Canon to the Ordinary
Report to the 232nd Annual Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

"The end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the Beloved Community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opponents into friends. It is this type of understanding goodwill that will transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age."
Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Diocesan office is actively reimagining its administrative structure by shifting away from a traditional top-down model toward a more collaborative, networked web of relational leadership. When the Reverend D'Rue Hazel retired from her position as Canon to the Ordinary, a re-examination of the entire leadership was completed and the position of Canon to the Ordinary was reconfigured to unlock resources, distributes authority; moving toward a more connected and integrated approach to ministry that would foster greater cross-departmental collaboration and shared mission. This decentralized approach empowers staff to lead with greater agency while intentionally navigating the productive friction of shared decision-making. To support this, shift the Bishops, Chiefs and Canons rely on regular weekly collaborative rhythms like the "What's on the Fire" meetings for strategic alignment and sharing. It is our hope that this new model will foster deeper trust and missional vitality across the diocese, beginning in the Bishops Office.

Clergy/Congregational Coaching
Work in this area includes Vestry Meeting, Reconciliation Conversation, Strategic Visioning opportunities, and supporting Title IV responses.

Monthly Clergy Calls
Continued support of monthly clergy calls to provide opportunities for communication, support and collegiality for the clergy of the diocese. Topic of these clergy calls included:

- Diocesan Treasurer Ted Smith talked about the changes to rates and coverages in our health plans for 2027 and actions congregations can consider which may help to save money while preserving access to care for their employees.
- The Rev'd Twila Smith who serves as the Director of Leadership Development within the Office of the Presiding Bishop. She presented a short, focused presentation on Safe Church. Twila+ shared how updated policies, practical risk-management tools, and a shared culture of transparency help us honor our Baptismal Covenant to respect the dignity of every human being.
- The Rev. Canon d'Rue Hazel provided updates on Safe Church Practices.
- Canon Ricardo Sheppard presented the new Lay Licensure process

- Canon J. Lee Hill, Jr. presented the new racial justice training offering for parishes, institutions and regions: "I Will With God's Help: Engaging God's People in the Work of Racial Justice"
- Mr. Greg Randall offered a presentation on changes and updates to Shrine Mont Camps
- The Rev. Sarah Shipman, Episcopal Migration Ministries Director, Kent Anker, The Episcopal Church Chief Legal Officer, and Canon Hill provided advice for congregations hosting immigrant communicants and preparing for ICE encounters.

Chrism Mass and Reaffirmation of Ordination Vows
Five congregations in the diocese served as hosts for the Chrism Mass and Reaffirmation of Ordinations Vows on Tuesday of Holy Week. Those host congregations were St. Johns' (West Point), St. Philip's (Richmond), Grace the Plains (The Plains), Trinity (Charlottesville), and La Iglesia de Santa Maria (Falls Church). Gratitude is extended for the kind welcome and hospitality extended, and all Diocesan Staff who supported and staffed each location.

Diocesan Staff Searches
Working closely with Bishops, Chiefs and Canons to support the calling of new members to our Diocesan Staff.

Spring Clergy Conference
Clergy of the Diocese of Virginia were joined by the Right Reverend Rob Wright to explore grief and ultimate restoration in the Emmaus Road narrative. The program fostered deep spiritual renewal by inviting clergy to process ministry burdens and burnout in a safe, communal space. The retreat redirected those honest emotions toward a renewed sense of shared resurrection joy and collegial support for the year ahead.

May the prayer of my predecessor continue to guide our work: "May we be faithful stewards of the mission of the church entrusted to us as we **restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."**

Canon Dr. J. Lee Hill Jr.

Canon to the Ordinary and
Dean of Diocesan Ministry for Racial Justice and Healing