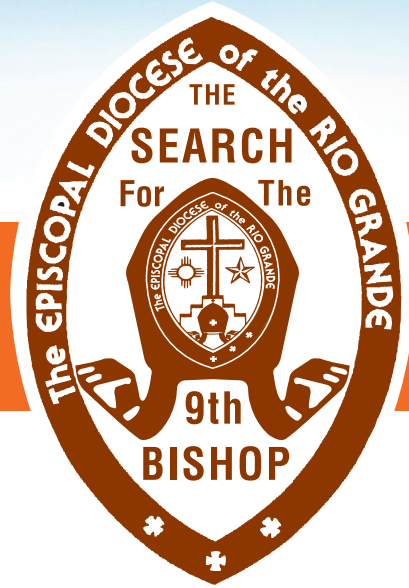


THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
OF THE RIO GRANDE

# PROFILE



# THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE RIO GRANDE

## MAP







# DIOCESAN PROFILE - INDEX

<http://www.dioceserg.org/>

I. Title Page

II. Map of the Diocese of the Rio Grande

III. Index and Prayer for the Election of the Bishop

IV. Vision Statement of the Diocese of the Rio Grande

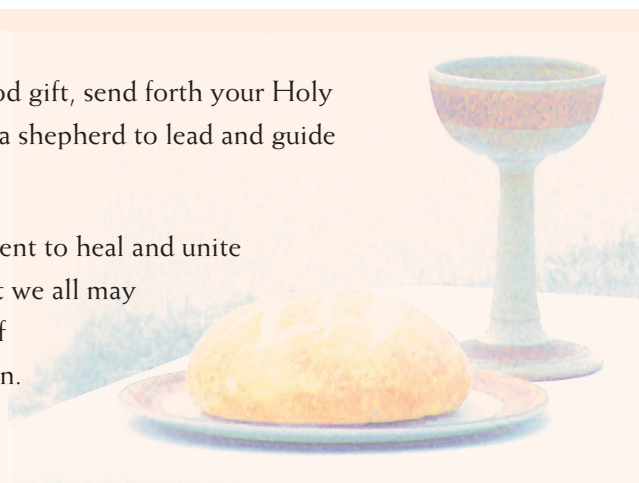
## SECTIONS:

## PAGE #

1. Where is God calling us? . . . . .	4
2. A Brief Recent History of the Diocesan Bishops. . . . .	7
3. The Cathedral of St. John . . . . .	9
4. New Life: Healing and Reconciliation in the Diocese . . . . .	10
5. Where Is the Diocese Now? . . . . .	13
6. Structures and Governance of the Diocese . . . . .	14
7. Demographics of the Diocese . . . . .	15
8. The Diocesan Budget . . . . .	17
9. Geography, Climate, Culture . . . . .	18
10. Who May Be Called? . . . . .	19

**A**lmighty God, our Heavenly Father, giver of every good gift, send forth your Holy Spirit and raise up for us a bishop of your own choosing: a shepherd to lead and guide us with personal holiness, wisdom, compassion and grace.

Father, we pray for a bishop with vision and the commitment to heal and unite your faithful people of the Diocese of the Rio Grande that we all may make known the love of Jesus Christ, who offered Himself for us and the whole world, in whose Name we pray. Amen.





# VISION STATEMENT

*We, the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, come together through prayer and worship to listen, learn, serve, and grow in our life in Christ.*

1. We will establish trust and achieve unity in diversity. *Let's come together.*
2. We will create a comprehensive Christian and spiritual formation initiative across the Diocese. *Let's learn together.*
3. We will facilitate the sharing and support of resources and best practices for mission and outreach ministry in the church and in the word. *Let's serve together.*
4. We will develop a Diocesan Communication System that provides accessible, timely, and transparent information that encourages two-way communication. *Let's listen together.*

We will develop resources and provide support for the individual needs of congregations. *Let's grow together!*

## 1. WHERE IS GOD CALLING US?

The path forward is not always clear. Two methods were used to answer our title question, both exploring the same questions. The first method, Focus Groups, was used to collect information in a way that allowed the people of the Diocese to hear each others' perspectives. Individual Focus Groups were held for both lay and clergy in each of the four area deaneries. The second method was an On-line Survey that allowed anyone in the Diocese to offer a response individually to each of the six questions, but without having heard or read the responses of others.

The questions were:

- What works well in our diocese?
- What does not work well in our diocese?
- What skills/experience should our new bishop have?
- What personal attributes should our new bishop have?
- Where is God calling our diocese?
- What challenges do we face in responding to that call?

