





The Episcopal Diocese of Washington

2024 Annual Report







Table of Contents

Welcome from Bishop Maryann 3

Revitalization 4

Faith and Leadership 10

Equity and Justice 15

Programs and Operations 20

Finance and Budget 27









Welcome from Bishop Mariann



Dear Diocesan Family,

As we enter the sixth and final year of our current diocesan strategic plan—and my fourteenth year as your bishop—I am filled with gratitude for the ministry we share. Thank you for allowing me and others on the diocesan staff to walk alongside you in your congregations and faith communities, and, through the ministrations of our diocesan initiatives, to amplify your good work.

Our theme for 2024 was courageous discipleship, seeking to discern God's presence and preferred future when the road ahead was not always clear.

As this annual report reflects, throughout the year we identified ministry opportunities that required our collective efforts, created capacity-building resources, and did our best to support congregational leaders. Your diocesan staff of our diocese might continue to strengthen the bonds between us, provide resources for spiritual growth, support congregations in need, and address the Spirit's call to address urgent social concerns and long-standing inequities.

As we enter 2025, we will continue to grow as courageous disciples, striving toward God's vision for ourselves and for future generations, and keeping faith that **Christ is before us**, for with Christ, all things are possible.

Faithfully,

Mariann

The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde
Bishop of Washington

Revitalization

Our strategic plan calls on us to invest in the vitality of our faith communities. In 2024, we committed to making significant progress in the work of revitalization by:



- Adapting the Tending Our Soil curriculum and revitalization resources for increased flexibility and widespread use while we continue to engage and support ongoing cohorts, ensuring each congregation makes progress in the program.
- Implementing the stewardship strategy for parish facilities and finances by making real estate professionals available to consult with congregations interested in leasing space or redeveloping property; sharing information and resources, such as template rental agreements, on a dedicated page of the EDOW website; and both engaging and supporting congregations that need to consider selling or redeveloping their buildings and properties.
- Identifying and working with a subset of congregations within up to two regions for diocesan engagement in shaping a plan for strategic ministry collaboration and resource sharing.
- Developing and growing The Well, the diocesan church plant in Bowie, Maryland introducing organic forms of prayerful gatherings and supporting other emerging faith communities around the diocese.
- Further empowering, encouraging, and equipping the Black Church Ministries Committee to engage Black churches to envision new models of ministry.

In this section of the 2024 Annual Report, we share the work we undertook in each of these five key areas, recap the work of our regional deans and dean of chaplains, and offer a brief overview of what we hope to accomplish in the area of revitalization in 2025.

Adapting Revitalization Resources for Widespread Use; Tending Our Soil Initiative

While we continue to direct and support our congregations participating in the Tending Our Soil thriving congregations initiative, we also worked to develop resources for widespread use across the diocese. We are currently experimenting with adapting the resources from Tending our Soil by taking best practices and turning them into a short course program for revitalization we're calling Next Vital Steps. The Next Vital Steps process is designed to help congregations discern their next step in moving towards revitalization. The work begins by forming a team and reflecting on the following questions — Who are you as a congregation? How are you doing and Who are your neighbors? The answers to these questions lays a foundation to discern a next step.

After an orientation session led by diocesan staff, a small team works through three listening sessions based on the three questions. The team then regathers with diocesan staff and other stakeholders for the discernment of a next vital step based on what they have learned. The team or another group then begins work on the identified next vital step breaking it down into manageable steps with a spirit of experimentation and learning. Resources will be provided as needed pulling from those used in the Tending Our Soil Initiative which could include Neighborhood Connection or Refinement of Mission and Vision.

Other activities included:

- Celebrating the conclusion of the Tending Our Soil experience for the class of 2021 with a graduation celebration where the congregations shared in fellowship, reflection, and received certificates.
- Continuing to partner with those in and outside The Episcopal Church to lead our Learning Labs. We worked with MissionInsite, the Rev. Dr. Doug Powe from The Lewis Center for Church Leadership at Wesleyan Seminary, the Rev. Meghan Hatcher of the Innovation Laboratory, and EDOW's Communications Director, Keely Thrall.
- Designing Cohort Labs for the Class of 2022 to engage the congregations more intentionally through learning segments, case studies and peer dialogue. These sessions are led by the coaches of each cohort.

Implementing the Stewardship Strategy for Parish Facilities and Finances

At Diocesan Convention in January, 2024, the diocese announced the implementation of a Stewardship Strategy for Parish Facilities and Finances, centered on the three ways to turn a building from a liability to an asset which include:

- Increasing rental income
- Redeveloping church property and/or
- Selling a building and/or property

Since Convention, the diocese has developed a roster of real estate professionals who can advise parishes looking to increase their rental income or redevelop their church property. Almost a dozen parishes have spoken with the real estate experts and two parishes are very close to signing long-term leases with tenants identified by their real estate advisors. These leases have the possibility of having a significant positive impact on the parishes' finances.

In addition, on Saturday, September 21, the diocese held a Courageous Discipleship Day on Reimagining Church Property. Teams representing seven congregations spent the day learning from three congregations at various stages of redevelopment, paying attention to both the concrete issues involved in discernment and implementation, but also to the spiritual and congregational impacts of property use and redevelopment.

