

April 28, 2025

Search and Transition for the Sixth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i

Aloha Kākou,

Last Friday, Bishop Robert Fitzpatrick, announced his plans to “resign due to advanced age” in late 2026. The resignation terminology is specific, as Bishop Bob points out, because one never stops being a bishop. That’s just the beginning of the intricate bishop transition process we will pursue together as a Diocese in the coming 18 months. The protocol is vital to a successful bishop transition and meant to be both a grand celebration for our departing Bishop and a welcoming for the sixth bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i.

Before discussing the “Bishop Transition Plan” we want to extend a heartfelt expression of gratitude to Bishop Bob for his service as our fifth bishop, ordained on March 10, 2007.

Let’s recall recent history in our Diocese and the world. During his tenure, Bishop Bob first led us through the financial market liquidity crisis which was followed by the Great Recession. A decade later, a global pandemic hit that has taken over 7.1 million lives globally at last count. Not only did Bishop Bob and the diocesan leaders bring us through both crises mostly intact, but we all held together in prayer, love, faith and compassion.

We grew in our faith under his leadership. Navigating The Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i through those major world events was no easy feat. One thing is certain: Bishop Bob could not have foreseen these challenges on that special Saturday in 2007. We are truly blessed Bishop Bob was at the helm, and we offer prayers of gratitude for his dedication and service. Mahalo nui Bishop Bob!

We mention the hardships we faced together, in part to express appreciation, but also to consider the unforeseen tasks the next bishop of Hawai'i likely will face. The world as we know has changed and will continue to change.

We also have no idea what challenges the next bishop of Hawai'i will face, but as we conduct our search and candidate selection, election, and transition to our new bishop, these possibilities must be top of mind. Being Bishop Diocesan is much more than ceremoniously leading us through worship services, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, ordinations and annual conventions, as we have learned over the last 18 years. The bishop we select must face challenges with grace, humility, love and compassion, with a spirituality that leads us to an awakening of our love for Jesus, and nurtures our love for all people.

Thanks to Bishop Bob’s advance planning, your Standing Committee has been working on this announcement for months, literally starting back in 2024. We have constructed a budget for the transition with the help of the Treasurer, the Commission on Finance, and the Diocesan Council. We have been in contact with the Presiding Bishop’s office, retained a consultant, formed a Search Committee, formed a Transition Committee, formed a “Bishop Transition Plan,” scheduled the events to come over the next 18 months, learned an extensive amount about the process, and most importantly, prayed considerably for guidance. It has been an exceptionally busy time for the Standing Committee with attention to, and compliance with, the Canons and Constitution of our Diocese and The Episcopal Church.

Mahalo for your interest in the bishop transition process. This is an opportunity for all people of this Diocese to participate and contribute to the future direction of the Diocese as well as the direction of The Episcopal Church. In our discernment, it is important to also consider the influence our next bishop will have as a member of the House of Bishops. Our goal as the Standing Committee is to invite and accept input from all of you, that include clergy, lay, and employees of the Diocese and its member churches.

[We want to hear from you and ask you to join our Diocesan virtual town hall meeting on May 3, 2025, at noon HST \(Sunday at 8:00 a.m. Guam/Saipan\).](#) At this virtual town hall, the Standing Committee will review the “Bishop Transition Plan.” The zoom meeting will be recorded and distributed for those who cannot attend. This town hall is your opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions and provide your thoughts on our way forward as a Diocese and The Episcopal Church. The Search Committee and members of the Transition Committee will attend this meeting as well, so that they might hear all your contributions. As you’ll hear in the presentation, the members of the Search and Transition Committees have been carefully selected to represent every island in our Diocese, including Guam/Saipan. They are your representatives as we journey through this bishop transition process together. **[REGISTER FOR MAY 3, 2025 VIRTUAL TOWN HALL HERE](#)**

Please see the accompanying files with the members of the Standing, Search, and Transition Committees as well as the general timeline of important dates in the entire bishop transition process. We thank the members of Search Committee and Transition Committee for joining on.

