

SAINT MARK'S  
EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

# CANDIDATES for VESTRY and DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES

## ABOUT THE ANNUAL MEETING

All members of Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral congregation are invited to attend the 2026 Annual Meeting to elect new parish Vestry members and Delegates/Alternates to the Diocesan Convention. The agenda includes reports from parish leadership and committees, the presentation of awards, and the Dean's address.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 12:30 p.m. and may be attended in person in Bloedel Hall or online via Zoom. A potluck meal will not be offered in 2025.

## WHO MAKES UP THE VESTRY?

The Vestry currently consists of 17 members: 12 elected from Saint Mark's Parish, three diocesan members appointed with the consent of the Bishop, the Dean who chairs the Vestry, and the Bishop of Olympia (or the bishop's designated representative). Additionally, the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Treasurer, and Clerk serve with the Vestry as non-voting officers. All Vestry members are to be persons with demonstrated qualities of dedicated commitment to Saint Mark's (or their own parish), leadership and vision with responsiveness to the needs, concerns and hopes of the world.

Vestry leadership resides with the Dean and individuals who are traditionally known as "Wardens", together with other Vestry Officers. In accordance with the By-laws (Art. IV, sec. 1), the Senior Warden, the Chancellor, and Vice Chancellor (the Cathedral's attorneys) are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Dean. The Junior Wardens, Clerk, and Treasurer are elected by the Vestry. Each member serves for one three-year term. This year, the members completing their terms are: **Greg Hamm, Peter Snyder, Alexandra Thompson, Sarah McCord, and Becky Kacel, Diocesan Member (Trinity, Everett).**

## VESTRY MEMBERS CONTINUING IN OFFICE

Term ends January 2027:

**Phil Haas, Julia Logan, Martha Craig, Christopher Breunig, and the Rev. Gail Wheatley, Diocesan Member**

Term ends January 2028:

**Mark Lundquist, Deborah Person, and Sam Herring**

*The four members elected at the 2026 Annual Meeting will end their term January 2029.*

*Additionally, a candidate may be elected to serve out the remainder of a term currently vacant due to resignation, pursuant to cathedral by-laws. Details will be shared at the meeting.*

## ELECTION RULES

Like last year, the Annual Meeting will be called to order in Thomsen Chapel at 8 a.m. to take nominations from the floor (if any). Voting will occur by paper ballot only, either at the table in the narthex between 8:05 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. or at the entry table in Bloedel Hall between 12:35–12:45 p.m.

Online voting for those joining the meeting via Zoom is no longer available. Per cathedral bylaws, there is no early voting or proxy voting. Complete election rules are presented during the meeting.

## WHO CAN VOTE IN PARISH ELECTIONS?

The Second Restated Bylaws of St. Mark's Cathedral Parish (Art. 1, sec. 3) provide:

*In accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese of Olympia, "Parish Communicants" are those baptized persons who are faithful in corporate worship and who have received the Sacrament of Holy Communion at St. Mark's at least three times during the previous year (unless good cause prevented) . . . ; "Parish Communicants in Good Standing" are those Parish Communicants age sixteen years or older, who are recorded contributors to the support of St. Mark's with money or with personal service. . . Unless subsequently defined otherwise by Diocesan or Episcopal Church canons, "Parish Electors" shall include all the Parish Communicants in Good Standing.*

## ABOUT DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Each fall, more than 500 delegates from around Western Washington come together to conduct diocesan business, including electing individuals to offices and deputations, admitting new missions or parishes, and voting on resolutions. The Bishop also gives an annual address. The 115th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia will be held on **October 23–24, 2026, at the DoubleTree SeaTac Airport.**

Convention Delegates are a major link between the parish, the Vestry, and the Diocese, at both convention and other diocesan meetings. Delegates serve for two years. The 12 Delegates elected at the 2026 Annual Meeting will join the 12 delegates already elected in February 2025.

## ABOUT THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

This committee is designated by the cathedral's Constitution and Bylaws to present to the parish a list of nominees for the annual parish elections. The process involves careful vetting of all candidates as well as interviews with candidates for Vestry. This year's committee is: **Greg Hamm** (chair & Vestry liaison), **Jim Buskirk, Carrie Davis, Hilary McLeland-Wieser, Peter Snyder, Alexandra Thompson, Nancy Valaas, and Dean Steve Thomason** (*ex officio*).

Questions? Contact: [nominations@saintmarks.org](mailto:nominations@saintmarks.org)

## CANDIDATES FOR VESTRY

### AMANDA DAVIS



Since joining Saint Mark's in 2012, I have been actively involved in many areas of this community. I am a member of both the Cathedral Choir and Evensong Choirs and currently serve as the Choir School Treasurer. When I'm not in the choir loft, I have been an acolyte, a confirmation mentor, both delegate and convenor for the Diocesan Convention, and previously served on vestry, including a year as Junior Warden for Finance. Professionally, I have worked at local nonprofits for over 13 years in financial, administrative, and fundraising roles.

