



## **REPORT OF THE BISHOP NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

“We are standing on Holy Ground  
And I know there are Angels all around  
Let us Praise Jesus now.  
We are standing in his presence  
On holy Ground.”

At the 85<sup>th</sup> Convention of this Diocese our Bishop, the Most Reverend Jonathan B.B. Hart, announced that in January 2023, by the Grace of God, he would turn three scores and ten years old, and as required by the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church of the Province of West Africa, of which this Diocese is a part, he would be retiring. Archbishop Hart therefore advised that our Diocese begins arrangements for the election of a Bishop Coadjutor, who will succeed to the Bishopric upon his retirement.

Consequently, at the 86<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Convention in 2020, which convened at the same venue as the 85<sup>th</sup> Convention with Epiphany Chapel on the main campus of our Cuttington University, a Bishop Nominating Committee, comprising an equal number of clergy and laypersons, was duly elected. The election took place on Saturday, February 15, 2020. The House of Clergy and the House of Laity, each voted separately, and on Sunday, February 16, 2020, the Bishop Nominating Committee was installed by the Vicar General The Venerable Reverend Sie Sunday Freeman. Those elected and installed are Rev. Fr. Andy Davies, Rev. Fr. David Hina, Rev. Fr. Richard Kpehe, Rev. Harris Woart, Bro. Debar Allen, Bro. Aaron Ansumana, Bro. Christopher K. Fayia, and Bro. ATrokon Tarr.

As prescribed by the Constitution & Canons of the Province, the Committee was tasked with nominating to Convention not less than two nor more than three eligible clergy from among whom the Bishop Coadjutor would be elected. Eligible clergy had to be a priest for not less than six years and be not less than thirty years of age. Such a priest could come from any Diocese within the Province of West Africa or from the diocese of any Province in communion with the Church of the Province of West Africa.

The Bishop Nominating Committee began work to fulfill that mandate with the adoption of the following prayer:



*Gracious God, from whom all wisdom flows, guide and direct this Committee entrusted by Your people to Nominate proper persons who shall be considered for service as Bishop Coadjutor for this Diocese.*

*Grant members of this Committee discernment to solemnly and with integrity impartially identify good servants capable and prepared to lead Your flock.*

*Free us from all personal prejudices; cleanse our thoughts and our hearts that by Your help we will focus only on that which will uplift this Diocese to vigorously carry forth Your Word.*

*We pray this in the precious name of Your Son, our savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.***

The substance of this prayer and supplications were made at the beginning and closing of each Committee session. The Committee determined and outlined the process by which nominations would be made to this Convention.

The first step was to conduct a survey in each of the four archdeaconries of this Diocese to gather from Episcopalians the qualities desired in the next bishop of our Church. In August 2021, questionnaires were prepared and circulated in autonomous and aided parishes, in preaching stations, and in various congregations in union with the Diocese as broadly as was feasible. The survey, while not covering the entire universe of Episcopalians (not one hundred per cent) covered a statistically significant sample of our congregations. Results from the survey were evaluated by an external monitoring and evaluation expert. Conclusions from the evaluation were synthesized and published on the website [www.episcopalchurchliberia.org](http://www.episcopalchurchliberia.org), which is the website of this Diocese.

## **The Bishop We Seek**

Respondents want our next Bishop to:

- Be effective in equipping and empowering people for ministry.
- Be aware of and sensitive to peoples' needs
- Be committed to transparency and accountability
- Be able to lead and manage during crisis and tensions
- Be able to clearly articulate a sense of vision of where he wants to take the Diocese
- Be open and tolerant of diverse views
- Be effective in soliciting support for the works and ministries of the Diocese



- Have some rural ministry experience
- Have been a curate or rector of a parish
- Have a strong faith in the Lord
- Have compassion and deep love for fellow human
- Have an active prayer life
- Have a competent knowledge of the Bible
- Have a deep commitment to Christ and a godly lifestyle
- Be an excellent preacher/teacher

Priority areas of focus for our next Bishop should be:

1. Addressing the financial plight of the Diocese,
2. Reopening and strengthening of all Diocesan schools and,
3. Reconciling the Diocese especially post elections (of the Bishop)

Because priests from the broader Anglican Communion are eligible for nomination, notice of the search for a Bishop Coadjutor was issued on November 12, 2021, and published on the Diocese website, and the Provincial Secretary, on our request, circulated the notice throughout the Province of West Africa. The application period ran from November 20, 2021, through December 20, 2021.

In keeping with the Provincial Constitution and Canons, the BNC is required to report only to Convention and must do so within seven days after it meets for the purpose of considering who should be nominated to the Convention. Therefore, the Committee began considering who should be nominated by conducting interviews of the six applicants on February 14 and 15, 2022. The Committee also interviewed the applicants' spouses on February 16, 2022. On Friday, February 18, 2022, the Committee retreated into a discernment process of prayers for several hours to arrive at nominees that would be presented to this Convention. In keeping with the Constitution and Canons, the Chancellor chaired the Bishop Nominating Committee throughout as ex-officio and without a vote.

The Bishop Nominating Committee after solemn, prayerful contemplation has arrived at its conclusion and submits to this Special Convention the following priests as nominees for election



as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Liberia.

They are:

1. The Rev. Father Ernesty Johnson
2. The Rev. Father Herman Browne
3. The Rev. Father James B. Sallee

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts with your Holy Spirit, O Lord, that we may by your inspiration in secret and known only to you and ourselves cast our individual ballots for that servant who you divinely shall choose to uplift the work of this Diocese to the Glory of Your Holy Name. Amen

Respectfully submitted:

This 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 2022 at the Special Diocesan Convention held with the Church of the Good Shepherd, Paynesville City, Montserrado County, Republic of Liberia.

### **Bishop Nominating Committee 2022**

The Reverend Fr. Andy Davis

The Reverend Fr. David Hina

The Reverend Fr. Richard Kpehe



The Reverend Fr. Harris Woart

Bro. Debar Allen

Bro. Aaron Ansumana

Bro. Christopher K. Fayia

Bro. ATrokon Tarr

Attested:

Bro. Seward Montgomery Cooper, Esq.  
**Chair, Bishop Nominating Committee &  
Chancellor, ECL**