



A Letter To Our Nominees

APRIL 15, 2018

www.bishopsearchdiobeth.org



Below is a letter to our Bishop Nominees from the members of the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem. This letter is a culmination of the responses to Rev. Canon Ruth Woodliff-Stanley and Rev. Canon Kevin Nichol's questions from prior bulletins.

Dear Kevin and Ruth,

We are incredibly blessed and honored to have both of you as our Bishop Nominees for the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem. You will be joining a group of people who are committed to our faith and each other. We are a spiritual home free of judgement and inclusive of all.

Ensuring that we can continue our mission is most important to us, whether it is through new members or empowering our youth. We also have major challenges in our society, and we need to be there to help our community members deal with difficult issues like addiction, mental illness, poverty, and gun violence.

Our Diocese is both beautiful and vulnerable. The beauty includes the celebrations where we All gather to worship, e.g. The Chrism Mass, Ordinations, Services at Conventions and Retreats. The unbelievable architecture and worship spaces throughout this Diocese and the wonderful smiles of love and joy when we greet one another are also beautiful. The Vulnerable includes the gathering for sorrowful or painful worship/pastoral ministries and sometimes the focus on our differences instead of what unites us. The continued pain of loss of members and support is difficult as well.

Some of our most significant moments in the life of the Diocese include our Provisional Bishop, the relief of tensions over the last several years, and the restoration of some trust among the faithful. The continued offering of persons to ordained ministry despite a society that scoffs, the outreach, and the ecumenical and Full Communion forays initiated by this Diocese are also significant.



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Through our services and educational gatherings, we are continually challenged to look at issues through our Christian eyes. We can take this perspective to spread Jesus Christ's message of love, peace, and support for those less fortunate during the week.

This diocese has sustained us in many ways, including supporting us during times of great sorrow and periods of illness. The peace and wonder at seeing our congregation in the pews during difficult days lifts us and our families. The genuine love and affection expressed every time we gather is sustaining, regardless of our personal difficulties or tensions. The continued, sincere, and ongoing warmth in welcoming strangers to our worship and our outreach, without judgement or falsehood, sustains us as well. We know without any doubt that we are welcomed with all our faults, all our sorrows, all our doubts, and yes, all our sins.

In gratitude,

The Members of the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem



Visit our Website

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- * New* **Bishop Book for our Youth**
- Register by **April 23rd** for **Bishop Sean's Farewell Party** being held in Wilkes-Barre on May 12th. All are welcome - Free of charge.
- **Walkabouts** are next week! If you cannot attend a walkabout session in-person, click on the link from our website to watch it **live streamed** on **Thursday, April 19th.**

*Please submit your Walkabout questions for the Bishop Nominees
In advance to bishoptransitiondiobeth@gmail.com*



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