

The Discernment & Nominating Committee  
for the Ninth Bishop of  
**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER**

*Home of the Finger Lakes Region*

*A Short Introduction to What This Place  
and the People in it Are About*

When expressing the story of the region of the Diocese of Rochester and the people connected to it, start with the colors. Start with green.

The geography of this place is magically and inspiringly beautiful. We are blessed with an abundance of fresh water, from the Great Lake Ontario, to the Finger Lakes, and to rivers that have carved amazing gorges with breathtaking waterfalls. We have temperate weather with four distinct, exhilarating seasons, and everyone has their preferences.

The nature of this place has inspired all of the various people who have lived in it. There is, however, no way to tell the story as a simple, uncomplicated thing. This was the home of the Seneca Nation before European settlers came. It also caught the eye of enlightened folk wanting to form utopian communities, industrialists who recognized a place of opportunity, and activists like Fredrick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony, both of whom are buried here. Every story of every people whose history shared this place is imbued with injustice.



It requires the enormous love of God to confront our privilege. Looking aside or away is a luxury we can't afford if we want to surround everyone with the big tent of acceptance and love.

We are working to connect the dots that show us the unjust actions of our history and the injustices of the present age. The words of our liturgy, "And, this fragile earth, our island home," ring in our ears.

The consequences of choices made by those who were before and our own present actions sit with us as we contemplate our future. We believe the love of God has given us the desire to hope and build anew.



Taking space to ponder creative solutions can feel exciting. Things that have never been before will be imagined and made. Sometimes, if they are big things, scaffolding will be needed. We're under construction, we're becoming something new, we're dealing with our past. We're recovering from a pandemic. With the power of the Holy Spirit, we want to embrace this next part of our story. We will put up the scaffolds.

We pray for the person God will call to be our next bishop, a leader who is not afraid of heights.



# Diocesan Profile Welcome

Dear Friends in Christ,

On behalf of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester's (EDOR) Discernment and Nomination Committee, thank you for taking the time to review this profile. Our diocese seeks its 9<sup>th</sup> bishop at a juncture that is exciting as well as daunting. EDOR is replete with gifts from God: a beautiful geography, rich history as a frontier in the trajectory of United States history, and a people committed to principles and practices of social justice as we follow Jesus' example.

EDOR has a breadth of diversity in geography, parish size, people, missions, challenges, and opportunities. We are a collection of forty-five parishes spread throughout the region. Our diocese includes urban parishes in the heart of the City of Rochester's downtown neighborhoods, country churches in the northern reaches of Appalachia, village churches on the Erie Canal, beautiful lakeside chapels in the Finger Lakes region, and more. We have parishes in Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Schuyler, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Our intention in this profile packet is to offer a comprehensive presentation regarding this opportunity. In preparation for creating our profile, we surveyed over 200 Episcopalians, representing a full spectrum of location, age, membership duration, and involvement level, as well as facilitated over twenty large group conversations across the diocese. The information included in our profile portrays our diocese and its needs, hopes, and dreams as best we can.

In the packet, you will find: first, a history of the Diocese, including a map of all parishes and missions; second, the leadership qualities that we believe are vital for our next bishop to possess, as gathered from extensive research across the diocese; third, demographic and financial details; and finally, instructions on how to submit a nomination.

We are eager to receive nominations from the broadest range of candidates possible, and we invite you to review this profile and consider whether the Holy Spirit is leading you into discernment with us or to share this profile with someone you feel might be called. We consider it a privilege to pray and discern with you as we envision and live into God's mission for our future.

Blessings and peace,

The Discernment and Nomination Committee  
Episcopal Diocese of Rochester



# A History of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

The greater Rochester area, the Finger Lakes region, and parts of the Southern Tier that comprise our diocese have deep ties to the indigenous people who occupied the land long before the first European settlers came. The Seneca Nation, one of six tribes in the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederation, lived in the Finger Lakes region, and the Seneca, Cayuga, and Delaware people lived in the southern parts of our diocese. Many of the towns and villages in our diocese bear names derived from the languages of the Haudenosaunee Confederation.

During the Revolutionary War, George Washington sent Colonial Army General John Sullivan on a campaign that brutally destroyed most of the Haudenosaunee settlements and broke the power of the Haudenosaunee Nation. At the war's end, white settlers forced indigenous peoples in New York onto reservations and continue to occupy their lands. The Canandaigua Treaty of 1794 established peace between the United States and the Six Nations, and the treaty is still celebrated every year in Canandaigua, with descendants of the original Six Nations signers in attendance. Ganondagan State Historic Site in Victor, New York, is located on the original site of a seventeenth-century Seneca Nation settlement.

By the early nineteenth century, the region that now encompasses our diocese was considered the edge of the western frontier of the United States. A growing population, who largely came west from New England or north through Pennsylvania, rapidly settled the area. Many of our earliest congregations were already active in Avon (1792), Geneva (1806), Clifton Springs (1807), Catharine (1810), Canandaigua (1814), Rochesterville (1817), and Bath (1825).