## **RESPONSES**

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The information gathered through both methods shows some common perspectives, but also confirms that the Diocese is deeply divided by issues experienced throughout the wider Church. Of particular note is the difference in the tone of comments made in Focus Groups compared to those of the On-line Survey. The Focus Group responses tended to be more hopeful about healing and reconciliation being possible through the New Life Process, and the leadership of a new Bishop in the Diocese. The On-line Survey responses tended to be more strident and much less hopeful about the future of the Diocese and the future of the national church, focusing on divisive issues related to the interpretation and authority of Scripture, salvation theology, sexuality, and social justice versus political correctness.

### **WORKING WELL**

- There is a consensus that our annual Diocesan Convocation is strong.
- Our deanery system supports communications, our governance processes, and provides leadership opportunities.
- The life within our individual congregations works well.
- Some experience communications as working well.

### **NOT WORKING WELL**

- There is a consensus about division between the northern and southern parts of the Diocese
- Some detachment between the population centers, such as Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and El Paso, and the distanced, much more sparsely populated regions, both north and south.
- The “us versus them” mentality, largely attributed to theological differences, tends to polarize and politicize diocesan relationships and processes.
- Some indicated that communications in general is poor, with that being especially true for the lack of timeliness of the Diocesan website.

## **SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE NEEDED OF A NEW BISHOP**

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- Communications skills – listening was emphasized; ability to communicate in both English and Spanish language is desired.
- Strong pastoral skills; empathy and compassion.
- Skilled in the reconciliation of individuals and communities.
- Open-mindedness, honesty, and humility.
- Energy and resourcefulness.
- Ability to lead us into a new vision of unity and wholeness.
- Experience in working with large and small parishes.

## **PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES NEEDED OF A NEW BISHOP**

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- Demonstrated belief in Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Rooted in Scripture and The Episcopal Church.
- Acceptance of diverse theological perspectives, yet unwavering strength about "good theology."

## **WHERE GOD IS CALLING OUR DIOCESE?**

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There were two diverse perspectives expressed about where God is calling the Diocese.

- Some experience the call of our Diocese to be:
  - Seeking unity through the ministry of reconciliation; healing our divisions.
  - Doing the work of Jesus Christ, loving our neighbors and spreading the Good News.
- Others experience our call to be:
  - Engaging in spiritual warfare, fighting for "traditional Biblical values."

And yet, our unity of purpose is growing, as evidenced by a number of positive signs. Among those are the expansion of one of our cardinal parishes, the growing toward self-support and independent status of a parochial mission, the continuation and growth of the remainder of one of the parishes that departed the diocese into a fully functional worshipping congregation, expanded and effective leadership roles for the cathedral and area deans, a reorganized Deployment Committee which has elicited an unprecedented number of applicants for clergy positions, and a developing ethic and practice for wider and deeper communications including the launch of a new diocesan website.

We continue to grieve the departure of four congregations from the diocese in the last few years. These losses and other events have presented challenges to which the diocese is responding in a positive manner. During this period of transition a more moderate voice has been shared and heard. The Standing Committee, in close teamwork with the Deans, has provided strong leadership and direction. The New Life healing and reconciliation process is already beginning to bear fruit. There is a new spirit of healing and reconciliation that is alive and well in the diocese. Through New Life we have heard from many of their desire to focus on what unites us rather than what divides us. Indeed we are growing in unity and purpose as the body of Christ in this place. It is to that which God calls the diocese of the Rio Grande.

## **CHALLENGES IN RESPONDING TO THAT CALL?**

- Reconciling our divergent understanding and experience of God's call to us.
- Managing the geography, topography, and travel distances of the Diocese.
- A lack of financial resources.
- Evaluating the true effectiveness of the New Life process.
- Our diocesan history of distrust, hurt, and division.

## 2. A BRIEF RECENT HISTORY OF THE DIOCESAN BISHOPS



In recent decades, the Diocese of the Rio Grande has had to deal with considerable challenges in terms of episcopal leadership. This is a very brief chronicle of the most recent and relevant.

By the end of his tenure in 1972, Bishop C. James Kinsolving had been forced to deal with a number of issues arising out of the tumult of the late 1960s and early 1970s. These included questions of churchmanship and the use of alternative forms to the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. The greatest controversy, however, involved the introduction of the General Convention's Special Program that sought to distribute resources to various civil rights groups, some of which were fairly militant in tone. On the whole, however, the Diocese fared well during his administration, and demonstrated considerable growth.

It has been said of his successor, Bishop Richard M. Trelease, who was elected bishop in 1971, that he was a man of his age. He was a strong supporter of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the 1982 Hymnal, as well as women's ordination. The result was a doubling of diocesan clergy, and yet unfortunately, a decrease in the number of confirmands and communicants. This essentially "zeroed out" the moderate expansion of the Kinsolving years. Bishop Trelease's ministry ended abruptly in 1988 with his resignation for health reasons, urged by Presiding Bishop Edmund Browning. To this day, no significant efforts have been undertaken to help the diocese deal with, and heal from, the summary departure of its Bishop.

