



At Ground Level

Bishop of New York 2025 Budget Priorities

The Story

Our story is the renewal of the church for the healing of the world. The Holy Spirit moves at ground level— and we'll experience renewal and healing through our congregations, chaplaincies, and schools.

We're learning how renewal will look and organizing for what healing can mean.

- We'll care for our clergy and congregational leaders who have given their lives to their calling.
- We'll renew healthy and vibrant ministry in every part of the Diocese— seeking to repair historic oppression and explore new ways to be Church.
- Together we'll preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a world that yearns for a message of "justice, love, and curiosity" and provide safe places to belong that liberate our souls.

This year, we set Mission Priorities together for the first time in 50 years. We've begun implementation of the Mission Priorities through increased support for property needs and calling a new canon to the ordinary with a focus on congregations and a new chief of finance & operations with a focus on aligning operations with mission.

We've offered clergy additional care and support for needs they identify.

Next year, we're going to focus on our congregations through re-structuring staff and providing direct resources. Bishops and canons will visit every congregation, every year. We'll offer resources for spiritual formation with a particular focus on our commitment to reparations, anti-racism and creation care. We'll expand networks for legal, property, and fundraising help.

We'll support funding for clergy sabbaticals and recommend supporting spiritual direction and retreats also.

And, we're preparing for the long-term health and vibrancy of the Diocese of New York by exploring new revenue models that decrease reliance on congregational apportioned share and building systems for property support and development.

We're learning what it means to follow the Spirit into a season of renewal. We're trying new things. We learn together.

Everything we do seeks to be good stewards of the gifts we hold— *especially our people*. We've set Mission Priorities by engaging the whole Diocese and we'll carry out the priorities in the same way. We're organizers of the Spirit. We change together.

Topline

My priorities as bishop are the Mission Priorities of the Diocese of New York.

We are re-weaving our pastoral fabric around Mission Priorities that support our congregations, chaplaincies, and schools.

The Mission Priorities are 5-year priorities and re-structuring will take years to carry out.

> *For 2025, we are focused on the center of our common life together:* supporting our congregations as they struggle, thrive, and work for renewal.

- This focus means our 2025 budget proposals emphasize re-structuring our program staff to support congregations and increasing the resources available for congregational life.
- We're also increasing our commitment to communications— focusing on internal connections and curating resources among our local communities and sharing the good news of our ministries with each other and the world.
- In making our proposals, we have followed the June 2025 Council recommendations for implementation of the Mission Priorities.
- We're keeping most operations expenses flat. The new chief of finance & operations will arrive early this fall. They will be part of re-structuring the operations staff for 2026 to align with our Mission Priorities. In 2025, we'll carry

out a limited re-structuring of operations staff to increase our support for congregational property needs and increase the responsiveness of the diocesan staff to congregational inquiries.

- We are launching longer-term policy development for Mission Priorities in stewardship of property and revising the financial model. Budget implications for both of these areas will begin to be incorporated in the 2026 budget.
- In 2026, we will also re-structure our chaplaincy programs and our work with non-diocesan staff clergy whose stipends are included in the diocesan budget. Both represent important parts of our common life.

> *There are three foundational areas that will be woven through our pastoral fabric and common life: pastoral care, congregational development, and reparations.* We recognize that other diocesan structures (and our Diocese in the past) has specified particular staff positions for these areas. We want to end the separation of commitments that should be shared across all our structures. Our focus will be weaving them into our policy structure and expressing through our local communities.

> *There are significant commitments that fall outside of the direct operating budget requests-* either because the projects are funded by bishop's discretionary funds or because the projects are largely policy-oriented and not financial. We have begun to extend funding for mission outside of the diocesan operating budget— and will continue to increase that direction.

> *There are significant questions around closures of congregations and immediate stewardship of property and sacred items.* These policy questions fall within the province of the Standing Committee & Trustees. We are building capacity to take on this work, which we expect to increase over the next several years.

Budget Priorities:

We're recommending 2025 expenses for all-staff managed lines. We're not making recommendations for commissions and committees that are making their own recommendations.

1. Elevate our congregations.

- a. Restructure diocesan staff to be closer to congregations and to focus on congregational support, including creating *four regional canon positions*. The bishops & canons should visit every congregation, every year. *Net budget impact: Reduction through restructuring and phasing in new positions through 2025.*
- b. Expand congregational renewal / redevelopment grants (new line 806) with input and oversight from the new Congregational Development Commission. *Net budget impact: Increase of \$30,000.*
- c. Create a new grants program/ supports for new clergy in charge and their wardens (new line. 807). *Net budget impact: Recommended increase of \$2,000.*
- d. Provide additional support for clericus deans' connection and care of congregations (new line 808): *Net budget impact: Recommended increase of \$8,000 (or, \$500 per clericus)*
- e. Provide additional support for congregational collaborations — including a new Rockland mission area that are supported with additional support included through grants funding and through additional use of endowed funds outside the operating budget. *Net budget impact: Slight decrease to operating budget because of outside funding.*
- f. Increase responsiveness to congregational inquiries from the diocesan staff. *Net budget impact: None because of changed staff emphasis.*

