

Final Report to the Standing Committee
Search Committee for XIV Bishop of Maryland
January 7, 2008

Preparation:

On February 10, 2007 at the joint retreat, and again at the 2007 Annual Convention of this diocese, the Search Committee was officially commissioned to begin the work of seeking and screening candidates to present to you. We quickly realized that we fairly well represented the diocese in the full range of diversity on theological and ethical issues facing the Church today. This would prove to be our challenge and our strength.

The committee has met as a whole seventeen times with additional sub-committee meetings, interviews and visitations. The amount of time, energy and study demanded of each member has been extraordinary, and to a person, all have given unselfishly to this task. Without the full participation of each member, this task would not be possible in the given time frame.

It quickly became apparent that the carrying out of this task would require strong, ongoing administrative help and the committee authorized the hiring of Mrs. Peggy Moore, a parishioner of Christ Church, who has provided us with devoted and excellent service. These costs of time, energy and administration must be kept in mind whenever this diocese next enters into a search process.

Seeking:

One of our first tasks was to gather information, and the surveys that the Standing Committee authorized and distributed were collected, collated and tabulated. The total number of responses approached four thousand. Results were shared with the committee, the Standing Committee and throughout the diocese via the web site and Diocesan Convention.

Members of the committee met with countless numbers of small groups and regional gatherings to seek further input. In addition, interviews were conducted with nineteen members of the Diocesan and Cathedral staff, along with our Bishop in Charge, the Rt. Rev. John L. Rabb and our retired Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ihloff.

Utilizing the information from the surveys, interviews, small group meetings, Diocesan Convention and Maryland Episcopal Clergy Association, the Search Committee shaped its process around the issues presented. Within the entire process, candidates were questioned on such topics as the Unity of the Church, Strengthening Existing Congregations, the work of the Holy Spirit in their ministries, Youth and Youth ministries, the Role of the Diaconate, their relationship with Jesus Christ, Diversity, Lay Leadership as well as their evaluation of the search process.

The Process:

By mid-August, over one thousand copies of the Diocesan Profile had been distributed through the diocese and nation: The nominating process was opened:

- 125 Letters with profiles were sent to individuals.
 - o We received 87 names for nomination from 127 nominators; 59 were male, and 28 were female.

- We received 40 additional names from the CDO office, two of which had already been nominated by individuals. 25 of these were male, 13 were female.

By the time nominations were closed, a total of 51 individuals sent us materials to consider. The list included nominees from 18 states plus D.C. Now the work of the committee began to involve large stacks of paperwork for each member to review and “score.” Using several methods of evaluating the material each candidate sent, the list of potential nominees was further reduced to thirty (30). It was now mid-September and the Search Committee broke into six teams, each reviewing written materials such as bulletins, newsletters, Annual Reports and other submissions, along with sermons preached by each candidate. A careful distinction was made in order to recognize and fairly evaluate clergy not serving in parishes, but whose ministry was in a non-parochial structure. Our thirty candidates included vicars, rectors, deans, canons and bishops.

The next level of screening reduced the number of candidates to thirteen. Ongoing candidates were individually called, while phone calls were also made to candidates from within our diocese who were not being continued in the process. (This, as expected, was heart wrenching at times.) Telephone interviews were conducted with the thirteen candidates and a report of each shared with the full committee, which at that time further reduced the number of ongoing candidates to nine. Prior to our actual visitation of candidates, one of the nine accepted a call to a new ministry and therefore withdrew from our process.

Weekend visitations were made to each of the remaining eight, with a team of usually three members arriving in the candidate’s town on Friday evening, interviewing the candidate and others on Saturday, dining with the candidate and spouse that evening and attending as many as three services at their church on Sunday. Each team made an extensive report to the full committee. All eight remaining candidates were invited to travel to Baltimore in mid-December, to be interviewed by the entire committee. Occurring on the weekends of December 14-15 and 21-22, 2007, each of the eight had a two-hour interview. Following these interviews, one of the candidates withdrew, leaving the Search Committee with seven extraordinarily gifted individuals, each of whom could ably become our bishop.

