

Two weeks ago, our diocese gathered in Special Convention, and elected the Rev. Thomas James Brown to serve as the Tenth Bishop of Maine. It was a spirit-filled and exciting day. But... where is he? What happens now?

In The Episcopal Church, a bishop is elected for the whole Church. So now, the whole Church must speak. First the Church, through the Presiding Bishop's Office, asks for medical and psychological testing. Once that testing has been accomplished, the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maine and the Presiding Bishop's Office seek consents from a majority of Standing Committees and Bishops with Jurisdiction from every diocese across the Church. Some of that work is done electronically these days, but it may still take several weeks.

In the meantime, Bishop-Elect Brown is saying good-bye to the people of the Parish of the Epiphany, Winchester, MA, and preparing his household for the move to Maine. He will complete his work at Epiphany at the end of March. In addition, the Standing Committee of Maine is working with him on a Letter of Agreement. We anticipate that, by God's grace, Bishop-Elect Brown will be in the Diocese of Maine by late April. Bishop-Elect Brown will work with Bishop Lane for 6 - 8 weeks prior to the consecration on June 22.

The Office, the Standing Committee and the Transition Committee are already at work preparing for the consecration. The *Service of Consecration and Ordination* belongs to the Presiding Bishop and there is a lengthy protocol to follow. Planning has already begun and there is a meeting scheduled for next week. More information will be forthcoming as plans take shape.

As you can see, there's a lot going on. We ask your prayers for a smooth transition as we all follow the Way of Love.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephen T. Lane".

The Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane  
*Bishop of Maine*

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maria J. Hoecker".

The Rev. Maria J. Hoecker  
*President of the Standing Committee*

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, O God, that you have called us to a goodly fellowship of faith in the Diocese of Maine. In the power of the Spirit, you have guided us in the election of the Tenth Bishop. We ask your blessings on all our people, especially on Bishop Lane, Bishop-Elect Brown and their households that each may move safely into their new callings and that, together, we may work to strengthen and share your Mission among us. We pray this in Christ's name.  
*Amen.*