

# **RECORD OF THE 2017 ANNUAL CONVENTION**

## **Minutes of the 152nd Annual Convention (Unapproved)**

### **The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of The Episcopal Church in the United States** **A.D. November 10-11, 2017**

The 152nd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of The Episcopal Church in the United States (the "Diocese") convened on Friday, November 10th, 2017 at Christ Episcopal Church, North Hills, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Registration of Convention Deputies began at 4:00 p.m. in order for the necessary certifications to be completed.

The Convention commenced at 6:00 p.m. The Right Rev. Dorsey W. M. McConnell called the Convention to order, and following an opening prayer, the Bishop asked the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair, Rector of the host parish, to offer a general welcome.

Following the welcome, the Bishop then recognized Ms. Kathy Baird, who, on behalf of Diocesan Council, nominated the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair as Secretary to Convention. There being no other nominations, Canon Shoucair was elected as Secretary by acclamation.

The Bishop then announced his appointment of Ms. Betsy Hetzler as parliamentarian for the Convention, Mr. Jon Delano as Judge of Elections, and Dr. Joan Gundersen as Convention Manager. The Bishop directed that any logistical issues or problems be directed quietly to Dr. Gundersen.

The Bishop then appointed Mr. Andy Roman, Mr. Richard Mathews, and Mr. Bruce Quayle to serve on the Committee of Claims of Lay Deputies to Seats; and The Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair, Mr. Andy Roman and Mr. Eric O'Brien to serve on the Committee on Claims of Parishes.

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Sheila Stagnitta, the Judge of Audits, who indicated that all parishes were in compliance with the canonical requirement on assessments and parochial reports for the year. She reported that three parishes (Church of the Good Shepherd, Hazelwood; St Michael's, Rural Valley; and St Bartholomew's, Scottdale) had not begun their audits and accordingly, their deputies would have seat and voice at the convention, but not vote.

The Bishop then recognized the Rev. Scott T. Quinn, who reported on the status of the Cathedral and its efforts to improve its financial health and physical condition.

The Bishop then called upon the Secretary to report on quorum.

The Secretary reported that there were sixty (60) lay deputies present whose credentials had been received before the Convention. He also reported that there were forty (40) clergy present who duly affirmed that they were ordained and in good standing in The Episcopal Church for the past three months. This brought the total deputies present to one hundred (100), which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business. He also indicated that the Convention would dispense with a formal roll call and accordingly certified the roll of parishes for the Convention.

The Bishop then moved the approval of the minutes of the 151st Annual Convention of the Diocese found in the Preconvention Journal, which were then duly approved and adopted by unanimous vote.

Ms. Kathy Baird, on behalf of Diocesan Council, then moved that the Convention adopt the printed agenda for the Convention. There being no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

The Bishop then asked Mr. Russ Ayres and the Rev. Nancy Chalfant-Walker, co-chairs of the Nomination Committee, to make the report of the Committee.

They then reported on each of the offices to be filled and the nominees for such offices. After the report for each office, the Bishop asked if there were any additional nominees from the floor.

Mr. Ayres reported that due to the withdrawal of the Rev. Shawn Malarkey as a nominee for Standing Committee, the committee had received a petition for the Rev. Noah Evans for the clergy position on the Standing Committee. The bishop instructed that the Rev. Noah Evans be added to the ballot as a nominee for the Standing Committee.

Russ Ayres then moved that nominations be closed. He asked that the Secretary of Convention be instructed to cast a unanimous ballot for those offices with uncontested elections; namely the Board of Trustees, the Cathedral Chapter, the Disciplinary Board, the Growth Fund and the clergy positions on the Committee on Constitution and Canons and the Standing Committee. The motion being moved and seconded, it passed by unanimous vote.

The Bishop recognized Mr. Jon Delano who instructed the Convention on the process for voting. Ballots were then cast by Convention deputies.

The Bishop then introduced the keynote speaker, the Rt. Rev. Andrew Doyle and invited him to address the Convention.

At the conclusion of Bishop Doyle's address, the Bishop thanked him for an inspiring and challenging message.

The Bishop then asked the Judge of Elections to report on the results of balloting from earlier in the evening.

Mr. Delano reported as follows (\*denotes elected):

**For The Board of Trustees (two to be elected):**

- \*Wesley Fox McCloud
- \*James Neral

**For the Cathedral Chapter (one clergy one lay):**

**Clergy:**

- \*The Rev. Lennel Anderson

**Laity:**

- \*Sig Tragard

**For the Commission on Ministry (one to be elected either clergy or lay):**

- The Rev. Howard Gillette 26
- The Rev. Dan Isadore 27
- \*The Rev. Eric McIntosh 43

**For the Committee on Constitution and Canons (one clergy, one lay):**

**Clergy:**

\*The Rev. Joseph Baird

**Laity:**

\*Courtney Horrigan 54

Kenneth Stiles 43

**For the Disciplinary Board (two clergy one lay):**

**Clergy:**

\*The Rev. Moni McIntyre

\*The Bruce Robison

**Laity:**

\*Courtney Horrigan

**For the Growth Fund (one to be elected)**

\*Gerald Dalton

**For the Standing Committee (one clergy, one lay):**

**Clergy:**

The Rev. Shawn Malarkey (withdrawn)

\*The Rev. Noah Evans

**Laity:**

Michael Donadee 44

\*Robert Johnston 52

Following Mr. Delano's report, the Bishop then declared the Convention in recess until the next morning at 9:00 a.m. and invited registered deputies and other attendees to proceed to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church for the Convention dinner.