The election of Bishop Terence Kelshaw in 1989 represented a conscious departure from the Trelease era. A British evangelical, Kelshaw quickly set about reversing many of Trelease's policies, and instituting his own. He decentralized some of the financial decision making of the diocese into the hands of the four deaneries, and also set a conservative agenda for the Diocese. Funds were withheld from the national Church, which mirrored the bishop's and many others' growing alienation. When issues of sexuality came to the fore, Bishop Kelshaw was highly visible, both locally and nationally, as a strong proponent of traditional values. He was among the bishops who filed a Presentment against retired Bishop Walter Righter for the ordination of a

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man in a same-sex relationship, and a vocal opponent of the election of V. Gene Robinson as Bishop of New Hampshire. By the end of his administration, Kelshaw had ceased to attend meetings of the House of Bishops, which increased the alienation of the Diocese from the national Church. By his retirement in 2005 the Diocese was perceived as one of the most conservative in the Church. Some regard his tenure as a time of real difficulty, while others see his time as one in which traditional values were upheld in the face of significant challenges. Many of the latter were deeply distressed when he left the Episcopal Church USA for the Anglican Church of Uganda.

Bishop Kelshaw's 16-year ministry was followed by the short-lived administration of Bishop Jeffrey Steenson. Steenson, who had been Bishop Kelshaw's Canon to the Ordinary for five years, was elected by a sizeable majority over his closest contender, Martyn Minns, in October 2004, and was consecrated Bishop Coadjutor in January 2005. He became Diocesan Bishop on August 1 of that same year, the 1000th Bishop consecrated in The Episcopal Church. Steenson differed from his predecessor in a number of respects. While a theological conservative, his perspective was that of an "Anglo-Papalist" rather than an evangelical. There was great hope that his "kinder and gentler" conservative style would usher in an era in which differing perspectives would be respected, while at the same time honoring the generally traditional character of the diocese.

For all of these reasons, Bishop Steenson's decision to resign as Bishop, renounce his orders in The Episcopal Church, and seek priestly ordination in the Roman Catholic Church, was greeted with a mixture of sympathy, consternation, and anger. Both prior to and following his departure on December 1, 2007, people struggled to deal with this unanticipated and unwelcome turn of events. For some, his action, though understandable given Steenson's concerns about the direction of the national church, was viewed as a repudiation of their own beliefs. Others were angry that he had allowed his name to be placed in nomination for Bishop, given his own ecclesial uncertainty. Still others wondered whether the direction in which he had begun to take the Diocese would continue.

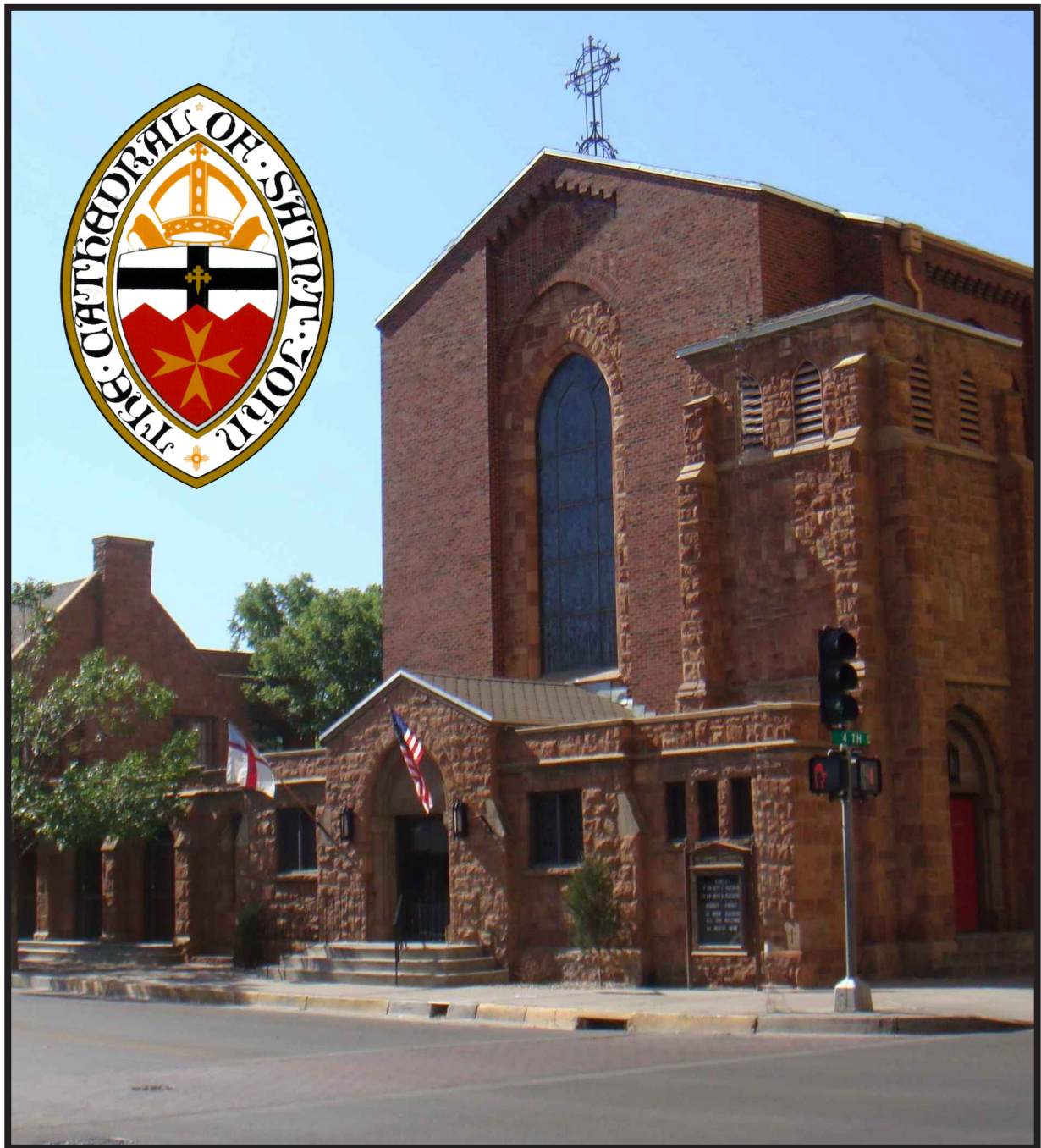
The argument could be made that the last "normal" episcopacy in the Diocese of the Rio Grande was that of Bishop Kinsolving, which ended in 1972. This is the legacy with which the Diocese enters into the process for the selection of a new bishop.

