

# Summer 2024 News From Province I School for Deacons



House of Deputies Deacons defending the 81st GC resolution supporting the Association for Episcopal Deacons

## "Why is General Convention so Important?"

While that question is asked and answered in the Polity segment of our students' Church History Formation Weekend, as it was this past June, it is also a question often fielded by our Province I School for Deacons Co-Facilitator, Jason Burns. Jason's response: "The underlying question is whether anything *done* at General Convention (GC) is really all that important. For example, does it matter that...

- the Episcopal Church (TEC) decided to condemn the events in Gaza?
- TEC will divest itself of financial investment in companies producing weapons systems?
- an ardent racist was removed from TEC's calendar of feasts?
- our Navajo Land Mission was granted Missionary Diocese Status?
- strategic legislative action led to passage of a resolution supporting the Association for Episcopal Deacons?

For Jason, the answer is, "It matters." A first-time deputy representing his Diocese of WMA at this summer's 81<sup>st</sup> General Convention (GC) in Louisville, KY, Jason joined many deacon siblings fulfilling various GC roles including over fifty serving alongside him in the House of Deputies. He sees passage of these resolutions, and many more, as a sign TEC is alive and we are striving to be a Beloved Community—a sign of our faith and hope for the future.

In Jason's words, "I talk and preach a great deal about the importance of community—that Jesus calls us to be a community of and for all people. Passage of the [resolution](#)

[condemning the war in Gaza](#) is a call to restore community and seek a peaceful reconciliation between two factions of God's people. The [decision to divest TEC's investment portfolio of any company that makes weapons systems or their components](#) supports our condemnation of the events in Gaza. [Removing one racist man from our calendar](#) will not end racism, but it is an acknowledgment that TEC has gotten it wrong in the past and this is one small attempt on our part to ensure that we get it right moving forward. It sends the signal that we are trying to reconcile our racist past and move towards the Beloved Community God calls us to be. Since the 1970's Navajo Land Mission has maintained multiple parishes under the direction of the Presiding Bishop or an appointed bishop. [The creation of their new diocese](#) allows them to elect their bishop and grants them autonomy within the church. [The resolution calling for financial support for the Association of Episcopal Deacons](#), as it restructures for the future, was initially stripped of its funding. Persistent convention-long dialog by concerned deputies resulted in the resolution's passage with partial funding restored. This is a significant step of TEC including diaconal ministry in the budget."

Returning from his first GC with enough memories to fill a book, Jason chronicled many stand-out moments on his blog: [Learning by Fire](#) (<https://learningbyfire.com/>). The upshot? General Convention is important, and what happens there matters to each of us, to the whole of TEC, and to the worldwide community Jesus calls us to be and to love.

## Congratulations, New Province I Deacons!



The Rev. Sharon Billetter with  
The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher  
in Pittsfield, MA  
April 27, 2024



The Rev. Chuck Sharp with  
The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens and  
The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey W. Mello  
in Hartford, CT  
June 15, 2024

## June Formation Weekend with Archdeacon Grace Swinski

Our June Formation Weekend at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center in West Hartford, CT capped off our module on Church History and Anglican~Episcopal History & Tradition, and included a special guest. The Ven. Grace Swinski, Archdeacon in RI, joined in our teaching, learning, worship and hospitality all while sharing her own wisdom and stories of diaconal ministry. Thank you, Grace!

*Following our Sunday closing service of Holy Eucharist. Back row (L to R): Tom May (RI), Jason Burns (Deacon Co-Facilitator), Lynda Tyson (Dean), Jaclyn Mayo (WMA), Madia Brumskine (WMA), Grace Swinski (RI Archdeacon). Front row: Kristen Burkholder (ME), Kara Maslowski (NH), Tom Hobin (RI).*

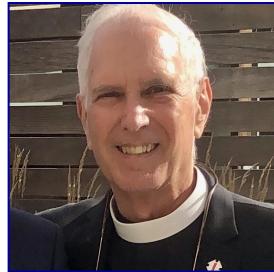


## Province I Archdeacons' Executive Council Succession



*The Ven. Aaron Perkins*

Archdeacons Aaron Perkins (ME) and Stannard Baker (VT), both members our school's Advisory Council, will have successive terms on TEC's Executive Council. Aaron's six-year term concluded with General Convention in July, and Stan was elected to begin a six-year term. Both Aaron and Stan also exercise their diaconal ministries in their home dioceses and in various other capacities in TEC at large.



*The Ven. Stannard Baker*

## What is Stirring at P1SFD?



## Who We Are

Province I School for Deacons offers a two-year program focusing on formation for the Diaconate, as set forth in the canons of The Episcopal Church. Students from CT, ME, NH, RI, VT, and WMA study with scholar-lecturers in a quarterly pattern of three-month-long courses capped by in-person Formation Weekends, and may enter at any quarter during the calendar year. School alumni tell us they value and continue their collegial relationships indefinitely beyond graduation. For information, contact: [dean.deaconformation@province1.org](mailto:dean.deaconformation@province1.org) or [Ctrl-click here to view our videos](#).

