

# **The 151st Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh**

## **“FORMING OUR FUTURE”**

### **Keynote Address Description**

#### **“Living Among the Bones” by the Rev. B. De Neice Welch, based on Ezekiel 37:1-14**

Ezekiel’s vision of the valley of dry bones can give us clues as to how we, as the church, have come to settle ourselves among the dryness created by a lack of hope.

Our national hopelessness is so pervasive, that rather than driving us into the street with a prophetic call to hope, we have cloistered ourselves behind the thin veil of religiosity. Societal structures that perpetuate racism, economic inequity, and “me-ism,” remain unaffected by our lack of prophetic witness and we find ourselves living as and among “dry bones.”

We must “re-member” our essential nature as the church of the living God and dare to breathe hope into a turbulent world.

*The Rev. B. De Neice Welch, an ordained Presbyterian minister, is celebrating her ninth year as senior pastor of Bidwell Presbyterian Church. Locally, she chairs the Spiritual Leaders Caucus of the Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network (PIIN). She also chairs a national women’s leadership training program and travels the country for the Gamaliel organization, which prepares faith leadership for work in the public arena.*

## **WORKSHOP OPTIONS**

### **“FORMING OUR FUTURE”**

#### **AT HOME...**

##### **“Great Expectations: Faith Formation at Home,” led by the Rev. Natalie Hall**

Cross-generational practices set manageably high expectations for life shaped by Christian faith. This session looks at the consistent, daily impact that cross-generational Christian education, worship, and faith formation have on individuals, families, and congregations. Participants will be introduced to a daily devotional practice.

*The Rev. Natalie L.G. Hall is a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her confirmation curriculum, “Chosen Together,” is slated for release in early 2017. Hall and her husband, Daniel, a priest of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, have a new daughter, Maryam.*

#### **AT CHURCH...**

##### **“Core Practices for Mission and Growth: Finding Your Confident Christian Voice,” led by the Rev. Christopher Martin**

The churches that will survive and thrive in our increasingly secular age are those that rigorously practice the disciplines Jesus taught. This session presents the essential elements of The Restoration Project, which is based on following these seven core Christian practices: pray, worship, serve, give, learn, listen, and join. Discussion covers how small discipleship groups give structure, strength and integrity to these practices.

*The Rev. Christopher H. Martin, rector of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in San Rafael, California, started The Restoration Project in 2010. Churches in multiple dioceses have adapted The Restoration Project and its components as a means to mission and growth.*

#### **IN OUR CONNECTED WORLD...**

##### **“Finding God in the Digital Space: Practical Guide for E-Formation and Social Media Ministry,” led by Ms. Lisa Brown**

Almost every aspect of our lives today has an online component, whether learning, working, shopping, flirting or playing. How can we meet people and help them meet God in the digital space? In this hands-on session, learn how to extend and enrich your existing ministries through the use of social media and other digital platforms.

*Lisa Brown is concluding seven years as Communications Coordinator and Director of Children’s Ministry at St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon, to become Digital Ministry Consultant with Membership Vision, a website developer specializing in church communications.*