The Episcopal Diocese of New York, which once encompassed the whole state, was established in 1785, two years after the end of the Revolutionary War. In 1816, John Henry Hobart, the third bishop of the Diocese of New York, began expanding the Episcopal Church into western New York. He founded Geneva College, now known



as Hobart and William Smith Colleges. The Diocese of Western New York was created in 1838, and in 1931, the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester was partitioned from the Diocese of Western New York, with The Rt. Rev. David Ferris as its first bishop.

Our history also shares the story of The Rt. Rev. Charles Henry Brent, an early bishop of Western NY, who served as the first missionary bishop to the Philippines, a leader against opium use, and a proponent of ecumenism. Another bishop we're proud to hold in our history is The Rt. Rev. Robert Spears, the 5th Bishop of Rochester, who was a leading proponent of women's ordination and Dignity/Integrity. We have a rich history of Episcopal leadership and anticipate strong leadership in our next chapter.



After the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, the Rochester region experienced a considerable population boom. It became a major manufacturing center and a hub for social reform movements. Susan B. Anthony, a national figure in many reform movements, including abolition and women's suffrage, was arrested in the front parlor of her home at 17 Madison Street, Rochester, after she voted in the 1872

presidential election. In 1848, the abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass purchased a home at 4 Alexander Street, Rochester, eventually moving to a rural home in 1852 to better accommodate fugitive enslaved persons traveling toward a free life in Canada on the Underground Railroad.

In 1810, freed Black migrants established the first Black neighborhood in the Third Ward of Rochester, now known as Corn Hill. In 1921, a group of African Americans met to discuss the creation of what was to become the Congregation of Saint Simon



Cyrene. Still, it was not until 1968 (after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965) that Saint Simon Cyrene was given full parochial status in the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester. A unique parish was formed in 1988 when the traditionally-African American parish merged with the traditionally-white parish of Saint Luke's, Genesee Falls. The merged parish of Saint Luke and Saint Simon Cyrene is locally known as "Two Saints."

While Rochester has historically leaned progressive regarding racial, social, and economic justice, it also erected barriers that kept the Black community from accessing equal education and other freedoms that white people enjoyed. Before 1950, Black Rochesterians never numbered more than one percent of the population. Due to white flight and the Great Migration, by 1964, the Black population of Rochester exceeded 32,000. Growing frustration with the lack of economic and educational opportunities for the Black community boiled over into the race riots of July 24-26, 1964. As a result of that uprising and the ongoing civil rights movement, significant changes were made to give more opportunities to African Americans. Despite those changes, many in Rochester's Black community continue to face economic marginalization due to decisions made beyond the local and state levels.

Rochester was a hub of innovation in the nineteenth century. More recently, it experienced economic and population declines beginning in the late twentieth century, as major corporations such as Kodak, General Motors, and Xerox began to downsize. Eventually, many manufacturing companies moved out of the area or went out of business as new technologies made their products obsolete. In recent years, reinvestment in education and healthcare has helped to revitalize and stabilize Rochester's economy.

Many parishes in the southern part of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester are located in the Southern Tier, a region on the Allegheny Plateau of the Appalachian Mountains comprising counties that border Pennsylvania. Early European settlers followed the major rivers in the area, and the earliest industry involved harvesting the forests and shipping lumber downstream. The population remained sparse until the arrival of railroads in the area. The Civil War contributed to an industrial boom that created new jobs and increased the population. Similarly, parishes north of the New York State Thruway (I-90) and outside the City of Rochester are also mainly agricultural and face various socioeconomic challenges. In these areas, immigration policies have made it difficult for farmers to hire the labor needed to plant, grow, and harvest their crops.



The diocese also includes much of the Finger Lakes region, an area whose population has experienced growth in recent years. It is known for its beautiful lakes, rolling hills, and wine country tourism.

Manufacturing jobs in food, computers, electronics, and machinery have helped to create new, high-paying jobs in the area.

The COVID-19 pandemic created significant challenges for the diocese. Some parishes that already faced declining membership have struggled to get their parishioners back into the pews since the



easing of the coronavirus restrictions, and a few have had to close their doors. Other parishes were better able to withstand the hardships of the pandemic and are in the slow process of recovering their financial wellness and returning to pre-pandemic attendance numbers. Most parishes now offer in-person worship services, and some continue online services to reach the maximum number of participants.

Aware of the challenges we face, we are reimagining ourselves to move forward as a new and vibrant bud of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.





# WHO WE ARE

Our name, the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester, does not accurately reflect the size and diversity of our geography and culture. Our geography comprises 8 counties and nearly 8,800 square miles, from Lake Ontario on our north to the Allegheny Plateau region of the Appalachian Mountains in our Southern Tier. Our diocese comprises many ministry settings, including small-town, rural, urban, and suburban communities. Our churches range from family- to program-sized and are spread over a broad and diverse landscape.



Our namesake city is racially diverse. It is globally recognized for cutting-edge developments in optics and imaging, research and development, health imaging, and many other areas. Rochester is home to world-class colleges and universities, including the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, and many others in the area, and two strong hospital systems through the University of Rochester and Rochester Regional Health. It also has a vibrant cultural life, including the Rochester City Ballet, Garth Fagan Dance, the Eastman School of Music, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the International Jazz Festival, and the Strong National Museum of Play. The city also has a high percentage of people living in poverty. Our churches in the City of Rochester and its suburbs are as

diverse as the neighborhoods in which they dwell, and each serves its community with mission and outreach tailored to effectively, through word and deed, preach the life-giving, liberating love of God.

