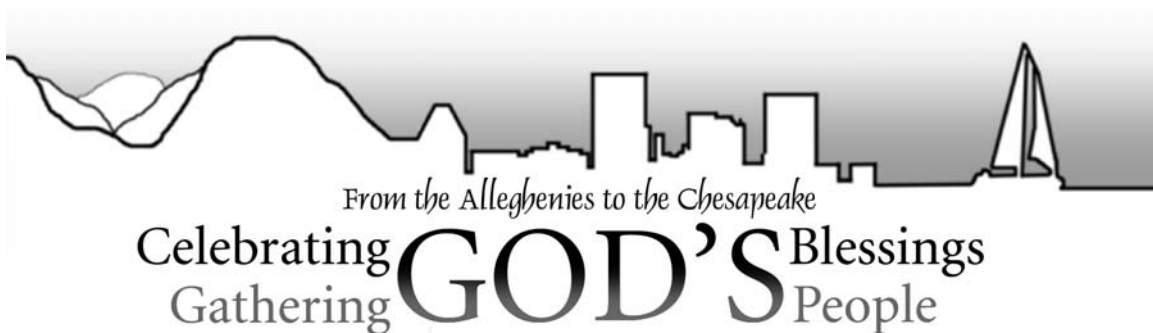


# Seeking a Shepherd

## for the Diocese of Maryland



## **Curriculum Team**

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(with deep appreciation to the power of the Holy Spirit)

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### **Adapted for use in the Diocese of Maryland**

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## **Conceptual Overview (For Leaders)**

Our search for the Fourteenth Bishop of Maryland offers our Diocese a great opportunity to reflect on what the Episcopal Church understands its episcopacy to be. This curriculum is intended to equip electors, and those who will elect them, to make wise and informed decisions. It highlights the role of the bishop: from historical and modern perspectives, from the perspective of a particular church in the worldwide Anglican Communion, and from the perspective of a particular Diocese within the Episcopal Church. It is an invitation to study, learn, and pray together about what we desire in a bishop, and to consider what issues might engage us and our new bishop in the future. The following aspects of our suggested curriculum support this overview:

The curriculum is designed to be delivered in four sessions. The collects are taken from the Propers for Various Occasions for a Pastor, a Missionary, a Teacher, and a Theologian. For the lessons for the Ordination of a Bishop, the prayers are taken from the *Book of Common Prayer* and are reflective of the task of seeking a new bishop.

Three of the sessions includes enrichment materials and resources. The use of these materials will require additional preparation and discussion time, and is left to the discretion of the congregational leadership.

We encourage every congregation to convene a meeting of the electors to review these materials, the Diocesan Profile, and the relevant canons before the Diocese assembles on March 29, 2008 for the Electing Convention for the 14<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Maryland.

## **Format**

Each of the four sessions follows a similar suggested format, as follows:

### **1. Theme and Overview**

Each session has a theme, drawn from Scripture, which is chosen to illuminate the lessons and learning objectives as outlined in the session overview.

### **2. Opening Collect**

Each session opens with a collect or prayer that highlights the issues in which we hope people will engage. The collects are taken from the Propers for Various Occasions for a Pastor, a Missionary, a Teacher, and a Theologian. For the lessons for the Ordination of a Bishop, the prayers are taken from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

### **3. Icebreaker**

Each session includes an opportunity for the participants to introduce themselves and respond briefly to a question that brings them into personal dialogue with the session theme.

### **4. Scripture Selections**

Each lesson uses readings from the lectionary for Various Occasions from the *Book of Common Prayer* lectionary. The lessons chosen are of a Missionary, of a Pastor, of a Teacher, and of a Theologian, and are from the Ordination Service for a Bishop. Each set of readings highlights verses that encourage biblical reflection on the themes of the session. If time permits, parishes are urged to reflect upon the complete lessons appointed for each session.

### **5. Encountering Saints**

Each session includes two biographies of bishops drawn from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*. One is an historic bishop and one is an American bishop, selected because their ministries—within the constraints of their time and place—deepen our understanding of the episcopacy and the theme of the session. Facilitators or group members may read the *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* biographies and discuss them, using the included questions as a beginning point.

### **6. Recognizing Choices**

Each session includes content materials drawn from historic and contemporary sources designed to deepen the knowledge of members of the Diocese about the episcopacy itself, about our selection process, about what spiritual work lies underneath the calling of a bishop, and about what reflection all members of the Diocese should do in the time of expectation.

### **7. Insights and Implications**

Each session includes summary discussion questions that can be used to help the electors in framing their particular discernment as the time for our convention draws near. The Missioner for Lifelong Christian Formation for the Diocese of Maryland also seeks feedback on this curriculum and any views, concerns, and hopes that might grow out of these discussions.

### **8. Closing Prayer**

Each session closes with litanies and prayers drawn from sources commonly used in the Episcopal Church. Each prayer was chosen to focus our hearts and minds on this complex and ultimately mysterious task of seeking a bishop for the Diocese of Maryland.

## Structure and Timing

These sessions are designed to be facilitated in 75 minutes, as follows:

(5 minutes) **Opening Collect** You may wish to encourage participants to locate the prayers in the *Book of Common Prayer*, or to read them from this curriculum, and pray together with the designated leader, silently or aloud.

(10 minutes) **Icebreaker** This exercise is designed to facilitate personal introductions and give each participant an opportunity to get “on board” with the themes of the week. There are suggestions for adapting these icebreakers to smaller and larger groups.

