

Seeking the IXth Bishop of Florida



Profile

The Diocese
of Florida

A Prayer for the Election of a Bishop

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for this Diocese, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (The Book of Common Prayer, page 818)

Join Us in Our Discernment



With trust in God and the **“something new”** that he pledges for our future (Isaiah 43:19), the Episcopal Diocese of Florida invites you to consider the call to serve as the ninth bishop of Florida.

We went into our search for a new bishop **“looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God”** (Hebrews 12:2) — for he alone leads the way to where God means for us to be.

We seek that same unflagging focus in our next bishop as well, for Jesus — crucified, risen, ascended, and due to return in glory — is the singular common denominator from which our multifaceted family of faith alone can draw the vision and impetus needed **“to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ”** — which is the primary purpose of the Church, as our Book of Common Prayer reminds us (page 855).

This profile will help you gain a cohesive sense of who we are as a diocese, where we have been, and where we hope to go in our quest to follow Christ Jesus faithfully. It is the fruit of months-long soul-searching on the part of a broad swath of Episcopalians from our 66 parishes, missions, and campus ministries. Its contents culls together dreams, needs, experiences, and concerns expressed by young and old, rural and urban, convert and cradle among us through 17 in-person and online envisioning forums and 1,000-plus responses to our three-week diocese-wide survey.

We offer you this profile not merely as a source of information and insight, but rather as a tool for prayer and discernment as you consider taking up the opportunities and challenges of ministry as our diocese’s next **“apostle, chief priest, and pastor.”** (The Book of Common Prayer, page 855)

May God guide your deliberations with the sort of clarity and conviction that can come from him alone.

The Rev. Carolyn G. Jones
Clergy Co-Chair, Bishop Search Committee

Gregory Orloff
Lay Co-Chair, Bishop Search Committee



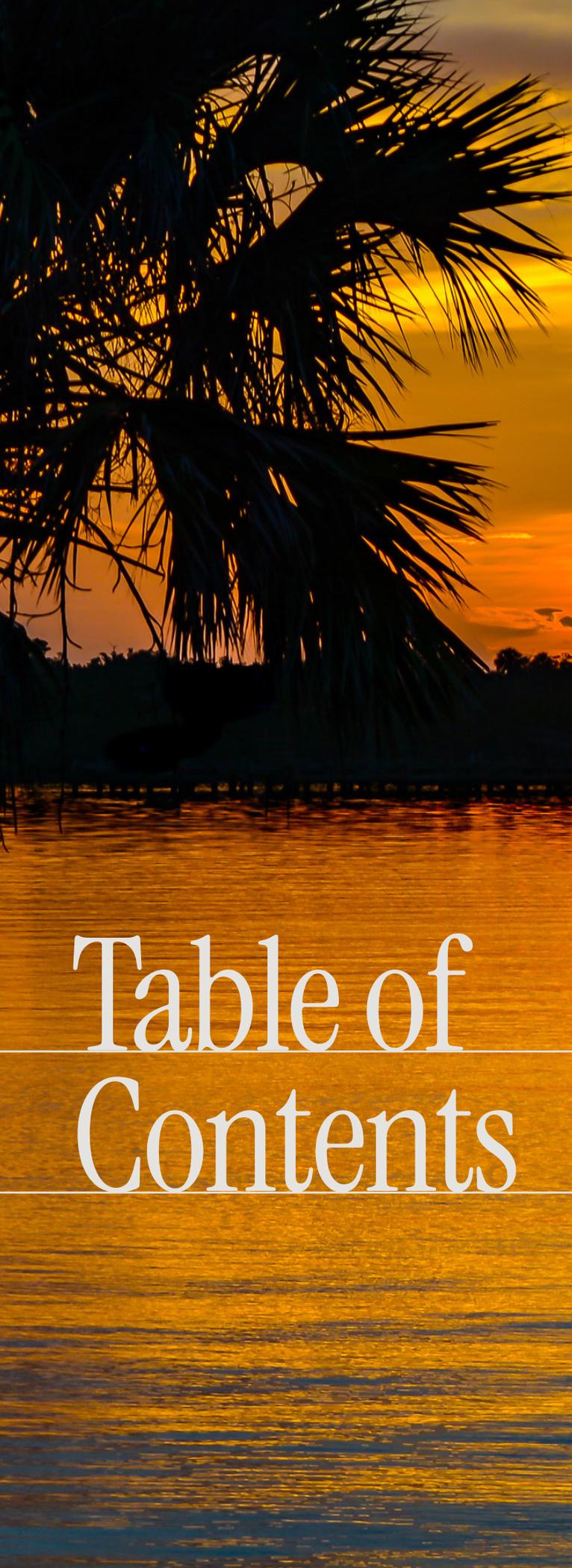


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Hopes and Vision for the Journey Ahead: The Pulse of our Diocese

Envisioning Sessions and Survey Insights

The Episcopal Diocese of Florida stands at a threshold of hope and possibility. Over the course of two months, 17 envisioning sessions were held throughout the diocese, plus a session with diocesan staff. Additionally, more than 1,100 responses were received to a survey administered and analyzed by Holy Cow! Consulting. The people of this diocese have spoken with remarkable clarity and honesty about who we are, what we celebrate, where we remain challenged and where God is calling us to grow.

What we hear most consistently is gratitude mixed with determination. The faithful of the Diocese of Florida recognize that we have faced challenges in recent years, yet we are not defeated. Instead, we are a people increasingly committed to healing, to building on what is solid and to equipping ourselves for renewed mission. Our vibrant youth and camp ministries — Camp Weed, Happening and New Beginnings — are described as spiritually formative and evangelistic, with participants across all ages naming them as evidence that “youth are not just the future; they are already leading us.” Our outreach ministries — food pantries, Church Without Walls, Grace Mission and parish-based service to the marginalized — stand as tangible expressions of the Gospel to those on the margins of our society. Our resurgent discipleship programs — Cursillo, Daughters of the King, Education for Ministry — and campus ministries are creating spaces where people are finding genuine welcome, theological depth and pastoral care. These are not token programs; they are the beating heart of Christ’s presence in our diocesan body.



We are a people increasingly committed to healing, to building on what is solid and to equipping ourselves for renewed mission.



At the same time, our people name with candor the challenges before us. We acknowledge a trust deficit born from institutional failures in the recent past — failures in financial stewardship, transparency, treating all equally and accountability. We recognize that many in our 25-county diocese are uncertain about the diocese’s vision or role in supporting their parishes. We see that geographic distance can create the perception that the diocese is distant and irrelevant. We understand that financial pressures require wisdom and creativity around issues like Camp Weed’s sustainability and the diocese’s annual budget. We hear that clergy need support systems to sustain them in their callings.

What strikes us most powerfully, however, is the resilience and agency our people have demonstrated even without episcopal leadership. During the vacancy, discipleship programs have not ceased. Outreach has not diminished. The 2025 Diocesan Convention was described by many as “a breath of fresh air,” with participants reporting “genuine healing and cohesion happening” and “a growing spirit of cooperation, even when there is disagreement.” This tells us that the Holy Spirit is moving in the Diocese of Florida. As we step into this season of new episcopal leadership, the diocese holds fast to several convictions. We believe that Christ, not personal agendas, must remain the focal point of our common life. We are claiming that

transparent governance, honest financial stewardship and accountability are not only necessities but spiritual imperatives that rebuild trust. We must tell the truth. We must live within The Episcopal Church canons — welcoming LGBTQ+ persons fully into the sacraments and community, honoring space for differing theological perspectives and standing persistently with the marginalized. We acknowledge that our geographic diversity should not be an obstacle but rather is an opportunity to demonstrate that the Body of Christ transcends distance. And we trust that God is not calling us backward to what we were, but forward — with “something new” (Isaiah 43:19) — into a future shaped by the Gospel, embodied in reconciled relationships and animated by servant leadership that walks among the flock with the dust of ministry on its frock.

The Diocese of Florida is ready. We are a people tested by adversity, rooted in creedal faith, growing in our hope of holding genuine theological diversity within unified communion and increasingly eager to cast our nets wider in our mission-hungry part of the state. We stand on the threshold of renewal, not because circumstances are perfect, but because God is faithful and our people have persevered.

Who We Are As a Diocese

Our Parishes and People

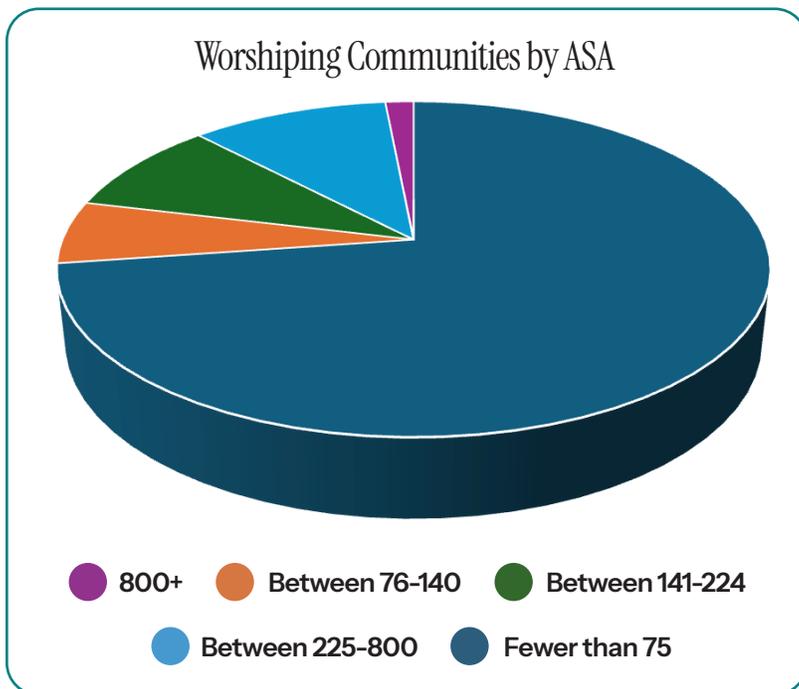
The Episcopal Diocese of Florida encompasses 25 counties in the northeast and north-central portion of the state. Since our founding as Florida's first diocese in 1838, our call to serve God's people remains steadfast and directed by the Holy Spirit, living and proclaiming the Gospel in community and servanthood ministry.

The Diocese of Florida serves a wide range of congregations – from small and rural to large metropolitan parishes – and is anchored by St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville. The total population of the diocese exceeds 2.8 million people.

By the numbers:

- Worshiping communities – 66 parishes, missions, university chapels, ministries at correction institutions and retirement facilities
- Communicants in good standing – 16,319
- Average Sunday attendance in-person – 6,193
- Full-time priests – 43
- Part-time priests – 15
- Retired priests – 68
- Active deacons – 16
- Retired deacons – 12
- Total clergy staff – 109

Our parish sizes based on 2024 Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)



Worshiping Communities by 2024 Average Sunday Attendance (ASA)



Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) by Region

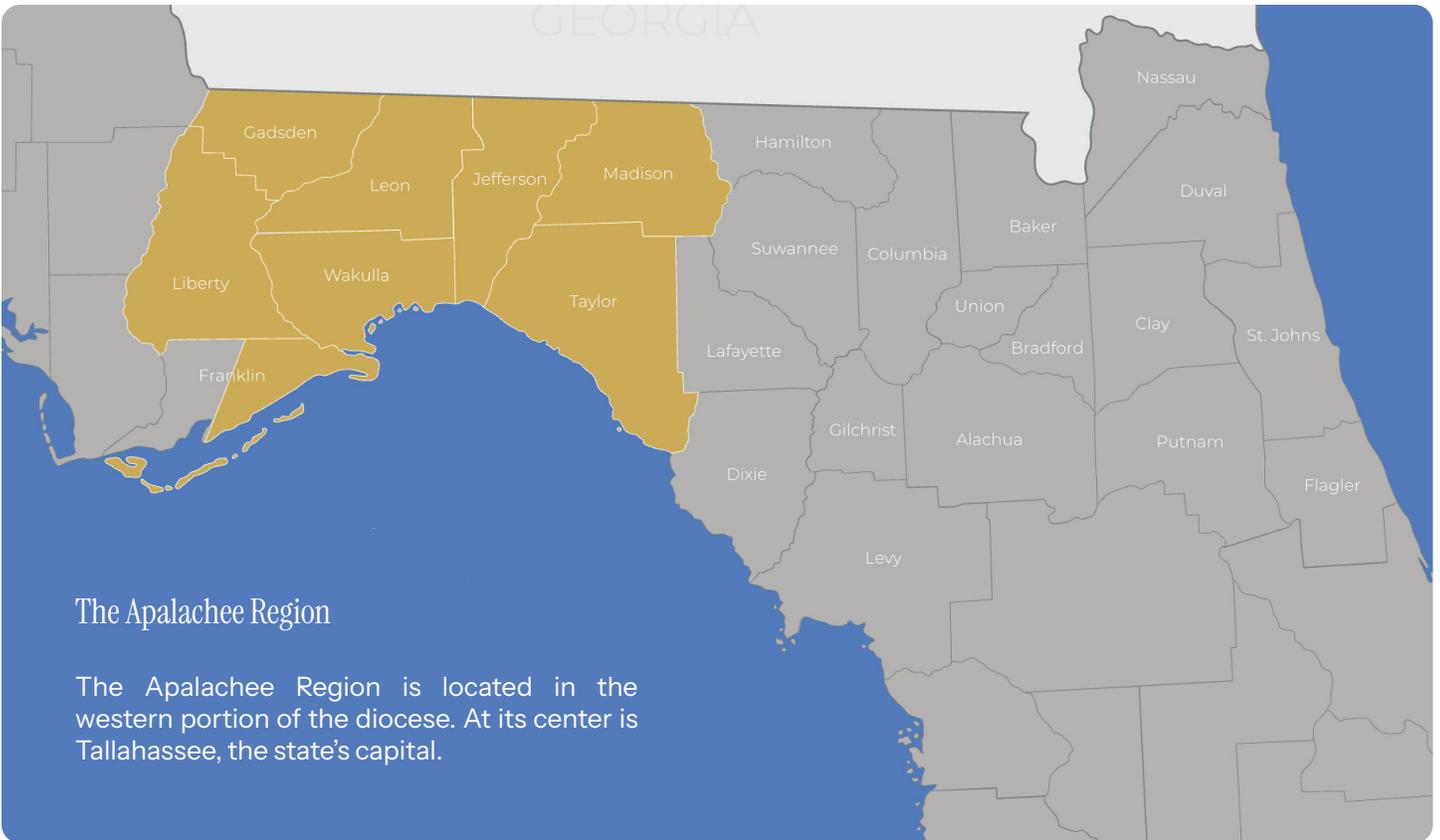
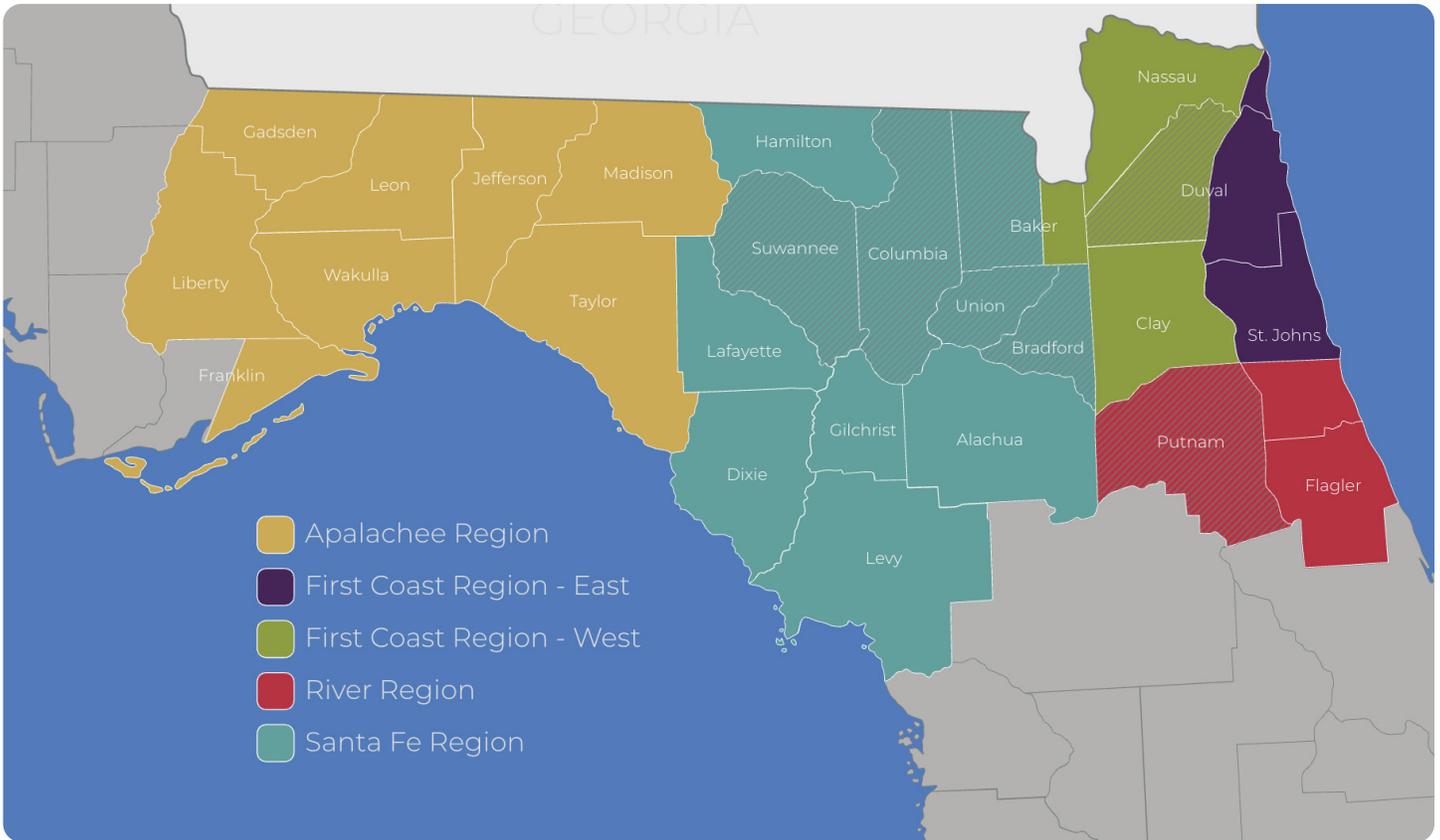
- **Apalachee Region ASA:** 714
- **First Coast East ASA:** 2,619
- **First Coast West ASA:** 1,307
- **River Region ASA:** 907
- **Santa Fe Region ASA:** 646

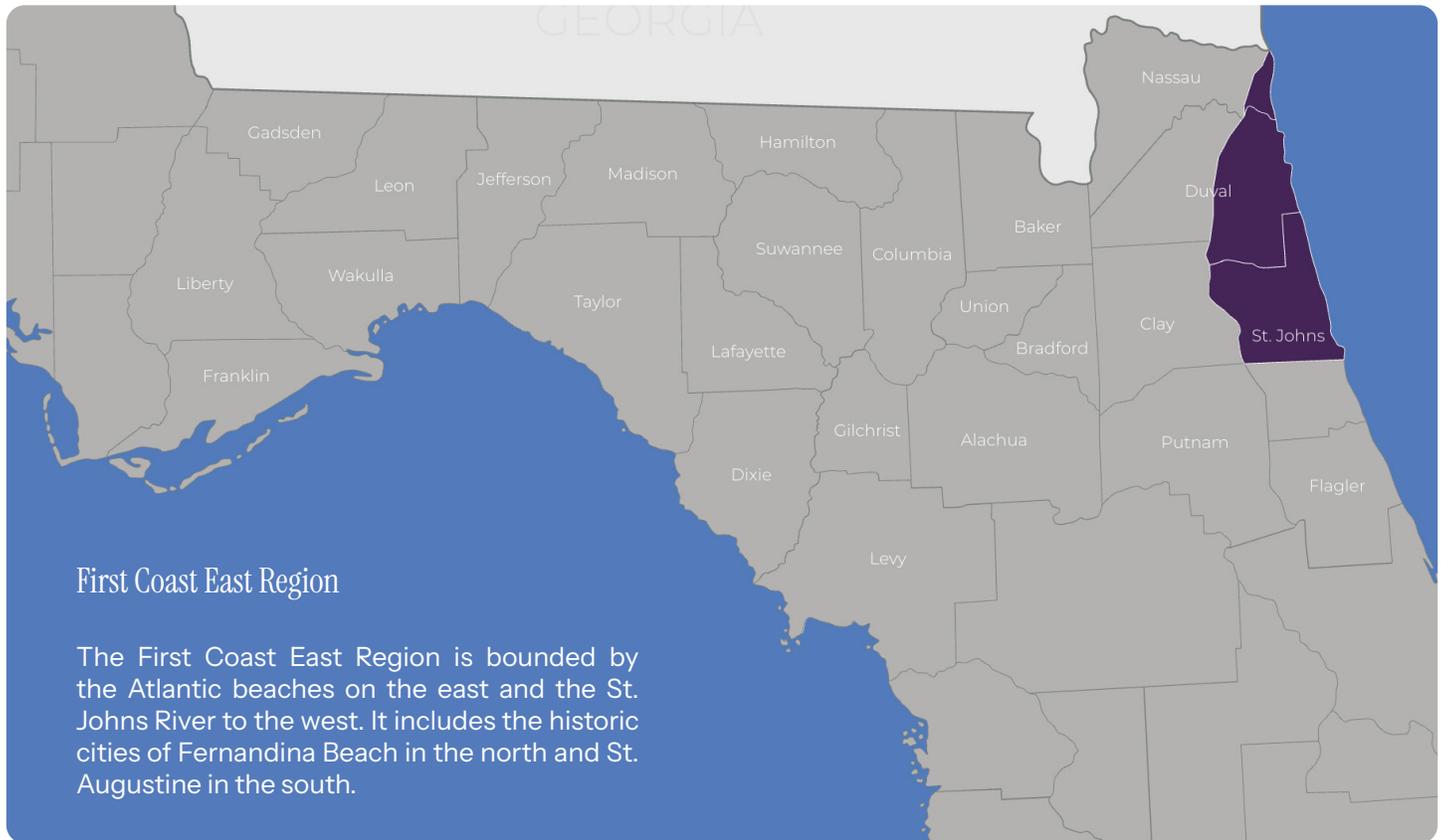
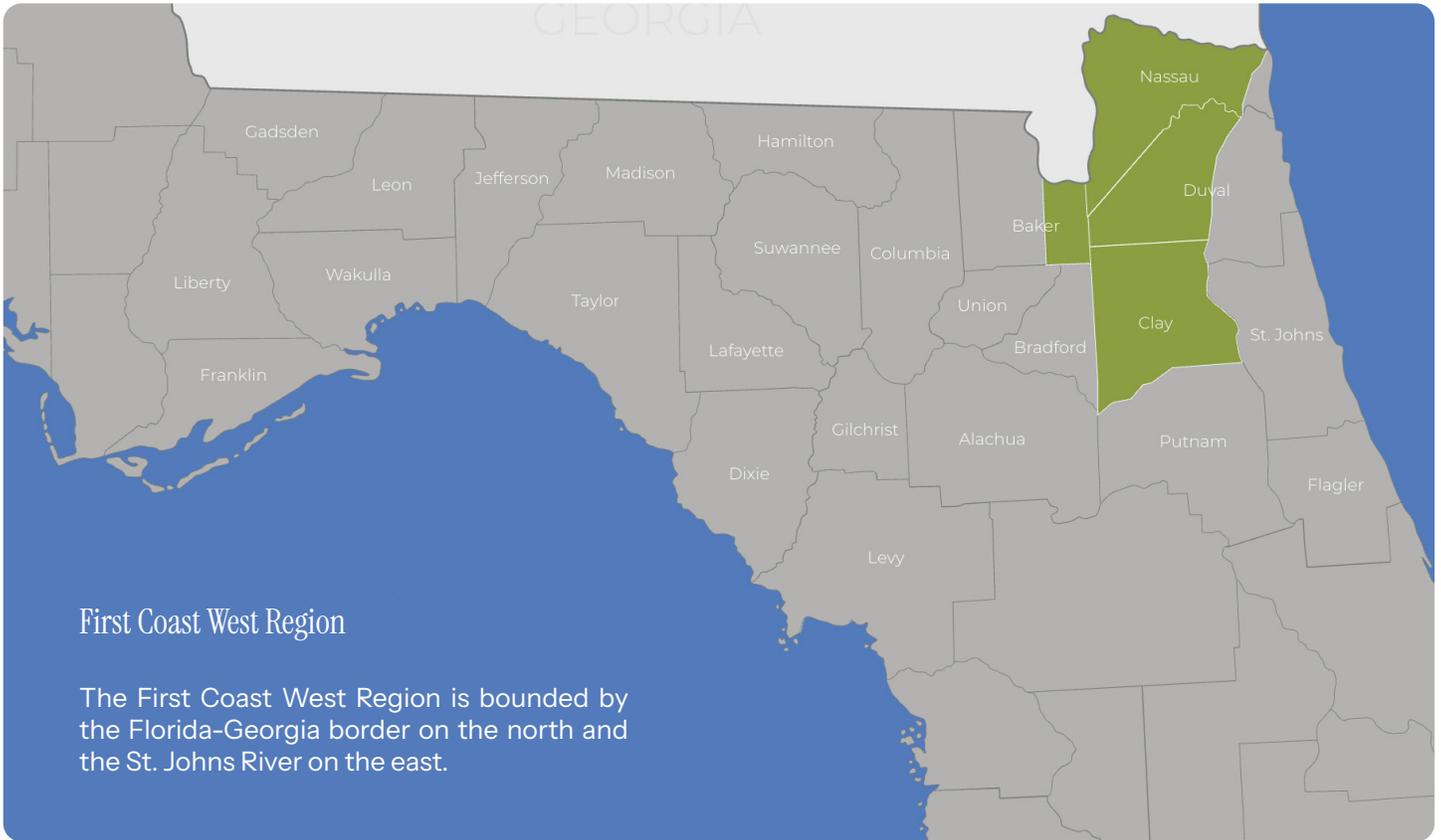


