

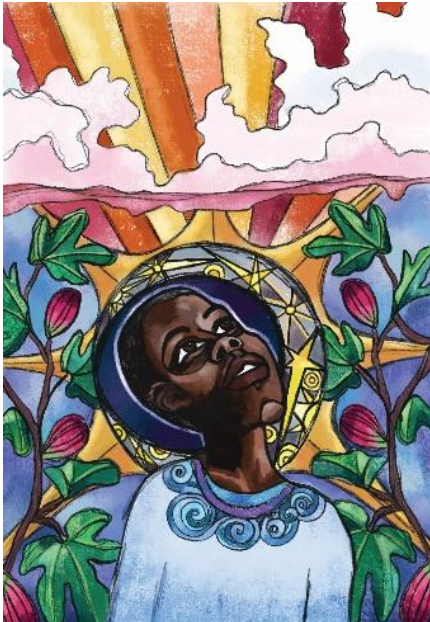
# DISCERNING MINISTRY: *A Guide to Calling out Leaders*

January 2023

*The Catechism in The Book of Common Prayer teaches that the ministers of the Church are all the baptized. We are all called to bear witness to Jesus Christ and, according to the gifts given us, carry on Christ's work in the world.*

***How do I know to which ministry God is calling me?*** We come to know and embrace our ministries by listening to God and to our friends in faith, by seeking and discerning God's will in prayer, and by testing our calling by taking steps in faith. Often, knowledge of God's call to us comes through others who name and affirm our gifts for ministry.

***Are people "elected" to ministry?*** Most ministries—whether at work, home, in the Church, or elsewhere in our lives—are not formalized by any special process. The most important "election" is our choosing or "electing" to carry out our ministry. Within the Church, however, there *are* several ministries that the congregation elect people for, including **Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Vestry Members, and Delegates** to Deanery and Diocesan Convention.



*Raise Your Head*  
by Lauren Wright Pittman  
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***What is the Vestry?*** The Vestry of St. Mary's is made up of twelve people, elected to two-year terms by the congregation to serve as a trustee body that works to assure that the best interests of the local church are being managed on a regular basis. Like all trustees, they have dual responsibilities: to carry out a set of legal mandates as officers of a chartered corporation and to be decision-makers committed to engagement in ministry and mission that is loving, liberating, and life-giving.

***What are the responsibilities of the Vestry?*** "The basic responsibilities of the Vestry are to help define and articulate the mission of the congregation; to support the Church's mission by word and deed, to select the Rector, to ensure effective organization and planning, and to manage resources and finances."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*, p. 540.

Together, Vestry Members share the responsibility to:

- DISCERN God's will for the congregation through prayer, study of Scripture, and conversation;
- EXERCISE LEADERSHIP in counsel with the Rector and staff;
- MOBILIZE RESOURCES to support those carrying out the Church's various ministries; and
- REPRESENT the diversity of practice and opinion in the parish

***What are the responsibilities of a Vestry Member?*** St. Mary's Vestry is organized by ministry areas, or teams. Each Vestry Member is elected to lead and develop a particular ministry area and usually chairs a team working in this ministry area.

Our Vestry meets monthly for two to three hours and gathers several other times throughout the year for planning sessions or retreats. In between scheduled meetings, Vestry Members are actively working to build up our parish life.

***What are the qualifications to be on the Vestry?*** Vestry Members should be firmly rooted in their own spiritual journey, committed to living out – with God's help – their own baptismal promises. (See *BCP*, p. 301-305.) They should demonstrate leadership skills and respect for diversity and difference of opinion. In addition to these qualifications, to be elected to the Vestry of St. Mary's, a person must:

- Be a baptized member,
- Be at least 16 years old,
- Receive Holy Communion in this Church at least three times in the preceding year, and
- Be regular and faithful
  - in corporate worship and
  - in working, praying, and giving for the spread of God's kingdom

***How often do we elect Vestry Members?*** St. Mary's Vestry positions are two-year terms that rotate so that we elect some members each year and other members continue. The following positions are currently filled and will **NOT** be elected this year:

- Senior Warden (Sarah Stanley)
- Stewardship Development (Al Alvarez)
- Caring Ministries (Maggie Wilkinson)
- Community-Building Ministries (Maggie McKay)

Vestry Members are eligible to serve two full terms in addition to any partial term that they are appointed to fill in the event of a mid-year vacancy.