Shaping a Plan for Strategic Ministry Collaboration and Resource Sharing

Conversations have begun among 4 churches in Charles County to create a shared mission position in the hopes of pioneering new, more collaborative models of ministry and clergy leadership. The churches are St. James Indianhead, Christ Church Durham, Christ Church La Plata and Christ Church Wayside. The willingness of these congregations to engage in this collaboration is a hopeful sign

Growing The Well and Supporting Other Emerging Faith Communities

The Well
Under the leadership of the Rev. Rondesia Jarrett-Schell, Diocesan Church Planter for The Well, Bowie, in 2024 this growing faith community:

- Built relationships in the Bowie community through prayer and action by assisting in community outreach, offering prayers after neighborhood crisis events, distributing water and socks to those in need, connecting with local business, and connecting with Bowie families.
- Offered safe spaces for conversations about God, faith, and community for the unchurched and those interested in non-traditional church gatherings. These conversations grew from once a month to twice a month, a book club, and fellowship gatherings.
- The Well now has 8 people on the advisory board and 29 participants.

Read Prayer in Action: Bridging Faith and Action at The Well (Diocesan Bulletin Newsletter, July 2). Follow Rev. Rondesia on TikTok at IamthePastor. Follow what's happening at The Well, Bowie on Instagram. Visit The Well, Bowie's website.

Water and Wilderness Church
The Rev. Pete Nunnally hopes to partner with the Diocese of Washington in creating Water and Wilderness Church, a worshipping community that meets in nature and is a liturgical response to the climate crisis. The worship is designed for seekers, believers, and anyone who finds connection to God in nature. Water and Wilderness Church gathered seven times in 2024 at Fletcher's Cove in DC and in other areas of nature in collaboration with some of our churches.

Committee on Black Church Ministries

The mission of the Committee on Black Church Ministries is to guide, support, and empower Black Churches toward the development and implementation of programs focusing upon education and training, congregational collaborative-based growth, financial stability, institutional history and current Black Church demographics. The committee is formed of two subcommittees: 1) Education and Training and 2) Black Church Ministry Initiatives.

This year the committee:

- Encouraged Black diocesan clergy to attend the International Black Clergy Conference sponsored by the African Decent Ministry (TEC) in Baltimore, MD April 4-8.
- Five people from our diocese attended Healing From Internalized Oppression, a weekend workshop that looks racial healing, reconciliation, and justice in our personal lives, our ministries, and our society and is specifically for people of color. This was sponsored by the Diocese of Maryland on Oct 25-26.
- Participated in the start up of the revitalization process at Holy Comforter DC.
- Provided pastoral care and supported parish leadership at St. Philip's, the Evangelist towards closing its organizational entity structure.

In addition, committee chair Rev. Ricardo Sheppard attended the annual Diocesan Leaders of African Descent Conference from September 30 – October 3 in Atlantic City, NJ.

- Read the Black Church Ministries Committee Update (Diocesan Bulletin Newsletter, April 25)
- Read the 2024 Annual Report of the Committee on Black Church Ministries

Regional Deans and Dean of Chaplains

Our ongoing commitment to congregational vitality includes the intentional fostering of strong ties between congregations, within regions, and across the diocese. Regional deans serve a crucial role in strengthening relationships, guiding collaborative efforts, and acting as a point of connection between diocesan staff and the regions and within the leadership of the regions themselves. We welcomed seven new deans this year. In preparation for our work, the deans gathered for an overnight retreat with the bishop to reflect on their work and plan for the year.

In 2024, our regional deans:

- Met regularly with both diocesan staff and regional leaders
- Convened meetings with regional parish clergy
- Created opportunities for regional collaboration including a seminar on Gun Violence
- Invited diocese staff to regional meetings and built support for diocesan initiatives
- Supported parishes in their transition process with an official role at installations.
- Served as an integral communications link within regions and around the diocese
- Supported collaborations between congregations including a youth mission trip, shared worship during Lent, joining together to have a presence at local festivals like Rockville Pride, working across congregations to support migrant families and attending events at other churches in their region.
- Because many deans were new to the role, much of their work focused on relationship building with the clergy in their regions as well as figuring out the best ways to gather clergy for regional meetings.

Dean transitions:

- Kate Heichler and Peter Ackerman, new co-deans of Southern MD
- Connie Reinhardt new dean of North Prince Georges Region
- Henry McQueen new dean of North Montgomery County
- BJ Buracker new dean of South Montgomery County
- Bertie Pearson new dean of North DC
- Richard Weinberg new co-dean of Central DC

For the second year, Dean of Chaplains, the Rev. Lisa Barrowclough, collaborated with the diocesan social media team and our Episcopal school chaplains on an Advent calendar featuring artwork by students and thematic questions aimed to invite people into a space of expectant waiting.

View a handful of the posts: December 1, December 8, December 12, December 20, Christmas Eve.

Christ Before Us: Revitalization in 2025

Keeping Christ before us in every faithful step we undertake, in 2025:

- We will implement a church revitalization strategy that leads to healthy, thriving congregations throughout the diocese, reversing the trends of decline
- Our leadership and congregations will reflect the demographics of our surrounding communities
- We will develop a stewardship strategy for our facilities and finances so that parishes are not constrained by building concerns
- We will launch or relaunch three worshiping communities focused on rising generations so that we become a spiritual home for our children and grandchildren

Faith and Leadership






As a diocese, we value spiritual growth and inspired, well-equipped leaders. In 2024, we took intentional steps toward building greater capacity for forming courageous disciples and well-resourced leaders by:

- Defining, completing and promoting a core curriculum for the School for Christian Faith and Leadership that includes resources and training for parish leaders as well as materials for use by congregations and individuals on the baptismal covenant, Bible, and spiritual practices.
- Further developing the Path of Discipleship.
- Advancing our vision for campus ministry by identifying up to three parishes to serve as centers for ministry with university neighbors.
- Developing a mission, vision, and timeline for diocesan youth ministry.
-

Here, we lean into the theme of "Christ before us" to illustrate the progress made in each of these objectives and turn our eyes to what's coming in 2025.

