Frequently Asked Questions

The Diocese of Easton and Bishop Kevin S. Brown

1. What is happening?

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Easton has nominated the Rt. Rev. Kevin S. Brown, Bishop of Delaware, to stand for election as the Bishop Provisional for the Diocese of Easton. Under Episcopal Church protocol, only one candidate is nominated for a Bishop Provisional election. The election is to be held at the beginning of the Diocese of Easton's annual convention on February 26, 2027, and Bishop Brown must be elected by a majority of both clergy and lay delegates at convention.

If elected, Bishop Brown will serve both dioceses, continuing as the Bishop of Delaware while also providing temporary episcopal leadership to the Diocese Easton as its Ecclesiastical Authority.

2. What is a Bishop Provisional?

A bishop provisional is an already consecrated bishop under 72 years of age who is elected after consultation with the Presiding Bishop to provide temporary episcopal leadership to a diocese during a vacancy or period of transition. The role of Bishop Provisional is specified in Canon III.13.1 of the Canons of the Episcopal Church.

A Bishop Provisional exercises the authority and responsibilities of a diocesan bishop, including pastoral oversight of clergy and congregations, episcopal visitations, confirmations, ordinations, and participation in diocesan governance.

This arrangement allows a diocese to continue its ministry and mission while discerning its future leadership.

3. Why has Bishop Brown been asked to serve Easton?

Since the resignation of the XI Bishop of Easton, the Rt. Rev. Santosh Marray, on October 18, 2025, the Diocese of Easton's Standing Committee has been the Ecclesiastical Authority in the diocese. The diocese is in a period of discernment as it considers its future and the best path forward for its congregations and ministries.

During this time the Standing Committee, in consultation with Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe, has sought a bishop who can provide stability, pastoral leadership, and Episcopal oversight while its people continue that discernment.

Canon law requires the Standing Committee to consult with the Presiding Bishop to identify a candidate who is approved by the Standing Committee. Under Diocesan rules the Standing Committee in nominating the candidate is required to give 120 days notice before an election can occur.

Bishop Brown has been nominated by the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Easton to offer that leadership as part of our shared commitment to supporting one another throughout The Episcopal Church.

4. Will Bishop Brown still be the Bishop of Delaware?

Yes, Bishop Brown will remain the Bishop of Delaware.

He will continue to provide Episcopal leadership, pastoral care, and oversight to the clergy, congregations, and ministries of the Diocese of Delaware.

His additional responsibilities in Easton do not change his position as diocesan bishop of the Diocese of Delaware.

5. Does this mean Delaware and Easton are merging?

No. There is no proposed merger between the Diocese of Delaware and the Diocese of Easton. The dioceses will remain separate, each with its own governing bodies, congregations, ministries, finances, and identity.

This arrangement is about sharing episcopal leadership during a time of discernment in Easton, not endorsing or predetermining any specific course of action that Easton might one day pursue.

6. How will Bishop Brown divide his time between Easton and Delaware?

The specific arrangements are still being developed in consultation with the leadership of both dioceses.

The goal is to establish a sustainable schedule that allows Bishop Brown to fulfill his responsibilities to both dioceses.

Additional information will be shared as these arrangements are finalized.

7. Who will visit parishes in the Diocese of Easton once Bishop Brown is the Bishop Provisional?

Bishop Brown will make Episcopal visitations, perform confirmations and offer pastoral care in the Diocese of Easton as his time and his schedule allow. Our current part-time Assisting Bishop, the Rt. Rev. James J. "Bud" Shand, will continue making visitations through the end of February 2027 and, in consultation with Bishop Brown, he may continue in that role into the early spring to assist Bishop Brown in the Diocese of Easton.

8. What is an Assisting Bishop?

An Assisting Bishop is contracted by the Ecclesiastical Authority in the diocese to help with Episcopal visitations, sacramental responsibilities and pastoral care for a specific period of time. An Assisting Bishop must already be ordained a bishop and operates under the authority of a Bishop Diocesan, a Bishop Provisional or a Standing Committee when there is no bishop. An Assisting Bishop does not have Ecclesiastical Authority.