We also invite all to attend the Standing Committee “talk story” sessions we are conducting in person throughout the Diocese. After a very insightful session on Kaua’i in February, we will conduct our next session at Good Samaritan Episcopal Church on O’ahu, on Saturday May 17, at 1:00 p.m. The Standing Committee will then hold its talk story sessions on the Big Island of Hawai’i on July 18 (East) and July 19 (West), locations and details to follow. The Maui in-person session will be held on September 20, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church By-the-Sea. *The sessions are open to all diocesan-related topics.*

The Standing Committee will keep you informed – after all, this is your Diocese and these are your bishops. We will confirm progress as we meet the milestones we are now sharing with you and welcome your observations along the way. All of us on the Standing Committee thank you for your trust in us and pray that the Holy Spirit will be with us as we care for one another with understanding, grace, and the love of God.

Blessings of Eastertide and Aloha nō,

The Standing Committee of The Episcopal Diocese of Hawai’i

Chuck Spence, President (Lay At-Large – 2027 Trinity, Maui County)
Bill Bonnet, Secretary (Lay At-Large – 2025 St. John’s, Maui County)
Doug Adams (Lay At-Large – 2026 Holy Apostles, Hawai’i County)
The Rev. Jazzy Bostock (Clergy At-Large – 2028 St. John the Baptist, Honolulu County)
Mary Carpenter (Lay At-Large – 2028 (St. Andrew’s Cathedral, Honolulu County)
The Rev. Keleawe Hee (Clergy At-Large – 2027 (Good Samaritan, Honolulu County)
The Rev. Andrew McMullen (Clergy At-Large – 2026 (St. Michael’s, Kaua’i County)
The Rev. John A. Hau’oli Tomoso (Clergy At-Large – 2025, Trinity, Maui County)

Enclosures: (1) Committee Members, (2) Timeline, (3) Bishop Transition Calendar of Events

Bishop Search & Transition Committee Members

Standing Committee

Chuck Spence, President	Lay	Maui	Trinity By-the-Sea
Bill Bonnet, Secretary	Lay	Maui	St. John's
Doug Adams	Lay	Hawai'i	Holy Apostles
The Rev. Jazzy Bostock	Clergy	O'ahu	St. John the Baptist
Mary Carpenter	Lay	O'ahu	St. Andrew's Cathedral
The Rev. Keleawe Hee	Clergy	O'ahu	Good Samaritan
The Rev. Andrew McMullen	Clergy	Kaua'i	St. Michael's
The Rev. John A. Hau'oli Tomoso	Clergy	Maui	Trinity By-the-Sea

