

THE ELECTION OF THE
11TH BISHOP
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Diocesan Profile | 2026



Search Committee's Prayer

“ Almighty and ever-loving God, be constantly with us during this period of discernment. Guide us as we collectively identify the spiritual gifts and devotion to the church that we seek in the person who will become our next bishop. Hold open our hearts and minds, help us to see and to listen, and look with favor upon all who engage in this holy work. We ask this in the name of our savior Jesus Christ, sent by you to accompany us in ministry and shepherd us into life eternal. Amen. ”

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Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the spiritual and physical connection the Pennacook, Abenaki, and Wabanaki Peoples have maintained to **N'dakinna** (N-DAH-kee-nah) and the **aki** (land), **nebi** (water), **olakwika** (flora), and **awaasak** (fauna) which the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire strives to steward today. We also acknowledge the hardships they continue to endure after the loss of unceded homelands. We reaffirm The Episcopal Church's renunciation of the Doctrine of Discovery. We repent of these sins and take responsibility for working to repair these damages ecumenically. We seek to foster relationships and opportunities that strengthen the well-being of the Indigenous People who carry forward the traditions of their ancestors.



Letter from the Search Committee

Dear Friend in Christ,

We are grateful you are here.

As a Search Committee, we have spent months in prayer and conversation. We have surveyed and listened to clergy and laypeople—from small towns to the Seacoast, from rural parishes to urban neighborhoods. What follows is not an idealized portrait, but the profile of a diocese with real gifts, real struggles, and a deep longing for what comes next.

Our survey and our listening sessions reflected remarkable engagement and energy across the diocese. More than 700 people shared about belonging—about being known, accompanied, and sustained, not about programs or statistics. They spoke of faith communities that walked beside them through illness and loss, through doubt and return. Again and again, they named a church that showed up. Their witness moved us deeply.


This diocese has challenges, of course. Attendance has declined. Geography stretches us thin. Parishes and missions alike are discerning what it means to be the Church in a changing state. We do not soften these realities. Yet something enduring remains: people who believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ is worth everything—and a deep well of trust.

We pray for a bishop who falls in love with this place—its seasons and its silences, its stubborn independence and quiet warmth. A leader who proclaims a clear vision that draws us closer together and closer to God. Someone who walks beside us and leads not from a distance, but through presence: at a bedside, at a vestry meeting, at a rally, at a graveside. Someone whose prayer life is visible and theological convictions are clear and humble. We hope our next bishop sees possibility where others see decline—and helps us grow in vitality.

God still has dreams for us, and we want to step into this next chapter with the right companion. If something in these pages stirs your spirit—if you find yourself drawn not just to the role but to the people, the place, and the questions—we warmly invite you to discern whether God might be calling you here.

Faithfully,

The Bishop Search Committee
Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire



I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:6

“

We pray for a bishop who walks beside us and leads not from a distance, but through presence: at a bedside, at a vestry meeting, at a rally, at a graveside.

”

Executive Summary

The Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire is subsequently referred to as The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire (ECNH), reflecting current practice and identity. It is a geographically diverse, relationally grounded, and spiritually resilient community serving a largely rural state of approximately 1.4 million. Since its founding in 1819, the diocese has cultivated a style of **episcopal leadership rooted in presence, shared responsibility, and moral seriousness**. Our history—including the witness of Jonathan Daniels and the election of Bishop Gene Robinson—reflects a community practiced in engaging difficult moments with courage, humility, and gospel-centered discernment. This legacy has been carried out in the last 14 years through Bishop Rob Hirschfeld’s episcopate.

This profile emerges from that history and from extensive listening across the diocese through gatherings, conversations, and a diocesan-wide survey. Our people consistently describe a diocesan culture grounded in relationships, shared ministry, and a **faithful presence in local communities**. Ministry here is understood as belonging to the whole Church: laity, deacons, priests, and diocesan leadership.

Important new programs include: the School for Ministry, which offers local theological formation for those interested in lay or ordained ministry, especially those serving in bi-vocational ministry; Gospel-Oriented Communities, which gather people for new **expressions of worship**, relationship, and service; and the Micah 6 Commission, which supports **social justice**, reconciliation, and repair as expressions of gospel discipleship.



“ *We’re a plucky group, rock solid in our beliefs, our words and our deeds. We each wear multiple hats and can switch hats when needed. We care about each other...we are family!* ”

Diocesan Survey
February 2026

Diocesan House
Concord, NH

Like many dioceses, New Hampshire faces challenges. Attendance has declined, and many congregations navigate aging demographics, limited resources, clergy availability, and wide geographic distances. Yet **the diocese remains financially stable and marked by strong engagement, deep relational trust, and a tradition of courageous witness.** We bring our ministry to communities that are facing increasing socio-economic challenges.

We seek a bishop who is grounded in prayer, theologically serious, and deeply present—a leader who will strengthen unity across diverse congregations, cultivate new leaders, and show up at diocesan events and also in congregational life and community moments of joy and crisis. We hope for a leader able to articulate a clear vision for the future of the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire. Above all, we seek a **bishop who will walk with us** as we discern faithful and sustainable ministry in this place and this season.



Context and Culture

New Hampshire is a small state marked by **striking geographic diversity**. From the Seacoast and river valleys in the south to the Lakes Region to the White Mountains in the north, terrain and distance influence how people gather, travel, and relate. Congregations are often separated by miles of highway, forest, or water. Ministry here requires attentiveness to place.

The rural–urban divide is central to the state’s identity. About 42% of residents live in rural areas, making New Hampshire one of the nation’s more rural states. Southern cities and towns offer major employers and medical centers. Northern and western communities rely on strong civic networks and close relationships despite fewer institutional resources. In many places, bonds are sustained by the steady practice of showing up for one another.

New Hampshire life has six seasons: winter, **“mud season,”** spring, summer, fall, and **“stick season.”** Outdoor recreation is woven into daily life and reflects a deep relationship with the land and creation. Winters—often long—bring skiing and snowshoeing, along with the realities of snow removal and heating costs. Spring signals renewal, maple sugaring, and the inevitable mud. Summer draws people outdoors to hike, fish, boat, and gather along the Seacoast and in the mountains (mosquitoes included). Fall arrives with brilliant foliage, harvest festivals, and hunting season. The sparse weeks of stick season, between foliage and snow, carry stillness.

For four years, New Hampshire has ranked as the **nation’s healthiest state**, reflecting strong outcomes in nutrition, physical activity, educational attainment, and access to care. At the same time, the state faces challenges especially housing affordability, access to mental health care, and limited public spending. Rising housing, childcare, and healthcare costs—along with an aging population and uneven access to resources in rural areas are placing increasing strain on households and communities, despite the state's overall economic health.



With a relatively small and aging population—nearly one-fifth of residents are over 65—many communities balance the needs of older adults with those of younger families seeking stability and connection. The economy is shaped by health care, small business, manufacturing, tourism, and ties to Greater Boston. Income inequality is lower than in many states, yet housing and childcare costs strain families. Population growth comes primarily from in-migration, from neighboring states and immigrants from Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. Tourism also shapes the state, bringing more than 14 million visitors each year.

