

THE REV CANON ALISSA NEWTON

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I seek to lead and serve as a bishop diocesan who works collaboratively with diocesan and congregational leaders to bring focus and resourcing to congregational health and development, empowering local churches to foster discipleship, spiritual transformation, and hope for the world.

WORK EXPERIENCE (EPISCOPAL CHURCH)

2014 - PRESENT

CANON FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & LEADERSHIP FORMATION

DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA, SEATTLE, WA

Serve as overall leader of congregational development and leadership in a diocese of 100 worshipping communities experiencing intense revitalization over the past 15 years. In this time have worked with all congregations consultatively, through direct training programs, or as part of the Diocesan Executive Team.

- Initiated “Non-Coercive Leadership” training for Bishop and Executive Staff and piloted program among clergy in charge of congregations.
- Worked as consultant with search committees and profile committees in 25+ churches in transition.
- Trained and deployed 15+ diocesan development consultants over the past 8 years to work with congregations on conflict, membership growth, identity, and relationship with neighborhoods.
- Worked to support and implement an adult development model for intercultural competency and anti-racism support work among clergy and throughout the Diocese
- Designed and planned three “Bishop’s Leadership Conference” events for lay-clergy teams from the Diocese, equipping them with direct and usable skills in response to immediate contextual issues.
- Developed new initiatives to resource congregations and clergy, including Diocesan One Service (during pandemic), a redesign of diocesan congregational development grants process, feminism and leadership groups for clergy of all genders, online intercultural competency trainings using the Intercultural Development Continuum, and multiple clergy conferences resourced to specific relevant topics including conflict resolution, clergy anxiety, and trauma.
- Personally conducted consultative work with lay and clergy leaders to resolve conflict, move through clergy transitions, launch new congregational initiatives, resolve longheld conflicts, and work on systemic issues (such as past clergy misconduct) in ways that helped individual congregations reach toward their own increased health, faithfulness, and effectiveness.

2014 - PRESENT

VICAR

ST. COLUMBA'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, KENT, WA

While simultaneously serving on Diocesan staff, serving as chief pastor of suburban multi-cultural congregation in re-development, with a starting ASA of 50 and a pre-pandemic ASA of 85+, leading the comprehensive re-development of the congregation to include during pandemic times.

- Achieved dramatic increases in Average Sunday Attendance, racial and ethnic diversity, while achieving dramatic decrease in average age of the congregation.
- Initiated multiple efforts to live out identity as a community that welcomes the stranger: refugee garden, homeless ministry, Just Garden, growing food to supplement food bank ministry.
- Achieved 47% increase in pledging units and 82% increase in amount pledged over 7 years.
- Supervised up to 7 staff members.

2015 - PRESENT

STEERING TEAM CO-CHAIR (TRAINER, DIRECTOR)

THE COLLEGE FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Founding trainer, supporting primary founder ++Melissa Skelton, in original 2009 launch, and made Director in Olympia in 2014. Convened and began to organize the Trainer Network in 2015. Currently Co-chair of the Network Steering Team.

- Co-author of a \$250K grant from Trinity Wall Street in support of a major curriculum redesign and update for The College.
- Grant Administrator for the same.
- Key leader in growing The College to a network of 55+ trainers working to teach Congregational Development in seven different Episcopal dioceses with more launching each year.
- Initiated addition of Intercultural Competency materials including the Intercultural Development Inventory and Intercultural Conflict Styles into The College curriculum.
- Coordinate trainer meet-ups, and lead The College Director's group to maintain community and best practices across all sites.
- Launch director for new programs – have launched programs in The Dioceses of Chicago, Rochester, Maryland, and Indianapolis.
- Work consultatively with dioceses interested in congregational development – speak at conventions, design clergy conferences and governing body retreats.

2019 - PRESENT

PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT

NEW REALM CONSULTING

Co-founder of consulting group focused on providing high level development consultations using the methods of The College to large church systems, dioceses, synods, and other faith based organizations.

- Completed consultations with Dioceses of Indianapolis, Chicago, Rochester, Maryland, Southern Ohio, Oregon and Alaska.

- Brought together a group of skilled development consultants to provide a wide range of services to the broader church, all of whom are full time employed on either diocesan level or leading congregations.
- Provided clergy conferences, board retreats, listening sessions, and intercultural competency trainings for a variety of purposes including episcopal transition work, and one on one clergy coaching.

2008 - 2011

LAY PASTOR FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ST PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SEATTLE, WA

Served as congregation's first Lay Pastor for families with Children and Youth.

