


REUNIFICATION DISCERNMENT



*The Episcopal
Diocese of Bethlehem*



The
**EPISCOPAL CHURCH in
CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA**



A resolution adopted at the 2022 Conventions
of both Dioceses called for
“a period of intentional exploration”
regarding the “future reunification as one diocese.”

Standing Committees appointed a ten member committee
to work with our bishops on this process of discernment.

DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Diocese of Central PA

- The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan, Bishop
- Ms. Drew Dorgan, SC President
- The Rev. John Harwood, Council of Trustees
- The Rev. Jim Jenkins, At Large Member
- Mr. George Park, At Large Member
- Mr. Michael McAuliffe, Esq. - Chancellor (Vice)
- The Ven. Jane Miron, Chaplain

Diocese of Bethlehem

- The Rt. Rev. Kevin Nichols, Bishop
- The Rev. Douglas Moyer, SC President
- The Rev. Sidnie Crawford, Diocesan Council
- The Rev. Rodney Conn, At-Large Member, SC
- Ms. Ginnie Schoonov, At-Large Member
- Mr. Ty Welles, Esq, Asst. Chancellor
- The Rev. Chris Sutton, Chaplain

Discernment is our Framework

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

(Romans 12:2)

THREE POSSIBLE OUTCOMES of this DISCERNMENT




We stay independent



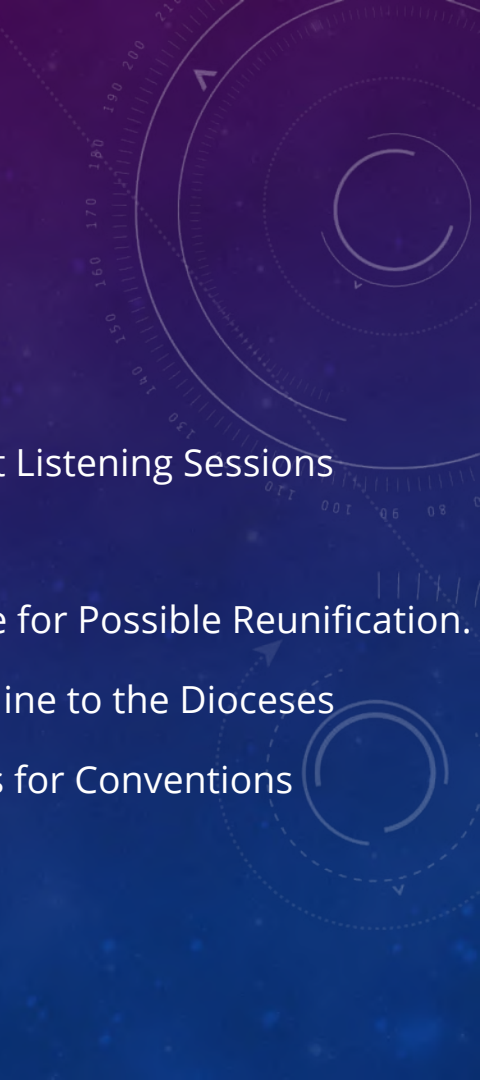
We collaborate in
ministry & share
resources



We become one



PRAYERFULLY EXPLORE, ANALYZE, LISTEN, and DESIGN

- Phase I: Explore (Gather Data)/Host Listening Sessions
 - Phase II: Collate and Analyze Data
 - Phase III: Consider Model & Timeline for Possible Reunification.
 - Phase IV: Present a Model and Timeline to the Dioceses
 - Phase V: Prepare Recommendations for Conventions
- 

Pennsylvania History

- 480 million years ago – Appalachian Mountains began to be formed
- 30,000 years ago – climate changes cycle glaciation and rains
- Delaware River - "Lenape Wihittuck", which means "the rapid stream of the Lenape"
- Susquehanna River - may come from the Lenape siskëwahane meaning "Muddy River" or it may come from the Lenape Sisa'we'hak'hanna, which means "Oyster River"
- Ohio River – from Seneca Ohi:yo' meaning "Good River"
- Erosion exposes natural resources, forms gaps, and fertile valleys