### What Vestry positions are we electing now?

This year, several positions have someone serving now who is eligible for election. (Others may also be nominated for these positions.)

Those serving who may be re-elected are:

- Adult Christian Formation: Eric Backman
- Outreach Ministries: Sara Stoops
- Youth Ministries: Sandra DeHart Mayor

Other positions are open for nomination and election:

- Junior Warden
- Children's Christian Formation
- Early Childhood Ministries
- Growth and Communications
- Worship

The following chart summarizes the Vestry positions and the rotation of current members.

<b>CURRENT VESTRY MEMBERS <i>and</i> VESTRY POSITION ROTATIONS</b>				
Position ( <b>Bold Blue = electing this year</b> )	Current Term Began February	Next Term Begins February	Position Currently Held By	Nominated for Reelection?
Senior Warden	2022	2024	Sarah Stanley	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Junior Warden</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Marcus Carter</b>	Term limited out/ not eligible
<b>Adult Christian Formation</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Eric Backman</b>	Standing for election
Caring Ministries	2022	2024	Maggie Wilkinson	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Children's Christian Formation*</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Erin Ballantyne*</b>	
Community-Building Ministries	2022	2024	Maggie McKay	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Early Childhood Ministries</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Arianne Morrison</b>	Term limited out/ not eligible
<b>Growth and Communications</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Thad Hunter</b>	Term limited out/ not eligible
<b>Outreach Ministries**</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Sara Stoops**</b>	Standing for election
Stewardship Development	2022	2024	Al Alvarez	<i>n/a</i>
<b>Youth Ministries**</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>Sandra DeHart Mayor**</b>	Standing for election
<b>Worship</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	

\* Erin is unable to complete this term; a person will be elected to complete her term.

\*\* Sara and Sandra were elected to fill vacated seats; they are standing for election for a full term.

**“THE MOST IMPORTANT ‘ELECTION’ IS OUR CHOOSING OR ‘ELECTING’ TO CARRY OUT OUR MINISTRY.”**

## MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION: VESTRY

*Each person has a unique style and brings unique gifts to leadership. What follows is a general outline of the responsibilities and opportunities of this ministry position.*

- **Vestry Responsibilities-All Vestry Positions** *(About 10-13 hours/month)*
  - **General Responsibilities** *(About 6 hours/month)*
    - Help guide and oversee the financial, legal, and ministry work of the parish. Work on special projects or tasks in your area of ministry and share in the work of various Vestry subcommittees, such as Nominating Committee, Personnel Committee, etc. *(1-2 hours/month)*
    - Prepare for Vestry meetings by reading and organizing materials and attend meetings of the Vestry, held on the second Monday of each month, traditionally from 6:30-9:00 P.M. *(2.5 hours/month)*
    - Attend the Annual Vestry Retreat *(1-2 overnights, during early February or March)* and any special trainings or work sessions held throughout the year *(usually 2-3)*.
    - Share your thoughts, hopes, and dreams as part of the spiritual and corporate leadership of our Church.
    - Attend and support regular and special events in the life of St. Mary's and be active and visible in the community's worship life.
    - Be a leader in stewardship and in giving back in thankfulness to God from the time, talent, and treasure God has given you.
    - Maintain an active prayer life or spiritual discipline of prayer, meditation, or Bible study and strive to grow in your relationship to God in Christ. Pray for those with whom you share ministry that God may use you as an instrument of grace, healing, and reconciliation.
  - **Ministry-Area Specific Responsibilities** *(About 4-6 hours/month)*
    - **Identify people** who have the gifts and interest in supporting the ministry of the assigned ministry area.
    - **Convene monthly meetings:** Bring them together on a regular scheduled basis to brainstorm, plan, coordinate, and carry out ministry in this area. *(1-2 hours/month)*
    - Recruit a co-chair or vice chair and ministry-area leaders to carry out ministry area.
    - Communicate in person, by phone, or via e-mail with ministry leaders in your area of support and oversight. Check to see how things are going for them and provide them encouragement and support. *(1-2 hours/month)*