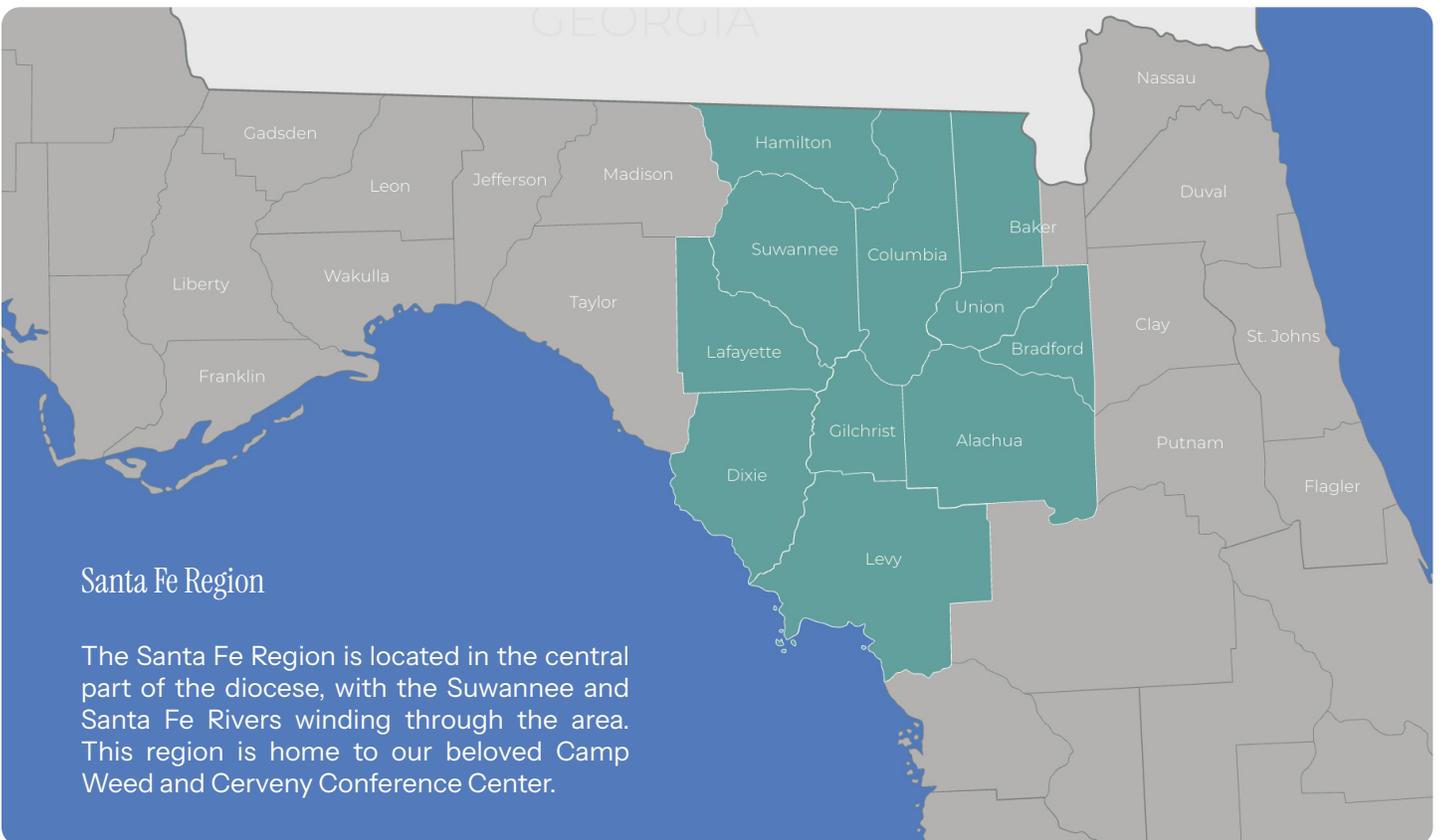
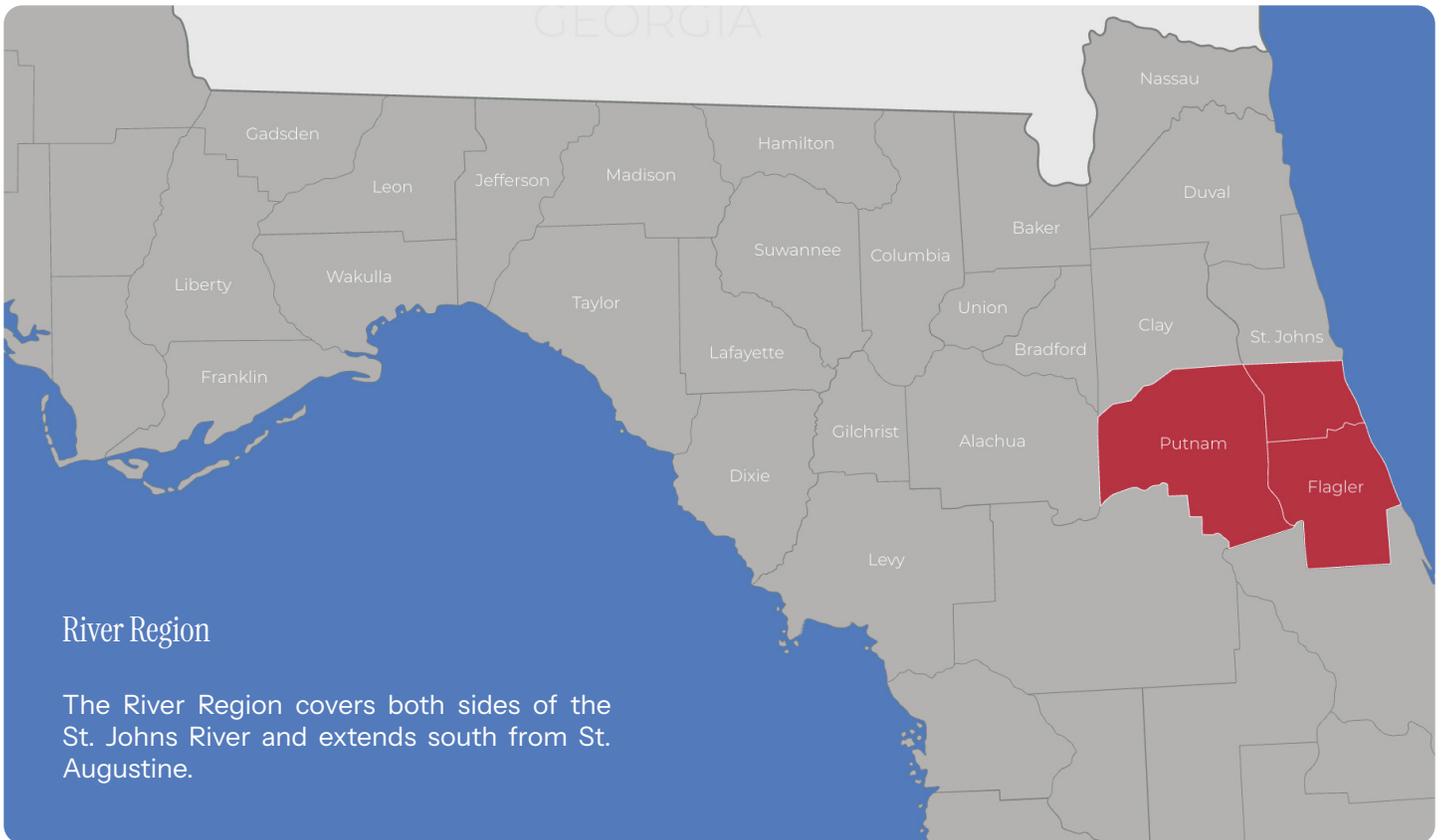
Regions of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida

The Episcopal Diocese of Florida is organized into five regions stretching over 220 miles:

- Apalachee Region
- First Coast East Region
- First Coast West Region
- River Region
- Santa Fe Region







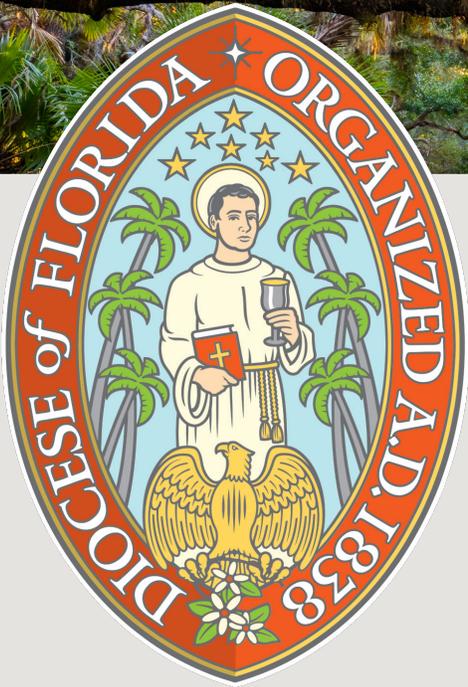
Our identity is marked by diversity in worship styles, theological perspectives and demographics – yet united in Christ.

History of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida

*Almighty God, you
sent your Son Jesus
Christ to reconcile the
world to yourself...We
thank you that in all
parts of the earth a
community of love has
been gathered together
by their prayers and
their labors.*

– Book of Common
Prayer, p. 838





History of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida

The Episcopal Diocese of Florida is older than the state of Florida itself. It was officially formed on January 17, 1838, when our region was still a territory of the United States, having been ceded by Spain in 1821. Florida would not become a state until seven years later, in 1845.

Early foundations (1513 – 1821)

History credits Ponce de León as the first European to set foot on the peninsula on April 7, 1513, during the Spanish Easter feast, “La Pascua de las Flores.” He then named the land “La Pascua de la Florida.” Historians believe that several hundred thousand Indigenous people lived throughout Florida at the time.

Spain initially explored but did not settle the area. In 1564, however, France established Fort Caroline near the mouth of the St. Johns River in what is now Jacksonville. The first Anglican services in the continental United States are believed to have been held in 1565 aboard a ship anchored near Fort Caroline, captained by Sir John Hawkins, a privateer commissioned by Queen Elizabeth I.

France’s claim on the land ended with Spain’s establishment of St. Augustine in 1565 and a subsequent military raid that decimated the French fort. Florida remained a Spanish colony until 1763, when Spain traded Florida to Great Britain.

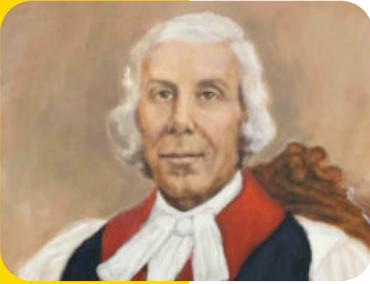
British and second Spanish periods (1763 – 1821)

For 20 years, Florida was a British colony, and the Church of England took root here with nine clergy licensed by the bishop of London. During Spain’s second colonization from 1783 to 1821, Roman Catholic Spaniards restricted Anglicanism, and the territory had neither Anglican churches nor clergy. In 1821, Spain traded Florida to the United States in exchange for control of Cuba.

Formation of the diocese (1838)

By 1838, Anglicanism had firmly replanted itself, and the newly formed Diocese of Florida boasted seven parishes stretching from Pensacola to Key West. The diocese initially could not afford a bishop and survived through infrequent visits by bishops from other states. In 1851, St. John’s in Tallahassee agreed to allow its rector, the Rev. Francis Huger Rutledge, to become the first bishop of Florida.

Our First Five Bishops (1851-1974)



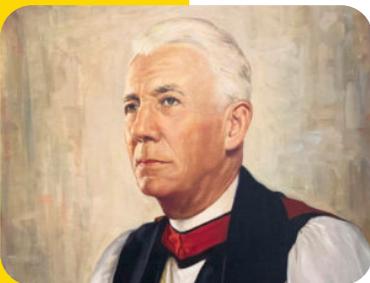
Bishop Francis Huger Rutledge (1851 – 1866): Under Bishop Rutledge, the diocese grew to 14 churches and nine clergy, only to be set back during the Civil War.



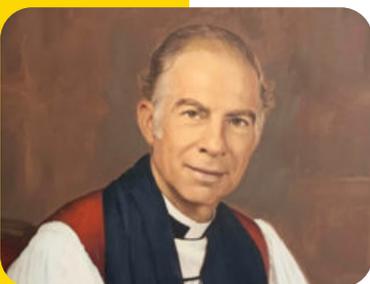
Bishop John Freeman Young (1867 – 1885): In 1867, the Rev. John Freeman Young became Florida's second bishop, and by the 1880s the church experienced significant growth.



Bishop Edwin Gardner Weed (1885 – 1924): Upon Bishop Young's death in 1885, the Rev. Edwin Gardner Weed became our third bishop. He recognized the need to divide the diocese into northern and southern portions in 1892. Bishop Weed's episcopacy also saw significant growth, including 14 churches organized along the St. Johns River, all built in a unique architectural style locally called "carpenter gothic." Some of these churches remain in use today, and their stories are chronicled in the 2023 book "Spires in the Sun" by Jonathan Rich and Phil Eschbach.



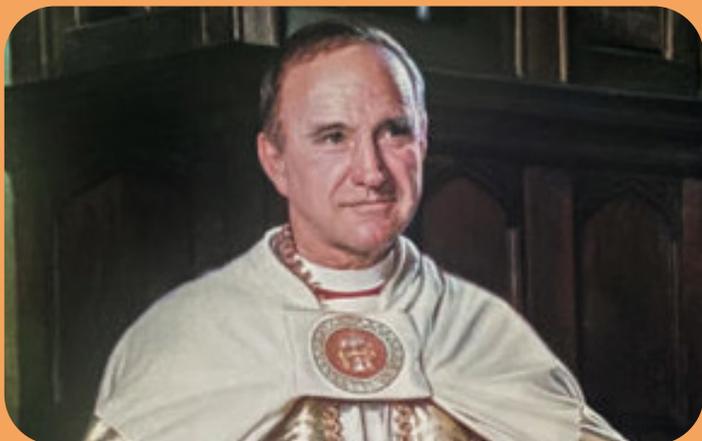
Bishop Frank Alexander Juhan (1924 – 1956): The Rev. Frank Alexander Juhan was elected to lead the diocese upon Bishop Weed's death in 1924, serving until 1956. Bishop Juhan's episcopacy was marked by the Great Depression, World War II and a postwar boom that prompted substantial growth in the number of churches and clergy. He designated St. John's in Jacksonville as the cathedral of the diocese and established Camp Weed as a camp and conference center.



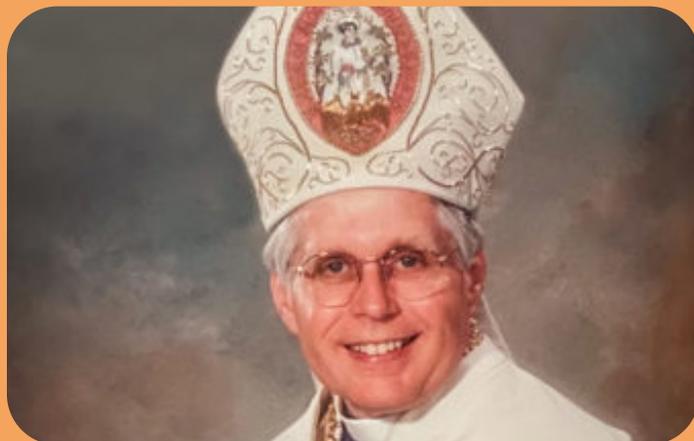
Bishop Edward Hamilton West (1956 – 1974): First elected as bishop coadjutor in 1948, the Rev. Edward Hamilton West became our fifth bishop in 1956 upon Bishop Juhan's retirement. Bishop West was a strong advocate of foundational Christian practices including personal prayer, tithing, Bible study and corporate worship. He demonstrated courageous leadership during the Civil Rights movement, unequivocally stating, "All churches of the Diocese of Florida are open to all races for all services." During his tenure, Episcopal High School (now Episcopal School of Jacksonville) was founded, along with Cathedral Residences for the elderly in Jacksonville, and a new diocesan office was built in 1971.