**Saturday, November 11, 2017**

The registration of deputies commenced at 8:00 a.m. The Bishop called the Convention to order at 9:00 a.m.

The Bishop then called upon Dr. Joan Gundersen to report on Diocesan Disaster Preparedness efforts.

Following the report, the Bishop then called on Ms. Kathi Workman, Diocesan Treasurer, to present the proposed budget for 2017. The Bishop mentioned that \$40,000 would be available for mission grants in 2018 and underscored the possibility of a joint Mon Valley Mission Initiative with the Bidwell Training Center. He also indicated that the Rev. Ted Babcock would be retiring as Canon for Congregational Development as of First Advent. He thanked him for his service to the Diocese over the course of the past two years.

Following Ms. Workman's report and a motion for approval and discussion, the budget was approved unanimously by Convention.

The Bishop then invited Bishop Doyle to give the second part of his presentation to the Convention. At the conclusion of his address, the Bishop again thanked Bishop Doyle and indicated that the Convention would have an opportunity to reflect on his ideas during small group discussions in the afternoon.

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Nancy Lapp and Ms. Marianne Novy for items of special business. Ms Novy then offered the following resolution for approval by the Convention:

WHEREAS Nancy Lapp has chaired the Diocesan Social Justice and Outreach Committee from 2009 until January 2017, with dedication, diplomacy, and careful thought; and

WHEREAS she organized, through the committee, a Race Against Hunger, which involved people throughout the diocese in helping at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, advocating for policies that promote development and fight poverty, watching three documentaries about food and food industries, and raising funds to fight domestic and international hunger; and

WHEREAS she facilitated the committee's provision of grants to help diocesan parishes develop vegetable gardens; and

WHEREAS she twice oversaw, through Habitat for Humanity, a diocesan-wide effort to rehab houses for occupancy by immigrants formerly homeless or living in grossly inadequate housing; and

WHEREAS she continued to educate about Christians in the Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by developing a resolution for General Convention and co-teaching a diocesan course, and helped committee meetings provide education about other issues ranging from literacy to air pollution; and

WHEREAS in addition to curating the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary's Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology for 30 years, she has done archaeological research and writing since the 1960s, publishing two co-edited volumes about research in Jordan in 2015, and impressing the American Schools of Oriental Research so much that they gave her name to the Nancy Lapp Popular Book Award in 2015; be it now therefore

RESOLVED that the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, meeting here in convention on this 11th day of November in the year of our Lord 2017, does hereby declare our profound gratitude to Nancy Lapp for her faithful ministry.

The Bishop then recognized the Rev. Michael Foley who made the following resolution:

WHEREAS Nancy Travis Bolden has chaired the Diocesan Commission on Race and Reconciliation from close to its beginning until 2015 with dedication, diligence, and careful thought; and

WHEREAS she organized, through said Commission, diocesan trainings using The Episcopal Church curriculum, *Seeing the Face of God in Each Other*, raising awareness of the systemic racism that oppresses people of color; and

WHEREAS she was Administrator of the Pittsburgh Public School's Educational Medical School (for Pregnant Girls and Teenage Parents); and

WHEREAS she reduced the rate of absenteeism at Taylor Allderdice High School by 30 percent in her profession as a School Social Worker and Home and School Visitor; and

WHEREAS she raises awareness through the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh about the pervasiveness of racism by her guidance and mentoring to so many of its members, and through her vigilant respect for sound process and systems in order to effect measurable change; and

WHEREAS she has served effectively as The Episcopal Church's Province III Coordinator for Anti-Racism Ministry and Training for many years, obtaining significant funding through a Constable Foundation grant for the Province's training of trainers and other anti-racism efforts; and

WHEREAS she has served her parish, the Church of the Redeemer in Squirrel Hill, as Senior Warden, and currently as a member of the Worship and Music Committee, and additionally has served as a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh Growth Fund Committee; be it now therefore

RESOLVED that the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, meeting here in convention on this 11th day of November in the year of our Lord 2017, does hereby declare our profound gratitude to Nancy Travis Bolden for her faithful ministry.

After both motions were moved and seconded, they were passed unanimously by Convention.