New Hampshire's culture values **civic independence and local governance**. Town meetings remain vital expressions of community life and participatory decision-making. New Hampshire's tradition of limited state government and local control results in constrained public investment and gaps in addressing complex statewide challenges such as housing, education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Arts and cultural life flourish across the state through museums, theaters, festivals, and historic sites. The arts here are **intimate and community-rooted**, sustained by volunteers and professionals, and help shape the character of towns and deepen the sense of belonging that many residents cherish.

The identity of the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire grows from this soil.



History of Our Diocese

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire has long lived a faith shaped by conscience rather than comfort. As a minority Anglican presence in a state marked by independence and self-reliance, the diocese learned early to practice faith without cultural dominance. That history continues to shape a culture **rooted in relationship, shared responsibility, and faithful presence**.

That spirit echoes New Hampshire's enduring motto, drawn from a Revolutionary War toast by John Stark. "Live free or die: death is not the worst of evils." The full sentence matters. It reflects a conviction that freedom, dignity, and integrity are worth real cost—an outlook that has shaped the diocese's understanding of Christian discipleship.

Organized in 1819, the diocese has never had a cathedral—a fact reflecting more than architecture. Episcopal life here has been intentionally dispersed, with leadership exercised through presence, shared responsibility, and trust rather than hierarchy. Bishops have been expected to travel widely, listen deeply, and lead relationally.



*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it.*

Psalm 24:1

At times in our history, faithfulness has required **clarity and courage**. One enduring example is Jonathan Daniels, an Episcopal seminarian from New Hampshire who was killed in 1965 protecting a young Black woman during the Civil Rights Movement. His witness continues to shape the Church's moral imagination and represents a diocese that refuses neutrality in the face of injustice and understands discipleship as costly love.

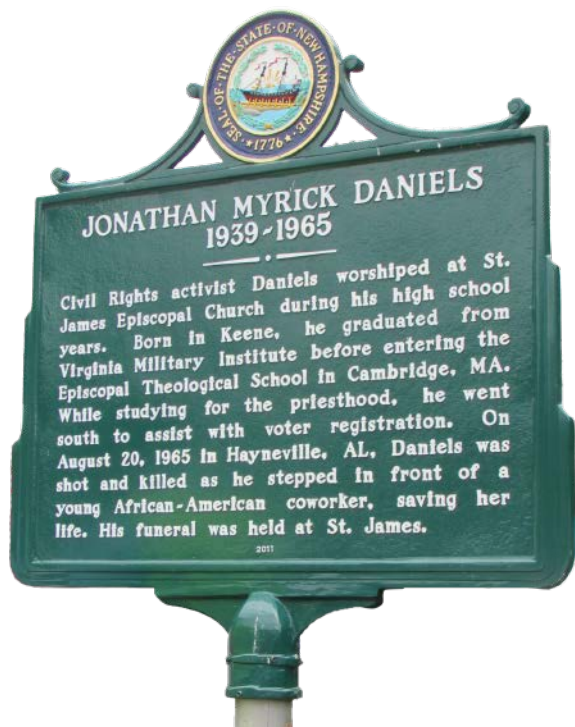
In 2003, the diocese elected Gene Robinson as its ninth bishop. We called him not because he would become the first openly acknowledged gay or lesbian bishop in the Episcopal Church, but because we knew and loved him as our Canon to the Ordinary. We understood that this decision would carry risk and would reverberate across the wider Church. Throughout his episcopate we worked alongside Bishop Gene to respond faithfully to the resulting controversies. We remain proud to have borne witness to the **open and affirming church** God calls us to be—even when faithfulness required courage.

We give deep thanks for the 14 years of the episcopate of Bishop Rob Hirschfield, whose steadfast commitment to presence has nurtured the bonds of trust that sustain our common life. He led a diocese facing the realities of small and struggling parishes with clarity and courage, fostering faithful innovation, including the embrace of vocational deacons, and strengthening our commitment to formation and Gospel-centered missions. Through his leadership, the diocese is prepared to step forward with resilience, deeper unity and hope.

Justice, mercy, and humility—held together—continue to guide the diocese's discernment as it seeks to live faithfully in this place.

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Micah 6:8



“

Our diocese's faith refuses neutrality in the face of injustice and understands discipleship as costly love.

”

Listening Sessions: Who We Are, In Our Own Words

This understanding of our diocesan identity emerges not only from our history but from extensive listening sessions across the state. In gatherings representing congregations large and small, rural and urban, people consistently described a church shaped by shared experience and faithful presence. What follows reflects not an idealized vision, but what people have named as life-giving, sustaining, and hopeful for the future.



A Community of Belonging

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire understands itself as a community shaped by deep belonging, shared ministry, and faithful presence. Welcome is intentionally practiced and sustained through relationships that form the heart of our spiritual life. Our faith is expressed through worship that connects theology to daily experience beyond church walls. Welcome here is not transactional or temporary; it is nurtured through companionship—through choirs and vestries, small groups and shared service. People speak less about programs and more about relationships: being known, accompanied, and sustained through all seasons of life.

Worship and Liturgy

Worship and liturgy are central to diocesan life. Congregations value worship that is rooted in Episcopal tradition and attentive to the realities people carry into the pews. Liturgy is experienced as formative: a place where theology meets daily life and where people are renewed and sent back into the world for service.



Shared Ministry

Ministry in the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire is understood as shared and mutual, with many pathways for discernment and service. The gifts of lay people, deacons, and priests are recognized, named, and trusted. People value a culture that invites participation rather than gatekeeping.



Faith in Action

Faith expressed through love in action is central to our outward-facing life as a church. Service to neighbors, public witness, and engagement with social justice issues are understood as integral expressions of worship and discipleship. Many speak with pride about belonging to a church willing to show up publicly, speak with moral clarity, and act with courage, while remaining grounded in prayer and pastoral care.

Supportive and Responsive Diocesan Culture

Underlying all of this is a diocesan culture that seeks to enable rather than control. The diocese is most valued when it acts as a responsive partner in mission—supporting local discernment, encouraging experimentation, and offering resources without imposing uniform solutions. The diocese understands its work as tending the vine with patience, adaptability, and shared care. Growth is understood not as something to be forced or measured solely by scale, but as something to be nurtured attentively over time—faithful to place, people, and the movement of the Spirit.



Youth Voices

In listening to our youth, we hear hope not disengagement. Young people across the diocese are deeply relational and spiritually curious. They are drawn to worship that is rooted in tradition yet honest about the unstable, unjust and uncertain world they are navigating.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5

Clergy Life in This Diocese

Clergy describe a distinctive culture that is collegial, trust-centered, relationally grounded, and capable of holding complexity without fracture. They value being known personally, supported pastorally, and trusted to exercise their ministry with appropriate autonomy. Leadership is experienced most faithfully as partnership rather than control, marked by prayer, presence, and mutual respect.



Clergy place high value on learning together and navigating tension faithfully. They value leadership that listens deeply, remains open to discernment, and journeys with them through ambiguity and change rather than resolving differences too quickly or directing solely from authority. Gospel-grounded Episcopal theological leadership, moral clarity, and pastoral sensitivity matter deeply.