His episcopacy also was marked by a geographic division of the diocese. All parishes west of the Apalachicola River in the panhandle in 1970 joined parishes in southern Alabama to create the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.

Recent Decades of Ministry (1974-2023)



Bishop Frank Stanley Cerveny (1974 – 1992): The Rev. Frank Stanley Cerveny succeeded Bishop West in 1974 and secured a permanent home for Camp Weed, which had been housed in four previous locations. With more than 500 acres, today's Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center is centrally located in the diocese and has become a focal point of diocesan life and ministry. Bishop Cerveny also established a companion relationship with the Episcopal Church in Cuba that continues today.



Bishop Stephen Hays Jecko (1993 – 2004): In 1993, the Rev. Stephen Hays Jecko was elected as the seventh bishop of Florida. His episcopacy was marked by a reorganization of the diocese into five geographic regions and implementation of the Great Commission strategy to share the Gospel promise with all people.

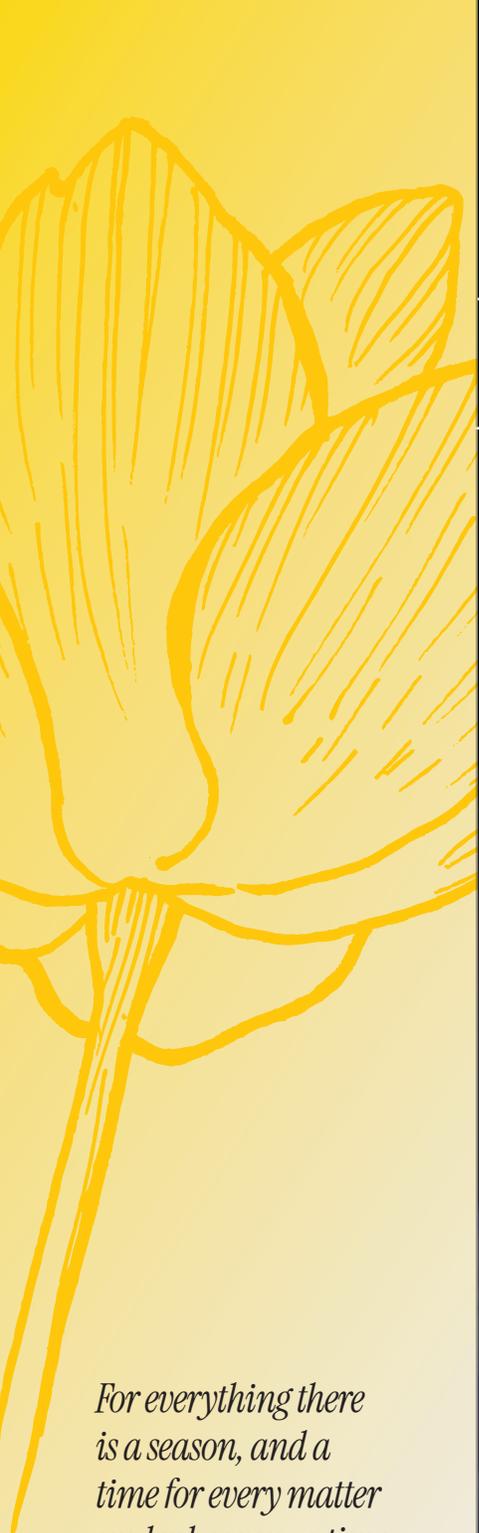


Bishop Samuel Johnson Howard (2004 – 2023): The Rev. Samuel Johnson Howard became the eighth bishop of our diocese in 2004 and was immediately tasked with holding the diocese together after divisions that began with the 2003 election of the Rev. Gene Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire. While the majority of parishes in our diocese chose to remain part of the diocese, some disaffiliated, and Bishop Howard successfully navigated legal proceedings to protect the property of the diocese.

Bishop Howard's episcopacy was highlighted by an increased focus on missions and ministries of the diocese, including strengthening prison ministries, fostering growth through church plants in fast-developing areas, emphasizing youth ministries and establishing the Bishop's Institute for Ministry and Leadership – an innovative approach to providing educational opportunities for clergy and laity. He underscored the importance of Hispanic ministries, and today Spanish language services are available in several parishes and missions. Bishop Howard supported stronger ties to our companion diocese in Cuba, helping forge relationships between parishes in both dioceses. Bishop Howard retired in October 2023 after reaching the church's mandatory retirement age.

During the final months of Bishop Howard's tenure, two Title IV disciplinary matters were initiated. In September 2025, Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe announced the conclusion of Title IV disciplinary proceedings against Bishop Howard. Shortly after signing the accord, Bishop Howard requested and received release and removal from ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church.

Presiding Bishop Rowe's complete letter regarding this matter is available [here](#).



A Season of Discernment & Renewal (2022–2026)



*For everything there
is a season, and a
time for every matter
under heaven: a time
to be born and a time
to die; a time to plant
and a time to pluck
up what is planted; ...
a time to weep, and a
time to laugh; a time
to mourn, and a time
to dance.*

– Ecclesiastes 3:1–2, 4

A Season of Discernment & Renewal (2022–2026)

Recent years have presented significant challenges for our diocese. A Search Committee was formed, and two bishop coadjutor elections in 2022 did not result in a consecration.

Subsequently, rather than rushing forward, the Standing Committee chose a path of intentional healing, discernment and reconciliation. The diocese engaged the Right Reverend Mary Gray-Reeves, former bishop of El Camino Real and a trained conflict resolution specialist, to guide a process of listening, healing and transformation.

This season of discernment, while challenging, has borne fruit. Though strong challenges remain, the diocese has strengthened its commitment to transparency, improved communication systems and updated canonical procedures for elections. Throughout this period, assisting bishops have included retired Georgia Bishop Scott Benhase and retired New Jersey Bishop Chip Stokes. Currently Central Florida Bishop Justin Holcomb and Southwest Florida Bishop Douglas Scharf are providing sacramental and pastoral support.



Moving Forward in Faith

Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves' transformational work

Beginning in 2024 and continuing through 2025, Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves led numerous convocations and listening sessions throughout the diocese, creating space for honest conversation, lament and hope.

At the 2025 Diocesan Convention, Bishop Gray-Reeves reflected on the diocese's remarkable movement from high conflict toward healing and strengthened relational functioning. She saw a diocese that has not merely survived transition but has undergone spiritual transformation – a dying and rising with Christ that has equipped the faithful for deeper communion.

Bishop Gray-Reeves observed that the diocese has **activated its Baptismal Covenant through concrete practices**. Through listening sessions, revised canons, updated administrative practices and disciplined communication, the diocese has measurably strengthened its capacity to make decisions across differences and to grow in mutual understanding.

Yet the diocese must approach its future with clear eyes. Bishop Gray-Reeves identified three **latent conflicts** that deserve ongoing, careful attention: questions surrounding human sexuality and marriage, dynamics between larger and smaller congregations, and how authority is properly used within the community.

One of Bishop Gray-Reeves' most hopeful observations concerns the diocese's leadership during this transition period. Rather than waiting for a bishop to provide direction, the diocese has continued its formation work and pursued necessary changes.

The diocese seeks a bishop who recognizes the spiritual formation already accomplished, who understands that authority is best exercised through collaboration and mutual respect, and who will help the diocese continue growing into beloved community.

The word that describes Florida today is **transformational**. The diocese is growing stronger and is ready to welcome a shepherd who will walk alongside people already learning to transform conflict into communion and witness the Resurrection's power in their common life.

Bishop Gray-Reeves' full presentation to the 2025 Diocesan Convention is available [here](#).

Recent progress and ongoing commitments

The Diocese of Florida is in the midst of a structural and cultural transformation.

1. LGBTQ+ marriage equality and non-discrimination

- **November 2025 statement:** On November 19, 2025, the Standing Committee issued a statement reiterating that the diocese now fully affirms marriage equality. It states that “accommodations for all couples seeking to marry” will be honored “regardless of sex or gender,” in alignment with the canons of The Episcopal Church. Clergy have full discretion to perform these rites without seeking bishop approval or consultation.
- **Affirmation of non-discrimination:** The statement committed to a culture where “discrimination is named and addressed.” It cited Title I, Canon 17, Section 5 (rights of laity) and Title III, Canon 1, Section 2 (access to discernment/process), guaranteeing that no person will be denied status or access to ministry based on “sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.” The Standing Committee acknowledged past “instances of discrimination,” positioning this move as a step for “filling in the valleys” before the next bishop is elected.

The full Standing Committee statement on marriage equality and non-discrimination is available [here](#).

2. Financial management and accountability

- **Audits:** By the end of 2025, audits through 2023 had been released, and the 2024 audit was underway. The diocese is committed to maintaining current audits going forward.
- **Assessment waiver achievement:** In October 2025, the Diocese of Florida received approval from Executive Council for a partial waiver of its diocesan assessment to The Episcopal Church. This achievement demonstrates the diocese’s commitment to financial transparency and accountability while recognizing ongoing financial challenges. Importantly, achieving assessment compliance makes the diocese eligible for Episcopal Church grant programs that support mission and ministry development.
- **Goal:** The diocese is working hard to create a more stable and transparent financial base for operations and ministries, including its beloved Camp Weed.

3. Dialogue, communications and healing

- **Listening reports:** The diocese released [unvarnished reports](#) from “convocation listening sessions” led by Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves.

4. Grievance processes

- **Visible intake officers:** The diocese has reformed its reporting accessibility by clearly listing Title IV Intake Officers on its website.

Current Title IV Intake Officer information is available [here](#) on the diocesan website.





5. Racial inclusion

- **Search Committee requirements:** Bishop Search Committee members are **required** to complete diocesan anti-racism training, with the desired result that the search process is viewed through an equity lens.
- **Institutionalization:** The diocesan-level recognition, by convention resolution, of a **Ministry of Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice** as a dedicated commission established this work as an important permanent governance structure.

More information on the Ministry of Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice is available [here](#).

6. Mission and growth initiatives

The diocese continues to pursue mission opportunities and respond to population growth within its boundaries.

- **New church plants:** The diocese is actively developing new worshipping communities to serve rapidly growing areas. Most notably, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church is being established in Wildlight, a master-planned community in Nassau County near Fernandina Beach. With land secured and architectural planning underway, this church plant represents the diocese's commitment to bringing Episcopal witness to one of northeast Florida's fastest-growing developments. The diocese is currently in the process of identifying a missionary to lead this exciting new ministry. This and other efforts demonstrate the diocese's forward-looking commitment to mission and evangelism in areas of significant population growth.

Our history includes seasons of extraordinary growth and seasons of challenge, periods of expansion and times of pain and necessary reflection. Through it all, we have endeavored to follow Christ faithfully, to love our neighbors and to be God's hands and feet in the world.

As we look toward welcoming our ninth bishop, we do so with gratitude for those who have led us, humility about the work still before us and hope for the future God is calling us into together. Our story is one of resilience, faithfulness and the transforming power of God's love – a story that continues to unfold with each new chapter.





Ministries of the Diocese of Florida

*You did not choose
me but I chose you.
And I appointed you
to go bear fruit, fruit
that will last, so that
the Father will give
you whatever you ask
him in my name. I
am giving you these
commands so that
you may love one
another.*

- John 15:16-17



Ministries of the Diocese of Florida



The Diocese of Florida has a rich tradition of ministries that nurture the children of God, both spiritually and physically. Each year, thousands are moved to new understanding of Christ's love for us, our responsibilities to support each other in spiritual development and our accountability to serve people less fortunate than ourselves.

Supported ministries

Many ministries are supported by the diocese, including Cursillo, Daughters of the King, Episcopal Church Women, older adult ministry, Happening and prison ministries. We also have two active chapters of the Union of Black Episcopalians: the Father Sidney B. Parker Chapter in Jacksonville and the Father Davis Henry Brooks Chapter in Tallahassee. Other ministries have their homes in parishes throughout the diocese.



Our mission and ministry programs work to strengthen individuals' relationships with Jesus Christ and with one another through teaching, healing, feeding and fellowship. Through this model of servant leadership, we seek to bring hope and transformation to north Florida and beyond.

The Bishop's Institute for Ministry and Leadership

The Bishop's Institute is a ministry of the diocese that provides educational opportunities for laity and clergy. Programs include academic preparation and formation for people seeking ordination to the vocational diaconate or to the priesthood, licensed lay ministry courses, seminars and retreats in theology and spirituality, and continuing education for clergy and lay leaders.

Brotherhood of St. Andrew

The mission of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew is to introduce men's ministry to all parishes in The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. Its vision is to inspire, empower and equip men and boys to fulfill the Great Commission.



Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center

Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center is a cherished jewel set in the center of north Florida and serves as an ideal site for summer camp, retreats and special celebrations. It is also a popular meeting site for colleges, government organizations, corporations and other religious and nonprofit groups. With 520 acres of beautiful, unspoiled land, the camp and conference center celebrates the best in nature, with facilities set apart from the bustle of the world.

Owned and operated by the diocese, Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center is a place for recreation, renewal and reflection. Named for two former diocesan bishops, Edwin G. Weed and Frank S. Cerveny, this center is the “heart of the diocese.”

The conference center hosts numerous retreats, meetings and educational opportunities each year. It offers conference rooms, complete meal service and motel-style lodging with 52 rooms and nine cabins. Camping sites also are available.