The Standing Committee has served as the Ecclesiastical Authority since January 2008, wrestling with the usual business of diocesan leadership, but also, the separation of four congregations, our continued division of spirituality and polity, and the launching of a diocesan-wide effort of healing and reconciliation. The Right Reverend William Frey began serving as Assisting Bishop in 2008. His pastoral approach to parish visitations and liturgical duties has been warmly welcomed.

Though the separations of the three parishes and one mission in recent years have resulted in a diocese of more moderate polity, sharp and deep division remains. At the same time, we remain firmly committed to remaining in the Episcopal Church USA. We are striving for a new vision of our Diocese, and we seek a Bishop called by God to lead that new community.



### 3. THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN



The Cathedral of St. John began with the purchase of land in 1882, and was designated as the Cathedral Church of the Missionary District of New Mexico & West Texas at the Convocation of 1920. The Cathedral house was designed by John Gaw Meem to provide parish and diocesan office, and ground was broken in 1930. Gaw Meem began plans for the current Cathedral Nave in 1950, and the building was completed in time for the 1952 Diocesan Convention. The new Cathedral was dedicated and a new bishop, James Moss Stoney, was instituted on November 11, 1952. For more information on the Cathedral, please refer to the website: <http://www.stjohnsabq.org/>

## 4. NEW LIFE: HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

### NEW LIFE IN THE DIOCESE OF THE RIO GRANDE: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

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*"If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all"*

(Romans 12:18 )

All people of the Diocese are called to participate in New Life: Reconciliation and Healing - a process developed by a team of lay and clergy leaders from the Diocese, in response to a request at the October 2007 Convocation for healing and reconciliation.

#### THE GOALS OF NEW LIFE ARE TO:

- Call together the community of Jesus Christ
- Develop a sustainable process that offers hope for healing, reconciliation, and restored trust
- Build communication capacities that are transparent, respectful, and loving
- Provide opportunities to live in the tension of diversity
- Create a Sacred Space as a safe place to share stories and explore differences
- Establish connections that transcend differences

The New Life Design Team developed a process which includes New Life Dialogues - structured conversations in which small groups addressed faith and Diocesan life in depth to better understand their own perspectives and those of others. The dialogue was followed by New Life Deliberation, a discussion of concerns, visions, and actions that corresponded to the issues raised by participants.

#### WHY HEALING AND RECONCILIATION IN THE DIOCESE IS IMPERATIVE

The Diocese of the Rio Grande has, along with the wider church, experienced increasing polarization over the past number of years. We are a diocese whose diversity has often been expressed through power struggles. Consequently, our history has been to call bishops who are the theological and stylistic opposites of their immediate predecessors. Our desire now is to change that pattern of behavior. Additionally, our past three bishops have departed prematurely: one through forced retirement; one through poor health (who later joined the Province of Uganda); and one to become a priest in the Roman Catholic Church.

