats; a daily, Christian after-school youth group program at Christ the King Center; a monthly young adult Bible study program with a yearly retreat; and a new monthly game night in Clifton Park. Beaver Cross Ministries also maintains partnerships with Race Track Chaplaincy of America, through which summer day camp scholarships for children of backstretch workers at the historic Saratoga Race Course are provided; with Albany's St. Francis Mission, through which children in the local Burmese community receive overnight camp scholarships; and with the diocesan Mission Committee, leading to the hosting of community meals, 'mission day' events, youth mission trips and more as young people are encouraged to be the hands and feet of our Lord. Finally, to support parishes throughout the diocese in reaching the youth in their communities, Beaver Cross Ministries is available for Sunday visits, delivering messages and devotionals, parish-level community events, and information and advice.

Through their programs and outreach, Beaver Cross Ministries aims to equip youth leaders of the future with the foundation and skills needed for the ministries to which they are being called.

The Healing Ministry at Christ the King

The mission of this ministry is to bring Jesus' hope and healing to all who desire them. At Christ the King, many people suffering in body, mind, soul and/or spirit have received solace through prayer and healing through the transforming power of Jesus Christ. The Healing Ministry provides a weekly Tuesday morning healing service comprised of worship, testimony, Scripture, a message, and Holy Communion followed by anointing and individual ministry by prayer teams. More intensive, personal prayer is available by appointment for individuals, couples and families.



Additional opportunities for healing and learning include a veterans' ministry (see below); quarterly Days of Quiet and Healing focused on soaking prayer; all four levels of the School of Healing Prayer developed by Christian Healing Ministries; and training through the Trauma Healing Institute.

The Welcome Home Initiative ministers healing for military veterans who have served their country in combat or any other service context that has caused suffering from post-traumatic stress or moral injury, and who need soul repair. Spouses are also encouraged to participate. The format of the program helps veterans and spouses understand the hidden impact of combat and trauma and provides a safe place for emotional healing through Holy Spirit-led discussion and prayer. This essential spiritual and emotional healing is a complement to healing received from psychiatric and social services. Several retreats are held during the year, one for women, one for alumni who have been to WHI previously, and one for all veterans. There is no charge to veterans or their spouses, thanks to the generous donations of individuals, churches, and businesses.

To fulfill its other primary goal of spiritual direction and formation, the Healing Ministry offers a wide variety of seminars, conferences, and retreats, such as an annual Advent retreat, an annual women's retreat, a men's retreat, clergy retreats and clergy spouses' retreats, group retreats for Vestries and ministry teams, and

personal prayer retreats. Most of these feature prominent and inspirational speakers. Currently upcoming are a *Run Alpha Training* retreat, the 3-day *Attending to the Soul: Deepening Our Faith Journey Retreat*, and *Life in Christ*, a once-monthly, 10-session course in ascetical theology and spiritual practices. Further complementing these many offerings, the beautiful grounds, tranquil setting and holy atmosphere of Christ the King create an environment that is conducive to healing, renewal and growth through communion with the Lord and with brothers and sisters in Christ.

HEALING A WOMAN'S SOUL

At least 1 out of 4 women will be victims of domestic violence in their lifetimes. Women in this situation need a safe place, people who believe them and listen with compassion, and intervention and support to attain a healthy lifestyle. Secular agencies offer physical and emotional aid but cannot provide the ongoing spiritual healing needed. Healing a Woman's Soul, Inc., in partnership with local shelters, organizations and parishes within the Diocese of Albany, aims to help fill that gap.

Healing A Woman's Soul began as a women's retreat ministry at Christ Church, Coxsackie, in 2007. Soon after, the important component of domestic abuse education and training to parishes was added. With a Christian focus and always with prayer, HAWS ministers directly to victims and staff in shelters, rehabilitation facilities and halfway houses in the greater Capital Region by offering classes, support groups and retreats. These are scheduled to resume in Fall, 2022, after a lengthy pandemic pause—during which time requests for support and outreach have greatly increased. A return to respite work is also anticipated.

This ministry is staffed by volunteers; funded entirely through donations of money and goods from individuals, churches and other groups as well as a grant from Episcopal Charities; and remains tirelessly dedicated to the prevention of domestic violence and healing of its victims—one woman at a time.

