

Episcopal Diocese of Western New York
182nd Convention
Nominees for Diocesan Offices

General Convention – Lay (Elect 4 Deputies & 4 Alternates)

Hon. Rose H. Sconiers (St. Philip's, Buffalo)



I feel called to this office because of my long term commitment to racial justice and healing. The Episcopal Church has undertaken the hard work of racial reconciliation and healing and charged the congregations within the Episcopal Church to engage in programs that promote this work. As a retired Justice of the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, and current Chair of the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable, I bring to this office, not only my experience, but contacts and relationships that will assist the Episcopal Church in meeting this mandate. I also feel that God had chosen this path for me because since my retirement in 2015, I have dedicated my full attention to the work of my church, St. Philip's, the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable.

Josephine Robbins (St. Philip's, Buffalo)



During the last General Convention, I had the privilege of serving as a lay deputy for the Diocese of Western New York. Previously I had served as an Alternate. Those experiences have done much to prepare me to be a more effective deputy. I thank you, and again ask for your support to serve the Diocese as a deputy for the next General Convention.

Since the mid-sixties, I have been involved in many parish, deanery and diocesan activities. These have been rewarding and satisfying. In addition, my professional experiences, including legislative and policy development, have been significant. I bring the experience of wisdom with insight and vision.

These opportunities continue to keep me grounded and current with the Church and the world at large. My understanding of, and passion for the responsibilities of Christians to the underserved, continue to develop as my respect for the dignity of every human being continues to grow.

Cheri Maytum-Krull (St. Luke's, Jamestown)



Ever since I attended a choir event at the cathedral in Buffalo as a young child, I have been appreciative of the fact that we, as Episcopalians are part of a much larger mission of faith. I have been fortunate to experience the greater church in many ways throughout my lifetime as a Diocesan Youth Leader, Deanery representative and member of Diocesan Council. I have travelled with WNY youth to EYE and attended the General Convention as a spectator in 2006 to witness the election of Katherine Jefferts Schori. I feel that my past interest and involvement in the national church, along with the leadership skills that I have developed through service to my community, church and the Diocese of Western New York make me a good candidate to be a Deputy. I would be honored to serve and work in support of the mission and growth of the ECUSA.

Elisabeth Brauza-Hughes (St. Paul's, Harris Hill)



The Episcopal Church needs faithful people who are committed to the work of envisioning its future. These people must be willing to embrace change, while still keeping fast to the core principles that make us Episcopalians. I believe I am called to this task. To this work, I bring my experience as a deputy to General Convention in 2015, and as an alternate deputy in 2018, as well as several years of experience on the Diocesan Council of this diocese, and as a lay professional in the church. I love the Episcopal Church, and I want to work for our common future.

General Convention - Clergy (Elect 4 Deputies & 4 Alternates)

The Rev. Canon Catherine Dempsey-Sims (Diocesan Ministry Center)



I love the Episcopal Church and I know that it, as an institution, it must adapt to the 21st century world without losing our commitment to the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is a challenging journey but one I am excited to be on. I have been honored to be a deputy for the past two General Conventions and wish to continue my service in 2021. I bring passion, thinking outside the box, hard work, and a willingness to try bold things (unburdened by the chance that they may not work) to my work as Canon to the Ordinary and the various church-wide committees on which I serve. In addition, I have been very involved with the planning leading up to the partnership of our two dioceses and feel that the wider church will benefit from the lessons learned (thus far!).

The Rev. Lillian J. Davis-Wilson (St. Philip's, Buffalo)



It is my desire to continue to serve and be an active participant in proclaiming the Episcopal Church as a beloved community. I request your consideration in representing you for the last time, as a clerical deputy to General Convention. As your Province II clergy representative to the Executive Council, Vice-Chair of the joint standing committee on Mission Beyond the Episcopal Church, and most important your deacon for the past 4 years, it is my vocation and desire to serve God and pursue peace and work for justice in the world.

The 2021 Convention will cover the election of the next Presiding Bishop, the Church Structure, Gun regulation, immigration, safeguarding (Title IV) and racial reconciliation. My experience throughout the years of working on national legislative, diocesan, and parish committees has provided me with insights that will help us practice the way of love, by growing relationships across divided walls and seeking Christ in each other.

The Rev. Michael Hadaway (Good Shepherd, Buffalo)



We are called to translate the eternal truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ for today. We need to listen to all under-represented groups, especially younger generations, both in and outside the church to learn the language of this translation. I have a passion for this work. Being raised in Episcopal camps, pilgrimages, and parish life led me to join the founding staff of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. Part of Virginia Seminary Class of 2000, now 49, I have 20 years' ordained experience in rural, suburban, and urban parishes. From 2010-2018, I led Trinity, Morgantown (WV), their college ministry, and redevelopment and expansion of their daily Soup Kitchen. Good Shepherd, Buffalo, and I are learning together how to magnify the Good News in our community and to rejoice in it. I'm also seeking to do that as part of our delegation.