Each summer, Camp Weed welcomes about 500 campers ranging in age from 6 to 14, as they learn important life skills, try new things and deepen their faith. Programming includes activities that promote the spiritual, physical and mental growth of campers, including kayaking, archery, wall climbing, swimming, and arts and crafts. Spiritual development comes from group devotions, singing and worship experiences.

At the heart of Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center is Mandi's Chapel, a wood and glass structure that is a cherished place of worship, beauty and tranquility. Given in memory of Mandi Petway by her parents, Betty and Tom Petway, Mandi's Chapel was named the top religious building and ranked second overall in the Florida Chapter of the American Institute of Architects' “Florida Architecture: 100 Years. 100 Places.” competition in 2012.

Current realities and future needs

Like many retreat centers across the country, Camp Weed faces operational challenges common to facilities of its scope and mission. The center requires ongoing investment in infrastructure maintenance and improvements, including modernization of technology infrastructure to meet contemporary connectivity expectations. The diocese recognizes Camp Weed as a vital ministry asset and is working toward establishing a stable and sustainable financial model that will ensure this treasured resource serves future generations.

More information about Camp Weed and Cerveny Conference Center is available [here](#).



Campus Ministries

Our diocese is blessed with active campus ministries established to support the spiritual and personal development of young adults.

Chapel of the Incarnation at the University of Florida: Students at the University of Florida in Gainesville have been served by an Episcopal ministry for almost 90 years. The community is known as the Chapel of the Incarnation and has a full-time Episcopal chaplain.

Episcopal University Center at Florida State University: The Episcopal University Center at Ruge Hall at Florida State University in Tallahassee has served students since 1931. Today, this thriving ministry serves students attending FSU, Florida A&M and Tallahassee Community College.

Jacksonville Campus Ministry: Jacksonville Campus Ministry has served the University of North Florida, Jacksonville University and other schools in the Jacksonville area since 1972. This ministry is a coalition of seven denominations: The Episcopal Church, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, United Methodist and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Our diocese is blessed with active campus ministries established to support the spiritual and personal development of young adults.

Chaplains to retired clergy

The Rev. Eric Kahl and his wife, Margaret MacNaughton, currently serve as chaplains to the diocese's retired clergy community. Their ministry to retired clergy, spouses and surviving spouses is primarily one of pastoral care. They visit members in their homes and in hospitals, send birthday cards and care notes, make phone calls, meet people for meals and coffee, and host social events. They also help find retired clergy who want to serve as supply clergy for congregations throughout the diocese.

Their ministry is a partnership of the Church Pension Group and the diocese.

Church Without Walls

Recognizing that church at its best cannot be contained, the Church Without Walls ministry calls people from all walks of life into partnership with "the least of these." It is a community of presence made up of individuals looking for spiritual companionship and connection that give meaning to life.

Services are typically held outdoors at St. John's Cathedral but also take place at various locations in the downtown Jacksonville area.

Cuba Committee

The Cuba Committee supports our companion diocese in Cuba spiritually and financially. There are presently 44 churches and missions in Cuba, and the committee's goal is to pair a diocesan church with a companion church in Cuba. The Cuba Committee helps facilitate trips to Cuba and holds annual meetings to increase awareness and connection between the companion churches. The committee also has an ongoing commitment to help support salaries of priests in Cuba by holding fundraisers and annual donation drives.

Cursillo

Cursillo is a three-day learning, sharing, inspirational experience of living in a Christian community. The objective of the Cursillo movement is to make Christian community possible in neighborhoods, parishes, work situations and other places where people live the greater part of their lives.

The Cursillo weekend is not an end to itself but is a starting point that lasts the rest of your life. It is a springboard to a long-range practice of the Baptismal Covenant in the life of the church called "Fourth Day."

Daughters of the King

The Order of the Daughters of the King is for women who are communicants of The Episcopal Church, churches in communion with it or churches in the historic episcopate but not in communion with it. Members include women in the Anglican, Episcopal, Lutheran (ELCA) and Roman Catholic churches.

Its purpose is to bring others into a living, loving relationship with Jesus and to help strengthen the spiritual lives of parishes and missions.

By reaffirmation of the promises made at their confirmation, a member pledges herself to a lifelong program of prayer, service and evangelism, dedicated to the spread of Christ's kingdom and the strengthening of the spiritual life of her parish.

Episcopal Children's Services

Episcopal Children's Services (ECS4Kids) began in 1966 as a ministry of the Diocese of Florida, opening a single childcare center serving 30 children. Today, ECS4Kids has grown into one of Florida's largest nonprofit early childhood organizations, reaching tens of thousands of children and families across Northeast and Central Florida and Southeast Georgia through high-quality, evidence-based services.

ECS4Kids delivers a continuum of programs designed to strengthen families and improve early learning outcomes. These include Head Start, which provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and family support services to more than 3,000 infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and pregnant women; Early Learning Services, which helps families overcome financial barriers to accessing high-quality early childhood education; and Coaching and Quality Improvement Services, which equips early learning providers with classroom coaching and technical assistance to enhance program quality. Together, these services build a strong foundation for children's school readiness and long-term educational and economic success.





Episcopal Church Women

Episcopal Church Women includes women of all ages, ethnic origins and socioeconomic backgrounds who hold a variety of views. Centered in congregations, ECW empowers women to do Christ's ministry in the world. It also provides financial support to the Bishop's Discretionary Fund, campus ministries, Cuba outreach, Church Women United, Episcopal Relief & Development, urban ministries and seminarians. ECW is committed to its mission and to sharing its ministries and evangelism efforts with all.



Episcopal schools and education

With an emphasis on educational excellence grounded in Christian principles and teaching, the diocese is widely known for supporting some of the top schools in our region.

These include:

- Episcopal School of Jacksonville (Munnerlyn, St. Mark's and Beaches Campuses)
- Holy Trinity Episcopal School, Gainesville
- All Saints Early Learning & Community Care Center, Jacksonville
- San Jose Episcopal Day School, Jacksonville
- The Cathedral School, Jacksonville
- Grace Episcopal Day School, Orange Park
- Christ Church Preschool, Ponte Vedra Beach
- Trinity Episcopal Learning Center, St. Augustine
- Holy Comforter Episcopal School, Tallahassee
- Tallahassee Advent Day School, Tallahassee

Feeding ministries

Many of our churches have an emphasis on feeding their communities. According to Feeding America, the counties within the diocese have an average food insecurity rate of 14%, and 23 of these 25 counties have more than 50% of their residents below the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) eligibility threshold of 200% of the poverty level.

We recognize the need to feed in numerous ways. Many congregations dedicate their time and resources to local food pantries and food banks. Within the diocese, congregations have come together to form more than a dozen feeding ministries out of their own churches. These congregations have dedicated food pantries or partnerships with food banks:

- Chiefland: St. Alban's
- Interlachen: St. Andrew's
- Jacksonville: St. Catherine's, Redeemer, St. Mary's Mission
- Lake City: St. James
- Monticello: Christ Church
- Perry: St. James
- St. Augustine: St. Cyprian's
- St. Johns: St. Patrick's
- Tallahassee: Grace Mission, Holy Comforter

Happening

Happening is a Christian experience presented by teenagers, for teenagers, with the help of clergy and lay adult leadership. The Happening program is meant to be one of the instruments within the Anglican tradition of renewing the Christian church in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that the church may more readily respond to its call to spread the kingdom of God throughout the world.

The diocese sponsors three weekends each year at Camp Weed, with over 75 youth participants. Outside of Texas, the Diocese of Florida hosted the most Happening weekends of any diocese in the United States.



We promise to strive for justice and peace among all people, to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to love our neighbor as ourselves and to respect the dignity of every human being.

Hispanic ministries

To answer the spiritual needs of our diocese's rapidly growing Hispanic population, the diocese made a commitment to Spanish-language ministry.

With ongoing discussions to expand this ministry, several parishes currently offer Spanish-language services, including St. Luke's/Iglesia San Lucas in Jacksonville, St. Catherine's/Iglesia Episcopal Santa Catalina in Jacksonville, St. Peter's in Jacksonville, and Christ Church/Iglesia Episcopal de Cristo in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Ministry of Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice

The Ministry of Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice of the diocese is committed to the vision of Becoming Beloved Community. Created by Bishop Howard in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, the commission began its work in earnest in 2022.

Within the diocese there are multiple initiatives toward racial healing and reconciliation – Sacred Ground and other study and dialogue circles among our parishes related to racial healing, collaborative efforts with other groups and other holy work – all of which have contributed toward truth-telling about race, proclaiming the dream of Beloved Community, practicing the way of healing love and repairing the breach in society and institutions.

An important outcome of the diocese's convention in 2023 was the passage of the Becoming Beloved Community resolution submitted by the Anti-Racism and Reconciliation Commission (now known as the Ministry of Racial Healing, Reconciliation and Justice). Presented in the spirit of our Baptismal Covenant, in which we promise to strive for justice and peace among all people, to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to love our neighbor as ourselves and to respect the dignity of every human being, the resolution affirmed the importance within the diocese of work advancing racial healing, reconciliation and justice.



Older adult ministry

Begun in 1987 by Bishop Frank Cerveny with the appointment of the first diocesan Committee on Aging, our older adult ministry is directed toward offering opportunities for older adults to strengthen their relationships with others and with God. Two primary events, offered in alternate years, provide these opportunities: retreats for older adults, and celebrations of couples in the diocese who have been married for 50 or more years.

During the spring, the diocese celebrates marriages of 50 years and more at St. John's Cathedral in Jacksonville and Holy Comforter in Tallahassee. Each includes a service of Holy Communion and renewal of marriage vows, followed by a gala reception in the parish hall.



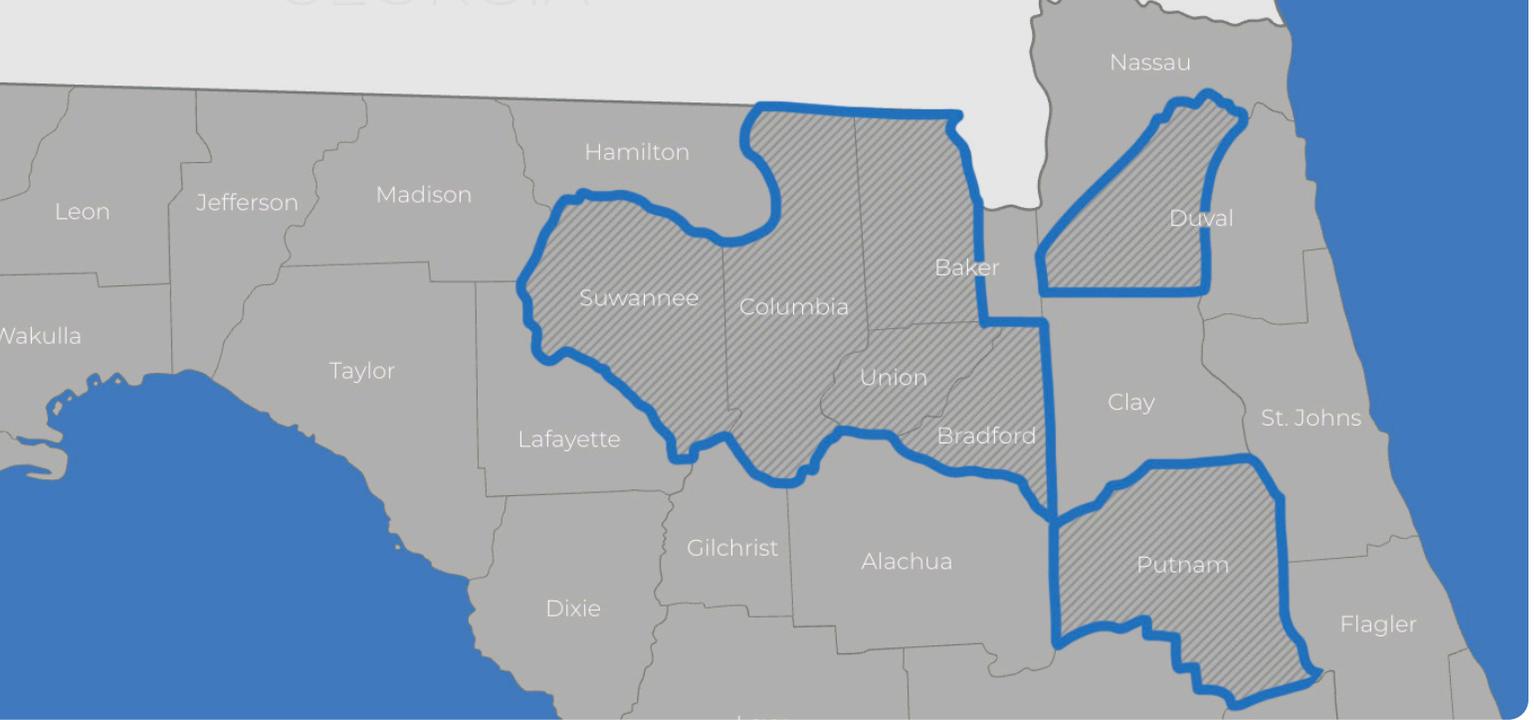
Outreach missions

The diocese has two outreach missions: Grace Mission in Tallahassee and St. Mary's in Jacksonville. Unlike a mission church, which is expected to be self-supporting at some time in the future, an outreach mission is expected to be supported by other congregations and the diocese.

Grace Mission has become the church home and anchor in the lives of many men, women and children who find themselves living at the homeless shelter and struggling with poverty and the problems of addiction. Services include after-school tutoring, meal and grocery distribution, showers, laundry and clothing distribution. It is a place where the faith community can engage in hands-on ministry and forge relationships across racial, cultural and socioeconomic divides.

St. Mary's is home to a much-needed and active urban ministry in Jacksonville. The church provides a food pantry and organic garden to feed physical bodies, and to feed the spirit it holds Church Without Walls each Sunday, with a worship service and lunch for those in the area who are homeless. Church Without Walls is held in the Dean's Garden at St. John's Cathedral.