- Help them get the necessary on-going training and support they need to carry out these ministries well.
  - Thank them and help the congregation find ways of expressing its appreciation and gratitude to God for this ministry we share in Christ's name.
  - Report back regularly to the congregation about the needs, joys, challenges, and successes of these ministries.
  - Meet in person at least monthly with the staff support person for this area of ministry development. *(2-3 hours/month)*
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### **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION: JUNIOR WARDEN**

*The primary focus of this area of ministry is the maintenance and safekeeping of Church property, and consideration of present and future needs of the congregation that may be met by the Church property.*

- **Junior Warden-Specific Responsibilities** *(About 8 hours/month)*
  - Organize, and recruit where needed, a Facilities Team, to advise and help with the work of the Junior Warden.
  - Along with the ministry team, oversee the operations and maintenance of facilities and equipment, schedule and meet with subcontractors, review bids, organize work teams, and plan for any needed future renovations and modernization.
- **Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; About 10-13 hours/month)*

### **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION: EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRIES**

*This area of ministry focuses on teaching and sharing the love of God in Christ to, with, and for preschool-aged children. It has as its foundational mission statement the Children's Charter for the Church<sup>2</sup>. We work to include preschool-aged children in all aspects of parish life, worship, and ministry.*

- **Early Childhood-Specific Responsibilities** *(2-4 hours/month)*
  - Participate in planning and carrying out various ministries, including:
    - Sunday School and Nursery programs,

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/091204\\_childrens\\_charter\\_flyer.pdf](https://www.episcopalchurch.org/files/091204_childrens_charter_flyer.pdf)

- Christmas and other seasonal pageants or programs,
- Little Seedlings, and
- Other ministries as they arise.
- **Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; about 10-13 hours/month)*

## **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION: CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

*This area of ministry focuses on sharing ministry to, with, and for the children in our community. It has, as its foundational mission statement, the Children's Charter for the Church. It lives this out through its efforts to include children in all aspects of parish life, worship, and ministry, and in various programs, which teach and share the love of God in Christ Jesus.*

- **Children's Formation-Specific Responsibilities** *(6-8 hours/month)*
  - Sunday School for grade-school children (Kinder-6<sup>th</sup> Grade)
  - Summer "pull out" program during service
  - Christmas and other seasonal activities, pageants or programs.
  - Children serving as acolytes, readers, Eucharistic Ministers, etc.
  - Children's activities
  - Children's music programs
- **Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; about 10-13 hours/month)*

## **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION: YOUTH MINISTRIES**

*Youth Ministries work with, and for, Junior and Senior High School students to deepen students' experience and understanding of the Gospel, themselves, and the world through study, community-building, and service.*

- **Youth-Specific Responsibilities** *(2-4 hours/month)*
  - Recruit and organize a Youth Ministries Team to help plan and support ministries to and with youth and their parents or caregivers.
  - Attend Youth special functions and events and establish a working relationship with our Youth members and their parents, where appropriate.
  - Support the ministry of Jesus Java.

**Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; About 10-13 hours/month)*

## **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION: ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

*The Adult Christian Formation Ministries team focuses on the ongoing Christian formation of adults through education and other participatory events.*

- **Adult Christian Formation-Specific Responsibilities** (4-6 hours/month)
  - Along with the ministry team,
    - plan and promote the programs and events for adult Christian formation, including regularly occurring programs (Sunday morning forum, Bible Workbench, Education for Ministry (EfM), etc.), seasonal offerings, and small groups;
    - provide support, encouragement, and resources for the development and maintenance of various adult Christian formation programs and events;
    - set up classrooms, arrange audio/visual equip, and provide signage for Sunday morning classes, to direct parishioners to the right location and advertise and promote the day's classes. Take down after classes and secure equipment.
- **Vestry Responsibilities** (See above; About 10-13 hours/month)

## **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION: GROWTH + COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRIES: *Making St. Mary's a Welcoming and Inviting Place for Everyone***

*The Growth and Communications Ministries team aims to create ongoing church growth through programs of invitation and welcome, celebrating the gifts and inclusion of newcomers. To that end, we coordinate internal and external communications focused on newcomers to increase pathways toward becoming a part of St. Mary's and to create a more intentional presence in the broader community as a progressive and welcoming church.*

- **Growth and Communications-Specific Responsibilities** (2-4 hours/month)
  - Along with the ministry team,
    - Craft St. Mary's message to emphasize the unique ways that we understand the Gospel and its application to 21st-century North American life.
    - Develop and implement a welcome program to fully connect with new members and visitors.
      - Work with other established committees at St. Mary's, including Outreach Ministries to ensure St. Mary's presence and involvement is known, Adult Christian Formation Ministries to increase opportunities for newcomers to receive educational information and create opportunities to share the newcomer's spiritual journey, and Community-Building Ministries to focus

on church growth activity among current church members. This would include providing volunteer opportunities to increase participation.

**Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; About 10-13 hours/month)*

### **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION: OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

*Outreach Ministries focuses on leading St. Mary's in serving the needs of the community, state, and world through activities and events in which we share of ourselves in Christ's name. Outreaching ministry changes the giver as much as (or more than) it changes the recipient of the gift. This ministry group helps support outreach ministries such as providing food and/or meals various local organizations, outreach to homeless persons, support for Millennium Development Goals, and distribution of outreach grant money from St. Mary's.*


- **Outreach-Specific Responsibilities** *(2-4 hours/month)*
  - Help develop and participate in outreach events and activities
  - Coordinate one meeting a month of leaders of various outreach ministries, such as Clare House Meal Team, FISH support, AFACT, homelessness ministry team, LGBTQA+ ministries, Malawi ministries, and support their team efforts.
  - Oversee the Mission Outreach funding application and review process once per year and help decide how best to leverage and utilize our outreach funds.
  - Participate in Long Range Planning about future ministries of St. Mary's.
- **Vestry Responsibilities** *(See above; about 10-13 hours/month)*

### **MINISTRY LEADERSHIP POSITION DESCRIPTION: WORSHIP**

*The focus of this ministry area is to encourage, build up, and support vital and varied worship services at St. Mary's, involving as many people as possible in offering their gifts to the praise and glory of God.*

- **Worship-Specific Responsibilities** *(4-6 hours/month)*
  - Support the ministry of the Rector, who has canonical responsibility for all worship oversight.
  - Plan and implement ongoing liturgical education about our traditions and their living meaning for us today.
  - Developing Worship task forces to help plan liturgical services or seasons.
  - Overseeing and supporting development of liturgical additions or improvements, such as planning for a baptistery for the Sanctuary.
  - Music Groups and Choirs





“Deanery Representatives provide a vital link between St. Mary’s and the other Episcopal churches of our area.... No parish, however large, can ever fully represent the richness of the Church.”

- Special services, which may include Feast of Transfiguration. All Saints Day, Epiphany Feast of Lights, Instructed Eucharists, Blessing of Animals, Services of Lessons and Carols, and Holy Week Services.
- Encouraging parishioners to write blurbs/articles for e-newsletter on subjects of liturgy and worship.
- Supporting the ministries of clergy, acolytes, musicians, readers, ushers, altar guild, and other worship leaders.
- **Vestry Responsibilities** (*See above; about 10-13 hours/month*)

***What are Deanery Delegates?*** Our Deanery is made up of the Episcopal Churches of South Central Alaska. Delegates from each congregation meet once a year—usually the first weekend in May. Deanery Representatives provide a vital link between St. Mary’s and the other

Episcopal Churches of our area and work to publicize and promote Deanery activities. This is a one-year term, serving from February 5, 2023 to January 31, 2024.