These abrupt changes, along with the issues confronting the Episcopal Church, have left many in the Diocese questioning the direction of their own faith journeys. The people of this Diocese, both clergy and lay, have been deeply wounded, yet have expressed the desire to heal. We have begun healing ministry within our Diocese on many levels. The New Life Process has been our most concerted effort to encourage healing from our losses and reconciliation of our divisions. We seek to call a bishop who will be able to join us in this process and lead us into reconciliation, healing, and more mutually supportive ministry.

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At the Diocesan Convocation in October 2007, which occurred shortly after the announcement that the current Bishop was resigning to become Roman Catholic, small group discussions were held to consider the direction the Diocese should follow, given this unanticipated resignation. The participants were encouraged to discuss their concerns openly with each other and energetically entered into discussions. The reports from the groups were candid, and differences of opinion with respect to theology, ecclesiology, polity, and mission were identified.

It was clear from the documented discussions that while there were many who felt a sense of urgency to elect a new Bishop, there were also significant numbers who believed that there needed to be time for healing and reconciliation before an election was held. Also, it was evident that though the people of the Diocese are committed Christians with a desire to move toward living out their mission as "a missionary people" and to live into their baptismal covenant, significant differences exist about how that is to be accomplished.

The Standing Committee, as the Ecclesiastical Authority, determined it essential to address a healing and reconciliation process so that the people of the Diocese would better understand who we are and how best to discern our way forward in calling a new bishop. The decision was made to engage in this endeavor while concurrently beginning the search for a new bishop. Time and resources to address the healing needs expressed by the delegates from the congregations throughout the Diocese were allocated and the Standing Committee commissioned the New Life process.

It is understood that healing and reconciliation will take time, perhaps three to five years, to discover and address our needs. The New Life Process has been designed and implemented in its initial phase with well over 300 participants.

At this time, the next phase of the process is being designed and will be initiated later in the year. In continued support of healing and reconciliation, New Life will address our diversity and relationships to each other across a range of concerns, including theology, authority and power, and social concerns. Our goal is to develop a path forward, together, in the name of Jesus Christ.

#### **SUMMARY FINDINGS OF THE NEW LIFE PROCESS**

The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande New Life: Healing and Reconciliation process has been underway for nearly a year, and has served six retreats, as well as a segment of the Diocesan Convocation in October 2008. More than 200 people, both lay and clergy, have participated in the retreats, resulting in an emerging set of issues that need to be addressed in the Diocese, as well as accompanying concerns, visions, and actions.

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The major themes that were illuminated in the retreats are: Communication, Trust, Mission & Ministry, Unity, Consensus on Core Values, and Leadership. Each retreat was concluded by a discussion about what "cross-cutting actions" were recommended by the retreat participants.

**THE FOLLOWING TEN ACTIONS ARE THE MOST FREQUENTLY RECOMMENDED.**

- Develop a Diocesan communication system that is unbiased, two-way, timely, and consistent.
- Encourage the practice of civility.
- Form a Commission on Christian Education that has a budget and Director of Christian Education.
- Continue the New Life Process.
- Be more proactive in providing resources to smaller/marginalized congregations.
- Define ourselves by what unites us rather than what divides us.
- Select a Bishop who is a loving shepherd, honors all, and builds consensus.
- Re-establish relationship and participation in The Episcopal Church USA with a Bishop committed to that purpose.
- Develop leadership (Bishop, Clergy, Lay) that fosters development of a unifying vision and mission for the Diocese.
- See ourselves as a Christian family: one body in Christ.

*"We want a Bishop who sees us as an opportunity, a challenge, and a gift."*

This quote generated a lot of enthusiasm at various retreats.



## 5. WHERE IS THE DIOCESE NOW?

The Diocese is, at its core, healthy. "To know Christ and to make Him known" is the foundation of all who minister throughout the Diocese of the Rio Grande. Despite distances, a strong sense of community persists in the Diocese, as evidenced by the many ministries emanating from parishes throughout the Diocese. Mission continues to be an essential element of the nature of this Diocese. This is not simply a result of the vast distances, but to the missionary zeal in the hearts of the people.

In leadership areas, the Diocese is vibrant and encouraging. The Standing Committee forthrightly publishes its actions through the diocesan newsletter and through its website. This has proved invaluable to the community of the Diocese. Four deaneries are the vehicles for regional work of the Diocese. This structure, which has been in place for nearly twenty years, encourages and assists the ministries throughout the region.

Annual Diocesan Convocations are well attended and provide opportunity for participation in governance, worship, fellowship, and inspiration. In such a diocese, diverse geographically and theologically as this, these annual gatherings encourage individuals and congregations in their ministries.

The Diocese also began a new program of coming together for its first Matthew 25 Conference over Labor Day weekend 2008. Eight months were spent in bringing together elements that created an atmosphere of sharing and education. Thirteen sponsoring congregations celebrated the many ways in which they were doing the ministry of the Gospel message. Half of the 56 congregations participated in the conference, presenting exhibits and materials on their respective ministries, including prison outreach, mission trips, family food cooperatives, Episcopal Relief and Development, camping ministries, AIDS caregiver kits for Zambia, and many more. A second Matthew 25 conference is planned for September 2009.