(10 minutes) **Scripture Selections.** These may be read by the group leader or group members in their entirety, or the selected verses may be highlighted. Invite the chosen reader(s) to recite them aloud rather slowly, inviting a meditative encounter with the Scripture.

(15 minutes) **Encountering Saints** Read and discuss the selected Episcopal (bishops’) biographies, using the included questions (or others) to identify leadership principles and practices.

(15 minutes) **Recognizing Choices** Invite a review and discussion of the content material, which is designed to contextualize the historic episcopacy in within contemporary and local leadership challenges.

(10 minutes) **Insights and Implications** Before the closing prayer, this is a time to recall the community who will elect our next bishop and offer them any insights we may have gleaned.

(10 minutes) **Closing Prayer** Encourage participants to locate resources in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), where appropriate, and encourage a rotating leadership.

### 50-Minute Option

Read briefer Scripture selections without comment; read but do not discuss Episcopal (bishops’) biographies. Instead, invite participants to name one or more common leadership qualities.

# 1

## Session One

Theme

### When God Makes All Things New, Will We Be Ready?

#### Overview

Change very often begins with anxiety. When things are changing all around us, the natural response is the wish to be saved. As we seek a new bishop, we are invited to first face our anxieties about change before being called forth to construct a positive response.

#### Opening Collect

**Collect for a Missionary** (From the *Book of Common Prayer*, p. 247. Traditional version is found on page 196).

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you for your servants, whom you called to preach the Gospel. Raise up in this and every land evangelists and heralds of your kingdom, that your Church may proclaim the unsearchable riches of our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

-or-

Prayer 12. For a Church Convention or Meeting (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 818)

Almighty and everliving God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with those who take counsel for the renewal and mission of your Church. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Icebreaker

*For a small group (less than 12):* Each introduces themselves by name and mentions one thing they do to prepare themselves in mind, body, or spirit for a change.

*For a large group (12 or more):* Ask people to form pairs, introduce themselves to each other, and mention one thing they do when they are preparing themselves for change. As time permits, ask the whole group to debrief any themes they identify in common.

## Scripture Selections

Read the following passages. (Or, if time does not permit, leader may select one or more of the following to read).

### Isaiah 52:7-10

Focus: verse 9: “Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.”

### Psalms 96

Focus: verse 10: “Tell it out among the nations: ‘The Lord is King! He has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.’”

### Acts 1:1-9

Focus: verse 8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to all the ends of the Earth.”

### Luke 10:1-9

Focus: verse 3: “Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.”

## Questions for Discussion

In what ways do these readings acknowledge the anxiety that God's people have associated with change?

In what ways do the readings suggest that God equips us to embrace change?

## Encountering Saints

This week we meet two bishops whose ministries included maintaining the center in times of conflict: Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, d.397, and Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts, d. 1893. Read the following biographies (from *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*).

### **Ambrose Bishop of Milan, 397**

(*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, December 7)

Ambrose was the son of a Roman governor in Gaul, and in 373 he himself was governor in Upper Italy. Though brought up in a Christian family, Ambrose had not been baptized. He became involved in the election of a bishop of Milan only as mediator between the battling factions of Arians and orthodox Christians. The election was important, because the victorious party would control the powerful see of Milan. Ambrose exhorted the nearly riotous mob to keep the peace and to obey the law. Suddenly both sides raised the cry, "Ambrose shall be our bishop!" He protested, but the people persisted. Hastily baptized, he was ordained bishop on December 7, 373. Ambrose rapidly won renown as a defender of orthodoxy against Arianism and as a statesman of the Church. He was also a skillful hymnodist. He introduced antiphonal chanting to enrich the liturgy, and wrote straightforward, practical discourses to educate his people in such matters of doctrine as Baptism, the Trinity, the Eucharist, and the Person of Christ. His persuasive preaching was an important factor in the conversion of Augustine of Hippo.

Ambrose did not fear to rebuke emperors, including the hotheaded Theodosius, whom he forced to do public penance for the slaughter of several thousand citizens of Salonkia. About baptism, Ambrose wrote: "after the font (of baptism), the Holy Spirit is poured on you, 'the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, and the spirit of holy fear'" (De Sacramentis 3.8).

A meditation attributed to him includes these words: "Lord Jesus Christ, you are for me medicine when I am sick; you are my strength when I need help; you are life itself when I fear death; you are the way I long for heaven; you are the light when all is dark; you are my food when I need nourishment." Among hymns attributed to Ambrose are "The eternal gifts to Christ the King," "O Splendor of God's glory bright," and a series of hymns for the Little Hours.

### **Phillips Brooks Bishop of Massachusetts, 1893** (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, January 23)

Writing about Phillips Brooks in 1930, William Lawrence, who was a young man who had known him, began, "Phillips Brooks was a leader of youth...; his was the spirit of adventure, in thought, life, and faith." To many who know him only as the author of "O little town of Bethlehem," this part of Brooks' life and influence is little known.

Born in Boston in 1835, Phillips Brooks began his ministry in Philadelphia. His impressive personality and his eloquence immediately attracted attention. After ten years in Philadelphia,

he returned to Boston as rector of Trinity Church, which was destroyed in the Boston fire three years later. It's a tribute to Brooks' preaching, character, and leadership that in four years of worshipping in temporary and bare surroundings, the congregation grew and flourished. The new Trinity Church was a daring architectural enterprise for its day, with its altar placed in the center of the chancel, "a symbol of unity; God and man and all of God's creation," and was a symbol of Brooks' vision, a fitting setting for the greatest preacher of the century.