Migration

- 16,000-19,000 years ago – First Peoples began to arrive
- Lenni Lenape “Original People” settled along the Delaware
- Susquehannock “People of the Longhouse” settled along the Susquehanna, by 1700 were nearly wiped out by disease and battle
- By 1789, all tribal lands had been ceded to Pennsylvania

European Settlers

- Dutch and French fur trappers
- Swedes settle along lower Delaware
- Welsh settlers arrived
- William Penn land grant 1681
- First wave – Philadelphia, Chester, Bucks, and Delaware Counties
- Second wave – Berks, Lancaster, and Lehigh Counties

Today's Demographics

- In 2020, Hispanic residents in Lehigh and Berks counties were 23-25% of the residents.
- In Pennsylvania and in most of the state's counties, the youth population, or those under 18 years of age, was more diverse than adult population, (56.4% vs 40.3% diversity index, respectively).*

*PA State Data Center Report, US Census Bureau, source

Industrialization

- 1600's – Shale and clay to make brick
- 1700's – Iron, lead, other metal ores; white pine to produce ships' masts
- 1761 – Coal mining begins in PA
- 1849 – Williamsport Boom completed – lumber on the Susquehanna
- 1859 – Drake's oil well in Titusville, PA
- 1865 – Bessemer steel process brought to US
- 1950's – Uranium and thorium
- 21st century – natural gas

The Episcopal Church

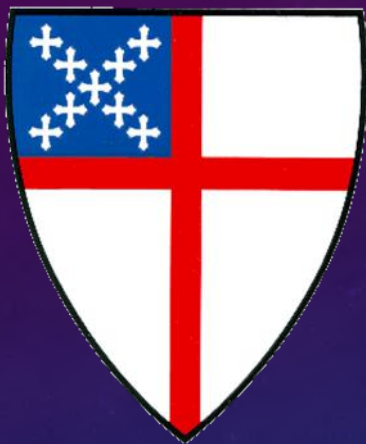
- Diocese of Pennsylvania – 1785
- Diocese of Pittsburgh – 1866
 - Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania – 1910
- Diocese of Central Pennsylvania – 1870
 - Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and Harrisburg – 1904
 - Central Pennsylvania adopts Bethlehem name – 1909
 - Harrisburg reclaims Central Pennsylvania name – 1971

Some Numbers

- Communicants
 - 1904 – two dioceses totaled 18,918
 - 1925 – Bp. Talbot retirement: had grown to 29,898 (58% growth in two decades)
 - 2021 – two dioceses total 17,254
- We are smaller now than when we split nearly 120 years ago

Other Episcopal Dioceses & Reunification

- Duluth and Minnesota reunified - 1944
- Chicago and Quincy reunified in - 2013
- Texas and Fort Worth reunified - 2022
- The three dioceses of Wisconsin voting on reunification - October 2023
- Eastern Michigan and Western Michigan voting on juncture - March 2024
- Northeast Pennsylvania and Western New York sharing a bishop
- Dioceses of Northern Indiana and Indianapolis are in discernment
- Maine-Vermont-New Hampshire: bishops are diocesan in their home diocese and serving as assisting bishops in the other two while the dioceses discern ways forward



Diocese	Parishes	Sq Miles	Year Formed
Montana	34	147040	1904
Arizona	80	113990	1959
Nevada	34	110572	1970
Colorado	93	104094	1887
Wyoming	44	97813	1968
Minnesota	111	86936	1857
Nebraska	52	77358	1868
West Virginia	60	24260	1878

Quiet Reflection

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

(Romans 12:2)

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Stewardship of Resources: Organization, Governance, & Finance

WHAT WE ARE PRESENTING TODAY

1. Basic Diocesan Statistics
2. A Financial Picture of Each Diocese
3. Diocesan Staffing Configurations
4. Some Patterns and Trends

WHAT WE WILL STUDY NEXT PHASE

1. Diocesan Constitution & Canons
2. Governance Structures
3. Fair Share
4. Models, Budget & Timelines for possible reunification.