The Rev. Claudia Scheda (St. David's, West Seneca)



In my nine years of ordained ministry in WNY, I've found our small, economically struggling congregations are on the cusp of a newly defined Church Universal in our generation. We are the bodies discerning how to do more with less; how to reach out and share gifts, ministries, and personnel; and how to develop new ways to connect with populations increasingly distanced from their own surrounding communities. It is these concerns I bring to Convention, and I feel ours are voices which need to be heard at the national level. My spiritual gifts include holy listening, and a commitment to view situations from multiple perspectives; my talents include relationship building—essential for fruitful communication. As an artist and creative thinker, my contribution is valuable as the Church seeks innovative solutions for our future. I've served as Safe Church Facilitator, Diocesan Council member, and Partnership board member.

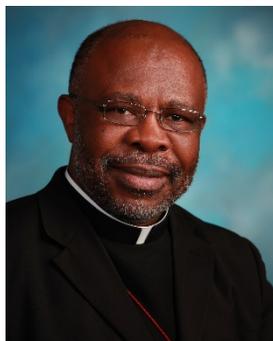
The Rev. Luke Fodor (St. Luke's, Jamestown)



As a parish priest, I believe that ministry happens in community, at local levels. And having worked on the church-wide staff at the Episcopal Church (at "815") for 8 years before ordination, I also know the important influence of church-wide initiatives to shape the character of our local ministry expressions. I feel called to run as a General Convention Deputy because I have both the experience and ability to think globally and locally about the future of the Episcopal Church and the mission to which God is calling us.

As church-wide staff I worked at two General Conventions (2006 & 2009) which will enable me as a first-time deputy to hit the ground running while bringing fresh expression. My current leadership roles in the Diocese—serving on Standing Committee and as Co-Chair of the Joint Board of Examining Chaplains—will ensure that I bring our real concerns to General Convention.

The Rev. Canon Dr. Isaac Ihiasota (Non-Parochial)



I came to this Diocese in 2006, as the Rector of St Stephen's Church, Niagara Falls. I retired a few years ago, but I'm currently serving as Priest-in-Charge at St Michael & All Angels Church, Buffalo. I've had the honor and privilege of serving a priest in the Church for over forty-one (41) years now, in the Worldwide Anglican Communion: Nigeria, United Kingdom, and United States.

I've been elected four (4) times to serve at the General Convention; but served three (3) times as a Deputy and one (1) time as Alternate Deputy. During those Conventions, I served on many Agencies, Boards, Committees and Commissions. I've also served on Provincial Synods, Provincial Councils, Diocesan Councils, Standing Committees, Commission on Ministry, Evangelism, Stewardship, Constitutions and Canons, etc. I've a broad knowledge of the workings of The Episcopal Church, USA, as well as the Worldwide Anglican Communion. Although I'm retired, I've not reached the mandatory retirement age of seventy-two (72) in The Episcopal. Therefore, I think that I still have a lot to offer to The Episcopal Church, and the Church in general.

As an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at Niagara University, I've taught many college courses, including Church and Politics; Global Conflicts and Conflict Resolution; International Relations; Public Policy; African Politics; American Government; the Presidency, etc. I love teaching and learning, especially new ways of doing things in politics and the Church. I attend Continuing Education programs almost every year at St Stephen's House, Oxford University, or Westcott House, Cambridge University, England. In one of my studies at St Stephen's House, I explored "Same-sex Unions in Pre-modern Europe," which is still one of the important issues the Worldwide Anglican Communion, The Episcopal Church, including the next General Convention, as we continue to work on the Liturgy for Same-Sex Blessing.

I promise to offer my rich background, broad knowledge, and experience of the Worldwide Anglican Communion, across three continents to this Diocese and the Episcopal Church. I strongly believe that The Episcopal Church needs the worldview, broad knowledge, experience and rich background that I offer. We all need one another, a deeper and clearer understanding of each other's theological views, church woman-ship and church man-ship, liturgical practices, as well as pastoral practices.

Finally, I promise to offer a message of reconciliation, which is our call as Christians: 'All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.' (2 Corinthians 5:18-19).

Diocesan Council - Lay (Elect Two to 3 Year Terms)

Wendy A. Palmer (St Peter's, Eggertsville)



I have been on the Diocesan Council for the last 3 years. During this time we have had quite a bit of change and the council has been able to work together to help accomplish the evolving needs of our diocese. I feel I have been able to contribute to those goals. Being on the council has given me a stronger belief in our diocese and has strengthened my faith by seeing of Gods growth of our church.