Ministry among clergy is understood as shared across orders and contexts. Clergy affirm the essential role of deacons, the centrality of lay ministry, and the value of diocesan staff who serve as responsive and competent partners in mission. In this diocese, innovation often grows from faithful persistence rather than abundant resources. Ministry is shaped by prayer, constrained resources, rural and small-parish realities, and a willingness to hold tradition and adaptation together in service of the gospel.

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire understands leadership as embodied presence: showing up for one another, especially in moments of transition, challenge, and hope.



“

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire understands itself as a community shaped by deep belonging, shared ministry, and faithful presence.

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Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.

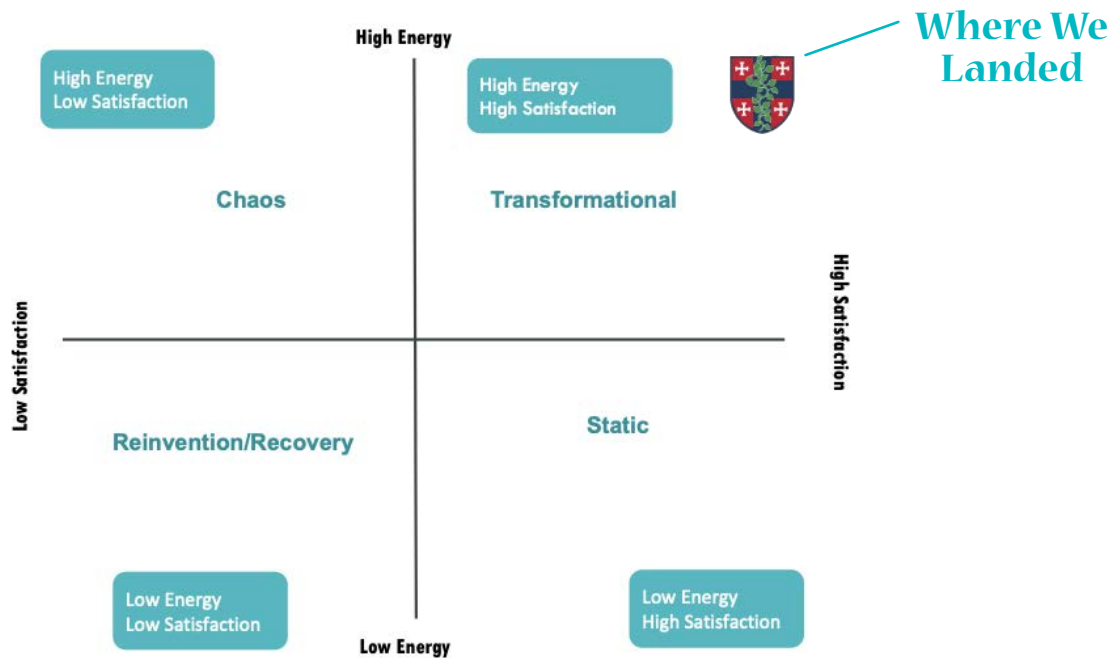
1 Corinthians 12:4-6

Diocesan Survey: What We Heard

Alongside the listening session conversations, a diocesan-wide survey offered a complementary perspective on how members understand the health and future of the diocese. People across the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire were invited to participate in a survey conducted by Holy Cow! Consulting. Six hundred eighty-eight respondents, representing nearly every congregation in the Diocese, participated. Their responses were benchmarked against comparable regional church bodies, offering insight into both what is typical and what is distinctive about the life of the diocese.

Satisfaction and Energy

Survey results revealed strong satisfaction with the current life of the diocese and a notable level of energy and readiness about its future. Compared with other jurisdictions, the Diocese of New Hampshire falls within the “Transformation Zone,” a category indicating **readiness to pursue growth, innovation, and wider impact in ministry.**



Three Priorities Emerged for the Years Ahead

Participants consistently identified three areas where diocesan leadership and support will be especially important in the years ahead:

1. Congregational Growth

Equipping clergy and lay leaders with strategies and resources to reach new people and strengthen local congregations.

2. Congregational Leadership

Providing guidance and partnership with churches that are struggling so they may rediscover vitality and mission.

3. Healthy Churches Across the Region

Developing thoughtful processes for discernment about how congregations can remain vibrant and sustainable throughout New Hampshire.

Qualities of the Next Bishop

Across these responses, a picture began to emerge—not of an idealized leader, but of the particular kind of bishop our people hope to call. Respondents described a leader who:

- Provides clear direction, vision, and strategic alignment
- Leads with humility and a willingness to learn what is already working well
- Can guide a creative and adaptive system toward shared goals
- Strengthens community across congregations
- Demonstrates innovative ways to support congregational vitality
- Helps people use their gifts and leadership most effectively
- Communicates clearly and connects the work of the diocese across communities



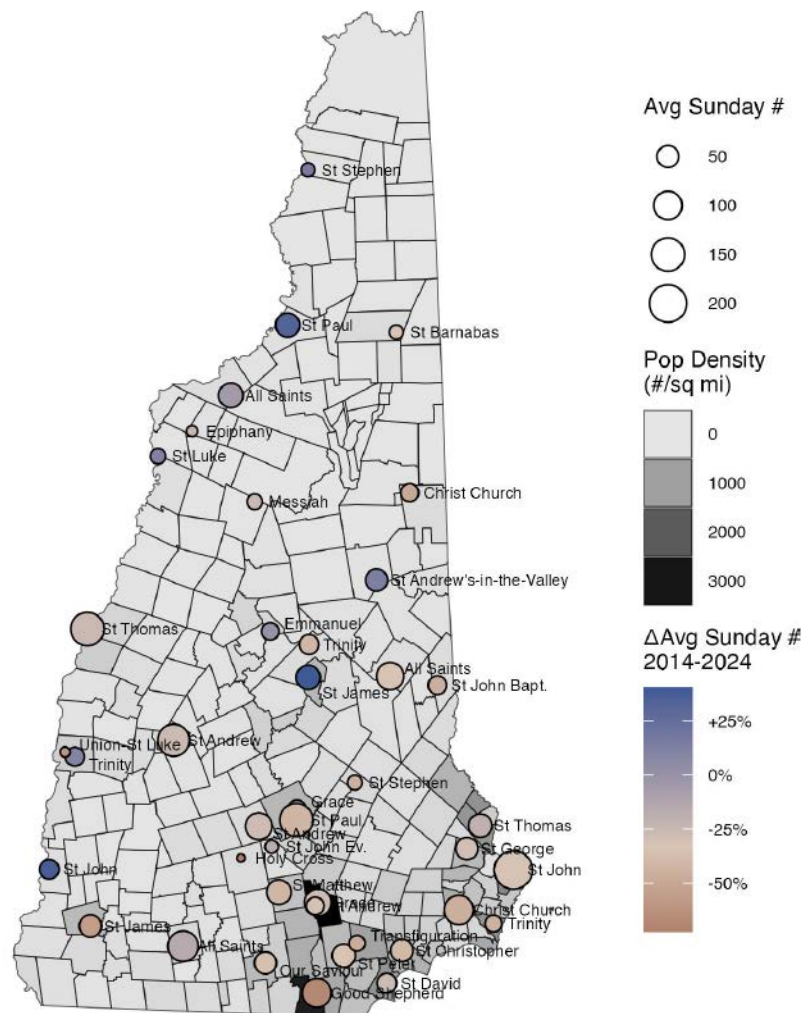
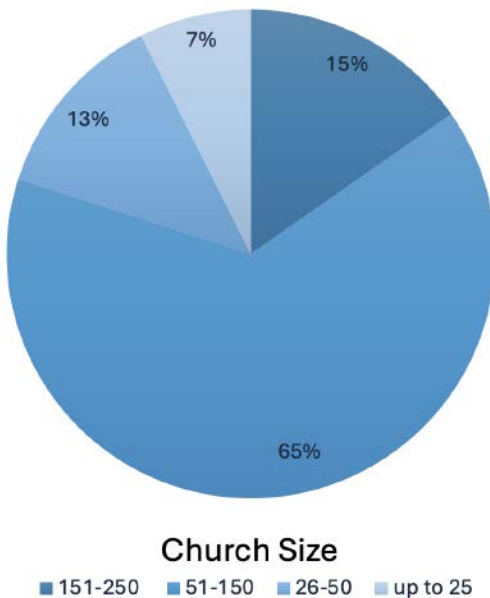
Diocesan Snapshot