GEOGRAPHY & POPULATION

Diocese of Bethlehem

- 14 counties
- Population – 2,465,678
- Area – 7,834 square miles
- Ten counties with pop > 150,000
- Four counties with pop < 100,000

Diocese of Central PA

- 24 counties
- Population -2,609,628
- Area – 16,902 sq miles
- Six counties with pop > 150,000
- Ten counties with pop < 100,000

2022 PAROCHIAL REPORT DATA

Diocese of Bethlehem

- 57 churches Filing
- 7,242 Membership
- 1,851 Avg. Sun. Attendance
- \$4,904,842 Plate & Pledge

Diocese of Central PA

- 61 churches Filing
- 8,403 Membership
- 2,436 Avg. Sun. Attendance
- \$8,258,772 Plate & Pledge

STAFF

DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM

Total: 7.125 FTE

- Bishop (1)
- Chief Operating Officer (1)
- Canon for Racial Reconciliation and Community Engagement (1)
- Northern Canon Missioner & Assistant (1)
- Southern Canon Missioner & Assistant (1)
- Bookkeeper (1)
- Missioner for Finance & Administration (1)
- Safe-guarding/Communications Consultant (Contractor) (.125)

STAFF

DIOCESE OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

Total: 8.5 FTE

- Bishop (1)
- Canon for Finance and Operations (1), Bookkeeper (.5)
- Canon for Communications and Events (1)
- Communications Assistant (.40)
- Executive Assistant to the Bishop (.75)/Assistant for Events (.25)
- Canon for Children Youth & Families and Safeguarding Administrator (.75)
- Associate for Congregational Vitality & SBF and Interim Transition Officer (.75)
- Dean of Stevenson School for Ministry (1), Associate Dean SSFM (.25)
- Archivist, Receptionist, HR Administrator (.5), Property Manager (.40)

DIOCESAN BUDGETS 2021 & 2022

	2022	2021	2022	2021
	<i>Bethlehem</i>		<i>Central Pennsylvania</i>	
Income				
Parish Support	1,036,840	1,112,247	1,201,783	1,392,478
Investment	217,144	252,053	742,707	373,584
Other	62,832	108,997	750,822	373,136
Total Income	1,316,816	1,473,297	2,695,312	2,139,198
Expenses				
Salary & Benefits	917,364	632,538	1,015,074	1,129,525
Total	1,372,831	1,011,901	2,668,381	2,187,568

Note: Central PA data for 2022 has not been audited, audit for 2021 is underway.

DIOCESAN ENDOWMENTS

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018		Average
<i>Bethlehem</i>							
Investments							
Diocese	14,724,605	17,505,065	15,426,253	13,989,961	11,764,192		14,682,015
Custodian - Parish	17,205,316	20,826,020	18,705,529	17,849,370	15,155,662		17,948,379
<i>Central Pennsylvania</i>							
Investments							
Diocese	9,722,935	12,009,864	10,735,038	11,263,071	10,090,997		10,764,381
Custodian - Parish	15,494,272	19,669,969	17,144,953	15,965,072	13,683,990		16,391,651

Note: Central PA data for 2022 has not been audited, audit for 2021 is underway.

Investments are reported at fair market value.

FAIR SHARE & TRENDS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Average
Bethlehem						
Plate & Pledge (1)	5,511,558	5,539,154	5,139,757	4,994,771	4,904,842	5,218,016
Parish Support to Diocese	1,057,425	1,097,907	1,115,807	1,112,247	1,036,840	1,084,045
Central Pennsylvania						
Plate & Pledge (1)	7,804,720	7,947,203	7,726,451	8,074,758	8,258,772	7,962,381
Parish Support to Diocese	1,319,172	1,385,132	1,371,285	1,392,478	1,201,783	1,333,970



Blue = pledge and plate, Orange = Parish Support to Diocese

(1) Plate & Pledge income received by parishes based on parochial reports

LOANS/INDEBTEDNESS

Neither Diocese reports any significant indebtedness other than funds held on behalf of the parishes.

The background is a dark blue gradient with a subtle pattern of white dots. Overlaid on this are several faint, light blue geometric elements: concentric circles, arcs, and a compass rose with degree markings (40, 150, 160, 170, 180, 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 250, 260).