I am deeply grateful for the Saint Mark's community and for the many rich and varied gifts that each person brings. I am honored to stand for vestry, and excited for the opportunity to learn about, engage with, and nurture the many areas of transformational work Saint Mark's is involved with both within these walls and across the diocese.

### JOHN GULHAUGEN



As the son of a Lutheran pastor, I have been involved in church communities my entire life. My parents were instrumental in our faith development and showing us what it is like to be a part of a church family. My husband James and I began attending regular services at St. Mark's during Holy Week of 2019, making the decision to officially join during the pandemic in 2021. Since then I have become ever increasingly involved in the church by joining the Cathedral and Evensong Choirs, becoming the leader of the Compline Host Ministry, participating in Radix, Queer in Christ and developing lifelong memories and friendships during two Pilgrimages. Serving on the Vestry would be a great way to enhance my continued growth at St. Mark's, and give a little back to an organization which has provided so much.

My life before St. Mark's included being the director of Music at Peace Lutheran Church in West Seattle, conducting The Seattle Metropolitan Singers, a volunteer leader of a support group, singing with the Seattle Opera Chorus and working in Procurement at the Boeing Company, from which I am retired. All of these past experiences required working with groups of individuals coming together to guide and lead the organizations successfully, and are a good background for work on the Vestry. I am pleased and honored to have been nominated and considered as a candidate.

### JOHN HARLOW



I moved to Seattle in 2021 with my wife, Kim. Our older daughter, her husband, and their first son were already here. They have since had a second son and we enjoy being active grandparents. This year, our younger daughter and her partner moved here. We have always been a close family and are blessed to be together in the same city. I am educated and trained as a psychologist and have been a therapist for 25 plus years. The last 15 of those have been in private practice. My office is in the Green Lake area. At our last church, in Albuquerque, NM, I served on the stewardship committee and was part of two successful campaigns. I liked learning some of what it takes to run a church and working with my fellow parishioners towards that end. We have attended St. Mark's since 2022 with the 11 a.m. service being our preference.

I am in my third year in the EfM program and have done four rounds of Radix. I like how the small group setting encourages fellowship and how it allows for a deep dive on a given topic. I would like to serve on the vestry because I believe in St. Mark's mission and see this as an opportunity to participate in furthering it. I think I would be a good addition as I have some relevant experience and am good at working with people to accomplish things. I am honored to be nominated.

### SARAH McCORD



I have been in a special one-year position on the vestry this past year and am now standing for a regular position. I was baptized and confirmed in the Episcopal church and began attending Saint Mark's regularly since 2018 when I was reaffirmed in the church. Since then, in addition to the vestry, I have served in the ushering ministry, the phase II discernment committee for Robert Stevens, and when my work schedule permits, bible study and the Radix Project. I have also attended a Wesleyan Small Group at Seattle Pacific University. I was very fortunate to be able to go on pilgrimage to Ireland and Iona a year ago, a life-altering experience which brought my faith into focus and created bonds with my fellow pilgrims that both surprised and touched me. I also volunteered for a month last summer at Saint Andrews House, an Episcopal retreat center on the Hood Canal.

I did my undergraduate work in Mathematics at MIT and graduate work in Applied Math at UW. After spending several years as a mathematician at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, I now teach in the Seattle Pacific University math department. I live in a multigeneration household, with my husband and children and one grandchild and also have several family members in the area - the richness of my family has been the center of my life. I want to explore God's message and my own purpose, in part by being more involved with Saint Mark's, learning more about theology and my place in the church.

### BEATRIX ROEMHELD-HAMM



I found my spiritual home at St. Mark's in 2016 after moving to Seattle from New Jersey with my husband Greg to be near our children and granddaughter. Since then, I have been increasingly drawn into Cathedral life in a variety of ways: Radix groups, a pilgrimage, the Saint Mark's Singers, and various committees. Since 2020, I spend most of my time and energy with the Flower Ministry as ministry leader.

I am an artist and a semi-retired academic family physician with a small private practice, and will enter Chaplaincy training at the Spiritual Care department at UW Harborview Hospital in January 2026. My family life as wife, mother, and grandmother keeps me grounded, and the St. Mark's community keeps me spiritually connected.

During our time at St. Mark's, we have met so many incredible people who have inspired and enriched our lives in many ways. I am honored to have been invited to stand for election to the vestry and hope to be able to contribute to the wellbeing of our community in serving on vestry.

## VICTORIA SZYDLOWSKI



St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral has been my spiritual home since I moved to Seattle in 2018 with my beloved spouse, Matthew Briggs, to begin my PhD in clinical psychology at the University of Washington.