The School for Christian Faith and Leadership

The School for Christian Faith and Leadership is the organizing and resource platform for leadership development and faith formation in the diocese. Its mission grows out of the EDOW strategic plan's commitment to "Inspire all people to grow spiritually and equip our leaders to lead well."

2024 was a year of gathering and streamlining for the School.

- In keeping with the theme set out in the Bishop's Convention address, the School offered four Courageous Discipleship Learning Days. Lay and clergy leaders gathered to share experiences, engage questions, learn from experts, and create local strategies around the following topics:
  - Discipleship

    - Stewardship
    - Reimagining Church Property
    - Celebrating Small Churches
- The School launched a year-long exploration of the Being With course as an accessible, theologically flexible tool for deepening Christian discipleship and building Christian community at the Diocesan and congregational levels. This effort included two Diocesan-level pilot cohorts, as well as resources and training for offering the course at the congregational level.
- The School helped to develop Diocesan Annual Giving resources and held three in-person workshops on planning and carrying out a successful annual giving campaign.
- The School's online platform introduced timely resources such as programs for engaging the election season and the Diocesan Reparations process, as well as training resources for Vestry and Stewardship, formation programming relating to Baptism and Bible Study, and study modules on Reparations and Creation Care.
- In close collaboration with the Missioner for Latino Ministries, the School provided interpretation and facilitated bilingual participation at learning days, engaged Latino clergy in a listening and planning session, and provided one workshop entirely in Spanish.
- The School director continued the practice of seeking congregational input in curriculum design and prioritization and outreach to promote the School's offerings.

To learn more, read EDOW articles relating to the School's activities:

Convention Guest Preacher Focuses on Discipleship | Resources for Confirmation Prep | Being With — Talking About What Really Matters | Reimagining Church Property | School for Christian Faith and Leadership Update for Fall 2024 | Marked as Christ's Own: Preparing for Baptism | Welcome to the Vestry!

The School in 2025

In 2025, we plan to:

- Continue the well-received learning days, where congregational leaders share challenges and strategies.
- Strengthen and expand support for the Being With course.
- Further develop resources in Spanish.
- Provide training opportunities to Vestry members, wardens, treasurers, and stewardship leaders.
- Pilot a "Wardens' Summit."
- Equip leaders in congregations without full-time clergy leadership.

Path of Discipleship

We worked in 2024 to develop a web-based Path of Discipleship for use by both congregations and individuals. The Path is framed around three aspects of Christian life: Believing, Belonging, and Behaving. The web tool offers ways to explore each aspect of Christian life based on the user's current understanding of their own faith journey. The design of the path leads the user to develop either an individual or congregational path of discipleship. We offer model individual and congregational paths and links to other resources for further learning.

In 2025, we will develop curricular resources for using the Path of Discipleship as a seasonal series, a resource for confirmation preparation, and in work on the congregational Vital Signs.

Read more about it: An Accessible Path of Discipleship

Diocesan Youth Ministry

In 2024, the diocesan Youth Ministry Visioning Committee created a mission and vision for ministry with middle and high schoolers (ages 11-18), that will enhance parish based ministries and meet the needs of today's rising generations. The Committee developed the following statements to guide diocesan youth ministry into the future:

- Diocesan Youth Ministry Mission Statement: We support youth and their Episcopal communities to nurture flourishing faith in Christ.
- Diocesan Youth Ministry Vision Statement: We facilitate connections, create opportunities, and share resources that foster empowerment of young people in their Christian discipleship.

In the last quarter of 2024, we began to live into these newly developed statements and started to shape a flourishing diocesan youth ministry by:

- Forming a new Youth Ministry Committee, the second incarnation of the Youth Ministry Visioning Committee, which began meeting in the early fall to plan events, cull formation resources, and support the work of diocesan youth ministry.
- Hosting the November 2024, Be a Blessing: Youth Day of service on the Cathedral Close, at which youth learned about and engaged in service with diocesan partners, while earning SSL hours and connecting service with Christian identity.

To learn more, read the EDOW articles, New Vision, New Mission for Diocesan Youth Ministry and Be a Blessing: Youth Day of Service.

Episcopal Campus Ministry/Ministry with University Neighbors

We seek to support parishes and worshiping communities geographically close to college campuses minister to and with their university neighbors. To assist these worshiping communities, the diocese launched a new congregational grant in the spring of 2024. Award recipients received funding for the 2024-2025 academic year, as well as online resources in collaboration with diocesan partners at The Vinery and coaching, to support their ministry initiatives with university neighbors. The following two EDOW congregations were awarded grants for the academic year:

- St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church of the Deaf, who hopes to rekindle a relationship with Gallaudet University.
- St. George's Episcopal Church (DC) who is planning to reconnect with the community at Howard University.

In addition to these two grant award recipient parishes, the diocese supports:

- The Humble Walk ministry at the University of Maryland. Traditionally a Lutheran ministry, The Humble Walk has a strong relationship with St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in College Park.
- An emerging Episcopal ministry at American University in collaborative partnership with four local Episcopal congregations (St. Alban's, St. Columba's, St. Dunstan's, and Washington National Cathedral).

To learn more, read the EDOW article Supporting Ministry with University Neighbors.