Other regions of the diocese are less racially diverse than Rochester. However, many rural communities have a large migrant labor force working in orchards and on farms. Our Finger Lakes region boasts fertile farmland, fine vineyards, and a rapidly growing viticulture industry, growing initiatives in tourism and agriculture, as well as several institutions of higher education (such as Hobart and William Smith Colleges). It is a popular hub for small businesses. We also have parishes, especially in

regions of economic decline, that struggle to remain open or to call clergy. The loss of industry and the inability of the small family farms to compete with the growth of large-scale commercial farms has hit the churches in the more rural Southern Tier region especially hard, with the elimination of jobs and youth moving to more urban areas. Southern Tier Episcopalians bring very different life experiences to their congregations than their urban siblings, but they share the same dedication to mission and ministry. Across the diocese, every congregation is passionate about the charitable work that it does as the hands of Christ.

We honor and respect our racial, cultural, and economic diversity, and we value our shared commitment to living as witnesses of the Gospel, to follow our Episcopal Church's traditions, and to take seriously

our baptismal covenant. Our racial diversity is evident in the City of Rochester and the parishes bordering Lake Ontario. There is also significant diversity in economic opportunity. The Rochester area and the Finger Lakes region have access to more economic opportunities and growth than other areas

that tend to be more rural, such as the Southern Tier, which borders Pennsylvania.

The diversity of the distinct regions in our diocese parallels the differing views of Episcopalians in our diocese; we have a spectrum of conservative and progressive congregations. Still, our congregations are united by a commitment to Episcopal identity as it is reflected in our traditions, sacraments, liturgy, and theology. As a diocese, we encourage ecumenism and interfaith dialogue and embrace people who have lost their faith, have no faith, or are seeking a place to belong. Despite this, our diocese still faces the challenges typical of many Episcopal dioceses: an aging population, declining youth attendance, and the uncertainties of sociocultural change.

Many of our congregations are pillars of their communities, advocating for various social issues. We strive to be a diocese where all of God's



children are welcome—especially individuals and communities marginalized because of their race, employment, sex, gender expression/identity, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, education, age, health, or any intersection of these markers of privilege.

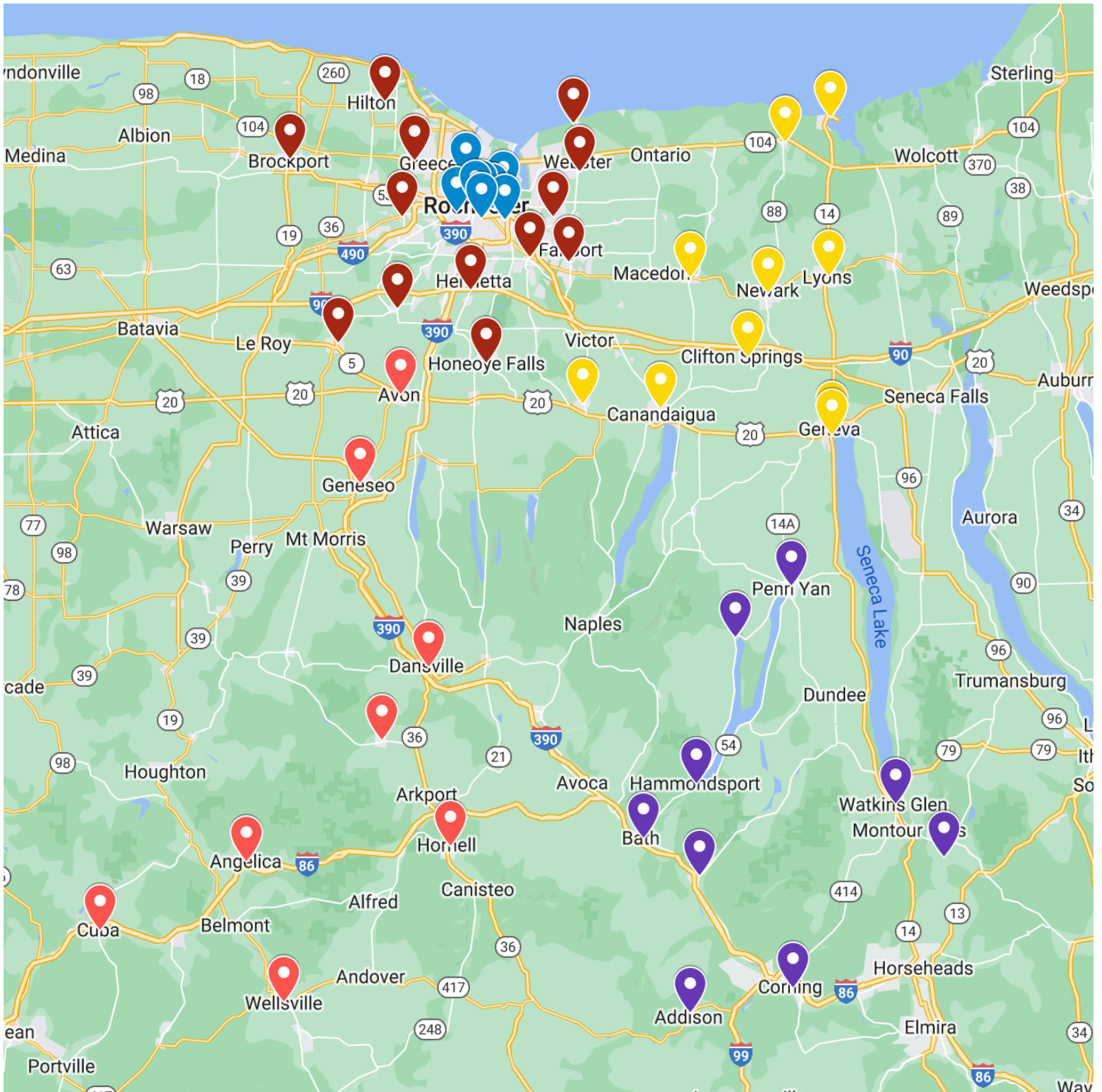
We continue to process and heal from the pain caused by the loss of our previous bishop under complex and challenging circumstances. This event has left many in our diocese confused, sad, angry, and sometimes suspicious of the diocese and its purpose. We are working hard to listen, understand, and be present for those who are hurt while focusing on healing our diocese and moving into the future with hope for what it holds. We recognize that this healing process will take time. We hope that our next bishop is someone who can walk with us along that journey of healing, who understands the complex nature of trauma, and who can be with us as a shepherd as we heal from the pain which affects many in our diocese.