I largely receive when I come to St. Mark's. Slowly opening to participate in St. Mark's over the years allowed me to integrate contemplation and action, to grow and co-create community oriented toward liberation theology. Significantly, my life at St. Mark's is informed by acting on values Matthew and I built our lives around as he prepared for his death from a rare cancer (2021) to use our shared resources to lovingly serve those who are marginalized and to challenge structures of privilege. As such, both Dr. Christena Cleveland, PhD and The Rev. Will Gafney, PhD visited St. Mark's to imagine a more equitable way of illuminating the plurality and abundance of God's ways. St. Mark's holds the reality of pain, illness, death, and love that knows no bounds. I would be honored to serve as a member of the vestry at St. Mark's to share this holy mystery and promise of love with you all.

## CANDIDATES FOR DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATE

### COLTON CAROTHERS



Colton is an active member of the Saint Mark's community, currently serving on the Visual Arts Ministry, as one of the lay leaders of the Queer in Christ Ministry (QuiC), and participating in Education for Ministry (EFM) and the discernment process. Raised in Eastern Washington, Colton studied at Seattle University (B.A.), the University of Washington School of Law (J.D.), and the Université Jean Moulin—Lyon III in France (LL.M.). Professionally, he is a technology transactions attorney at Perkins Coie, where he has an active pro bono practice with arts organizations. Outside of work, he delights in traveling, speaking French, and attending opera performances and Kraken hockey games. Colton looks forward to bringing his love for Saint Mark's, experience in governance, and passion for justice to his role as a delegate to diocesan convention.

### MARIAM ERMOIAN



I have grown up as a member of the Saint Mark's community, having attended since I was a few months old. Music is the most critical part of my connection to both Saint Mark's and my faith as a whole. I have been a member of the choir school since I was five years old, and it has truly shaped who I am today. As a current Junior in high school, I am now a member of the Schola and Evensong choirs and occasionally play piano for the monthly service of Taizé. Outside of the church, I am especially interested in biology and/or medicine, and I participate in the Ballard High School orchestra (as a violinist), as well as Ballard's student arts council.

The supportive and welcoming environment I have found here at Saint Mark's is truly unmatched. As a youth member who is continuing to grow in my faith, I find myself constantly guided by the community around me. I am both excited and grateful for the opportunity to take a more active role in the church as a convention delegate. Thank you!

### JAMES WILCOX



I joined the Saint Mark's Cathedral Choir in September 2013. I had just moved to Seattle to go to graduate school at UW in computer science, and I thought a church choir would be a good way to stay musically active and meet people who are not computer scientists. At first I thought I was "just" joining the Cathedral Choir, but Saint Mark's has a wonderful way of patiently growing on you, and in the years since then, I joined the Evensong and Compline Choirs, served on the Compline Choir board for 6 years, helped lead in-person evening prayer on Wednesdays, and met and married my wife Molly Porter here. That's a bit more than I thought I was signing up for, but certainly I can say I've been musically active and have met plenty of people who are not computer scientists! I feel called to continue to let Saint Mark's grow on me by standing for Vestry this year.

### ROBERTA KANIVE



I first came to the 11 a.m. service in January 2004. While I grew up in the Northern Baptist Church and was married in the Roman Catholic my spiritual home is at St. Mark's. In the early weeks of attending,

I recognized the lightness, the burden lifted as I walked to the car to resume my "outside" life. Now I understand: the liturgy encouraging participation with its antiphonal structure, and the absolutely bedrock grounding of the sermons with their suggestions, descriptions of integrating our spiritual lives as we move through the secular world were such a perfect beginning. The beauty and inspiration of the anthems and organ offerings provide the so important lift, the emotional response to Hope, and finally the comfort of singing hymns alongside the kind neighbor next to us in the pew suggested it was possible for all to be well... I believe the worship service provides the stability and the emotional space to take first steps toward the sought after transformation.

I am happy to serve as a candidate to the Diocesan Convention. I want to do whatever is needed to support the Episcopal Church in its presence and influence in the current American culture we find ourselves in today. It seems to be essential that we search out ways to sustain the Church as an essential thread of society's foundation that holds true as history unfolds.

### CARRIE KAHLER



I grew up in Lynnwood and used to attend Compline in high school, but really came to St. Mark's in 2012. Ever since I have been blessed by the lovely community of people here, as well as challenged to think differently about my faith and theology. I currently lead the reading ministry and have enjoyed attending some Radix groups as well as many Wisdom School offerings. I would be honored to be a convention delegate and learn more about the larger structure of our diocese.

