

Commission on Ministry (COM) Report to the 2013 Convention

The Rev. Melanie R. Barbarito, Chair

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Members: Fred Barber, David Brockman, Richard Cabes, ClayOla Gitane, Cynthia Hill, Slavin Manning, Sharla Marks, Tracie Middleton, Susan Nanna, Diane Snow, Judy Upham, Joel Walker

The Discernment Process

Discernment of a call to ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church involves much more than an aspirant and God. In our denomination, discernment takes place first by a person along with his or her family then widens to include the priest in charge of the person's community of faith and members of that community, including the vestry. Discernment continues with national church-mandated medical, psychological, and background checks. At some point after these steps, the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee participate in the discernment on behalf of the diocese and the wider church. Those bodies recommend, and the bishop decides.

Documents

In addition to shepherding people through the process, the COM has created documentation to explain the canonical process toward ordination in the Episcopal Church. The 12-page *Ordination Process Handbook* is a step-by-step guide to the process from aspirant through ordination based upon the canons of the Episcopal Church. The creation of this document began in 2009 and has seen multiple revisions. It is now available on the diocesan website along with applications for ordination to the diaconate and P\priesthood. Deacon Tracie Middleton has created an extensive chart outlining the process indicating the "who, what, when, where, and why" of canonical requirements. She has also created a number of charts that provide simple visual explanations of the same. Presentations of these materials were made to the Standing Committee and at a clergy day.

Thanks to the work of Susan Nanna and Cynthia Hill, an extensive handbook for parish discernment groups (PDG) is now available. Since the PGDs must be trained by members of the COM, this document is not currently available on line.

Conferences

Two members led a workshop on licensed lay ministries at the diocesan leadership conference and the Commission led a diocesan discernment conference in June.

Interviews and Recommendations

A number of aspirants, postulants, and candidates have moved through the process. Not all of these actions require interviews; some require only attestation of work completed. The following recommendations were made:

- Transitional Deacon – One
- Priest – One
- Candidate for Priesthood – One
- Postulant for Priesthood – Two

The Chair thanks all the members for their diligent work.