Despite some difficulties, we are people who love The Episcopal Church, believe in its future, and continue to journey through faith with hope and joy in Christ. We invite you to consider, if you feel called to become our next bishop, to work with us as we discover who we are becoming.



# Our Five Districts and Their Parishes

- Rochester District: blue pins
- Monroe District: dark red pins
- Northeast District: yellow pins
- Southeast: purple pins
- Southwest: bright red pins



# The IX Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester

## *Who We Seek*

Our Discernment and Nominating Committee has compiled and analyzed the results of surveys, conversations, and feedback from a broad-reaching range of people in our diocese, representing a spectrum of locations, ages, membership duration, and involvement levels. The survey addressed the current status of our diocese, our relationships, and our dreams for the future. It also identified key attributes and qualities that Episcopalians across our diocese desire in their next bishop. The following description is crafted from the feedback from these surveys and conversations. One can find the entire feedback and results from the survey at <https://www.thedioceseofrochesterbishopsearch.org/gathering-pieces>.

In our interpretation and discernment of the feedback we received, we have dreamed together and identified that we desire a bishop whose leadership is grounded in prayer and worship while reflecting both imagination and intellectual curiosity. Understanding our history, we seek someone who values truth, practices clear, consistent, transparent communication, and is an approachable, responsible, and resilient listener. Our next bishop will be a grounded person with integrity, humility, sound judgment, and compassion. Our next bishop will also routinely assess and care for their own spiritual, mental, physical, and emotional health in order to provide meaningful support to our clergy, church leadership, and people of the diocese.

Our diocesan leadership and clergy acknowledge that the world has changed. Church membership continues to decrease as our congregants age, and many congregations also face financial challenges. Despite these metrics, we remain convinced that the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement will grow, experience revitalization, and live vibrantly as a relevant witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Dreaming together about our future, we have identified that our next bishop will model an energetic, adaptive, creative, and flexible spirit to diverse groups across our diocese who work together to create a unity of purpose. This leader will be a change-maker, working collaboratively with congregations and diocesan leadership to articulate a fresh, expansive vision for the diocese. Our new bishop will equip and empower all clergy and congregations to carry that new vision into their communities. The bishop will need to be resourceful and encourage us to understand the “emerging church” as a way of compassionately moving forward into the future of Christianity.

As we navigate our future together, we hope our next bishop will help us discover ways for all parishes to have sacramental leadership, especially by helping parish leaders understand their gifts and

encouraging discernment within congregations without resident clergy. Our next bishop will endeavor to understand the unique needs of individual churches and work to unite us in a common mission. This will invite all of us—our bishop, clergy, leaders, and congregations alike—to celebrate existing ministries and help us envision new and different ways to faithfully live into the Gospel’s call for all followers of Jesus Christ.

For several decades, our diocesan leadership has been committed to honoring the dignity of every human being by celebrating the full inclusion of historically-excluded and marginalized communities (including women, BIPOC communities, LGBTQ+ persons, people who live with disabilities, and all “Others” who bear the divine image of God) into all aspects of our Christian life. Our next bishop will need to understand the complex intersectionality of our human diversity and articulate that all of Creation is beloved by God.

