

This draft report reflects information received by October 03.

With a 150-word limit, each candidate was asked to review the job description for the position and discuss how their gifts, experiences, skills, and interests would aid this work, and how they would invigorate and/or stimulate the ministry of that particular diocesan leadership group.

## NOMINEES AT-A-GLANCE

### Commission on Ministry (pg. 3-4)

#### Clerical Order

**Ruth Anne Garcia**  
St. James, Kent

**Kim McNamara**  
St. Hugh of Lincoln, Allyn

**Barbra Weza**  
Chaplains on the Harbor, West Port

**Sheryl Haase**  
St. Anne's, Washougal

**Laura Murray**  
St. Andrew's, Port Angeles

#### Lay Order

**Maria Weber**  
St. John the Baptist, Seattle

### Diocesan Council (pg. 5-6)

#### Columbia (3 yr)

**Kay Flores**  
St. Timothy, Chehalis

#### Holy C (3 yr)

**Robert Stevens**  
St. John the Baptist, Seattle

#### Eastside (3 yr)

**Sharon Simes**  
St. Margaret's, Bellevue

#### At Large Clergy (3 yr)

**Ruth Anne Garcia**  
St. James, Kent

**Courtney Jones**  
Christ Church, Anacortes

### Standing Committee (pg. 6-8)

#### Clerical Order

**Sabeth Fitzgibbons**  
Trinity, Seattle

**Kendall Haynes**  
Non-Parochial

**Steve Thomason**  
Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle

**Jedediah Fox**  
Redeemer, Kenmore

**James Thibodeaux**  
St. Christopher's, Olympia

#### Lay Order

**Lisa Beske**  
St. John's, Gig Harbor

**Sherina James**  
Christ Church, Tacoma

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH GOVERNING BODY/OFFICE

**Commission on Ministry:** The primary canonical responsibility of the Commission on Ministry (COM) is to assist the Bishop in matters related to discernment and selection of persons for ministry; in the guidance and pastoral care of all candidates for Holy Orders, as well as lay professionals and other baptized persons; and in matters pertaining to lifelong learning. The Commission does this by facilitating the process for authentic individual discernment in community, by listening to the Holy Spirit and the sacred in each person, and by helping discerners grow spiritually as they identify their place in building the Kingdom of God. Members of the COM represent all orders of ministry laid out in the Catechism. Members are appointed for three-year terms by the Bishop, with terms beginning after diocesan convention. The work of our diocesan COM is done through periodic meetings as well as two in-depth retreats for those in process for holy orders. High value is placed on authenticity and integrity; listening and communication skills; intentional work focused on anti-racism skills, equity and inclusion; and compassionate understanding.

**Diocesan Council:** Between Diocesan Conventions, the Council oversees the budget and program goals of the Diocese, carrying out priorities adopted by Convention. Council develops a proposed budget to be ratified by the next convention. Members assume and accept the role of public relations and goodwill toward individuals and congregations facilitating connectedness within the Diocese. Members accept assignments, work on task groups, and attend regional, committee and commission meetings as necessary. Membership of the Diocesan Council is in transition through 2024, based on convention action in 2020. When complete, the Diocesan Council will include the bishop; 14 elected members: 1 clergy or lay member from each of the 10 regional ministries and 4 at-large members (2 clergy and 2 lay); and up to 6 BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members appointed by the bishop.

**Standing Committee:** The Standing Committee serves as a council of advice for the bishop and becomes the diocesan ecclesiastical authority in the bishop's absence. It makes decisions about the sale, encumbrance or disposal of real property belonging to parishes of the Diocese. It interviews and makes recommendations to the bishop on candidates for Holy Orders, and the consent of the Standing Committee is required for ordination. The Standing Committee also gives or withholds consent to the election of bishops throughout the church and has judicial responsibilities in the case of clergy misconduct where the clergy or the complainant does not accept the adjudication of the bishop. By canon, no two members of the Standing Committee may be from the same congregation.