It strives to be the welcoming face, heart and hands of Jesus Christ to all who come through its doors. It particularly serves the mentally ill, the struggling addict, high-risk youth and the urban poor.



Prison ministry

The mission of the diocese's prison ministry is to encourage, assist and equip the church to respond to the pastoral and sacramental needs of incarcerated people, their families, ex-offenders, victims and those who work with the incarcerated, as directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Prison ministry formally has been a ministry of the diocese since 1987, with about 8,000 inmates in institutions within the diocese. Prison ministry became formalized with the passage of a resolution on prison ministry at the 2002 Diocesan Convention. The ministry currently has three full-time, non-stipendiary priests, and other supporting clergy and laity bring this ministry into prisons, jails and youth facilities.

These are the current prison ministries and the regions in which they are located:

Apalachee Region

- Community of St. Paul at Liberty Correctional Institution
- Christ's Church, Wakulla Correctional Institution, Annex
- Gadsden Re-Entry Center
- The Ministry at Gadsden Correctional Facility, Gretna (Women's)
- Community of the Resurrection at Franklin Correctional Institution
- Jefferson Correctional Institution

River Region

- Community Transformation at St. Johns County Detention Center

Santa Fe Region

- All Souls Chapel, Union Correctional Institution
- The Community of St. Dismas, Baker Correctional Institution
- Brotherhood of St. Philip, Suwannee Correctional Institution
- Brotherhood of St. Philip, Suwannee Correctional Institution, Annex
- The Ministry at Florida State Prison
- The Ministry on Death Row, Union Correctional Institution
- St. Columbia's, Columbia Correctional Institution
- St. Columbia's, Columbia Correctional Institution, Annex





The University of the South

Colloquially known as Sewanee for its location in Sewanee, Tennessee, the university is supported by the common ministry budget of the diocese. It is the only university in the nation that is owned and governed by dioceses of The Episcopal Church, specifically the 28 dioceses of the southeastern United States. Bishops, as well as other leaders, from these dioceses hold a seat on the university's Board of Trustees, which meets yearly.

The Diocese of Florida currently holds four trustee seats – two lay and one clergy, as well as the bishop. The lay and clergy trustees are elected for three-year terms at the annual Diocesan Convention.



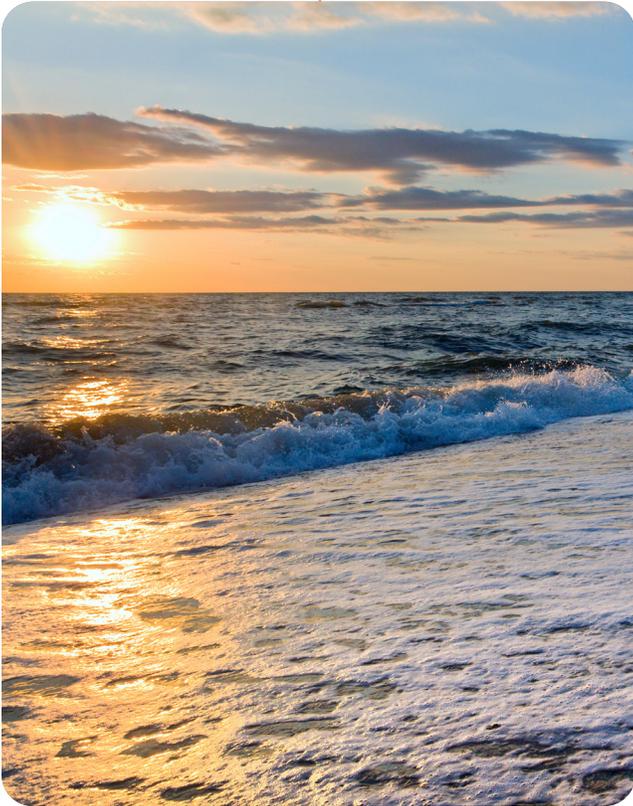
Financial Overview



According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ.

- 1 Corinthians 3:10-11





Financial Overview

Our new bishop will need to have financial acumen and an ability to work with the dedicated and knowledgeable team currently in place that is focused on enhancing and tightening the diocese's finances. Fortunately, there are sufficient resources available to meet the ongoing needs of the diocese while the financial changes are being accomplished.

Revenue and support

The Diocese of Florida has consistent support from our parishes and missions, with 76% of the income coming from them and another 5% from programs. The remaining funds historically have been obtained from long-term investments and fundraising.

As expected, the fundraising efforts for ministry and mission work of the diocese – including our largest mission, Camp Weed and the Cerveny Conference Center – have been negligible since the retirement of our former bishop. Although Camp Weed has traditionally not received funding from the diocese's Common Ministry budget, support for Camp Weed has now been included as an expense in our 2026 budget.

Endowment and financial stability

The Endowment Fund currently is the only long-term investment that can be used to augment revenues that are needed to pay operating expenses. The diocese can count on using up to 4.5% of the Endowment Fund to help meet operating funding shortfalls. Currently, however, we have to use a considerably larger portion of the endowment to meet expenses.

Progress and opportunities

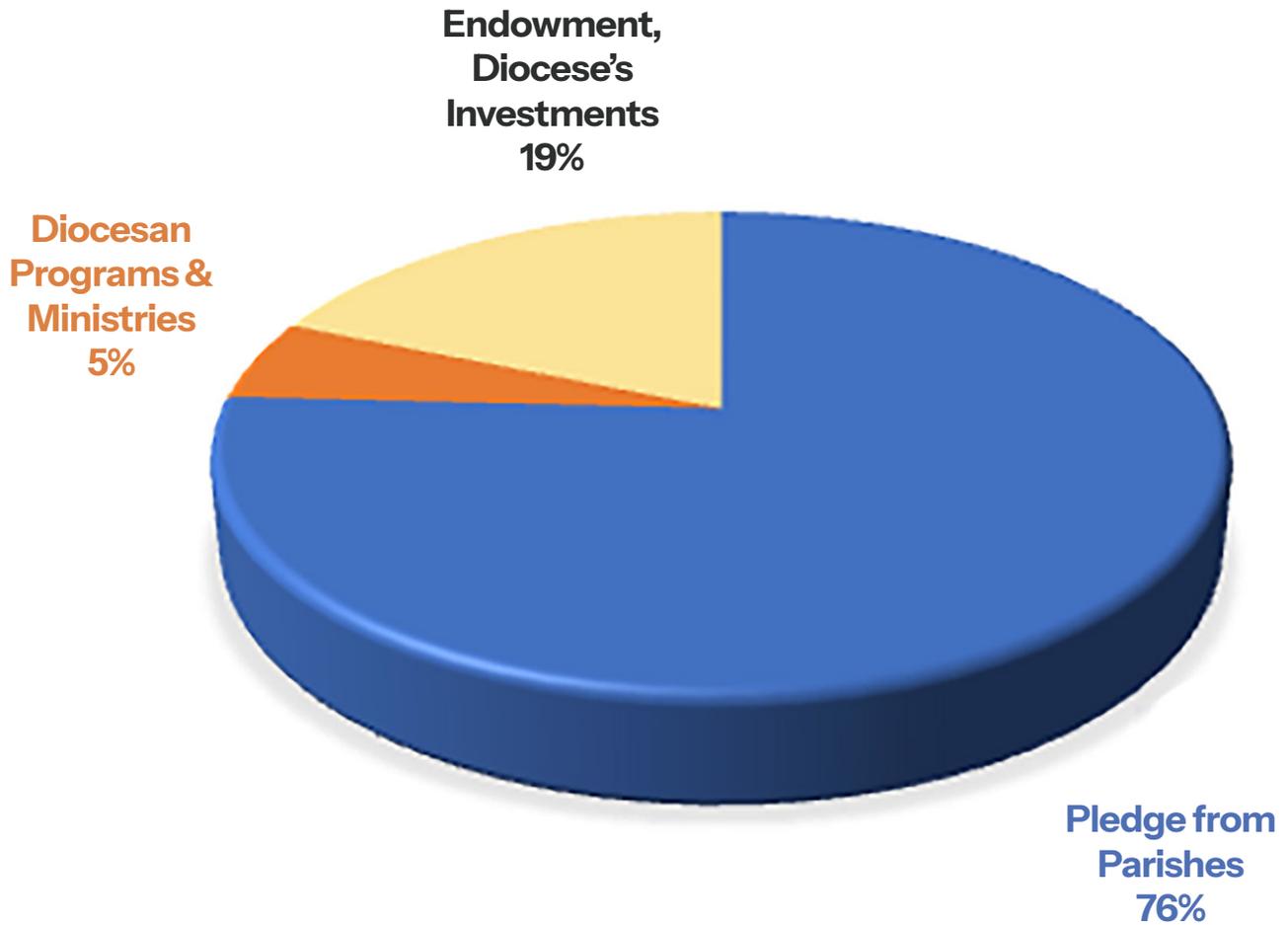
Much hard work has been done in recent years to better understand diocesan finances, create transparency and move toward operating the diocese at the level supported by recurring revenue. All audits will be current by the time the new bishop takes office. Diocesan leaders have an additional goal to create a more stable financial base for Camp Weed, a vital asset of the diocese that historically has been dependent on fundraising and grants for its programs and maintenance.

Detailed information is available on the [diocesan website resource page](#).



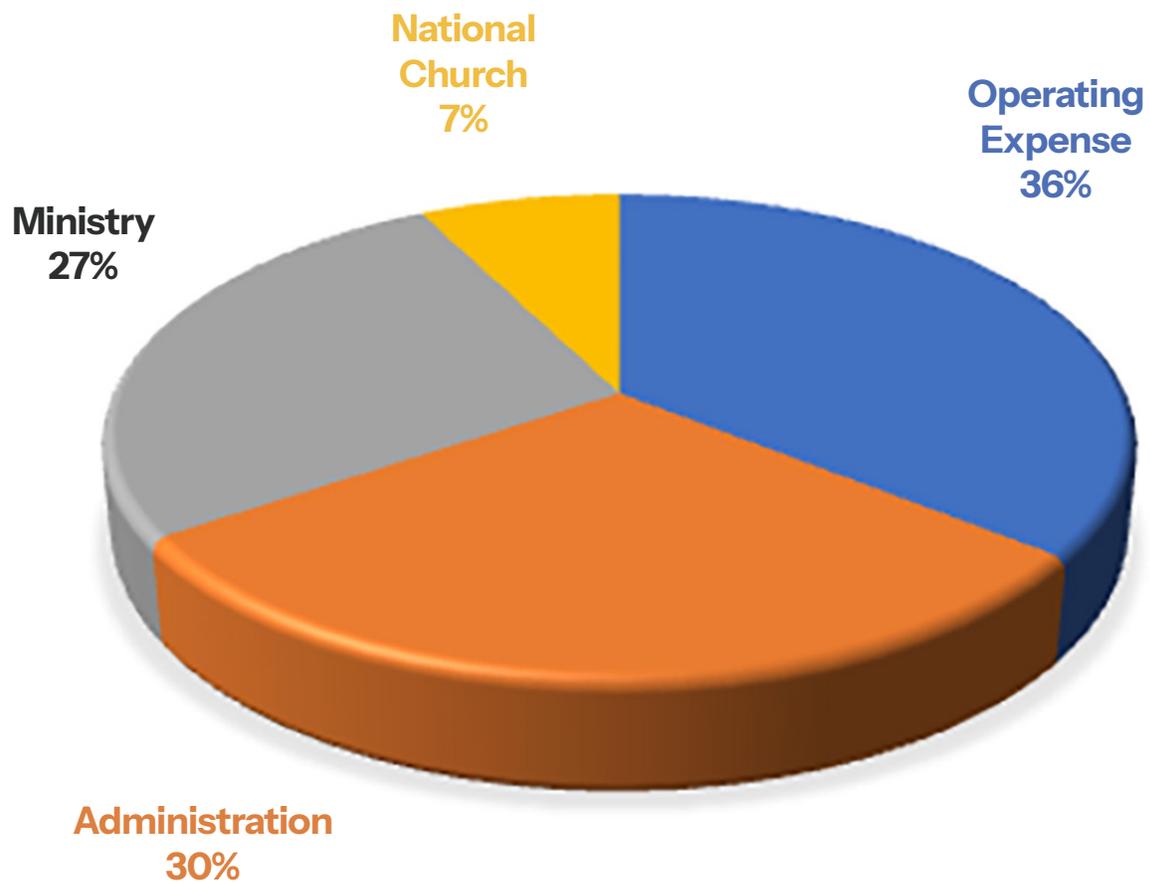
The following graphs reflect a reasonable representation of the 2026 budget. Please note that various departments can be viewed in various ways. Additional information is available [here](#).

2026 Budget – Income





2026 Budget – Expenses



A photograph of a church service. In the foreground, several altar servers in white robes with green sashes are holding tall, lit candles. One server in the center holds a large, ornate processional cross. The background shows a church interior with wooden beams and a stained glass window.

Governance and Leadership Structure

A blue line-art illustration of a hand holding a leaf, symbolizing care and leadership.

If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

– Romans 12:8

Governance and Leadership Structure

The Diocese of Florida is governed by its canons, which were updated at the 182nd Annual Convention in 2025.

Diocesan Convention

The Diocesan Convention meets annually and is the legislative authority and chief policy-making body for program and finance in the diocese. The convention is composed of all canonically resident clergy in good standing, lay delegates from each congregation based on average Sunday attendance, members of Diocesan Council and Standing Committee, and delegates-at-large elected by the Diocesan Council upon nomination by the bishop.

The convention adopts an annual budget, sets policy through canonical amendments and resolutions, elects deputies to General Convention, elects members of various diocesan committees and receives reports from diocesan departments and groups.

Regional canons

The diocese is divided into five regions to help provide an effective flow of communication between the bishop, Diocesan Council, committees and congregations, as well as to ensure the maintenance of strong and effective congregations.