The Bishop then called for a short recess before continuing with the Convention Eucharist, lunch and small group discussions, and he asked the Secretary of Convention to instruct the deputies.

Upon reconvening after the small groups, the Bishop called on the Judge of Elections, Mr. Jon Delano, to present the District election results, which he did as follows:

**District 1**

**Chair:** Bruce Quayle, Christ Church, North Hills  
**Vice-Chair:** Eric O'Brien, Christ Church, North Hills  
**Council:** Bruce Quayle, Christ Church, North Hills  
**Trustee:** Heather McDonald, Christ Church, North Hills

**District 2**

**Chair:** The Rev. Michael Foley, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill  
**Vice-Chair:** Gerald Dalton, St. Stephen's, Wilkinsburg  
**Council:** Frances Dannenberg, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill

**District 3**

**Chair:** Amy Shelley, St. David's, Peters Township  
**Vice-Chair:** Bob Johnston, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon  
**Council (2020):** Jon Delano, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon  
**Council (2019):** Peter Balfe, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon  
**Council (2018):** The Rev. Linda Wilson, All Souls, North Versailles

**District 4**

**Chair:** The Rev. Nancy Threadgill, St. Mark's, Johnstown  
**Vice-Chair:** Lyssa Nickle-Madden, St. Mark's, Johnstown  
**Council:** The Rev. Joseph Baird, St. Peter's, Blairsville  
**Trustee:** John Hose, Advent, Jeannette

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Diane Duntley, the diocesan coordinator for Episcopal Relief & Development. Ms. Duntley spoke on a desire for parishes to name local ER&D coordinators. The Bishop noted that the plate offering from this morning's Eucharist will be directed to ER&D's hurricane relief efforts in Bishop Doyle's diocese and elsewhere.

The Bishop then called upon the Secretary to Convention, the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair, to provide notice of proposed changes to the Constitution of the Episcopal Church. Canon Shoucair reported as follows:

“As required by Article XII of the Constitution of the Episcopal Church, each amendment to the constitution of The Episcopal Church which has been passed by one General Convention is to be sent to every diocesan convention secretary so that it can be “made known” to the diocesan convention before General Convention takes up the matter for a second, final reading and passage. There are three amendments due for a second reading at the 2018 General Convention. All are in Section C of our pre-convention materials. You will find them on pages C-1 and C-2. Should you have objections to the changes, you may voice them now or by expressing your concerns to members of the 2018 deputation to General Convention.”

The Bishop then asked whether anyone wished to voice an objection. There being none, he then called on the Rev. Dr. Bruce Robison for the report from the Committee on Constitution and Canons.

Father Robison offered two canonical amendments on behalf of the Committee on Constitution and Canons, as follows:

First, a resolution concerning reorganization of Canons I, II, and III as found in the preconvention journal. He indicated that the changes involved moving materials to more logical placements and that no substantive changes were involved.

Second, he moved the amendment of Canon III.2.b so that the words “Clergy and” were removed from it. He explained that the effect was to prevent a conflict between this canon section and Article III.2 of the Constitution of the Diocese that guaranteed seat and vote to those clergy canonically and physically resident in the diocese and meeting certain other requirements.

Both motions were passed by Convention.

The Bishop then asked the Convention to recognize the following clergy anniversary of ordination milestones:

The Rev. Bruce Robison	30 years
The Rev. Jeffrey Murph	30 years
The Rev. Philip Wainwright	30 years
The Rev. Regis Smolko	35 years
The Rev. Marjorie McCarty	35 years
The Rev. Arthur Dilg	55 years
The Rev. Roger Bell	60 years

After the applause, the Bishop then recognized Ms. Kathy Baird of Diocesan Council.

Ms. Baird moved the following resolution:

**Resolution of Thanks and Support for Bishop Doyle, the Diocese of Texas and other Dioceses Recovering from Natural Disasters this Year.**

WHEREAS Bishop Andrew Doyle has given us much food for thought and given of his limited time by being with us through two days of convention; and

WHEREAS, the Diocese of Texas and other dioceses in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and California were faced with great challenges following natural disasters from hurricanes and fire; and

WHEREAS the members of the annual Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh Convention, its officials, lay and clergy deputies, guests, and staff are aware that recovery and rebuilding in all these places will be a long and difficult path; therefore be it

RESOLVED that we thank Bishop Doyle for his presence and for his diocese in lending him to us during this challenging time; and be it further

RESOLVED that we send our prayers and support to all of the affected dioceses and best wishes for their continued recovery.

The resolution was passed unanimously by Convention.

Ms. Baird then presented the following resolution:

**Resolution in Recognition of Volunteers**

WHEREAS, this Diocese has been enriched by the gifts of time and talent offered by many volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the work of the Diocese depends on the many hours donated by those who serve on diocesan committees, commissions, and task forces, volunteer in the archives and help with Convention; and

WHEREAS this annual Convention has depended on volunteers to register, guide visitors count ballots and lead our worship; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh gratefully acknowledges the many hours of unpaid service offered so willingly and with such good spirit and hereby request that all those here present who have provided volunteer service for the diocese since our last Convention stand receive the thanks of the Convention.