The Rt. Rev. Bud Shand has been contracted by the Standing Committee to be the Diocese of Easton's Assisting Bishop. It is possible that he could continue in that role after the Bishop Provisional's election to help the Bishop under the Bishop Provisional's authority.

9. What will this arrangement cost the Diocese of Easton?

Money is already allocated to pay the expenses of a bishop through the Office of the Bishop in the Diocese of Easton's operating budget.

Easton will use these funds to pay a portion of Bishop Brown's compensation, benefits, and expenses currently provided exclusively by the Diocese of Delaware, reflecting his additional responsibilities and the sharing of his ministry.

Should the Bishop Provisional contract with an Assisting Bishop that position could be compensated from Easton's Office of the Bishop funds as well.

10. Is this arrangement unusual in The Episcopal Church?

No. Bishops Provisional have served in several dioceses throughout The Episcopal Church. Though historically uncommon, Bishops Provisional have been increasingly used in recent decades as the demands of church and ministry have evolved.

These arrangements allow dioceses to receive experienced Episcopal leadership while

navigating transitions, discerning future directions, or preparing for the election of a new diocesan bishop.

While the circumstances of each diocese differ, the practice of provisional Episcopal leadership is well established.

You may recall that the last time the Diocese of Easton elected a diocesan bishop we first elected a Bishop Provisional, the Rt. Rev. Henry Parsley, who served a two-year term 2014-2016.

11. When will Bishop Brown begin serving as Bishop Provisional?

The Bishop Provisional election will be held during the opening part of our annual Convention at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, Maryland on Friday, February 26, 2027. If elected, Bishop Brown will begin his ministry as Bishop Provisional that day. Until that election, Bishop Brown does not yet hold the office of Bishop Provisional of Easton.

Arrangements are being made to introduce the candidate in advance of the election to the Diocese through different formats and events in the Diocese of Easton, subject to Bishop Brown's schedule. Notice of these opportunities will be communicated in the near future.

12. How long will Bishop Brown serve as Bishop Provisional?

The duration of this arrangement is expected to be two to three years.

Bishops Provisional serve during periods of transition, and the length of service depends on the needs and discernment of the diocese they are serving.

Easton's ongoing discernment will help shape the duration of Bishop Brown's provisional ministry.

13. Will Easton eventually elect its own bishop?

That is among the questions we are discerning as a diocese as we consider our future as the Episcopal Church on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

The purpose of provisional Episcopal leadership is to provide stability and continuity without requiring a diocese to make immediate decisions about its long-term leadership. Bishop Brown's role will be to support our diocese during this process, not to predetermine its outcome.

14. Will Bishop Brown need to be consecrated or installed again?

No additional consecration is necessary. Bishop Brown is already a consecrated bishop of The Episcopal Church. There will be discussions regarding appropriate liturgical "installation."

Pending election, he will assume provisional Episcopal authority in Easton according to the Church's canonical requirements.

15. Why does Bishop Brown want to be the Bishop Provisional of the Diocese of Easton?

Bishop Kevin Brown believes that, by agreeing to be a candidate for Bishop Provisional, he is responding to the basic Christian call to care for one another.

"The Episcopal Church in Delaware and the Diocese of Easton are neighboring dioceses, but we are also part of the same Church, united in faith, mission, and ministry," said Bishop Brown. "Supporting Easton during this season of discernment is an opportunity as the Diocese of Delaware to extend the generosity, compassion, and faithful leadership that we seek to embody.

"I believe that when we have the opportunity to help provide stability and encouragement to another part of the Church, responding to that call is both good and right."

QUESTIONS?

We recognize that this new chapter of shared ministry may bring additional questions as plans continue to develop. We welcome your questions and are committed to keeping our diocesan community informed along the way.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact the President of the Standing Committee, the Rev. Dr. Darcy Williams: drdarcy.williams@gmail.com.