CURSILLO

The Episcopal Diocese of Albany supports the goal of the Cursillo Movement—to bring people to Christ—and provides Cursillo weekends for committed Christians who desire to renew and deepen their relationship with the Lord and learn ways to share the light and love of Christ with others. Cursillo weekends are patterned on

Jesus' example as He searched out and called a small group of potential leaders (pre-Cursillo); trained and inspired them by word and deed (Three-Day Weekend); and linked them together and sent them out into the world (Fourth Day). To date, the Episcopal Diocese of Albany has offered 76 Three-Day Weekends for men, women and couples, often meeting at the Christ the King Center. Fourth Day activities include area wide Ultreya meetings of Three-Day Weekend "alumni" who gather periodically to support and encourage one another. Approximately ten Ultreya groups have been established within the Diocese, meeting regularly to kindle the flame of Christ's Light and Love.

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

The Order of the Daughters of the King® is an active presence in the Diocese of Albany with membership numbering about 270 women from 27 chapters. The Diocese also has one Junior Daughters chapter (for girls and women between the ages of 7 and 21.) Since chapters are spread throughout the vast geographical area of the Albany Diocese, participation at the annual Assembly held each autumn helps Daughters foster and maintain relationships with one another. Chapters typically meet once a month to pray and study and encourage one another, strengthening their bonds and equipping them to help fulfill the Mission of The Order as the extension of Christ's Kingdom through prayer, service, and evangelism.

Each Daughter adopts a Rule of Life which includes a Rule of Prayer and a Rule of Service. Prayer comes first as it undergirds and nourishes everything that flows from it. Daughters vow to pray daily for each other, their churches, their clergy, and challenges made known to them, and to give thanks for the blessings and joys in their lives.

Drawing from habitual practices of prayer, support for one another, and service to their communities, the Daughters were well-positioned to render comfort and aid to those suffering from isolation and fear during the Covid-19 pandemic. Already in place were prayer chains and ministries to the homebound and those in nursing homes, to name but a few of the ways Daughters were already seeking to extend Christ's Kingdom. Nimble, they bolstered and expanded existing ministries to help serve new needs.

Presently, several women in the Diocese are in the discernment process to become Daughters, engaged in the three-month study and preparation process. In addition, new chapters are being considered, in partnership with parish clergy.

ALBANY REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT MINISTRY AND ST. FRANCIS MISSION

The Albany Refugee Resettlement Ministry has been serving Tri-City communities for over three decades, mainly through St. Francis Mission in Albany. ARRM endeavors to assist the displaced people from every corner of the world who have escaped from wars, totalitarian governments, poverty, persecution, and natural disasters and made their way here to our Diocese. The organization welcomes these refugees and aids their assimilation into American culture.

In recent years, the largest wave of refugees coming to the Albany Diocese have fled from ethnic persecution, violence and war in the Southeast Asian country of Myanmar (Burma). Before arriving here, these people have endured years of danger and hardship. Then, finally resettled in the United States, they are faced with a whole new set of challenges. They come to the local community knowing very little English, lacking marketable job skills, and ill-prepared for life in this culture and climate. The Albany Refugee Resettlement Ministry sponsored the first of these refugees, and St. Francis Mission continues Jesus' work of meeting their ongoing needs. The parishioners of St. Francis support the refugees in a variety of different ways. In addition to providing a place of worship, they collect diapers for their children; help them acquire necessary clothing, blankets, and furniture; drive families to and from church; and guide them through the process of obtaining health care and financial aid. In return, the refugee families bring a love for the Lord and great faith which bless the entire congregation.

LOAVES AND FISHES

With its mission of welcoming the stranger, offering loving acceptance to everyone, and bringing people to Jesus, Loaves and Fishes is a feeding ministry and much more. Based in the kitchen and parish hall of St. Francis Mission, it is run by volunteers from various churches in the diocese and provides up to 200 hot, healthy meals every Saturday for guests from the West Hill neighborhood of Albany. Also available are clothing; household and health care items; a food pantry where those attending can choose what they need with dignity; and the opportunity to receive prayer for physical and spiritual needs.

EPISCOPAL CHARITIES OF ALBANY

Episcopal Charities of Albany (ECA) was established in 1999 with the funds from the sale of Child's Hospital to Albany Medical Center. ECA is a separate entity with its

own EIN number. Its mission is to support health and health related issues within the 19 counties of the diocese.