Young Adult Episcopalians

We support Young Adults in their 20's and 30's with unique opportunities for fellowship and formation. Whether deeply rooted in a local congregation or seeking new community, all young adults are welcome in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

In 2024, for the first time since the pandemic, we provided reliable seasonal diocesan offerings for Young Adults to grow in their faith and discipleship. The following seasonal offerings were held in Lent and Advent of 2024:

- Young Adult Episcopalians: Living a Faithful Lent — Young Adults gathered in person for six Saturdays of service and reflection centering on Jesus' words in Matthew 25.
- Exploring a Path of Discipleship: An Introspective Advent for Young Adults — Participants gathered online and utilized the diocesan Path of Discipleship tool to explore the themes of belief, behavior, and belonging, as they relate to the lifelong journey of Christian discipleship.

To learn more, read the EDOW articles Young Adult Episcopalians: Living a Faithful Lent and Exploring a Path of Discipleship: An Introspective Advent for Young Adults.

Christ Before Us: Faithful Leadership in 2025

We're grateful for the good forward movement we achieved on each of these strategic plan objectives in 2024. With this solid progress in hand, we look to a rich and exciting new year of implementing the diocesan strategic plan as we continue to be a diocese that draws on the gifts of all of God's people to serve Christ together.

In 2025, we will:

- Establish the School for Christian Faith and Leadership as the vehicle for all events, curriculum and annual planning.
- Establish the diocese as a reliable resource for youth and young adult ministry.
- Have all tools and resources in place to support the Parish Vital Signs, core strategies, diverse faith formation and onboarding of clergy and lay leaders.
- Use the campus ministry grants to help assess the plan for campus based ministry.

Equity and Justice



As followers of Jesus, we are called to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. - Micah 6:8

In 2024 we embodied this call by deepening our engagement with underserved communities, amplifying our efforts around creation care, and strengthening our capacity for impactful collaborative ministry. Our equity and justice strategic plan objectives for the year included:

- Supporting the Committee on Diocesan Reparations — assisting the Education Working Group as it engages the diocese in education and conversation and the Policy Working Group as it prepares to submit recommendations to the diocese as required by Diocesan Convention.
- Identifying equity and justice champions among the deacons and work with the deacons and regional deans to foster collective engagement in areas of common concern, such as creation care, care for migrants and gun violence prevention.
- Working with the Creation Care Committee to identify opportunities for collaboration in community efforts around tree planting, food security and climate justice advocacy.
- Developing equity and justice resources through the School for Christian Faith and Leadership, particularly focused on providing both theological context and opportunities for action around pressing issues in the communities served by our diocese.

We give thanks to Rudy Logan who served as Missioner for Equity and Justice with deep conviction and consideration before leaving to pursue graduate studies out of the area. We are grateful for his time among us and his good work. We give thanks, too, for the work of Interim Missioner for Equity and Justice Michelle Dibblee, who hit the ground running and has ably helped us to continue making progress on our strategic plan goals.

Diocesan Reparations

At Diocesan Convention in January 2023, we passed a resolution that established the Committee on Diocesan Reparations. The committee is formed of the Policy Working Group and the Education Working Group. The Policy Working Group is tasked with investigating and recommending policies and other measures to support the redress, healing and atonement of the diocese's historical involvement in anti-Black racism. The Education Work Group is focused on educating, encouraging, and supporting the diocese in its reparations work, while also making preparations to implement the recommendations of the Policy Working Group. The committee will submit its recommendations in the form of resolutions for consideration at the 2025 Diocesan Convention.

In addition to holding regular meetings and conducting research into the reparations work of other dioceses, institutions, and localities, in 2024 the committee:

- Finalized and submitted recommendations to move toward a culture of equity in EDOW.
- Refreshed the Reparations Hub on the diocesan website a second time to enhance user experience as additional stories were told and resources created.
- Shared a narrative about the collective work before us through articles in the *Diocesan Bulletin* and on social media.
- Encouraged research and reporting on racialized histories, including the commission of *Bindeth Up Our Wounds* by Franklin Robinson, a report on the 8 parishes that were originally members of the diocese of Maryland and transferred to EDOW in 1865.
- Hosted *Healing Histories: A Reparations Dialogue* for African-American members in EDOW.
- Presented on reparations at congregations and regional clergy gatherings around the diocese and at the fall Regional Gatherings in preparation for convention.

Equity and Justice Areas of Common Concern

In 2024, deacons and parish leadership fostered parish engagement in areas of common concern. Congregations have addressed food insecurity, gun violence and more. (See sections 3 and 4 to learn more about creation care and refugee and migrant ministries.) The information below is drawn from the 2024 survey on congregational outreach and justice ministries.

- **Food insecurity:** more than half of the congregations in the diocese are engaged in some kind of food ministry. Parishes provide volunteer support for local organizations including schools, food banks, and homeless shelters. Many serve meals from their buildings, grow and share vegetables, and donate food regularly. Three parishes — Atonement, D.C., St.

Stephen and the Incarnation, D.C. and San Mateo, Hyattsville — serve as hubs for wider distribution to local groups.

- **Housing insecurity:** Congregations use their buildings to provide hypothermia and drop-in shelter as well as short- and long-term housing for those in need. Clothing, supply, and toy drives through local nonprofits, including shelters, help resource these individuals and families. Several congregations are members of Action in Montgomery or Washington Interfaith Network, two faith-based advocacy groups with safe and secure housing campaigns.

- Congregations also support outreach and advocacy in **jail and prison ministry**, and **gun violence prevention**. This includes visits to incarcerated people, donations and support for returning citizens (those recently released from incarceration who are returning to their communities). Advocates have worked to raise awareness and provide education on both these concerns.
- **Deacons** throughout the diocese are champions in these areas as well as in migrant support and creation care. They are energized by not only their own passions but also the passions and encouragement of the parish members living out their baptismal covenant. Parishes/deacons work both independently and also in concert with other parishes and faith communities on collective efforts.