The motion passed unanimously. After the applause, Ms. Baird moved the following resolution:

**Resolution of Thanks to Christ Church, North Hills.**

WHEREAS Christ Church, North Hills, and its staff and members have hosted the 152nd diocesan annual convention; and

WHEREAS this Diocese has been well fed, escorted, directed and generally welcomed with smiles and helping hands, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the officers, deputies, bishop and visitors participating in this Convention tender Christ Church our sincere thanks for the many ways, large and small, that the people of the parish have worked to smooth the course of events and provide us with a welcoming site for our Convention.

The motion was passed unanimously.

After the applause, the Bishop then called upon Mr. James Neral to present a report from the Diocesan Compensation Committee. Mr. Neral reported that Diocesan Council has already approved the Medical Insurance Guide so that employees could participate during the enrollment period. After reporting on the changes to the medical plans and Compensation Guide, Mr. Neral moved the adoption of the revised

Compensation Guide and all its Appendices as set forth in the preconvention journal. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Bishop then gave his annual address to the Diocese. A copy of his address is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

The Bishop concluded by announcing that the 153rd Diocesan Convention would be held on November 9 and 10, 2018, at a location to be announced. He offered a closing prayer and moved that the Convention be adjourned. The motion, duly moved and seconded, passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair  
Secretary to Convention

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **Bishop's Address to Convention 152nd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh November 11, 2017**

*A transcript of the concluding remarks to Convention delivered by the Right Reverend Dorsey W.M. McConnell, VIII Bishop of Pittsburgh:*

I don't know a better place to do this, but, first of all, how were your Bible studies [earlier today]? Good? Excellent! It seems people had a very good experience with it. Take that away with you and use it. You've got the whole leader's guide. Let me ask Natalie to please stand: Pastor Hall, Canon Hall is the major architect, designer, and author of that. She has been helped by staff comments, particularly by Kim Karashin, and the dynamic duo here has come up with that in some wonderful ways, so let's give them some recognition, please (*applause*). And as logical to that, I would like all my staff, please, to stand... (*applause*). Thank you, thank you so much for all you do.

Second, a reminder, as will become probably unavoidably clear to you in the course of this address, this business of living stones: this is you. There are 200 [stones] out there on the table. I prayed over each one of these yesterday as I marked it with a cross and with today's date, and with a citation, 1Peter 2:5: *Like living stones yourself, be built into a holy temple to offer spiritual sacrifices to God.* Just a reminder, my friends, of who you are, and who you lean on, and that you're never alone. So take one with you as you go out. You'll notice that they're a little heavier than the scallop shells which were distributed in McKeesport in February. And if this keeps going, in another five years, I'll be handing out basketballs I imagine, so... (*laughter*).

From one of my favorite letters from Paul: *Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience... and above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony, and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. (Col. 3:12-15)*

Well, friends, I've been among you for five years, and among all the things I love about being your bishop, foremost among them would have to be your hospitality towards me during my visitations. You are just incredibly welcoming and I am always so grateful to be among you. Even if there's stuff going



on in your parishes that is making you sad or anxious, it never seems to affect the way you greet me. Sometimes it's not just me, but also Betsy; you are always very gracious with her when she is able to come. And many of you have even hosted Charlie, our basset hound mix. I always get the feeling that you pull out all the stops and you'd be ready with anything I could need. There's a beautiful story about Bishop Bill Gordon, who is the famous flying bishop of Alaska. He used to tell about the generosity of his own congregations when he visited. Once he was going way up above the Arctic Circle into a native village up there. There was a rousing service of Confirmation and a big community meal, like they do in Alaska, with the specialty being bowls of moose head soup. You got to eat it, if you haven't! The people were poor but the feast was great, and took place in and around the home of the village's chief elder. During the meal, as the bishop sat in the seat of honor, with his lunch in his hands as he was spooning it up, the family dog sat in front of the bishop staring at him and growling softly. Bill was puzzled, because the dog had been friendly enough when he had entered the house, so he couldn't understand why now the dog's attitude had quickly changed. So he asked the elder, "What's wrong with the dog?" The elder leaned over, pointed to Bill's lunch, and said, "It's 'cause you've got his bowl." (*laughter*). So, I am grateful you've never had to cross that line, but I know if it ever were necessary, your dog wouldn't hesitate!