The related Eye Care Assistance program is funded by a bequest in 2003 restricting the funds to eye care. Episcopal Charities of Albany offers direct assistance in the form of grants to indigent persons regardless of faith, who reside within the 19 counties of the Diocese and need eye care, or who otherwise suffer from eye disorders, and are unable to afford such eye care or necessary related services. Grants are available limited to eye examinations, the purchase of eyeglasses, purchase of special equipment or medication due to eye disease, and surgical procedures to restore or maintain normal vision.

These ministries/funds are administered by an independent board which provides grants to needy individuals and families of all faiths, as well as to organizations providing health care related services to those in need. This initiative also sponsors health care screening programs, wellness education and preventive health care programs. The Episcopal Charities of Albany has provided significant financial support for Christ the King Healing Center, the nursing staff at Beaver Cross Camps, the Hospital Chaplaincy Program, Healing A Woman's Soul, Alpha Pregnancy Care, Safeguarding God's Children (the child sexual abuse prevention program) and others. Episcopal Charities thus plays an essential role in undergirding key ministries of the diocese which promote physical, mental, and spiritual good health.

MINISTRY REACHING BEYOND THE DIOCESE

The purpose of the Mission Committee is to provide a forum for missions--empowering, equipping, encouraging, and evangelizing throughout the Episcopal Diocese of Albany for local, regional, national and international missions. Members of the Mission Board are appointed by the Bishop. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, they are committed to sharing God's love in Jesus Christ and eager to proclaim His Kingdom with everyone. For more information, please visit the EDOA Mission Committee Facebook page.

The Mission Committee seeks to:

- establish mission committees in every church in the diocese.
- assist the parishes of the diocese in organizing and carrying out local mission activities as well as short-term and long-term missionary

opportunities near and far; provide support for these activities through discernment, preparation, prayer and debriefing. Small financial gifts to mission teams may also be offered as a supplement to personal funds and team fundraising.

- initiate and encourage prayer support for mission initiatives at home and away.

In the Episcopal Diocese of Albany, mission is not viewed as a one-way relationship but rather as a partnership based on shared faith and mutual encouragement and support—the worldwide Church working together in mission. In the words of Paul to the Romans (1:11-12), “I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong—that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.”

Internationally, the Diocese of Albany enjoys a very close and long-standing link with the Diocese of Maridi in South Sudan, which joyously celebrated its centenary in January. The two dioceses are in frequent contact, pray fervently for each other’s needs, and recently joined together for a Zoom prayer event. In addition to this relationship, individual parishes within our diocese have partnered with churches, schools and their communities in Belize, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Madagascar, Malawi, the Diocese of Down and Dromore in Northern Ireland, the Diocese of Juba in South Sudan, and Zimbabwe. EDOA congregations have provided financial support, aid in times of natural disaster, and collaborative work on needed projects. Many productive, uplifting and Spirit-filled mission trips to these areas have taken place in past years, and with great anticipation teams from the diocese will resume visits to partners in the Dominican Republic and Zimbabwe this year. Since the start of the war in Ukraine, several EDOA clergy and laypeople have also traveled to Poland to help work with refugees at the border.

Nationally, the Diocese has done mission outreach in Appalachia for many years and is also currently working on a new partnership with Navajoland. On a local/regional level, the Mission Committee supports ministries at Beaver Cross and Loaves and Fishes, described previously, as well as Sleep in Heavenly Peace Bed Build.

These endeavors are in fulfillment of the last words of Jesus to his disciples before He ascended to heaven: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

INDIVIDUAL PARISH MINISTRIES

Despite differences in size, demographics and finances among the congregations which make up this diocese, our parishes are committed to serving their brothers and sisters in the community, region, nation and world. They meet this call in a wealth of ways, some of which include:

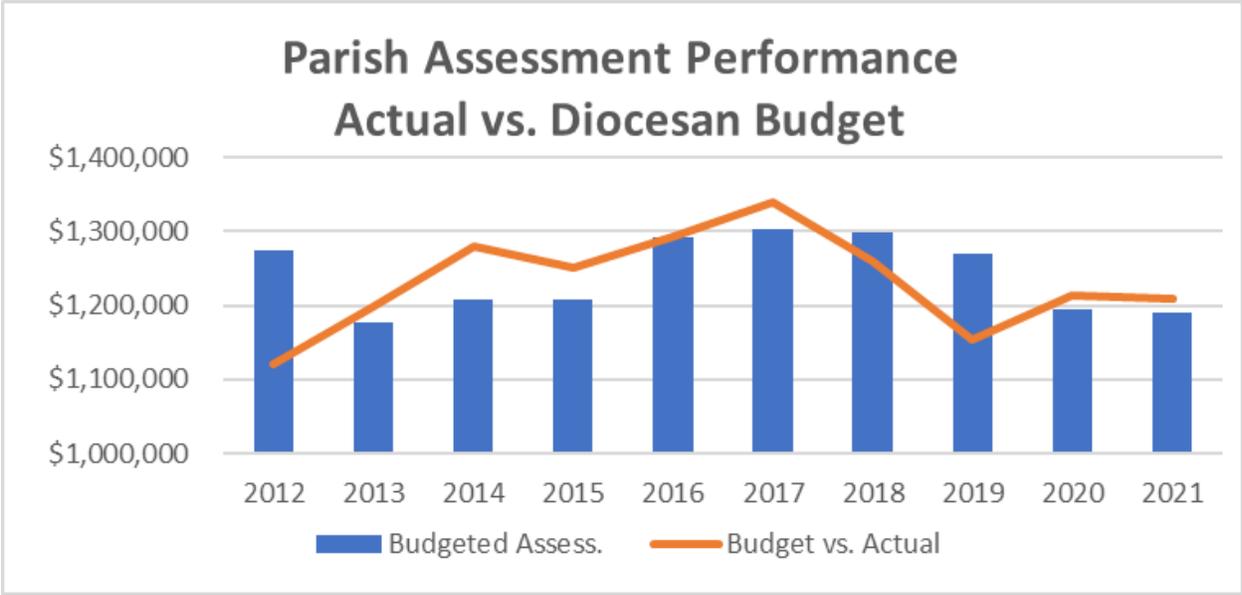
Feeding ministries, outreach to schoolchildren and their families, active support of the internal and external ministries of the Diocese, support for and partnering with outside ministries and organizations helping those in need, offering the use of church buildings for outside groups, knitting, sewing and quilting ministries, and tithing to God from church income for outreach ministry to meet needs beyond the parish

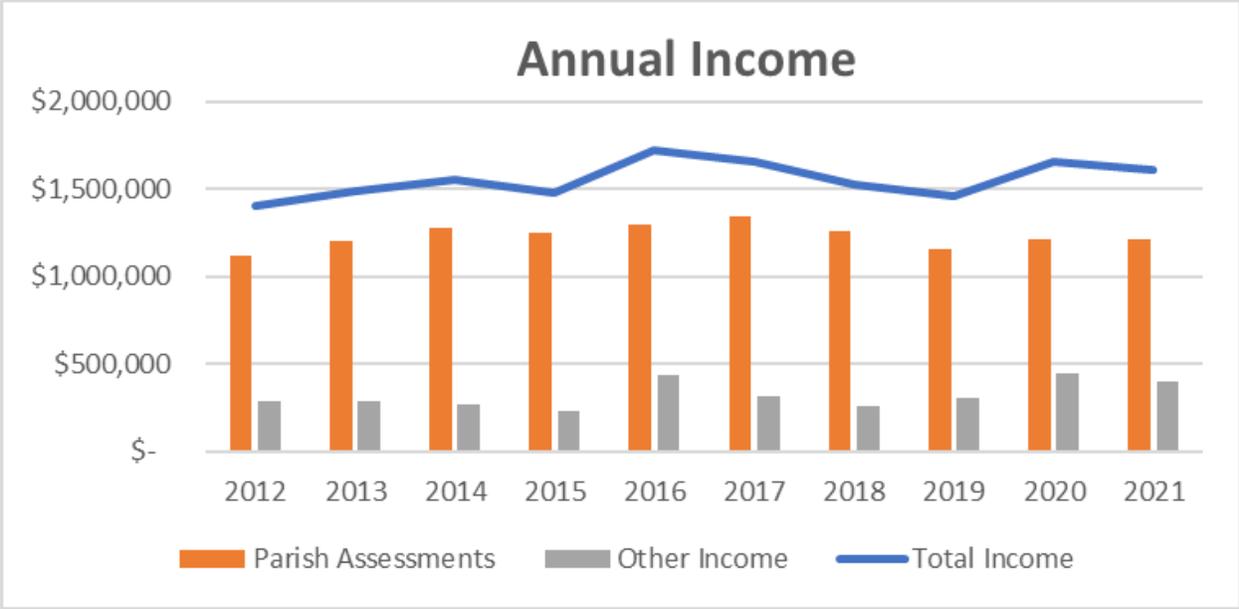
It should be noted that ecumenical ministry is prevalent and an important model in the Diocese, especially in its more rural areas. Such ministry blesses those involved and reinforces the message that we are all one in the body of Christ, sharing a common purpose. For a more complete description of individual parish ministries in the EDOA, please click [HERE](https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/edoa-profile-document-links/). (or visit: <https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/edoa-profile-document-links/>)

This document is not all-inclusive. It is based on information shared with the Ministries Workgroup of the Profile and Search Committee.