2. Equip our lay and clergy leaders.

- a. Create a *canon for formation* position that supports both lay and clergy formation as (1) our responsibility for clergy formation increases as theological education changes (2) there's increased need for spiritual formation support at the congregational level. The canon will have

particular responsibilities for a focus on reparations in our formation—both anti-racism and creation care. *Net budget impact: None because of restructuring.*

- b. Create a *director of community connections* position to oversee fund development and communications. Internal communications will focus on connecting congregations/ networks/ curating resources that congregations need. External communications will focus on sharing our stories and our values. *Net budget impact: Reduction because of restructuring.*
- c. Develop formation resources for congregations by season with input and oversight from the Faith Formation Commission with a focus on anti-racism, creation care, and reparations. *Net budget impact: None in the first year because of restructuring.*
- d. Continue networks for treasurers and stewardship chairs; develop new networks to support (1) legal issues (2) property education (3) new funding streams with input and oversight from the new Congregational Development Commission. *Net budget impact: \$20,000, in addition to restructuring current grants programs.*
- e. Develop a long-term spiritual formation focus on anti-racism that extends beyond the initial 2-day training with direction from a new Task Force. *Net budget impact: initially covered through 2024 funds.*
- f. Name an Archdeacon to support deacons across the Diocese and develop a plan to support formation and ordination of 10 permanent deacons annually by 2028. *Net budget impact: None because of support from bishop's discretionary funds.*
- g. Fully utilize the endowed Clergy Critical Needs Fund (proceeds equaling \$178,000 annually) to provide care for deacons and priests. I've suggested revising the policy to include care for persons pursuing ordination in the Diocese of New York and include spiritual direction and retreats as areas covered by fund grants. *Net budget impact: None because of support from bishop's discretionary funds.*
- h. Develop a sabbatical program for clergy from congregations unable to sponsor respite time. *Net budget impact: None because of support from bishop's discretionary funds.*

- i. Redesign the diocesan website to focus on sharing our faith and values to the world and providing resources for our local communities. *Net budget impact: None because of support from bishop's discretionary funds.*
- 3. Re-Envision Stewardship of our property.
 - a. Extend 2024 commitments to additional property support staffing funded through discretionary funds.
 - b. Continue current support for property grants through a declining balance fund from the bishop's discretionary funds. A new funding source needs to be identified for 2026 and later.
 - c. Continue current support for additional property staffing (right now, Parish Property Management) in 2025 through the St. Peter & Paul Fund, one of the bishop's discretionary funds. New funding will need to be phased in 2026 and in place by 2027.
 - d. Developing longer-term property policies and support structure will be a focus of governance and staff work in 2025.
 - e. Under "equip," we will create a network of support for property education.
 - f. Under "repair," we will develop plans to support the greening of our buildings.
- 4. Re-Imagine our Financial model.
 - a. We have launched a Revenue Model Task Force to look at the overall revenue model and diversity of funding sources for diocesan mission. It will make recommendations— including a revision of the apportioned share formula — for the 2025 diocesan convention.
 - b. We are recommending development of a network for supporting congregational diversify funding streams.
- 5. Repairing our relationships with the earth and each other.
 - a. This priority will be engaged as a reparations lens into other priorities with a focus on how creation care, anti-racism, and economic justice are woven

into the policy fabric and how local communities integrate into their common life.

- b. Create a canon for lay and clergy formation position that has special responsibility for engaging reparations— anti-racism and creation care— into our formation for clergy and congregations.
- c. Develop policy supports for greening buildings through our property work.
- d. Develop long-term focus on spiritual formation for anti-racism through a new Task Force.
- e. Provide support for congregations to join the new Episcopal Credit Union so that 50% of congregations in our diocese are members.
- f. Commissions enacted through the Social Concerns Committee and other commissions in the 700 budget lines, including work with reparations, LGBTQ+, ecumenical relationships, congregational life, Christian formation, domestic violence, creation care, etc., will continue to be funded at approximately the same level as the prior year in order to accommodate the greater budget's movement toward the mission priorities.

Overall staff structure.

- The canon to the ordinary, the chief of finance & operations, and the director of connections will report to the Bishop of New York.
- The canons and all program staff will report to the canon to the ordinary.
- The controller, director of human resources & operations, the director of property support, and all operations staff report to the chief of finance & operations.

Key New Staff Positions.

- *Regional Canons for Mid-Hudson West (Ulster, Orange, Rockland), Mid-Hudson East (Dutchess, Putnam,), Westchester, & New York City (Bronx, Staten Island, Manhattan).*

Regional canons will focus on local communities by supporting pastoral care, clergy transitions, and congregational development in their area along with carrying a diocese-wide portfolio— rural congregations, transitions, global mission, and congregational development. The positions will be funded through restructuring.