Immigrant and Refugee Support

The Refugee Response Team (RRT) continues to be a dynamic, motivated powerhouse in the diocese working to resource and connect congregations under the able leadership of the Rev. Nancy Stockbridge. In 2024, more than half the parishes in our diocese supported migrants and refugees in some capacity. We:

- Sponsored refugees from Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, and other locations. Partners include the state department, Good Neighbors Capitol Hill, Lutheran Social Services, Migrant Solidarity Mutual Aid, Episcopal Migration
- Ministries and (new in 2024) Rainbow Railroad, an organization supporting LGBTQ+ refugees. In addition to housing, refugees received support for enrolling in school, finding work, managing a new culture and more. This takes participation from dozens of parishes and hundreds of individuals.
- Continued to welcome asylum seekers from the southern border. Congregations teamed up to offer housing, food, clothing, supplies, support for pregnant women and newborns, and food and donations. Many also received accompaniment to migration appointments and assistance with legal processes.

- Through RRT, deacons and lay leaders learned together to troubleshoot complicated situations, navigate bureaucracy, find local resources (such as daycare, or people who could speak Haitian and other languages), and share events and opportunities for advocacy.
- During 2024, parishes who did not have capacity to support a ministry partnered with each other to gather household goods, set up apartments, and welcome arriving migrants. It has been a good experience to share resources and build relationships among parishes. Work was accomplished through partnership that would not have been done without it.
- RRT was instrumental in raising funds to help finish bathrooms at San Mateo, a congregation that continues to serve as a hub for Spanish-speaking migrants and the wider community.
- With leadership from the Washington National Cathedral Sanctuary Ministry, members of RRT began preparations for potential mass detentions and deportations, including family preparation research and training.

Interested in learning more? Sign up for the EDOW Refugee Ministry Listserv

Creation Care

The Diocese's Creation Care Committee works to promote and assist parishes with environmental sustainability and responsibility in our faith communities and neighborhoods. As part of this undertaking in 2024, the Creation Care Committee and congregations around the diocese:

- Observed the 2024 Season of Creation. Sixteen parishes included prayers, readings, and programs celebrating this Season and inviting congregations to continue ecological and environmental efforts.
- Contributed to natural landscaping through Saplings for Sacraments, tree planting, establishment of native plant gardens, watershed restoration, and more. Ascension, Gaithersburg dedicated the Piscataway Rain Garden; St. Dunstan's took further steps toward storm water management; and St. Bartholomew's, Laytonsville planted 17 native trees. St. John's, Lafayette Square even planted trees with partners in South Africa.
- Encouraged parishes to invest in energy efficient systems, including solar power (through panels and/or connecting to solar farms) along with new heating and cooling systems. St. George's Valley Lee added solar panels after five years of research and planning, and Good Shepherd announced that solar panels will be added as part of their new roof installation. (Long term planning pays off!)
- Partnered with Interfaith Power and Light (DC.MD.NOVA) to continue learning about new tools and technologies to reduce energy usage and carbon emissions. This resulted in the introduction of Resolution 4 (Urging the Diocese and Parishes to Participate in Energy-Usage Study) for consideration at Diocesan Convention in 2025.
- Participated in the United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP 29) through the selection of Autumn Smith, member of Grace Silver Spring, as a lay delegate.

Equity and Justice and the School for Christian Faith and Leadership

In 2024, the School created online "on demand" modules for Creation Care and Reparations, providing opportunities for the diocesan community to learn more about both of these priorities. In preparation for the election, the School also added a module on election resources, including information about voter mobilization and pro-democracy reflections and activities from the Office of Government Relations and other sources.

In collaboration with Michelle Dibblee, Interim Missioner for Equity and Justice, School Director Anna Olson developed an online workshop on the spiritual dimensions of reparations. The workshop combined the "being with" model of reflection and conversation with information about the racialized harms committed in the diocese, preparing participants for discussion of resolutions at Diocesan Convention.

Christ Before Us: Equity and Justice in 2025

In 2025, these are the strategic plan goals we will pursue:

- Continuing listening process with regions and congregations to help discern the most effective role for a diocesan resources (e.g. the Equity and Justice Missioner, regional deans, and deacons)
- Defining the leadership role of the Equity and Justice Missioner into 2025 and beyond
- Preparing for ongoing changes in response to potential changes with the new administration
- Appointing new Reparations Committee and define the scope of the Committee's work

Programs and Operations



Our Diocesan Strategic Plan envisions a future where we *draw on the gifts of all God's people to serve Christ together and live Jesus's Way of Love.* As we approach the plan's final year, we celebrate the progress made while remaining attentive to the areas that still need our care and effort. At the same time, we recognize that much of our work lies in the essential, day-to-day responsibilities that form the foundation of a thriving diocese — the "nuts and bolts" of diocesan operations.

This section of the Annual Report highlights the programs and initiatives that, while not directly tied to the strategic plan, play a vital role in sustaining the health, vibrancy, and mission of our diocesan community.

Bishop's Office

In addition to guiding the diocese through our strategic plan, Bishop Mariann fulfills the canonical responsibilities of her episcopate. These include parish visitations, confirmations, ordinations, and installations, all of which serve as vital expressions of her leadership and connection across the diocese.

