

A Letter from the President of the Standing Committee

Dear Faithful People of the Diocese of Southwest Florida,

The Standing Committee is very pleased to announce the following slate of candidates for the Sixth Bishop of Southwest Florida (listed in alphabetical order by last name):

- The Rev. Thomas P. Reeder, Rector, Christ Episcopal Church, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
- The Very Rev. Dr. Douglas F. Scharf, Rector, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church & School, Tequesta, FL
- The Rev. Timothy E. Schenck, Rector, Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist, Hingham, MA
- The Rev. Canon C. John Thompson-Quartey, Canon for Ministry Development & Congregational Vitality, Diocese of Atlanta

Information about each candidate, including a brief professional biography, is available at www.bishopsearchswfl.org. We will shortly make available at the same link additional information, including each candidate's full resume as submitted as part of their application, answers to five essay questions, and introductory videos.

Our Search Committee has been steadfast in prayerful discernment over the past 11 months. After an exhaustive search, they selected the names presented to you to stand for election. The Standing Committee is grateful for their efforts, and we are very confident in the process that has brought us to this point.

The petition period is now open and will close on Monday, February 7 at 5 pm EST. Information about the petition process, as well as forms and information about other required documents, can be found at www.bishopsearchswfl.org. All nomination petitions and all supplemental materials will be directed to the President of the Standing Committee. After the completion of all necessary evaluations and accompanying paperwork, any petition candidate will be announced to the Convention no later than March 20.

Candidate Meet & Greets will be held March 22-24. Participation in these offerings throughout the diocese is highly encouraged. More information about these special events will be forthcoming. Between now and then, more information will also become available from our candidates.

The Standing Committee has called a Special Meeting of Convention to be held for the purposes of the Election of the Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Southwest Florida. This Special Convention will take place on Saturday, April 2, 2022, at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter in St. Petersburg. If the Convention is not able to meet in person, the diocese will proceed with a virtual platform.

We now move into a more public form of discernment. Public discernment requires us to continue our prayers for the Diocese of Southwest Florida which now includes these wonderful candidates and their families. Each of them is a beloved child of God. I pray that we keep this

deep truth central as we discern with them. We also must pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide this process. And, not our will, but God's will be done.

Diocese of Southwest Florida Prayer for the Election of a Bishop

Gracious God, as we walk by faith the shared journey of choosing a bishop for the Diocese of Southwest Florida, nurture within us discerning hearts and minds hopeful for possibilities yet to be revealed. Send to us a caring leader, we pray, who will uniquely delight in the abundant gifts of our diocese, and the beauty of this land, which so richly reflect your unity in diversity. Equip our human eyes and ears with divine recognition for the chief pastor of our diocese whom you have chosen to lead us in the ever-unfolding mission of your Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer For the Election of a Bishop (The Book of Common Prayer, p. 818)

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for this Diocese, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

With deep gratitude and excitement,

The Reverend Carla B. McCook
President of the Standing Committee