## COMMISSION ON MINISTRY - LAY ORDER

three year term



**Maria Weber** - *Retired, St. John the Baptist, Seattle.* As a lifelong Episcopalian and priest's kid, I have long observed the Episcopal Church and ruminated over its inner workings. Does being a Christian always mean we treat one another with fairness and integrity? Unfortunately not. Assuming someone else would do the hard work of making things better was my position for too long. Now retired, with kids out of the house, I am looking for ways to shoulder some of that responsibility, both within the diocese and the world at large. Serving as convener for a discernment committee in 2020-21 also made me understand the rigorous process candidates for postulancy must traverse, and gave me a sincere appreciation for those who are brave enough to embark on this journey. I would like to be a support to those brave souls, and to the diocese as it discerns how we continue to attract and nurture candidates for the diaconate and priesthood.

## COMMISSION ON MINISTRY - CLERICAL ORDER

three year term



**Ruth Anne Garcia** - *Priest-in-Charge, St. James, Kent.* After 26 years in ordained ministry, I am very aware of the need for raising up new leadership in the body of Christ. Beginning my early ministry in the Diocese of Virginia and the Diocese of Washington (DC) was a gift, not only because of the wonderful parishes I served as an Associate, but also because being so close to Virginia Theological Seminary meant that I had the opportunity to be formally trained at VTS as a mentor to seminarians whose placements brought them to our parishes. Having such a role gave me an opportunity to hear about both the gifts and the difficulties faced by postulant seminarians with their Commissions on Ministries. Discernment in life and ministry is an important part of our path as Christians and growth as children of Christ. If I am elected to serve on the Commission on Ministry, I will cherish the opportunity to walk with our wonderful Christian siblings as they discern their call to ordained ministry and to hold them in love and prayer as they seek to respond to God's call to them.



**Sheryl Haase** - *Deacon, St. Anne's, Washougal.* I think my experience during most of my working life that has been in management has helped prepare me for a position on the COM. I have been a trainer, coach, and a mentor. My gift of Christian listening in which I have had training will help me to really hear what the people who are going through the discernment process are saying. When I was in the process my friends and I had heard many stories about going before the COM and they were discouraging and we were apprehensive. My hope having gone through the process to be able to reassure those in the discernment a more gentle process. To help alleviate some of the apprehension. I will do my best to follow Jesus commandment to us. Love one another as I have loved you.



**Kim McNamara** - *Total Common Ministry Priest, St. Hugh of Lincoln, Allyn.* I was ordained as a Total Common Ministry (TCM) priest in 2015. Called in 2010 by the congregation of St. Hugh, I trained locally, and now serve as their part-time, non-stipendiary priest. In the TCM model, parishioners serve as a circle of ministry support and are responsible for many of the administrative tasks required by the church. We work together on these tasks using the processes of discernment and project management. The experience of serving as a part-time priest is shared by a growing number of clergy in the diocese and around the country. I hope to explore this non-traditional model of ministry - known as bi-vocational ministry -- and consider how best to prepare and support clergy and congregations who are new to the model. As a bi-vocational priest, I bring gifts of communication, research, problem-solving, and facilitation from my secular world of employment as a, mostly retired, college professor.



**Laura Murray** - *Rector, St. Andrew's, Port Angeles.* I believe authenticity, honesty, careful listening, and kindness are crucial attributes for one serving on the COM; these are all attributes I possess and I have long felt drawn to serve in this capacity. The church desperately needs committed, enthusiastic, innovative, clergy to help forge its path in the future, and I would consider it a privilege to prayerfully engage with those called to ordained ministry.



**Barbra Weza** - *Executive Director / Deacon / Chaplain, Chaplains on the Harbor, Wesport.* I am humbled by the nomination, and have had an interest and heart for the COM for some time as it was members of the COM that walked, prayed, discerned, and advocated with those of us on our journeys toward ordination; and it meant so much. It would be a privilege to walk alongside others to love, pray, encourage, and mentor as a part of the COM. My lived experiences and service include over 18 years in nonprofit and community development, social services, human resources, assessments of skills, homeless advocacy, supported employment, disability and self advocacy (People First of WA advisor), Learning styles, hospice and street chaplaincy which could aid the group into possible insight into things that arise in a candidate's process. My own process toward ordination was controversial to say the least and it would be a privilege being a voice for justice, against marginalization and oppressive systems that can be barriers to the ordination process.



