



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — April 3, 2024

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From the Bishop

Faith Groups

Dear Companions on the Journey,

Happy Easter! I hope your Holy Week and Easter were filled with the blessing of God's presence. I write this while on retreat this Easter Week. My retreat time is primarily focused by reading and reflecting upon the Biblical call stories of Hagar, Moses, and Jonah. This time is shared with good friends and colleagues. We know each other well enough to have real conversations about our hopes and struggles as baptized people who happened to be spiritual leaders. We also offer each other encouragement and insight as we hear unique ways God's Spirit leads each of us. In many ways during this week of retreat, study, prayer, and reflection we are a Faith Group.

I hope and pray that every Episcopalian will be in a Faith Group. This practice is usually characterized by 6 - 12 people covenanting to meet regularly to talk about faith. Faith groups usually meet weekly or monthly during the school year or a specific number of months. These groups are more than a place for friends and fellowship. They are primarily a place to deepen faith by talking about one's own spiritual life, growing in the ability to listen for the ways God is working in the lives of others, and praying for and with each other.

Ironically, the Faith Group model has become a popular mechanism for profit making businesses.

There are several companies, fitness organizations, and social clubs that offer small groups experiences for a fee. In other words, they charge a fee for people to be part of a caring and supportive group. As Ruth Graham said in an article, "these companies have figured out how to do church without God." Even so, Christians have been gathering in Faith Groups for more than 2000 years, yielding a priceless profit of faithfulness.

As the celebration of Easter continues it is time to look for new practices. This one will support you in the lifelong journey of growing more deeply into faith. Learn more from the materials on the diocesan website. Attend an information session when offered. If you need help getting started, Canon Margo Peckham Clark and Cynthia McChesney, Missioner for Stewardship and Legacy Giving, are happy to provide support.

Know this too, my daily prayer is for God's transformative presence to shape the faith of every person in our diocese. You are in my prayers. You are in God's sight.

Easter Blessings,
Bishop Hughes

Happening in the Wider Church

Four chosen to stand for election as 28th presiding bishop

Office of Public Affairs

The Episcopal Church's Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop today announced the names of the bishops it will nominate to succeed Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

Its nominees are:

- **The Rt. Rev. J. Scott Barker**
Diocese of Nebraska
- **The Rt. Rev. Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez**
Diocese of Pennsylvania
- **The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe**
Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania
Diocese of Western New York
- **The Rt. Rev. Robert Wright**
Diocese of Atlanta

Videos of each nominee discussing a biblical image or metaphor that resonates with this moment in the life of the church and the role of the presiding bishop are available on the General Convention website. This page also includes photos and links to each bishop's biography on their diocesan websites.

The four names will be formally submitted to the General Convention during a joint session on June 25, a day before the House of Bishops is scheduled to elect the 28th presiding bishop.

Following the Convention Eucharist at 8:30 a.m. on June 26 in the Kentucky International Convention Center, the bishops with seat, voice, and vote will travel to Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Louisville, where the election will take place during a sequestered session in the context of prayer and

reflection. The House of Deputies will then be asked to confirm the election.

"We appreciate the many Episcopalians who prayerfully set us on our way to discerning this slate of nominees," said the Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, bishop of Alaska, who co-chairs the committee with Canon Dr. Steve Nishibayashi of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Rev. Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, a deacon who chairs the nominations subcommittee, added, "We felt the Holy Spirit's presence during this process and are prayerfully thankful for the guidance we received."

In keeping with the protocol of previous presiding bishop elections, the nominees will not be available for media interviews.

The announcement of the nominees now opens a 13-day period during which any bishop or deputy to the 81st General Convention may indicate their desire to nominate a bishop not on the committee's slate. The committee recently outlined the process that must be followed before any additional bishops can be nominated in that manner. Bishops and deputies will receive a link to the nomination form from the General Convention Office.

All nominees, including any nominated by petition, will address General Convention attendees from 4-6 p.m. EDT on June 21. That session will be livestreamed and available for on-demand viewing. The nominees' names will be formally submitted to the General Convention during a joint session of the two houses on June 25. Any petition nominees will be submitted during that session as well.

"We look forward to presenting these bishops to the convention for its consideration," Nishibayashi said.

Curry's nine-year term concludes Oct. 31, 2024. The presiding bishop-elect's nine-year term officially begins Nov. 1, 2024.