

Standing Committee Member Nominations



Nominee: The Rev. Cynthia Howard
Church: St. Mary's, Andalusia
Occupation: Episcopal Priest

Nominator: The Rev. Reid McCormick
Church: St. Thomas, Greenville

Describe experiences and positions you have, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position: Rector Search Committee, St. Andrew's Church, Kansas City; Diocesan Council, Diocese of West Missouri; Bishop Search Committee, Diocese of West Missouri. In the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast: Chair, Commission on Youth and Young Adult Ministries; Member, I Dream of a Diocese Committee; Member, Bishop Transition Committee; Member, Finance Committee

(current); Member, School for Ministry Development Committee (current); Camp Dean, Beckwith. Service on numerous professional and community service boards. Current: Board Chair, Andalusia Health; Board Member, Andalusia Ballet; Board Member, South Central Alabama Mental Health Center.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast at this time? It is an exciting time in our diocese with a number of new initiatives underway and a great sense of energy and enthusiasm. The staff of the Duvall Center provide an increasing and enhanced level of support to our churches. Finances continue to be a challenge for the diocese. Growth, especially in smaller, rural congregations, and dreams/possibilities for planting new churches in areas of increasing population present both opportunities and challenges. Better connections and sharing between and among churches are needed. Our commitment to diocesan youth ministry is critical and should be maintained or preferably increased.

What sustains you in your spiritual life? Prayer, scripture and other spiritual reading, time away to rest and refresh, time with friends.



Nominee: Britt Landrum, Jr.
Church: Pensacola
Occupation: Landrum HR Founder and CEO

Nominator: Joe McDaniel, Jr.
Church: Christ Church, Pensacola

Describe experiences and positions you have, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position: I currently serve as Jr. Warden of Holy Cross in Pensacola. I have previously served as Chair of Bishop Search Committee, and on the Diocesan Standing Committee, Commission on Ministry and Beckwith Board of Directors.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast at this time? Declining attendance and dwindling financial support continue to be significant challenges, and I believe we have experienced this in most churches in the diocese. We are challenged to come up with creative ways to continue to minister to the needs of our congregations and to do so with fewer resources. I see opportunities in sharing resources, partnering with other congregations and becoming better stewards. I also believe there is still a hunger for a closer and more meaningful relationship with God and many people want to know how to make their faith relevant in their lives today. That means there's still a need for church, especially the Episcopal Church where all are welcome...including those folks who don't have all the answers...and that, by the way, includes me.

What sustains you in your spiritual life? Attending church regularly, praying daily, studying scripture, listening to sermons and spiritual talks online, and reading books written by Biblical scholars of our time.

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Nominee: The Rev. Mark McDonald
Church: Church of the Advent, Lillian
Occupation: Episcopal priest

Nominator: Cheryl Josephson
Church: Church of the Advent, Lillian

Describe experiences and positions you have, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position: Commission on Ministry, Diocese of Central Gulf Coast, currently serving; Executive Committee, Diocese of Western Louisiana, 2003-2006 and 2008-2009; dean of Acadiana Convocation, Diocese of Western Louisiana, 2003-2006; Board of Trustees, Epiphany Day School, New Iberia, LA, 2002-2009; Board of Trustees, Episcopal School of Acadiana, 2002-2005; Headmaster Search Committee, Bayside Academy – 2011. My experience in church and school leadership

committees over the years have given me a good foundation and understanding that have prepared me well for serving the church on Standing Committee if given the opportunity.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast at this time? People want to move to South Alabama and Northwest Florida, and this growing area demographic is an incredible opportunity for the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. We have the opportunity to engage with spiritual depth and substance the transformative power of Jesus Christ to a hungry world. Connecting with today's youth is both a challenge and an opportunity. I think the authentic message of following Christ as an Episcopalian is a message that can resonate with our young. Our message is genuine, but it is not easy to replicate in neat soundbites that can break through the short attention spans of today's youth. We must find a way to communicate who we are and how we follow Jesus that reaches them. If we do, we have a tremendous transformative opportunity as the body of Christ in the Central Gulf Coast.

What sustains you in your spiritual life? I practice centering prayer for at least thirty minutes every day. Through centering prayer, I quiet my mind and intentionally try to listen to God and open myself more fully to God's activity in my life and the world. This practice, more than anything, helps me to become more fully present in the here and now and has been invaluable to me as a pastor in God's vineyard, a father to my children, and a husband to my wife. I read and study scripture very actively and participate and lead corporate worship at the parish I currently serve. I exercise with weight and cardio training on a regular basis. Exercising regularly helps me deal with stress. Through exercise, I have more energy and it allows me to be more fully present and engaged in active ministry and with my family and friends. Centering prayer, studying scripture, regular intentional worship, and exercise are the foundational spiritual practices keeping me fully present and grounding me as a faithful follower of Christ.



Nominee: The Rev. Margaret Shepard
Church: St. Andrew's Panama City
Occupation: Episcopal Priest

Nominator: The Rev. Barry Crow
Church: St. Andrew's, Destin

Describe experiences and positions you have, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position: Rector, St. Andrew's, Panama City; Chair, Bishop's Church Development Process Task Force; past member of Standing Committee; Beckwith Board (chair of Personnel Committee); teacher in School for Deacons; past member Spirituality Commission; past member of Board of Wilmer Hall; past member Commission on Liturgy and music; Chair Resolutions Committee for 2015 Diocesan

Convention.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast at this time? An opportunity and a challenge in this diocese is that we are actively looking at what makes a vital church, what are the characteristics and how can we add vitality to all the parishes in this diocese. This gives us an increased awareness of those beyond our walls who are yearning for the love of God.

What sustains you in your spiritual life? Meditation, prayer, and walking the labyrinth at St. Andrew's helps sustain my spiritual life, as well as the love and closeness of the parishioners of the parish.