## DIOCESAN COUNCIL - COLUMBIA REGIONAL MINISTRY

three year term



**Kay Flores** - *Rector, St. Timothy, Chehalis.* My name is Kay Flores. I've served as the rector of St. Timothy in Chehalis for almost seven years. I've served the church for many years, both as a priest and as a lay person. I was ordained in the Diocese of Wyoming, and was elected a Deputy to General Convention in 2009, 2012, and 2015. I worked as Youth Director, serving at several church camps. I was the Ministry Developer for churches located in and around the Wind River Indian Reservation. I served on the Standing Committee in Wyoming. I am a trainer and mentor for EfM (Education for Ministry) and a trainer and storyteller for Godly Play. I enjoy knitting and reading. I like teamwork. I don't expect any of us to have all the answers, but I believe that God gives us wisdom and strength to work together as a group to care for God's world.

## DIOCESAN COUNCIL - EASTSIDE REGIONAL MINISTRY

three year term



**Sharon Simes** - *Retired / former NCS Administrator, St. Margaret's, Bellevue.* As an administrator my focus was budgets, management of personnel, organizing and delivery of services, planning, troubleshooting problems and providing leadership and support to the college. My years of experience working with diverse groups and thinking outside of the box has given me both empathy and a unique outlook. It would be an honor and privilege to serve as a layperson on the Council as part of the ministry of the diocesan.

## DIOCESAN COUNCIL - HOLY C REGIONAL MINISTRY

three year term



**Robert Stevens** - *Curate, St. John the Baptist, Seattle.* The four-fold action of the Eucharist (take, bless, break, and give) does not end at the Lord's Table but takes us into the world in radical love, hospitality, and humble servanthood. I have a love and passion for raising up the diversity of the body of Christ when we create space for its full expression and inclusion. In 2019, my husband and I made the decision that I would conclude early a twenty-eight-year career in legal administration (HR Management [7 yrs.] & Chief Operating Officer [21 yrs.]) to pursue a vocation in the church. While I am newly ordained, I have served in support and leadership roles with the following examples: church (vestry, stewardship co-convener, verger, finance comm.), community (Underhill House Listener & Treasurer), and professional organizations (HR Comm. and Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Comm. chair). I have gifts and skills in gathering, programming, leadership/mentoring, and finance and budgeting.

## DIOCESAN COUNCIL - AT-LARGE - CLERGY

three year term



**Ruth Anne Garcia** - *Priest-in-Charge, St. James, Kent.* For the last three years, I have been honored to be a member of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese of Olympia. I have enjoyed my service on Council because it allows me to be involved in helping the Diocese fulfill the ministry goals and priorities identified at Convention and those requested by the Bishop. During my first term, I served as a member of the Budget and Finance Team which not only serves to ensure sound and transparent fiscal management, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to help fund and fulfill the ministries and goals identified by Convention and the Diocese. I would like to continue on in my Council role so I might continue to serve the Diocese of Olympia



**Courtney Jones** - *Interim Vicar, Christ Church, Anacortes.* I am a "high-systematizer" with experience in budget and program considerations - both in the church setting and in school administration. I like to think that I'm a detail-oriented person, but in an easy-going way. I've worked in both large and small congregations and understand some of the hopes and concerns that come with each. Having come to the priesthood from education, I've spent much of my adult life working with and for young people. As such, I would like to see the wider Church invest in youth and young adults. I also have interest and wider-church experience in the areas of church revitalization, creative models of ministry, deacon formation, and lay preaching. Having been a member of Diocesan Council in my previous diocese, I have some idea of what I'm getting myself into if selected.

## STANDING COMMITTEE LAY ORDER

four year term



**Lisa Beske** - *Retired / former Administrator, St. John's, Gig Harbor.* My faith-walk has guided my entire life, both spiritually and professionally. I've been highly involved in many large dioceses including: San Diego, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles. In my years working for the Washington National Cathedral, I supported the Cathedral Chapter. In Los Angeles, I served on the St. John's Episcopal Cathedral Vestry - a diverse cross-cultural community in the heart of downtown where we pursued a complex, mixed-use development project. I am profoundly grateful for my newest church home: St. John's, Gig Harbor, where I serve on the Altar Guild and Worship Committee. The Rector and I recently created and implemented a contemplative Evening Eucharist to serve our growing congregation. I am organized in considering the larger picture, while being thoughtful and sensitive to detail. I believe my enthusiasm and skills, combined with my passion and deep faith, prepare me for the work with the diocesan leadership under Bishop LaBelle.