This reputation has never been challenged. His sermons have passages that still grasp the reader, though they do not convey the warmth and vitality which so impressed his hearers. James Bryce wrote, "There was no sign of art about his preaching, no touch of self-consciousness. He spoke to the audience as a man might speak to his friend, pouring forth with swift, yet quiet and seldom impassioned earnestness, the thoughts of his singularly pure and loft spirit."

Brooks ministered with tenderness, understanding, and warm friendliness. He inspired men to enter the ministry, and taught many of them the art of preaching. He was conservative and orthodox in his theology, but his generosity of heart led him to be regarded as the leader of the liberal circles of the Church.

In 1891, he was elected Bishop of Massachusetts. The force of his personality and preaching, together with his deep devotion and loyalty, provided the spiritual leadership needed for the time. His constant concern was to turn his hearers' thoughts to the revelations of God. "Whatever happens," he wrote, "always remember the mysterious richness of human nature and the nearness of God to each one of us."

### **Questions for Discussion**

- What, in your view, are the qualities that set these bishops apart as leaders?
- Each one took strong stands on behalf of Church orthodoxy and yet maintained broad-based leadership. How can you imagine a bishop doing this in the Diocese of Maryland today?
- The word "orthodoxy" is used all the time. What does this word mean to you?

### **Recognizing Choices**

Read the questions for Examination of a Bishop (from *The Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 517-18).

## The Examination

### At the Ordination of a Bishop

My sister/brother, the people have chosen you and have affirmed their trust in you by acclaiming your election. A bishop in God's holy Church is called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and interpreting the Gospel, and to testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and King of kings. You are called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church; to celebrate and to provide for the administration of the sacraments of the New Covenant; to ordain priests and deacons and to join in ordaining bishops; and to be in all things a faithful pastor and wholesome example for the entire flock of Christ. With your fellow bishops you will share in the leadership of the Church throughout the world. Your heritage is the faith of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and those of every generation who have looked to God in hope. Your joy will be to follow him who came, not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many. Are you persuaded that God has called you to the office of bishop?

**Answer:** I am so persuaded.

*The following questions are then addressed to the bishop-elect by one or more of the other bishops.*

**Bishop:** Will you accept this call and fulfill this trust in obedience to Christ?

**Answer:** I will obey Christ, and will serve in his name.

**Bishop:** Will you be faithful in prayer, and in the study of Holy Scripture, that you may have the mind of Christ?

**Answer:** I will, for he is my help.

**Bishop:** Will you boldly proclaim and interpret the Gospel of Christ, enlightening the minds and stirring up the conscience of your people?

**Answer:** I will, in the power of the Spirit.

**Bishop:** As a chief priest and pastor, will you encourage and support all baptized people in their gifts and ministries, nourish them from the riches of God's grace, pray for them without ceasing, and celebrate with them the sacraments of our redemption?

**Answer:** I will, in the name of Christ, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

**Bishop:** Will you guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church?

**Answer:** I will, for the love of God.

**Bishop:** Will you share with your fellow bishops in the government of the whole Church; will you sustain your fellow presbyters and take counsel with them; will you guide and strengthen the deacons and all others who minister in the Church?

**Answer:** I will, by the grace given me.

**Bishop:** Will you be merciful to all, show compassion to the poor and strangers, and defend those who have no helper?

**Answer:** I will, for the sake of Christ Jesus.

### Questions for Discussion

- Which tasks do you think are most important? Underline them.
- What does it mean to “guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church”?
- How have you experienced a bishop as a teacher? As a provider of sacraments? As a leader in the councils of the Church?
- What place would you say the bishop takes in your faith community? In the larger community?

### Insights and Implications

- What have we learned that we would like the clergy and lay delegates who will elect the next bishop to know?

### Closing Prayer

Our life in the Church begins with baptism. Baptism acknowledges life's anxiety by taking us liturgically through death into new life in Christ. Invite the group into prayer, offering silently or aloud their prayers for:

- the person whom God is already calling and preparing to be our next bishop.
- the lay and ordained persons who will elect our next bishop.
- all those people who have been called into fullness of ministry and Christian leadership through baptism.

Conclude by reading together

The Prayer after Baptism (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 308).

*Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.*

**Want to Learn More? Optional Homework for Session One**

Read the biographies of Ambrose and Phillips Brooks in *Brightest and Best* by Sam Portaro (Cowley, 2001). Both Ambrose and Brooks were renowned preachers. Ambrose worked with Scriptural characters to weave contemporary stories and questions of faith. Brooks used Scripture to help his hearers understand how to recognize such good things as peace. Do they speak to you?

Turn to the Catechism (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 855) and read the paragraph on the ministry of a bishop.

Begin reading (Précis, Introduction and “Bishop as Proclaimer and Teacher”) in *The Ministry of Bishops: a Study Document*, authorized by the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church.

# 2

## Session Two

Theme

### Prepare the Way

#### Overview

Prophets in the Bible were believed to be inspired by the Word of God. They appeared to help people navigate the often unknown paths of change. The search for the new bishop involves an articulation of what we are looking for and how we will recognize what we are looking for when we see it. Calling a religious leader involves a whole community in listening for the voice of God. In this session we will explore the call to Christian leadership, and consider its implications for the vocation of a bishop in our community of faith. We ground our learning in the themes of pastor and shepherding, meet two bishops whose exercise of ministry took place within a context of political upheaval and change, and consider what our tradition tells us about the role and responsibilities of a bishop.