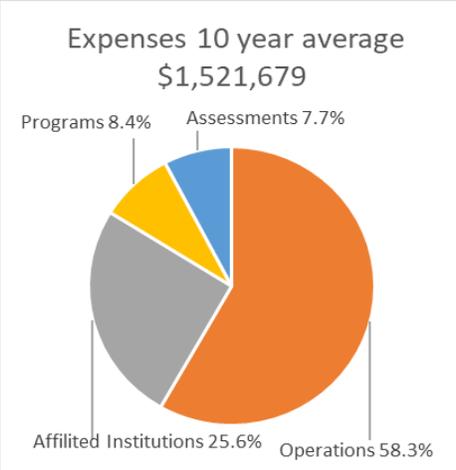
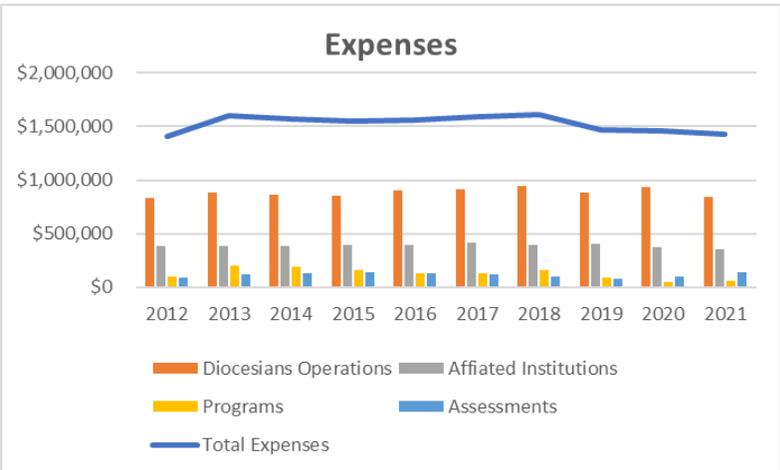
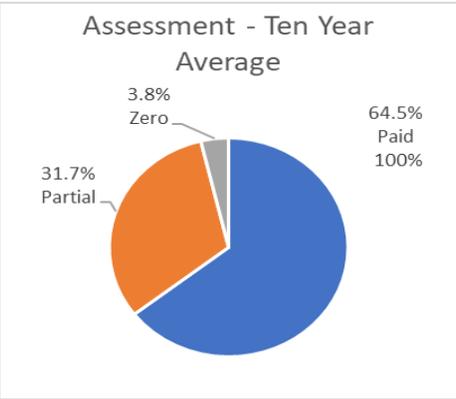
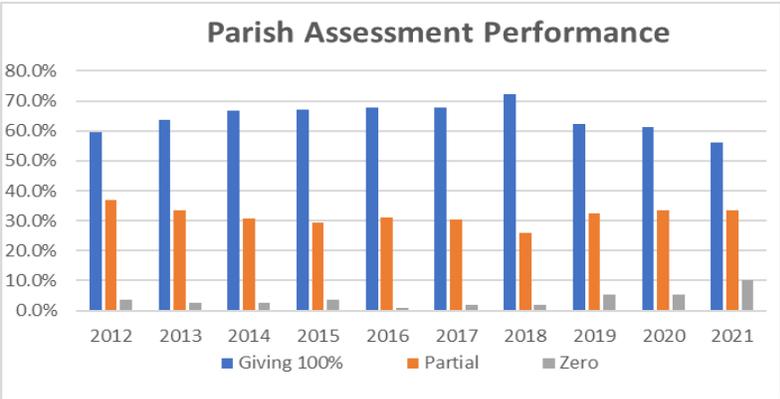
Through all these ministries and in the power of the Holy Spirit, the people of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany live out in word and deed the Great Commandment of Jesus. To God Be the Glory!