As I mentioned in my sermon, the world is looking for this sort of kindness I just have described, because it is the sign of the gracious Lord we serve. You grant that kindness to me, and if we are to grant that kindness to the world, then surely we've got to grant it to one another. Indeed, a diocesan budget, which you approved today, is exactly that – an expression of your care for one another, your inter-relatedness, and over the last five years, I want you to know, have seen that become so much more of a reality. The walls that once were among you – of mistrust and hurt, in many cases between small parishes and large ones, urban and rural, Pittsburgh and not-Pittsburgh, barriers even between clergy and laity, barriers of race and class and theology – well, they're not down yet, but they are slowly wearing away as you more deeply live out your connection to each other as members of the Body of Christ charged with a common mission.

And just what is that mission? During my time with you, I have repeatedly phrased it according to three key priorities. You've heard these before: that we proclaim, by word and action, a public Gospel; that we re-invent ourselves as missional communities; and that we focus on the formation of Christian leadership. Public Gospel means the engagement of the society around us with the good news of Jesus Christ. Missional communities means the conversion of our congregations from settled, inward-looking religious societies to outward-focused bands of apostles who engage the real human need in their neighborhoods and beyond, in the power of the Gospel. Leadership formation means what you were doing a few minutes ago in your groups, the intentional development of our people's relationship with Christ through deepening prayer and study of Scripture, which helps us all towards greater maturity in Christ.

I say it every year: three priorities, six words, ten years. And I believe in the content of this, but in my conversations with you all across the diocese during my tenure, I also know that something is not connecting. That is to say, these words fail to achieve the basic function of a mission statement, which is clearly to state a mission without then having to explain it all, the way I just did. Which shows me that these things, as good and as desirable as they may be, are a step away from the core of our mission as Church, as diocese. They are things we need to be about, yes, but there has been something missing, something that, without resorting to a bunch of Church-talk, would describe the essence of who we are and what we do as followers of Jesus Christ, and convey it in a nutshell as our peculiar gift, yours and mine, bishop and priests, deacons and laity, as a diocese knit together in one Body for common witness in southwestern Pennsylvania.

I have prayed long and hard about this, seeking a simple phrase that would express our mission, guided by the love of Jesus Christ. So here it is: We Love. We Teach. We Heal. – Love. Teach. Heal. That's who we are and it's what we do.

So let's take a little time to explore the dimensions of each of these. Love is first. But, of course, as the children in my sermon would have asked, love whom? Well, first God. To love God *with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind* (Luke 10:27). It's an obvious beginning, in the Hebrew Scriptures and quoted again in many places in the New Testament, particularly in Luke 10. It's an obvious beginning, but you'll recall that when Jesus quotes it and emphasized it as the great commandment, he then links it to a second commandment, less well known, that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. So first love God, then the neighbor. But you will recall also, as [Bishop] Andy Doyle was saying last night and again today, that that's a complicated and very challenging proposition. As Jesus tells that story, the one about the good Samaritan, saying that our neighbor is precisely the one most different from us, the one we're afraid of, who causes us trouble, perhaps even the one we hate, and who hates us, and in case we miss the point, he tells us explicitly that we must love even our enemy.

So, if this first mission point is to love, it is to love God, love the neighbor, and love your enemy. God knows we have plenty of opportunities. Start at coffee hour. I'm serious. Look, it's a family, at Thanksgiving, everyone is gathered around, they love each other, and yet also they are troubled by each other. They project stuff onto each other. They image things in their heads. So, it's loving others, not because we expect anything back from them, but because that is how Christ loves us. Love God, love the neighbor, love the enemy. How counter-cultural. How against the world it is. And, how absolutely mainstream to us. Of course, you got to know, it's impossible. As Jesus would say, impossible on a human level, which is why we need to go to the next one, to let the Holy Spirit teach us and others how it is that God makes the impossible commandment to love possible, do-able, normal.

And so, we teach. We teach about God, or we teach God-with-us. *And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.* (John 1:14). That is, as Gene Peterson translates it: God has moved in to the neighborhood, in Jesus Christ. And note friends, not just the Church, moved into the neighborhood, into the world you see, in taking on human flesh. So, God with us, God for us. God is on our side. *He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?* (Romans 8:32). *Through his cross, he has forgiven our sins, and through his resurrection has conquered our mortality.* He is for us and He is in us – God in us. *God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying Abba! Father!* (Galatians 4:6) as Paul puts it in Galatians. God, in other words, is speaking to us, through us and in us, all the time, as he leads us through the Church into the world, and in the world, and through the world He will also speak to us, and in us, as we carry Him in our hearts.

As we learn what the Spirit teaches, and as we teach others, the Church receives power to see and join the work that God is already doing in the world, and power especially to heal the wounds of a beautiful and yet broken creation. And that's the last mission point, to heal. Well, better start simple, with people – heal the person. Again and again in the Gospels, *Great crowds came to [Jesus], and he healed them* (Matthew 15:30). And he didn't heal them by stretching out his hand over 5,000 as if he were Moses parting the sea. He walked among them one by one, one at a time, loving, teaching, healing.

