

# THE BOARD FOR TRANSITION MINISTRY

## Membership

Ms. Judith A. Stark, <i>Chair</i>	Southwest Florida, IV	2018
The Rev. Canon Stuart Wright, <i>Secretary</i>	Maryland, III	2018
The Rev. Paula Clark	Washington, DC, III	2021
The Rev. Canon Elizabeth Easton	Nebraska, VI	2021
The Rt. Rev. Douglas Fisher	Western Massachusetts, I	2021
The Rt. Rev. Ann Elliott Hodges-Copple	North Carolina, IV	2018
Canon Jill Mathis	Pennsylvania, III	2021
Mrs. Denise Obando	California, VIII	2021
The Rev. Canon James H. Pritchett, Jr.	Western North Carolina, IV	2018
The Rt. Rev. Allen Shin	New York, II	2021
The Rt. Rev. Kirk Stevan Smith	Arizona, VIII	2018
Mr. Michael P. Spencer	Eastern Michigan, V	2018
The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	North Carolina, IV	2018
The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, <i>Ex-Officio</i>	Ohio, V	2018

### CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

No changes in membership.

Representation at General Convention: Bishop Douglas Fisher and Ms. Judy Stark are authorized to received non-substantive amendments to this Report at General Convention.

## Mandate

Canon III.16.1 - 2

Sec. 1 (a) There shall be a Board for Transition Ministry of the General Convention consisting of twelve (12) members, four (4) of whom shall be Bishops, four (4) of whom shall be Presbyters or Deacons, and four (4) of whom shall be Lay Persons. (b) The Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop. The Priests or Deacons and Lay Members shall be appointed by the President of the House of Deputies. All appointments to the Board shall be subject to the confirmation of the General Convention. (c) The Members shall serve terms beginning with the adjournment of the meeting of the General Convention at which their appointments are confirmed, and ending with the adjournment of the second regular meeting thereafter. The members shall not serve successive terms. (d) At each regular meeting of the General Convention one-half of the membership shall be appointed to serve full terms. (e) Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Presiding Bishop or by the President of the House of Deputies, as

appropriate. Such appointments shall be for the remaining unexpired portion of the members' terms, and, if a regular meeting of the General Convention intervenes, appointments for terms extending beyond such meetings shall be subject to confirmation of the General Convention. Members appointed to fill the vacancies shall not thereby be disqualified from appointment to full terms thereafter.

Sec. 2. The duties of the Board shall be: (a) To oversee the Office for Transition Ministry. (b) To provide support for the training of bishops and diocesan personnel in the transition ministry processes. (c) To study the transition ministry needs and trends in the Episcopal Church and in other Christian bodies. (d) To issue and distribute such reports and information concerning transition ministry as it deems helpful to the Church. (e) To cooperate with the Centers for Mission and the other Boards, Commissions, and Agencies which are concerned with transition ministry, and particularly with the Executive Council. (f) To report on its work and the work of the Office for Transition Ministry at each regular meeting of the General Convention. (g) To report to the Executive Council annually as a part of its accountability to the Council for the funding which the Office for Transition Ministry receives. (h) To work in cooperation with the Church Center Staff. (i) To fulfill other responsibilities assigned to it by the General Convention.

### **SPECIFIC MANDATE FROM GC78**

Resolution 2015- A031 Continue Development of the Clergy Search Toolkit:

***Resolved, That the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention direct the Office of Transition Ministries, the Office of Pastoral Development and the Executive Council Committee on the Status of Women to continue development of search toolkit resources for female clergy and Church leadership discernment committees through the 2016-2018 triennium; and be it further***

***Resolved, That the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention extend appreciation for support of the search toolkit at the 77<sup>th</sup> General Convention, and call on bishops and other diocesan leaders to urge the search toolkit's use by search committees and transition ministries and to promote its availability for use among female clergy; and be it further***

***Resolved, That the 78<sup>th</sup> General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program Budget and Finance to allocate \$20,000 to continue to develop the search toolkit and for resources such as expanded development of online materials, Spanish translation and videography.***

Resolution 2015- A031 calls for the continued development of search toolkit resources for female clergy and Church leadership discernment committees. It also calls on bishops and other diocesan leaders to urge the search toolkit's use by search committees and transition ministries.

## Summary of Work

### MEETINGS

The Board met in person at the Maritime Center in Linthicum Heights, MD, in November 2015; at the Oak Ridge Conference Center in Chaska, MN, October 5-7, 2016; and again at the Maritime Center in March 2017. The board also held Adobe Connect teleconferences in January, April, and July of 2016 and in January, August and November of 2017.

This has been a triennium of extraordinary progress, accomplishment and health for the Board for Transition Ministry. In both concrete actions and in thoughtful conversation we have addressed the needs of a changing church.