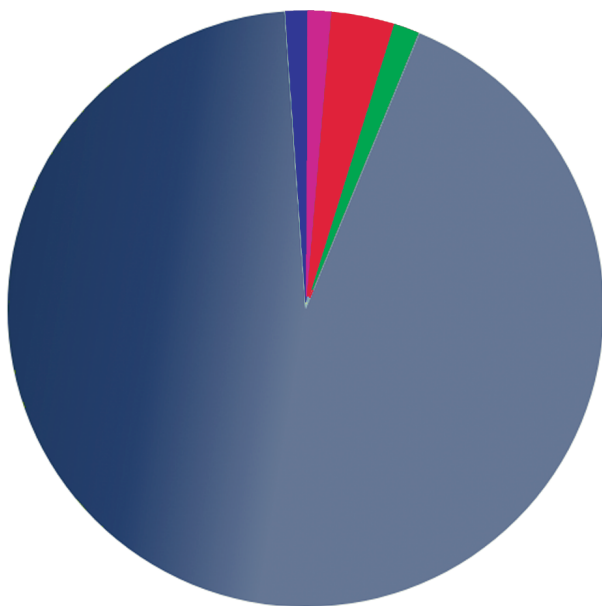
In sum, the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester seeks a passionate follower of Jesus who forms connections and creates community. The bishop we call will live into an evangelist’s vocation and help connect people to Jesus and one another to be the body of Christ in the world.



# RACIAL / ETHNIC DATA

The current demographic of the City of Rochester is reported as White: 45.39%; Black or African American: 39.36%; Two or more races: 6.17%; Other races: 4.9%. In other areas of the diocese, racial and ethnic diversity is less present; many of our congregations in these areas reflect that reality. However, alongside our commitment to embracing diversity of all kinds, the membership of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester represents people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. A glimpse into our membership is outlined below, though it does not portray those who may be impacted by other ministries that the diocese and unique congregations support across our diverse landscape.

2022 Racial / Ethnic

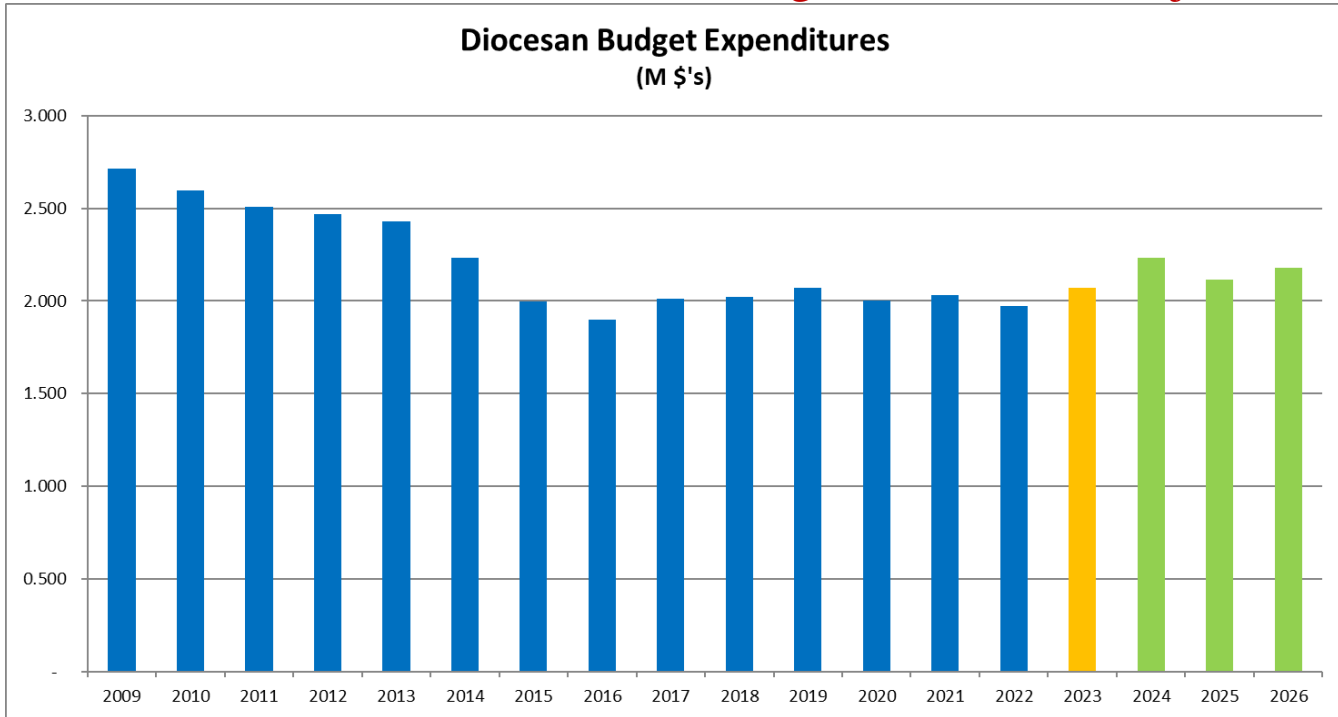


- Native American
- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
- White
- Multiracial

