

## **Bishop's Senior Staff Report**

### **184th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri**

Canon Westfall, Desiree Brattin, Canon for Finance and Administration, and the Reverend Canon Whitney Rice, Canon for Evangelism and Discipleship Development, make up the Senior Staff in the Offices of the Bishop and work together in overseeing the business, legal, property, formation, and other matters pertaining to the Diocese of Missouri.

Ms. Brattin works very closely with the Treasurer of the Diocese in creating a yearly budget, preparing and presenting the draft budget of the Diocesan Council. Other responsibilities include preparing for the yearly outside audit, administering diocesan grants and loans, and working on trust and endowment issues as well as administration of health and benefit plans. She also supports the functioning of Diocesan Council and the Diocesan Investment Trust. She serves on the Diocesan Endowment Committee and as a Vice President of COEDMO as well as assists with convention planning. Her twenty-eight years of service are a tremendous gift to the diocese and her knowledge of the diocesan finances is unparalleled.

Canon to the Ordinary, the Rev. Doris Westfall, assists the bishop in supporting the clergy and congregations of the diocese. She accompanies the bishop on visitations and makes herself available to parishes in need of supply clergy or who are in need of a senior staff visit to help them think through and address any difficult issues that may arise. Canon Westfall works with clergy and congregations that are in transition and mentors the vestries and discernment teams in the transition and call process. From November 18, 2022 to November 3, 2023 there has been 22 clergy transitions: eight newly ordained clergy; there were no clergy new to the diocese, seven new cures in the diocese, two new cures outside of the diocese, two other transitions, one retirement and two clergy deaths.

Canon Westfall is currently working with the congregations of Trinity-Central West End, Trinity-Hannibal, Holy Communion-University City, and Grace-Kirkwood in their search and call process. Interims are in place at Grace-Kirkwood, Trinity-Central West End, Christ Church-Cape Girardeau, Christ Church-Rolla, and St. Mark's-St. Louis. Canon Westfall assists interim clergy in shepherding the congregations through the transitional time. She works with other canons to the ordinary and transition ministers across the country and plans clergy conferences and retreats as well as educational offerings for the diocesan clergy. She assists the bishop in the pastoral care of the clergy and oversees training for the diocese for the Title IV process. She is also the Chief of Staff and a Vice President of COEDMO.

Canon For Evangelism and Discipleship Development, the Rev. Whitney Rice, oversees the ordination process, diocesan-wide evangelism efforts and training, as well education for life-long discipleship development. Canon Rice chairs the Reimagining the Church Task Force, is the diocesan liaison for Fresh Start-a program for clergy in new cures, and is heading up the work to redesign the ordination process. She oversees experimental ministries and missional communities and is the diocesan liaison for youth and young adult ministries. Canon Rice has also developed the 18 month Requiem or Renaissance program for congregations receiving financial assistance from the diocese. This program has been well received by those who have been working with it and there have been inquiries from several domestic dioceses as well as The Anglican Church in Canada about how it works and how to adapt it to their

specific contexts. Canon Whitney also took a well-deserved sabbatical from January to April of 2023 working on writing a book.

Ms. Jillian Smith is Executive Assistant to the bishop and canon to the ordinary. Her responsibilities include but are not limited to appointments with the bishop and canon to the ordinary, lay licensing, remarriage petitions and authorizations, setting up virtual meetings for staff and churches, renewal of ministry planning and scheduling, letters dimissory, diocesan convention, and clergy conference assistance. She also has participated in the redevelopment of Safeguarding God's Children, which is now called Safe Church, and tracks canonically required training and continuing education for clergy and laity. She assists Canon Rice with the logistics and forms for the ordination process.

Janis Greenbaum is the diocesan Communications Director and is responsible for communicating the bishop's message and vision to the diocese and beyond. She is the primary contact for parish event promotion, social media and website development. She oversees the livestream production of major diocesan events and has led the rebranding of the Offices of the Bishop. She is responsible for the content and production of all print publications for the diocese as well as the weekly Proclaim and Clergy Connections digital newsletters. She plans diocesan-wide communications conferences and oversees a diocesan communications board.

Ms. Tracy Grigsby serves the Offices of the Bishop as Administrator of Diocesan Operations. Ms. Grigsby provides both internal support to staff as well as external support to those who have questions or are looking for information about the diocese. She works with Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, convocations, Diocesan Convention, Fresh Start and the different diocesan commissions. Ms. Grigsby is also responsible for the updating and oversight of the diocesan database.

Ms. Rita Benson works with the Canon for Finance and Administration and supports all areas of finance, benefits, and insurance. She is the primary contact for any changes in benefits or insurance plans, pension fund matters, employee status, background checks, UTO grants, parochial reports, and Flexible Spending Accounts. She is responsible for payroll, accounts payable, and receivables in the diocesan office.

Two new staff positions have been added this year: The Rev. Erin Pickersgill is the new Ministry Developer for Children and Youth. She helps churches with their children and youth formation and programs providing information and ideas as well as helps with compliance with Safe Church, Safe Community training. She is overseeing the leadership team reimagining Camp Phoenix and the development of a safe space for the LGBTQIA+ youth in the diocese. Rev. Pickersgill is also the Diocese of Missouri liaison for exploring the possibility of a joint youth relationship with the Diocese of Puerto Rico and Provence V.

The Rev. Aaron Rogers is the new diocesan Ministry Developer for Young Adult Ministry. He is developing new fellowship, social justice, and ministry groups for the 20-40 year age group in the diocese. He collaborates with Directors of Christian Education, Campus Ministers, and Adult Formation directors to encourage a life-long curiosity and commitment to faith development and practice. Rev. Rogers is also the Priest in Charge of St. Stephen's-Ferguson. As a Trinity Wall Street Leadership Fellow, he meets for two years with other emerging young leaders in the church.

The part-time position of Data Organizer was added this winter and Mr. Michael DelCastillo has been helping Canon Desiree and Rita Benson in the office two days a week getting long delayed clerical projects done.

This is a knowledgeable, compassionate, deeply committed, and fun team to work with. There is much caring as well as laughter in the office and it is a privilege to work with them as they serve the people and parishes of the Diocese of Missouri.

Submitted by the Rev. Canon Doris Westfall