

February 23rd, 2026

To the Clergy and All the Faithful.

Diocese of Western Newfoundland-Labrador Straits

Grace and peace to you from the Episcopal Search Committee.

On January 23rd the official notice for the election of our next bishop went out, and on our behalf the Diocese also circulated the call for nominations to be submitted. This was an important step in the process as we discern God's call for the 6th bishop of our Diocese.

On this point we wish to offer a brief clarification. Despite Synod 2022's unanimous vote to expand the name of the diocese to Western Newfoundland and Labrador Straits, and the increasing use of that name in our common life, the episcopal electors meeting on April 25th will, officially, be the Diocesan Synod of Western Newfoundland. Accordingly, the person elected will become, when consecrated and seated in the Cathedral, the 6th Bishop of Western Newfoundland.

Today we renew that call for the names of proposed nominees. They should reach Rhonda Green, the secretary of our Committee, on or before March 6th: Rhonda Green, PO Box 753, St Anthony, NL A0K 4S0 Email: rhonda.green@live.ca

As we look forward to the electoral synod of April 25th the Search Committee shares with you its process thus far and, as best we can, looking forward. Note the Electoral Synod web page at <https://westernnewfoundland.anglican.org/electoral-synod-2026/>

Canon 11 of the Diocese provides that the Search Committee's work is governed by Canon 3 of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada. Provincial Canon 3 requires that the Synod Executive form a Search Committee of at least 6 members. In December 2025, at a regular meeting of the Synod Executive, 8 members were elected to undertake this important task, 4 clergy and 4 lay.

Clergy

The Reverend Wilhelmena Green,
The Venerable David Taylor,
The Reverend Cynthia Haines Turner, and
The Reverend Canon Joshua Haggstrom.

Lay

Rhonda Green,
Annie Jacobs,
Bernice Whalen, and
Beverley O'Connell.

The first task of this group was to gather and select a chair and secretary. That meeting took place on December 16th, with Canon Joshua being selected as the chair and Rhonda Green as secretary.

Provincial Canon 3 outlines the Search Committee's work in detail. We put it into our earlier communication, and it bears repeating here.

12.(1) When a diocesan bishop or a coadjutor bishop is to be elected, or where a suffragan bishop is to be elected pursuant to subsection 9(3), the Search Committee shall:

(a) prepare for the approval of the Council, a written description of the general qualifications and requirements for the position to be filled and any specific qualities that the Search Committee considers to be desirable in the person who will fill the position.

(b) receive in writing from members of the diocesan synod and from members of the House of Bishops of the Province the names of any persons proposed by them as nominees for election together with information as to the clerical position or office, address and telephone number of each person so proposed and a statement that the person has consented to be proposed;

(c) determine which of the persons proposed pursuant to clause (b) in the opinion of the Committee meet the canonical requirements for election, and the qualifications, requirements and qualities determined pursuant to clause (a);

(d) inform the proposer of any person proposed whom the Committee does not intend to nominate for election, of that fact;

(e) determine the names of other persons who in the opinion of the Committee meet the canonical requirements for election, and the qualifications, requirements and qualities determined pursuant to clause (a);

(f) enquire of the persons identified pursuant to clauses (c) and (e) whether they consent to being nominated for election, and obtain from those who do consent written confirmation of such consent;

(g) prepare a list, arranged alphabetically by surname, of the persons identified pursuant to clauses (c) and (e) who have consented to being nominated;

(h) obtain from proposers, from persons to be nominated, or otherwise the information required for communication to the members of the electoral synod;

(i) prepare appropriate information about each person to be nominated for communication to the members of the electoral synod in such a manner that as a minimum there is a brief curriculum vitae for each person to be nominated, the information is communicated in a standard format and reproduced in a uniform quality, and **the identity of the person or persons who proposed any person for nomination under this section or under section 15 is not communicated to the members of the electoral synod;** and

(j) present its report to the electoral synod and nominate the persons listed pursuant to clause (g).

The gist of the process is that Synod members, including members of the Search Committee itself, may propose various names for the electoral ballot. (Earlier, we advised that each name required two proposers, but generally only one is sufficient; see paragraph (b) above.) Who proposes a particular name is never to be revealed (see paragraph (i) above). Having received names, the Search Committee considers whether proposed nominees meet the canonical and the other requirements as set out in our earlier communication. The result will be the Search Committee's list of nominees for election, which it will circulate at least two weeks prior to Synod Day.

The above process relates to nominees placed on the ballot by the Search Committee itself. Once the Committee has made known its list of nominees, **any two members** of the Synod may add additional names to the ballot. This is provided for as follows.

“15. At an electoral synod where a diocesan bishop or a coadjutor bishop is to be elected, or where a suffragan bishop is to be elected pursuant to subsection 9(3), **any two members of the synod may nominate any person who meets the canonical requirements for election for election and who has consented in writing to be nominated if, at least 72 hours before the commencement of the electoral synod**, such members have provided to the Secretary of the Search Committee written notice of their intention to nominate, the intended nominee's written consent to nomination, and a brief curriculum vitae of the intended nominee in a form prescribed by the Council or approved by the Search Committee.”

Following our December meeting the Search Committee met twice in January and once in February. We continue working on the different aspects that will allow all in the diocese to discern those who may become nominees for our election. This is an ongoing process and one which we continue to discern ourselves. We are still considering various ways, in addition to circulating the standard information about nominees that is required by Canon 3, we might best make the nominees known to the diocese (for example, seeking their responses to standard questions in written or video format, etc).

At each of our meetings all members come together and speak openly and honestly. We look at all that our diocese has gone through and wrestle with the implications that may come from any decisions we make. This is something we will continue to do, with every decision made.

As we continue the work of the Search Committee, we need your prayers and support, that you would uphold us as we undertake this important ministry in our Diocese.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Joshua +

The Rev. Canon Joshua Haggstrom

Chair of the Search Committee.