The Commission on Ministry meets four times each year and gives careful and prayerful consideration to those seeking to answer a call to Holy Orders. Members of the Commission serve as mentors to those who are proceeding through the ordination process.

The Investment Board meets regularly with skilled advisors to monitor five diocesan funds, each with a long-term focus. Prudent review continues; and the declines in portfolio values as a result of the present global economic situation, have not been as severe as with many other non-profit organizations.

Cursillo has long been active in the Diocese and reunion groups continue to meet. The diocesan church camp, Camp Stoney, named for one of our early bishops, each year brings young people to Christ through a camping experience supported by a dedicated staff of counselors and volunteers.

## 6. STRUCTURES AND GOVERNANCE OF THE DIOCESE

The structure of the Diocese of the Rio Grande resembles that of other resource-challenged dioceses in most respects. The central staff includes only two full-time positions, an Executive Assistant to the Bishop and a Business Manager. The part-time support staff consists of the Canon to the Ordinary, a Deployment committee, a Receptionist, a Communications Specialist, and a Staff Assistant. Additionally, a Diocesan Youth Director also serves as the program director of Camp Stoney during the summer season.

The Diocese conducts a School for Ministry, which is responsible for the formation of vocational deacons and priests. Presently, eighteen students are matriculated in a 21/2-year program accredited through Trinity School for Ministry. The school is served by a Dean, who is responsible for the formation process, and an Administrator, who handles logistical and financial matters. Both are part-time positions. An appointed board, responsible to the Bishop and Standing Committee, governs the School.

Officers of the Diocese include: Canonist, Associate Canonist, Chancellor, Associate Chancellor, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Archivist, Parliamentarian, Registrar, and Secretary to Convocation. All of these are appointed by the Bishop with the exception of the Treasurer, who is elected by Diocesan Convocation for a three-year term.

The territory of the Diocese is divided into four deaneries: Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Southwest. A dean is appointed by the Bishop to coordinate deanery activities, including the allocation of diocesan funds disbursed through the deaneries.

The Diocese has the customary canonical bodies: Standing Committee/Trustees of the Property, Diocesan Council, and Commission on Ministry. The Standing Committee consists of three clergy and three lay members, who are elected to three-year terms in a staggered rotation. The Diocesan Council, which is comprised of ex officio and elected members, functions as the Diocesan Convention (called Convocation in this Diocese) ad interim. The Commission on Ministry consists of fifteen lay and clergy members, who are appointed and elected, as well as several ex officio non-voting members. There also is an Ecclesiastical Court that is elected and functions according to national and diocesan canons.

Additionally, a number of established committees serve the Diocese. The Cathedral Chapter consists of the Bishop, the Dean of the Cathedral, members of the Cathedral Vestry, elected representatives from the Diocese, and (non-voting) episcopally-appointed (non-residentiary) Canons. Traditionally, the major function of the Cathedral Chapter is the election of the Cathedral Dean. A Camp and Conference Board, made up of elected and ex officio members, oversees Camp Stoney and its programs. An appointed Diocesan Investment Board manages the Diocese's financial resources, while an appointed Budget and Audit Committee is responsible for the development and annual audit of the diocesan budget. The Growth in Effective Mission (GEM) Committee, comprised of ex officio and appointed members, allocates resources to aided congregations, and assists in the development of diocesan mission strategy. A Communications Committee is responsible for the management and development of diocesan communications efforts.

## 7. DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE DIOCESE

A number of trends emerge from examining the data from the ten years of Parochial Reports from 1998 through 2007. First, the number of pledging units and active baptized members reached its peak in 2003 with 3,926 pledging units and 15,667 active baptized members.

Over the next three years both numbers declined to 3,124 pledging units and 13,212 active baptized members. This represents a twenty percent decrease in pledging units and a fifteen percent decrease in active baptized members.

Similarly, from 2001 through 2007 the average Sunday attendance declined from 6,408 to 4,875. This represents a twenty-four percent decrease. Plate and pledge offerings peaked in 2005 at \$10,533,532.00 and by 2007 that number fell to \$8,657,376.00, a decline of eighteen percent. A significant factor in these decreases in membership and funding is the departure of four congregations from the diocese.

