

Minutes  
of the  
Standing Committee

**Date:** 6/7/16

**Place:** Diocesan Center, PA

**Members Present:** Greg Hinton, Barbara Hutchinson, Patrick Pierce, Churchill Pinder, Sanford Schwartz, John Stevenson, Sam Ward, Linda Watkins, Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer, Sarah Weedon; Bishop Scanlan, Herb Sprouse (VP of the Commission on Ministry)

- **Call to Order:** 2:00 p.m.
- **Opening Prayer**
- **Minutes:** The Committee approved the minutes of the 4/5/16 meeting.
- **Consent to Election:** The Committee approved the Consent to Election of the Rev. Canon Daniel G. P. Gutierrez as Bishop Diocesan of the Diocese of Pennsylvania.
- **Ordination Process:** Bishop Scanlan and Herb Sprouse reviewed the “Revised Ordination Process Outline” (see Appendix 1), focusing in particular on the role of the Standing Committee in the ordination process for Deacons and Priests. Several issues arose in the discussion:
  - Steps 9-10 (Nomination). The Committee recommended that a representative of the COM meet with the Vestry of the candidate’s local parish.
  - Step 22 (Candidacy). Greg Hinton discussed the General Ordination Examinations (GOE) and the Diocesan Canonicals with respect to the role of the Examining Chaplains.
  - Step 28 (From Deacon to Priest). The Committee discussed the issue of access to medical and psychological information when it certifies the candidate’s fitness for ordination.
- **Standing Committee Representation on the Commission on Ministry (COM):** The Committee discussed a proposal (see Appendix 2) prepared by Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer, Kate Harrigan, and Barbara Hutchinson in collaboration with Bishop Scanlan for Standing Committee representation—voice but no vote—on the COM. Churchill Pinder recommended that if possible both of the proposed representatives should attend COM meetings. John Stevenson wondered whether Standing Committee should be as involved with COM affairs as the proposal suggests. Patrick Pierce moved approval of the

proposal with revisions reflecting Churchill's recommendation; Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer seconded, and the proposal passed unanimously.

- **Report on Council of Trustees (COT):** Barbara Hutchinson reported on the recent meeting of the COT. Among the matters discussed at the meeting were the financial condition of the Episcopal Home in Shippensburg, the state of our relationship to Camp Mt. Luther, and the initiative to restructure diocesan committees.
- **Bishop's Report:** Bishop Scanlan reported on her various ongoing activities, including the problem of responding to the presence of a known pedophile or registered sex offender in a parish; our Concordat with the Lutheran Church and the prospects for sharing clergy; the agreement with educator-consultant John Roberto to assist the diocese and individual parishes in matters of Christian formation; the appointment of the Rev. Canon Daniel Morrow as Canon for Congregational Life and Mission; the Interim situation at St. Thomas, Lancaster; and concern for the health of Deacon Pat Strohl and his wife, Sandy.
- **Closing:** The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

#### **Addendum:**

- **Approval of Encumbrance:** On June 20<sup>th</sup>, Barbara Hutchinson emailed the Committee a series of documents supporting the request by John Morris, the Rector of St. John's, Lancaster, to incur debt through a commercial loan. The loan would fund the difference between the amount raised by their capital campaign and the amount needed for proposed adaptations to their buildings.

## **Appendix 1**

#### **Revised Ordination Process Outline**

#### **Pennsylvania**

The Rev. Dr. Herb Sprouse

Barbara Hutchinson

#### **Diocese of Central**

The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan

The Rev.

**MAY 31, 2016**

# FOR THOSE SEEKING ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(This document is in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church 2015 and includes local variances particular to the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania.)

## ***Pre-Nomination Discernment***

1. A call to explore the idea of ordained ministry is perceived by a parish member.
2. The parish member initiates a conversation with their Presenting Priest.
3. If the Presenting Priest affirms the call of the parish member s/he writes to the Bishop expressing support for the parish member to begin the discernment process for ordained ministry.
4. The parish member meets with the Dean of the Stevenson School for conversation about their call and to learn about opportunities for ministry exploration through SSFM. A course of action is selected that may include registering for one or more SSFM classes. Other comparable exploration options (not SSFM) may also be considered in conversation with the Bishop.