Congregations

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire includes 41 congregations, 9 summer chapels, and several Gospel-Oriented Communities.

Over the past episcopate, several congregations have combined or entered collaborations with Lutheran congregations. On the average Sunday about 85% of parishioners attend churches that have fewer than 150 people, and only two congregations have an Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) between 151 and 250.

The Diocese is organized into 6 Convocations based on geography, and numbering from 6 up to 10 congregations in each. Each Convocation gathers at least several times a year, some more often. Delegates to Diocesan Convention meet to discuss upcoming resolutions, as well as a variety of other topics. Additionally, they support one another in times of transition and challenge, as well as rejoicing together.



New England Connections

The Episcopal Church of New Hampshire maintains active relationships and shares programs with the New England neighbor dioceses of Province 1. Through Province 1 coordination, the diocese is connected to many Provincial Ministry Networks including those focusing on youth, formation and Becoming Beloved Community.

Diocese of New Hampshire

Figure: Average Sunday Attendance (ASA), 2014–2024

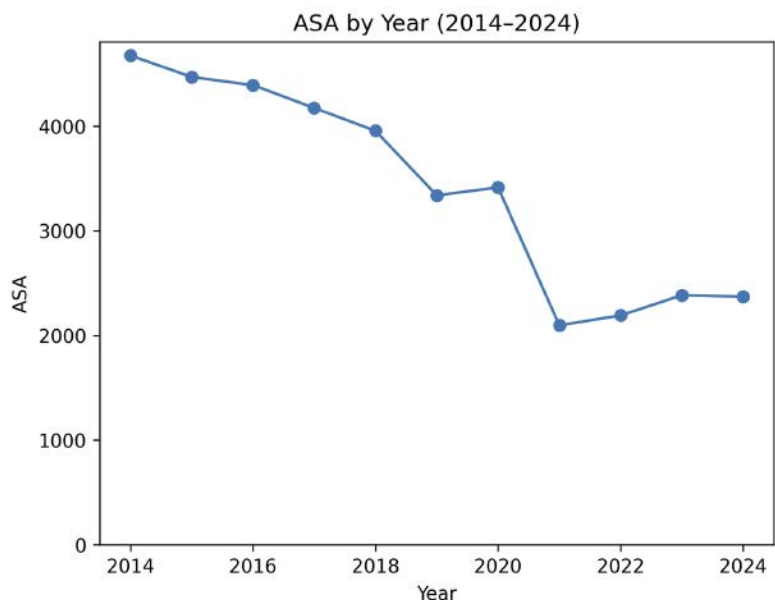


Figure 1. Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) by year, 2014–2024.

Average Sunday Attendance

The graph shows overall Average Sunday Attendance from 2014 through 2024, highlighting the magnitude of decline during the pandemic years and the pattern of stabilization thereafter.

Clergy

Ministry in the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire is shared among clergy and lay leaders alike. Over the last decades, the number of clergy in full-time positions has declined, and many congregations rely on part-time or shared ministry. Our clergy reflect diverse racial, cultural, and gender identities and bring a wide range of experience to their work.

A small but vibrant diaconate plays an essential role in the life of the diocese, embodying the Church’s call to service and helping connect altar and world. The chart shows all the clergy in New Hampshire, many of whom are not in full-time ministry. Retired priests and deacons remain deeply engaged, contributing significantly to ministry across the diocese.

Designation	Canonically Resident	Licensed	Total
Congregational leadership (e.g. Rector, Vicar, Priest-in Charge)	32	0	32
Other Priests	24	14	38
Deacons	9	3	12
Retired Priests	63	16	79
Retired Deacons	6	1	7
Total	134	34	168

Financial Overview

The 2026 budget reflects a collaborative effort to sustain the diocesan mission and ministry while preparing for episcopal transition. Projected revenue is \$2.21 million and total expenses \$2.20 million, resulting in a modest operating surplus. Core revenue comes from parish fair share contributions and investment income, supporting diocesan programs, clergy development, youth formation, and congregational vitality, while making targeted structural adjustments to achieve a balanced budget.

The diocese and related organizations have endowments that are a significant source of revenue, accounting for more than 40% of diocesan revenue in 2025. The recently completed Deep Roots, New Life Capital Campaign raised more than \$2.5 million to strengthen key ministries including: the School for Ministry, the Bishop’s Curate Fund, the Ministerial Development Fund, the Gospel-Oriented Communities Fund and the Coaching Fund.

Our Diocese in Action: Programs



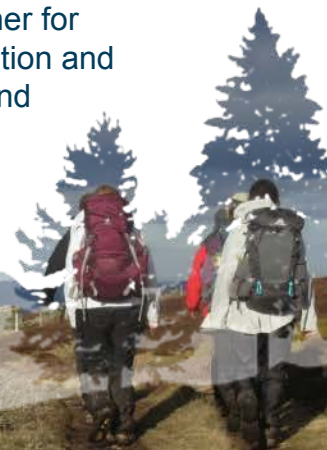
The School for Ministry

The School for Ministry forms priests and lay leaders to serve where and how they are called within the Episcopal Church, with a particular emphasis on local and context-based formation. Initiated in 2013, the program is grounded in Common Prayer, Life in Community, and Context and Continuity in Ministry. In 2026, the school began offering free theological education for lay people across the diocese.



Campus Ministry

There are two Episcopal schools in New Hampshire; St. Paul's School in Concord and Holderness School in Holderness. The bishop serves as President of the Board at Holderness. The Diocese of New Hampshire supports campus ministries at the University of New Hampshire, and Dartmouth. These ministries offer spaces where students gather for worship, shared meals, conversation and prayer, seeking to explore faith and discover God's presence in their academic and personal lives.





