

RECORD OF THE 2018 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Minutes of the 153rd Annual Convention (Unapproved)

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Episcopal Church in the United States A.D. November 9-10, 2018

The 153rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of The Episcopal Church in the United States (the "Diocese") convened on Friday, November 9th, 2018, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

Registration of Convention Deputies began at 5:00 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 Reverend Noah Evans, Rector of the host parish, to offer a general welcome.

Following the welcome, the Bishop then recognized Mr. Jon Delano, 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 unanimously by acclamation. Mr. Delano then moved adoption of the Rules of Order and printed agenda, which was passed unanimously.

The Bishop then appointed Ms. Betsy Hetzler as Parliamentarian for the Convention and Mr. Jon Delano as Judge of Elections.

The Bishop then appointed Mr. Andy Roman, Mr. John Adams, and Ms. Lisa Brown to serve on the Committee of Claims of Lay Deputies to Seats; and the Rev. Ted Babcock, Mr. Andy Roman and Mr. Eric O'Brien to serve on the Committee on Claims of Parishes.

The Bishop then announced his appointment of Ms. Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan as Convention Manager and directed that any logistical issues or problems be directed quietly to her.

The Bishop then recognized Mr. Kevin Hipolit, the Judge of Assessments, to give his report. Mr. Hipolit reported that all parishes were in compliance with Diocesan requirements concerning assessments and parochial reports.

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Sheila Stagnitta, the Judge of Audits, who reported that three parishes, St. Paul's, Monongahela; St. Bartholomew's Scottdale; and St. Michael's, Rural Valley, had not completed their 2017 audits and accordingly, their deputies would have seat and voice at the convention, but not vote.

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

The Secretary reported that there were sixty-seven (67) lay deputies present whose credentials had been received before the Convention. He also reported that there were twenty-seven (27) clergy present who duly affirmed that they were ordained and in good standing in The Episcopal Church, and canonically and physically resident in the Diocese for the past three months. This brought the total deputies present to ninety-four (94), 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 152nd Annual Convention of the Diocese found in the Preconvention Journal, which was then duly approved and adopted by unanimous vote.

The Bishop then recognized the Rev. Liddy Barlow as a guest of Convention, commending her for her role in the local pastoral response to the Tree of Life tragedy. The Bishop then introduced the Keynote Speaker of the Convention, the Rev. Raymond Bonwell, who then delivered the first of a two-part presentation to the Diocese.

At the conclusion of Pastor Bonwell's address, the Bishop thanked him for his thought-provoking message. He then declared the Convention in recess until the next morning at 9:00 a.m. and invited registered deputies to proceed to the parish hall for the Convention dinner.

Saturday, November 10, 2018

The registration of deputies commenced at 8:30 a.m. The Bishop called the Convention to order at 9:00 a.m.

The Bishop then called on the Rev. Michael Foley and Mr. Robert Johnston, co-chairs of the Nominating 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, including those duly placed on the ballot following the publication of the Preconvention Journal. After noting that some offices still lacked a sufficient number of nominees, deputies agreed by voice vote to suspend the rules of order in order to allow additional nominations from the floor, upon which:

- Mr. Thomas Moore nominated Ms. Jane Burger for the Board of Trustees.
- The Rev. Lennel Andersen nominated Ms. Dawna Byrom for the Disciplinary Board; Ms. Byrom then withdrew her name from the Growth Fund ballot.
- The Rev. Joseph Baird nominated Mr. Dwayne Ladd for the Disciplinary Board.

All nominations were seconded and approved unanimously by vote of Convention.

Father Foley thanked the Nominating Committee for its work 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, Cathedral Chapter, the Committee on Constitution and Canons and the clergy position on 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 for the Disciplinary Board, Standing Committee (lay) and Growth Fund were then cast.

The Bishop then reported that there would be no salary increase for Diocesan employees in 2019. He also noted that staff work responsibilities had been redistributed after the Rev. Shawn Malarkey stepped down from the position of Canon to the Ordinary.

The Bishop then called on Ms. Kathi Workman, Diocesan Treasurer, to present the proposed budget for 2019. Ms. Workman began the presentation by mentioning that \$45,000 remained available for mission grants in 2018 and underscored the availability of grants in 2019.