*(Note: an extensive parish internship is not contemplated for most people in discernment at this time.)*

5. The parish member meets with their Presenting Priest after completion of an SSFM or comparable program and they discuss the options of:
  - (a) continued lay ministry, possibly with more SSFM or other training, or
  - (b) further exploration of their perceived call to ordination.

6. If the Presenting Priest concurs with further exploration of ordained ministry, the Presenting Priest contacts the Bishop. The Parish Member makes written application to enter the discernment process formally providing the following information: Full name and DOB, length of time in the diocese, evidence of baptism and confirmation, [notice of any other applications for ordination in other dioceses, a description of the discernment processes completed official transcripts from all attended post-secondary educational institutions.]

*(Note: the Parish Member becomes a "Nominee" only at this point. Using this term earlier may be prematurely misunderstood as "being in the process." Nomination is also the event that triggers the 18-month minimum time frame to ordination under the national canons.)*

## ***Nomination***

7. The Nominee meets with the Bishop

- (a) Upon the Bishop's invitation, the nominee meets with COM for an introductory meeting
- (b) The Nominee begins work with a Discernment Committee as instructed by the COM.

*[Note: changes to the structure and duration of discernment committees are underway.]*

8. Based on the outcomes of all of the above, the next steps are determined by the Bishop with COM recommendations. Possibilities include:

- Additional SSFM classes
- An internship, if required to address a significant "gap" in experience that might influence fitness for postulancy or to assess maturity in younger persons
- Other ecclesiastical explorations as needed to support discernment
- Enrollment in seminary or similar education at the Bishop's discretion (*Note: if distance learning and/or part-time seminary is planned the education can take 5+ years*)

At this time, the Nominee will enter Spiritual Direction, if not already engaged in direction. A time-certain to meet again with the Bishop and COM will be set.

9. At the completion of their work, the Discernment Committee issues its report to the Bishop, COM, the Standing Committee and the individual's rector and parish vestry. All paperwork and pre-postulancy examinations are completed, including psychological evaluation and medical exam.

10. The parish writes a letter of support to the Bishop nominating the individual for postulancy including a pledge to contribute financially to the Nominee's preparation and a commitment for the parish to be involved in the preparation of the individual for ordination. This letter must be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and by the Member of the Clergy leader exercising oversight. The nominee writes a letter to the Bishop accepting the nomination.

11. At the time-certain previously established:

- (a) Nominee and Presenting Priest meet together with Bishop to reflect. The topic of financial resources to complete formation is discussed with the Nominee at this point and in other follow-up instances in the process.
- (b) Nominee meets with COM (*including representation of the Standing Committee*) to reflect on experiences. The COM shares its evaluation of the nominee with the Bishop.

12. The Bishop decides if the Nominee is to continue forward with the ordination process.

- (a) If not, Bishop meets with Nominee to discern next steps for ministry, or
- (b) The Nominee is made a Postulant
  - Presenting Priest, sponsoring parish, COM, Standing Committee, Seminary Dean and Postulant all receive letters testifying to postulancy
  - The nominee writes a letter to the Bishop accepting postulancy.
  - The new Postulant is invited to the next (midwinter) COM retreat

- The Postulant begins to write ember day letters to the Bishop
- The Bishop records the Postulant's name and date of admission in the register.

## ***Postulancy***

13. Following the next COM (midwinter) retreat, the COM reviews findings and assigns a Companion for the Postulant. The Companion is trained by the COM and begins the Companion-Postulant relationship.

*(Note: The timing on this may be adjusted to provide a Companion if postulancy is granted long before the next midwinter retreat.)*

14. If not yet matriculated in a seminary program, an SSFM program or another ministry formation program, the postulant is given direction from Bishop to begin.

15. After at least one year of postulancy, including academic preparation and formation (with transcripts and evaluations submitted) the Postulant requests meetings with:

- The Bishop
- The COM (with Standing Committee representation.)

The Bishop and COM confer.

16. The Bishop gives the Postulant direction to:

- (a) Continue towards candidacy
- (b) Redirect toward lay ministry
- (c) Continue studies and formation as a postulant (thereby extending the postulancy period.)
- (d) The Bishop may give additional instructions for further individual formation.

