



The Episcopal Diocese of Olympia

The Episcopal Church in Western Washington

www.ecww.org

The Most Rev. Melissa M. Skelton

Bishop Provisional of Olympia

mskelton@ecww.org

June 23, 2023

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to recommend The Venerable Clara Plamondon in her nomination for the Bishop of The Territory of the People in the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and Yukon.

I have known Clara for nine years in two capacities: First, simply as a priest in the Diocese of British Columbia (Islands and Inlets) and secondly and more fully, in her roles as Prolocutor for the Province of which I was the Metropolitan.

As I reflect on my experience of Clara, these are the gifts and skills I have noticed that she would bring to the potential role of Bishop of the Territory:

1. **Clara is deeply dedicated to her life as a Christian and to the Anglican Church of Canada.** From the first moment I met Clara I knew her to be “the real thing”—a person dedicated to her own Christian spiritual path and dedicated to the Anglican Church of Canada with all its own gifts and shortcomings. This dedication expresses itself in what I perceive to be a well-formed prayer life and in her tireless efforts for the betterment of the Church both in her parish, her diocese and at the Provincial level.
2. **Clara is utterly reliable and pays attention both to big things and small things.** In my time as Metropolitan, Clara was a true partner with me in all things. She always did what she said she would do and gave careful attention both to the overall direction of the Province as well as the many, many details that added up to whatever the bigger picture was.
3. **Clara is committed to building relationships and community across difference.** In all the decisions we had to make at the Provincial level, I found Clara to be deeply respectful of those who differed from her. Connected to this, Clara was well formed in and respectful of the perspectives and experience of Indigenous people.
4. **Clara can preach!** I will always remember one of our Provincial Synods at which I invited Clara to preach. More quiet than showy in her presentation (and that’s a good thing!), I thought what we would hear was something consistent with that. What we heard instead was a fireball—energetic, preaching fully without notes, funny, engaging and accessible. Wow.

5. **Clara is fun to work alongside.** Some of the best part of serving as Metropolitan of the Province was how enjoyable, and yes, fun, it was to work with our Executive group for the Province. A big part of that was Clara.

In summary, I believe the above gifts and skills that Clara would bring to the role of bishop would serve the Territory not only well but very well. I'm grateful to have been asked to recommend her!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Melissa M. Skelton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. A small cross symbol is written to the left of the first letter of the first name.

The Most Rev. Melissa M Skelton
Bishop Provisional, Diocese of Olympia

June 23, 2023

To whom it may concern:

It is an honor and privilege to write a letter of reference for Archdeacon Clara Plamondon.

Clara serves faithfully and diligently in this diocese both as a parish incumbent and as a regional archdeacon. In my time as bishop, I have been consistently impressed with the pastoral care she extends both to those in her parish and to her clergy colleagues, both active and retired. She has a generous heart, is a good listener and a clear communicator. Clara seeks out relationships and partnerships to find ways that churches can support one another and work together.

Clara is a key member of the archdeacon team in this diocese, and I would be remiss if I didn't mention that I would be miss working with her. However, it would also be a joy to welcome her into the House of Bishops. I believe Clara has the skills to be an effective bishop and to lead the Territory of the People. I support her election for the office of bishop.

Sincerely,



The Right Rev. Anna Greenwood-Lee
bishop

To The Territory of the People Electoral Committee

Re: The Venerable Clara Plamondon

June 25, 2023

It is my pleasure to write a letter of reference for Archdeacon Plamondon who has been nominated for Bishop in your upcoming election. I have known Clara for over fifteen years. I served with her on staff at the Parish of All Saints, Cochrane in the Diocese of Calgary when we were both lay people. It was a privilege to be part of her discernment process for ordination and was a lay presenter at her Diaconal Ordination. Through the years Clara and I have become good sisters in Christ and I have come to know her very well.