Community-Based Faith Formation

Like many of our churches with youth formation, St. John's Church in Portsmouth welcomes more than 40 children to Sunday School each weekend. To deepen connection between worship and daily life, this parish partners with Nooney Farm in nearby Kittery, Maine. There, children experience the rhythms of the liturgical year alongside the cycles of planting and harvest.

Journey to Adulthood (J2A) Pilgrimages

The Journey to Adulthood program, for youth in grades 9–11, invites young people to theologically and spiritually reflect on their lives and society while building Christian community. At St. Thomas Church in Hanover, the program prepares youth for Confirmation and culminates in a pilgrimage—recently to West Virginia and Ireland—designed to encounter God beyond their local community.



Stations of the Cross

The annual Good Friday Stations of the Cross is a walking pilgrimage in Manchester. Starting at St. Andrew's Church, participants stop to pray and reflect at 14 historic and contemporary locations—from the Granite State Bridge, through the mill yard, and back to the west side. For those unable to attend, a Facebook Live video is posted simultaneously.

Our Diocese in Action: Local Communities

Across New Hampshire, congregations are experimenting with **creative expressions of ministry** that respond to the needs of their communities. A few examples illustrate the spirit of this work.



Dinner Bell

All Saints', Littleton

Like many of our dinner ministries across the state, the Dinner Bell is faith in action. Each Tuesday, volunteers meet at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Littleton, NH to cook and serve a hot, free meal to neighbors in need. The effort, launched in 2018, is supported by more than 20 organizations—including civics groups, churches, schools, hospitals, local businesses, and families. In 2025, the group serve served nearly 4000 hot meals.

Redevelopment Project | Christ Church, Portsmouth

The Gospel-Oriented Community of Christ Church in Portsmouth is reimagining how its resources can serve the wider community. With support from the diocese, the parish's redevelopment plan includes donating the building to HAVEN, an organization which supports survivors of domestic and sexual violence; dedicating part of the property to the Portsmouth Housing Authority for workforce housing; and constructing a new, right-sized church building. During construction the congregation is worshiping with neighboring Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, embracing this season as a time of pilgrimage, discernment, and renewed imagination.

A Place for Us

Saint Barnabas, Berlin

A Place for Us is a large community space in the lower level of Saint Barnabas, designated for social connection and warmth. It opened in 2022 as a warming center due to rising electricity and heating costs, and has continued as a gathering spot, especially during cold and sometimes isolating winters. On any given day, you can find people playing guitar, doing art, or visiting.



Supporting Mental Health | St. Stephen's Church, Colebrook

Each October, St. Stephen's Church in Colebrook hosts an annual walk supporting the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), a nationwide organization dedicated to raising awareness and resources for mental health care. Parishioners and community members walk to raise funds that are directed to the New Hampshire chapter of NAMI.



Contemplative Action Network Multiple Congregations, Manchester

Launched in 2025, the Contemplative Action Network is a Gospel-Oriented Community rooted in cultivating community, practicing accompaniment, and integrating contemplative prayer with action. This Episcopal-Lutheran collaboration, housed at the local YMCA, offers weekly worship and seasonal liturgies both within and beyond church buildings. The network focuses on accompanying immigrants and refugees, supporting those experiencing homelessness and housing instability, addressing hunger, and walking alongside people in recovery from trauma and addiction. The ministry also seeks to engage communities often under-served or alienated from church life, particularly young adults, students, and LGBTQ+ communities.



Rite Now | All Saints' Church, Peterborough

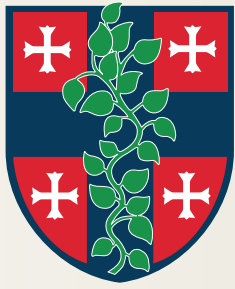
All Saints' Church in Peterborough offers Sunday Eucharist in three forms: Rite I, Rite II in the stone church, and Rite Now in the fellowship hall. Rite Now began more than 30 years ago as a participatory expression of worship that draws on supplemental liturgical resources and music, with attention to expansive language, silence, and contemplation. Instead of a formal sermon, worshippers engage in a guided reflection on the scripture readings. Members of the congregation share in leading the readings and prayers.



Prayer Garden | Grace Church, East Concord

Originally created with support from the diocesan Care of Creation Committee, this Prayer Garden started as a small pollinator garden but has grown into an outdoor sanctuary. With the addition of an altar after the pandemic, it is now a gathering space for Sunday Holy Eucharist.





EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF NH



Our Diocese in Action: Online Communities

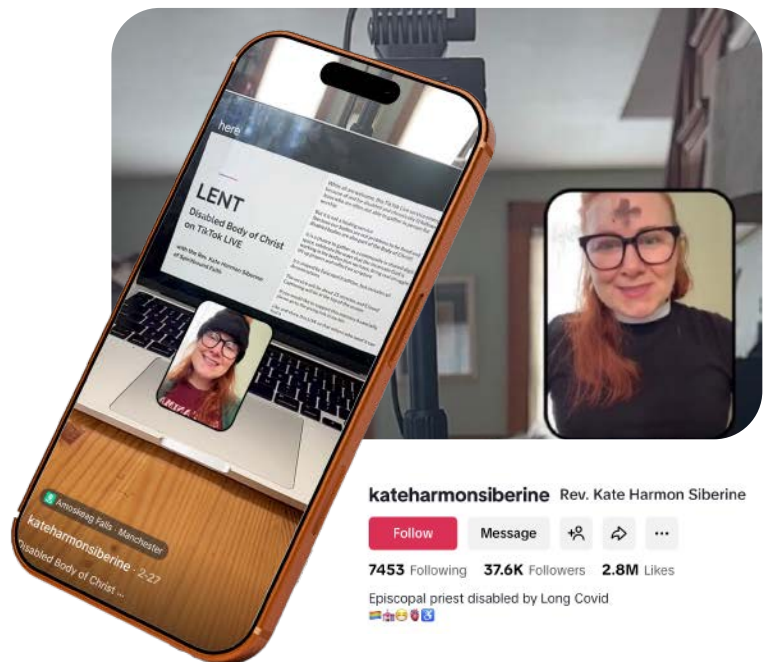


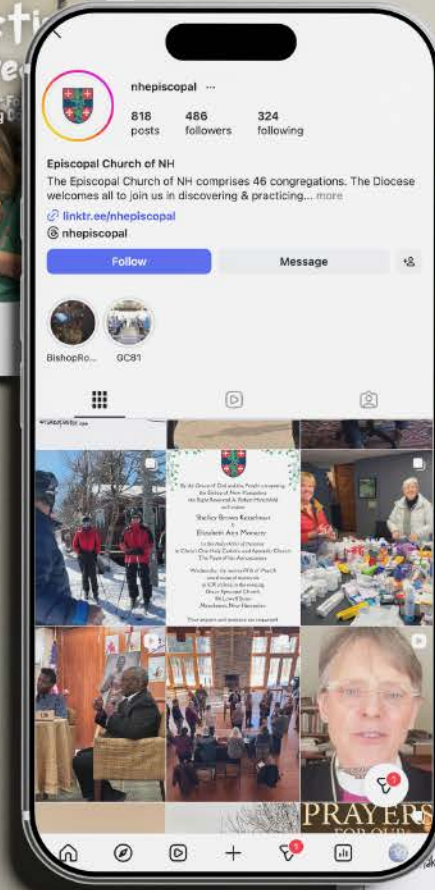
SpiritBound Online

As a virtual sanctuary, SpiritBound gathers spiritually curious folks at the intersection of faith and life. Focusing on curiosity-contemplation-conversation, it is the digital gathering of the "Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement." Contemplative Prayer services are Sunday evenings on Facebook Live. People from across the diocese and outside the walls of the traditional church gather to worship together.


