

# The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany



The Very Reverend Tom Malionek, *President*  
Janet Papa, *Secretary*

September 12, 2023

Lesser Feast of John Henry Hobart  
Third Bishop of New York

To the Congregations, Laity, and Clergy  
of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The special meeting of diocesan Convention to elect the Tenth Bishop of Albany convened this past Saturday and discerned the Rev. Jeremiah Williamson, Rector of Grace and Saint Stephen's, Church, Colorado Springs, in the Diocese of Colorado, to become Bishop-Elect of the diocese and soon, by the grace of God, confirmed and consecrated the Tenth Bishop of Albany. Bishop-Elect Jeremiah received 50.91% of the clergy vote, and 74.71% of the parish vote on the fourth ballot.

The Bishop-Elect addressed the Convention on Saturday after the conclusion of our discernment. We have asked him also to direct a letter to us all as a step in our new relationship with him. That letter is attached to the Weekly Update e-mail for September 12, 2023, and can also be found on the [Bishop-Elect page](#) of our web site and on the diocesan Facebook page. We welcome him, along with his wife, Jennifer, and their sons, Oscar, and Isaiah, warmly to our diocesan family.

Much remains to be done yet before Father Jeremiah can be consecrated Bishop and assume jurisdiction. A majority of the diocesan bishops in the Episcopal Church must first consent to his election; also, a majority of the standing committees of dioceses of the Episcopal Church must also, separately, consent. There is a 120-day window in which that can happen, beginning soon, after other preliminary paperwork is completed. After that, if consents have been received from both Bishops and Standing Committees, the Consecration date can be set. As it is, we expect the consecration to take place in early 2024.

Until then, **the Standing Committee remains the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.** Father Jeremiah must focus on the confirmation process. He and his family will be busy with arrangements to move to New York State. While prayers and expressions of support will certainly be welcome, please do not burden him with requests or information at this time, so that they can enjoy a smooth transition. An orderly orientation process will introduce Fr. Jeremiah systematically to the affairs of the diocese from a variety of perspectives.

The process of discerning a bishop has been long and intense. Following our Rules of Order, we began in the first half of 2021 with the election, by Deanery, of members of the Profile & Search Committee and the supplemental election of at-large members by the Standing Committee. We also engaged an election

*Disciples Making Disciples*

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consultant, the Rev. Cn. Brian Nordwick, to facilitate and help guide us through the process. Thanks to him, we have not only complied fully with the various canons and regulations that apply, we have benefitted from his experience, and that of his fellow consultants, as well as the best practice guidelines of The Episcopal Church in consultation with the Presiding Bishop's office.

After gathering information and input from around the diocese, including listening sessions in each Deanery, the Profile & Search Committee composed a Profile of the Diocese, released August 13, 2022. This was followed immediately by an open period in which anyone could submit recommendations for the Committee to screen. After researching and interviewing the recommended names, the Committee invited semi-finalists to a discernment retreat. After a week of prayer following the retreat, the Committee identified four candidates, and submitted them to the Secretary of the Diocese to be placed in nomination at the Convention. This was followed by an open nomination period.

Extensive information on all candidates and on the process was made publicly and uniformly available. Prior to the Convention, the four candidates undertook a tour of the Diocese to give the clergy, deputies, and faithful in various geographic parts of our area a chance to meet them in person.

On Saturday, September 9, 2023, the Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany met in special session at the Cathedral of All Saints, 62 South Swan Street, Albany, New York. The Very Rev. Dr. Leander Harding, Dean of the Cathedral, celebrated the Convention Eucharist. The Very Rev. Tom Malioneck, President of the Standing Committee, preached the sermon.

The Convention was called to order by the Rev. Marian Sive, Secretary of the Diocese. A revised Agenda was adopted and a quorum established. By the end of the day, 115 of the 182 clergy entitled to vote (canonically resident priests and deacons), and 207 deputies, representing 88 of the 106 churches of the diocese, were in attendance.

The Very Rev. Tom Malioneck was by unanimous consent elected President *pro tempore*. He then appointed the Very Rev. Megan Castellan of the Diocese of Central New York as parliamentarian; Mr. Mark Brittell as Head Teller; and Mr. Rob Drumm as Assistant Teller. Also assisting the President was Mr. Tom Bell, Esq., Assistant Chancellor of the Diocese. Padgett Communications of Tampa, Florida, provided electronic voting equipment, software, and services. The entire Convention, starting with the opening Mass, was livestreamed on YouTube and recorded.

