



2025 PRE-FILED NOMINATIONS FOR DIOCESAN OFFICE

POSITION	NOMINEE	NOMINEE'S PARISH
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Northern District for a 3-year term	The Rev. Donavan Cain The Rev. Donavan Cain has been Rector of St. Thomas, Huntsville for the past two years. Prior to arriving in the Diocese of Alabama in 2023, he served on Diocesan Council and the Standing Committee in the Diocese of Florida. He also served 10 years on the Board of Examining Chaplains in the Diocese of Florida, 8 of which he acted as the Board's Chair. Prior to the Diocese of Florida, the Rev. Cain served on the Standing Committee for the Diocese of Lexington.	St. Thomas, Huntsville
Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Northern District for a 3-year term	Tiffany Martin Tiffany is a member of Epiphany in Guntersville and the mom of three children: Grace, Caitlin & Wyatt. She has been involved with leadership at Epiphany as well as Camp McDowell, serving as a staff member and program director at Bethany's Kids and Special Session for the last 10 years. She is a retired Special Educator and is currently serving at Epiphany as the Interim Children and Youth Minister. She loves being able to help share the love of Christ.	Epiphany, Guntersville
Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Northern District for a 3-year term	Gayle Ozbirn Gayle Ozbirn is a lifelong member of Trinity Episcopal Church, where he has served on several Vestries and as the Treasurer during his Vestry terms. She has been active in Cursillo and serves on the Alabama Cursillo Secretariat. She is very interested in serving on the Diocesan Council.	Trinity, Florence
Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Northern District for a 3-year term	Kenneth Schuppert Ken has been a devoted member of St. John's since the late 1950s, growing up within the church community. During his teenage years, he served as an Acolyte for six years before attending The University of the South and Cumberland Law School. Returning to Decatur, he took on various leadership roles at St. John's, including Junior and Senior Warden, Treasurer, and eventually Chancellor. He was a co-author of St. John's 100-Year Anniversary Book and has been a member of the Trust/Endowment Committee since 1996. Beyond St. John's, Ken has practiced law for over 43 years and has held leadership positions on numerous community boards, including the Decatur Morgan Hospital Board. A dedicated Rotarian since 1983, he has served as Club President, District Governor, Vice President of Rotary International, and a Trustee of The Rotary Foundation, among other notable roles, reflecting his lifelong commitment to service and leadership.	St. John's, Decatur



Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Northern District for a 3-year term	Susan Van Apeldoorn A member of St. Joseph's parish for a decade, Susan has led successful Episcopal Relief and Development fundraisers and served as the Hospitality Chair for several years. She is on her second term as a Vestry Member and has been Senior Warden in both terms. Susan is currently supporting the St. Joseph's congregation as they seek a new Rector. Her time in a leadership role in this parish has allowed her to develop an understanding of the stresses and strains experienced by a parish. Consequently, we believe this experience would allow her to make good observations on the needs of parishes across the Diocese.	St. Joseph's on-the-Mountain, Mentone
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Middle District for a 3-year term	The Rev. H. Huey Garder The Rev. Huey Gardner has served as the Rector of St. Mary's on the Highlands and was a candidate for Holy Orders from the Diocese of Alabama. His church life was shaped by his family's commitment to Christ Church, Fairfield, Church of the Advent, and St. Dunstan's in Auburn. He is married to Irene Thames, who grew up in Church of the Ascension, Montgomery. Both Irene and Huey consider the Diocese of Alabama to be important in the development of their faith. He has served on several Departments of the Diocese, attended Virginia Seminary, and was ordained in 1991. He has also served at Grace Church, Anniston, Calvary Church, Memphis, and Christ Church, Macon, before accepting the call to serve at St. Mary's. He has a strong commitment to supporting lay leadership and witness of the Episcopal Church in Alabama.	St. Mary's on the Highlands
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Middle District for a 3-year term	The Rev. Katherine Harper The Rev. Katherine Harper has served as a priest in the Diocese for seven years. Since 2019, she has served at Saint Stephen's, Birmingham, as Associate Rector. She has held a variety of roles in diocesan ministries, including Standing Committee (Chair 2022-23), Bishop's Search Committee (2018-2019), Happening Steering Committee, Camp McDowell Summer Camp Session Director, Cursillo (as spiritual director), and Episcopal Place Board of Directors.	Saint Stephen's, Birmingham
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Middle District for a 3-year term	The Rev. Josiah Rengers Rev. Josiah Rengers has been the rector of Saint Thomas in Birmingham for the last nine years, and he has enjoyed watching the ministry thrive and grow. Prior to that, he was the associate at Saint Luke's in Birmingham and rector of St. Stephen's in Eutaw, AL. He is the head of the Companion Diocese with Honduras Committee, serves on the Camp McDowell board, was the president of the Standing Committee, and has previously served on the Diocesan Council. The Rev. Rengers leads a session every year at Camp McDowell summer camp, where he has enjoyed watching his daughters grow up. He is married to the Rev. Katie Nakamura Rengers, who serves on the Presiding Bishop's staff as the Missioner for Church Planting in America, and she is the founder of The Abbey worshipping community and Avondale Breakfast Church.	St. Thomas, Birmingham



Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Middle District for a 3-year term	Brian K. Denton Brian K. Denton is an accomplished IT Vendor Management Analyst at UAB with extensive experience managing IT vendor contracts and ensuring compliance. He excels at negotiating favorable terms, fostering strong partnerships, and implementing cost-saving initiatives. Brian holds a Master of Legal Studies (Juris Master) from National Juris University in Phoenix, AZ, enhancing his ability to navigate complex legal and policy matters. His expertise in legal research & writing, along with his knowledge of Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, further strengthens his professional profile. Recently elected as Vice Chair of the Standing Commission on Formation and Ministry for the General Convention of The Episcopal Church through 2027, Brian is dedicated to developing leaders and furthering the ministry of all the baptized. He is also involved in the House of Deputies representing the Diocese of Alabama and is completing the last year of his current term on the Vestry of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia Hills, AL.	Ascension, Birmingham
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Southern District for a 3-year term	The Rev. Sarah Smith Halloran The Rev. Sarah Smith Halloran joined the Diocese in 2021, coming from North Carolina. With a background in formation and camp ministry, Sarah graduated from Duke Divinity School and is passionate about developing and equipping disciples who find joy in their life together and hope to join the ongoing mission of God. Sarah currently serves as the chair of the Diocesan Taskforce for Creation Care and rector of Grace Church in Pike Road. She shares a home with her spouse, Colin Halloran, and daughters, most of whom enjoy working out in the garden, vegetarian cooking, and hiking.	Grace, Pike Road
Diocesan Council – Priest from the Southern District for a 3-year term	The Rev. Evan Thayer The Rev. Evan Thayer has served as rector of Trinity in Demopolis for just over two years. He currently serves on the Sawyerville Department and has been a chaplain for Sawyerville Camp for the last two sessions. Prior to moving to Demopolis, Evan was rector of the Church of St. Augustine and St. Martin in Boston, Massachusetts, and served as dean of the Boston Harbor Deanery. A native of Louisiana, Evan holds a Bachelor of Music degree in vocal performance. He received his seminary training from the Episcopal Divinity School. Since relocating to Demopolis, Evan has become active with The Demopolis Music Study Club, The Two Rivers Arts Council, and The Canebrake Players. He also serves on Black Belt Women Rising's Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Task Force.	Trinity Church, Demopolis
Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Southern District for a 3-year term	Billington M Garrett Bill retired from the Alabama Attorney General's Office where he served the citizens of Alabama for 39 years as an Assistant Attorney General. He served under four attorneys general as Chief of the General Civil Litigation and Administrative Law Division. Primarily retired now, he serves as general counsel to an Alabama professional licensing board. Bill served on the Diocesan Council for three years. He has also served the Church of the Ascension as Junior and Senior Warden; member of the Vestry, parish search discernment committee, and parish finance committee; lay eucharistic minister; and lector. He currently serves as a verger and a parish bus driver. He has also attended Cursillo.	Church of the Ascension, Montgomery



