

1. What in our profile sparks excitement in your becoming the next Bishop of Maryland? What skills, gifts, and possibilities do you bring to meet us where we are?

The way in which the special charisms of The Diocese of Maryland are laid out in your profile with depth of thought and an energetic voice drew me right in. The full picture piqued my curiosity, and sparked my imagination and excitement. I'll share a few specific examples.

It's clear that the Diocese holds Gospel values of courage, diversity, welcome, and relationships grounded in openness and trust. Those characteristics shine through. The way in which those values are further clarified by your "Statement of a Preferred Future" excites me.

I work, and will continue to work, to support congregations and develop leaders; and I'm dedicated to transparency and approachability. I see parallels in your Statement: "...we will be a Diocese that provides responsive and meaningful support to our congregations..."; and I look forward to exploring what working together might be like as you continue to work for a diocese that is united, clear in its purpose, transparent and welcoming.

I was deeply moved at a soul-level by reading about your hopes for building trust with your bishop; and I'm grateful for your clarity on that front: *"The issue of trust, perceived or real, needs to be addressed."* One of my greatest strengths and passions is to build trust and nurture healthy relationships. My spirituality, my approach to leadership, and my relationships are built on a firm foundation of trust, integrity and prayer. These have always been cornerstones of my ministry.

I get excited when presented with a new opportunity; in Maryland, one of these areas will be working with your vibrant network of Episcopal Schools. I am captivated by the role that the Episcopal tradition can play in shaping young lives; and the families and leaders of these academic and faithful institutions. I know God is there beyond my comfort zones, and I'm energetic and passionate about learning new things, sharing these learnings, and incorporating them into ministry.

Familiar ministry areas which continue to spark excitement within me are working with merging and blended congregations, and being present with congregations of various sizes, locations, context and liturgical expressions. I share your commitment to creating a spiritual home for all those whom God has called across the diversity of economic realities, gender, race, political party affiliation, and theological perspectives.

I was elated to read that the Diocese of Maryland has 54 vocational deacons! As one deacon is quoted in your profile, *"We are engaged in the exciting holy adventure of leading the People of God out to transform the world."* (I Cor 12:4) In this beautiful, blessed, and broken world, it is a delight to know that there are so many deacons in the Diocese of Maryland engaged in this essential work. I am excited by your commitment to discernment in raising up both lay and clergy leaders through ministries like Exploring Baptismal Ministry.

Scripture tells us, *There are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit.* God created me with the gifts of building trust and relationships, connecting people with one another, reconciliation, building bridges, a willingness to confront difficult conversations, as well as the gifts of support, encouragement, and lifting others up.

Throughout the course of my ministry, I have very intentionally focused on developing skills for Congregational Development. I have studied this as an academic discipline, and I have put it into practice and trained other practitioners as well. It is a passion of mine. I am skilled at facilitation – I can run an effective meeting and facilitate even large and difficult conversations well. I also am skilled in Conflict Resolution and practice those skills in the church and in my own life. I have experience in strategic planning and leading a congregation through consistent implementation of our core values and vision.

I've long felt a pull toward Maryland. I grew up visiting grandparents in Bethesda and aunts and uncles all around the state. Now, my excitement quickens when I cross the state line, knowing that both of my sisters live here (in Lusby and near Riviera Beach). As I turn off of 270 toward Claggett, like many of you, I feel my anticipation rise, having had transformative experiences there with both transition ministers and with the College for Congregational Development.

Over the past couple of years, I've gotten to know many of your congregations and leaders. I am impressed with the depth of the faithfulness, creativity, integrity, and good humor of the people I've met in the Diocese of Maryland, and inspired by the courage, commitment, and warmth of the congregations I've gotten to hear about.

I feel a keen sense of excitement when I hear you describe Maryland as "America in Miniature." Your profile goes on to say, *"Diversity is the heartbeat of our congregations, but urban, rural, small or large, we have a common goal. We hope to welcome all God's people who feel the call to come through our doors."* What a delightful glimpse into your diocese! Unity through mission and hospitality. Depth in diversity. This moved me from loving your place as a sister diocese and wanting the best for you - to wondering if I could be called to be a part of that. This truth you speak in your profile sings to me and continues to call to me.