Following Ms. Workman’s report and a motion for approval and discussion, the budget was approved unanimously by Convention. Ms. Workman thanked the Budget and Assessment Working Group for all their efforts in connection with the development of the budget.

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

The Bishop then asked the Judge of Elections to report on the outcome of the first ballot.

Mr. Delano reported the following results, including those cast by the Secretary as a unanimous ballot for offices with uncontested elections (*denotes elected):

For the Board of Trustees (three to be elected):

- *Florence Atwood
- *Kathleen Farrington
- *Jane Burger

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

Clergy:

- *The Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair

Laity:

- *Kathy Baird

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

- *Dr. Gloriana St. Clair

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

Clergy:

- *The Rev. William Geiger

Laity:

- *Joan Gundersen

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

Clergy:

- *The Rev. Michael Foley

Laity:

- *Sandra Collins 97
- *Dawna Byrom 83
- Dwayne Ladd 34

For the Growth Fund (one to be elected)

- *Nancy Travis Bolden 57
- Thomas Koehler 54

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

Clergy:

- *The Rev. Annis Rogers

Laity:

- Don Block 41
- *Lisa Brown 73

The Bishop then called for a short recess in preparation for the Convention Eucharist, to be followed by lunch. He instructed the deputies as to the location of the district meetings. The celebration of the Eucharist commenced with a procession of items from each parish that symbolized their answer to the question “Who is My Neighbor?” A copy of the Bishop’s sermon is attached as Exhibit A.

Following the lunch recess, the Bishop called on Pastor Bonwell to lead the café conversations on how we can use our resources to love, teach, and heal in our local contexts. Pastor Bonwell shared a personal experience of local ministry, at the end of which he invited the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall and the Bishop to share personal stories of the ways in which local congregations have worked to meet the needs of parish and community neighbors. At the conclusion of the conversations, the Bishop asked the Judge of Elections, Mr. Jon Delano, to present the District election results, as follows:

District 1

Chair: Bruce Quayle

Vice-Chair: Eric O’Brien

Council: The Rev. Regis Smolko

District 2

Chair: Francis Dannenberg

Vice-Chair: Darrell Powell

Council: The Rev. Eric McIntosh

Trustee: Bernard Rottschaefter

District 3

Chair: Amy Shelley

Vice-Chair: Robert Johnston

Council: The Rev. Doug Kinsey

District 4

Chair: The Rev. Nancy Threadgill

Vice-Chair: The Rev. Charles Schaller

Council: Dwayne Ladd

The Bishop then invited the Rev. Liddy Barlow to give an update on the activities of Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania (CASP). Reverend Barlow made an animated presentation on the various iterations of CASP.

The Bishop then called upon Mr. Andrew Roman to provide the Chancellor’s Report. Mr. Roman reported on the property settlement reached earlier this year between the Diocese and nine individual parishes whose congregations have aligned with the Anglican Church in North America. He noted that Presiding Bishop Michael Curry commended the Diocese for its creative way of reconciling issues concerning legal title and trust interests among the Diocese and the parishes. Mr. Roman thanked the present and past members of the Board of Trustees and Standing Committee, Bishop McConnell, the Diocesan negotiating team (Russ Ayres, the Rev. Jim Simons, Jerry Stephenson, the Rev. Leslie Reimer, and the Rev. Kris Opat,), as well as David McClenahan and Mark Nordenberg, who acted as the formal mediators. Final approval of the settlement is expected from Judge Joseph James on December 4, 2018.

The Bishop then recognized the Chair of the Resolutions committee, the Rev. Canon Jay Geisler, and asked for his report.

Canon Geisler moved the following resolutions:

Resolution #1, concerning Those Affected by the Criminal Justice System, as it appears in the Preconvention Journal, page C-1. The resolution passed unanimously.

Resolution #2, concerning Protecting the Environment, as it appears in the Preconvention Journal, page C-2. The resolution passed unanimously.

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 Benefits Guide so that employees could participate during this year's open 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 B.