#### Opening Collect

**Collect of a Pastor** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 248)

O God, our heavenly Father, who raised up your faithful servant to be a (bishop and) pastor in your Church and to feed your flock: Give abundantly to all pastors the gifts of your Holy Spirit, that they may minister in your household as true servants of Christ and stewards of your divine mysteries; through Jesus Christ your Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

-or-

**Collect for the Consecration of Samuel Seabury** (*Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, November 14)

We give you thanks, O Lord our God, for your goodness in bestowing upon this Church the gift of the episcopate, which we celebrate in the remembrance of the consecration of Samuel Seabury; and we pray that, joined together in unity with our bishops, and nourished by your holy Sacraments, we may proclaim the Gospel of redemption with apostolic zeal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## Icebreaker

*For a small group (less than 12):* Each person introduces themselves by name and names a person who has been a messenger or played a prophetic role in their lives.

*For a larger group (12 or more):* Ask people to form pairs, introduce themselves to each other, and name a person who has played a prophetic role in their lives.

## Scripture Selections

Read the following passages. (Or, if time does not permit, leader may select one or more of the following to read).

### **Ezekiel 34:11-16**

Focus: verse 16a: “I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak.”

### **Psalms 23**

Focus: verse 3: “He revives my soul and guides me along right pathways for his name’s sake.”

### **1 Peter 5:1-4**

Focus: verse 2: “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve.”

### **John 21:15-17**

Focus: verse 16: “Again Jesus said, ‘Simon son of John, do you truly love me?’ He answered, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Take care of my sheep.’”

## Questions for Discussion

- How do these passages relate to us as we seek to discern Christian leaders?
- How do these passages relate to the bishop we seek?

## Encountering Saints

This week we meet two bishops whose ministries held the Church together in the face of possible dissolution: Leo the Great and Samuel Seabury.

### **Leo the Great Bishop of Rome, 461**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, November 10)*

When Leo was born, around the year 400, the Western Roman Empire was almost in shambles. Weakened by barbarian invasions and by a totally inefficient economic and political system, the structure that had been carefully built by Augustus had become a chaos of internal warfare, subversion, and corruption.

The social and political situation notwithstanding, Leo received a good education, and was ordained deacon, with the responsibility of looking after Church possessions, managing the grain dole, and generally administering finances. He won considerable respect for his abilities, and a contemporary officer, Cassian, described him as “the ornament of the Roman Church and the divine ministry.”

In 440, Leo was unanimously elected Pope, despite the fact that he was absent at the time on a mission in Gaul. His ability as a preacher shows clearly in the 96 sermons still extant, in which he expounds doctrine, encourages almsgiving, and deals with various heresies, including the Pelagian and the Manichean systems.

In Gaul, Africa, and Spain, Leo's strong hand was felt as he issued orders to limit the powers of one over-presumptuous bishop, confirmed the rights of another bishop over his vicars, and selected candidates for holy orders. Leo's letter to the Council of Chalcedon in 451 dealt so effectively with the doctrine of the human and divine natures of the One Person of Christ that the assembled bishops declared, “Peter has spoken by Leo,” and affirmed his definition as orthodox teaching. (See p. 864 of the Prayer Book.)

With similar strength of spirit and wisdom, Leo negotiated with Attila when the Huns were about to sack Rome. He persuaded them to withdraw from Italy and to accept an annual tribute. Three years later, Genseric led the Vandals against Rome. Again, Leo negotiated. Unable to prevent pillaging by the barbarians, he did dissuade them from burning the city and slaughtering its inhabitants. Thereafter, he worked to repair the damage, to replace the holy vessels in the desecrated churches, and to restore the morale of the Roman people.

### **Samuel Seabury, First American Bishop, 1784**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, November 14)*

Samuel Seabury, the first Bishop of the Episcopal Church, was born in Groton, Connecticut, on November 30, 1729. After ordination in England in 1753, he was assigned, as a missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to Christ Church, New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1757, he became rector of Grace Church, Jamaica, Long Island,

and rector of St. Peter's, Westchester County in 1766. During the American Revolution, he remained loyal to the British Crown, and served as a chaplain in the British army.

After the Revolution, a secret meeting of Connecticut clergymen in Woodbury on March 25, 1783, named Seabury or the Rev. Jeremiah Leaming, whoever would be able or willing, to seek episcopal consecration in England. Leaming declined; Seabury accepted, and sailed for England.

After a year of negotiation, Seabury found it impossible to obtain episcopal orders from the Church of England because, as an American citizen, he could not swear allegiance to the Crown. He then turned to the non-juring bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland. On November 14, 1784, in Aberdeen, he was consecrated by the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor of Aberdeen and the Bishop of Ross and Caithness in the presence of a number of the clergy and laity.

On his return home, Seabury was recognized as Bishop of Connecticut in Convocation on August 3, 1785, at Middletown. With Bishop William White, he was active in the organization of the Episcopal Church at the General Convention of 1789. With the support of William Smith of Maryland, William Smith of Rhode Island, William White of Pennsylvania, and Samuel Parker of Boston, Seabury kept his promise, made in a concordat with the Scottish bishops, to persuade the American Church to adopt the Scottish form for the celebration of the Eucharist. In 1790, Seabury became responsible for episcopal oversight of the churches in Rhode Island; and at the General Convention of 1792, he participated in the first consecration of a bishop on American soil, that of John Claggett of Maryland. Seabury died on February 25, 1796, and is buried beneath St. James' Church, New London.