The Disabled Body of Christ TikTok Live

While all are welcome, this TikTok Live (Wednesdays at 9 a.m.) is primarily for disabled and chronically ill followers of Jesus. Led by a diocesan priest, the scripture-based service celebrates how God works in the bodies we have, voices everyday struggles, and lifts up prayers. Over the past three years, thousands of participants have experienced connectedness in a way not possible in person.

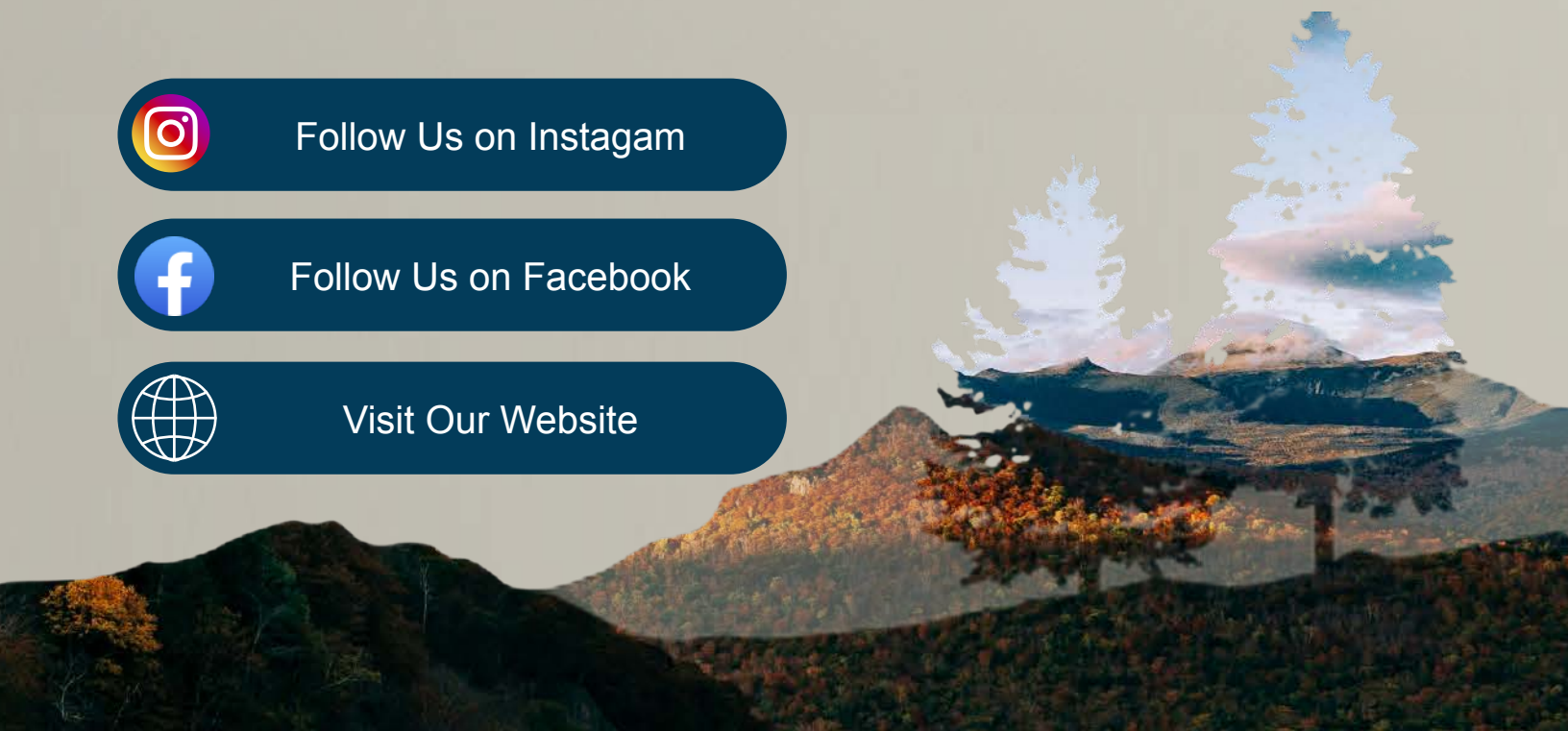




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Our Diocese in Action: The Wider World

Global Missions Committee

As reductions in federal funding affect international aid programs, the call to global engagement has taken on renewed urgency. In response, the diocese established the **Global Missions Committee** in 2025 to strengthen parish partnerships with international dioceses and ministries.



Cuba

For more than twelve years, Christ Church in Exeter has organized pilgrimages to Cuba, enabling more than 40 parishioners—including many young people—to build relationships with the Episcopal Church in Cuba through shared worship, service, and fellowship.

In 2025, they delivered critical over-the-counter medical supplies as pictured here.

Haiti

St. Andrew's Church in Hopkinton partners with the Head to Head School in rural Belle Vue, Haiti. Through a formal parish ministry supported in part by the diocesan Global Missions Committee, St. Andrew's provides financial support and sustains a relationship of encouragement and learning in a region with limited educational resources.

Angola

The Church of Our Saviour, in Milford, shares a spiritual and prayer partnership with St. Andre's Anglican Church in Ondjiva, Angola. In the past, diocesan members have traveled there, witnessing both hardship and vibrant, joyful worship. Together with Global Missions, the congregation supports efforts to replace the church's zinc building and fund nutrition training initiatives.





Where Is God Calling Us

We believe the Holy Spirit is drawing us forward—not simply sustaining what is, but opening what is yet to come. The Spirit is shaping our common life and pulling us more deeply into the reconciling mission of Christ. This is not a moment to hold our ground. It is a moment to move.



Across our listening sessions and survey responses, a bold and hopeful conviction has taken hold: God is not calling the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire to become something unrecognizable—but to become more fully, more courageously, and more faithfully ourselves. The future is not elsewhere. It is being born from who we already are.

We are choosing to deepen our life as a community of genuine, practiced welcome—where belonging is not simply proclaimed but embodied and pursued. We commit to strengthening the relationships that sustain us, expanding participation in shared ministry, and building communities where people are known, accompanied, and sent into the world with purpose. We believe that in the years ahead, this diocese will be known as a place where people are genuinely welcomed and loved.



We are stepping into a future where worship and action are inseparable. The Church we are becoming is one in which liturgy forms disciples for daily life—where love in action flows naturally and urgently from the altar into neighborhoods, workplaces, and public life. This integration is not optional. It is the heartbeat of our witness.