So with us, people carry enormous burdens in their lives. They carry things they can't seem to get over or get beyond. What if all of our churches became known as places where people could safely put those burdens down and grow into the human beings God has always desired them to be?

That's why He wants to heal the Church. We know something about that in this diocese. John 17, the last prayer of Jesus: that his disciples, the Church, his apostles *may become perfectly one, so that the world may know you sent me* (John 17:23). I'm in the habit of saying that God will not heal a divided

world through a divided Church. To the extent that our wounds as Church are healed, He will use us mightily to heal the world. I believe God in this time is breaking down the dividing walls of hostility among the Churches that have shattered the Body of Christ according to doctrine and denominational heritage and ethnicity and race, and He is using us to do so, friends. And what if every one of our churches had a commitment to crossing that barrier, to walking with Jesus across those divisions, to building the bridges of reconciliation in prayer and mission with a congregation of a different brand, a different color? We might be even taken seriously by the world, because that's where our healing is really called.

St. Paul, in Second Corinthians says that He has made us agents of His reconciliation: *We are nothing less than ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us (2 Corinthians 5:20)*. Heavens knows, there is no shortage of brokenness in the world around us – broken lives, broken relationships, broken systems. Here in our region, especially, we see in so many of our neighborhoods the consequences of racism, poverty, violence and particularly addiction, which is a growing epidemic, and at the root of it all a deep hopelessness, a kind of resignation to the assumption that “that’s just the way the world is and there’s no point to thinking that it could be a different place.” Yet we know, it can be a different place. It all seems overwhelming, and yet God has called us and filled us with power in the words of the old spiritual, “to make the wounded whole.” And the efforts don’t have to be huge in worldly terms. They don’t have to have big budgets. They don’t have to have lots of people. They just have to meet, in some small way with the faithfulness of Jesus, the broken-ness of the world with the power of Christ to heal. What if every one of our communities dared to have a single, specific ministry to engage that world in the work of reconciliation and healing?

So there you have it, sisters and brothers, our mission from your bishop’s perspective: love, teach, and heal. To love God, neighbor and enemy. To teach God with us, for us, and in us. To heal the person, the Church, and the world.

And yes, while the content of my old three key priorities are either contained or implied in the words, I love this – love, teach, and heal – because these are English! You see they’re easy to remember, even in their expanded form. In their short form, these three words, you could adapt them as a mission statement for your parish or for your outreach committee, or as a way of introducing your congregation at a public hearing or town meeting, right? “Hi, I’m Nancy from St. Swithin’s. We’re a parish of the Episcopal Diocese. We love, teach and heal.” I’d suggest that the expanded form could be the basis for a whole lot of things, a newcomers’ class, or a Sunday School curriculum. They could be turned into even, God help me, a set of metrics for your vestry. You could visit them as standards from time to time to gauge your progress in moving the Gospel into the lives of your congregants and of the people and institutions around you in your neighborhood. Or they could help you as a filter to judge whether or not to keep a ministry or to start a new one – and we’ll be doing that, believe me, in my office – asking questions like “how will this help us in our mission to love teach and heal?” And, indeed, “if this is not helping us love, teach or heal, then why are we doing it?” These questions will certainly be used to guide my work and the work of our staff.

Now quickly, since this is the basic work of the Gospel, we shouldn’t be surprised to see a lot of this going on already in the diocese. Here’s a quick look back over the last year and a little look forward. And these categories are a little artificial because, in fact, in some ways all of these ministries involve all three of the love, teach, and heal. But let’s have a look at it.

So, in Mt. Lebanon it turns out... did you know that Mt. Lebanon isn’t perfect? I was shocked to find out that 18% of kids in Mt. Lebanon public schools are on assisted- or free lunches. Eighteen percent. So, now, there are some folks at St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon, along with other faith communities, churches, and synagogues, the library, and other public institutions who are really saying “you know, we got to actually

talk about race and poverty and justice in Mt. Lebanon. Maybe we can have a way of facilitating a public conversation,” which is a way of *Love*. The Walk-in Ministry at Trinity Cathedral, which has been adopted by this diocese, is *Love*. Laundry Love from St. Peter’s, Blairsville – one of my favorite ministries, good gracious – they just go there and help people get their clothes clean, and pay for it, and talk with folks, and sometimes pray for them. There are Community Gardens – *Love*. Jeremiah’s Place, a crisis ministry – *Love*. The Daughters of the King, which in this diocese are starting up again, their ministries are of service and prayer in the *Love* of Christ – and if you are a priest-in-charge in this diocese, you can expect a call from them in the next few days, as they would ask you to help them identify, perhaps, women in your congregation who might be invited into this ministry of prayer and service.

