



# Risen

ADVENT 2022

Rhode Island's Source for Episcopal News



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Pages 2, 4, & 5 (left, middle) —  
From the archives

Pages 3, 5 (right), & 6 —  
Kristin Knudson-Groh

**Thank you for reading RISEN, Rhode Island's source for Episcopal news.** In this issue you'll learn about the events of Diocesan Convention, read the Bishop's thoughts about how we will be moving forward as a Diocese, and get a taste of people and ministries already taking position. If you find yourself wanting to learn more, let me know! Wishing you a blessed Advent, and a Merry Christmas. We'll meet again in 2023! — *Kristin Knudson-Groh, Editor*



## BISHOP'S ADDRESS ■ At 10 Years and Counting: Looking Forward



*The following is an edited summary of the Bishop's Address to Convention. The video of his full address may be found here.*

As I begin, I'd like to thank you all for the way that you and the whole diocese marked the 10th anniversary of our ministry together. At 10 years, it's a chance for us to think about what comes next. A chance for us to look back at what's been accomplished, and to think about what we need yet to do for the coming years of our ministry together, and as we begin to think about the ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island in the coming decades in this 21st century.

We are in a place now where we are having trouble finding clergy to come

even to Rhode Island. And who wouldn't want to come to Rhode Island? Canon Dena has been extraordinarily persistent and has persevered and has managed to call some extraordinary clergy. I have great confidence in her ability to continue that work, but we're going to have to lift up leaders amongst ourselves. And that means we're going to have to think about how we recruit new clergy. What kind of clergy will we need for the 21st century and how will we share scarce resources in this moment?

We're already experimenting with clergy who are serving multiple parishes at one time (see page 8). We are working with clergy who will only be able to be part-time in a congregation and we're

going to have to count on strong lay leadership. And we're going to have to change our sense of what worship looks like. It is not going to be the norm anymore that we can all expect to have the Eucharist every Sunday. And that's sad, because it has been an extraordinary gift to the church and to the world in which we live to have the sacrament celebrated with such frequency.

But, there have been times in our history where that wasn't a possibility and we have managed. The good news is, that's when the Episcopal Church grew at its most rapid pace, I think because we unleashed lay leadership in a profound way in those days. We're going to have to figure out what that looks like in the 21st century. Know that the Commission on Ministry and I will be working very intentionally over the next years to support lay ministry and lay leadership in our congregations as well as identifying training and equipping ordained ministers, both deacons and priests, to serve our various ministries around the state.

We're going to need to recruit people. We're going to need to recruit young people. And there's a problem, isn't it? I cannot tell you how frequently it is that I am asked, maybe every Sunday when I'm in a visitation, "Bishop, where are all the young people?" My normal response is to say, "Why do you want them to be here?" And people look at me funny when I ask that because

that's not the response they expect me to give. But the truth is, most of us are talking about wanting young people in our congregations, not because we have things that we can do to support the young people, but because having young people around makes us feel that our congregations have a future.

People don't join your congregation to solve your problems. They don't join a congregation to balance your budget. They don't join a congregation so that you can have the Sunday school program that you remember and treasured from 20 or 30 years ago. We have to recognize the problems that young adults are having in this community that we can help them with, and that's going to require us to change.

What I would like us to do is think about ways that we can strengthen our ministry at URI that is mostly being done by St. Augustine's congregation. How can we help them more powerfully connect with the lives of college students who are attending the University of Rhode Island? We have a deacon who's working as one of the football coaches. We have official clergy in that congregation who are recognized as chaplains of the university. We should listen to them to learn from them what kinds of issues young people are facing and the kinds of questions

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they're asking. And then we should act on that information in a thoughtful and organized way across the state.