Region	Mid-Hudson-West Rockland/Sullivan/Orange/Ulster	Mid-Hudson-East Dutchess/ Putnam	Westchester	New York City
Regional Responsibility	Pastoral Care Transitions/ Deployment Congregational Development/ Support	Pastoral Care Transitions/ Deployment Congregational Development/ Support	Pastoral Care Transitions/ Deployment Congregational Development/ Support	Pastoral Care Transitions/ Deployment Congregational Development/ Support
Portfolio	Rural congregations/ new expressions of church	Diocesan Transitions	Global Mission	Congregational Development/ CCD

- Canon for Lay & Clergy Formation

The canon for lay & clergy formation will provide resources for formation ministries in local communities— with a particular focus on anti-racism and creation care— and support for people pursuing ordination. The position reflects a commitment to our shared baptismal ministries across all orders— and the changes in theological education that places additional responsibility on dioceses to support formation through the ordination process.

- *Director of Connections.*

The director of connections will coordinate fundraising and communications. Communications will focus on (1) connections within the diocese/ curating resources and (2) sharing our values with communities across New York. This position will be supported by a coordinator position working on internal communications/ social media and with outside partners providing video stories of the Diocese and external communications. This position will be funded through re-structuring.

Major Activities Supported by Discretionary Funds Outside of the Diocesan Operating Budget

There are endowed funds that come under the auspices of the Diocese of New York. Some are held by the Diocese for use at the discretion of congregations; others for regions like Harlem, the Bronx, or Mid-Hudson; others are held for agencies like Episcopal Charities.

Some funds are disbursed at the discretion of the bishop of New York. It's my long-term stewardship value to not invade the principal, to use the annual proceeds of the funds for the mission we share, and to utilize any accumulated proceeds for strategic projects. The trustees serve as the accountability body for the funds. I will report to them about use.

We also wanted to share the funds under the bishop's discretion that impact ongoing mission/ operating functions:

- *Board of Managers Pension Fund:* The endowed fund supports clergy pensions and has proceeds of \$179,000 annually.
- *Cornerstone Fund:* The endowed fund supports property maintenance and has proceeds of \$84,000 annually. It helps fund property grants administered by the Trustees' property support committee. Current property grants are also spending down accumulated proceeds.
- *Keystone Fund:* The endowed fund supports property maintenance and has proceeds of \$112,000 annually. It helps fund property grants administered by the Trustees' property support committee.
- *St Peter & St. Paul Fund:* The endowed fund supports maintenance and support of missions and has proceeds of \$87,000 annually. The proceeds are being used to fund additional property staffing for 2024-2025.
- *Clergy Critical Needs Fund/ Bell Home Fund:* This collection of funds supports clergy care and has proceeds of \$178,000 annually. The proceeds are being used for the Clergy Critical Needs grants.
- *Bedell Fund:* This 1996 non-endowed gift from St. Matthew's in Bedford is dedicated to clergy continuing education and totals \$330,000. We anticipate using the proceeds for sabbaticals for clergy otherwise unable to take time away.

- *Religion & Learning Fund:* This fund provides scholarships for students in seminary and has proceeds of \$45,000 annually. The funds are used to support diocesan students preparing for the priesthood.
- *New York Training School:* By 1991 Trustee resolution this fund supports diaconal training and has proceeds of \$46,000 annually. The funds are used to subsidize the deacons' formation program and the stipend of its director.
- *Taylor Fund:* The endowed fund supports diocesan gathering and has proceeds of \$142,000 annually. It supports the deacons' and priests' conferences, the Holy Tuesday luncheon, and Spice gatherings.
- *St. Thomas Fund:* The endowed fund is unrestricted and has proceeds of \$70,000 annually. In the past it had funded sabbaticals for bishops. We'll use it to help underwrite external communications that share the story and values of the Diocese.
- *St. James Fund:* The endowed fund is restricted for support of the episcopacy and has proceeds of \$48,000 annually. These funds will fund bishops' hospitality, eliminating the need to fund through the operating budget.

Appendix 1: Clergy positions supported through the Diocesan Budget

The Diocese of New York is our congregations, chaplaincies, and schools.

There are clergy supported either full-time or part-time through the diocesan budget:

- Four Chaplains serve colleges in Manhattan, Orange, and Ulster counties—including the chaplaincy at West Point.
- Twenty-seven mission-supported clergy (supported either in fully or in part). serve in Harlem, the Bronx, Sullivan County and in bi-lingual congregations across the Diocese.
- Six collaborative team ministries serve in Sullivan, Westchester, and Rockland counties along with the Bronx.

The 1974 Mission Priorities (the last time the Diocese of New York set priorities) declared “an effective church presence in poor communities” as the anchor of the common mission of the diocese.

This legacy continues to be important. Mission-supported clergy carry out mission and ministry on behalf of the whole Diocese. Nearly all serve congregations of color.

		2024	2025		
601	Campus Ministry	\$ 437,580.00	\$ 445,260.00		
603	Bilingual/Intercultural	\$ 643,292.00	\$ 553,104.00		
694	Bronx Mission	\$ 794,394.00	\$ 781,025.00		
605	Curacy Initiative	\$ 92,000.00	\$ 72,000.00		
606	Area Team Ministry	\$ 101,270.00	\$ 318,336.00		
607	Harlem Mission	\$ 280,000.00	\$ 110,000.00		
610	Church Plants-Revitalization	\$ 123,850.00	\$ 242,312.00		
	Total	\$ 2,472,386.00	\$ 2,522,037.00		