### Questions for Discussion

- What, in your view, are the qualities that set these men apart as leaders?
- Both of these bishops worked during times of political upheaval when the Church and State, though separate, clearly had a great deal of interaction. How did these bishops interact with the state/society/other churches? What does that teach us about how a bishop might function for our Diocese today?

## Recognizing Choices

### Defining “Bishop”

Read and consider the following definitions of a bishop:

(From *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*, ed. D. S. Armentrout and R.B. Slocum, 2000)

**Bishop.** One of the three orders of ordained ministers in the Church, bishops are charged with the apostolic work of leading, supervising, and uniting the Church. Bishops represent Christ and his Church, and they are called to provide Christian leadership for

their Dioceses. Diocesan bishops hold jurisdiction in their Dioceses, with particular responsibility for the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the church. Bishops serve as the focus of diocesan unity and for the unity of their Dioceses with the wider Church.

From *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed E. A. Livingstone (1997)

**Bishop.** The highest order of ministers in the Christian Church. The word is an Anglo-Saxon corruption of *episcopos*. In Catholic Christendom (including the Anglican Communion) bishops are the chief pastors of the Church, who individually form a center of unity in their Dioceses, and together, by their sharing in the episcopal college, embody the unity of the Church, and by their consecration and power to confer Orders, witness to the succession of the Church throughout the ages.

The chief duties of a modern bishop in the western Church consist of the general oversight of (his/her) Diocese, the leadership of (his/her) clergy and laity in the proclamation of the Gospel, and administering those Sacraments which (he/she) alone is competent to confer (Confirmation and Ordination). The beginnings of the episcopate in early times have long been debated, partly because of the inconclusiveness of the New Testament evidence by itself, partly on account of its relevance to the many contemporary forms of Church government. It seems at first that the terms “episcopos” and “presbyter” were used interchangeably (cf., e.g., Acts 20:17 and 20:28). But for St. Ignatius (early second century), bishops, presbyters, and deacons are already quite distinct. On the other hand, elsewhere, notably in Egypt, the threefold ministry does not seem to have established itself until considerably later. By the middle of the second century all the leading centers of Christianity would appear to have had their bishops, and from then on until the Reformation, Christianity was organized on an episcopal basis everywhere.

**From the Catechism** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 855)

Q. What is the ministry of a bishop?

A. The ministry of a bishop is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as apostle, chief priest, and pastor of a Diocese; to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the whole Church; to proclaim the Word of God; to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church; and to ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.

### Questions for Discussion

- Circle the qualities in these definitions that seem most important to you.
- In what ways do these definitions of bishop match your experience of bishops in the Church? In what ways do they not match your experience?
- If you were new to the Church, what questions might these definitions raise?

## Insights and Implications

What have we learned that we would like those who will elect the next bishop to know?

## Closing Prayer

Prophetic insight and faithfulness allows us to see clearly those things that are cast down, in order that they might be raised up and made new. Invite the group into prayer, offering silently or aloud their prayers for:

- the person whom God is calling and preparing to be our next bishop.
- the lay and ordained persons who will elect our next bishop.
- all those people who have been called into fullness of ministry and Christian leadership through baptism.

Conclude by reading together

The Collect for Ordinations (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 515)

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Want to Learn More? Optional Homework for Session Two

Read the definition of “episcopate” in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, ed. Adrian Hastings et al. (2000).

Continue reading “Bishop as Provider of Sacraments and Leader in the Church” in *The Ministry of Bishops: a Study Document*, authorized by the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church.

If you haven’t read it yet, read the Diocesan Profile at **<http://www.ang-md.org/bishopsearch.php>**.

# 3

## Session Three

### Theme

## We Seek Wisdom

### Overview

When the anxiety of change has been named and the direction that change might take has been explored, all kinds of things can happen. New possibilities arise. New ways of being together suddenly seem possible. The closest that many of us get to true prophetic excitement is in the world of dreams. Dreams take us to worlds we have never visited, allowing us to achieve things that our cognitive analysis alone cannot. In the words of the Rev. Jeremy Taylor, contemporary community organizer and dream worker, “No dream comes to tell us what we already know.” This is the time to begin to imagine what life under a new bishop might really look like.

### Opening Collect

**Collect for a Theologian and Teacher** (*Book of Common Prayer*, pages 248-49. Traditional versions are on page 197).

O God, by your Holy Spirit you give to some the word of wisdom, to others the word of wisdom, to others the word of knowledge, and to others the word of faith. We praise your Name for the gifts of grace manifested in your servants called to be theologians and teachers, and we pray that your Church may never be destitute of such gifts; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

-or-

**For the Ministry II. For the choice of fit persons for the ministry** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 256. Traditional version is on page 205).

O God, you led your holy apostles to ordain ministers in every place; Grant that your Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, may choose suitable persons for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and may uphold them in their work for the extension of your kingdom; through him who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Icebreaker

*For a small group (less than 12):* Each person introduces themselves by name and states a dream they have for the Church.

*For a larger group (12 or more):* Ask people to form pairs, introduce themselves to each other, states a dream they have for the Church, and/or recall a time when they were inspired or changed by a dream.

## Scripture Selections

Read the following passages. (Or, if time does not permit, leader may select one or more of the following to read).