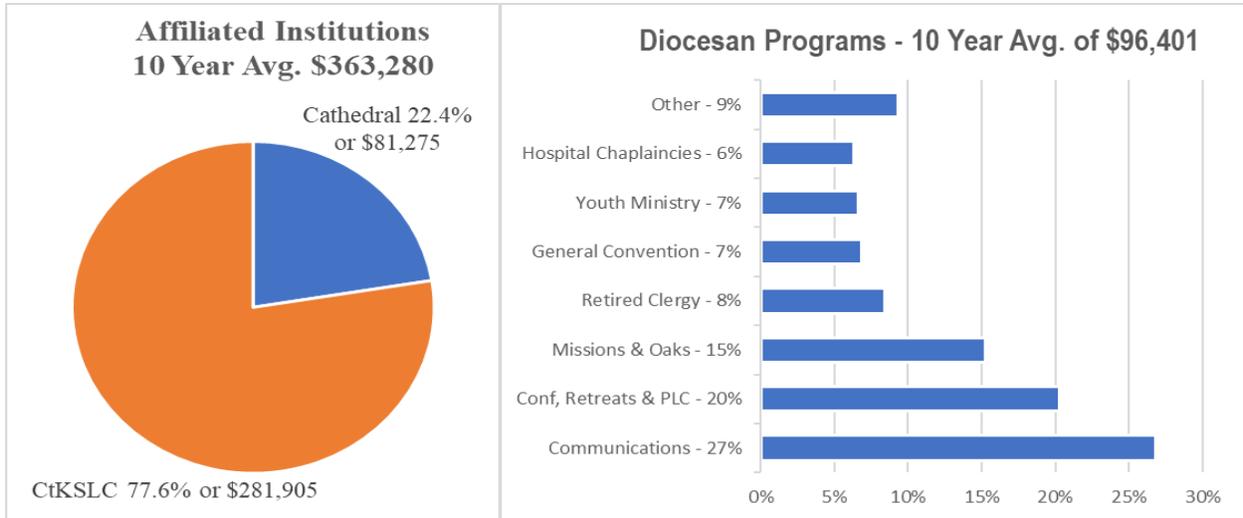
FINANCIAL





Budgeted Assessments – Anticipated income based on historical performance





Our diocesan operating budget depends most notably on parishes meeting their annual assessments, and we acknowledge and celebrate those parishes that achieve this goal. As indicated above, 65% of our parishes successfully fulfill their financial obligation; this makes clear the need to work with the remaining 35%, supporting and helping them as they work to achieve 100% of their assessment.

The demographics of the Diocese of Albany are such that addressing that 35% will be a challenge. Congregations are getting older, with many members living on fixed incomes, and many of our parishes are in rural, low population areas, so those congregations are small. The economics of the rural areas are such that, in addition to the aging population, lower wages allow young families to earn enough income to meet normal expenses but leave little extra for anything else. This encourages our younger parish members to move away to more economically rewarding areas such as California, Texas, and North Carolina. Urban parishes, too, are forced to address many of the same economic issues, as well as the cost of utilities and maintenance of larger older buildings.

With low incomes and low attendance many parishes are compelled to spend a significant amount of their pledged income to keep the doors open and pay their clergy, thus leaving little left over to meet other obligations. The Diocese of Albany is also closing parishes in towns and cities hit hard by the changes in the manufacturing industries. Those industries created considerable wealth during much of the 1900's, but have now closed or moved, leaving urban populations with significantly lower median incomes.

Diocesan support of Affiliated Institutions (Christ the King Spiritual Life Center and our Cathedral) has averaged 25.6% of the total annual operating budget for the period 2012-2021.

Financial support for Youth Ministries and Beaver Cross is made possible as follows:

- Parish Choice pledge - 2022: \$12,300
- The interest from four (4) ADIT* accounts for Youth Ministries and Beaver Cross scholarships - 2021: \$25,207
- A significant portion of the Diocesan Grant for CtKSLC is designated for Youth Ministries and Beaver Cross.
- Episcopal Charities contributes approximately \$13,000 annually for a medical professional to be in attendance while Beaver Cross Camp is in session.

**ADIT- Albany Diocese Investment Trust*

A Clergy Sabbatical Fund, as of 12/31/2021, totaled \$1,393,933.47.