The following table of statistical data was provided by the National Church, and represents the accumulated data from the parochial reports submitted by the congregations in the Diocese. The data provides a simple snapshot of the Diocese. The 2007 figures reflect in part the departure of St. Clement's Church in El Paso. Additionally, the 2008 division of the congregation of St. Francis on the Hill, also in El Paso, is not reflected.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Pledging Units</i>	<i>Active Baptized Members</i>	<i>Communicants Good Standing</i>	<i>Baptisms</i>	<i>Confirmations</i>	<i>Marriages</i>	<i>Burials</i>	<i>Average Sunday Attend</i>	<i>Church School Students</i>	<i>Plate &amp; Pledge</i>
2007	3,124	13,212	10,682	179	127	76	216	4,875	947	\$8,657,376
2006	3,356	14,785	12,115	244	233	106	243	5,667	1,138	\$10,462,858
2005	3,451	14,732	11,866	355	321	111	267	5,940	1,298	\$10,533,532
2004	3,722	15,071	12,418	335	318	114	278	6,102	1,508	\$10,315,152
2003	3,926	15,667	13,047	345	305	125	259	6,187	1,585	\$10,072,209
2002	3,834	15,398	13,620	397	348	136	288	6,312	1,511	\$9,586,867
2001	3,918	15,408	13,558	390	343	135	293	6,408	1,695	\$9,102,584
2000	3,805	15,242	13,065	394	372	140	301	6,384	1,485	\$8,640,798
1999	3,842	14,951	13,348	370	309	150	266	6,097	1,369	\$7,820,097
1998	4,207	14,453	12,696	382	306	152	254	5,770	1,530	\$7,122,299

In late 2008, the Search Team conducted a census to gather data. Approximately 1,600 responses were gathered, which represents sixteen percent of the Diocese's communicants in good standing (based on the 2007 parochial report summary of 10,682.) Departures would likely reduce the number of communicants in good standing for 2008, but those numbers are not yet available.

If the sixteen percent respondents would stand as a representative sample of the Diocese, several statements about the Diocese's active communicants are possible.

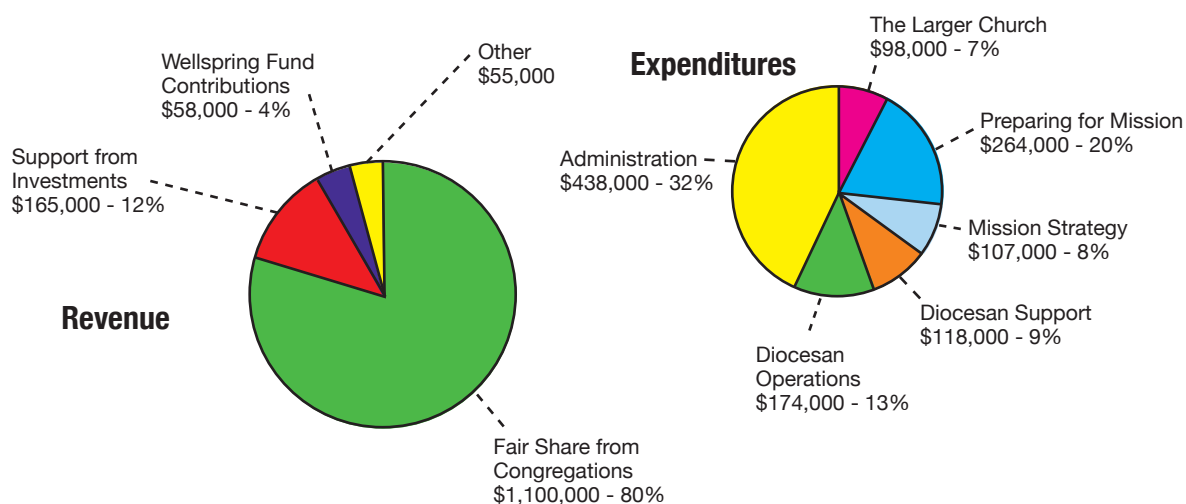
- The majority of those who are communicants in good standing are women.
- Most are married and over age 50.
- The majority have at least a bachelor's degree.
- By a large majority, the communicants in good standing are Caucasian, who have been Episcopalian for more than 21 years.

The following table was consolidated using information gathered by the same voluntary diocesan census conducted by the Search Team, and cited above.

	MARITAL STATUS	GENDER	AGE RANGE	EDUCATION	ETHNICITY	LENGTH OF TIME EPISCOPALIAN
SINGLE	347					
MARRIED	1208					
DOMESTIC PARTNER	47					
MALE		716				
FEMALE		1093				
16-34			108			
35-49			246			
50-64			586			
65+			857			
HIGH SCHOOL				128		
SOME COLLEGE				292		
ASSOCIATE DEGREE				99		
BACHELORS				536		
MASTERS				510		
DOCTORATE				230		
DECLINED TO STATE				85		
AFRICAN AMERICAN				22		
ASIAN					15	
CAUCASIAN					1562	
HISPANIC					76	
OTHER					41	
DECLINED TO STATE						4
NOT EPISCOPALIAN						101
< 1 YEAR						31
1-4 YEARS						92
5-10 YEARS						159
11-20 YEARS						201
21+ YEARS						1148



## 8. THE DIOCESAN BUDGET



The 2009 operating budget of the Diocese is a balanced budget. Fully 80% of revenues are Fair Share Contributions from congregations, based on a rate of thirteen percent of pledge and plate income. Fair Share has remained at the same level the last few years. Investment income is expected to be at a lower level in 2009 as a result of current economic conditions.