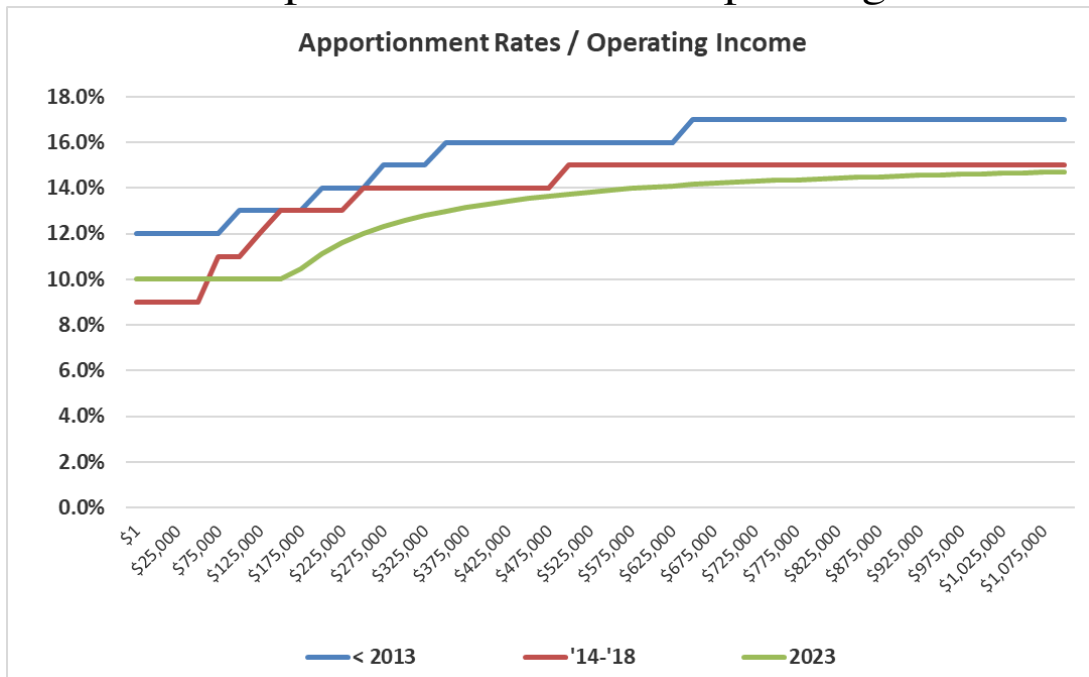
	2022	Percent
Native American	5	0.08%
Asian	83	1.29%
Black	221	3.34%
Hispanic	85	1.32%
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	7	0.11%
White	5964	92.65%
Multiracial	72	1.12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6437</b>	

# FINANCIAL TRENDS

Diocesan Budget Expenditures  
 2009-2022 Actual, 2023 Budget, 2024-2026 Projected



**2023 Apportionment Rates**  
 10% Rate up to \$160K Normal Operating Income





## Draws from Investments (2007-2022)

YE Audit Data thru 2021 (\$ M.'s)  
Adj. for FHFO & Non-Op. Exp.