In 2024, Bishop Mariann:

- Conducted 28 parish visitations
- Confirmed, received, and reaffirmed 306 people from 46 parishes at two confirmation services at Washington National Cathedral and while conducting visitations
- Ordained the Rev. Aaron Dunn and the Rev. Caitlin Frazier first to the transitional diaconate and then to the sacred order of priesthood. Ordained the Rev. Dawn Booth, the Rev. Diana Edwards, the Rev. Miriam Felipe, the Rev. Mary Alcuin Kelly, the Rev. Annemarie Quigley, and the Rev. Donna Stinchcomb to the sacred order of Deacons.
- Installed:
    - The Rev. James L. Pahl as rector of All Saints', Chevy Chase, MD
    - The Rev. Sara Palmer as rector of All Soul's, DC
    - The Rev. Z. Mark Smith as rector of St. Andrew's, Leonardtown, MD

    - The Rev. Christopher Phillips as rector of Church of the Redeemer, Bethesda, MD
    - The Rev. Yoimel González Hernández as rector of St. Stephen & the Incarnation, DC
    - The Rev. Cynthia McKenna as rector of St. Paul's, Rock Creek Parish, DC
    - The Rev. David Kendrick as rector of St. Monica & St. James, DC
- Provided pastoral support to clergy and lay leaders
- Convened quarterly sessions with staff to track progress on strategic plan objectives
- Attended the 81st General Convention of The Episcopal Church and participated in the election for the new Presiding Bishop
- Traveled to Texas for the House of Bishops
- Traveled to Honduras to explore a potential partnership with an Episcopal school, fostering opportunities for collaboration and shared ministry.

Diocesan Staff Transitions

Diocesan staff is dedicated to equipping and resourcing leaders across the diocese as we journey together in walking Jesus' Way of Love. We strive to foster strong, meaningful relationships with those we serve and with one another. To further nurture a vibrant and collaborative work environment, each quarter we set aside a day for team-building, visioning, and the sharing of a meal together.

Diocesan staff experienced these transitions in 2024:

- Kathleen Hall retired from her position as Director of Human Resources and Administration
- The Rev. Stuart Wright was hired to serve as Director of Human Resources and Administration
- Rudy Logan, Missioner for Equity and Justice, departed staff to pursue graduate studies out of the area
- Michelle Dibblee joined the staff as Interim Missioner for Equity and Justice
- The Rev. Dr. Robert Phillips, Canon for Leadership Development and Congregational Care, announced his retirement and departed staff after January's Diocesan Convention

In addition to these transitions, we cheered on Mildred Reyes, Missioner for Latino/Hispanic Ministry and Diocesan Initiatives, as she tackled her first semester of seminary in support of her call to the priesthood.

Ordination Process

In 2024, the Rev. Dr. Robert Phillips, Canon for Leadership Development and Congregational Care, and the Ven. Steve Seely, Archdeacon and Diocesan Liturgist walked alongside the Commission on Ministry in managing the ordination process within the diocese.

Priesthood formation process

- We had 11 postulants discerning a call to the priesthood (The Rev. Deacon Antonio Baxter, Erin Bowers, Tracey Forfa, Mildred Reyes, Tiffany Clark, Cami Caudill, Chris Farrar, Mark James, Eric Bailey, Laura Carpenter, and Clayton McKleskey). 5 of these postulants were discerned towards candidacy in 2024 and towards ordination to the transitional diaconate and priesthood in January 2025 (Tracey Forfa, Tiffany Clark, Mark James, and Eric Bailey (transitional diaconate), and The Rev. Deacon Antonio Baxter (priesthood).
- 2 candidates (Aaron Dunn and Caitlin Frazier) were ordained to the transitional diaconate in January 2024 and later ordained into the priesthood in July 2024 at Washington National Cathedral.

Diaconal Formation Process and Deacon School

- 6 new deacons (Cohort V) were ordained in October at Washington National Cathedral and began their ministries in their assigned parishes.
- The bi-annual Deacon Workshop took place in the fall with 9 aspirants attending
- 5 postulants (Cohort VI) are attending their first year of Deacon School
- 6 nominees (Cohort VII) have been accepted into the diaconal formation process and have begun work with their local discernment committees

Clergy and Parish Transitions

An essential element of diocesan operations is assisting clergy and parishes in transition. On behalf of Bishop Mariann, in 2024 the Rev. Canon Robert Phillips worked with clergy and parishes on all aspects of the process.

There are currently 24 parishes in active transition (i.e. clergy leadership in the form of Interim Rector, Priest-in-Charge, or Supply) in the Diocese of Washington.

- 19 priests were called to new ministries:
  - 9 rectors/priests-in-charge/vicars
  - 1 interims
  - 7 associates
  - 2 assistants
  - 1 diocesan staff (interim)
- 15 parishes currently rely on supply and long-term clergy
- 14 priests participated in Genesis, the diocesan program designed to onboard priests in new calls to better equip them for success. They will complete the program in 2025.
- 1 parish undergoing the Canon 54 assessment process.

- 1 parish closed.

Latino/Hispanic Ministry

The Episcopal Diocese of Washington is home to five Spanish-speaking faith communities, each serving as a spiritual home to individuals and families from diverse countries and cultural backgrounds. These communities embody the Gospel's call to love and service, extending their ministry beyond the church walls to address urgent challenges such as hunger, homelessness, and immigration. With deep compassion and steadfast faith, they nurture both the physical and spiritual well-being of their neighbors, embodying Christ's presence in their communities.

Joining this rich tapestry of Latino/Hispanic Ministry, St. Thomas, DC, is the most recent community to offer a truly multilingual worship experience. With a bilingual Spanish and English bulletin and headsets available for those who wish to hear the service in Spanish, St. Thomas affirms that language is no barrier to belonging. In keeping with the radical hospitality of the Gospel, all are welcome at our table for Holy Communion, for it is God's table, not ours.

During the summer, twelve members from the diocese gathered early morning on June 3rd to make their way down to the biennial gathering of Nuevo Amanecer 2024 (New Dawn), which celebrates Latino/Hispanic ministries across The Episcopal Church at Kanuga Conference and Retreat Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For three days, over three hundred Latino Episcopalians gathered June 3-6 to discuss the possibility of this year's theme of Sembrando Amor y Esperanza or "Sowing Love and Hope."

During Hispanic Heritage Month, members from across the diocese gathered in a joyful celebration at Ascension, Gaithersburg, lifting their voices in worship and song to celebrate more than 25 years of Latino leadership and faith. Together, they continue to weave their vibrant traditions into the fabric of diocesan life, shaping and strengthening the body of Christ in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

Building on this legacy, 2024 marked a significant step forward in accessibility and inclusion with the creation of a dedicated webpage that compiles all Spanish-language blog posts, announcements, and articles, ensuring that vital information is readily available and easily shared within our Spanish-speaking communities. This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring that all who seek God's love can fully engage in the life and mission of the Church.

We invite you to follow our Spanish language social media platforms: Facebook | Instagram

Diaconal Ministry

Deacons of the diocese continue to be central to our ministry strategy in the Diocese of Washington. Under the guidance of the Ven. Steve Seely, our deacons serve as a bridge between the church and the world, helping to equip and encourage folks to do meaningful, necessary, and impactful collective engagement and justice work.

- Deacons are now actively serving in 34 congregations across the diocese, enriching communities through their ministry of service and compassion.
- Deacons are engaged in a variety of community engagement activities from assisting with food pantries and feeding programs, advocacy and ministry to the unhoused populations in our communities, returning citizens, creation care, refugee and migrant assistance, as well as many localized and specialized ministries unique to the parishes and communities they serve.
- The deacons of the diocese gathered for a Deacon Day in September. They explored together ministry models that reach beyond "outreach" to looking at ways to form relationships with those being served to share Jesus' love in deeper ways. The discussions were centered around ministry models discussed in Sam Wells' book, A Nazareth Manifesto. Simply put, doing ministry as Jesus did by being in relation with those he healed and taught.
- We highlighted diaconal ministry in the Diocesan Bulletin throughout 2024 in the Belovedness series:
    - Ascension, Silver Spring Loving Their Neighbors
    - Assist, Accompany, Advocate: A Ministry of Welcome
    - Belovedness – Are You Being Called to Ordained Ministry?
    - Mary, Did You Know? Well, Did You?

Diocesan Liturgies

Partnering with other diocesan leaders, the Ven. Steve Seely develops the liturgy for the services that sustain our communal life.

Diocesan liturgies in 2024 included:

- The Holy Week Clergy Renewal of Vows services
- The ordination of 6 persons to the transitional diaconate and then priesthood at Washington National Cathedral in January and July respectively.
- Clergy Conference in May offered an opportunity for clergy to come together with their bishop and each other for prayer, refreshment, and conversation
- Confirmation services for the sacrament of confirmation, reaffirmation and reception

Business Affairs Office

The Business Affairs Office tends to the financial and human resource needs of daily diocesan life. In 2024, the Rev. Stuart Wright, Director of Administration and Human Resources, and Kelly Cooper, Financial Analyst, in collaboration with the Human Resources and Finance committees and supporting staff:

- Updated the templates for Letters of Agreement for priests in EDOW.
- Assisted congregations with personnel issues, including compensation and benefits.
- Served as staff liaison to the parish administrators email group.
- Helped the Bishop Walker School with accounting and accounts payable system (bill.com).

Communications and Technology

In 2024, diocesan communications were dedicated to telling the story of the diocese and sharing updates about progress made on our strategic plan initiatives.

- In the fall, Director of Communications J. Keely Thrall presented a talk on mission statements at a Tending Our Soil learning lab
- The diocese continued its partnership with Worship Times to offer a Parish Website Design and Hosting Program for congregations interested maximizing the potential of their digital "front door"
    - 20 parish websites are now live, including: Church of the Epiphany – DC | St. Nicholas Episcopal Church – Germantown | Grace Episcopal Church – Silver Spring | Christ Church Durham Parish – Nanjemoy | Church of the Ascension, Gaithersburg | Church of the Ascension, Silver Spring | St Mark's Episcopal Church – Fairland | Transfiguration Parish – Silver Spring | Grace Episcopal Church, DC | Christ Episcopal Church – Clinton | Trinity Episcopal Church – DC | St. Philip's Episcopal Church – Baden | The Well – Bowie | St. Mary's Episcopal Church – Foggy Bottom | Church of the Holy Comforter – DC | St. John's Episcopal Church, Georgetown | St. Luke's Episcopal Church – DC | Christ Church Washington Parish | Christ Church – La Plata | Christ Episcopal Church – Kensington
- John White, owner of Computer and Network Resources, Inc., continued his contractual agreement with the Diocese to provide system and network management, tech support to staff and parishes, and management of IT vendor relationships
- Email newsletters remain key vehicles for communication in the diocese. The diocese regularly sends 4 communications:
    - The Diocesan Bulletin (biweekly)

- Bishop Mariann's Reflections (biweekly)
- School for Christian Faith and Leadership (monthly)
- Faith Formation News (monthly)
- Sign up for our newsletters