We have come to think of transition ministry as a pipeline: from those who first begin to feel a call to ordained ministry, to diocesan Commissions on Ministry that listen for that call; to the seminaries that train prospective clergy, or the formation that occurs within the diocese; and on to the first calls and succeeding careers and retirement.

At every step, all of us are challenged to acknowledge the evolving needs of the church; the skills clergy must possess today and tomorrow -- which may be very different from what was needed in the past; and the expectations of what a career in the church will look like -- which may be very different from what was promised in the past. We wondered aloud whether each part of the pipeline is aware of how the other parts view the world and how we are preparing clergy to deal with reality.

When we gathered at the Maritime Center in November 2015 for our first meeting as a newly constituted board; we thought out loud about what the priests of tomorrow might look like. Here are some notes from our flip chart about what they might have/do/be: “Tattoos ... an online dating profile ... a first language other than English ... a first vocation ... a second job ... a same-gender spouse ... a way of relating to the community other than through church (be in a band).”

Now that we think of it, that describes many of our clergy today. Our point (and recent Church Pension Group information supports this): The old model of being a priest (full-time, for one church at a time, with uninterrupted service as he — and in the old days it was always “he” — moved up the ladder with regular salary increases) is rapidly fading.

As we thought more about what we are transitioning from ... and transitioning to ... one of our members, Bishop Doug Fisher of Western Massachusetts, proposed an “Invitation to the Church” -- to wonder and ponder with the Board, an opportunity to engage the wider church in a conversation about the trends and challenges we see. We don’t have the answers. The wisdom comes from all around the church. Since we released the Invitation in Spring 2017, we have had positive feedback. The Invitation has been used to start conversations at clergy days, at diocesan conventions, and in other contexts around the church. The “Invitation to the Church” is posted on the Episcopal Church website ([www.episcopalchurch.org/page/invitation-church](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/invitation-church)). We hope to gather and share more feedback with the wider church.

The specific points we called out -- which are echoed in the reports of many other interim bodies -- are: the aging church (both clergy and parishioners), dual-call couples, energy beyond the parish (non-traditional, non-parochial ministry), diversifying clergy, interim ministry, part-time clergy leadership, full-communion partners, effective ministry in multicultural settings, the call process now, and the facts about transition ministry today.

We are all part of the pipeline. The fact that these topics come up again and again in various contexts and from various viewpoints suggests that these are, indeed, the conversations we need to be having. The end of this triennium does not mean the end to the conversations.

#### **CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS**

The board recognizes a number of trends in transition ministry, many of which overlap. As the availability of full-time clergy positions declines, the need for part-time and bi-vocational ordained leadership grows. That raises questions about formation, time, compensation, stewardship of resources, and expectations for the congregation and its spiritual leader. Both must learn to live into the opportunity for spiritual growth and renewal available through a different kind of leadership model.

Women clergy, clergy of color and LGBTQ clergy continue to face conscious or unconscious bias in the calling process. Women are disproportionately represented in part-time, interim, supply and non-stipendiary calls. That impacts their career-long earning capability and their ultimate pension. (CPG has documented an earnings gap of nearly twenty (20) percent between men and women.) Compensation parity is a justice issue for the Church, and the Board has voted to support Proposed Resolution A091: Amend Canon III.9 Equity in Clergy Hiring and Appointment Practices, put forward by the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution & Canons, urging pay parity.

We have established a relationship with the Church Pension Group this triennium. Their Executive Vice President, the Rev. Anne Mallonee, and their Senior Vice President for Research and Data, Matthew Price, were our guests on one of our quarterly conference calls, and the board chair was an invited responder at the “Insights and Ideas” Centennial Conversation in New York City in September 2017. This is a relationship we are eager to cultivate.

### **PERMANENT MISSIONER**

In May 2016 the Presiding Bishop named the Rev. Meghan Froehlich to the permanent position of Missioner for Transition Ministry, a position she had held on an acting basis since January 2015. Her thorough knowledge of the transitions process, her strong relationships with diocesan transition ministers and others throughout the church, and her technical “under-the-hood” abilities made her an ideal choice. The Office for Transition Ministry has grown, strengthened, and made itself even more valuable to the wider church under our new missioner’s leadership and with the strong backup at the Church Center of Sabrina Nealy, Systems Coordinator and Associate for the Office for Transition Ministry. Together they present a positive, helpful, and professional face to the constituents we serve.

### **OFFICE FOR TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY [OTM] PORTFOLIO DATABASE**

The Office for Transition Ministry Portfolio database is a service of the Episcopal Church to assist churchwide in search and call processes for clergy, lay leaders, and worshipping communities. The Office for Transition Ministry [OTM] staff offer individualized assistance to all users through telephone, video, and email support.