### **Proverbs 3:1-7**

Focus: verse 5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge God and he will make your paths straight.”

### **Psalms 119: 89-96**

Focus: verse 90: “Your faithfulness remains from one generation to another; you established the earth, and it abides.”

### **1 Corinthians 3:5-11**

Focus: verse 6-7: “I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters in anything, but only God, who makes things grow.”

### **John 17:18-23**

Focus: verse 20-21: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

### **Questions for Discussion**

- How do these passages relate to us as we seek to discern Christian leaders?
- How do these passages relate to the bishop we seek?

## Encountering Saints

This week we meet two bishops whose ministries were distinguished by their pastoral skills: Gregory the Great and William White.

### **Gregory the Great Bishop of Rome, 604**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, March 12)*

Only two Popes, Leo the First and Gregory the First, have been given the popular title of “the Great.” Both served in the difficult times of the barbarian invasions of Italy. Gregory also knew the horrors of “plague, pestilence, and famine.” He was born of a patrician family around 540, and became Prefect of Rome in 573. Shortly thereafter he retired to a monastic life in a community which he founded in his ancestral home on the Coelian Hill. Pope Pelagius the Second made him Ambassador to Constantinople in 579, where he learned much about the larger affairs of the Church. Not long after his return home, Pope Pelagius died of the plague, and in 590 Gregory was elected as his successor.

Gregory's pontificate was one of strenuous activity. He organized the defense of Rome against the attacks of the Lombards, and fed its populace from papal granaries in Sicily. In this as in other matters, he administered “the patrimony of St. Peter” with energy and efficiency. His ordering of the Church's liturgy and chant has molded the spirituality of the Western Church until the present day. Though unoriginal in theology, his writings provided succeeding generations with basic texts, especially the *Pastoral Care*, a classic on the work of the ministry.

In the midst of all his cares and duties, Gregory prepared and fostered the evangelizing mission to the Anglo-Saxons under Augustine and other monks from his own monastery. The Venerable Bede justly called Gregory the Apostle of the English.

Gregory died on March 12, 604, and was buried in St. Peter's basilica. His life was a true witness to the title he assumed for his office: “Servant of the servants of God.”

### **William White Bishop of Pennsylvania, 1836**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, July 17)*

William White was born in Philadelphia on March 24, 1747, and was educated at the college of that city, graduating in 1765. In 1770 he went to England, was ordained deacon on December 23, and priest on April 25, 1772. On his return home, he became assistant minister of Christ and St. Peter's, 1772—1779, and rector from that year until his death, July 17, 1836. He also served as chaplain of the United States Senate until 1800. Chosen unanimously as first Bishop of Pennsylvania, September 14, 1786, he went to England again, with Samuel Provoost, Bishop-Elect of New York; and the two men were consecrated in Lambeth Chapel on Septuagesima Sunday, February 4, 1787, by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of Bath and Wells and of Peterborough.

Bishop White was the chief architect of the Constitution of the American Episcopal Church and the wise overseer of its life during the first generation of its history. He was the Presiding Bishop at its organizing General Convention in 1789 and again from 1895 until his death. He was a theologian of no mean ability, and among his protégés, in whose formation he had a

large hand, were such leaders of a new generation as John Henry Hobart, Jackson Kemper, and William Augustus Muhlenberg. White's gifts of statesmanship and reconciling moderation steered the American Church through the first decades of its independent life. His influence in his native city made him its "first citizen." Too few men has the epithet "venerable" been more aptly applied.

### Questions for Discussion

- What, in your view, are the qualities that set these men apart as leaders?
- What "dreams" of Church might have been the guiding inspiration for their episcopacies?

### Recognizing Choices

Read Diocesan Profile portion: "Profile of a Bishop for the Diocese of Maryland" ([www.ang-md-org/bishop\\_search/profile\\_final.pdf](http://www.ang-md-org/bishop_search/profile_final.pdf)).

Read this definition of an apostle:

**Apostle.** Derived from the Greek term *apostolos*, an apostle is basically a "sent one." From his many followers Christ chose twelve whom he designated as "apostles" (Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:14; Lk 6:14-16). These twelve, along with the apostle Paul as one "abnormally born" (1Cor 15:8), became foundational in the establishment of the church and functioned as authority figures in the early church. As a result, the idea of apostolicity has to do with the correspondence of faith and practice of the church to the authoritative New Testament teaching attributed to the apostles. (From *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, by Stanley J. Grenz, David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling. Intervarsity Press, 1999.)

### Questions for Discussion

- What sort of apostle does our profile invite?
- Recalling the scripture readings from this session, what do they have to say about apostolic leadership?

### Insights and Implications

What have we learned that we would like those who will elect the next bishop to know?

## Closing Prayer

Invite the group into prayer, offering silently or aloud their prayers for:

- the person whom God is calling and preparing to be our next bishop.
- the lay and ordained persons who will elect our next bishop.
- all those people who have been called into fullness of ministry and Christian leadership through baptism. Conclude by reading together

### **Prayer for New Ministry** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 562)

O Lord my God, I am not worthy to have you come under our roof; yet you have called your servant to stand in your house and to serve at your altar. To you and to your service I devote myself, body, soul, and spirit. Fill my memory with the record of your mighty works; enlighten my understanding with the light of your Holy Spirit; and may all the desires of my heart and will center in what you would have me do. Make me an instrument of your salvation for the people you have entrusted to my care, and grant that I may faithfully administer your holy Sacraments, and by my life and teaching set forth your true and living Word. Be always with me in carrying out the duties of my ministry. In prayer, quicken my devotion; in praises, heighten my love and gratitude; in preaching, give me readiness of thought and expression; and grant that, by the clearness and brightness of your holy Word, all the world may be drawn into your blessed kingdom. All this I ask for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Want to Learn More? Optional Homework for Session Three**

Read the biographies of Gregory the Great and William White in *Brightest and Best*, by Sam Portaro (Cowley, 2001).