Regional canons are canonically resident clergy who are appointed by the bishop to serve as a representative for their region. They act as the bishop's liaison, assisting with pastoral ministry for clergy and their families, and supporting the bishop's pastoral and ecclesiastical responsibilities. Regional canons also represent their region on Diocesan Council and are accountable to both the bishop and the council.

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee serves as a council of advice to the bishop in matters relating to clergy, the process leading to ordination, matters of conduct and episcopal oversight, episcopal transitions, and action on episcopal elections in other dioceses. During this time of transition, it also serves as the diocese's Ecclesiastical Authority. The committee includes three clergy and three lay people elected by Diocesan Convention for terms of three years, on a staggered schedule.

Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Council serves as the executive body of the diocese. It implements policies and programs adopted by Diocesan Convention and acts on its behalf between meetings. The council oversees the diocese's overall program and finances, ensures efficient business management, and functions as an agency to relieve the bishop from detailed administrative responsibilities wherever possible. Voting members of the council include the bishop, the regional canons, and five at-large lay members and two at-large clergy members elected by Diocesan Convention. Non-voting members are the diocese's secretary, treasurer and chancellor.

Special roles and committees

The canons provide for a secretary, treasurer, chancellor and historiographer to be nominated by the bishop and elected by Diocesan Council. All serve at the pleasure of the council.

There are three committees of the diocese established by the canons: Finance, Congregational Development, and Camp and Conference Center. Subject to confirmation by the Diocesan Council, the bishop may appoint and assign duties to other boards, commissions and committees of the diocese. Currently there are 15 additional diocesan committees and boards.

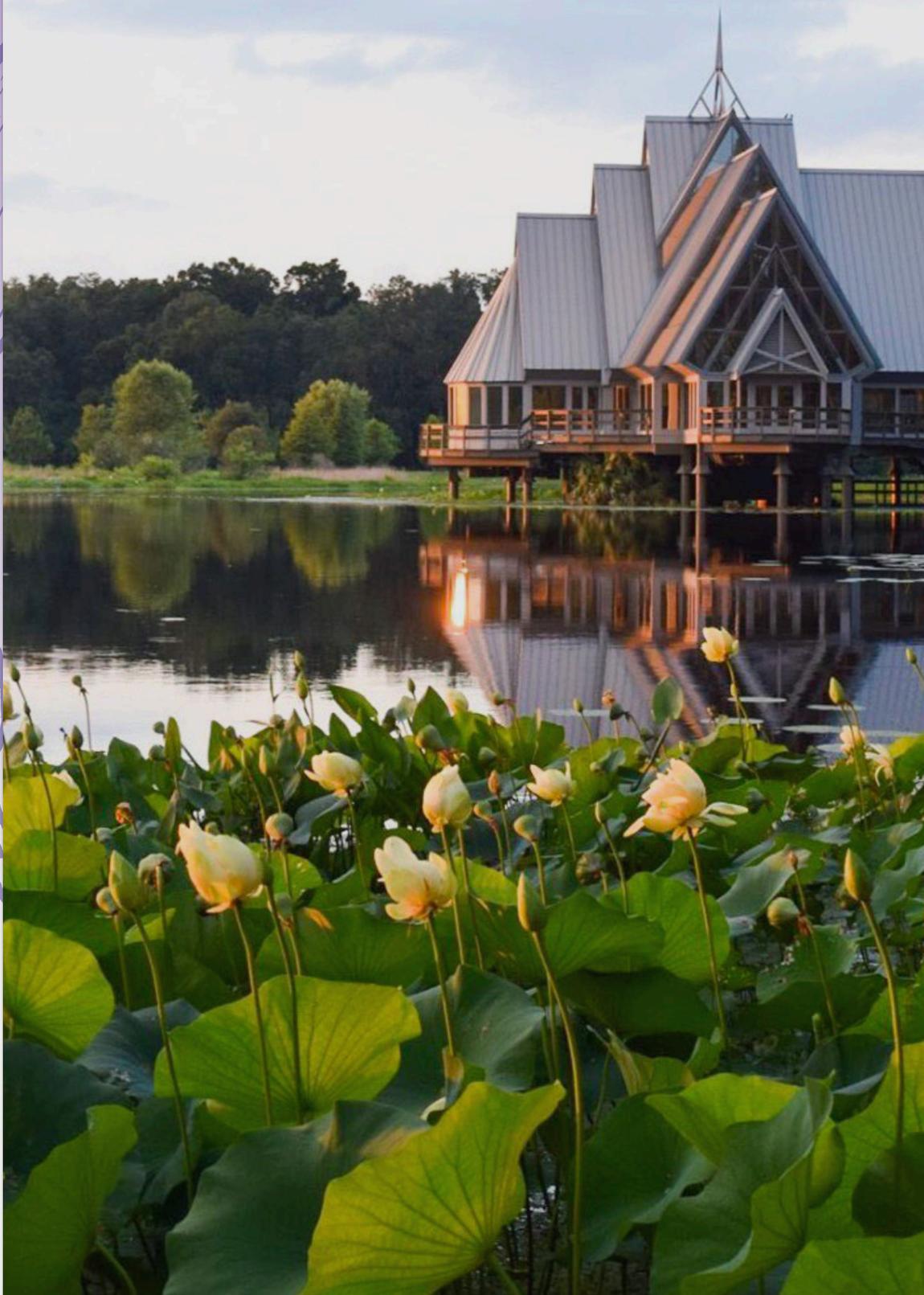
Diocesan staff

The diocesan staff work diligently to support, equip and inspire parishes as they share the transformative love of Jesus through both word and action. They are dedicated to fostering congregational vitality across the diocese's parishes and Christian communities, providing guidance and resources to ensure every parish flourishes for generations to come.

Current staff includes a chief operating officer, a canon theologian/rector of the Bishop's Institute, a director of people services, an executive assistant, a ministry resource coordinator, a controller, a senior accountant and two communications directors.

The offices of the diocese are in downtown Jacksonville adjacent to St. John's Cathedral. The office building is known as the Hamilton West Diocesan Center in honor of the fifth bishop.

A Place Where Nature Delights



*The heavens declare
the glory of God, and
the firmament shows
his handiwork!*

– Psalm 19:1



A Place Where Nature Delights

With a temperate climate and typically mild winters, our region offers year-round opportunities to embrace the great outdoors. Our diocese is blessed with access to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, featuring hundreds of miles of pristine beaches and coastal salt marshes. From the undeveloped barrier islands of Little Talbot and Big Talbot to the historic shores of St. Augustine Beach and the luxurious resort atmosphere of Ponte Vedra Beach, our coastline invites contemplation, recreation and restoration.

The region is home to the world's most extensive freshwater spring system, powered by the Floridan Aquifer – one of the world's largest and most productive underground aquifers, stretching beneath Florida and into Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina. With over 300 documented springs, these crystal-clear natural wonders offer opportunities for swimming, diving, kayaking and encountering Florida's unique ecosystems.

World-class fishing draws anglers from around the globe to our waters. The region's extensive river systems, including the mighty St. Johns River, coastal estuaries and offshore Gulf Stream waters, support abundant populations of redfish, spotted seatrout, flounder, tarpon, grouper and countless other species. Whether you prefer freshwater bass fishing in spring-fed streams, inshore kayak fishing in pristine marshes or offshore adventures, our waters provide extraordinary angling experiences.

Our diverse natural habitats support hiking, birding, camping, kayaking and wildlife observation at numerous state parks and preserves, including Anastasia State Park, Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park and the scenic Ravine Gardens State Park in Palatka. Championship golf courses designed by internationally renowned architects dot the landscape, offering challenges for players of all skill levels.

Centers of learning, culture and innovation

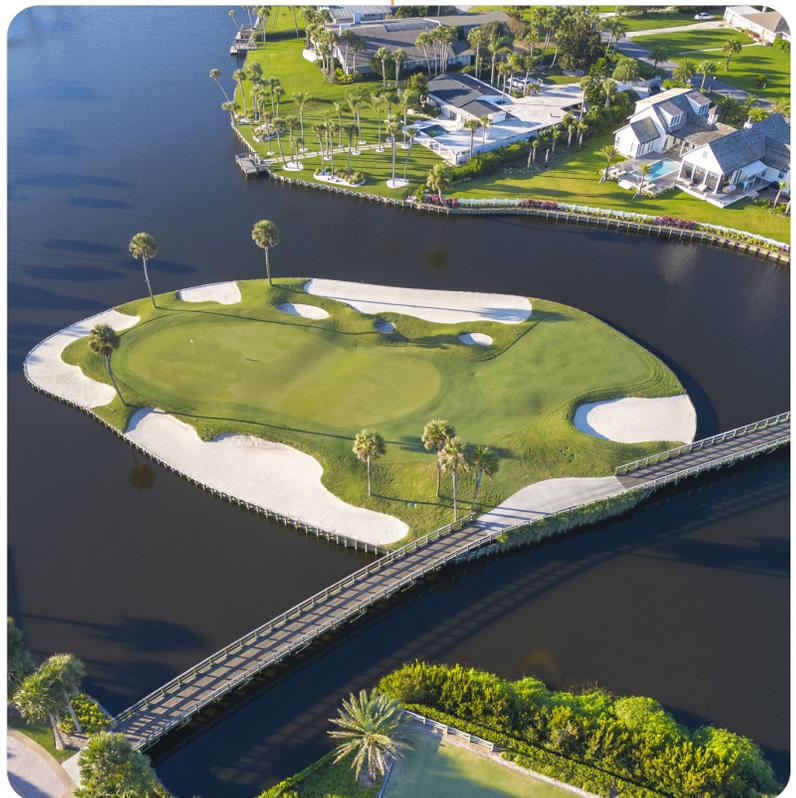
The diocese is home to prestigious institutions of higher education that enrich our communities with cultural programming, sporting events and intellectual vitality. The University of Florida in Gainesville, one of the nation's top public universities, brings world-class research and Gator athletics to north-central Florida. In Tallahassee, Florida State University and Florida A&M University – a historically Black institution with a distinguished legacy – anchor the state capital region. Jacksonville boasts the University of North Florida, Jacksonville University and Edward Waters University, Florida's oldest historically Black college and university. St. Augustine is home to the historic Flagler College, housed in the magnificent former Hotel Ponce de León.

Our region's cultural offerings are exceptional. More than 100 museums, cultural centers and historic sites invite exploration. Highlights include the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens in Jacksonville, the Florida Museum of Natural History with its enchanting Butterfly Rainforest in Gainesville, the Tallahassee Museum with its wildlife exhibits and tree-to-tree zipline adventures, and numerous museums in America's oldest continuously inhabited city, St. Augustine, including the Lightner Museum, the St. Augustine Lighthouse & Maritime Museum and the St. Augustine Pirate & Treasure Museum.

Sports and recreation

Professional and amateur sports thrive throughout our diocese. Jacksonville is home to the NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars, who play at EverBank Stadium, along with the Jacksonville Jumbo Shrimp (Miami Marlins' baseball AAA affiliate) and professional teams in arena football, hockey, soccer, basketball and rugby.

The PGA Tour maintains its global headquarters in Ponte Vedra Beach, adjacent to the world-famous TPC Sawgrass, which hosts The Players Championship. The World Golf Hall of Fame stands near St. Augustine, while the Association of Tennis Professionals Tour also calls Ponte Vedra Beach home.





Historic treasures

History lives and breathes in our diocese. St. Augustine, founded in 1565, is the oldest continuously inhabited, European-established settlement in the continental United States. Its cobblestone streets, Spanish Colonial architecture and landmarks such as the Castillo de San Marcos fortress transport visitors to another era.

Tallahassee is Florida’s capital, where the historic Capitol and Mission San Luis – Florida’s only National Historic Landmark mission site – tell stories of Spanish Florida and the Apalachee people.

Jacksonville’s rich history includes Fort Caroline, marking early French settlement, and numerous “carpenter gothic” churches built along the St. Johns River in the late 19th century.

A medical destination

Our diocese has emerged as a premier destination for medical care, with comprehensive health systems that serve residents and attract patients from around the world. Mayo Clinic’s Jacksonville campus, one of only three main Mayo Clinic locations nationwide, provides care in more than 50 specialty areas.

UF Health operates an extensive network of 11 hospitals throughout our region, including flagship academic medical centers in Gainesville and Jacksonville. Baptist Health Jacksonville has served as a healthcare provider in northeast Florida for more than 20 years. It operates the Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center, providing multidisciplinary cancer care clinically integrated with the renowned MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

Ascension St. Vincent’s has been caring for Jacksonville families since 1916. HCA Florida Healthcare, Florida’s largest healthcare network with 50 hospitals statewide, maintains a significant presence in our diocese, and Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare serves as the region’s healthcare leader. AdventHealth operates several hospitals throughout the diocese.

Medical schools at both the University of Florida and Florida State University train the next generation of physicians.

Urban sophistication meets small-town charm

From the metropolitan energy of Jacksonville to the historic allure of St. Augustine, from the capital city ambience of Tallahassee to the quiet beauty of rural communities like Live Oak, Perry and Madison, our diocese offers extraordinary diversity. Thriving downtown districts feature farm-to-table restaurants, craft breweries and distilleries, art galleries, live music venues and unique shopping experiences. The Riverside Arts Market beneath Jacksonville’s bridges, St. Augustine’s pedestrian-friendly St. George Street, Tallahassee’s Railroad Square Art Park and Gainesville’s vibrant college-town atmosphere each offer their own distinctive character.



Geography and demographics

The Episcopal Diocese of Florida encompasses a remarkable stretch of northeast and north-central Florida – a region where history runs deep, natural beauty abounds and opportunity flourishes. Covering more than 220 miles, our diocese is home to vibrant urban centers, charming small towns, pristine beaches and some of the most spectacular natural landscapes in the southeastern United States.

