

BIOGRAPHIES OF NOMINEES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One layperson to be elected to three-year terms ending in 2023



Name: James W. Neral
Church: Christ Church, North Hills
Occupation: HR Director

My involvement with church activities began at the age of 10 while attending St. Patrick's Catholic School in Newry, PA (near Altoona), at which point I actively engaged each Friday as a lay reader. That led to altar boy service, and more lay reader service, continuing into college. I was received into the Episcopal Church in the early 1990s, and continue active engagements in church service while also leveraging a strong career background in Human Resources.

Upon graduation from IUP in 1987, I moved to Pittsburgh to begin my career in Human Resources. That career to date has remained in the Human Resources field, primarily in the technical aspects of HR being compensation (about 60%), benefits (20%) and HR computer systems (20%).

I have always felt a strong calling to share my acquired skills in technical Human Resources activities in service to my church and diocesan families, as demonstrated by the following actions: 2005-Current, Christ Church North Hills ("CCNH") Finance Chair; 2005-2015, CCNH Lay Reader Ministry Coordinator; 2009-2011, CCNH Vestry Member; 2012-2014 Diocesan Council District 1 Representative; 2013-2014, Diocesan Budget & Assessments Working Group (BAWG); 2013-Current Diocesan Clergy Compensation Committee; Chair since 2017; 2018-2020, Diocesan Board of Trustees member; 2018-Current, Diocesan Finance & Investments Committee member; 2018-2020, CCNH Vestry Member.

I see a second term position on the Board of Trustees as a continuation of service, at this senior level of church administration, given my acquired skills, knowledge and dedication to achieve and provide high quality work product for the successful administration of church affairs at the Diocesan level.

CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to three-year terms ending in 2023



Name: The Rev. Laura Di Panfilo
Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon
Occupation: Priest

Laura has served as Assistant Rector at St. Paul's Mt. Lebanon since July 2019. She just completed her Master of Arts in Ministry from General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City and her Master of Divinity at Princeton Theological Seminary. She was ordained a transitional Deacon in June in New Jersey and was ordained to the Priesthood at St. Paul's in December 2019.

After her M.Div., Laura worked as a chaplain at a trauma hospital in Trenton, New Jersey. In the hospital setting, she learned how critical spiritual care can be for people in the transitions that often accompany a visit to the hospital. Through her involvement with the Nominating Committee and service projects with the St. Paul's youth, Laura has learned more about Trinity Cathedral and is eager to serve the Diocese on the Cathedral Chapter.



Name: Hunter Ficke
Church: Trinity Cathedral, Pittsburgh
Occupation: Retired/Part-time Consultant

I have submitted my name as a candidate to serve on the Trinity Cathedral Chapter.

I was born and raised in Delaware and am a life-long Episcopalian. I have two grown children and two grandchildren, and my wife, Dolly, and I live in the city of Pittsburgh.

Following my graduate education in Chemical Engineering, I had a 30-year career in R&D management with the DuPont Company. We were members of a number of Episcopal churches, as a result of our frequent moves, where I taught Sunday school, was a youth group co-leader, outreach committee member and served on several vestries. While at our last church in Delaware, I served on the property committee, led the outreach committee, was a member of the vestry and Junior Warden, and led the rector search committee following the retirement of our former rector. I also chaired two land conservation project committees for the parish and the diocese.

I have attended Trinity Cathedral since 2017, and have been an active volunteer in the outreach food ministry. I appreciate being considered to serve on the Cathedral Chapter to help in building a strong downtown ministry and support the Cathedral’s mission within the diocese.

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to three-year terms ending in 2023



Name: The Rev. Joseph Baird
Church: St. Peter’s, Blairsville
Occupation: Priest

Service to the church: Present: Commission on Constitution and Canons; Cathedral Chapter. Diocesan Council (Vice President); Budget & Assessment Working Group. Past: Judge of Audits; and Senior Warden.

Statement of Interest: I currently serve in the Diocese of Pittsburgh as Vicar of St. Peter’s, Blairsville, Most of my thirty-plus years in the Episcopal Church have been spent in smaller parishes, far from diocesan affairs. That ended when I joined the Bishop Search Committee. Since then, I served most of two terms on Diocesan Council as a lay representative from District 4, and am in my second term as clergy representative from District 4 and VP of Council for the past 2 years. I have been privileged and continue to serve on the Budget & Assessment Working Group. I was Judge of Audits for two years, and was also Senior Warden for eight years at St. Peter’s. As part of my training for Holy Orders, I served six months at Christ Church, North Hills, with Father Shoucair, and six months at St. Thomas, Oakmont, with Father Murph.

I would like to continue to serve on the Committee on Constitution and Canons, both to learn more of the tenets that we accept in common, and to help as I am able as we implement the results of the Project CREED initiative.



Name: Ansley Westbrook
Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon
Occupation: Attorney

Ansley is a commercial litigator who represents licensed professionals in a variety of state and federal venues including the defense of malpractice claims in civil court; disciplinary actions in administrative tribunals; and white-collar criminal charges arising out of the diversion of narcotics from the workplace.

Ansley works tirelessly for his clients and believes in aggressive advocacy and developing a genuine and trusting relationship with each client. He has 25 years of litigation and trial experience including more than a decade as an equity partner at a full-service national law firm, and occupying a position as an ethics and loss prevention partner within the office of general counsel.