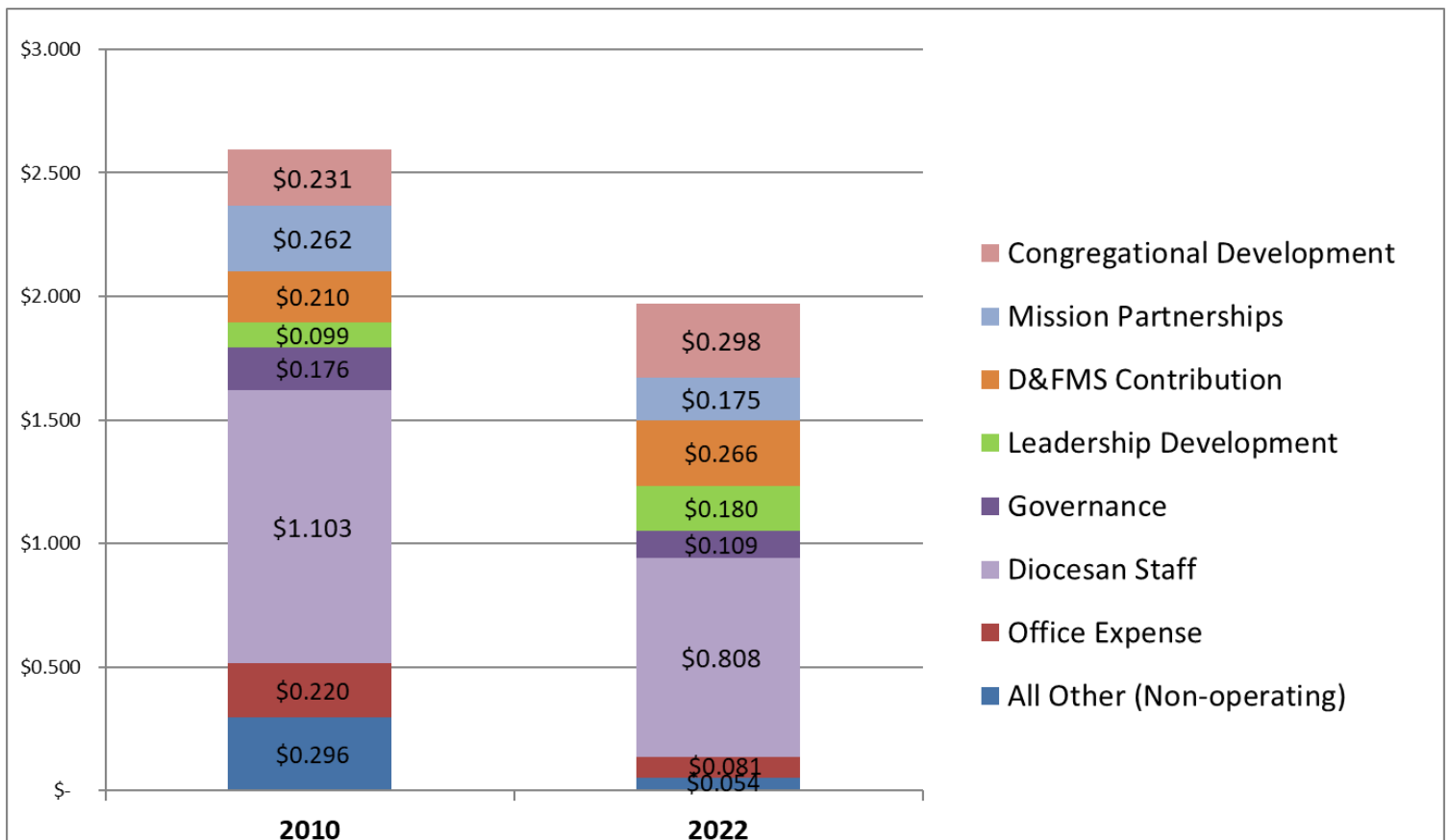
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Est. 2022
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	\$2.411	\$2.507	\$2.712	\$2.596	\$2.510	\$2.468	\$2.430	\$2.221	\$2.027	\$1.900	\$2.013	\$2.019	\$2.070	\$2.001	\$2.031	\$1.970
<b>Net Draw/ Fin. Assets:</b>	1.313	\$1.456	\$1.771	\$1.576	\$1.490	\$1.450	\$1.361	\$1.208	\$1.053	\$0.924	\$1.041	\$0.975	\$0.983	\$0.970	\$0.915	\$0.961
Loans & Mortgages *	\$3.3	\$4.0	\$3.4	\$2.9	\$2.9	\$2.7	\$2.5	\$2.1	\$2.0	\$1.7	\$1.5	\$0.9	\$0.8	\$0.8	\$0.7	\$0.5
Cash & Investments	\$23.2	\$14.0	\$16.5	\$17.5	\$15.8	\$15.1	\$17.6	\$17.7	\$16.9	\$17.4	\$20.6	\$19.3	\$22.1	\$23.1	\$26.0	\$21.3
<b>Net Financial Assets **</b>	\$26.5	\$17.9	\$20.0	\$20.5	\$18.7	\$17.8	\$20.1	\$19.8	\$18.9	\$19.1	\$22.1	\$20.2	\$22.9	\$23.9	\$26.7	\$21.9
Trailing, Audited 5-YR Avg.	\$21.6	\$22.4	\$23.4	\$23.2	\$22.9	\$22.4	\$21.5	\$20.2	\$19.2	\$19.5	\$19.3	\$19.1	\$19.6	\$20.0	\$20.5	\$21.2
(% Trailing 5-YR Avg.)	6.1%	6.5%	7.6%	6.8%	6.5%	6.5%	6.3%	6.0%	5.5%	4.7%	5.4%	5.1%	5.0%	4.8%	4.5%	4.5%
<b>Current Draw/Cash &amp; Invest</b>	5.1%	9.0%	9.7%	8.5%	8.8%	9.1%	7.3%	6.4%	5.8%	4.9%	4.8%	4.8%	4.3%	4.1%	3.4%	4.4%

\* Excludes restricted loan funds

\*\* Excludes liabilities for PRHB

- The high level of expenditures during and after the Great Recession led to an unsustainable *Current Draw* that averaged 9% from 2008-2012.
- With this level of draw, *Net Financial Assets* never recovered in this period.
- Reducing *administrative expenses and loans*, along with strong market performance, reduced draws to ~ 4%, allowing *Cash & Investments* to recover by over \$10M. from 2012 to 2021.