I want to thank the people who have been part of the Brown chaplaincy for so long, and I want to encourage S. Stephen's, as it is renewing its role in that ministry. I'm really excited about what Father Benjamin is doing in that community and the way that now undergraduates are just wandering into S. Stephen's to pray. But S. Stephen's isn't the only parish that is near Brown's campus. Grace Church has an extraordinary ministry to young adults. St. Martin's has a great ministry to a lot of the faculty, as well as graduate students. The Church of the Redeemer has a ministry to that community. All Saints has a ministry to that community. And even in surprising ways, Church Beyond the Walls, which reaches mostly homeless people, has in the volunteer life of that congregation a deep connection to both RISD and to Brown University. I want us to think intentionally about how we can strengthen those ministries and those ties. That's where we're going to get the leaders of the next generation.

I'm excited to say that we have a new strength in ministry going on at Rhode Island College. I'm even more excited to tell you that the administration there is supportive and is even giving money and resources to the work that we are doing in that place. We're no longer

simply present on the campus; we're working with them as partners. And that's a new development as I think they and we recognize the importance of a Christian voice such as the Episcopal Church has on that campus among those young people.

I would like us to be able to identify ministry at CCRI, at Salve. I'd like us to reconnect with Bryant. All of these ministries need to be a part of what we do as a diocese, the common work that we do across the state that benefits all of our congregations, because we need those young leaders so that we can face the challenges that are in front of us.

I want us to think very seriously about how we can better integrate and support the work that's going on at ECC.

I would love to imagine that someday we have a pipeline where counselors, head counselors, volunteer adults, who are formed in that extraordinary worship life at ECC, who have encountered that community of love and acceptance, are then able to move into our congregations around the state, are recognized for the gifts that they are already bringing and the experiences that they have had, and then we can use them to reach out to young people in the communities around the state. We have people who've already experienced life-transforming Christian life. Why would we not want to listen to what worked for them?

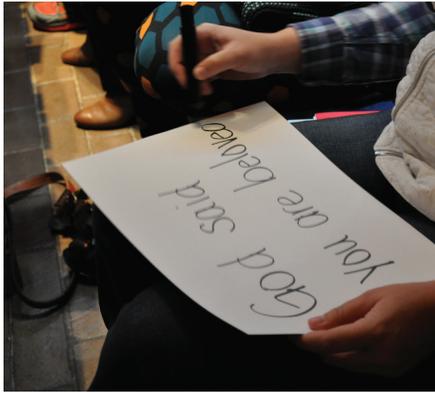
I think there are things that we're going to need to do to bring ourselves to more

prominence in the state in the coming weeks, months, and years. Some of that work is going to focus on the work that we are doing because it is just and right for us to do, but we need to share that we are doing it, because not everyone knows that it's happening. Like the work that we're doing with the Center for Reconciliation (see page 7). The CFR as an independent body was closed down over the last few years and is now a work that belongs to the diocese itself. It's something that answers to diocese and council, and thanks be to God for my staff who have worked to keep it going during the COVID shutdown. But now it's time for us to take that more seriously again. We have to speak about what our history is. We have to tell our truth. We have to learn our truth.

The community that surrounds us, particularly the African American community, the Indigenous people community in this state, they know the story. We need to know the same story they know so that we actually have something to talk with them about. And we can begin to think about what we can do to make sure those events never happen again, and that we can begin to set right the things that went wrong before us, so that in our day we can look with pride on the things that we did in our chance when we had the opportunity.



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We do a lot of work in climate change and climate justice that is not widely shared. And I have met young people around the state who are really interested in what we're doing. The diocese and efforts in the Providence Resilience Project, in the Climate Change Commission, in the kinds of local and statewide initiatives that are happening, and the work that we are continuing to do with the solar farm, and the way that we are having to face the legal and bureaucratic challenges that we have had to face in simply trying to bring renewable energy to this state. There's a story to tell, and I want us to tell that story.

To get us more prominence we have reached out to Canticle Communications, a communications firm. I've heard many of you say around the state that you would like to see stories about the ministries of the diocese of Rhode Island, ministries of the Episcopal Church, and ministries of your local congregations, more prominently placed in mass media of the state;

in the newspapers, online, on Facebook, even on TV stations. Well, we're going to take that more seriously as part of our work of evangelism, evangelism to the entire community, but particularly evangelism to young people, because it's those young people that we will be able to recruit, some of them at least, into leadership roles, both as lay leaders and as ordained leaders. And that gets us back to the very beginning of this conversation. How are we going to respond to the challenges we're facing? The clergy shortage, and the lack of young people that we have in our congregations?