I'm inspired by your ongoing commitment to engage conversations about racial reconciliation and the traumas of the past. And I am deeply moved to learn of your commitment to reparations. Raising funds and raising commitments to the hard yet transformative work of reparations reveals both your courage and faithfulness to repairing what is broken and I want to be with you in that work.

2. In the OTM, you discussed your experience with conflict. Has there been an experience where you have felt the need to apologize? If so, how did you apologize?

As a white woman, I continue to discover how I unintentionally perpetuate the dominant culture in unhelpful ways. I seek to heal that in my own life. I am also committed to discovering how The Episcopal Church perpetuates the dominant culture in ways that run contrary to the Gospel. I seek to heal that in the life of our church.

One recent example was when I was supporting a congregation in conflict with their rector. Both the rector and wardens needed some help bringing their expectations out into the open in order to address them. While working with the rector, I said, "all congregations have a culture - I mean an organizational culture, not an ethnic culture." After our meeting, Rev. Maria sent me an email sharing that she felt my explanation was dismissive of her Latinx culture. I found myself in a wide chasm between my intent and the impact I had on her. I felt deeply embarrassed, remorseful, ashamed and frustrated. I took to heart the truth that I had hurt her. I made time to process the incident, and to get clear with myself. I called Rev. Maria and apologized. I made sure I wasn't mounting a defense in explaining my intent. This apology without defense allowed us to acknowledge brokenness and once again focus together on God's call within that community.

I appreciate that you are asking a straightforward question about conflict, because conflict happens and it isn't inherently good or bad. It's normal, healthy, natural and can be a sign of vitality and growth. I believe that the process of moving through tension is as important (and sometimes more important) than the outcome. The way we handle dissent and disagreement in the Church directly relates to how we understand and live into the Gospel; it is the redeeming love of God that makes reconciliation possible. The worst thing that can happen in conflict is sin. The best thing that can happen in conflict is transformation, reconciliation, forgiveness, redemption, and bringing glory to God.

3. The Diocese of Maryland has a broad diversity in its geography and membership. Many people expressed a desire to be more connected across the diocese. Describe your experience and leadership style in navigating systems across lines of difference.

An important part of my leadership style is to connect people with each other. I bring people together – in formal and informal ways. In formal ways, I've created regular gatherings for leaders like wardens, stewardship chairs, and tech-support for worship. I've created learning communities of small church leaders, congregational development practitioners, and leaders interested in anti-bias work. In informal ways, I've introduced search chairs to one another which led to their mutual support and learning. I've helped to connect tech-savvy folks with eager learners, congregations who are facing similar challenges, and even wardens of parishes who have or are discerning closing.

I am an adaptive leader. I listen and pay attention and then seek to respond well to what's happening. While there are certainly benefits of an adaptive, flexible leadership style, I was given feedback during the pandemic that perhaps a more dependable rhythm would work to build more trust in the system. So, I shifted from one-off offerings to a regular schedule of events. That shift has served to connect across lines of difference more effectively, especially as we move from crisis mode into a new way of being.

In connecting people across diversity in geography and lines of difference, it's helpful to bring people together around a specific topic, question, or interest. I've had success bridging across lines of difference by separating people from the problem (remembering that both the substance of the conflict and the relationships are important), through building trust and relationship, recognizing the emotions in the room, and using and encouraging good communication skills. I encourage people and groups to focus on interests, rather than on positions, finding common ground and places where connection is possible and leaning into our shared core values and that which binds us together in community. That approach doesn't dismiss or ignore differences or difficulties, but instead helps create a safe container where we can be honest about what gets in the way of connection and relationship.

When and where appropriate, I also use humor and play to connect across distance and difference. Our transition ministers' meetings now include trivia nights, silly prizes, and sing-alongs, as lighthearted ways of building relationships when we gather together.

4. Where is your voice when big issues come up in the world? How do you balance world issues with diocesan issues?

Leadership requires striking a balance based on the context and culture of a particular system, as well as acknowledging our interconnectedness. *Just as the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you.* (I Cor 12:21), as a church, we cannot separate world issues from diocesan issues. Together we will attend to how issues in the world affect

our people's communities. We will also attend to ways our diocese can use its resources to help the world. Our mutual call is to help build the reign of God, here on earth as it is in heaven, in our local contexts and beyond.