The Bishop then 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 Sermon 153rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh November 10, 2018

A transcript of the sermon preached by the Right Reverend Dorsey W.M. McConnell at the Convention Eucharist:

“But he, desiring to justify himself, asked Jesus, ‘Who is my neighbor?’” (*Luke 10:29*) May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be always acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. *Amen.*

I was out and about two weeks ago, when I heard about the massacre at Tree of Life Synagogue. I came home and sat at my desk with my laptop for a few minutes and wrote a statement, and pressed the “send” button to Andy Muhl and Rich Creehan. Then I put on a collar and a clerical shirt. Betsy came home a few minutes later. She saw me in clericals, and asked, “Where you going?” She had heard about it, too. “I don't know,” I said, “I think I need to go somewhere.” “Well, where?” she asked. “I think I need to go to Rodef Shalom. I need to see if they're all right, if Aaron Bisno is all right. But I don't know.” She said, “Well, there's a rumor they are locking down synagogues, but if you think you should go, then you should go.” I said, “That's right, I should go. So, I'm going.” She said, “Go, go!” So, I did.

When I got there, there were only a few cars in the parking lot. There were two police cruisers near the door, and when they saw me they waved me in. I kissed the mezuzah at the entrance. I went upstairs, and saw the receptionist who stood up as I came. She looked sad. I shook her hand. "I'm so sorry," I said. "I'm so, so sorry." She said, "Thank you, and thank you for coming." I asked, "Is the Rabbi around?" She said, "Yes, he's in the dining room. We had a naming ceremony today. He's with the family. They're having lunch. I know he'd love to see you." So I went in. There were about 30 people gathered at tables. They were conversing and they were celebrating, but in a sort of sober way. They were weeping and checking their news feeds. At the far end of the room, there was Rabbi Bisno, cutting the cake. He looked up, and saw me, and said, "Dorsey! Good God! You've come! You're here!" He strode across the room and before I could say anything – which was good because I didn't know what to say – he wrapped me in a bear hug, kissed me, and said, "Thank you for loving us! Thank you!" And then he said, "Did you eat? Have you eaten yet? You should eat. Here, the chicken is good. And the eggplant. You got to definitely try the eggplant." So he filled my plate, and got a napkin and utensils, and sat me down at his table, next to him. As I took all of this in, and before I could say anything, Aaron said again, "It's good you're here. Thank you for loving us. How is Betsy? How is Evan?" And we talked for a bit, and then just sat together with everyone for a while. And when it was time to go, the Rabbi introduced me to the family of the little girl at the center of it all, the reason for the feast that day, whose name – may she be remembered forever – is, wait for it... Giovanna Rossellini Fiorella Falcone. Such a nice, Jewish name (*laughter*). Rabbi Sharyn said, "From this day on, she'll also be known as Rachel." I congratulated her parents, and when it was time to go, I was sent out the door with the biggest piece of carrot cake, for my wife, because I happened to mention it's her favorite.

You see how this works, in the Kingdom of God? You go out thinking you are being sent to offer a ministry of consolation, and instead you are the one who is being consoled. You believe you are the one binding up the brokenhearted, and discover it is your heart being healed. You assume that you are bringing Christ to the world, and what you discover is that Christ has been in the world all along, unnoticed by you, not waiting for your permission, not needing your blessing, but showing forth sovereignly the face of Jesus wherever in this life the marks of his Cross are found, and particularly in the sorrows and the sufferings of those whom Jesus calls neighbor, even though we may balk at doing so, and whom He commands us to love, as Christ loves us. I went to Rodef expecting to prove neighbor to Aaron and found that Aaron proved neighbor to me.

It seems that all of Jesus's teaching and work moves us into a deeper understanding of this question, and its answer, asked by a lawyer who was just trying to win an argument with Him, like me half the time. "Who is my neighbor?" he said. And the reason we left it hanging in today's Gospel reading, rather than going on to the story we all know so well, is to underscore the full scandal of the question. Because what is important for us, is not how Jesus answers it for the lawyer, but how he answers it for you, for me. And the fullness of that answer becomes frightening when you pile into it the other things Jesus says, expanding Luke 10, as Raymond Bonwell pointed out, with Matthew 5: Love not only your neighbor, but love your enemy, until you realize that when He says "neighbor" he means absolutely everyone – the friend, yes, but the stranger also; the acquaintance, of course, but the enemy as well, perhaps especially the enemy. So I can love Rabbi Bisno because he is so easy to love – and I've loved him for years – but could I love those who hate him? How could I prove neighbor to Robert Bowers? Could I bind up the wounds of the one who would hate me for even coming near; and could I believe that such a person might hold the key to my own healing?