New forms of ministry are already taking root across our diocese—creative partnerships, renewed uses of space, expanded digital presence, and fresh approaches to formation and fellowship. We are not waiting for permission to innovate. We are naming this momentum, investing in it, and letting it grow. Our call is to keep learning together, take faithful risks, and respond boldly to the spiritual hunger of our time.

We are committed to a renewed clarity of Gospel witness—grounded in Scripture, prayer, and deep listening, and expressed with both humility and conviction. In a complex and often divided world, we will be a Church that speaks not with noise or partisanship, but with spiritual depth, moral courage, and pastoral presence. We will not be silent where the Gospel calls us to speak.

We are **investing in shared ministry** across all orders, because the vitality of our future depends on the gifts of lay leaders, deacons, and priests alike. We will expand pathways for discernment, deepen formation, and equip leaders to serve with creativity and faithfulness in contexts that are diverse, changing, and full of possibility.

From the Seacoast to the North Country, we are a diocese shaped by distance and diversity—and we are turning that into a strength. We are building a more connected, collaborative, and mutually supportive body. **Distance will not define us.** Shared purpose will.

We step into this next chapter not with certainty about every outcome, but with confidence in the God who is already ahead of us. Like New Hampshire itself—resilient, independent, shaped by season and silence—we carry forward what has sustained us and open ourselves to what the Spirit is making new. The invitation before us is not to preserve the past, but to participate fully in what is being born—trusting that as we deepen our life in Christ, strengthen our bonds of belonging, and act with courage and imagination, the Spirit will lead us into a future marked by vitality, faithfulness, and hope.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever.

Ephesians 3:20-21

RELATIONALLY
GROUNDED

CREATIVELY
ADAPTIVE

GOSPEL
CENTERED

SPIRITUALLY
COURAGEOUS

Our Challenges

Our diocese faces many of the challenges experienced across the wider Church, and those particular to New Hampshire. The following are among those we recognize most clearly.



Generational Participation and Public Trust

Younger generations have largely disengaged from institutional religion, driven less by theology than by questions of trust and credibility. Many young people seek a Church that offers belonging, depth, and courage—a place where hard questions are welcomed, where leadership is steady, and where discipleship is taken seriously.

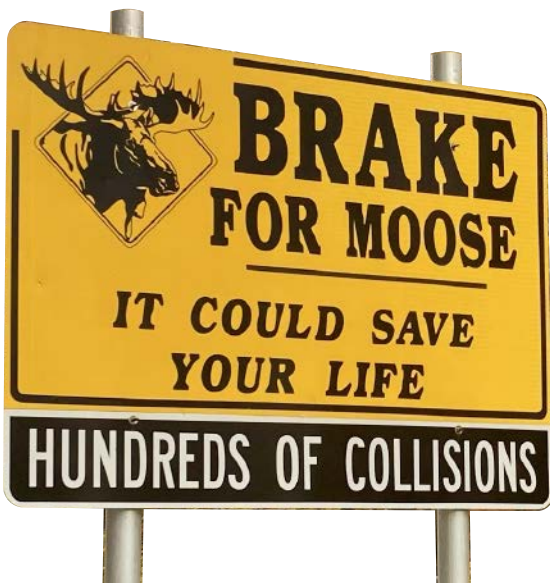
Growth

Over the past decade, Average Sunday Attendance has declined significantly. This mirrors broader national trends yet is felt locally and unevenly. Some congregations demonstrate vitality, adaptability, and faithful creativity, while others struggle to sustain critical mass of people across generations.



Geography, Context, and Equity

From the Seacoast to the North Country, our diocese spans diverse contexts. Smaller and rural congregations face challenges of distance, sustainability, clergy availability, isolation, and limited access to resources. We seek to strengthen relationships across geography so that ministry is context-sensitive and support is equitable.



Communication, Visibility, and Shared Understanding

Congregations experience the diocese in different ways. Some describe diocesan staff as responsive and collaborative; others seek clearer communication and greater clarity around roles, decision-making, and support. The diocese is often described as a “best kept secret,” doing meaningful work not always visible or widely understood. This presents an opportunity to deepen shared understanding, transparency, and connection across our common life.

While the diocese has taken courageous stances, particularly around LGBTQ+ inclusion and social justice, this witness often remains invisible beyond church walls. We are called to communicate more clearly who we are and why our witness matters.



From Aspirational Welcome to Practiced Inclusion

The diocese is committed to welcome and inclusion, yet we recognize areas where practice has not always matched aspiration. Some women clergy and those in formation face challenges. Many LGBTQ+ people remain unaware that the Episcopal Church is open and affirming. People with disabilities and other marginalized voices are not always fully included. This moment invites deeper listening to move from intention to practice

Leadership Transition and Identity

Strong trust has been built within the diocese. As we prepare for a new bishop, we also recognize the importance of distinguishing enduring values from leadership styles. The challenge is to remain rooted in trust, presence, and collaboration while making space for future leadership to embody those values in new and faithful ways.

Sustainability

Financially, the diocese remains stable, but our resources—financial, human, and emotional—are finite. The challenge is not simply maintaining what exists but nurturing sustainable ministry that is faithful, life-giving.

What We Are Learning

Through these challenges, our diocese is learning that faithful discernment requires patience, humility, and courage. Such vitality often emerges from relationship rather than scale, grows through presence and transparency, and must be practiced, not assumed. We believe that God continues to call us—**not to replicate the past, but to respond faithfully to the present with hope, creativity, and love.**

As we prepare to call a new bishop, we recognize that each season of leadership brings distinct gifts and perspectives. Our hope is not to replicate what has come before, but to build faithfully on the strengths of our common life as we continue following where the Spirit leads.

An Invitation to Discern with Us

We are a diocese shaped by deep belonging, courageous witness, and resilient hope. As we seek our next bishop, we do not look for perfection or a particular leadership style, but for someone drawn to faithful ministry and ready to discern God’s call alongside us. We hope to walk with a bishop deeply rooted in prayer, Scripture, and contemplative practice, whose faith naturally connects theology with everyday life.

Presence matters deeply in our diocese. We are drawn to leaders who are accessible, attentive, and genuinely loving—those who build trust by listening and by showing up consistently, especially in moments of challenge, grief, and transition. We hope for a shepherd for both laity and clergy—someone who delights in personal connection and models prayerful presence, openness, and spiritual trust.

We seek a bishop able to hold the creative and complex tensions of our life together with **grace**, **steadiness**, and **theological depth**. Grounded in the gospel, a leader who will offer thoughtful and courageous guidance—someone clergy and congregations can rely on in complex times. We seek a bishop who can help us move forward with clarity and shared purpose—guiding a creative, adaptive diocese toward common goals. We pray for someone able to articulate a compelling vision for the future of the Church in this place while humbly listening to what is already bearing fruit. Drawing wisdom from what has sustained us, we hope our next bishop will help us imagine and pursue what God may be calling forth.