Our diocese serves approximately 3 million residents across 25 counties and the eastern half of Franklin County, positioning it within one of the fastest-growing regions in the United States. The diocese includes three major Metropolitan Statistical Areas:

Jacksonville Metropolitan Area: With a population of approximately 1.76 million, Jacksonville is the largest city in Florida by area and is home to the sixth-most populous county in the state. Duval County’s population of 1,055,159 anchors a metropolitan region that includes St. Johns County (334,928), Clay County (236,760), Nassau County (104,376) and Baker County (29,325). Jacksonville reached a milestone population exceeding 1 million in 2024 and ranks among the 15 cities with the highest numeric population growth in the nation, gaining more than 16,000 residents in 2024 alone. St. Johns County has experienced a 24-25% population increase in recent years, making it one of Florida’s fastest-growing counties. Nassau County has seen 12% growth and ranks as the fourth fastest-growing county in Florida. The Jacksonville metropolitan area experienced a 2.2% annual growth rate from 2020 to 2024, with net in-migration in 2024 totaling 31,700 people.

Tallahassee Metropolitan Area: Comprising Leon County (300,488), Gadsden County (44,151), Jefferson County (15,921) and Wakulla County (37,115), the Tallahassee area serves as Florida’s capital region with a total population approaching 400,000. As the seat of state government and home to major universities, Tallahassee anchors the northwestern portion of our diocese.

Gainesville Metropolitan Area: Centered in Alachua County (291,782) and including Gilchrist County (20,233) and Levy County (47,765), the Gainesville area encompasses over 359,000 residents. Home to the University of Florida, one of the nation’s premier public research universities, Gainesville brings exceptional educational, cultural and medical resources to north-central Florida.

Rural communities: Beyond these metropolitan centers, the diocese includes 17 predominantly rural counties with populations under 50,000, representing approximately 414,000 residents. These counties reflect the diocese’s remarkable diversity – from major urban centers to close-knit rural communities where neighbors know one another by name. They include Flagler (136,744), Putnam (77,301), Columbia (73,977), Suwannee (47,536), Bradford (28,075), Taylor (21,843), Madison (18,364), Dixie (17,614), Union (15,738), Hamilton (14,334), Lafayette (8,640) and Liberty (7,955).

Florida’s overall population exceeded 23.3 million in 2024, with a 2% growth rate that was second highest in the nation. Our diocese has shared fully in this dynamic expansion, and the Jacksonville metropolitan area is projected to add over 97,000 new residents through 2029.

Our piece of heaven on earth

From idyllic small towns where neighbors know each other to dynamic metropolitan areas with world-class amenities, the Diocese of Florida blends traditional Southern hospitality with modern innovation and deeply rooted history, with eyes fixed firmly on tomorrow's possibilities. Whether you're drawn to barrier island sunrises, spring-fed rivers that run crystal clear, championship fairways, historic cobblestones or communities growing and thriving with new families and fresh opportunities – this is a place where you can truly flourish.

It is a place we are blessed to call home. And perhaps, with God's grace, you will, too.





The Qualities We Seek in Our Next Bishop



To you, O Father, all hearts are open: fill, we pray, the heart of this your servant whom you have chosen to be a bishop in your Church, with such love of you and of all the people.

– Book of Common
Prayer, p. 521

The Qualities We Seek in Our Next Bishop

The Diocese of Florida calls for a leader characterized first and foremost by a deep spiritual foundation, authentic servant leadership, demonstrated integrity and the capacity to hold us together as a diverse people united in Christ.

Gospel-centered and spiritually rooted. Our people long for pastoral leadership rooted in Scripture, the creeds and prayer — a bishop whose personal faith journey is evident and whose decisions flow from a genuine encounter with the living God.

Servant leader: humble, accessible and visible. This is a leader who sees episcopacy as a calling, not a promotion; who is approachable and who is willing to say “I might be wrong”; and who will visit our parishes — large and small — across all five regions, getting to know people and standing with them in their joys and sorrows.

Integrity, transparency and accountability. We seek a bishop whose character and word are beyond reproach, whose financial stewardship is impeccable, and who will work and be transparent with the Standing Committee, the convention and the people.

Reconciling and healing leadership. We seek a bishop with demonstrated capacity for reconciliation and relationship healing — someone who can “hold tension with faithfulness, humility and courage” and who understands that our diversity is not a problem to manage but a gift to celebrate. We have genuine theological differences in this diocese — on human sexuality, on Scripture interpretation, on how authority should be exercised — and we need a bishop who can create space for all of us without demanding false uniformity. This requires a leader who welcomes LGBTQ+ persons as full members of the Body of Christ, who creates secure space for those with traditional theological perspectives and who can help us grow into the maturity of living in “unity without uniformity” centered on Christ.

Unity-builder and visionary leader. The #1-ranked critical ability from our survey was the ability to create unity of purpose among diverse groups. Ranked #2 was to articulate a clear vision for the future. Our people are hungry for a pastoral bishop who can paint a picture of what God is calling us to become. This includes strategic thinking about church planting, the sustainability of Camp Weed and the coordination of youth ministries.

Able administrator and financial steward. We need a bishop who has basic competence in diocesan financial management, who understands that responsible stewardship is a spiritual discipline, who can work with the diocesan leadership to build sustainable budgets and who will leverage resources wisely for mission. This is not about being a CFO — it is about being a faithful steward of what God’s people entrust to the diocese.

Communicator and listener. We need a bishop who listens deeply to lay people, clergy, young people and those who disagree, who can communicate vision clearly through multiple channels, who admits mistakes and invites dialogue and who can speak honestly about difficult topics with both truth and love.

Aligned with The Episcopal Church and its canons. We need a bishop committed to canonical governance and alignment with The Episcopal Church. This is not a diocesan church unto itself — we are part of a wider communion with disciplines, doctrine and a way of doing business. Our next bishop must follow Episcopal Church canons faithfully, participate actively in the House of Bishops, represent the diocese at General Convention and help us understand ourselves as part of something larger than we are.

Equipped to lead in our particular context. Finally, our people named several additional gifts: the ability to work across our regional cultures (recognizing that Tallahassee is different from Jacksonville and that rural contexts are different from urban), the ability to work with and honor congregations of all sizes, and the ability to understand youth and young adult culture and invest significantly in the next generation.



Qualifications for Candidates

The Bishop Search Committee has established the following qualifications for candidates for the office of bishop of Florida:

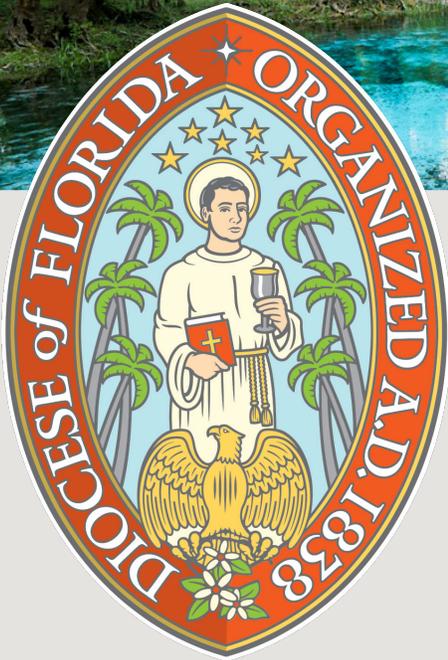
- Be a priest or bishop in good standing in The Episcopal Church
- Be at least 30 years old
- Have completed at least five years of ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church
- Hold an advanced theological degree

Candidates should possess a good understanding of the challenges associated with substance use disorders and demonstrate a commitment to both personal and community recovery.

Desired attributes:

In addition to these baseline qualifications, the Diocese of Florida seeks a bishop who embodies the qualities and capacities identified through our extensive discernment process, as detailed in the section “The qualities we seek in our next bishop.”





Application and Nomination Process

Thank you for your interest in our search for the ninth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida. We are honored by your interest in our diocese and look forward to hearing from you.

Please submit your application before 5 p.m. Eastern on March 23, 2026.

There are 2 methods of presenting a candidate:

- The Application Process where a candidate submits their application independently.
- The Nomination Process where someone else submits the name of a potential nominee who is then contacted by the Search Committee and invited to submit an application. (Nominations are due by March 9, 2026 in order to give the nominee time to apply if they wish to do so.)

The online application form can be accessed at the link [here](#). Please provide all your contact information and answers to the essay question.

Please also provide the following along with the application form:

- A cover letter
- Your response to the essay question posed in the application
- Your OTM portfolio
- A current resume/cv
- A sermon video via link/url
- Name and contact information for all bishops under whom you have served

If you have any problems accessing the application form, please contact fl.bishop.app@gmail.com for help. Please submit your application to fl.bishop.app@gmail.com.

Please note: The application form will be considered incomplete without all of the information requested.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this sacred search for our next bishop of the Diocese of Florida. We look forward to hearing from you soon and to learning more about you.



Nomination Process

The Bishop Search Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Florida welcomes your nominations for candidates to be considered for the position of bishop. You must have your nominee's permission prior to submitting the nomination. Nominations should be submitted to fl.bishop.app@gmail.com and must be received by March 9, 2026, at 5 p.m. Eastern so that we may contact the nominee and invite them to complete an Application.

The online nomination form can be accessed at the link [here](#).

Accurate and complete contact information for the nominee must be supplied.

Timeline

2026

- **Early February:** Profile published; application period opens
- **March 9:** Nominations are due
- **March 23:** Applications are due
- **March-April:** Search Committee conducts first round of interviews
- **April-May:** Search Committee conducts second round of interviews
- **June:** Discernment retreat with potential candidates
- **Early July:** Announce slate; begin petition period
- **Mid-July:** Announce final slate
- **Mid-late August:** Meet-and-Greets held throughout diocese
- **September 11-12:** Electing convention

2027

- **February 6:** Consecration

Leadership Teams



Search Committee and Standing Committee members at Camp Weed.

Search Committee

The Search Committee is entrusted with the sacred task of discerning who will be candidates for the next bishop of the Diocese of Florida. The committee is committed to prayerful and faithful discernment as they look forward with hope, seeking God's guidance to identify a leader who will shepherd the diocese into a future shaped by the love of Christ.

Members:

The Rev. Carolyn G. Jones, St. Mark's, Jacksonville, co-chair
Gregory Orloff, Holy Trinity, Gainesville, co-chair
Mark Armesto, St. Paul's, Quincy
Paul Arrington, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
Eileen Bisgard, St. Mary's, Green Cove Springs
Angela Boyd, Our Saviour, Jacksonville
Martha Cox, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
Courtland Eyrick, St. Mark's, Jacksonville
The Rev. Allen Hill, Ph.D., Holy Comforter, Tallahassee
The Rev. George Holston, Church of the Mediator, Micanopy
The Rev. Mal Jopling, St. Cyprian's, St. Augustine
The Rev. Lonnie Lacy, St. John's, Tallahassee
The Rev. Reid McCormick, St. Paul's by-the-Sea, Jacksonville Beach
The Rev. Quinn Parman, All Saints, Jacksonville
The Rev. Deacon Beth Ranoull, Our Saviour, Jacksonville
The Rev. Deacon Lawanda Williams, St. Paul's by-the-Sea, Jacksonville Beach



Transition Committee members at Diocesan Office.

Transition Committee

This committee conducts most of its planning before the candidate slate is announced. Once the slate is announced, this committee takes over from the Search Committee. Its task is to welcome and host the candidates in the diocese, provide opportunities for shared common discernment and learning, and celebrate the work of the Standing Committee. The committee also will be vital in assisting with the electing convention, as well as the ordination of the new bishop.

Members:

The Rev. Teri Calinao, St. Mary's, Green Cove Springs, co-chair
 Carolyn Gosselin, St. John's, Tallahassee, co-chair
 Lou Armesto, St. Paul's, Quincy
 Ann Brackin, Resurrection, Jacksonville
 The Ven. Lydia Bush, St. Luke's, Live Oak
 Katrina Crews, St. Philip's, Jacksonville
 Ed d'Avi, St. Francis-in-the-Field, Ponte Vedra
 Vince Ferrigno, St. John's Cathedral, Jacksonville
 The Ven. Marsha Holmes, Christ Church, Ponte Vedra
 Robert Hood, Holy Communion, Hawthorne
 The Rev. Eric Kahl, Christ Church, Ponte Vedra
 The Rev. Rachel McElwee, St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach
 The Rev. Catherine Montgomery, St. Mary's, Jacksonville
 Francine Andia Walker, St. John's, Tallahassee
 Bob White, St. Peter's, Fernandina Beach

Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Council serves as the executive body of the diocese.

Members:

The Rev. Justin Yawn, chair
 Christopher Greene, chancellor
 Bob White, treasurer
 The Rev. Natalie Blasco, secretary
 The Rev. Mark Anderson, Canon, First Coast West Region
 The Rev. Curtis Benhan, Canon, River Region
 John Curington, River Region
 The Rev. Joe Gibbes, First Coast East Region

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee typically serves as a council of advice to the bishop. In this time of transition, it also serves as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese. The committee is composed of three clergy and three lay people elected by the Diocesan Convention for a term of three years. The convention, at each annual meeting, elects one member of the appropriate order to fill each vacancy.

Members:

The Rev. Justin Yawn, St. Francis-in-the-Field, Ponte Vedra, president
 J. Byron Greene, St. Michael & All Angels, Tallahassee
 The Rev. Bob Goolsby, St. Thomas, Palm Coast
 The Rev. Lisa Meirow, St. Andrew's, Jacksonville
 Heather Prox, St. Andrew's, Interlachen
 Mary Dudley White, St. Mark's, Jacksonville

Amy Johnson, Apalachee Region
 The Rev. Laura Magevney, Canon, First Coast East Region
 Lee Miniea, Youth Member
 Melinda Moses, Santa Fe Region
 The Rev. Phillip Prescott, Canon, Santa Fe Region
 The Rev. Tanya Scheff, Canon, Apalachee Region
 The Rev. Annette Sines, First Coast East Region
 Dorothy Young-Holder, First Coast West Region



Next Steps in Our Journey Together

We invite you to prayer during this sacred process – prayer for the diocese, for those discerning a call to serve us and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we move forward together in faith.

More information about the Episcopal Diocese of Florida and the bishop search process is on the diocesan website, diocesefl.org.