Before writing this letter I had a look at the Examination in the Ordinal. It is a tall order, but in reading the Bishop's address and the promises she would have to make, I believe Clara could in all integrity do so. Clara lives out her ministry with a high level of faith and responsibility and is conscientious and attentive to detail. These promises would not be taken lightly, and she would live them out to the best of her ability, which is saying something. I also read from your website what you are looking for in a Bishop. Again, I truly believe Clara can fulfill this role with great dedication.

First and foremost, Clara is a disciple of Christ, who is at the core of her being. This informs her ministry. As such she prays, studies scripture, reads and engages in professional development. As well, Clara is dedicated to the Anglican Church, and all the joys and challenges that comes with it. Her experience with General Synod, her participation on the Council of General Synod, as well as her participation as Prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia and the Yukon and her responsibilities as an Archdeacon in her Diocese of British Columbia has given her a broad view of the Anglican Church of Canada. Travel with the church internationally has given her a view of and heart for the worldwide Anglican Church.

The Territory of the People has gone through a lot of change and challenge over the past few years. I am sure you want a leader of high integrity who is sensitive to this; one who listens well, encourages others, is inclusive and collegial, and has the courage to move into the future with the people. This describes Clara. In parish ministry Clara has a genuine ability and heart for teaching, enabling, and encouraging the laity in their rightful positions of leadership as the Priesthood of All Believers. She has strong pastoral skills from which the clergy could benefit. She understands the very real challenges facing the church, not only in the Territory, but in Canada and beyond. Not only does Clara understand the need to seek and discern new visions and ways of being, she is willing to bring others into this visioning and then turn the vision to action.

Clara has a genuine love for the people she serves. She listens and reflects rather than reacting. She is consultative in an authentic way as she truly cares about inclusion. Having said that Clara can be decisive when necessary as she takes her leadership role seriously. Clara does not play games or hide behind a façade. When you meet Clara Plamondon, you are meeting the

real person. You will find some wonderful aspects in her nature – kind, empathetic, gentle, yet knowing when it is time to be firm. You will discover a delightful sense of humour. You will also find a person who is trustworthy, does what she says she is going to do and strictly abides by the rules of confidentiality.

Clara has a love and understanding of liturgy and making worship meaningful to people. She understands the desire for local expression and the need for incorporating indigenous practices into liturgy.

In Clara's ministry one has always found her outside the walls of the church as well as within. She has a real heart for the world in which she lives and takes seriously the concerns and needs of the world including, but not limited to, gender equality, climate change, LGBTQIA rights, the poor and the homeless. I know that for many years it has been a joy for Clara to serve alongside her Indigenous brothers and sisters in Christ. She has listened, observed, studied and been profoundly impacted by the stories relating to the legacy of the residential schools. I know it would be a true blessing for her to serve alongside the Indigenous People of the Territory and encourage them in their particular forms of leadership.

The Office of Bishop brings with it administrative responsibilities that are not always second nature to every Bishop! Clara brings with her a gift for organization and attention to detail that can only be beneficial.

You have stated that you want a Bishop who attends to self-care. I have watched Clara get better at this over the years. As well as being generally successful with her day off, she takes time away for herself, enjoys going out with good friends, travel and has enjoyed volunteering with community theatre. Her family is very important to her. Clara is a life-long learner and enjoys taking courses and reading. She has a good friend and confidante outside of the Diocese with whom she checks in weekly to share and pray.

I believe that the Territory of the People would be well served in having Archdeacon Clara Plamondon as your Bishop.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Rev. Deacon Elizabeth Short

June 22, 2023

Melissa Green
Chair of the Electoral Committee
The Territory of the People

Dear Melissa Green,

This letter is a reference for the Venerable Clara Plamondon, who is applying to be Bishop of the Territory of the People.

Rev Clara is my Rector. I served on the Bishop's Consultation Team that hired her as the Incumbent of St. Paul, Nanaimo in June 2018. I served as People's Warden at St. Paul from February 2021 to February 2023. Clara appointed me as Rector's Warden in February 2023.