# 4

## Session Four

### Theme

## The Lord Will Make You a House

### Overview

Dreaming ends in awakening. Spiritual ideas take physical form. As we bring our journey of study and discernment to closure, we acknowledge that the choice we make to commit ourselves—to a person or a place, a project or a prayer—is also a beginning. With the leadership of a new bishop, our relationships with each other will be renewed, and our household of faith will assume a new form. The Lord will indeed make us a house. In this session, we will engage with Scripture, meet an historical abbess (the equivalent of a bishop) and a twentieth century bishop whose ministries required that they make historically significant choices, and practice the discipline of making leadership choices within the context of our own particular time and place.

### Opening Collect

**Collect for the Ordination of a Bishop** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 212)

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

-OT-

**Proper 8** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 230. Traditional version is on pages 178-79).

Almighty God, you have built your Church upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone: Grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their teaching, that we may be made a holy temple acceptable to you; through Jesus

Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Icebreaker

*For a small group (less than 12):* Each person introduces themselves by name and mentions a time when they had to make a choice from among several good things.

*For a larger group (12 or more):* Ask people to form pairs, introduce themselves to each other, and mention a time when they had to make a choice from among several good things, and—as time permits—ask the whole group to debrief any themes they identify in common.

## Scripture Selections

Read the following passages. (Or, if time does not permit, leader may select one or more of the following to read).

### **Isaiah 42:1-9**

Focus: verse 4: “Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations.”

### **Psalms 40:1-14**

Focus: verse 5: “Great things are they that you have done, O Lord my God! How great your wonders and your plans for us! There is none who can be compared with you.”

### **Hebrews 5:1-10**

Focus: verse 1-3: “Every high priest chosen from among mortals is put in charge of things pertaining to God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is subject to weakness; and because of this he must offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people.”

### **Luke 24:44-49a**

Focus: verse 47-48: “Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.”

## Questions for Discussion

- How do these passages relate to us as we seek to discern Christian leaders?
- How do these passages relate to the bishop we seek?

## Encountering Saints

This week we meet two bishops who gave up their positions of power because of faithfulness to a greater truth: Hilda of Whitby, Abbess, equivalent to the role of a bishop, and Paul Jones, Bishop of Utah.

### **Hilda Abbess of Whitby, 680**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, November 18)*

“Hilda's career falls into two equal parts,” says the Venerable Bede, “for she spent thirty-three years nobly in secular habit, while she dedicated an equal number of years still more nobly to the Lord, in the monastic life.”

Hilda, born in 614, was the grandniece of King Edwin. She was instructed by Paulinus (one of the companions of Augustine of Canterbury) in the doctrines of Christianity in preparation for her baptism at the age of 13. She lived, chaste and respected, at the King's court for 20 years, and then decided to enter the monastic life. She had hoped to join the convent of Chelles in Gaul, but Bishop Aidan was so impressed by her holiness of life that he recalled her to her home country, in East Anglia, to live in a small monastic settlement.

One year after her return, Aidan appointed her Abbess of Hartlepool. There, Hilda established the rule of life that she had been taught by Paulinus and Aidan. She became renowned for her wisdom, eagerness for learning, and devotion to God's service.

Some years later, she founded the abbey at Whitby, where both nuns and monks lived in strict obedience to Hilda's rule of justice, devotion, chastity, peace, and charity. Known for her prudence and good sense, Hilda was sought out by kings and other public men for advice and counsel. Those living under her rule devoted so much time to the study of Scripture and to works of righteousness that many were found qualified for ordination. Several of her monks became bishops; at least one pursued further studies in Rome. She encouraged the poet Caedmon, a servant at Whitby, to become a monk and to continue his inspired writing. All who were her subjects or knew her, Bede remarks, called her “mother.”

In 663, Whitby was the site of the famous synod convened to decide divisive questions involved in the differing traditions of the Celtic Christians and the followers of Roman order. Hilda favored the Celtic position, but when the Roman position prevailed she was obedient to the synod's decision. Hilda died on November 17, 680, surrounded by her monastics, whom, in her last hour, she urged to preserve the gospel of peace.

### **Paul Jones Bishop and Peace Advocate, 1941**

*(Lesser Feasts and Fasts, September 4)*

Paul Jones was born in 1880 in the rectory of St. Stephen's Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. After graduating from Yale University and the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he accepted a call to serve a mission in Logan, Utah. In 1914 Paul Jones was appointed Archdeacon of the Missionary District of Utah and, later that year, was elected its Bishop. Meanwhile, World War I had begun.

As Bishop of Utah, Paul Jones did much to expand the Church's mission stations and to strengthen diocesan institutions. At the same time he spoke openly about his opposition to war. With the United States' entry into the war, the Bishop of Utah's views became increasingly controversial. At a meeting of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Los Angeles in 1917, Bishop Jones expressed his belief that "war is unchristian" for which he was attacked with banner headlines in the Utah press.