Judy Elliott (St. Paul's Cathedral, Buffalo)



I am currently the Clerk to the Diocesan Council, and have considered it an honor to serve in this capacity the last 4 years. I have been actively involved in the Diocese of WNY all my life, and currently serve on the Vestry of the Cathedral, as well as being Chief Sacristan of the Altar Guild and lead Pastoral Care minister.

My main goal has always been to serve the Lord through my church work, and am now a volunteer for our Garden of Love outreach ministry to the homeless and street people of Buffalo, NY. If elected to the Diocesan Council, and in agreement with Bishop Sean, I am also willing to remain the Clerk of the Council. Council's work is very crucial, especially between Conventions. Council members meet monthly except in the summer, and are working hard in this new endeavor with the DNWPA, as we are "On the Road to Emmaus Together."

Amy Swanson (St. Paul's, Stafford)



I'd like to be a voice of the small rural congregations on the outskirts of the diocese. As a parent of 3 young kids, I'd like to be an advocate for stronger Christian education and youth activities.

I bring to the council an awareness of the needs of the elderly. As many of our congregations are facings the challenges of growing older with increased numbers of aged and shut in parishioners; it's important that we find new and innovative ways to continue to minister to their spiritual needs.

I see the struggle of our young and very old in the church communitybut I also see a common thread and that is a desire to serve God and minister to the needy.

I may not bring a strong biblical understanding or deep theological knowledge to council, but I do bring a love and desire to help the church in any way I am called.

Diocesan Council - Clergy (Elect one to a 3 Year Term)

The Rev. Stephen Lane (St. Philip's, Buffalo)



I see our Diocese as one church with many different parishes. We are in a time of change with our new partners to the south and that will have an impact on who we are and how we operate. I have had extensive training in Systems, family, congregational, and organizational. I would like to be a part of this transformation as we move towards a new future in Christ.

Standing Committee - Lay (Elect one to a 4 Year Term)

James B. Isaac (St. Mark's, LeRoy)



I hope everyone already knows the answer to this question!

Standing Committee - Clergy (Elect one to a 4 Year Term)

The Rev. Helen O. Harper (St. Peter's, Niagara Falls)



I feel called to the Office of Standing Committee because I have a clear understanding of working within the structures of the Episcopal Church. Over the years I have experienced the Episcopal Church when I worked in different venues: The Episcopal Church Center, NY, Trinity Wall Street, St. Mark's Cathedral, Seattle, as well as being rector or priest in charge of culturally diverse churches in the US, East Coast, West Coast, and Hawaii. I spent 11 years living in Canada as a Permanent Resident serving in Yukon Territory, in charge of Native Ministries, and also in Vancouver, BC. In 1993 I graduated from the Vancouver School of Theology, Vancouver, BC, Canada. Over the years I have used education time to fly into remote villages in Alaska assigned by the Bishop of Alaska, to teach, preach, and live in the villages. Working in various phases of social services has proved to be valuable crossover experience work at the parish level. I love linking church with community and see these relationships as important and necessary for the survival of each in today's world. I feel my unique gifts and talents will serve this new diocesan venture very well.

The Rev. John A. Marshall (St. Mark's, Orchard Park)



Since becoming a member of this diocese twenty years ago, I have served on the Diocesan Council and the Ecclesiastical Court and as a department head at Niagara Hospice, I understand checks, balances and procedures of the corporate world. Coupled with a familiarity with the Constitutions and Canons, I believe that I have something to add to the Standing Committee. I am optimistic about our joint venture and the Bishop Provisional's unique role and would be happy to serve in this capacity.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Harvey (Calvary, Williamsville)



The Standing Committee's work is essential to the life and ministry of our Diocese and throughout the Episcopal Church. Charged with oversight of Diocesan property, an important role in the ordination process and offering advice and counsel to the Bishop, the Standing Committee is critical to the health and well-being of the Diocese. Serving on the Standing Committee in my former Diocese (Washington, DC) I now want to offer my experience and gifts to the mission work we are doing here in Western New York as we collaboratively work with the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and our Bishop Sean Rowe.

Trustees - Clergy (Elect two to 3 Year Terms)

The Rev. Matthew Lincoln (Trinity, Buffalo)



I'm in a trustee meeting right now, and I am re-upping at the request of my fine colleagues.

The Very Rev. Randi Hicks Rowe (St Andrew's, Burt & St. John's, Wilson)



I have served on the trustees for the past 6 months, completing Samuel Colley-Toothaker's term, so I already have some experience. In addition, I have a Master of Business Administration degree which enables me to understand financial statements and to think strategically.