Essentially, what we need to do is tell our story much more intentionally.

We do actually have something to share. And when I've talked to young people, they are amazed at the kinds of things that the Episcopal diocese is doing. They're amazed at the kinds of things that we believe. They want to know more about us. And so we have to put our little lamp on top of the bushel so that everyone can see it and can get the light of our faith into a conversation with their own doubt, and let our light help lighten their path as people before us lightened ours.

We have two big challenges, and essentially they boil down to two things. We need to tell the good news of what God has done in Jesus Christ, and we need to work to form people, form



Christians into a deeper faith. We need to form leaders who can take their place in the councils of the church and proclaim with all of us the fact that we know that we have a reason to hope. Our hope is in the Cross of Christ.

— *The Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely,  
Episcopal Bishop of Rhode Island*



## Changing of the Guard

During the Eucharist of Convention, the Bishop took a moment to honor the dedicated service of retiring Archdeacon Janice L Grinnell, bestowing on her the title "Venerable" as Archdeacon Emeritus. He then installed Grace Swinski as our new Archdeacon. Stay tuned for more about Archdeacon Grace and her plans.

# DIOCESAN CONVENTION 2022 ■

## Looking Ahead / Looking Back

In 1992, Bishop W. Nicholas Knisely faced 130 competitors when he applied for his first job as a newly ordained priest. The parish in question, located in a small borough in southwestern Pennsylvania, would probably close in about six months, by Knisely's estimation, but the applications poured in.

Today, Knisely told the diocese in his address to its 231st annual convention on November 5, the Episcopal Church is facing a clergy shortage. The rectorships of small but vital parishes in some parts of the country sit empty for years, and not even bishop searches receive 130 applications.

The diocese's responses to the clergy shortage and to the dwindling number of young people in Episcopal pews were the focus of Knisely's address, which occurred at a convention in which the diocese celebrated the bishop's first 10 years in office and heard encouraging reports about its financial stability.

While visiting parishes, Knisely said he is frequently asked, "Bishop, where are all the young people?" My normal response is to ask, "Why do you want them to be here?"

He poses the question, Knisely said, because he sometimes fears that older congregations want younger members simply to ensure the parish's future.

"People don't join congregations to solve your problems," he said. "They don't join a congregation to balance your budget . . . We have to realize the problems that young adults are having in this community that we can help them with."

The diocese is cultivating relationships with young adults by enhancing its commitment to campus ministries across the state, the bishop said. This is especially true at Brown University, where St. Stephen's Church is renewing its efforts to reach students; the University of Rhode Island, where Deacon Rob Izzi volunteers as an assistant football coach, and Rhode Island College, where the administration is newly supportive.

The clergy shortage and dearth of young people involved in the Episcopal Church are related problems, Knisely said, because the church, during the demographic heyday of Baby Boom vocations, discouraged young people from pursuing ordination, and has, more recently, cut back on resources available to campus ministries and to camp and conference centers, another proven source of clergy vocations.

Knisely said the diocese is fortunate that the Episcopal Conference Center, under the leadership of the Rev. Canon



Meaghan Brower, has remained vital and is strengthening its connection to the diocese. Nonetheless, he said, congregations in the diocese might eventually find themselves in situations increasingly common around the church, including calling part-time clergy, sharing a priest with other congregations, and not celebrating the Eucharist every Sunday.

Vicki Escalera, the diocesan treasurer, reported that the diocese's invested assets grew 10 percent to almost \$50.4 million in 2021, but would diminish in 2022 due to a downturn in the stock market. In 2023, she said, the diocese would operate on a balanced budget of \$4.4 million, one-third of which is spent on employee compensation and \$548,000 of which is given as grants to diocesan congregations.

"Our diocese is in good shape financially and we have a cushion built

up from prior years' surpluses and reinvested earnings," she said.

In other business, the convention approved several canonical revisions, elected members of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council, deputies to the 2024 General Convention, and several other commissions.