As a person in diocesan leadership, I understand that the most helpful way for me to use my voice is in ways that support the ministries of our faith communities. Sometimes supporting our faith communities means leading by example in taking a prophetic stance. Sometimes it looks like using that voice upfront so that others can follow along. Sometimes it looks like using that voice to support and encourage from the sidelines when others are doing a big, brave thing. Sometimes it will look like having someone's back when they've used their prophetic voice with integrity. If called as your bishop, I would use my voice to support your living more fully into the words of Micah 6:8b *"to do justice and love kindness and to walk humbly with your God"*.

5. In the Diocese of Maryland, a part of our discernment process for ministry includes a program known as Exploring Baptismal Ministry (<https://episcopalmaryland.org/diocesan-governance/ministry-discernment-process/>). In this program, those exploring their call, read books on a variety of topics. These books have included theological texts, memoirs, social justice and scriptural materials. If you were creating this program, which book would you want to ensure was read during this program?

Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear by Elizabeth Gilbert. Although she doesn't use explicitly religious language, this is a book about the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit works in the world and in people. Creativity is about making – bringing things into being – with the Spirit of God. Creativity is essential for the Church - the act of going beyond traditional constraints to grow in ways that are generative and new. The book also has a lot to say about fear, which is a common feeling in ministry and often a roadblock to growth and change, and also is so present in the church that hopefully is beginning to emerge from the pandemic. From Deuteronomy, *"Be strong and bold; have no fear or dread of them, because it is the Lord your God who goes with you; God will not fail you or forsake you."* When Gilbert writes about the relationship between fear and creativity, when she talks about how her spiritual practices uphold and support her work, when she talks about the spirit (I read Holy Spirit) that moves among and between people in relationship, I find myself encouraged, motivated and inspired for ministry.

For this program, I would also recommend other forms of receiving wisdom, like interviewing people, reading articles, attending workshops, following faithful people and groups on social media, and listening to podcasts. God has created people with many learning styles and we all have time constraints. Offering a diversity of resources helps

people engage in ways that work for them. I would also highlight the work of [Nedra Tawaab](#), who is a therapist doing great work on educating people about maintaining healthy boundaries in their lives. I recommend the podcast: [Small Churches, Big Impact Collective](#). It's offered by a group of Episcopal Clergy who work, by choice, in small congregations. They engage topics that are helping to shape the future of our church.

6. Our people have identified that openness, transparency and communication are important issues in the diocese. What experience do you have to work on this with us?

I have seen places where transparency happens naturally well and places where it has taken concerted effort to overcome some unhelpful habits that were inherited through the system. I am grateful to work closely with a Bishop who models openness, transparency, and good communication in her episcopate. I feel like I've been in a Master Class for six and half years.

The way I live into openness, transparency and good communication is to not only explain what I'm doing – but why I'm doing what I'm doing. Many times I talk about my decision-making process, not just the decision itself. I invite, appreciate, and learn from feedback.

I also have experience and skill with the sometimes difficult task of holding confidences while valuing transparency. That's a narrow passage that I navigate quite often in my life. I know I'm navigating that place with care when I can stay in good relationship with those who are going through a hard time while standing squarely in my integrity.

When I was called as canon in the Diocese of Central New York, it was with the knowledge that part of my work would be developing relationships of openness, transparency, and integrity among clergy, lay leaders and congregations. Clergy and lay leaders often call on me to help them think through challenges; and they reach out when they're sad, frustrated, or just not at their best. I feel warmly welcomed in many parishes I engage. These are, indeed, tangible reminders that the patient work of trust building is paying off. It hasn't always been easy; building solid relationships of trust has taken time and commitment. We've been able to work through challenges and experience God's grace and healing in beautiful ways. I've built strong relationships through acting with integrity consistently, with non-anxious, yet energetic leadership, by listening well, admitting when I'm wrong, raising deep questions with compassion, through unfailing graciousness, and making tough decisions when needed.