Ms. Sue Ellen Ruetsch, Chair of the Profile & Search Committee, addressed the Convention to establish that the Profile and Search Committee had, at the completion of its work, earlier transmitted the names of the candidates that Committee had identified to the Secretary of the Diocese. The Secretary then placed these names in nomination. The nominations were seconded by Ms. Barbara Breen of Saint Mary's, Lake Luzerne.

The Rev. Scott Garno, Rector of Saint Stephen's Church, Delmar, New York, in the Diocese of Albany, received 49.09% of the clergy vote and 25.29% of the parish vote on the fourth ballot. The Very Rev. Neal Longe, Rector of Saint Ann's Church, Amsterdam, New York, in the Diocese of Albany, and the Rev. Geoff Ward, Rector of Saint Christopher's, Church, River Hills, Wisconsin, in the Diocese of Milwaukee, both received less than 5% of the combined clergy and parish votes on the third ballot, and were thereupon removed from the ballot as required by the Rules of Convention.

Our diocese is immensely grateful to all of the candidates, as well as to their spouses and families, for their generous dedication and sacrificial commitment to our diocese throughout a demanding and intense discernment process. Our prayers are with them for God's rich blessing on their lives and

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ministries. We ask God to bless, as well, the individuals who allowed themselves to be considered by the Profile and Search Committee.

Our deepest and most heartfelt thanks go to all the people mentioned above, and the many leaders and volunteers who served in various capacities.

### **The Profile and Search Committee**

The Rev. Jonathan Beck  
The Rev. Kathryn Boswell  
Ms. Barbara Breen  
Ms. Holly Chamberlin  
Mr. John Dietrich  
Ms. Jennifer Firth  
The Rev. Justine Guernsey  
The Rev. Paul Hunter  
The Rev. Laura Miller  
The Very Rev. David Ousley  
Ms. Pat Outhouse  
Mr. David Palmquist  
The Very Rev. Dr. Tom Papazoglakis  
The Rev. Thomas Pettigrew  
Ms. Franny Preston  
Ms. Helen Reilly  
Mr. Keith St. John  
The Rev. David Sullivan  
Ms. Judith Sweet  
The Rev. John Thompson  
The Rev. Jack Whritenour  
The Rev. Darius Mojallali (Chaplain, non voting)  
The Rev. Marian Sive (Confidential Secretary, non-voting).

### **The Election Procedures Committee**

The Rev. Marian Sive, Chair;  
The Rev. Meaghan Keegan;  
Mr. Tom Bell, Esquire;  
The Rev. Nathan Ritter;  
Lay Canon George Marshall;  
The Very Rev. Leander Harding;  
The Very Rev. Sonya Boyce

### **Diocesan and Convention Staff**

The Rev. Meaghan Keegan  
Mr. Christopher Fitz  
Mr. Warren Wright-Sedam  
Mr. Shawn Denis  
Ms. Kyra Fitzgerald  
Ms. Laura Johnson  
the hospitality staff of Christ the King Center  
The Rev. Abigail Bee

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The Rev. Deborah Beach  
Mr. Mark Brittell  
Mr. Robert Drumm  
and an army of volunteers

### **Cathedral of All Saints**

The Very Rev. Fr. Leander S. Harding, Ph.D., Dean  
Ms. Meredith Ewbank, Administrative Assistant to the Dean  
The Rev. Sandra McGowan  
The Rev. Jason Radcliffe  
Mr. Woodrow Bynum, Director of Music and Choirmaster,  
The Cathedral Choir  
Mr. Thomas Odell, Lloyd Cast Organ Fellow  
Mr. Jonathan Keeler  
Mr. Larry Norville  
Ms. Brynna Carpender-Nardone  
Mr. Carter Wilkins  
Mr. Ben Nardone  
and many others

### **Candidate Shepherds**

Ms. Sue Ellen Ruetsch  
Fr. Nathan Ritter  
Fr. Tom Pettigrew  
Mtr. Sonya Boyce

There are many others who deserve mention; if we have omitted anyone inadvertently here please let us know so that we can recognize you.

Father Tom made the point in his sermon at the Convention Mass that giving God the benefit of our doubt allows God the chance to surprise us. We pray that God will continue to pour out undeserved grace upon us, and to exceed even our wildest expectations.

We urge you to read Fr. Jeremiah's letter carefully, and prayerfully. Please read and ponder it, and keep praying. A prayer for the Bishop-Elect is also available on the [Bishop-Elect page](#).

In the peace of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Malionek" followed by a small cross symbol.

The Very Reverend Tom Malionek  
President, Standing Committee of the Diocese of Albany

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Janet Papa

Secretary, Standing Committee of the Diocese of Albany