Search Committee

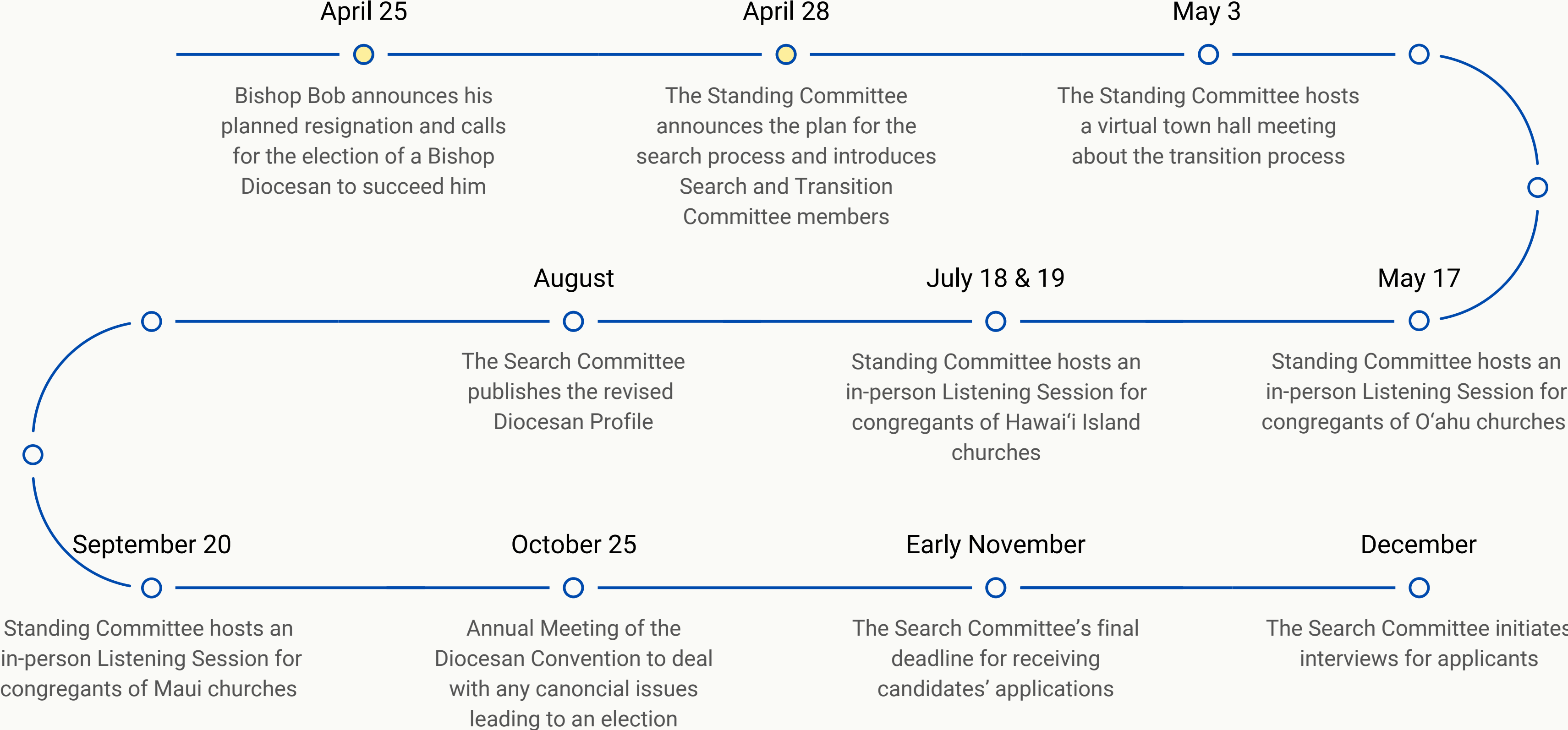
Sheryl Seaman, Chair	Lay	O'ahu	St. Christopher's
The Rev. John Lunn, Chaplain	Clergy	O'ahu	
The Rev. Dcn. Alberta Buller	Clergy	Hawai'i	Holy Apostles
Joseph Cascio	Lay	Maui	St. John's
The Rev. Amy Crowe	Clergy	Maui	
Pam Fern	Lay	O'ahu	St. Clement's
The Rev. David Gierlach	Clergy	O'ahu	
The Rev. Dcn. Hannah Lee	Clergy	Guam	St. John the Divine
Jadine Lujan	Lay	Guam	St. John the Divine
The Rev. Dcn. Mary Margaret Smith	Clergy	Kaua'i	St. Michael and All Angels
Evette Tampos	Lay	Hawai'i	Holy Apostles
Marc Walz	Lay	Kaua'i	Christ Memorial

Transition Committee

Roth Puahala, Chair	Lay	O'ahu	St. Andrew's Cathedral
The Rev. Libby Berman	Clergy	O'ahu	Holy Nativity
The Rev. Dcn. Lani Bowman	Clergy	Hawai'i	St. Augustine's
The Rev. Keleawe Hee	Clergy	O'ahu	Good Samaritan
Velma Lee	Lay	O'ahu	St. Peter's
The Rev. Paul Nahoa Lucas	Clergy	O'ahu	St. John's By-the-Sea
The Rev. Irene Egmalis Maliaman	Clergy	Guam	St. John the Divine
Deann Megonnell	Lay	Kaua'i	St. Michael's
Brian Shuster	Lay	Maui	Good Shepherd

