



February 5, 2021

An Invitation to Help Share Awareness of the Beloved Community Initiative (BCI)

As the saying goes, we want to hear from you. It's true!

As the Diocese of Pittsburgh continues this new collaborative effort of establishing a Beloved Community, an important step is for you to provide us your thoughts on the BCI – what you already know or need to learn; what you are doing or where you might need help; who is involved and how we might share our experiences with one another.



In the process, we will learn from you. By completing the survey linked to below, you will begin a dialogue that will lay the foundation for future conversations and activities, whether among individuals, as a parish, across the diocese, or involving our neighbors. So, let's begin...

First, learn about The Beloved Community Initiative:

Our mission:

The Beloved Community Initiative (BCI) seeks to promote the liberating and reconciling love of Jesus Christ, particularly as it relates to racial justice and reconciliation. The BCI will serve specifically to develop strategies for this work that are informed by the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Baptismal Covenant and our diocesan mission.

The following links provide more information about the BCI:

- [Becoming Beloved Community](#)
- [Becoming the Beloved Community](#), a letter from Bishop McConnell
- [Reserve Your Seat at the Beloved Community Table](#)

Now, tell us about yourself by completing [this brief survey](#).

[Click here for the BCI Survey](#)

An Ecumenical Celebration of Absalom Jones & Jehu Jones

Please join Bishop McConnell and ELCA Bishop Kurt Kusserow on Saturday, February 13, at 10 a.m. for an ecumenical celebration of the lives of the Rev. Absalom Jones and Pastor Jehu Jones.



The Rev. Absalom Jones (1746–1818) founded the first black Episcopal congregation in Philadelphia in 1794, and in 1802, he was the first African American to be ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church. Jones is listed on the Episcopal calendar of saints and is remembered liturgically on the date of his death, February 13. Find more about the Rev. Absalom Jones at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Absalom_Jones



Pastor Jehu Jones Jr. (1786–1852) was the first African American Lutheran pastor who, also in Philadelphia, founded the first African-American Lutheran congregations in the United States in 1834. Jones, Jr. was actively involved in improving the social welfare of all African-Americans. Find more about Pastor Jehu Jones at www.lutheranquarterly.com/uploads/7/4/0/1/7401289/jehu_jones.pdf.



The Rev. Charles L. Fischer III, VP for Seminary Advancement at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will be the Homilist. More about Fischer is available at www.pts.edu/Charles_Fischer_VP.

[Trinity Cathedral, Pittsburgh](#), will be the host of the service and it will be streamed live on the following Facebook pages:

Trinity Cathedral: <https://www.facebook.com/trinitycathedralpgh>

Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh: <https://www.facebook.com/EpiscopalPittsburgh>

Beloved Community Initiative: <https://www.facebook.com/welove1st>

By the Grace of God
The Right Reverend
Dorsey W. M. McConnell
Bishop of Pittsburgh
will ordain
Brandon Pearce Cooper
and
Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan
to the Sacred Order of Deacons
in Christ's one holy catholic
and apostolic Church
Saturday, March 6, 2021
at ten o'clock in the morning
Trinity Cathedral
328 Sixth Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222
Your prayers are requested
*The service will be live-streamed on
Trinity Cathedral's Facebook page*

In-person attendance is by invitation only.

Garden Grants Available this Spring

This last year, with its pandemic and isolation, have been difficult for everyone, and we all are missing our church families. But Spring is coming! How about considering creating or sustaining a church vegetable garden, a wonderful outdoor activity offering easy social distancing, fresh air, and much-needed fresh produce for local food pantries and neighbors. So, grab those seed catalogs from your mailboxes, and start planning your planting strategy.



Once again in 2021, the diocesan Social Justice and Outreach (SJO) Committee will offer grants to fund church garden initiatives. For the last seven years, the diocesan SJO Committee has offered a few (4-8) small grants to support the efforts of creating and sustaining parish-based vegetable gardens. In 2020, five established gardens received funding: St. Brendan's, Franklin Park; Holy Cross, Homewood; St. David's, Peters

Township; Spring Street Farms at the Community of Celebration, Aliquippa; and Shepherd's Wellness Community, Bloomfield.

More information and a Garden Grant application with submission instructions is [available here](#). **The deadline for submissions is March 16, 2021**

ECW Spring 2021 Scholarships Available

In 1927, The Episcopal Church Women established the Memorial Membership Fund to provide missionary training scholarships. In the 94 years of its existence, the scope of the fund has widened to include nursing, theology and other humanitarian fields of study.



Funds are raised through gifts from individuals or groups in memory of a loved one or friend. This money is invested and the interest used for the grants.

Each applicant must:

- be an Episcopalian in good standing (active) in a parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh,
- have completed one year of college or the equivalent,
- be pursuing education in either church or humanitarian related fields,
- submit an application, including a letter stating goals and need, and
- submit a reference letter from their parish priest.

The Memorial Membership Committee will consider each request based on individual need and circumstances. Scholarships are completely unencumbered and may be used as needed to aid the recipient in achieving their educational goals. Each eligible applicant is able to apply once a year for three years.

The applications must be received by Sunday, March 21, 2021. The application form with submission instructions is [available by clicking here](#).

For additional information please contact Betty Duckstein at ducksteine@yahoo.com.

