



THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALBANY

Mr. Christopher Cassidy, *President*
The Rev'd Thomas J. Pettigrew, *Secretary*

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Rev. Kathy Alonge-Coons	1 st / 2026	Barbara Breen	2 nd / 2028
The Rev. Lynne Curtis	1 st / 2028	Chris Cassidy, <i>President</i>	1 st / 2028
The Very Rev. Art Garno	2 nd / 2028	Jean Stevens Lauria	2 nd / 2026
The Rev. Tom Malionek	2 nd / 2026	David Malsan	1 st / 2027
The Rev. Derik Roy	1 st / 2027	Sue Ellen Ruetsch	2 nd / 2026
The Rev. Tom Pettigrew, <i>Secretary</i>	1 st / 2027	Gary Sorensen	1 st / 2027

Highlights of the Standing Committee Meetings held in October 2025

The Standing Committee met at the close of the annual Diocesan Convention on October 11th. We congratulated and welcomed new members Deacon Lynne Curtis and Chris Cassidy; and returning members Barbara Breen & Fr. Art Garno, all of whom were elected during the convention.

We also thanked Fr. Scott Garno and Janet Papa, whose terms ended, for their faithful service to the Diocese. Both Fr. Garno and Janet will continue to serve in other ways: Father Garno will continue to serve as Secretary of Convention and was re-elected as a Deputy to the General Convention. Janet Papa has been asked by the Bishop to serve on the Finance Committee of the Diocese.

Fr. Tom Malionek, who served as President of the Standing Committee through much of the transition and the Election of the Tenth Bishop of Albany, had made it known that he would like to step down as President, though he will continue as a member of the Committee for the final year of his term. The role of President of the Standing Committee is a busy one in ordinary times, but during the transition in the Episcopate, with the added role of leading the Standing Committee through the work of being the “Ecclesiastical Authority,” it was an even more challenging and time consuming job. The Bishop and Members thanked Fr. Malionek for his hard work and dedication during his time as President which saw the election of Bishop Williamson two years ago.

The Committee also thanked Janet Papa whose departure, after serving her two-three year terms (members may only serve two consecutive three year terms at one time), left the position of Secretary open. Janet also served her time as Secretary during the Episcopal transition.

The Committee elected Christopher Cassidy to serve as President of the Standing Committee. Chris is a parishioner at St. Stephen's in Delmar where he has served as Lector, Vestry member, Senior Warden, Finance Committee Chair, Stewardship Committee Chair, Search Committee Co-Chair. He has also served as a Delegate to Diocesan and General Conventions. He has previously served as a member of the Standing Committee and is a Senior Vice President at Wells Fargo Advisors in Albany. He and his wife Debby reside in Delmar, New York.

The Committee elected The Reverend Thomas Pettigrew, Rector of St. George's Church in Schenectady, as Secretary of the Standing Committee. Fr. Pettigrew was ordained in Deacon and then Priest in 2011. He served as Rector of the Church of the Holy Cross in Warrensburg from 2011 to 2023, and now as Rector of St. George's since 2023. He has served previously on Diocesan Council and as a member of the Bishop's Search Committee. He is currently serving his first term on the Standing Committee.

The Standing Committee convened for its regular monthly Meeting on October 21 at Christ the King Center in Greenwich. Members were present in person and also via Zoom.

The Committee received and consented to a request from the Bishop for the Release and Removal from the Ordained Ministry of a Priest of the Diocese who had retired and moved across country. The priest had written Bishop Jeremiah asking to be released because they had moved away from the Diocese and were no longer functioning as a priest in their retirement.

The Committee also received a request from a parish of the Diocese to begin the process of selling the current property of the parish including both the church building and the Rectory. In the Episcopal Church and under the New York State Religious Corporation Laws, a Vestry wishing to sell property must have the consent of the Bishop and Standing Committee. The practice in our diocese has been that parishes communicate with the Bishop and Standing Committee well before the need for the final approval of any sale.

The Wardens and Vestry of the Parish shared with the Bishop and Standing Committee that they had for many years struggled with the costs of maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and infrastructure and that their long-term goal was to continue to build and maintain a thriving congregation. Their fear is that the cost of the buildings, the size of which is beyond the ability of the current congregation to maintain, would deplete their reserves and make that goal unattainable. The Committee registered their understanding and concern for the difficulties that the parish faces, recognizing that many parishes throughout the diocese and the Church face similar challenges. The Committee approved the request to move forward with listing the properties while also encouraging the leadership of the parish to work with the Bishop's Office in seeking out resources and alternative solutions to meet the challenges they face.

The Committee also heard a report from the Trustees that they had received and reviewed a comprehensive engineering report on state of the Swan Street buildings as part of a larger project of discerning the best use of those properties for the benefit of the Diocese. The Bishop said the report was a mix between better and not-better than he thought it might be. Since his consecration, the Bishop and his staff have made use of both the Swan Street and Greenwich offices.

The Bishop and Committee discussed the recent Diocesan Convention, highlighting the great success the Diocesan and CtK Staff had achieved in holding the Convention at CtK for the first time. The Bishop also reflected on how proud he was that the Convention was able to discuss the resolutions presented with charity and compassion towards one another.