Finally, we hope for a leader who can **strengthen community** across the diocese, encourage innovation that supports congregational vitality, and helps people discover and use their gifts for ministry. Clear communication, a commitment to connection, and the ability to help diverse congregations recognize their shared mission will be essential.

Characteristics We Value

We are drawn to leaders who embody:

- Wisdom
- Integrity
- Generosity
- Humility
- Emotional maturity
- Resilience
- Steadiness
- Presence
- Joy

We value unity rather than uniformity and leadership that fosters trust, psychological safety, and mutual respect.

We trust that the Spirit who has sustained this diocese will guide us and our next bishop as we continue walking together in faith.



Application Process & Timeline

Thank you for taking the time to read our profile and begin getting to know the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire. If, as you read, you sensed the gentle prompting of the Holy Spirit, we invite you to enter this process prayerfully and consider joining us in discerning whether God may be calling you to walk with the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire as our next bishop.

To apply is not simply to submit materials, but to enter a shared season of discernment with a community seeking to follow Christ faithfully in this place.

As we undertake this holy work, we hold all who may be discerning this call in prayer. We ask that you pray for us as well, that together we may listen faithfully for God's guidance and discern how the Spirit is calling this diocese to serve Christ's mission in New Hampshire and beyond.

How to Apply

Please submit a complete application package no later than 12:00 p.m. noon on May 11, 2026.

Your application package should include the following:

- A cover letter containing your personal vision or creed
- A one-page outline of your ministry experience
- Contact information for your current and past bishops
- A current resume/CV
- Signed release statement
- Your Vocation Hub or OTM profile
- Links to any public social media accounts
- A transcript and/or recording link to a recently preached sermon
- Responses to the following three questions
(no more than 500 words for each essay response)

O God, who calls your people into service, guide the hearts and minds of all persons discerning a profound call to join the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire in our ministry and mission. We ask your blessing on everyone we encounter as we seek our 11th Bishop, and we trust in your Holy Spirit to inspire and embolden them throughout this search process. In the name of your son Jesus we pray. Amen.

Essay Questions (up to 500 words)

1. Describe how you have discerned your call to serve as Bishop of New Hampshire. What experiences, prayers, and conversations have led you to this moment? What excites about joining in our life and serving God’s mission in our diocese?
2. For you, what are the top three most pressing issues or trends facing The Episcopal Church today that require our prayer and attention? How is your ministry focused relative to these?
3. What sustains you in your relationship with Jesus, and your family and friends? Describe your prayer life, support network, and life-giving activities outside the Church that ground you in your daily life?

Search Timeline

The following timeline reflects the Search Committee’s anticipated schedule for this discernment process. While dates may shift slightly as the process unfolds, we are committed to communicating updates promptly and transparently with all candidates.

DATE	MILESTONE
May 11, 2026	Application deadline — all materials due by 12:00 P.M. Noon
June 15 – 30, 2026	Candidate interviews conducted via Zoom
August 7 – 8, 2026	Discernment retreat with finalists
Late August 2026	Finalist slate announced to the diocese
September – October 2026	Meet & Greet — candidates introduced to the diocese
October 23 – 24, 2026	Electing Convention
March 6, 2027	Ordination and Consecration of the 11th Bishop of New Hampshire

Throughout this process, we seek to listen for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as together we discern who is called to help lead this community of faith as it continues to grow in belonging, deepen its life in Christ, and serve God’s mission in the world—rooted in worship, strengthened by community, and sent into the world in hope.

Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

It is the policy of the Episcopal Diocese of New Hampshire (The Diocese) to be an equal opportunity employer. To that end, The Diocese is committed to providing equal opportunity for all employees without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, military status, or any other characteristic protected under federal, state, or local laws. Each person is evaluated based on skill and merit. The Diocese's Equal Employment Opportunity Policy applies to all aspects of employment, including recruitment, hiring, job assignments, promotions, working conditions, scheduling, benefits, wage and salary administration, disciplinary action, termination and social, educational and recreational program. The bishop shall act as the responsible leader in the full implementation of the diocese's Equal Employment Opportunity policy. The diocese is also committed to complying fully with applicable disability discrimination laws, ensuring that equal opportunity in employment exists for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. Reasonable accommodations will be available to all qualified disabled employees/applicants so long as the potential accommodation does not create an undue hardship on The Diocese. An employee who believes that s/he may require a disability-related accommodation should discuss this matter with the bishop or their supervisor.

Participation in this discernment process does not establish a right to employment, licensing, ordination, call, deployment, or election.

Questions

For questions regarding the application process, eligibility, or timeline, please contact:

The Rev. Timothy Hodapp, Search Consultation
timothy.hodapp@gmail.com

For questions about the overall search process, please contact:

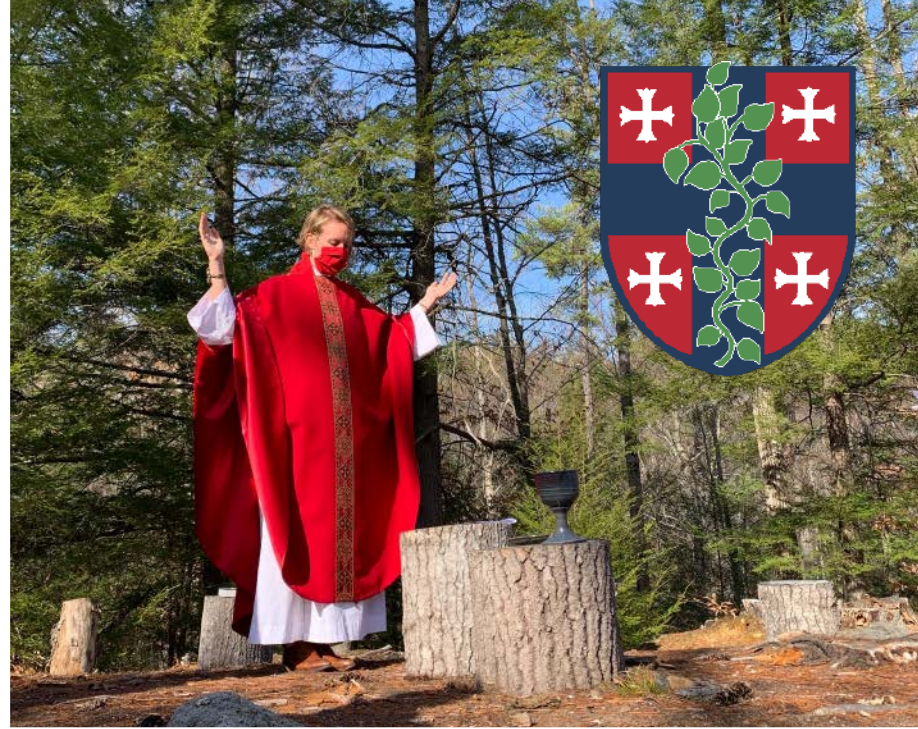
Ms. Sarah Ambrogi, Lay Co-Chair
ssambrogi@gmail.com

The Rev. Kate Atkinson, Clergy Co-Chair
revkotty@comcast.net

[APPLY NOW](#)

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)





We look forward to meeting you!