LISTENING SESSIONS



"Whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task," (1 Timothy 3:1)

One of the major components of developing the diocesan profile for the 10th Bishop of Albany is including the voices of those who constitute the body of Christ in our diocese. A bishop is called to share in the leadership of the Church throughout the world and in a specific region. As the chief pastor of a particular expression of Christ's Church, a bishop inherits the faith of the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs and the responsibility to serve those who continue to follow the apostles' teaching in a specific region and at a contemporary time. Therefore, it is important that the candidates for the next Bishop of Albany hear from their potential flock. To that end, the Profile and Search Committee created a Listening Session Working Group -- composed of two clerics and two lay members -- to hear from the people of Christ's Church in the Episcopal Diocese of Albany about what they would like to see in their new bishop.

Following distribution of the 2022 electronic survey, eight Listening Sessions in the style of town hall meetings were held throughout the diocese during the months of April and May 2022 to gather additional input from the clergy and parishioners across nineteen counties about their hopes and concerns regarding the call of a new bishop.

These Listening Sessions involved each of the eight deaneries that comprise the Diocese of Albany. The Listening Session Working Group was assisted by each regional dean to facilitate these sessions. Each session was well attended, and it is

the conviction of this working group that the whole diocese (both rural and urban parishes alike) and a wide breadth of opinion was well represented in every way. Taken as a whole, these Listening Sessions produced a coherent and true picture of who we are as a diocese.

More than 230 members of our parishes and worship congregations pre-registered to attend. At least four members of the Profile and Search Committee were present at each session, and a member of the committee facilitated each session with four questions related to the person of the next bishop. Each dean kept a record of all the comments made on a flip chart which were reviewed by all who participated to ensure accuracy. Additionally, contemporaneous notes were taken by the Listening Session Working Group to provide greater context, accuracy, and completeness. A significant number of comments offered to the Profile and Search Committee dealt with the Diocese of Albany's relationship with The Episcopal Church, especially as it relates to General Convention Resolution 2019-B012, and the many challenges that every parish experiences throughout the Northeast such as significant financial concerns, a major decline in church attendance, a recent pandemic, and a culture in which the Church is no longer viewed as essential.

After carefully listening to and recording all the viewpoints expressed during these sessions, the Working Group has concluded that something unique is taking place in the Diocese of Albany. It is evident that the diocese has much to contribute, not only to The Episcopal Church, but to the Church throughout the world. Much of the frustration voiced in these Listening Sessions is related to the untapped potential of the people and the deep faith that informs the variety of opinions and beliefs that were heard. In the end, the prevailing atmosphere generated by these Listening Sessions speaks of the faith that is already present, the hope for what the diocese can be, and the love of God and neighbor. It is our conviction that this report provides a true and accurate snapshot of who we are as a diocese, and will be the first step in welcoming the 10th Bishop of Albany.

A Summary

Personal Characteristics and Spiritual Gifts

"Please find us a bishop so trusting in God's love, that all those who come to our churches seeking Jesus' love may find welcoming arms and loving embraces without reservation."

Strong, inspirational preacher

Visible, approachable

Compassionate listener

Humble, with a sense of humor

Joyful

Throughout the eight Listening Sessions, the desire for a compassionate bishop was expressed by many voices. The kind of person the people of the diocese of Albany desire as their next bishop is approachable, present, a sincere listener, and someone who can see Christ in every person they encounter. Several people noted that a bishop who is a humble person with a good sense of humor is the kind of personality they think would be a good fit for the diocese, a “people person.” Above all, the desire for a bishop who shows the fruits of the Spirit and who is a person of deep prayer, spiritual discernment, and embodies the baptismal covenant to love all people, strive for justice and peace, and respect the dignity of every human being.

Skills and Talents

“A bishop that’s creative enough to find new ways to bring the Gospel to those in need.”

A bishop in the Church is first and foremost a pastor and an icon of Christ. However, the administrative, financial, and spiritual needs of the diocese require an individual with demonstrable skills and talents.

Experience with conflict management

Ability to manage diocesan staff and volunteers

The ability to know one's limits and delegate accordingly

Skilled at recognizing the financial challenges of our diocese and parishes

Many comments were made concerning how the next bishop should be a capable preacher and teacher who can equip people in the diocese to answer questions about Jesus, the Church, and how we might all move forward together in Christian service—“someone who can model and teach us how to work or get along with people with whom they disagree,” and “someone who is sensitive to the situation in the world in which God has placed us; but also deeply rooted in Holy Scripture and the traditions of the Church.” There is also a great desire that our next bishop have leadership experience, especially experience with conflict management. Our next bishop should have appropriate administrative skills and the ability to delegate when needed. Our next bishop must be able to guide us financially and help develop realistic strategies to mitigate the financial challenges of our diocese as a whole, as well as individual parishes. As with many other dioceses, management of the dioceses’ finances is a major concern and every Listening Session recognized the need for a bishop who will be able to chart a new course in identifying and resolving

major financial challenges related to Christ the King Center and individual parishes that are dealing with “life or death” financial situations. Our new bishop should have a good understanding of the significant differences between urban and rural churches and avoid an Albany-centric management structure.