ECW Spring 2020 Grant Applications Available

The Diocese of Pittsburgh's Episcopal Church Women (ECW) will be making outreach grants in the Spring.

The ECW particularly seeks to support hands-on ministries that help children, adults and families in need of assistance with food, nutrition, health care, housing, education and counseling.



The grants are primarily designed for ministries within the diocese and with the goal of even distribution across all districts. It is hoped that these small grants will enable the continuation of existing ministries on the local level.

However, the ECW will continue its policy of also awarding grants to some national and international ministries such as Episcopal Relief & Development.

[Click here for the grant application](#) and submission instructions. **Applications for the Spring 2021 grants must be submitted before Sunday, March 21, 2021.**

Parochial Report QuickTip: Online and In-Person Services

In December, we informed you of [updates to the 2020 Parochial Report form](#), intended to reflect the changes and challenges that parishes have faced during our year of pandemic. We are highlighting some of the most notable updates in this Parochial Report “QuickTip” series.

Today’s PR QuickTip: Recording Online and In-Person Services

The 2020 Parochial Report asks parishes to record separate counts of online and in-person services.

- If the only people gathered were those involved in leading and streaming the service, and the entire congregation joined online, count the service as an online service.
- If anyone else was present as a congregant only (even just one or two people), count the service as an in-person service.
- No service should be double-counted as both online and in-person.

See page 9 of the [Workbook & Instructions for the 2020 Parochial Report](#) for more information.

Remember, the deadline for filing 2020 Parochial Reports is **March 1**. File online at <https://reports.dfms.org>.

View our [previous PR QuickTips](#) on recording PPP loan forgiveness and responding to the new narrative questions.

Police Reform and Public Safety Online Forum

Police Reform and Public Safety will be the topic of a Zoom panel discussion on **Sunday, February 21, at 7 p.m.**

The panel will feature Erika Strassburger, member of Pittsburgh City Council for District 8, and Summer Lee, Pennsylvania State Representative for District 34.



Erica Strassburger
Pittsburgh City Council for District 8



Summer Lee
Pennsylvania State Representative for District 34

Presented by the Social Justice and Outreach Committee and the Commission on Race and Reconciliation, the speakers will discuss legislation that has passed, is in progress, and/or will be proposed, and respond to questions and comments from the audience.

The event is co-sponsored by the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Squirrel Hill, East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Congregation Dor Hadash, the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills, and other faith groups.

Join the Zoom panel discussion at 7 p.m. on Sunday, February 21:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87523504622?pwd=ZDdSYkl6ejdxNjhyYld1cGVzdFhGZz09>

If requested: Meeting ID: 875 2350 4622 Passcode: 741991

Diocese Seeking Part-time Administrative Specialist

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is seeking a qualified individual to join its staff as a part-time Administrative Specialist. This staff member will oversee the administration of employee compensation and benefits and the management of diocesan properties. The Administrative Specialist will also serve as a resource to parishes, ministries, and clergy and lay employees throughout the diocese in matters relating to compensation, benefits, and property.

[View the full job description here](#) for a complete list of responsibilities and requirements.



If you would like to apply for this position, please prepare a detailed curriculum vitae, as well as a cover letter that highlights any particularly relevant experience and expresses why you are interested in the position. Email these materials to the diocese's Director of Administration, the Rev. Canon Kimberly Karashin at kkarashin@episcopalpgh.org. **The deadline for applying is Tuesday, February 9, 2021.**

Holding an Annual Parish Meeting, Pandemic-Style

Late January begins the season for annual parish meetings, when members typically crowd into a parish hall or undercroft to discuss parish finances, review committee reports, elect new vestry members, etc.

Of course, in the context of Covid-19, annual meetings must take a different shape.

If you are involved in planning your parish's annual meeting, you probably have questions about what is possible and what will be effective. The diocesan office has prepared guidance that will, hopefully, be of assistance.

This guidance has been updated since the previous edition of Grace Happens.



Visit <https://www.episcopalpgh.org/holding-an-annual-parish-meeting-pandemic-style/>

The guidance addresses questions like:

- Must we change our bylaws to allow an online meeting?
- Can we delay our annual meeting?
- How can we ensure that everyone will be able to participate?
- Can some join online and some in person?
- So, how do we hold an online annual meeting?

Have you encountered questions that we have not addressed, or do you have a creative solution to the challenges of an online annual meeting? Please feel free to leave a comment at the [bottom of the guidance page](#). That page will also be updated as further guidance and resources are added.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For details on related legal issues, see the resource "Do We Need to Change the Parish Bylaws?" prepared by Diocesan Chancellor Andy Roman, [available here](#).

Reminder: Annual Reports Due Following Annual Meetings

In order for the diocesan office to continue to have up-to-date information, please complete the Annual Meeting Report Form in [PDF](#) or [Word](#) at your earliest convenience following your parish's annual meeting.

Around the Diocese



Bishop McConnell's Visitation Schedule:

February 7: All Souls, North Versailles

February 14: Emmanuel, North Side

February 21: Atonement, Carnegie

February 28: St. David's, Peters Township

Parish leadership is reminded to complete and submit [this form](#) at least two weeks in advance of their visitation.

Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh | 325 Oliver Avenue, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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