He is active at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon as a Confirmation Class Teacher and participated in a three-year term on the Episcopal Church's Constitution and Canons Committee. He is a Board Member of the Cultural Trust's Three Rivers Arts Festival, a volunteer with Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers and a prior member of the Strengthening Communities Partnership of the Allegheny Conference.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

One member to be elected to a three-year term ending in 2023



Name: The Rev. Dr. Julie L. Smith
Church: St. Brendan's, Franklin Park
Occupation: College Professor/Children & Youth Christian Educator at St. Brendan's

In 2003, I was confirmed by Bishop Clifton Daniel in the Episcopal Diocese of East North Carolina. Since that time, my involvement with and commitment to the Episcopal Church has continued to grow. I served during a transitional period at my first church, Trinity Church, Lumberton, North Carolina, and as we moved, I continued to serve as I was able. We were at Church of the Redeemer in Squirrel Hill when I began to discern a call to holy orders in 2013. In 2015, I began serving as an intern with Deacon Ann Staples in Northern Cambria and remained there until 2017. I then served with The Reverend Nancy Chalfant-Walker in Wilkinsburg while I completed Clinical Pastoral Education at the VA Hospital System in 2018. I was ordained in 2019 and have been serving as Children and Youth Educator at St. Brendan's in Sewickley.

In addition to church internships, I also work with men in prison and continue teaching History at Mount Aloysius College. I thought I was clearly being called to bi-vocational ministry. My opportunities to serve have been rich and varied and I have been blessed to serve.

What I have appreciated on my journey is the support from the Diocese and especially the Commission on Ministry as I explore my ministry and where best my call, talents, and skills will lead me. The discernment of Bi-Vocational ministry, and the call to serve in underserved populations – be they rural, in prisons, or varied living communities – is rewarding and challenging, and I feel called to serve those in the process.

DISCIPLINARY BOARD

Two clergy to be elected to a three-year term ending in 2023



Name: The Rev. Charles L Fischer III
Church: St. Paul's, Mount Lebanon
Occupation: Seminary Administrator

I am currently serving as a Priest Associate at St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon and the Vice President for Seminary Advancement at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. I am also a member of the Commission on Ministry for the Diocese.

Prior to moving to Pittsburgh, I was active in the Diocese of Atlanta having served as a rector of a parish in SW Atlanta. Married to Rhonda and we have two boys, Charles IV and Cameron.



Name: The Rev. Dr. Bruce Robison
Church: All Saints, Brighton Heights
Occupation: Priest

I retired from full-time ministry at St. Andrew's, Highland Park, at the end of 2019, and I am currently serving part-time as Vicar of All Saints, Brighton Heights. At this Convention I'm completing a 3-year term as a Member of the Disciplinary Board and will be glad to continue for another term if elected. In terms of relevant background, I served on our Disciplinary Board's antecedent body (the "Array") for a couple of terms in the early 2000's.

I have also in the past served three terms as a Member (one as Chair) of our Committee on Constitution and Canons. As a past-President of our diocesan Clergy Association and in my role in the later 1990's and through the first decade of the 2000's as board member and President of the National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations I've had a fair amount of experience with the practice of canonical discipline both here in Pittsburgh and in the wider church. I've had two tours of duty on our Standing Committee, and I more recently served as a member of the Governance Task Force with the CREED initiative.

GROWTH FUND

One member to be elected to a three-year term ending 2023



Name: Gerald W. Dalton (Gerry)
Church: St. Stephen's, Wilkinsburg
Occupation: Retired

Statement of Interest: As the Financial Administrator of a small Parish, I understand the need for Grants and Loans, in order to maintain the aging physical plants of our Diocese. I wish to show my support for these requests by reviewing them and awarding grants and loans when possible.

Qualifications: Having worked for 40 years as an Accountant/Controller, I understand the need to distribute funds in an equitable manor and to qualified and responsible organizations. As a former member of the Board of Trustees, I understand the accountability necessary in distributing loans and grants. I have served on the Growth Fund for the past three years.

STANDING COMMITTEE

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to four-year terms ending 2024



Name: The Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre
Church: St. Stephen's, McKeesport
Occupation: Priest

Service to the church: Present: Sunday supply priest at St. Stephen's, McKeesport. Past: Interim priest, St. Andrew's, Highland Park; Standing Committee, one term; Diocesan Council, two terms; Sheldon Calvary Camp Board, three terms, currently in fourth term; rector, Church of the Holy Cross, Homewood; assisting priest, Calvary Church; supply priest for St. Stephen's, Steubenville and various churches around the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Statement of interest: I have been a priest in this diocese for twenty years. I take my ordination vows seriously, and would be happy to take another turn on the Standing Committee. Since this is a transition time in the diocese, and persons with history and vision would be helpful, I am willing to serve.



Name: Kathleen Baird
Church: St. Peter's, Blairsville
Occupation: Retired

Raised as a Roman Catholic but away from the church since high school, my life took a turn in 2006. I began attending St. Peter's in Blairsville and shortly after that, at St. Paul's on Nantucket where we have a summer home. In 2008, I was received into the Episcopal Church and was married to the (now) Rev. Joseph Baird at St. Peter's in 2009.

I continue to serve St. Peter's as a lay deputy to convention, vestry secretary, District 4 representative to Diocesan Council, Chair of the Budget and Assessment Working Group, serve on the Commission on Ministry, was past Judge of Audits and completed my term on the Standing Committee at the end of 2018. After a long search for a local mission that our very small parish could support, I founded the first Laundry Love mission in western PA where we provide quarters, detergent, dryer sheets and Christian fellowship to Blairsville residents who struggle financially to keep clean clothes and bedding for their families. This mission has spread to other parishes in the diocese as well as the parish we attend at our summer home.

I retired in 2015 as the VP & GM for a division of a company delivering IT services to state and local governments nationwide, focusing on Children's Protective Services. This role has blessed me with a wide array of experience in leadership, fiscal management/budgeting, interpersonal relationships, negotiations and strategic planning.

I am looking to continue to serve the diocese that has served us so well, in whatever capacity is most needed and appropriate for my skills.