

A Letter from the Standing Committee Regarding a Petition Process in the Election of the IX Bishop of Pittsburgh

May 7, 2021

Dear friends in Christ,



One week from now, we expect to identify a slate of nominees who will stand for election to be the Ninth Bishop of Pittsburgh. As of this writing, no one, including the members of the Nominating Committee themselves, knows the composition of that slate. We do know that the committee is in its final stages of discerning a shortlist of candidates; that they began with a pool of applicants that numbered in the high end among all Episcopal dioceses in the current electing cycle, regardless of size; and that the committee has been deeply and prayerfully engaged in this process since February 2020. In the coming days, the Nominating Committee should recommend its slate for our approval, and we intend to reveal those names by way of the diocesan website and newsletter on Friday, May 14. Please pray for all involved in these decisions.

In truth, no one person or group knows whom God will use to lead this diocese. While the principal method for calling candidates is through the discernment of the Nominating Committee, the Canons of the Episcopal Church provide for a wider process in which all laity and clergy can join with the Holy Spirit to raise up a new bishop. Accordingly, the Canons allow for a means to nominate by petition.

The petition process is intended to address those situations where a person may be called to stand for election, but for whatever reason was not part of the Nominating Committee process or ultimately recommended for the slate. In such cases, the petition candidate must be endorsed by a wide cross-section of the diocese, and undergo the same application process and personal background checks required of other candidates. Because of these steps, the former practice of nominating from the floor during the electing convention is no longer permitted.

Accompanying this letter are the documents and forms that provide more detail on the requirements and process for nominating by petition (see below). The petition period will begin when the slate is announced on May 14 and remain open for seven days, closing at noon on Friday, May 21. The names of persons put forward by petition will remain confidential until the individual's candidacy is approved by the Standing Committee. Any petition nominee will then be introduced to the diocese in the same manner as the initial slate. All nominees, regardless of how they came to be on the slate, will participate in our planned pre-election activities, including the June 14-19 meet-and-greet opportunities, and will appear on the ballot at our electing convention on June 26.

Asking the Spirit's guidance on all of us as we move toward calling our next bishop,

The Rev. Noah H. Evans, Standing Committee President
Lisa Brown, Secretary
Kathy Baird

Robert Johnston
The Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre
The Rev. Neil K. Raman
The Rev. Annis Rogers
Steve Stagnitta

Petition Process for the Election of the IX Bishop of Pittsburgh

The Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh has adopted the following petition process and forms for the election of the IX Bishop Diocesan:

PURPOSE

The petition process is an opportunity for additional persons to be nominated after the Nominating Committee has completed its work and the Standing Committee has approved the Nominating Committee's recommended slate. The petition process is intended to address the narrow circumstance when, for whatever reason, a person who may be called to candidacy was not vetted by the Nominating Committee or identified among its slate of nominees to stand for election.

While discerning a call to episcopal leadership is a process in which all laity and clergy are invited to join with the Holy Spirit, we trust that the Nominating Committee process will be the primary means through which most candidates will be brought forward and ultimately compose the final slate.

WHO CAN BE NOMINATED BY THE PETITION PROCESS?

All bishops and priests in good standing with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America (The Episcopal Church), can be nominated by this petition process, with the exception of current members of the diocesan Standing Committee, Nominating Committee or Transition Committee.

REQUIREMENTS FOR NOMINATION BY PETITION

Petition candidates must be supported in writing by twelve (12) nominators: four (4) clergy entitled to vote in the election of a bishop under Article XIV of the diocesan Constitution, four (4) lay deputies of the electing convention, and four (4) lay communicants in good standing in the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. Nominators must represent at least four (4) different congregations from at least two (2) districts within the diocese.

In order for a petition to be accepted by the Standing Committee, the candidate must consent to his or her nomination in writing, and provide the same information that was required of candidates discerned through the Nominating Committee process.

Specifically, the following must be submitted electronically by the petition deadline:

By the nominators:

- Petition Nomination Form completed and signed by all 12 nominators. The form is available by [clicking here](#).

By the person being nominated:

- Candidate Application Form, complete with essay responses. The form is available by [clicking here](#).
- Cover letter outlining why you believe yourself to be called through the petition process into discernment (max. 500 words)
- Current resume or CV
- Updated OTM profile
- Current color photograph (head & shoulders) suitable for publication
- Contact information for current and all previous bishops

Some of these materials may be used for biographical profiles and other information that will be published about the final slate of nominees.

All persons nominated by petition must successfully complete the same background check and psychological evaluation required of Nominating Committee candidates. Petition nominees should also be prepared to be interviewed by the diocesan chancellor regarding certain employment, financial, personal, legal and background information.

Because of the time required for each stage of this process, the former practice of making nominations from the floor of the electing convention is no longer permitted.

TIMETABLE

The petition period will commence when the slate is announced by the Standing Committee, no sooner than Friday, May 14. The period will remain open for seven days, closing at noon, Eastern time, on Friday, May 21.

Petitions, including all required forms and materials, must be sent electronically to the Rev. Noah Evans (noah@stpaulspgh.org) and received no later than noon, Eastern, May 21. If any of these documents are received after that deadline, the nomination will be void and rejected by the Standing Committee.

The name of anyone nominated by petition will remain confidential until the individual's candidacy is approved and announced by the Standing Committee.

ADDITIONAL EXPECTATIONS CONCERNING APPROVED PETITION NOMINEES

Petition nominees will be asked to respond to questions that will be published along with the responses to the same questions from the nominees raised up by the Nominating Committee. Any petition nominee will be introduced to the diocese in the same way as the other nominees, using the diocesan website, electronic newsletters, and other forums. All nominees will participate in the pre-election processes, including meet-and-greet opportunities, as planned and arranged by the Transition Committee.

A complete Petition Process packet that includes the letter from the Standing Committee, the Petition Process Requirements and Procedures, the Petition Nomination Form, and the Candidate Application Form is available here:

https://www.episcopalpgh.org/docs/Petition_Process_Packet.pdf

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