### 2010 vs. 2022 Expenses by Category (\$M)

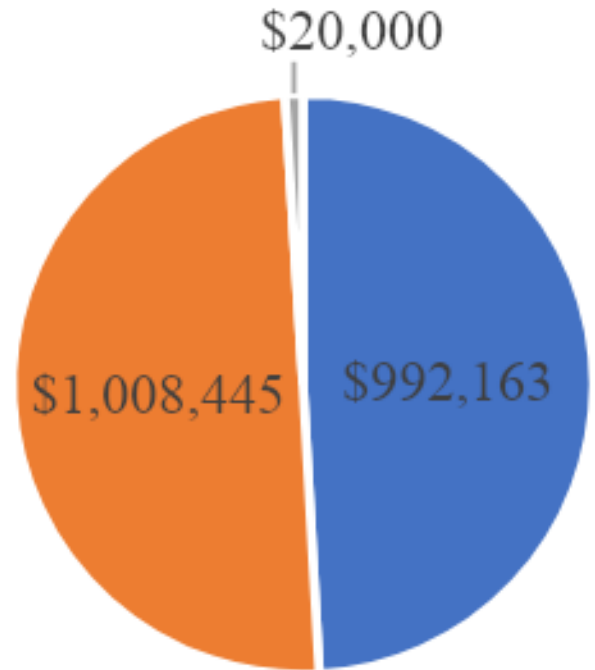


# DIOCESAN FINANCES

## Approved 2023 Operating Budget

Almost half of our income, 49.9%, comes from our draw from investments. Assessments collected from congregations make up 49.1%. Of these funds, we spend 44.9% to cover the salaries, benefits and expenses for the bishop and staff. The next largest category is 15.1% for Congregational Development and 8.7% for parish missions. We send 13.3% of our funds to provide support for the wider church. Over the past few years, we have had 18-20 churches receiving Congregational Development Program (CDP) grants.

### 2023 Operating Income

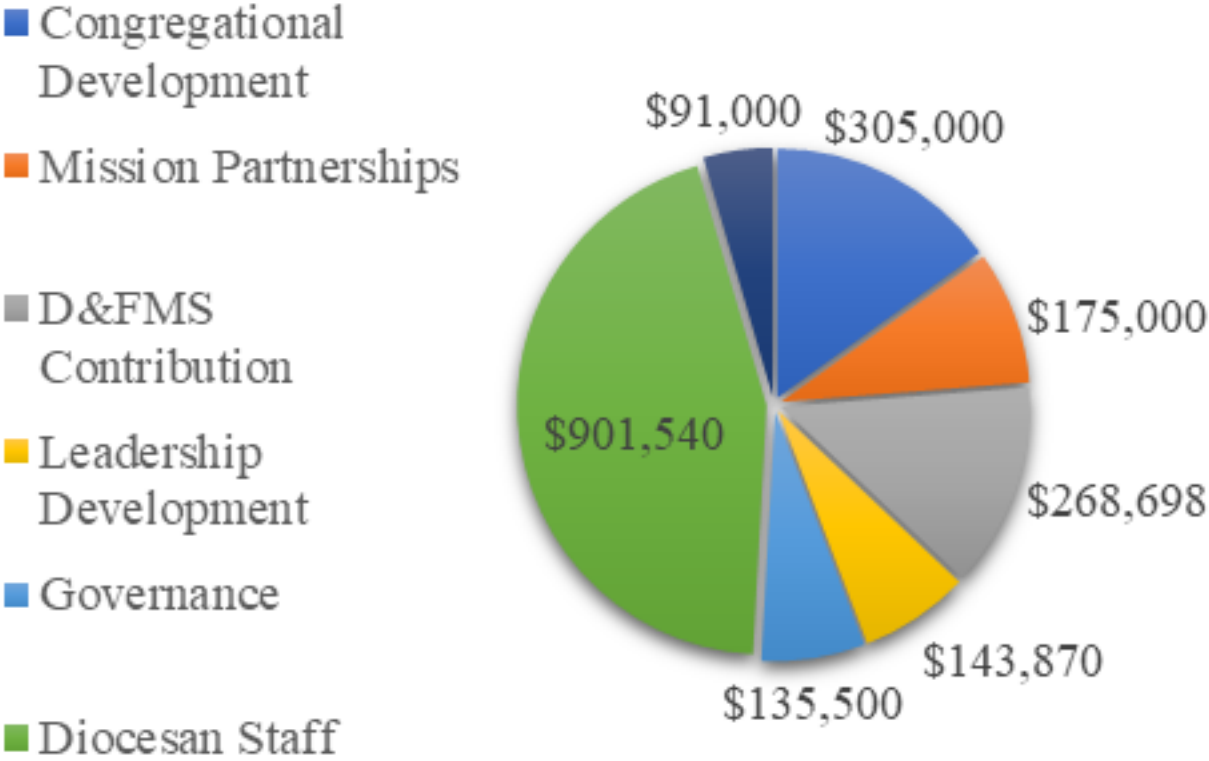


- Apportionment
- Draw from Investments
- Other Income

	2023	Percent
Apportionment	\$992,163	49.1%
Draw from Investments	\$1,008,445	49.9%
Other Income	\$20,000	1.1%

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,020,608</b>	
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## 2023 Operating Expenses



	<b>2023</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Congregational Development	\$305,000	15.10%
Mission Partnerships	\$175,000	8.70%
D&FMS Contribution	\$268,698	13.30%
Leadership Development	\$143,870	7.10%
Governance	\$135,500	6.70%
Diocesan Staff	\$901,540	44.60%
Office Expense	\$91,000	4.50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,020,608</b>	

**PROGRAM:** ~ \$893,000 (CDP & Mission Grants, D&FMS, Leadership),  
**ADMINISTRATION:** ~ \$1,128,000 (Governance, Staff & Office Expenses),  
**EXCLUDES: Non-Operating expense/draw:** \$50,000 (Post-retirement Health Benefits)