17. If the direction is to continue towards candidacy, (16a) then the Postulant files his/her Candidacy Application which shall include:

- Formal application paperwork (including the Postulant's date of admission to Postulancy)
- Continuing Vestry endorsement
- Transcripts from education/formation program
- Physical exam
- Psychological exam update (if elapsed time requires)
- Clinical Pastoral Education evaluation and credentials
- Seminary evaluation (or comparable program evaluation)

It is expected that each person in the ordination process will complete at least:

- (a) One academic year of an internship in a parish or ministerial setting (as in a typical seminary field education placement) approved by the Bishop and COM with evaluations submitted at the conclusion thereof.

(b) One unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) with evaluations submitted at the conclusion thereof.

18. The Postulant attends the (midwinter) COM retreat again. The now “senior postulant” attends with all other postulants and candidates.

19. When Candidacy paperwork is complete, at the Bishop’s invitation the Postulant attends:

- (a) Interview with the Bishop
- (b) Interview with COM
- (c) Interview with the Standing Committee

The COM issues a statement to the Bishop attesting to the continuing formation of the Postulant.

The Standing Committee reviews documentation relating to the application of the Postulant and issues a report on their findings to the Bishop.

20. At the Bishop’s discretion, the “Senior Postulant” is made a Candidate for Ordination.

- The Bishop informs in writing the (new) Candidate, Presenting Priest, COM, Dean of Seminary or SSFM, and Standing Committee of the move to Candidacy.
- The nominee writes a letter to the Bishop accepting postulancy.
- The Bishop records the name and date of admission to Candidacy in the register.

## ***Candidacy***

21. The Candidate continues formation and education through completion of seminary or other formation program(s).

22. The Candidate takes the General Ordination Examinations (GOEs) and the Diocesan Canonicals.

(a) The Bishop, COM and Standing Committee review results of GOEs and/or Canonicals

(b) If remediation in any field of study is recommended by the Bishop, the Examining Chaplains are notified and a plan for increased competency and the metrics for desirable outcomes is designed.

(c) Examining Chaplains certify successful completion of remediation to the Bishop and the COM.

23. The following training is also certified as required by the national canons:

- (a) Prevention of sexual misconduct.
- (b) Civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.
- (c) The Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, “particularly Title IV thereof.”
- (d) The Church's teaching on racism.

24. At the invitation of the Bishop, final interviews and certifications prior to ordination are conducted:

- (a) Final interview with the Bishop

(b) Final COM Interview

(c) Final Standing Committee interview

(d) The required certifications received:

- Application for ordination
- COM Certification
- Standing Committee Certification
- Certificate of studies completion from Seminary, SSFM or comparable program as approved by the Bishop

(e) The Candidate meets the canonical requirements:

- At least 18 months from acceptance as Nominee to ordination
- At least 24 years of age
- Continuing endorsements by sponsoring clergy and two-thirds of the sponsoring vestry
- A criminal background check, psychological examination and medical examination completed within the last 36 months

25. The Bishop meets with Candidate to schedule ordination to the diaconate.

- The Bishop informs the Candidate, Presenting Priest and Vestry, COM, Dean of Seminary, SSFM or comparable program, and Standing Committee.

### ***From Deacon to Priest***

26. The (transitional) Deacon serves in a ministerial placement approved by the Bishop.

27. After a minimum of six (6) months (and at least 18 months from the time of Nomination) the (transitional) Deacon applies for ordination to the priesthood.

(The Deacon must be at least 24 years of age, medical and psychological exams must have taken place or been updated within 36 months prior to ordination as a priest.)

The application shall include:

- a. a letter from the (transitional) Deacon requesting ordination and including the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy and ordination as a Deacon
- b. a letter of support from the Deacon's original sponsoring congregation signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and Member of the Clergy
- c. evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy
- d. a certificate from the seminary, SSFM or other formation program showing the Deacon's academic fulfillment of coursework in the subjects required by the Canons including an evaluation that includes personal qualifications and affirmation and recommendation for ordination to the Priesthood

- e. a statement from the COM attesting to the successful completion of the program of formation, proficiency in the required areas of study and a recommendation for ordination to the Priesthood

28. The Standing Committee reviews the application and, with a majority consenting, certifies in a testimonial addressed to the Bishop that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination.

