



Preface

Supporting Our Shared Mission for God's Work

This is an important time as we gather to strengthen our ability to support vital ministries and programs for God's mission in our diocese. Together, we play a crucial role in our communities, continuing Christ's work of spreading love and kindness. Our financial contributions are sincere expressions of our faith. Thank you for your generosity that enables this mission within the Episcopal Church in Colorado.

We are all on a journey, following the Way of Love and growing in our faith. Fueled by the Holy Spirit, we are making a positive impact on communities and the world. Here in Colorado, we are committed to living out our baptismal covenants by tackling racial inequality and working toward justice and healing. We are dedicated to protecting God's creation in response to climate change and creating an inclusive church that welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are helping people see their worth, find their purpose, and explore life's possibilities. We are also developing Cathedral Ridge as a place for nurturing young leaders and creating enriching experiences for our youth.

We are grateful for the collective effort and the pledges from our congregations. By wisely managing our resources and supporting our budget, we can better equip and empower everyone to love and follow Jesus.

Treasurer's Narrative to Accompany the 2025 Recommended Budget

Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen BCP p.818

The chief purpose of this document is to provide Diocesan Convention delegates and others with information to help them understand the story behind the numbers found on the proposed budget spreadsheet. The 2025 proposed budget reflects the reality of the robust formation programming and Youth and Young Adult engagement and the congregational development challenges that we are currently experiencing in 2024.

With faith and enthusiasm, we welcome new engagement from across the diocese in the program offerings. From Lay Pastoral Leaders to the YES mission trips, to Cathedral Ridge and Caffeinated Church, people are energized, and organizers are encouraged. The people of the Episcopal Church in Colorado continue to do the work of our Baptismal Covenant.

First, as to process: the annual budget cycle begins with an initial proposed draft budget based on input from the leadership and staff of the Office of the Bishop, gathered in late spring and early summer. In June, this preliminary draft budget was sent to the Finance Committee and the Standing Committee for review and comment, and further changes were made to reflect that input. In early August, the next iteration of the draft budget was presented to your Standing Committee for their review and approval. The final recommended budget comes to the Diocesan Convention with your Standing Committee's unanimous recommendation that you adopt it. The recommended budget and this narrative will be published in advance of the Diocesan Convention. There will be a Budget Hearing held via Zoom on September 28, a week before the Diocesan Convention's business session. This Budget Hearing is open to everyone, not just convention delegates.

The format of the budget this year continues with the changes that were made in the way the 2022 budget was presented. The intent behind these changes is to better describe how the budget supports the direction of our life together. Previous budget presentations were organized according to departments within the Office of the Bishop; what you will see takes more of a functional, programmatic, and missional approach.

The presentation of the budget begins with our projected income. The foundation of that is, of course, the faithful giving of the congregations that make up the Episcopal Church in Colorado, and that, in turn, is based on the generous giving of individuals and families that make up each congregation. Congregational giving continues to be robust and exceed our expectations, and we have reason to believe it will continue to be at that level or higher for the balance of 2024 and in 2025.

The second largest component of our Diocesan income after congregational giving is our annual grant from the Colorado Trust. This was budgeted at \$800,000 for 2024 and will come in at just over \$981,000. This is a challenge every year and we get a projection from the Colorado Trust in the late summer but never know the exact amount until Q1 of the following year. We are projecting this to be \$900,000 for 2025 and early indications are this will be a good projection.

Estimated income from our many internal trusts is designated to be used for specified purposes and equals those estimated expenses, the net bottom line effect on the operating budget is neutral.

Turning to expenses, as was noted above, budget areas are now divided into Operational Expenses, Empowering Leaders, Equipping Congregations, and Engaging the World, encompassing not just the work of the Office of the Bishop staff, but also our collective work as the Episcopal Church in Colorado.

Bishop Kym is on the road for visitations most weeks and representing the Episcopal Church in Colorado at the Province and the House of Bishops with involvement in committees and leadership.

Imagining Meetings and the Mission Leadership Review were conducted earlier this year. The input received from both was reviewed by the Office of the Bishop and the Standing Committee. This vital information has informed planning by the Office of the Bishop for 2025 and beyond.

The increase in participation and enthusiasm surrounding our Children and Youth events continues in 2024. We increased spending on these areas by \$20,000 in 2024 and by an additional \$15,000 in the 2025 proposed budget. Cathedral Ridge is also playing a renewed role in Children and Youth events with expanded offerings.

In the “Engaging the World” section of the budget, we are giving The Episcopal Church the 15% minimum mandated by General Convention. These funds support churchwide ministries, from evangelism and church planting to caring for creation and racial reconciliation. The amount budgeted for 2025 is derived from applying The Episcopal Church formula to our 2023 actual income.

Canon Jon Anderson, Treasurer Nancy Jones and Controller Pam Greenfield met in person with our auditors in May. We are back on our normal audit schedule and expect the Audit Review Committee to be able to complete their work in a timely fashion.

There are, of course, increases in budget items for things like higher insurance rates, higher travel and meeting costs, but most of our additional spending is going straight to services offered.

This past year, we’ve done tremendous work in engaging, equipping, and empowering God’s people to love and follow Jesus.