As technology has changed rapidly in recent years, the database is in the process of updating and improving. The Board for Transition Ministry, Diocesan Transition Ministers, bishops, and other Portfolio users highlighted areas for improvement. Updates are under way in the areas of:

- \* User experience improvement, including ease of use
- \* Stability and full functionality on mobile, tablet, laptop, and desktop platforms
- \* Cross-platform reliability (use on PC, Mac, Linux, all website browsers)
- \* Search functions
- \* Strengthening information security

In the next triennium, with input from users, improvements can be expected in the areas of:

- \* Simplifying compensation information pages
- \* Mapping available positions
- \* Specialized search and output options
- \* Any needed data security
- \* Changes identified by primary users and others, with guidance from the Board

### **NATIONAL GATHERING OF DTMS**

Another important accomplishment of this triennium is the decision -- in response to great demand from diocesan transition ministers [DTMs] -- to facilitate a churchwide gathering of DTMs, the first since a meeting in conjunction with the 2011 CODE conference in Minneapolis. This is now scheduled for March 26-29, 2019, at the conference center in the Diocese of Utah.

This gathering will respond to our mandate to provide training, support and professional development for those involved in transition ministry and to educate DTMs and others about the resources available through the Office for Transition Ministry (website, mobile tools) and the changing nature of transition ministry (much of which is highlighted elsewhere in this report).

### **EXPANDING THE TOOL KIT**

Resolution 2015-A031, approved by the 78th General Convention, called on the board to expand the online search tool kit created in 2015 in response to a previous General Convention resolution ([www.episcopalchurch.org/page/cast-wide-net](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/page/cast-wide-net)).

We are doing so by:

- refreshing and updating existing material (new CPG compensation report, for example);
- adding material on dual-call couples (of which there are now five hundred (500) in the Episcopal Church) created by the Rev. Diane Vie as part of her doctoral work;
- offering new material on how to read a parish or diocesan profile
- providing a list of “Do’s and Don’ts” for women seeking the episcopate

We expect this new material will be posted by the first quarter of 2018.

## **TRAINING**

The most visible work of Diocesan Transition Ministers (DTMs) involves collaborating, as a member of the bishop's staff, with clergy and congregations as they discern new clergy leadership for a worshipping community. This process is implemented differently in each diocese and is tailored to meet the needs of each congregation.

DTMs must be imaginative leaders who educate their diocesan staffs, their searching congregations and their candidates about the changing expectations, needs and creative challenges we face as a church, as we've discussed above.

For new Transition Ministers, developing the required relational and technical skills for this complex responsibility takes time -- time that is mostly in short supply, as position openings do not follow any schedule. The board seeks to offer options for training new DTMs and supporting their ongoing work.

Diocesan Transition Ministers [DTMs] serve in an increasing variety of configurations on bishops' staffs. Some are full-time with transition ministry as their only responsibility; some are part-time with compensation; some serve as DTMs while also serving as rectors and are uncompensated, and many also serve as Canon to the Ordinary with multiple areas of responsibility. Some new DTMs have their predecessor available as a resource; others do not. Some new DTMs have prior experience with transitions; others are new to this specialized ministry area. In some dioceses the bishop is the transitions minister and may require unique training.

Training for new DTMs comes from three (3) major sources. Over the last triennium, the two (2) staff members of the Office for Transition Ministry have provided individualized training and ongoing support for new DTMs. Other training and support come from other DTMs, often from a neighboring or similar diocese. A third source is the regional transition ministry groups consisting of one or more provinces. These groups typically meet twice a year and offer formal or informal training and for new DTMs.

Our national gathering of DTMs, proposed for 2019, will add a fourth opportunity for leaders in transition ministry to strengthen their skills. Given that much of the work of finding good candidates involves networking and relationships, the value of this time together should not be underestimated.

The board is considering developing a checklist of skills and questions that acknowledges the differences among diocesan processes and insures that DTMs receive training in all necessary areas. The OTM missioner attends many of the regional meetings and can share best practices regarding training among the regional groups.

## **WIDER CONVERSATIONS**

As trends in transition ministry are showing increasing changes across the church, several groups have convened conversations that include Bishops, Diocesan Transition Ministers, Commissions on Ministry, and theological formation leaders.

Province III has convened a “Calling the Future Church” conversation annually for the last two (2) years, and has addressed topics that included diversity, how people are called into ministry, whether formation leads to the kinds of leadership that the church needs, how to better equip lay leadership for the changing church, creative ways to offer collaborative formation, ways to more deeply engage collaboration among Episcopal churches and beyond Episcopal churches. Other regional groups have hosted similar conversations and plans are increasing to have future similar discussions.