The convention Eucharist, held on the evening before the business session at St. Luke's, East Greenwich, featured a sermon by Diana Butler Bass, a noted Episcopal author. It was followed by a celebration at which the bishop, his wife, Karen, and their daughter, Kenney, were thanked for their service to the diocese during the bishop's first decade in office.

The 2023 convention will be held on October 27 and 28.

—Jim Naughton

## UPDATES ■ The Center for Reconciliation

James DeWolf Perry has detected a familiar pattern in his long years of working to help Americans confront the pervasive influence of slavery in their history.

“Time and again, white people find a way to deflect, to make this about other people and other institutions,” says Perry, who was nominated for an Emmy for his work as historical consultant on the PBS documentary film, “Traces of the Trade: A Story From the Deep North,” which documents his Rhode Island forebears’ role in the slave trade. “The real challenge is helping people to connect this history and its legacy to their own lives.”

That’s why Perry is encouraged by the most recent turn in the brief history of the Center for Reconciliation. Last month, Diocesan Council voted to disband the center as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and reconstitute it on firmer footing as a ministry of the diocese.

Bishop Knisely has appointed an advisory board to help the center, founded in 2015, to find its way forward, but part of its mission is already clear: The center will offer the antiracism training the Episcopal Church requires of its clergy and lay leaders, and may also promote

programming such as Sacred Ground, the 11-part video and reading-based series from the Episcopal Church that explores issues of racism in U. S. history.

“It has been wonderful to see how the diocese has been so persistent in making this happen,” says Perry, who was an advisor on the Sacred Ground project and will serve on the center’s new advisory board. “Obviously race is a deeply ingrained problem, and the kinds of issues the Center for Reconciliation focuses on are so challenging for people to think about. I credit Bishop Knisely in particular for his persistence and for offering us the clarity to keep us focused on what is needed and what will make a difference.”

The diocese initially conceived of the center as place for explorations into slavery, the slave trade, and its ongoing legacy, focused on Rhode Island’s involvement in the slave trade, with particular attention to the role of the Episcopal Church. The center had offices in the former Cathedral of St. John, and it refurbished the cathedral’s Synod Hall to host displays and exhibits, while also developing study guides and walking tours

“The center’s mission statement is still valid,” Bishop Knisely says. “Its work is to respond to the present consequences

of the history of the slave trade. We need to understand and then deal with consequences we see around us today. That requires training. It requires education. And it requires us to be aware of things like redlining and voting rights issues. I think there is advocacy work for us to get involved in in terms of some obvious inequities.”

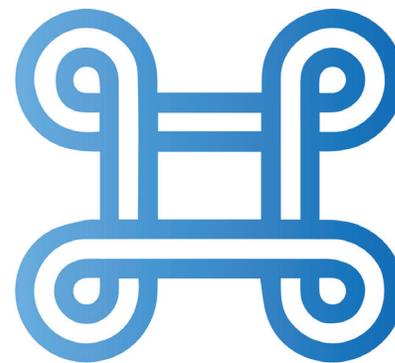
The onset of the pandemic coincided with leadership transitions at the center, but the Rev. Canon Dr. Dena Cleaver-Bartholomew, canon to the ordinary, and Kristin Knudson-Groh, the diocese’s director of communications, stepped forward to sustain its ministry.

“Fortunately, just before the lockdown we and the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau published a walking tour brochure of early Black history sites in Providence,” Knudson-Groh says. “And our

pandemic time webinars drew more participants than our in-person events. We had some good panels.”

The diocese will continue “trying to find ways to educate both ourselves and others about the history of slavery in Rhode Island and the Episcopal Church in Rhode Island,” Cleaver-Bartholomew says. “We need to do that in relationship with a community that has been and still is being actively harmed by slavery.”

Perry says the diocese is proceeding with the right attitude. “It’s not, ‘We are the good guys, and here is what you should do,’” he says. “The diocese is starting from the perspective that ‘We have things to acknowledge about our own history, and much to learn,’ and that makes it so much easier for all of us to proceed with humility.”