- The Formation Team helps equip congregations to support people of all ages on their faith journeys. The team also offers diocesan-wide, deep-dive faith experiences that connect people from churches across the state. For youth this included fall and spring Quest retreats; taking two youth to General Convention; supporting 30 participants on a YES mission trip to Albuquerque; and supporting three Olympic-themed Cathedral Ridge youth summer camps. This past year was also the inaugural year for Youth Council Colorado (YOCO). YOCO is a leadership board that offers the youth voice in all aspects of youth ministry.
- In its call to raise up lay leaders, the Formation team trains and supports individuals for licensed lay ministry, helps equip vestries for leadership, and ensures that churches in the diocese have access to required Safe Church training and policies. We are pleased to announce that in May nine pastoral leader candidates completed their nine-month course of formation and were licensed as pastoral leaders. A new cohort of candidates began formation in September. Other adult offerings this past year included bimonthly hybrid Eucharistic Visitor trainings; a Journey to Confirmation course for individuals exploring confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation of their baptismal vows; and courses

customized to individual congregational needs. Our collaboration with the Iona Collaborative continues to bear fruit, providing high quality training and formation for clergy and lay leaders at no cost to congregations.

- Over the past year the Formation team has helped congregations become involved or deepen their engagement in the five Realities areas in a number of ways: by curating resources, supporting Sacred Ground dialogue circles, hosting diocesan-wide suicide prevention workshops through SoulShop, creating and offering the Lenten experience Journey through Lament, liaising with the diocesan care of creation team, and accompanying congregations in their work to become welcoming and affirming congregations.
- Acknowledging that we all wear many hats, the Formation team also has the role of overseeing the Office of the Bishop's Realm diocesan management system. This system has been key in ensuring clergy and lay leaders receive the information they need and allows us to connect individuals and congregations with one another for collaboration and shared ministry.
- Each year the Formation team plans the diocese's largest events, clergy gathering and diocesan convention. We continue to seek ways to enrich participants' faith experiences at these events through dynamic speakers and engaging workshops.
- The Formation team also continues to embrace the growing interest in pilgrimage. In 2023/2024 the team supported pilgrimages along the Footsteps of Paul in Greece and Turkey, to Santiago de Compostela along the Portuguese way, and a high school pilgrimage from St. Christopher's Mission in Navajoland to Arches National Park along the Upper San Juan River in Utah. The team regularly consults with individual churches and dioceses interested in crafting local or overseas pilgrimage experiences.
- Our Communications & Evangelism Office has expanded communications and administration resources through Caffeinated Church exponentially with over 36 workshops offered annually, serving more than 400 members, and having its first annual conference in Denver, September 2024, for the wider Episcopal Church in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Synod ELCA, Mountain Sky Conference of the United Methodist Church, the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains, and the Denver Presbytery. Canon Mike has also worked with many churches and spoken at several events on Evangelism, along with online workshops to help us learn about how we can be engaged beyond our walls out in our communities to build authentic relationships where Good News can be shared. Additionally, Canon Mike continues to serve as faculty for Project Resource; equipping stewardship teams with strategic training and flexible resources to design and execute annual stewardship campaigns which can be replicated and adapted in future years. Project Resource is dedicated to fostering cultural and systemic advancements around stewardship as a ministry in the Episcopal Church and as an offering of the College for Bishops.

- The Rev. Canon Vanessa Stickler Glass works with church Vestries, Bishop's Committees, and Profile and Search Committees across the diocese. She recruits clergy from across the church and invites them to discern open interim and permanent positions in Colorado. Canon Vanessa also leads vestry retreats, mutual ministry reviews, and provides support to wardens in congregations that don't have a settled priest. She encourages clergy and lay leaders to creatively imagine new ways of being church. Outside of the Diocese, Vanessa serves as a CREDO Conference Leader and on the Board of the College for Bishops.
- The main purpose and mission of the "Multicultural Ministries" of The Episcopal Church in Colorado is to Fully Reflect the Richness and Unity of the Body of Christ by Welcoming and Embracing Each Person in their wholeness... [with their questions, complexities, ethnicity, culture and all], and by Assisting Congregations and Communities to become More Culturally Diverse and Truly Inclusive. The Missioner Rev. QC offers presentations to the Regions and Congregations, to create "Diversity Awareness of our Own Context" and also offers Basic Latino Competency Trainings and Empowerment of Latino and Multicultural Leaders. Equips Latino and Multicultural Leaders to develop fruitful Multicultural Ministries and Gatherings.
- The Administrative Team plays a crucial role in providing administrative assistance to congregations, regions, and ministries of the Episcopal Church in Colorado. We are here to support you and managing the administrative aspects of operating the Office of the Bishop.

This year has been a whirlwind for the Administrative Team, but our dedication remains unwavering. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to team members Pam Greenfield, who recently celebrated 30 years of service in the Office of the Bishop, Dianne Draper, who even more recently celebrated 10 years of service, and Maria Rhine, who, like me, has been in the saddle not quite as long. As a team, we are committed to supporting the congregations, ministries, and people of the Episcopal Church in Colorado. While they may not be the Bishop's Office employees, thanks also to Larry Hitt, Diocesan Chancellor, and Nancy Jones, Diocesan Treasurer.

This last year, my first on the Bishop's staff, has been one of steep learning curves: getting to know congregations, clergy and lay leaders, histories, joys, and challenges. In short, stepping into the living and life-giving waters of a Diocese and her people who love each other, their histories, cultural diversity, and their sense of Western independence and spirit.

Specifically, this year, much time has been spent on property issues, Church Insurance matters, employee benefits assistance, Bylaws consulting, and a Bylaws template revision that will launch shortly. Additionally, assistance has been requested and provided to congregations in various crises and clergy and lay disciplinary matters. In summary, the Administrative team members have assisted and consulted with congregational leaders seeking to better serve their communities, people, and facilities

while dealing with the ongoing cultural, demographic, and other evolutions in the American religious landscape and the financial challenges many congregations face.

The bottom line of the proposed budget projects a deficit of around \$101,000, which your Standing Committee believes is reasonable. It is our hope that the aspirations of this budget will inspire all to see the value of the mission and ministries of the Episcopal Church in Colorado, and to support them with your prayers and your faithful financial contributions to both the Diocese and your respective Regions.