Our Diocesan Convention Delegates are also Deanery Representatives and are elected to both positions simultaneously. This year, St. Mary’s will be elect at least four persons as Delegates.

***What are Diocesan Convention Delegates?*** The Diocese, not the parish, is the basic unit of Episcopal Church life. No parish, however large, can ever fully represent the richness of the Church. Once a year, the diocesan family gathers in this basic unit at Diocesan Convention. Together we take counsel for building up the Church, share in the breaking of bread, and join in prayer and fellowship. We set our diocesan budget for the upcoming year and prioritize the many needs of the Diocese and its congregations. Each parish sends elected Delegates who convene to represent the local parish and to share a common life and witness in this larger gathering of Christ’s body. These persons carry the story of St. Mary’s to the convention and return to share with the congregation the story of our Diocese.

At our annual meeting, in addition to electing Delegates to the next Diocesan Convention, we will also elect Alternates who will attend the convention should the elected Delegates become unable to attend. This is a one-year term, serving from February 5, 2023 to January 31, 2024.

Our Diocesan Convention Delegates are also Deanery Representatives and are elected to both positions simultaneously. This year, St. Mary's will be elect at least four persons as Delegates.

The next Diocesan Convention is scheduled for October 2023 in Fairbanks. Transportation costs are shared through a travel pool that is funded by Delegate fees, and lodging is traditionally with local Church families.



*“Look around you. Who among us do you recognize as having the gifts and heart needed by the Church today? Is it yourself? Is it another as well?”*

*Are there other leadership positions that we will elect to?* Information will also be forthcoming about leadership positions with our St. Mary's Episcopal Church Housing Company, LLC, (d/b/a The Thomas center for Senior Leadership) and the Administrative Council of St. Mary's Creative Playschool.

***OK, what do I need to do right now?*** How good of you to ask! We need **YOU** to help discern who God may be calling to ministry in our congregation. Look around you. Who among us do you recognize as having the gifts and heart needed by the Church today? Is it yourself? Is it another as well?

- **HELP US IDENTIFY** people God may be calling by using the list of active members. Please circle a name and write what position(s) you think they should consider. Your list can be submitted to the Rev. Dawn or the Rev. Michael or brought to the Church Office.
- **PLACE NAMES** into consideration for nomination, forward them to the Rev. Michael at [Michael@Godsview.org](mailto:Michael@Godsview.org), cc'ing [Dawn@Godsview.org](mailto:Dawn@Godsview.org) please. Nominations are also permitted at the time of the Annual Meeting, held this year on Sunday, February 5, following the combined 10AM service.
- **FOR MORE INFORMATION** about this process or to provide feedback, please email the Rev. Michael at [Michael@Godsview.org](mailto:Michael@Godsview.org) or the Rev. Dawn at [Dawn@Godsview.org](mailto:Dawn@Godsview.org) or call 563-3341.

Thank you for contributing to the life and mission of St. Mary's by discerning your choices! In your prayers this month, pray for our parish, the candidates for ministry, and the Church.

## CANDIDATE INFORMATION SHEET ST. MARY'S LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Fillable form available online at [godsview.tiny.us/yckmkj7v](https://godsview.tiny.us/yckmkj7v)

Please fill out and submit this form as soon as possible and include a digital photo of yourself. (If you need help getting a digital photo, please let us know.) Submit a hard copy to the Church by mail to: 2222 E. Tudor Rd, Anchorage 99507 or a digital copy via email to [Michael@godsview.org](mailto:Michael@godsview.org) AND [Dawn@godsview.org](mailto:Dawn@godsview.org).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Position Standing for Election to: \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about yourself:

What do you value and love at/about St. Mary's?

Where do you believe God is calling us as a community of faith in the years ahead?

Is there something else you wish we would have asked? If so, write it here: