

BIOGRAPHIES OF NOMINEES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Three laypersons to be elected to a three-year term ending in 2018

Name: Suzanne DeWalt

Church: Calvary, East Liberty

Occupation: Lawyer

Service to the church: Present: Diocesan Trustee; Diocesan Clergy Compensation Committee. Past: Co-Chair Task Force 2.0 (Diocesan strategic planning committee); Social Justice Committee; Jr. Warden; Vestry; Parish Council; Co-Chair, Every Member Canvass; Rector Search Committee; Chair, Facility Study; and for Sheldon Calvary Camp: President of Board and member of Board.

Statement of interest: When I first stood for election to the Board of Trustees three years ago, I was excited by the question of how the diocese can best use and protect its assets to support new and existing ministries. The question still captures me, particularly after having served a term as a trustee and after having co-chaired the diocesan strategic planning committee. Serving on the Board of Trustees for a second term will allow me to keep working on projects that began during my first term and to apply knowledge and insights gained during my first term toward further enhancing mission and ministry in the diocese. A graduate of an Episcopal college (Sewanee) and a devoted vacationer at an Episcopal retreat center (Kanuga), I have significant exposure to the broader Episcopal Church. My ties to the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh run deep. I was baptized at St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, where my parents grew up; was reared and confirmed at Christ Church, North Hills; and am now a member of Calvary, East Liberty, where my own daughter was baptized and confirmed. Four generations of my family have been Calvary Campers. In return for what the diocese has given and continues to give to me, I wish to continue to offer my skills in strategic and critical thinking to support my diocese.

Name: Anne Wolcott Kinsey

Church: Church of the Atonement, Carnegie

Occupation: Retired

Service to the church: Present: Licensed Lay Reader; prepare/print Atonement's Sunday bulletin and Lessons. Past: Lay Eucharistic Minister, Vestry member, Senior Warden.

Statement of interest: The Episcopal Church has always been an important part of my life, from Girls Friendly Society, to being a Senior Warden, to supporting my husband's call to the priesthood. As a young person, I joined the GFS, the children's choir and YPF at St. Matthias Church, Whittier, CA. While a student at Scripps College, I attended St. Ambrose in Claremont, CA, often bringing my grandmother who lived nearby. In my thirties, my joy was being a Lay Reader and a Lay Eucharistic Minister, serving homebound church members and a local nursing home. At the age of 31 my priest, Fr. Chet Howe of St. Matthias, asked me to run for the vestry. I was elected and served on the Stewardship Committee. At the beginning of my fourth year of vestry service, Fr. Chet asked me to be his Senior Warden. He told me I was the youngest Senior Warden ever to serve in the Diocese of Los Angeles. Aside from the Stewardship Committee, I spent many hours listening to Fr. Chet, asking questions and suggesting possible alternatives to problems. My husband and I have recently taken the Church's anti-racism course. We have worshiped at a number of churches in the diocese, including St. Peters, Brentwood; St. Thomas, Canonsburg; St. Paul's, Kittanning; St. Stephen's, McKeesport; and Trinity Cathedral. It has given me a sense of what is taking place throughout the diocese. I believe in my Church and I would be honored to serve.

Name: Melanie Kurtz

Church: St. Matthew's, Homestead

Occupation: Administrator, BNY Mellon MVPs (Mellon Volunteer Professionals). I have held this job since retiring from Mellon Bank in 2003 after 26 years of service.

Service to the church: Present: Board of Trustees (term expires this year); lay reader; and Altar Guild. Past: Served twice on St. Matthew's Vestry; program chair of women's auxiliary; Sunday School teacher; and youth leader.

Statement of interest: I have served on the Board of Trustees for the past three years as a representative of District 2. I am now seeking a term as a trustee at-large, elected by Convention. I look forward to continuing to explore how our diocesan resources can be best used to advance the mission of the diocese and of our congregations.

CATHEDRAL CHAPTER

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to a three-year term ending in 2018

Name: Doug Starr

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Music Minister

Service to the church: Present: Director of Music and Arts. Past: Faculty LPM program 1999-2000.

Statement of interest: I am nominated to serve another term as a lay, diocesan member of the Cathedral Chapter. I bring to this position my nearly 40 years as a professional musician in the Episcopal Church, where I have witnessed and participated in the revitalization of ministries inside the church and educational enterprises outside the church, e.g., colleges and universities. I look forward to continuing to work toward having a strong cathedral ministry, serving the diocese and the larger Pittsburgh community.

Name: The Rev. Garrett Yates

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Transitional Deacon

Service to the church: Present: Curate, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Chaplain, Emmaus Community Pittsburgh.

Statement of interest: I recognize the centrality of the Cathedral and its iconic importance for the diocese. As a younger member of the clergy, I hope to bring a fresh perspective to the ways that the Cathedral bears witness to ministry of Jesus Christ in the downtown community.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

One member to be elected to a three-year term ending in 2018

Name: The Rev. Dr. Michelle Boomgaard

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Priest

Service to the church: Present: Associate Rector, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Cathedral Chapter (term expires this year); Committee on Constitution and Canons (term expires this year); secretary, Pittsburgh Episcopal Clergy Association; and member of Compensation Committee.

Statement of interest: A clergy colleague suggested that I run for the open position on the Commission on Ministry, based in part on my frequently expressed desire that the diocese work to lift up the ministry of all people – those called to lay ministry, as well as those discerning calls to the diaconate and priesthood. I also believe that, if elected, I work to better support those in discernment during their journeys, and to encourage and raise up a more diverse group of ordinands that better reflects the community of southwestern Pennsylvania.

COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to three-year terms ending in 2018

Name: Ansley Westbrook

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Attorney

Service to the church: Present: Sunday School teacher; usher.

Statement of interest: I have been seeking to expand my involvement and service to the church. I wish to help the diocese, particularly in ways that draw on my legal background.

Name: The Rev. Dr. Michelle Boomgaard

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Priest

Service to the church: Present: Associate Rector, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon; Cathedral Chapter (term expires this year); Committee on Constitution and Canons (term expires this year); secretary, Pittsburgh Episcopal Clergy Association; and member of Compensation Committee.

Statement of interest: Early this year, I was asked by the current chair of the Committee on Constitution and Canons and the Bishop to fill the term of a clergy colleague who was unable to continue to serve this committee. I have been happy to serve in this capacity. This type of work is somewhat familiar to me; I have previously helped the Clergy Association revise their bylaws, and similarly helped draft proposed changes to the Cathedral Chapter bylaws.

DISCIPLINARY BOARD

One clergy and two laypersons to be elected to three-year terms ending in 2018

Name: Betty Duckstein

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Retired broadcast engineer

Service to the church: Present: President, Diocesan ECW; Social Justice Committee; Growth Fund Committee; Lay Eucharistic Minister and Visitor. Past: Outreach Committee and Children's Education Committee in Philadelphia parish.

Statement of interest: I am pleased to serve, if needed, but hope the work of this board will never be necessary.

Name: James Kraus

Church: St. Peter's, Brentwood

Occupation: Engineer

Service to the church: Present: I am a lay deputy for my parish, which is in District 3. I am beginning my third year as a member of my parish's vestry, and am the currently the chairman of the parish Budget & Finance Committee. I am a member of the Altar Guild, and also perform usher duties when called on. At the diocesan level, I am a member of the Disaster Preparedness Committee.

Statement of interest: I am honored to be considered for a position on the diocesan Disciplinary Board. I feel called to use my time and skill to serve the diocese, as well as my parish and community. Participation on this board is a great opportunity to become more involved in the life of the diocese. My training as an engineer has taught me to approach problems in an objective way. I am a thoughtful, level-headed person, and believe these qualities will make me a valuable member of the board, should it be convened.

Name: The Rev. Linda Wilson

Church: All Souls, North Versailles

Occupation: Vocational Deacon

Service to the church: Present: Pastor-in-Charge, All Souls' Episcopal Church.

Statement of interest: It is my heartfelt prayer that this committee will never meet due to clergy malfeasance. However, if this does happen, after careful discernment, decision(s) concerning fairness and justice for all parties involved would be at the forefront of the process in my thoughts.

STANDING COMMITTEE

One clergy and one layperson to be elected to four-year terms ending 2019

Name: The Rev. T.J. Freeman

Church: Calvary, East Liberty

Occupation: Priest (Curate)

Service to the church: Past: Standing Commission on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations (2012-15).

Statement of interest: Over the course of my first year and few months of being physically and canonically resident in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, I have grown very fond of the people and places; it is from this fondness that my sense of call and desire to serve on the Standing Committee grows. My time in this diocese is limited, but I have a range of experiences within the church and in life that will make me a vital member of the Standing Committee. Over the last three years, I have served The Episcopal Church on the Standing Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations. During the course of that service, I have been a part of many conversations that are looking to the future, imagining new relationships, and strengthening the foundations of our church. The Diocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Texas, the two dioceses that I have been a part of prior to coming here, have some similarities and many differences from the Diocese of Pittsburgh; the breadth of these experiences provided me with insights and knowledge that will be an asset to the Standing Committee. I will end this piece in the same place that I began it; love. Despite having been here just more than one year, I have a deep love for this diocese and her people. I am very much looking forward to many more years of service at Calvary Episcopal Church and within the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Name: Sandy Ludman

Church: St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Occupation: Retired teacher

Service to the church: Present: Altar Guild, 1985-present; Wedding Coordinator, 1993-present; Greeter, 2011-present; and Disciplinary Board, 2013-15. Past: Vestry, 2011-13; Choir, 1980-2003; Youth, Worship (Recording Secretary) and Communications Commissions; Chair and Recording Secretary, Evening Circle, 1983-85; Coordinator of three parish photo directories, 1992, 1996 and 2012; Chaperone of three Youth Mission Trips, 2012-14; co-chair of St. Paul's 175th anniversary celebration; Co-chair Cotillion, 1988-93; and Hospitality Committee, St. Paul's Experiment, 1990.

Statement of interest: I've been involved with this diocese for more than 50 years and have been active at both parishes of which I've been a member. It would be both exciting and humbling to be part of an advisory group for Bishop McConnell as we move forward together as a diocese.