Reference calls were made to 12-15 persons for each candidate, including all bishops for whom the candidate has worked, clergy peers, Clergy Deployment Officers, Wardens, supervisors, Lay subordinates and parishioners. On Saturday, January 5, 2008, in a meeting within the context of the Holy Eucharist, the Search Committee reviewed the interviews and entire candidacy of each of the seven. Prayers were offered for the process, the diocese and the candidates, and the selection of our final slate took place. Each of the seven candidates was called either seeking permission to present their names to the Standing Committee or informing them of our discernment not to include their names.

Fulfilling Our Charge:

In compliance with our Charge from you, each and every member attended Anti-Racism Training; most members in a group session in April, others later in the calendar year. In order to maintain the confidentiality to which we committed ourselves, a system of coding was given to each candidate so that members of our committee could email and converse without revealing names. A secure email address obtained specifically for the Search Committee allowed members, candidates and references to share information. While word has leaked out about some of our candidates, we know that the sources are the candidates themselves and references they provided, and not our committee. The Episcopal Church is still a small place and word has recently been spreading about, whether accurate or not.

Also, in accordance with our charge, we have been faithful to the task of considering all candidates, regardless of “*race, color, ethnic origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age.*” At no point in any of our deliberations did any of these factors enter into our public discussion or decision, other than the question of age, where several of the original 125 candidates were not near the age required for election as a bishop or who did not have a “reasonable projected tenure.”

As to our timetable, it is important to remember that lay members and clergy who are each engaged in full-time careers and ministries have accomplished all of this work. While we earnestly attempted to complete our task within the original time frame, it was necessary to seek an extension from you, and we thank you for granting it to us. We can assure you, no time was wasted.

In regard to the budget given to us, we earnestly sought and received from you an increase in the Visitation monies budgeted for our visitations and interviews. We have been careful with our spending. We will be right on target for Administrative Expenses, we came in under the budget for the Profile and we will be within the revised budget for the visitation/interviews. It is important to remember that members of the committee paid for all of their travel and meals for each of our meetings; this is not a small amount of money. In addition, Christ Church, Columbia has given free use of its space, copier and many materials.

Sharing:

One of our goals was to conduct this process with a strong level of clear communication to the Standing Committee, the diocese and to each candidate and family. While this is a heavy burden to place on volunteers, we believe that this goal was accomplished. Candidates continue to tell us of the care they experienced from the committee, and how deeply appreciative they were. We believe that our work was tremendously enhanced by the spiritual guidance of our Chaplain, the Rev. Christopher Lee, and we maintain several of the “symbols” he introduced to our deliberations. His sudden death in late September took its emotional toll upon us, but his strength and faith allowed us to continue forward. We remember him at each and every meeting we hold, but in addition to remembering, we extend thanks to God for the work of Christ among us.

Another of our goals was to treat each and every candidate fairly and equitably. This became our “mantra” as we continued our work. Because of the guidance of our Consultant, the Rev. Conrad Selnick, we are able to say that each candidate was given a thorough evaluation of leadership experience, character, management style and liturgical sensibility. Background checks have been initiated on all of the candidates we present to you today.

We thank you for entrusting this process to us; each of us has been lifted to a stronger sense of the Church and what it can be, thanks to the work before us and the mature, kindly spirit of each member. We have conducted every meeting enveloped by prayer; we have continuously prayed for one another, the candidates and this diocese. And so, with a sense of fulfillment and joy, and knowing that the Holy Spirit has truly guided our decisions, and with unanimous consent, we present our official slate of nominees from the Search Committee:

The Very Rev. Peter D. Eaton (49), Dean of St. John’s Cathedral, Denver, Colorado

The Rev. Jane Soyster Gould (51), Rector of St. Stephen’s, Lynn, Massachusetts

The Rev. Dr. John C. N. Hall (49), Rector of St. Matthew's, Chandler, Arizona

The Rev. Canon Eugene Taylor Sutton (54), Canon Pastor of the Washington National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

The committee also submits to you biographical material for each candidate that will immediately be made available to the diocesan communication office pending your approval.