Missions, Special Programs, and Related Organizations



STEVENSON SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY

SHAPED BY FAITH

NEW HOPE

GRACE MONTESSORI

READING EPISCOPAL HOME

EPISCOPAL COMMONS

EPISCOPAL TOWERS

SLATE BELT EPISCOPAL HOME

ALLENTOWN EPISCOPAL HOME

HONAMAN HOUSE

PATTERNS & TRENDS

- Both dioceses are very similar in terms of membership, number of parishes, staffing and financial resources.
- There is a similar mix of rural and urban churches.
- The most significant difference is geographic size with Central Pennsylvania being nearly twice as large.
- The staffs are similar in size, but organized differently. Bethlehem has a more decentralized model. Central PA uses a more centralized approach and also includes staffing for the Stevenson School.

PATTERNS & TRENDS

- In the most recent Parochial Data Report, both dioceses had a significant decrease in Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) in the past ten years. Bethlehem's was 48.5% (3,594 to 1,851) and Central PA's was 46.3% (4,536 to 2,436). This is slightly higher than for the Episcopal Church overall which decreased 43.2%.
- Financial resources for the two dioceses are similar. As of 12/31/22, Bethlehem had \$14.7 million in investments and held an additional \$17.2 million for its parishes. Central Pennsylvania had \$9.7 million in investments and held an additional \$15.5 million for its parishes.

Called to Respond

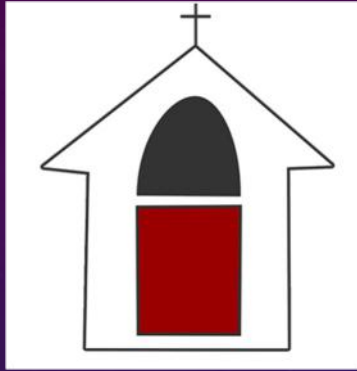
Both Dioceses are responding to the reality of declining numbers, actively addressing the call to steward our resources, and innovating ways to support vibrant ministry throughout our regions.

- The Diocese of Bethlehem introduced a reconfigured Convocation and Assembly model that fostered a decentralized approach to leadership and recently implemented a Canon Missioner model to foster care and collaboration among church leaders and congregations. They also recently launched two new Latinx congregations in Bethlehem and Allentown.
- The Diocese of Central PA introduced “Shaped by Faith,” a three-part initiative to create a Diocese best shaped to serve God’s mission. Church leaders are given new tools and new ways to help congregations relate to their community, understand their resources, and create sustainable ways of being church.

Quiet Reflection

*"As each has received a gift,
use it to serve one another, as good
stewards of God's varied grace."*

(I Peter 4:10)



Congregational Ministries Survey

Responses from Parishes
27 Bethlehem & 38 Central PA

Summer Listening Sessions

Five sessions in June & July
About 200 participants from across both dioceses.





**WE HAVE MUCH
IN COMMON**

WE ARE EPISCOPALIANS

liturgical beauty Prayer BCP welcome Sacraments engaging familiar community acceptance social justice openness Scripture acolytes heart cradle participatory inclusion loving social issues friends service reason/thought mind



FORMATION IS
A STRENGTH OF
BOTH DIOCESES

THE STEVENSON SCHOOL for MINISTRY

The Stevenson School for Ministry in Central PA provides theological education for all Episcopalians wanting to explore and prepare for their lifelong learning and vocational call.



GATHER

Gather is The Diocese of Bethlehem's annual spring formation event for lay and clergy leaders.





OUTREACH
AND SOCIAL
JUSTICE are
PRIORITIES
IN BOTH
DIOCESES

RACIAL JUSTICE

Both dioceses and their parishes are dedicated to addressing systemic racism and fostering the creation of Beloved Community in the church and society.



Ministerios Latinx

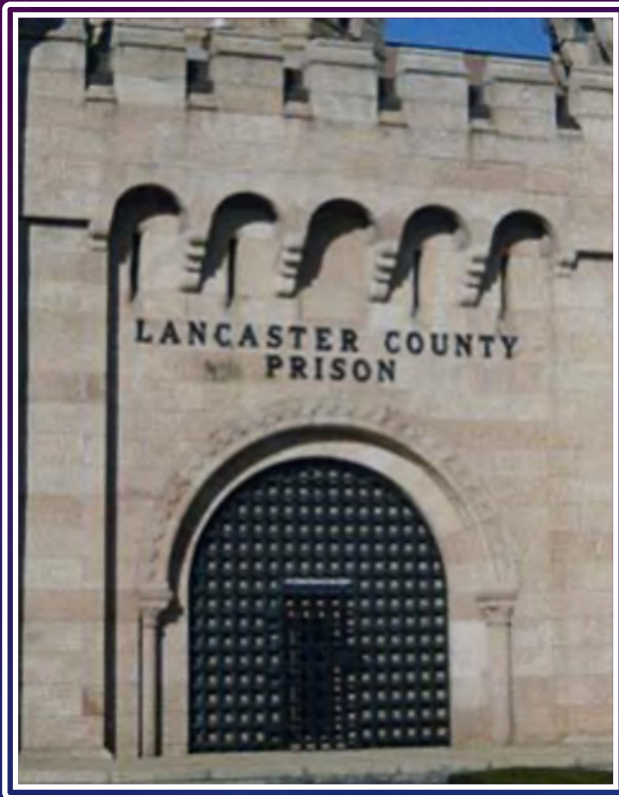
The Diocese of Bethlehem launched two Latinx congregations, Parroquia Catedral de la Natividad (Cathedral Church of the Nativity) in Bethlehem and La Iglesia de Cristo el Mediador (Church of the Mediator) in Allentown.





LGBTQIA+ MINISTRIES

Both dioceses and their parishes are committed to LGBTQIA+ inclusion and justice efforts and participate in PRIDE celebrations across the region. The Diocese of Bethlehem recently opened The LGBT Center of Greater Reading.



PRISON MINISTRY

The Diocese of Central PA has an active prison ministry. Laity and clergy are visitors and penpals with people who are incarcerated in local prisons.



SAVING LIVES: ENDING GUN VIOLENCE

Bishops Scanlan and Nichols and members of both dioceses are involved in church and state-wide initiatives against gun violence.



FEEDING & SHELTER MINISTRIES

Feeding and/or shelter ministries are a top priority in nearly every parish reporting in the survey.



A word cloud centered on the word "Music" in large orange letters. Surrounding it are various ministry names in different colors and sizes, including "Safety Food" in blue, "Adult Formation" in orange, "Racial Justice" in green, "LGBTQ+" in orange, "Shelter" in green, "Creation Care" in blue, "ECW" in orange, "Children & Youth" in orange, "Global Partnerships" in orange, "Anti-Gun Violence" in green, "Thrift Shop" in orange, "UBE" in green, and "Daughters of the King" in green. The background is a dark blue gradient with white circular patterns.

Safety Food
Daughters of the King
Adult Formation
Racial Justice
LGBTQ+
Shelter
Creation Care
ECW
Music
Children & Youth
Global Partnerships
Anti-Gun Violence
Thrift Shop
UBE

Ministries with Highest Involvement from Survey

ADDITIONAL PARISH MINISTRIES & PARTNERSHIPS

AA and NA Support

Chamber of Commerce Involvement

Community Sponsored Events

Community Blood Banks

Community Food Banks

Community Garden

Cheyenne River Mission

Church World Services

Diaper Banks

Grant Programs

Habitat for Humanity

Meals on Wheels

NAACP

Nursing Home Support

Outdoor Food Blessing Boxes

Pilgrimage & Mission Work

Prison Ministries

Relief Programs

Shelter Programs

St. Stephens Episcopal School

UCC Participation

YWCA

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS COMMITTEE

- Continue to analyze data and feedback
- Focus on feedback and areas brought forward for greater attention
- Consider models for further collaboration and possible reunification
- Remain in conversation with other dioceses in discernment
- Continue to engage and seek input from across our dioceses
- Prepare recommendations for the 2024 Diocesan Conventions

2023 RESOLUTION

- Extends the period of intentional exploration of the future reunification
- Continues the work of the appointed Reunification Discernment Committee as charged
- Authorizes the bishops to continue engagement of the consultant
- Includes both diocese contributing an equal amount to the process, with neither contributing more than \$25,000 between the 2023 & 2024 Diocesan Conventions
- Continues the Committee's charge to report its findings quarterly to each Standing Committee, to seek input from and address questions raised by members of both dioceses, and to prepare recommendations regarding reunification to be made at Conventions in Fall 2024

Quiet Reflection

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

(Romans 3:20-21)

TABLE QUESTIONS

- What are your reactions to this presentation?
- What positive outcomes do you see as a result of this shared discernment process?
- What would you like this Committee to explore as they continue?