Top Priorities for the Future of the Diocese

“Our next bishop should have a vision for healing and reconciliation that they can articulate”

The Episcopal Diocese of Albany is at a critical juncture in its history as part of The Episcopal Church and much of the hope regarding the future depends upon a bishop who can appreciate the complexity of the diocese, and is also committed to the doctrine and discipline of the national church.

Hold and defend God’s Word.

A “pastor to the pastors” and nurture the clergy’s spiritual health and well-being so that they may minister effectively.

Articulate a vision for a robust diaconate.

Inspire our youth.

Committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Respect for conservatives as well as progressives.

Consistent in visiting parishes and understanding rural churches and urban churches.

Committed to their responsibility in the Episcopal Church.

One of the major concerns at this time in the Diocese of Albany is healing and reconciliation in the wake of our past bishops’ stance on matters of human sexuality and marriage. Many are committed and prepared to work through these difficult issues and continue to live and worship with people with whom they disagree on any number of issues. The current discourse has the potential for further division among clergy and parishioners. Above all, the 10th Bishop of Albany must be committed to bringing Christ-centered focus and resolution to these matters.

Ability to Reconcile and Bring Healing

Our next bishop must be willing to face head-on the issues that have the potential to divide us further.

Our next bishop must be capable of doing the hard work of healing and reconciliation and guiding us through what this means in the Church.

Our next bishop must have experience in demonstrating how those who may disagree with each other can find common ground.

Our next bishop must lead by example.

Our next bishop must demonstrate what following Christ during this time looks like.

Our Experience as a Working Group

The Listening Sessions revealed sincere and respectful reflection upon those characteristics we would like to see in our next Bishop. Recognizing that we might see disagreement or disorder in the meetings, the working group admittedly “planned for the worst”, but the faithful in the Albany diocese showed us their best. Participants were keen to give their heartfelt recommendations for the type of leader needed. While some individual attendees were fervent in their opinions, none was intimidating or discourteous to others in the room.

The working group embarked on this assignment not knowing who would be willing to participate and what would be proffered. The goal of our task, namely, to create a safe space for candid expression and earnest hearing, was never lost on any of us. As our travel across the diocese progressed, we found a diversity of Episcopalians volunteering their opinions, including young and newly-committed members as well as those involved in the Albany diocese for many years. While in some cases we heard distress and pain, it seemed to be a cathartic release for many. A wide variety of opinions were made known: from those in support of progressive church policies to those wishing to preserve more traditional views. Regardless of the participants’ views on current issues, it was clear that they were eager to participate and appreciative of the invitation to be heard. As representatives of the larger Profile and Search Committee, we have confidence that the diocesan faithful are ready to move forward, leaving the conflicts and tensions of the past behind in favor of reclaiming our shared connection to the Body of Christ here in the Episcopal Diocese of Albany.

Appendices

Click [HERE](#) for the notes from all 8 Listening Sessions

(or visit: <https://albanyepiscopaldiocese.org/edoa-profile-document-links/>)

1. Listening Session Notes–Cathedral of All Saints
2. Listening Session Notes - Catskill

3. Listening Session Notes–Clifton Park
4. Listening Session Notes–Oneonta
5. Listening Session Notes–Online
6. Listening Session Notes – Plattsburgh
7. Listening Session Notes–Potsdam
8. Listening Session Notes – Glens Falls

Our Prayer In This Time Of Transition

Heavenly Father, we praise and thank you for this, your diocese of Albany. Inspire and sustain us in this time of transition. Incline our hearts to do your will, and so direct us in your ways that the leader you are raising up to be our Bishop will find here joyful disciples, making disciples, united in faith, unflagging in hope, and steeped in mutual charity.

In your mercy, accept our repentance, and grant us peace; look with patience on our enthusiasms; and pour rich gifts and grace upon all who are entrusted with the ongoing work of your church; so that, with diligence and charity, we may discern correctly and walk righteously in your ways.

This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

This Profile is a publication of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany



Episcopal Diocese of Albany
Disciples Making Disciples

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