Diocesan Council – Lay member from the Southern District for a 3-year term	Suellen Young Suellen Young is very active in her church and has been very active in the Diocese of Alabama. She has served numerous times on the Diocesan Council for the Southern District and as Convention Delegate for her Parish. Ms. Young is active in Cursillo, served as Youth Director at her parish for 29 years, is President of her local Daughters of the King Chapter, is on the Vestry at Trinity, and is active in Bible Study and Sunday School. She loves her church and serving in whatever capacity is needed. Suellen has completed the Metagem Program for certification as a Spiritual Director and serves as a spiritual companion for those desiring such companionship and as a Lay Eucharistic Minister. She loves the perspective gained by serving on the Diocesan Council and seeing all the different ways and organizations within the Diocese that are working to bring the gospel to God's people through study, action, and worship.	Trinity Episcopal Church, Wetumpka
Disciplinary Board – Clergy member for a 3-year term	The Rev. Katie Kirk-Costas Katie Kirk-Costas is the Associate Rector at St. Thomas, Huntsville, where she loves formation and empowering the laity with knowledge of our church's Constitutions & Canons and Book of Common Prayer. Previously, Katie served as the Episcopal Church's interim Global Relations and Networking Officer, where she was most proud of gathering many of our partners in faith from around the Anglican Communion at the General Convention (and coordinating their arrivals without losing a single one).	St. Thomas, Huntsville
Disciplinary Board – Clergy member for a 3-year term	The Rev. Worth Stuart A cradle Episcopalian, The Rev. Worth was brought up at the Church of Ascension in Montgomery. After receiving a Bachelor's Degree at the University of Alabama, he worked as a youth minister at Trinity Episcopal Church in Florence, Alabama (2008-2010) and St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery (2010-2013). From 2013-2014, Worth joined the staff at the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama as the Lay Missioner for Young Adults. He received his Master in Divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary in 2017. His first call was to Holy Apostles in Hoover, Alabama, where he served as Curate until 2019. He served as a Priest Associate at the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville, Alabama, from 2019 to 2024. Worth is married to The Rev. Ranie Neislar, who is also an Episcopal priest in Birmingham.	Holy Spirit, Alabaster
Disciplinary Board – Lay member for a 3-year term	George Carpenter George Carpenter was confirmed in the Episcopal Church in 2008 and is a member of Trinity, Florence. He has served on a vestry and been a senior warden. He was a District Judge in Colbert County from 1980-2010 and served on the Judicial Inquiry Commission from 2004-2008. He is married to Sandra.	Trinity, Florence



Disciplinary Board – Lay member for a 3-year term	Brian Denton Brian K. Denton is an accomplished IT Vendor Management Analyst at UAB with extensive experience managing IT vendor contracts and ensuring compliance. He excels at negotiating favorable terms, fostering strong partnerships, and implementing cost-saving initiatives. Brian holds a Master of Legal Studies (Juris Master) from National Juris University in Phoenix, AZ, enhancing his ability to navigate complex legal and policy matters. His expertise in legal research & writing, along with his knowledge of Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, further strengthens his professional profile. Recently elected as Vice Chair of the Standing Commission on Formation and Ministry for the General Convention of The Episcopal Church through 2027, Brian is dedicated to developing leaders and furthering the ministry of all the baptized. He is also involved in the House of Deputies representing the Diocese of Alabama and is completing the last year of his current term on the Vestry of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Vestavia Hills, AL.	Ascension, Birmingham
Disciplinary Board – Lay member for a 3-year term	Keith Miller Mr. Miller is currently the senior warden, having previously served on the Vestry and been a delegate to the Diocesan Convention. His service in the parish has included serving as a Sunday School teacher and a LEM. Mr. Miller has practiced law for over 30 years, and throughout this time, his practice has included employment law. He has served as a Hearing Officer for the State of Alabama Personnel Board and the Alabama Medicaid Agency. He has also served as a Temporary Probate Judge presiding over commitment hearings.	St. John's Montgomery
Standing Committee – Clergy member for a 4-year term	The Rev. Chase D. Ackerman The Rev. Chase D. Ackerman has served as the Rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Decatur since August 2019. He has previously been a member of the Diocesan Council and currently serves on the Happening Steering Committee. He is also an active member of the "Equipping the Saints" Campaign Cabinet. Additionally, he has contributed his time and leadership to Cursillo and Summer Camp staff at Camp McDowell.	St. John's, Decatur
Standing Committee – Clergy member for a 4-year term	The Rev. Emily Collette Emily grew up at Nativity, Huntsville, where, over time, she was baptized, confirmed, married, and ordained. While attending UAB, Emily was a member of Trinity Commons, Birmingham, where she served as a student intern. Before attending seminary, she was a youth minister at St. Simon Peter, Pell City, and St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands, Birmingham. Emily graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 2020. She has served as a priest at Holy Apostles, Hoover; Trinity Commons, Birmingham; and Ascension, Vestavia Hills, where she currently serves as Associate Rector. Emily has served on the Happening Steering Committee, the Vocare Steering Committee, the Special Session Steering Committee, and as the spiritual advisor to the Youth Department. In her various parishes, Emily has overseen Outreach, Newcomer, and Family Ministries. She particularly enjoys working with youth, college students, and young adults.	The Church of the Ascension, Vestavia Hills