- Oversaw dramatic growth in children's program – from 2 families with children to a Sunday school with 30+ children in regular attendance.
- Started new Godly Play classrooms.
- Cultivated a community of parents and other adults around the spirituality and teaching of Godly Play as a spiritual practice and formational approach.
- Worked with congregation on how to welcome parents and their children into the ordered life and liturgy of an Anglo Catholic parish.

NON-PAID EPISCOPAL CHURCH EXPERIENCE

2018 - CURRENT

VICE BOARD CHAIR

EPISCOPAL EVANGELISM SOCIETY

The Episcopal Evangelism Society is a granting body that funds small scale grants to Episcopal seminarians for innovative evangelism projects.

2018 - PRESENT

CO-FOUNDER

CONVIVUM WEST

The Convivium West is a collaboration of Episcopal Church practitioners who want to talk, think, pray, learn, and speak about and from the context of Episcopal spirituality and practice in the Western USA.

2017 - PRESENT

CHAPLAIN

ST FRANCIS CLERGY BACKPACKING PILGRIMAGE

Annual backpacking trip where a rotating group of 10-12 Episcopal and Lutheran clergy take to the wilderness for a week of off the grid retreat, prayer, pilgrimage and recreation. Past destinations have included Glacier Peak Wilderness (WA), Paria Canyon (UT), Yosemite Backcountry (CA), Steens Mountain (OR), and the Grand Canyon (AZ).

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

2006-2011

PROGRAM COORDINATOR, ACADEMIC DERMATOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE, WA

UW Dermatology is a division of University of Washington Medical School and Research that focuses on advancing medical research in dermatology and related areas, as well as training residents and medical students in Dermatology.

- Provided administrative support for medical school classes in academic dermatology.
- Coordinated and promoted annual free skin cancer screening for to 200 people per year.
- Managed complex databases for research support of multiple three labs and varied associated research studies.
- Provided support for research, grant writing, administration, and reporting.

2001-2006

RESEARCH COORDINATOR

WASHINGTON STATE SOCIAL & HEALTH SERVICES, CHILD RESEARCH OFFICE
SEATTLE, WA

Worked as primary research interviewer and coordinator for Seattle site of the LONGSCAN Study, a nation wide study begun in the 1990s looking at the long term effects of child abuse and neglect, funded primarily through the NIH.

- Managed study database, and maintained contact with 200+ study participants and caregivers.
- Conducted annual interviews with participants and their caregivers.
- Kept up to date records on Child Protective Services interactions, and participant locations between interviews.
- Mandated reporter, required to make decisions about how and when to report participant situations to Child Protective Services.

FALL SEMESTER, 2000

ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTOR

UNIVERSITY OF UDMERTIA, ISHEVSK, RUSSIA

Instructor in conversational English within a university English language program. Instructed four classes, produced curriculum, graded papers, and assigned grades.

EDUCATION

2009-2014

MASTERS OF DIVINITY, SEATTLE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

Graduated cum laude. Published two co-authored academic papers in peer-reviewed journals and presented an academic paper solo at the Society for Biblical Literature in 2012.

1996-2000

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND RUSSIAN STUDIES SEATTLE
PACIFIC UNIVERSITY**

Graduated cum laude. Student Coordinator for Seattle Pacific Reachout INTERNATIONAL (SPRINT), the international service program on campus. Preacher for Baccalaureate, class of 2000.

PUBLICATIONS

- Vital Christian Community: 12 Characteristics of Healthy Congregations, Church Publishing Inc. September 2022, co-authored with Phil Brochard
- "How the Pandemic Cured My ASA Obsession," web article, Vestry Papers, May 2022
- "Antiracism as a Development Effort," web article, Vestry Papers, July 2020, co-authored with Arienne Davison
- "Satisfied Churches Don't Change," web article, Vestry Papers, November 2019
- "The Vocational Vestry," web article, Vestry Papers, January 2018
- "Playing with Pictures of Paradox: Children and Christology in Soren Kierkegaard and Godly Play," Journal of Childhood and Religion Vol 4, 2013, co-authored with Dr. Mark Lloyd Taylor
- "Praying at the Edges: Theology of an "Emergent," Anglo-Catholic Sunday Evening Eucharist," Worship Vol 90, 2016, co-authored with Dr. Mark Lloyd Taylor

OTHER CERTIFICATIONS

- Congregational Development Institute, certificate of completion, 2008
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, authorized administrator
- Intercultural Development Inventory, Qualified Administrator
- Intercultural Conflict Styles, Qualified Administrator

INTERESTS

Music, hiking, gardening, reading, pop culture, science fiction, spending time with my husband and daughters, animals, history, crochet, travel