The gifts of Rev Clara that I have witnessed over the past five years include a deep pastoral ministry, the ability to "equip the saints for ministry", a love of faith formation and sermons that speak to me and make me think about my faith and how I can live out the gospel of Christ in all that I do.

Clara is a patient and compassionate leader. She works hard to build up the skills of her leadership team and those who lead ministries in the parish. She is a wonderful teacher. She is clear about her role as Priest, and the role of the wardens and parish council. She truly believes in a team approach and always ensures that everyone's opinion is heard and validated.

Clara has very high expectations of herself and others, and sometimes this is perceived as the Priest trying to stay involved with everything. She works hard to see the "big picture" and how all the moving parts of a busy parish work together. She continues to work on letting others deal with the day to day non-pastoral issues.

Clara has worked tirelessly during the past three very challenging and difficult years to lead us through a time of liminality. She has encouraged us, prayed with us, grieved with us and celebrated with us. She is always there working to nurture and guide her flock. And she works hard looking after herself by taking her holidays, retreat time and education time. She models healthy self-care.

Most recently, our parish created a new Parish Ministry Plan. Clara allowed the members of the parish to lead the work and the conversation, and offered her advice with asked. She is masterful at helping our parish determine what excites and energizes us and what perhaps we might have to let go of.

Her experience as an Archdeacon, member of the Council of General Synod, and as Prolocutor of the Ecclesiastical Province of BC and Yukon has broadened her knowledge of the Anglican Church of Canada and provided her with many opportunities to work in collaboration and community with Anglicans of many different backgrounds.

Rev Clara knows her strengths and her weaknesses and is not afraid to name them. I value her open, honest and respectful communication style. I value her deep and abiding faith in Jesus Christ. I believe she has the necessary skills and God given talents to serve as Bishop of the Territory of the People, if that is God's call to her.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joy Adams Bauer", followed by a long, horizontal, wavy flourish.

Joy Adams Bauer, Rector's Warden
St. Paul Anglican Church, Nanaimo BC

June 23, 2023

To whom it may concern:

My name is Sandra Leigh. I am the Deputy Rector's Warden at St. Paul Anglican Church, Nanaimo, B.C. It is my privilege to write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Ven. Clara Plamondon. I understand that she is being considered as a candidate for the position of Bishop of the Territory of the People. Based on my nearly five years working with Clara, I can say without reservation that she is an excellent candidate for the post.

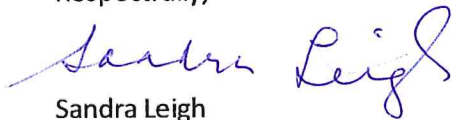
Clara has many qualities that make her suitable for the bishopric. First among these is her strong, grounded faith. I have taken part in book studies, Bible studies, retreats, and EFM classes under Clara's leadership. Her faith shines through in these endeavours, as it does when she preaches and when she trains congregants for our work as liturgical assistants, readers, chalice bearers, or any other lay ministry.

The second quality that defines Clara is her honesty. It inspires confidence on the part of anyone who works with her. If Clara gives you her opinion, you know that she has arrived at that opinion thoughtfully, prayerfully, and without guile.

Also, she is extremely well organized, and she knows how to bring out the best in the people around her. Clara knows how and when to delegate. She recognizes the importance of self-care. That last quality enabled her to remain strong and dependable through the fraught pandemic years.

On a personal note – I can recommend Clara without reservation. While I know that she will be a fine bishop, the fact is that I will miss her. Clara has inspired me to be a great deal more involved in the life of the church than I have ever been before. She has been a blessing to our parish. We at St. Paul's are clearer about our identity and purpose as a downtown parish than we were before Clara came to us. I hope that you will recognize in Clara the talent, intelligence, diligence, and faith that make her an excellent candidate for the bishopric.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sandra Leigh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandra" and last name "Leigh" clearly distinguishable.

Sandra Leigh