Presented this 7th day of January, in the year of Our Lord, two thousand and eight.

Neva. W. Brown
Co-Chairperson

The Rev. Richard A. Ginnever
Co-Chairperson

Members of the Committee

The Rev. Mary-Pat Ashby

Doris C. Bowen

Bob Bunch

Russell H. Costley

The Rev. Adrien Dawson

Charlotte Elder

The Rev. Ronald S. Fisher

Bess Garrett

Christina Harris

The Rev. Jane Mayrer

The Rev. Rick Morley

The Rev. Ed Munro

James Rauth

The Rev. Allen Robinson

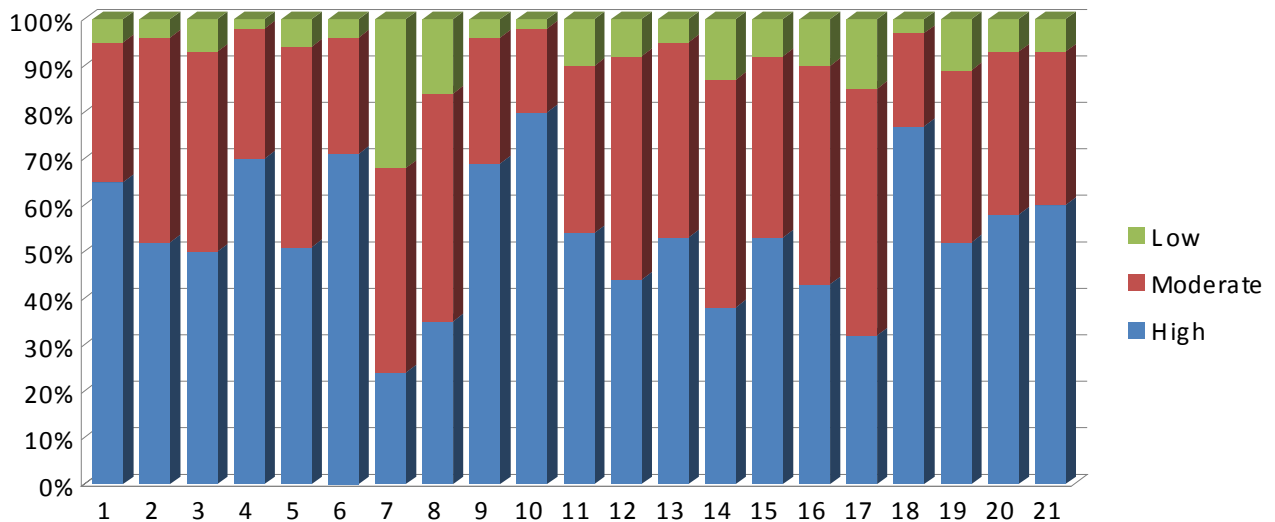
Mark Stahr

The Rev. Dina van Klaveren

The Rev. Anne O. Weatherholt

Priorities for the Episcopal Church in Diocese of Maryland

(3353 Responses from 51 Parishes)



- 1) Enable members of the Diocese to witness Christ in Daily Life.
- 2) Identify & train lay persons for leadership in parish and diocese.
- 3) Identify & prepare persons for ordained ministry.
- 4) Support those already ordained.
- 5) Encourage educational formation for adults.
- 6) Encourage educational formation for children/youth.
- 7) Establish new congregations.
- 8) Seek new models for parish ministry.
- 9) Bring new persons to Christ.
- 10) Strengthen existing congregations.
- 11) Intentional expressions to the commitment to ethnic/racial inclusiveness.
- 12) Promote individual spiritual growth through diocesan programs.
- 13) Demonstrate an understanding of Christian stewardship.
- 14) Encourage vestries to develop statements - stewardship.
- 15) Promote a sense of ministry as stewards of the earth.
- 16) Develop stewardship education programs for all ages.
- 17) Encourage vestries to consider concepts - stewardship.
- 18) Meet human needs (Hungry, Homeless).
- 19) Speak out on public issues from a Christian perspective.
- 20) Work to advance unity with other Christians.
- 21) Increase the sense of unity among the congregations.