BISHOP'S TRANSITION TIMELINE

2025



BISHOP'S TRANSITION TIMELINE

2026

March



The Search Committee formally announces three finalists

April



Interisland Ke Aloha Kākou (meet and greets) with the finalists

May 16



Special meeting of the Diocesan Convention with the single purpose to elect the sixth bishop



September



The bishop-elect arrives and begins on-the-job training

Summer



Bishop Bob submits formal resignation letter upon receipt of consents from the national Dioceses



October 23 & 24



Annual Diocesan Convention, including Ka Ha'alele Ana farewell event for Bishop Bob on Oct. 23

November 14



Ordination of the new Bishop Diocesan with jurisdiction immediately passed

BISHOP TRANSITION CALENDAR OF EVENTS (all times HST)

- ⇒ **May 3, 2025 at 12 PM:** Standing Committee Virtual Town Hall (Zoom) for the Diocese regarding the search and transition processes. [REGISTER HERE](#)
- ⇒ **May 17, 2025, at 1:00 PM (O‘ahu):** Standing Committee Talk Story Tour – Good Samaritan Episcopal Church, 1801 10th Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816.
- ⇒ **June 21, 2025 at 8:00 AM:** Standing, Search and Transition Committee members in-person meeting for prayer, discernment, orientation and breakout session – Von Holt Room, Diocesan Support Center, 229 Queen Emma Square, Honolulu, HI
- ⇒ **July 18 (East Hawai‘i) and 19 (West Hawai‘i) 2025:** Big Island Standing Committee Talk Story Tour with details forthcoming
- ⇒ **August 25-27, 2025:** Annual Clergy Conference at Grand Naniloa Hotel, Hilo, with Guest Speaker, the Rev. Canon Chuck Robertson, Canon and Senior Advisor to the Presiding Bishop. Registration Webpage: <https://www.episcopalHawai‘i.org/2025-clergy-conference.html>. Clergy attendance this year is particularly important.
- ⇒ **September 20, 2025 at 1:00 PM (Maui):** Maui Standing Committee Talk Story Tour at Trinity Episcopal Church By-the-Sea, 100 Kūlanihāko‘i St, Kihei
- ⇒ **October 24-25, 2025:** Education Day and the Annual Meeting of the Diocesan Convention at ‘Iolani School. Delegates and clergy are strongly encouraged to attend both days. Others are welcome to attend – especially at Education Day. Please come to help build community at this important time in the life of our Diocese.
- ⇒ **April, 2026:** Ke Aloha Kākou (Meet and Greet) tour of Candidates for the Sixth Bishop of Hawai‘i with details forthcoming.
- ⇒ **May 16, 2026:** Special Meeting of the Convention of the Diocese of Hawai‘i with the single purpose of electing the sixth Bishop of the Diocese. Details will follow closer to the time. All voting delegates and clergy will need to plan to be at the designated electing site on O‘ahu from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Clergy with Saturday evening liturgies will need to make provision for supply or lay led Evening Prayer.
- ⇒ **October 23-24, 2026:** The Annual Meeting of Diocesan Convention. Delegates and clergy need to plan on being in attendance both full days. Again, clergy with Saturday evening liturgies will need to make provision for supply or lay led Evening Prayer as the scheduled conclusion of the business meeting on Saturday will be 4:00 PM. The plan is for the Bishop-elect to be in attendance at this meeting. It will also be my last Convention as Bishop Diocesan. Ka Ha‘alele ‘Ana (Farewell) Reception and Dinner planned for Friday evening.
- ⇒ **November 14, 2026:** Consecration of the sixth Bishop of Hawai‘i in the Cathedral of St. Andrew, Honolulu. The Presiding Bishop has confirmed this date on his calendar. All clergy are expected to be in attendance. It is also important that the congregations, schools and Camp are well represented. All Wardens and members of Vestries/Bishop’s Committees need to plan on being present. Ke Kipa ‘Ana Reception for the sixth Bishop of Hawai‘i to follow the ordination.