As a result of the speech and the reaction it caused in Utah, a commission of the House of Bishops was appointed to investigate the situation. In their report, the commission concluded that "The underlying contention of the Bishop of Utah seems to be that war is unchristian. With this general statement the Commission cannot agree...." The report went on to recommend that "The Bishop of Utah ought to resign his office," thus rejecting Paul Jones' right to object to war on grounds of faith and conscience.

In the spring of 1918, Bishop Jones, yielding to pressure, resigned as Bishop of Utah. For the next 23 years, until his death on September 4, 1941, he continued a ministry within the Church dedicated to peace and conscience, speaking always with a conviction and gentleness rooted in the Gospel.

In his farewell to the Missionary District of Utah in 1918, Bishop Jones said: "Where I serve the Church is of small importance, so long as I can make my life count in the cause of Christ. ...Expediency may make necessary the resignation of a Bishop at this time, but no expedience can ever justify the degradation of the ideals of the episcopate which these conclusions seem to involve."

### **Questions for Discussion**

- How did each of these episcopal leaders engage and respond to the issues and challenges of their times? Compare and contrast.
- What can their stories tell us about the person being called to be the next Bishop of Maryland?

## Recognizing Choices

In brainstorming mode—that is, recording all responses without comment, editorializing or discussion—ask participants:

For the fourteenth bishop of the Diocese of Maryland—in the Episcopal Church in the USA, in the worldwide Anglican Communion—what will be the most pressing, most serious, most defining issues he or she will face?

Re-read section from the Diocesan Profile, “A Bishop for the Diocese of Maryland.” Discuss:

- How will the qualities we seek in a bishop enable that person to engage and respond to the issues and challenges we have identified?
- Conduct a mock election. Pass out “ballots” with the following instructions: All of the “candidates” lives may be found in Lesser Feasts and Fasts. This means that all were so qualified for the ministries to which they were called that all were canonized. Yet, you can choose only one. This may well be the case when the finalists chosen by the Search Committee are presented, as well as any candidates nominated by petition. All may be qualified, but the Diocese of Maryland can call only one. Therefore, as electors, we are called to discern those qualities of leadership we believe are most needed in our own time.

## Sample Ballot

### **Ambrose**

“...became involved in the election of a bishop of Milan only as mediator between the battling factions of Arians and orthodox Christians. Ambrose exhorted the nearly riotous mob to keep the peace and to obey the law. Suddenly both sides raised the cry, “Ambrose shall be our bishop!” He protested, but the people persisted.”

### **Phillips Brooks**

“...ministered with tenderness, understanding, and warm friendliness. He inspired men to enter the ministry, and taught many of them the art of preaching. He was conservative and orthodox in his theology, but his generosity of heart led him to be regarded as the leader of the liberal circles of the Church.”

### **Leo the Great**

“... the Western Roman Empire was almost in shambles. With strength of spirit and wisdom, Leo negotiated with Attila when the Huns were about to sack Rome. He persuaded them to withdraw from Italy and to accept an annual tribute.”

### **Samuel Seabury**

During the American Revolution, he remained loyal to the British Crown, and served as a chaplain in the British army. After the Revolution, Seabury found it impossible to obtain episcopal orders from the Church of England because, as an American citizen, he could not swear allegiance to the Crown.”

### **Gregory the Great**

“Gregory's pontificate was one of strenuous activity. His ordering of the Church's liturgy and chant has molded the spirituality of the Western Church until the present day. In the midst of all his cares and duties, Gregory prepared and fostered the evangelizing mission to the Anglo-Saxons under Augustine and other monks from his own monastery.”

### **William White**

“Bishop White was the chief architect of the Constitution of the American Episcopal Church and the wise overseer of its life during the first generation of its history. White's gifts of statesmanship and reconciling moderation steered the American Church through the first decades of its independent life.”

### **Hilda**

“...founded the abbey at Whitby, where both nuns and monks lived in strict obedience to Hilda's rule of justice, devotion, chastity, peace, and charity. Known for her prudence and good sense, Hilda was sought out by kings and other public men for advice and counsel.”

### **Paul Jones**

“Where I serve the Church is of small importance, so long as I can make my life count in the cause of Christ. ...Expediency may make necessary the resignation of a Bishop at this time,

but no expedience can ever justify the degradation of the ideals of the episcopate which these conclusions seem to involve.”

Collect ballots and announce results.

**Discuss the following:**

- Why the winner?
- What did others see in those for whom they voted?
- What information from this “election” would be helpful to those who will vote from our parish?

## **Insights and Implications**

What have we learned that we would like those who will elect the next bishop to know?

## **Closing Prayer**

Invite the group into prayer, offering silently or aloud their prayers for:

- the person whom God is already calling and preparing to be our next bishop.
- the lay and ordained persons who will elect our next bishop.
- all those people who have been called into fullness of ministry and Christian leadership through baptism

Conclude with the prayer

**From the Consecration of a Bishop** (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 521)

To you, O Father, all hearts are open; fill, we pray, the heart of this your servant whom you have chosen to be a bishop in your Church, with such love of you and of all the people, that he/she may feed and tend the flock of Christ, and exercise without reproach the high priesthood to which you have called him/her, serving before you day and night in the ministry of reconciliation, declaring pardon in your Name, offering the holy gifts, and wisely overseeing the life and work of the Church. In all things may he/she present before you the acceptable offering of a pure, and gentle, and holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and power and glory in the Church, now and forever. Amen.