Expenditures for 2009 include the estimated costs of sending our deputies to the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in Los Angeles this year. Because General Convention is held every three years, related costs are difficult to project. Numerous increases and decreases in costs and revenues are reflected in the budget.

Changes are reflected in the areas including: communications of the presence of a part time assisting Bishop rather than a sitting Bishop; and the costs related to the search for a Bishop, including the services of independent consultants.

The Diocesan Council monitors the operating budget during the year and may adjust the budget as appropriate to recognize changing situations.

## 9. GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND CULTURE

The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande is as expansive in size as it is diverse in its natural beauty. It includes all of New Mexico, the 5th largest state in area, and that part of Texas west of the Pecos River, an area of 154,000 square miles. The Diocese boasts two time zones within its boundaries: Mountain and Central.

The Diocese's landscape extends from the more than 13,000 feet of the Rocky Mountain range in the north to the low desert plains in the south. Most of the Diocese is more than 4,000 feet in elevation. The abundance of sunshine and the dazzling colors of the sky enhance the beauty of the Land of Enchantment. The climate is dry with temperatures rising or falling 5 degrees Fahrenheit with every 1,000 feet of elevation. Outdoor recreational opportunities are readily available. Annually, tourists from around the world visit the area's various national parks and monuments such as Carlsbad Caverns National Park, Big Bend National Park, and White Sands National Monument.

Minerals, such as uranium, potassium, petroleum, and natural gas are abundant natural resources and play a vital role in the area's economy. Chemical and computer products also contribute to the economy, and the area's farms and ranches derive income from livestock, and crops such as cotton, pecans, corn, peanuts, sorghum, beans, and chilies.

Since 1945, two national laboratories, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory and Sandia Laboratories, have been leaders in energy research and development.

Two cities within the Diocese, Albuquerque, with a population of 518,271 and El Paso, with a population of 606,913, are listed amongst the 100 most populous U.S. cities.

About 2,729,000 people live within the boundaries of the Diocese, and are as diverse as the landscape. In New Mexico alone, the racial diversity is reflected in U.S. Census Bureau statistics: 44.4% who are Hispanic or Latino; 42.3% who are white (not Hispanic); 9.5% Native American or Alaskan natives; 2.8% black; 1.4% Asian; 0.1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; and 1.7% who listed two or more races. The Native American population includes the members of nineteen Pueblos, Apache, and Navajo peoples.

Along with racial diversity, we find a people richly diverse in history, culture and theological expression within the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion of the Diocese. Although the size of the Diocese is and will remain a challenge, the members of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande remain committed to Our Lord and the building up of the Body of Christ.

## 10. WHO MAY BE CALLED?

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of the Rio Grande has called for the election of the Ninth Diocesan Bishop, which is scheduled for April 24, 2010.

We thank you for prayerfully considering your call to be our next bishop. We ask that you carefully read our Diocesan Profile. If you are interested in exploring a call as Bishop of The Rio Grande, please follow the steps outlined in the Application Form.

We recognize that this process involves a considerable commitment of time and prayerful consideration on the part of each applicant. You may be assured that the Search Committee has spent much time in preparation and prayer and it's our intent to keep applicants apprised of their position in our decisions in a timely manner.

In the Standing Committee's Charge to the Search Team, the following was emphasized:

- That the bishop is "called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the church; to celebrate and provide for the administration of the sacraments of the New Covenant; to ordain priests and deacons and to join in ordaining bishops; and to be in all things a faithful pastor and wholesome example for the entire flock of Christ."
- That the bishop is called to "share in the leadership of the church throughout the world."
- That the Diocese of The Rio Grande has embarked on a reconciliation and healing process called "The New Life Process." Our new Bishop will envision coming along side of us to join this process of building further, a healthy family of God.
- That in light of the New Life process, working towards reconciliation, nominees are urged to express, in writing, a commitment to remain in The Episcopal Church USA, and to uphold the Constitution and Canons of The Episcopal Church USA and the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

### WHO MAY APPLY?

Those eligible include anyone who meets the canonical requirements of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America, these include:

- A. *An individual must be at least 30 years of age. The compulsory retirement age for bishops is 72. Suffragan Bishops are eligible nominees; those currently serving as Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor of a Diocese must have served that Diocese for at least five years to be eligible.*

The Diocese of the Rio Grande seeks to call someone who is 5-10 years or more from retirement.

- B. *All are welcome in our church, and consistent with that value, no candidate shall be excluded "because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age." (Title III, Canon 1, Section 2)*