## CANDIDATES FOR DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATE (cont.)

### BRAD KIRSCHNER



Although relatively new to St. Mark's, I have been involved in the Diocese of Olympia since 1974—Bishop Phil is the fifth Bishop of the Diocese since I arrived. At the parish level I have served as Vestry member, Senior Warden as well as serving at the Altar as Lector, Chalice Bearer and herding the young Acolytes. At the Diocesan level, I have served on the First Nations, Camps & Conference facilities, and Episcopal Charities Appeal Committees. I am a graduate of the former Diocese of Olympia School of Theology with such St. Mark's notables as Earl Grout and Hisako Beasley. I have often said that Convention presents the Church at its best and its worst as it brings together the faithful as we try to live into the Gospel Message and guide the temporal affairs of the Diocese. I will try to focus on bringing out the best.

### JOELLA (JO) KIRSCHNER



Baptized at age three in Butte, Montana, I have been a life-long member of the Episcopal Church. My first encounter with St. Mark's was as a diocesan delegate in the years when the convention gathered in the pews of St. Mark's Cathedral. A lot has changed over the intervening years. I have been involved in small group prayer and pastoral care in the parishes we have attended, leading me to earn a Masters of Pastoral Care degree at Seattle University. Yearning for deeper educational offerings, the Wisdom School listed on the Cathedral website drew me to St. Mark's. I believe that we are stronger together, and the diversity in our parishes across the diocese offers the opportunity to learn from others we might not otherwise meet. I look forward to those opportunities to listen, learn and grow, and to share what I learn with you.

### KATHY MINSCH



I grew up singing in the choir in my local Episcopal Church in Potomac Maryland, then attended several Episcopal churches on the East coast before moving to Seattle in 1992. I eventually became a member of Saint Mark's in 2009, and have been a lector ever since, as well as intercessor. I served on the Vestry 2021–2023, where I also participated on the Strategic Planning Committee. I became Co-Chair of the Creation Care Ministry September 2021 through 2024 and am currently Co-Chair of the Third Acters Ministry which started up in November 2023. I took the 4 year Education for Ministry course, graduating this past June, which gave me a deeper understanding of scripture and the history of Christianity. I am in the current Center of Spirituality and Action program. Even though I've been fortunate to serve as a Diocesan Convention Delegate several times, I am honored to be considered once again. I've always enjoyed the Conventions and appreciate the importance of the governance of the Episcopal Church.

### MOLLY PORTER



Hi! I've been attending Saint Mark's for just over 4 years. For most of that time, I've sung in the cathedral and evensong choirs, where I met my husband James. I have also recently made my stirring debut as a Compline hospitality minister, and love taking part

in various events around the cathedral. Beyond Saint Mark's, I am a PhD candidate in English at UW, where I also teach writing and literature, and I like hiking, skiing, gabbing, cooking, and reading. Previously, I have lived and taken part in Episcopal community in Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. James and I have enjoyed attending services and coffee hours around the diocese, and I'd like to get to know how the diocese works more through attending Convention. Plus, I take an odd delight in the mundane happenings that result from the delightful confluence of relative strangers with a common goal in logistics meetings, so I am excited to take part in this one.

### KEVIN JOHNSON



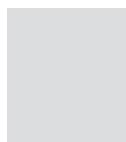
I have been a member of St. Mark's Cathedral since 2007, confirmed in 2009. My current ministries include serving as an acolyte, chalice bearer, coordinating our Eucharistic Visitor ministry, and I've taken a Cathedral-related picture or two. I have previously served as a delegate to the Diocesan Convention and am pleased to serve again. I appreciate the opportunity it provides the Cathedral delegation to meet parishioners from around the Diocese, while offering insight into our contribution to the Diocesan community.

### JAMES DAVIDSON



James Davidson comes to the Episcopal Church from the United Methodist tradition. During seminary (Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University), James served as a minister with a circuit of 11 chapels in Yorkshire, England. James and his husband, John Gulhaugen, joined Saint Mark's in 2021. At Saint Mark's, James has facilitated Radix groups, as well as Queer in Christ Lenten study groups. He currently serves on the Altar Guild, Chalice Bearer, and Lector ministries. And (with John) serves as a Compline host once a month. A lifetime highlight with many cherished memories is a Saint Mark's Cathedral pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Spring of 2023.

### KRISTINE EKMAN



I was born and raised in Seattle, and baptized at Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church. My family joined the Episcopal Church when I was 10 years old, and I have been an Episcopalian ever since. I grew up in the Church of the Ascension in Magnolia, and as an adult have been a member of Grace Church in New York, and attended St. James in the City in Los Angeles. When travelling, I always try to find an Episcopal Community where I can worship, and celebrate the global reach of our church.

I started attending St. Mark's in 2019 when I joined my first EfM Cohort. After taking a break during Covid, I graduated from EfM this past June, and decided to sign up for another go round this fall to learn more about Women in the Bible. I officially became a member of the Cathedral community in 2022 and have been involved in the 40s/50s group and the 2nd Sunday Book Club. I am very honored to be asked to serve as a delegate for the congregation that has given me so much.