These are tough questions. But let's take it a little further. The question, "Who is my neighbor?" then, becomes pretty easy to answer. We can just try it right now. I ask you all just to relax; you're in a safe place. Close your eyes. Let me read you a few names, and as I do so I'd like to ask you to note in the split second you hear each one, the impulse in you of attraction, on the one hand, or aversion that you feel. Are you ready? Here we go:

Your dog. Sorry, that was a control.

Let's move on.

The cop who gave you a ticket last week, or last month, or last year.

The nurse who saved your mother's life.

Donald Trump.

Your mother.

Your mother-in-law.

Saint Francis.

Pope Francis.

Nancy Pelosi.

Kellyanne Conway.

Have we done enough? You can open your eyes. Did you notice how it's almost impossible to suppress that burst of warmth or bitterness as we consider those we think are our neighbors, want to be our neighbors, wish we could limit our neighbor to, and those whom Jesus calls his neighbor and declares they must be ours as well.

The author of the letter to the Ephesians paints this situation in such vivid colors it is impossible to ignore. He's very smart. He is addressing a mixed congregation of Jews and Gentiles, and at first you think he was saying what a good thing it is that the Gentiles have woken up and joined the covenant people through the Cross of the Messiah. But then you realize what he actually is saying is, you know, we're all in the same boat, all are broken by the dividing wall of hostility – that little dark impulse you just felt, grown into full dark flower – the wall that separates us not just from each other, but from God. And His Good News is it takes the blood of the Cross to get rid of the wall. And that has happened. And the wall is gone.

“Why the Cross?” is pretty mysterious, and there are lots of ways of looking at it, but here is one for us today: the dark impulse towards the one we think of as our enemy – and I will speak for myself – is linked to a deep and very dark fantasy, which is this: if I can just get rid of that person, and all persons like them, I will finally have peace. Can we get an amen? *Amen*. It is perfectly reasonable, completely mistaken and it is absolutely deadly. It motivates nearly all blood lust, whether against Jews or Muslims, immigrants or invaders, the rich, the poor, Democrats, Republicans, oh, just pick your enemy. And Jesus, God Incarnate, says this, “Let me stand in their place. If you got to take somebody's blood, take my blood instead,” He says. “Because it is the sacrifice that lasts forever, once for all, let me do this for you, and admit it's done, and then you will have peace. There is only one catch, if you let me do this for you, you will never need to shed the blood of someone else, either literally, or spiritually, just by saying nasty things about them – to their face, rarely; to someone else, frequently; or in the quiet of your heart, almost all the time. You will never need to shed that blood, or despise someone, nor will you actually be allowed the freedom to do that, but you will love them instead, as I loved you, even when you were enemies of God.

Sometimes it takes time to get us through all of this mystery. When you think of the folks who have most troubled you in your life, sometimes we think we have to forgive them in order to love them, but I would suggest actually the reverse is true. Maybe, by the magnificent sovereignty and miraculous power of God, we begin to love them, and through loving them gradually move into a place where we can forgive them.

It's funny, that as I was thinking about this I thought of my proto-typical enemy. It happened almost 60 years ago. His name was Kenny. I was in first grade. He was a bully and he used to torture me in the playground and one day he went all the way. He cuffed me and knocked me about and tore my clothes. And I must have passed out, because everything went dark and the next thing I remember was that I was on my back, looking up, with a ring of children around me, holding hands, and staring down. And Kenny, sitting on my stomach, looking me in the face, was saying, "I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry." And instantly I thought, "If you're so sorry, why don't you get up?" (*laughter*). But then I said something that I didn't believe, because I didn't want him to start again. I said, "It's okay. It's all right. It's okay." Then I heard the words come out of my mouth for the first time, "I forgive you." And I didn't believe it. But it worked. He left me alone, and I found that just about a week ago, it occurred to me, that even though he might not have been saying that with his emotions, maybe he was saying that out of guilt or out of a desire to get it over with, nonetheless, the image of God in Kenny was weeping, and so sorry, so sorry – as I believe the image of God in Robert Bowers is so sorry, even though he cannot imagine, perhaps, what that would feel like. But perhaps, one day he will.