Center  
For  
Reconciliation  
Rhode Island

# Transitions: Clergy Profiles & New Calls

**The Rev. Ed Beaudrou, Vicar, St. Elizabeth's, Hope Valley; Priest-in-Charge, St. David's on the Hill, Cranston; Vicar, Church of the Holy Spirit, Charlestown**

*When the Bishop spoke at Convention about clergy serving multiple parishes, the Rev. Ed Beaudreau was one of those clergy. Fr. Ed has stepped up to take on two additional part-time positions.*

**Tell us about your decision to shift into full-time ministry.**

I have been a social studies teacher at Cumberland High School for over twenty years. I was blessed to teach some wonderful students and work with such a dedicated faculty. I was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Knisely in June of 2018. My original intention was to serve as a bi-vocational priest while continuing my vocation as a teacher. After COVID and some discernment, I felt moved by the Holy Spirit deeply as I prayed about the move to full-time ministry. I feel it important to dedicate myself to serving as a pastor to my parishioners while sharing the Eucharist in this time of clergy shortage. It is a blessing to serve the Church as a priest!

**What does it look like, so far, to serve three parishes? How does it work on a Sunday? On Christmas?**

I think serving as a high school teacher with multiple preparations and multiple classes is great preparation for this circuit-riding ministry. It is very important to keep a calendar of services

and good communication with the laity in the three churches that I serve. I am blessed by my amazing wife, Kerin, and her dedication to serve the Lord. Her love is my greatest blessing. I am also grateful for her great skills in communication through social media.

It does help that retired Deacon Christine Burton assists with Morning Prayer at St. Elizabeth's. It will be very important to the Church to ordain more deacons as well as priests. Training lay leaders is the other part of the equation.

Services of Holy Eucharist are shared between the three churches. There is a mix of Saturday and Sunday services along with a Thursday weekday Eucharist. Compline is crossposted every Tuesday before 7 p.m. It is a great way to reach all three churches. Christmas will be wonderful. I will start the celebration at St. Elizabeth's at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve followed by St. David's at 10 p.m. On Christmas Day I will officiate a service of Holy Eucharist at 9:30 a.m. at Church of the Holy Spirit. Members of the three churches are encouraged to attend the service that fits their family's needs, or they can see me at all three.

My inspiration for this model of ministry is the Rt. Rev. Jackson Kemper,

who served as the first missionary bishop of the Episcopal Church in the 19th century. He was the founder of Nashotah House, the seminary I attended in preparation for the priesthood. He traveled on horseback to the various churches of his multiple dioceses.

In the coming months I think flexibility is key for the Church. For myself, I can only do this with the grace of God, my wife, and a full tank of gas.

**Tell us a bit about yourself – your background, your interests.**

My full name is Edward G. Beaudreau, Jr. I've been married to Kerin since 1996, and am a father of two. I'm a native of Rhode Island and a former Roman Catholic. I'm a pet lover, with two dachshunds, Sadie and Gus; a greyhound, Kermit; and a cat, Noelle. My hobbies include reading history and biography. I love going to yard sales with Kerin, fishing for tautog with my father (Father Ed's father, Ed), and growing a yearly Vicar's Victory Garden. I graduated from Rhode Island College with a B.A. in history, and an M.Ed. in secondary education. I graduated from Nashotah House Theological Seminary with a Certificate of Anglican Studies.



## Changes

**The Rev. Virginia Army**, called as Priest-in-Charge, St. Andrew's by-the-Sea, Little Compton.

**The Rev. Spencer Reece**, called as Vicar, St. Paul's, Wickford.

**The Venerable Grace Swinski**, appointed Archdeacon.

**The Rev. Tanya Watt**, concluded as associate at St. Luke's, East Greenwich; called as Priest-in-Charge, Trinity Church, Cranston.

## Retirements

**The Venerable Jan Grinnell**, retired as Archdeacon.

**The Rev. Eileen Lindeman**, from Holy Spirit Church, Charlestown.

## Deaths

**The Rt. Reverend George N. Hunt**

**The Rev. Peter Whelan**



**The cross is my anchor**

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