

Transition Committee

Position Description

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of West Missouri is accepting applications from lay people, priests, and deacons of West Missouri to serve on the Bishop Transition Committee. This body will play a pivotal role in helping the diocese discern whom to call as the next in a line of apostolic leaders going back to the 12 apostles originally called and sent by Jesus himself. Our next bishop will bear great responsibility to proclaim a shared vision for our congregations, inspire and minister to diocesan clergy, lead our diocesan liturgical life, raise up leaders for the future, and help lead The Episcopal Church. Managing the opportunities for diocesan members to get to know the candidates for bishop and managing the election process will require a significant commitment of time and energy, gifts of hospitality and organization, and attentive pastoral care for all involved.

The Transition Committee will include about 12 members embodying the diversity present in West Missouri. With the help of consultants provided by The Episcopal Church's Office of Pastoral Development, the Transition Committee will be responsible for introducing the slate of candidates to the diocese, shepherding the candidates as they visit West Missouri, working with the Convention Planning Committee to plan the election of the bishop at the 2024 Diocesan Convention, and being pastorally present to all the candidates following the election. Strong planning and organizational skills, gracious hospitality, and a servant's heart are vital for members of the Transition Committee. The Standing Committee reserves the right to appoint additional members as needed.

Specific responsibilities of Transition Committee members include:

- Building a budget in consultation with the Standing Committee.
- Working with the Diocesan Convention Planning Committee to coordinate the bishop's election with the rest of the convention's business. Typically, the Presiding Bishop's Office will be in contact with the Transition Committee to ensure that the electing-convention protocols are correctly followed and documents are in place for confirmation by the bishops and Standing Committees across the Church.
- Educating the diocese about what a bishop is, what a bishop does, and what our diocesan profile revealed so that diocesan stakeholders can evaluate the extent to which the candidates' gifts and skills align with the role of a bishop in West Missouri.
- Serving as shepherds for the candidates. Each candidate will have a committee member acting as contact, answering questions, and guiding the candidate from the time of the slate's announcement through the election. Each committee shepherd will treat the candidate with loving pastoral care, hospitality, and respect in what will be a stressful time for the candidates and their families.
- Introducing the candidates to the diocese and the diocese to the candidates. This will include meet-and-greet events ("walkabouts"), but the committee will need to offer other media for this introductory work, too – for example, candidate videos, sample sermons, social-media interactions, etc.
- Planning and executing the meet-and-greet events – locations, dates, times, logistics (candidate travel, lodging, and meals), and formats for diocesan lay people and clergy to submit questions and have dialogue with the candidates. We anticipate these events taking place mid-August through October 2024 across the regions of the diocese.
- Maintaining neutrality and cultivating a level playing field for the candidates. Committee members will share information with all candidates equally, and they may not advocate or

campaign for particular candidates. Maintaining neutrality will model that this is a prayerful discernment process guided by the Holy Spirit.

- Maintaining absolute confidentiality about the process and the candidates at all times, now and always.
- Working closely with the diocesan communications team to promote opportunities for interaction with the candidates and to inform the diocese about the election.
- Working closely with other diocesan staff about planning, logistics, payments, etc., related to candidate travel and events.
- On election day, being present at the convention. Each shepherd will call their candidate after each round of voting but before the results are announced to the convention and online. This is a pastoral gesture that also allows candidates to withdraw after ballots if they receive low vote tallies.
- After election day, following up with and thanking each candidate.
- Helping the bishop-elect begin to transition into the diocese – for example, helping the bishop-elect and family find a realtor, physicians, schools, employment opportunities for a spouse, etc.
- Planning a celebration for the outgoing bishop provisional.
- Writing a report outlining the transition process and lessons learned in it.

Lay applicants for the Transition Committee must be communicants in good standing in a West Missouri congregation, being faithful in corporate worship as well as in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God. Ordained applicants for the Transition Committee must be in good standing and canonically resident or licensed in West Missouri. In addition, all applicants must possess these gifts, skills, and characteristics:

- Knowledge of The Episcopal Church's worship, ethos, organization, and governance.
- Availability to devote significant time and energy to the work. Committee members will take part in an all-day retreat in March 2024 with expenses paid (date to be determined). Other personal expenses related to committee service will be reimbursed. Planning work will begin following the retreat. We anticipate the slate of candidates will be announced in early August 2024, at which point the committee's activities will intensify through the meet-and-greet sessions and conclude soon after the election at Diocesan Convention Nov. 8-9, 2024.
- Strong oral and written communication skills, as well as willingness to engage via e-mail, manage shared documents online, and participate in videoconferences.
- Respect for the viewpoints of others, especially those that differ from one's own.
- Openness to receiving feedback.
- The courage of conviction but also open-minded respect for others' convictions.
- Willingness to prioritize the needs of the diocese as a whole and set aside regional, congregational, or personal agendas.
- Willingness to compromise, build bridges, and make decisions.
- Second-nature ability to engage others with dignity, respect, and love – both in relating with committee members and with candidates.
- Desire to care for the candidates and their families, making the process a blessing for all involved.

If you hear the Holy Spirit asking you to be part of the Transition Committee, please complete the application and email it to bishopsearch@diowestmo.org by **Dec. 31, 2023**. If you feel called to serve as chair or co-chair of the Consecration Committee, please indicate that on the application and return your

application by **midnight Oct. 1, 2023**. If you need an accommodation in completing this application, please contact us at bishopsearch@diowestmo.org.

We are also seeking a secretary for the Transition Committee – recording and distributing meeting minutes, scheduling meetings, arranging housing and transportation as needed, communicating with diocesan support staff, etc. The secretary will be expected to attend each meeting but will not be a voting member of the committee. The secretary will be compensated for hours worked. If you would like to be considered for this position, please complete the full application, as well as the portion relating to the committee secretary.

The Standing Committee will select the members of the Transition Committee, name its chair, and hire the secretary. In naming the Transition Committee, the Standing Committee will seek diversity that represents our diocese. This includes geography, congregational size, age, urban/rural context, gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity/language, and ministry order.