*Teaching*: there’s Faith 5, a simple platform for organizing family devotions, moving deeper into love for one another, and in formation in Christ in the Scriptures and in prayer together. There’s the Restoration Project from Christopher Martin. There’s Sheldon Calvary Camp, of course, which teaches more kids and more people in one place than I, frankly, have ever seen over the course of a summer. There are Lenten Learning inquiries with Carrie Headington this year and Scott Gunn of Forward Movement coming next year. There’s Appreciative Inquiry, led by Canon Kim Karashin. By the way, Faith 5 is being moved forward in this diocese by Natalie Hall, our Canon for Evangelism and Faith Formation. Appreciative Inquiry is a powerful way of seeing Gospel principles re-animate a search for purpose and direction in your own parish and leadership. There’s a Himalayan Foundation at St. Peter’s in Brentwood, there is the Neighborhood Youth Outreach Project at St. Stephen’s in Wilkinsburg, there is Godly Play training, there is all these ministries going on all the time, and all of them are teaching the power of Jesus to make people new.

And on the *Healing* side, we have the Mon Valley Mission, which is reaching into the neighborhood around it for those who are most desperate. There’s a Youth Mission from this diocese in West Virginia, spearheaded by St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon. There are still outreaches in Uganda, which is a province of the Anglican Church that is among those that been most deeply estranged from us; and yet, both through the work of the Mustard Seed Baby Home in Uganda and through the UTO offering grant through this diocese to St. Andrew’s School in Jinja, and through my own work through Pilgrim Africa, lives are being saved and people are being healed. There is our support for Becca Stevens, who was wonderful when she came here, and there’s so much more.

In the bishop’s office, I want to say, we have resources to help you grow more into the Church that loves, teaches and heals. If you’re looking for assistance in figuring out your mission, or reconfigure it, or if you want to start something new, our Canon for Mission Kim Karashin can help. Kim, why don’t you stand up. And when I call your name out, remain standing if you would... (*applause*). Appreciative Inquiry, strategic support for mission initiatives, she can help you with mission grants, and all kinds of thing. If you are looking for sound practices appropriate to your size and budget that will empower you for the Christian formation of your children and your adults and your families at home, in the church and in the world; or if you feel called to evangelism, but it still scares the heck out of you and you’re shy because you’re Episcopalian, our Canon for Evangelism and Faith Formation Natalie Hall can help. She’s right over there (*applause*). If you are wondering how to connect with the 12-step groups that meet in your church, if you want to join Christ’s mission in healing addiction, if you think the Mon Valley Mission may be a useful model for your community or parishes near you, or if you are interested in exploring what it might mean to be a bi-vocational priest or deacon, you can reach out to Canon Jay Geisler, who’s standing right here (*applause*). And if you’re unsure of what you need, but just want to talk to someone about any possibility whatever, including if you need cell phone numbers for any of the people I just introduced, or you got something to share, including complaints about your bishop, you just connect with Shawn Malarkey... (*applause*), who as Canon to the Ordinary will be not only coordinating

the work of our canons and staff, but also trying to coordinate his bishop, so please pray for him on that one (*laughter*).

One of the major tools for us to connect with one another will be the new website, and we want to introduce this to you. It's an early draft. We're not going to go through it all, so it's a work in progress. There are two goals: obviously to make sure you, as people inside "the box" can find the resources you need to get outside the box; it's also designed to connect seekers with a home – your home. It's designed for new people who are looking for information about the Episcopal Church and just have heard something or are looking and just wandering around and need a portal, and this is it. It will play well on all mobile devices, which is going to be really new. It will also be fully integrated with social media, and parishes can be searched by location and ministry offerings. And we will even have a template for smaller parishes to participate in this, so that your parish can have an active, vibrant website that is linked to the whole. And I got to say, I really like this. I don't know what it's looking like from your point of view, but it's going to be a lot of fun. The idea of playing with this is almost as much fun as the other idea which is coming into fruition, which is that thanks to a very generous grant, the bells at Trinity Cathedral are now being redone. We were hoping that they are going to be done in time for Christmas, but it doesn't look like they'll make it. But you know what, I can sit in my office and run them from my iPad! Be afraid, be very afraid (*laughter*).

Now, I know that some of our parishes are unsure of their future, and some are even unsure whether they can hang on much longer. Sometimes, when you are struggling just to pay the bills, it is hard to imagine what it may mean to be a church devoted to the vision that Bishop Doyle was outlining earlier in the day and that I have described, especially if that means entirely re-assessing who you are, and how you can respond to the needs of the world around you, when you feel you barely have enough just to keep going. I understand that and, again, my office can help you. In that spirit, based on your parochial reports and other data that we have assessed in the past year all 36 parishes, and we've got a very clear idea of how everybody is doing. And thanks to Kathi Workman, who has just done amazing work on this. We got the data spread across about 14 fields. All 36 parishes are categorized across five classes, five being you could actually make some serious mistakes and still come out just fine, going all the way down to one, which is gasping for air. I am happy to report that there is good news, in that more than two-thirds of our parishes are doing either very well or reasonably well, but a lot of the others are under significant stress. In the coming months, I want to dedicate a portion of my time, and also of my office, to be helping several congregations, especially our most vulnerable, reimagine their future. In some cases, this may mean doing something completely different than they've done before, and not just significantly reducing their expenses, which is kind of a negative way of thinking about this; but, finding ways of co-operating with neighboring parishes and community partners, possibly finding other uses and more imaginative uses for their buildings. The purpose of this is not to intervene with a suggestion that people aren't doing the right thing, or have lost, or failed or something. But rather, to remember that we are all connected, sisters and brothers. And that as we bring congregations together, we see possibilities we could not see before – for the Gospel – that provides light ahead.