29. The Bishop, having received the certification from the Standing Committee may ordain the (transitional) Deacon to the Priesthood. At the time of ordination, the (transitional) Deacon shall subscribe publicly, and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution. (I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church.)

Note: Canon III 8.7e states, "No Deacon shall be ordained to the Priesthood until having been appointed to serve in a Parochial Cure within the jurisdiction of this Church, or as a Missionary under the Ecclesiastical Authority of a Diocese, or as an officer of a Missionary Society recognized by the General Convention, or as a Chaplain of the Armed Services of the United States, or as a Chaplain in a recognized hospital or other welfare institution, or as a Chaplain or instructor in a school, college, or other seminary, or with other opportunity for the exercise of the office of Priest within the Church judged appropriate by the Bishop."

## Appendix 2

Proposal

(as amended  
and approved)

Standing Committee Representation on the Commission on Ministry Prepared by  
Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer, Kate Harrigan, and Barbara Hutchinson and in collaboration with  
Bishop Scanlan June 6, 2016

Prepared by: Charlotte Weaver-Gelzer, Kate Harrigan, Barbara Hutchinson

In Collaboration with: Bishop Audrey Scanlan

Understood Assumptions regarding COM Membership: Appointed by Bishop, Approved by Diocesan Convention

Standing Committee Representation: Voice but no vote.

Attendance at COM Meeting:

1. There will be a representative from the SC at the COM meeting when persons are being interviewed at any of the steps for ordination.
2. These interview points are set out in the Revised Ordination Process Documents (5/31/16) .
  - a. Before Postulancy
  - b. Before Candidacy
  - c. Before Ordination
3. There will also be representation at the Mid-Winter Retreat

Purpose of SC Representation at COM meetings:

1. Provide additional information and feedback to the whole SC regarding the people in the ordination process.
2. Prepare the Standing Committee as a body to meet their canonical requirements of assessing the person's spiritual, emotional physical health in moving into candidacy.

Advantages of Standing Committee Representation at COM meetings:

1. Provide knowledge, articulation, and oversight of canonical requirements governing the ordination process.

2. To meet the charge to the Standing Committee to attest there are no grounds for dismissal based upon moral, spiritual, or physical concerns.
  - a. Be present at the meeting to get a fuller knowledge of the nominee/postulant, candidate.
  - b. Observe the dynamics of the COM related to a particular person, which could be articulated in a report to the Bishop and SC.

Standing Committee Representation:

1. Two people, one apostolate, one clergy, appointed as representatives.
2. One person attends each meeting, with representatives sharing attendance, as their schedules allow.
3. The SC representatives should not be:
  - a. Anyone connected with the SSFM (Dean, instructor, administrator)
  - b. Clergy person with member in the process.
  - c. Examining Chaplain

Standing Committee Representation: Report Back Procedure:

1. Each representative will attend one meeting during the 2 month time period between SC meetings.
2. They will meet to share their feedback and create one report for the SC, which will be on the agenda of each SC meeting.
3. Their report may include observations regarding the nominee/postulant/candidate (progress, recommendations, information) .
4. This report will become a part of the minutes of the SC, as well as placed into the person's official file for review at time of candidacy.
  - a. The advantage of placing it in the official file is that all information will be kept together in one place so even with the rotating membership of the SC, the information will be available to all, even if not on the SC when the person was interviewed at COM.
  - b. The disadvantage of filing our observations/recommendations in the official file is that others may negatively interpret our information.
  - c. We understand that the Bishop and the SC are the ones who review the official file kept in the Bishop's office and that the COM has their own records.

Standing Committee Representation: Qualities/Skills of the Representative:

1. Knowledge of the Canons and Constitution (ECUSA and Diocesan), which govern the ordination process.
2. Knowledge of the organization of the Diocese (various entities and their responsibilities).
3. Awareness of the long-view big picture of the development of a missional diocese, showing evidence of studying and learning about Missiology and competence in sharing vision around it.
  - a. If we are defining understanding which is imperative for nominee/postulant/candidate to possess regarding missional church, then we will want to offer suggestions for this development throughout the process, beginning with initial questions to be asked in the parish, seminary or SSFM preparation