Social Media

The diocesan social media team worked diligently to provide content in both English and Spanish on our diocesan social media platforms. Our analytics from last year show continued growth in organic reach, interactions, and new followers in both our English and Spanish platforms:

Facebook (English)

- Video Views — 54% increase from last year
- Facebook Profile Visits — 36% increase from last year. (13.6K)
- 233 new followers gained in 2024

Instagram (English)

- Organic Reach — 79% increase from last year (5.8K)
- Content Interactions — 100% increase from last year (20K)
- Followers — 3% increase from last year (1.4K)
- Instagram Profile Visits — 36% decrease from last year (1K)

Facebook (Spanish)

- Organic Reach — 76% increase from last year (15.3K)
- Content Interactions — 100% increase from last year (3.4K)
- 129 new followers gained in 2024

Instagram (Spanish)

- Organic Reach — 98% increase from last year
- Content Interactions — 93% increase from last year
- Instagram Profile Visits — 97% increase from last year

Follow us in English: Facebook | Instagram
Follow us in Spanish: Facebook | Instagram

Finance and Budget



At its core, stewardship is the recognition that everything we are and everything we have — including our financial resources — is a gift from God. In gratitude, we give back by dedicating a portion of these gifts to support God's work in the world, sharing our blessings to serve others and further God's kingdom.

With diligence and care, Bishop Mariann, diocesan staff, and the volunteers serving on our financial committees work together to steward the diocese's resources. Their efforts ensure we meet both the immediate and long-term financial needs of the diocese, supporting its mission and ministry.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee oversees the preparation and monitoring of the diocese's annual operating budget. It also advises Bishop Mariann and the Standing Committee on matters related to the sale or encumbrance of real property and separate congregations.

In 2024, the Finance Committee closely monitored factors that could impact the diocesan budget, recommending adjustments as needed. Over the summer, the committee began drafting the 2025 budget, and committee chair Joseph Alcock presented a preliminary version during the fall Regional Gatherings.

Watch the report on the diocesan budget from the 2025 Diocesan Convention
Watch the treasurer's report from the 2025 Diocesan Convention

Stewardship Strategy for Parish Facilities and Finances

As part of the diocesan strategic plan, and specifically the initiative to revitalize churches to grow the Jesus movement, the diocese set a goal to "develop a stewardship strategy for our facilities and finances so that parishes are not constrained by building concerns."

At Diocesan Convention in January 2024, the Rev. Andrew Walter, Canon to the Ordinary and Chief Operating Officer, described a Stewardship Strategy for Parish Facilities and Finances that focused on the three ways to transform a church building from a liability into an asset: increasing rental income, redeveloping church property, and selling the building/property.

Watch Canon Andrew's presentation | Read the text of Canon Andrew's presentation

Throughout 2024, several parishes around the diocese have worked with real estate professionals recommended by the diocese to explore the possibility of either leasing parish space or redeveloping space.

In September, the School for Christian Leadership led a Courageous Discipleship Day on reimagining church property. Leaders from several different parishes went on a pilgrimage to Arlington, VA where they met with church leaders who had made the courageous decision to redevelop their church property. It was a day of listening, learning and imagining what it could mean to be church unfettered by concerns over building costs and deferred maintenance.

Then, in December, the first fruits of the Stewardship Strategy came into being when Good Shepherd, Silver Spring signed a long-term lease with a Montessori school which would not only rent space from the parish but also invest significant resources into the parish's physical plant, transforming Good Shepherd's property, finances and future.

Committee on Congregational Stewardship and Diocesan Support

The Committee on Congregational Stewardship and Diocesan Support convened following January's Diocesan Convention to explore how we can most effectively and equitably ensure diocesan funding for the Bishop's episcopal functions and diocesan programs. Tasked with looking at models within The Episcopal Church as well as at our own history the committee's first opportunity to engage active leaders in the Diocese came in the form of a diocesan-wide survey, "Your Parish's Financial Support for the Episcopal Diocese of Washington."

The Resolution on Congregational Stewardship & Diocesan Support was proposed by the Rev. Jessica Hitchcock, Rector of St. Luke's in Bethesda and Central Montgomery's clergy representative to Council. You can watch Rev. Hitchcock's presentation to the 2024 Diocesan Convention about the call for this committee here and read the full text of the resolution on page 49 of the 2024 Convention Booklet.

Learn more about the committee

Diocesan Grants and Scholarships

The diocese administers a diverse array of grants and scholarships designed to empower leaders, support congregations, and enrich the broader community. This work is made possible through the dedication and stewardship of our volunteer committee chairs and members, whose commitment to this vital fiduciary responsibility ensures that these resources are distributed with wisdom and care. With profound gratitude for their service, we present an overview of the actions and disbursements of each fund in 2024.

- **Angus Dun Fellowship Fund**
  - This fund supports the continuing education of canonically resident clergy within EDOW that fosters skill development and strengthens ministerial relationships and self-directed study aimed at enriching one's ministry or the broader mission of the diocese.
  - 6 individuals were each awarded $1,000 grants
- **Clergy Children Scholarships**
  - Formally known as the Claggett Fund Grants, these scholarships provide financial assistance to support the educational expenses of children of canonically resident clergy, covering costs from grade school through college.
  - 9 families received a total of $$43,476 in grants
- **St. Mary's County Scholarship Fund**
  - Established in 1980, this fund provides scholarship assistance to students of African-American heritage and residents of St. Mary's County who are pursuing a degree at an accredited college or university or obtaining certification in a post-secondary educational program
  - 17 students were awarded a total of $15,950 in scholarships