So, as we bring together these congregations and remember that we're all connected, we can see some models that offer us some hints of success. We're seeing it in The Mon, drawing together with the parishes in Monongahela, McKeesport and Donora, in partnership with Bethlehem Baptist, as I mentioned earlier in the day. There are significant possibilities for building similar relationships in two other parts of our diocese, and in the next year we will be engaging people on the ground to consider what such a relationship might look like. Beyond this, we are looking at new ways of being effective communities for the Gospel that don't have a whole lot to do with traditional church "boxes," like Dan Isadore's. He and Hallie have turned their own home into the House of Life, known as Zoe, the service that's really the gathering of a community with a liturgy of the Table, followed by a meal and then a community study of the Word, and sometimes there are 50 people there. And they are young, like, really

young. I mean young by any scale, not young from your bishop's view, which means under 50, I mean young. And the Gospel is moving.

So what would more of these communities look like? I have asked the Reverend Kris Opat to convene a group that will be looking at new plants over the coming years and just brainstorming about the kind of opportunities we might have, and also thinking about the kind of leadership those communities will need. To help in that, we got a lot of resources. Again, I sit on the board of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary – yes, your Episcopal bishop is on the board of a Presbyterian seminary – it's just a sign, and there's your sign, all right. It's breaking down, all these barriers. We have submitted a draft of an Episcopal-Anglican track at PTS that is being considered in Academic Affairs, the purpose of which would train candidates not just for holy orders but also for lay leadership, and both in traditional modes and for more adventurous mission. And to help on a practical level, especially for our newly ordained, we've taken what used to be Fresh Start, and Fr. Jonathon Jensen and Fr. Bill Pugliese will be conducting a course for newly ordained clergy that will help them master basic practices of Word and Sacrament, and to help them create a learning community among themselves, beginning in January. So there is so much here.

When I reflect back on all of this, in conclusion, I remember that a little more than a year ago, my whole office was focused on the imminent arrival of the Presiding Bishop. I don't know if you remember my terror, learning just a few weeks before the Convention that he was not only coming to Pittsburgh as part of a series of revivals across the Church, but he had designated us as the pilot for this. It was new. He said, "You take it, bishop," and so we did. By the grace of God, and by the absolutely steely devotion of the diocesan staff and of so many of you, lay and ordained, it was a huge blessing from one end to the other. Just think about it, over those days, from the Friday evening Service of Reconciliation and Repentance at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary; to the next morning celebrating Absalom Jones at Holy Cross, Homewood; to the afternoon, where 200 people got together in that convocation around Bridging Divides and Healing Communities; and then on the Sunday morning, first at that glorious Mass at Calvary in East Liberty, followed by a standing room only service at St. Stephen's, McKeesport. Good gracious. In every place you could see a *loving* Church, a *healing* Church, and a *teaching* Church. And it just keeps going. I think particularly the moment for me was to see at that service at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Pittsburgh, Metropolitan Savas, standing next to the African-American Baptist pastor of Bethlehem Church in McKeesport, Earlene Coleman, and the two of them leading the prayers together. All I could think of was Dr. [Martin Luther] King and Archbishop Iakovos, arm in arm, going across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. And I thought, "My God, this has come here? Maybe God is really up to something."

And it's kept going. In partnership with Dr. Darryl Canady and several other churches, not just Rodman Baptist, we've launched the Church Without Walls and now we have 15 out of 36 parishes participating in 21 racially balanced study groups and prayer groups, with over 170 people. Really, the aim is to become Church Without Walls, and to understand as we do, God is going to turn us into a blessing, not just for the Church, but for the world! So that as the Presiding Bishop has prayed, revival might not be just within the walls of the Body of Christ, but in the society as well, as we break down ancient barriers and heal desperate and ancient wounds. And just maybe, friends, the whole purpose of this is so that we, becoming a Church that together loves, teaches, and heals, might actually be used to fulfill Sam Shoemaker's prophecy of all those years ago – that one day, Pittsburgh will be more famous for God than it ever was for steel.

So as you go out today, take a stone. Take it with you. Be reminded of the ones you are leaning on and who are leaning on you. And together let's trust that God will, more and more, build us into a holy temple, living and precious in His sight, with good news for the world.

In Jesus's name. Amen.