Standing Committee – Clergy member for a 4-year term	The Rev. Michael Harber The Rev. Mike Harber grew up in the Diocese of Alabama and has been very active at both the parish and diocesan levels. As a layperson, he served as a senior warden (2 terms) and Eucharistic minister, and he was on Cursillo 218 staff. As a priest, he was as a clergy deputy representing the Diocese at the 81st General Convention, Cursillo 228 staff assistant spiritual director, and is currently a member of the Commission on Ministry. Mike is the rector at St. Michael and All Angels in Millbrook.	St. Michael & All Angels, Millbrook
Standing Committee – Clergy member for a 4-year term	The Rev. Peter Helman The Rev. Peter Helman, originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, serves as Rector of Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church in Birmingham. Previously, he was Parochial Vicar of Saint Philip's in the Hills, Tucson, Arizona, where he guided the parish's worship and pastoral life, supervising adult formation programming and deepening interfaith and ecumenical partnerships. He served on the Diocesan Commission on Ministry for six years and the Board of Directors for the Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network. Before that, he was Priest-in-Charge of Saint Mary's, Middlesboro, Kentucky, a historic Appalachian parish. Peter holds advanced degrees from Yale Divinity School and Princeton Theological Seminary, and was ordained in the Diocese of New Jersey. He is active in the Guild of All Souls and is a Priest Associate of the Holy House of Our Lady of Walsingham. A seasoned archaeologist in Northwest Jordan and a clergy mentor-coach, Peter's vocation is rooted in fostering spiritual growth and service.	Saint Andrew's, Birmingham
Standing Committee – Clergy member for a 4-year term	The Rev. Carl Saxton The Rev. Carl Saxton has been Rector of Holy Comforter, Gadsden, for eight and a half years. He previously served on the Disciplinary Board and is now Dean of the Mountain Convocation.	Holy Comforter, Gadsden
Standing Committee – Lay member for a 4-year term	Lamar Auman Mr. Altman is a retired GS-15, Army Aerospace Engineer and a cradle Episcopalian. Lamar currently serves on the Diocesan Council and is the Chair of the Department of Camp McDowell. He has observed his activities in both and has a good understanding of the workings of the Diocese. At the parish level, Lamar serves as Treasurer at Epiphany, Guntersville, and has served as its Sr. Warden. Lamar attended Happening (Dio Florida) and Cursillo #171. He is a graduate of Sewanee's Education for Ministry (EfM) and served as an (EfM) Mentor. His parish leadership began in college at St. Dunstan and continued afterward at St. Stephen's Huntsville and Epiphany Guntersville. In the parish, Lamar's leadership included leading EYC, cooking breakfast, serving at the altar, cleaning, trimming limbs, and other duties. Lamar worked at Camp Weed (Dio, Florida), Camp McDowell, and Camp Kanuga.	Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville, AL