**Sherina James** - *Management Analyst, WSDoC, Christ Church, Tacoma.* As a member of Christ Episcopal Church in Tacoma, WA, I bring over 20 years of experience in advocacy, particularly in the anti-gender violence movement. My work has centered on supporting victim-survivors of sexual and domestic violence, emphasizing racial equity in every facet of my efforts. My involvement with the ECWW Diocesan Task Force to Prevent Sexual Harassment and Discrimination has deepened my commitment to fostering safe and inclusive spaces within our church. I believe my skills in collaboration and community engagement can invigorate diocesan leadership. I aim to stimulate our ministry by promoting awareness around issues of equity and justice. My role as Co-Leader for Black African/Caribbean Ministries of Province VIII and involvement with The Circles of Color keep me grounded in the issues that impact our Beloved Community. Together, we can create a more inclusive environment that honors all voices, ensuring our ministry is both vibrant and responsive to the needs of our entire community.

## STANDING COMMITTEE CLERICAL ORDER

four year term



**Sabeth Fitzgibbons** - *Rector, Trinity, Seattle.* Standing Committee links the lives of congregations, the diocese, and the wider Episcopal Church. In ordained ministry, I have been blessed to serve with small, medium, and large size congregations, in part and full time positions, in three dioceses. As a result, I bring a diversity of perspectives on church life. In other dioceses, I served on Commission on Ministry, Disciplinary Board, and Standing Committee. In the Diocese of Olympia, I served on the Bishop's Committee for Youth Ministry, SEARCH Board, Commission for Liturgy & Music, and Personnel Commission. I am a 3 time deputy to the General Convention. I love our church and the diversity of ways we work with one another and the Holy Spirit to love the world the way God loves us. I would be honored to serve on Standing Committee as we live into the new thing God is bringing into being with and through us.



**Jedediah Fox** - *Rector, Redeemer, Kenmore.* Over the last 2 years I have served out an unexpired term on the Standing Committee in a time of transition. I have appreciated the work that the committee did to wend our way to the new place we have reached, now being led by Bishop Phil, and a little humbled to be called to act as co-secretary in both years. I have tried to bring my experience in parish ministry, and in the wider church, and my continuing learning about how to equip leaders for ministry, to help with the work of the Standing Committee. I hope to continue to bring those perspectives if elected for another term. I have been deeply grateful to serve, and I am delighted, because I served only two years, that I can offer my self to serve on Standing Committee once again.





**Kendall Haynes** - *Supply Priest / Consultant, Diocese of Olympia / Solar Design Consultant, SolTerra Solar, Seattle.* I am a bi-vocational Priest of the Diocese with nearly 20 years of service and experience in Parish Ministry and Diocesan Governance. My current role as a Design Consultant in the field of renewable energy has allowed me to serve 15 different congregations as a weekly Supply Priest and Congregational Consultant over the past year vibrantly living the challenges of the modern Church in creative and life giving ways. We need leadership on the Standing Committee that can focus our shrinking resources into areas that will grow our ability to live and spread the Good News of Jesus

Christ while expanding our vision of Love to include literally everyone. I have the time, energy, and growing skills to be such a candidate. For more information about my ministry, please visit [www.faithseed.net](http://www.faithseed.net).



**James Thibodeaux** - *Vicar, St. Christopher's, Olympia.* James offers a balanced comprehensiveness and catholic ecumenicity to church leadership. He was ordained in this diocese in 16 years ago, and has served two congregations, one rural and one urban. He has experience on Diocesan Council, the clergy association board, and as an alternate for General Convention. He holds degrees from both Episcopal and ELCA seminaries, and was designated a Mission Developer in the ELCA. Pastorally he is known for his warmth, genuine inclusivity, and for creating authentic community. His love of church history provides a

grounded perspective on contemporary issues of church governance and the challenges/opportunities of ministry in the PNW. James, his wife, Annaka, and their two children live, learn, work, and play surrounded by their micro-farm, their music, and bucolic maritime Olympia.



**Steve Thomason** - *Cathedral Dean, Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle.* I have served in this diocese for twelve years, and as a priest for more than twenty years. I have had the honor of serving in a variety of roles at the diocesan and church-wide levels, and have forged connections across the Episcopal Church and across this diocese as Cathedral Dean. I am keenly aware of the role the Standing Committee plays in the life of the church, locally and across the Church. As Cathedral Dean, I also see the value of supporting our new diocesan bishop in their role, and I would be delighted to do so as a clergy member of the Standing Committee as we enter this new era in our common life.