Standing Committee – Lay member for a 4-year term	Eleanor (Ellen) I. Brooks A life-long member of the Church of the Ascension, Montgomery, Ellen is a Verger, LEM/LEV, Lector, and member of the Altar Guild, Capital Campaign Steering & Finance Committees. She chaired Christian Education, Worship, Governance, and the last Rector Search Committee and has taught Christian education to all ages. She served on the Vestry six times (Senior Warden in 2023) and is an EFM graduate, attended Cursillo, & has been a delegate to a number of Diocesan Conventions. On the Diocesan level, she chaired the last Bishop Search Committee & was a member of the Disciplinary Board. A graduate of Vanderbilt University & Alabama School of Law, as well as Leadership Montgomery & Alabama, she served on numerous boards & as an officer of the national & local Girl Scouts & Junior League. Ellen was District Attorney for 21 years & has a passion for helping children & families, having co-founded the Family Sunshine Center, Child Protect, & One Place Family Justice Center.	Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Montgomery
Standing Committee – Lay member for a 4-year term	Katherine Gould Katherine Gould served on staff at Christ Church, Tuscaloosa, for 20 years and oversaw Formation for all ages, all Programming, and Outreach. She was instrumental in creating the Children's Service, Christ Church Collectibles , and Connect: Where Love Never Forgets, a respite ministry for those living with Dementia. Connect has grown and become a 501-C-3. She now serves as the Connect Board President. Katherine has served on the Diocesan Christian Formation Committee, been a Delegate at the Convention, and served on several Cursillo staffs, including being a Lay Rector.	Christ Church, Tuscaloosa
Standing Committee – Lay member for a 4-year term	Erika Huber Erika Huber is a dedicated member of St. John's Episcopal Church in Decatur and is an attorney with over 25 years of experience. Within her church community, Erika has made significant contributions, including serving two terms on the Vestry and co-chairing the Stewardship Committee. She also co-founded impactful ministries at St. John's, such as Backpacks for Food and the St. Nicholas Shoe Drive. Currently, Erika serves as a Licensed Lay Eucharistic Minister, Lector, Godly Play teacher, and Cursillo Parish Lay Rector. She has also represented St. John's as a delegate to the Diocesan Convention and has served on two Cursillo staff as well as the Cursillo Secretariat.	St. John's, Decatur
Standing Committee – Lay member for a 4-year term	Natalie Isom Sansom Natalie Isom Sansom, a Birmingham native and long-time Episcopalian, has been a Saint Luke's member for over 20 years. She holds degrees in culinary arts, culinary management, and a BA in English from UAB. A certified spiritual director and Metagem Institute graduate, Natalie serves on the Metagem Steering Committee and the Diocesan Commission on Spirituality, which she chaired from 2019-2023. She is currently a board member of The Threshold Center and co-chair of programs for 2025. At Saint Luke's, Natalie has served as ECW President, lay eucharistic minister, usher, and member of the Care of Creation Commission. She is also active in the Daughters of the King, has served on multiple Cursillo staff (including as Head Cha), and was the Parish Lay Rector for Cursillo. She currently serves on the Vestry. Natalie and her husband, Ken, have two adult children, Jake and Maxie.	Saint Luke's Birmingham



Standing Committee	Dr. Steve Katsinas	St. Thomas, Birmingham
– Lay member for a 4-year term	<p>A third-generation lifetime Episcopalian now at St. Thomas-Birmingham, with experience on three different vestries, Dr. Steve Katsinas believes his professional work as Director of the University of Alabama's Education Policy Center can assist the Diocese. The EPC has published Black Belt 2020 and Black Belt 2022 and is currently working on BB2025 in partnership with Al.com and in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the Selma-to-Montgomery Voting Rights March this spring. He knows the state and its challenges and believes the same scale and size issues challenging rural K-12 schools and rural community colleges challenge the Diocese's many smaller rural congregations. His desire to serve is linked to my belief that they need to speak truth to power, as the Bishop of Washington did recently. He cares about refugee rights and pledges to serve conscientiously to help the Diocese continue to make a difference, with special emphasis on its important rural and smaller congregations.</p>	