So, the end result is this: the enemy has become the neighbor for the simple reason that God has made that move towards us through the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus. That is the source of our hope and the cause of our mission. So why not stop fighting it and just accept this invitation to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" – each in our own way, with words something like this: The neighbor is the one we are too busy to know better until something terrible happens; or the one we hold in fear or suspicion; or the one we don't know yet; and the one we hope we will never know. And Jesus says unequivocally, "Do not be afraid. Go find them." Because, if and when we find them, we will find Him, and where we find Him we will find life.

In Jesus' name, *Amen*.

EXHIBIT B

Bishop's Address 153rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh November 10, 2018

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

Last year, I introduced a summary of my vision for the diocese in the three words: Love. Teach. Heal. None of us could have foreseen the terrible moment in which we now stand, in which especially over the last two weeks, hate, ignorance and wounded-ness have been revealed to be a deeper part of our social and political life than many of us ever dared think. As for the question, "Who is my neighbor?" well, it's always been a lively one in Pittsburgh, thanks as much to Fred Rogers as to Jesus. But no one could have guessed, when we picked it, six months ago to guide our conversation today, that eleven souls would have spent their blood on the seed ground for this question, because this question is now being asked across the world with a new urgency. I saw an enormous banner saying, "#LoveThyNeighbor" on the wall of a building just around the corner from my neighborhood, but it was not a church. It was a Get Go, a filling station. Something huge is happening.

On Thursday, the evidence gathered with 130 interfaith clergy at the JCC [Jewish Community Center] to mourn and talk and pray for healing. There were in that room, rabbis, Sikhs, various kinds of Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Muslims – and at the outset, it was Rabbi Ron Symons of the JCC who said we were there to redefine the concept of neighbor from a geographical description to a moral absolute. And Pittsburgh? We find ourselves in the spotlight.

As a city and a region we are being asked, it seems, to model a way forward in a divided, anxious, angry, grief-stricken country, full of blame, empty of answers – a way toward the embrace of every human being not only as a person of full and equal dignity, but as God’s own gift to the world – announcing a sort of proto-Gospel, that everyone is precious in God’s sight, joined to us through the bonds of our common humanity, essential to our own lives, the neighbor without whom we ourselves could not exist. Sort of, not only the person on the right, as always taught, but also the person on the left. That is the vision we are called to proclaim together, boldly, to counter every voice of violence or despair, and God knows there have been many over the last several months. I’m not only thinking of Tree of Life, I’m thinking of the full weight of abuse scandals in the Church revealed in August; innocent lives taken by violent hands at Thousand Oaks, California; but also in countless neighborhoods most of us don’t even read about, where this kind of loss has been going on, un-trumpeted, for years: Hazelwood, Wilkinsburg, [you] name them... (*those listening began to call out various locations*). Homewood. Keep going. Rankin. Braddock. East Pittsburgh. McKeesport. Carrick. Northside. Duquesne. Allentown. The list goes on and on.

On top of that there was, any way you look at it, a – shall we say, at least “painful” – Supreme Court confirmation, no matter which side of politics you stand on; and midterm elections that show our country even more divided than we might have thought. And even as, in the wake of Tree of Life, we weep together and, I trust, now heal together and struggle together to build some basic social frameworks of peace, unity and reconciliation, we as Church cannot forget God’s answer to the darkness around us, which is always life in Christ. And that is the life we have tried to express in these simple terms: Love. Teach. Heal. Love God, neighbor, and enemy. Teach God with us, God for us, God in us. Heal the person, the Church, and the world. I know that’s a tall order, only possible through God’s power working in us, but St. Paul says, that is able to accomplish more than we can ask or imagine.

So now, with all these expectations and hopes, we are asked to take stock, and consider our common work anew – it feels like a pivot point – to ensure that it, our common work, and we, are fit for this time, that we can proclaim to our country and to the world God’s hope, love and life that are stronger than death, and walk with joy and confidence the road that is set before us, inviting others, and coming alongside them as they walk it as well. It’s following the path of the risen Lord who one morning shortly after Easter, as you recall in John’s Gospel, met his children on a beach, forgave their sin, fed them breakfast, and then said, “Follow me.” So, now, we choose to follow Him once again, and ask, “What will we look like as we follow?” in Reverend Bonwell’s words. How might we be changed by the neighbor we meet? What must we take on, or let go of, or re-imagine, as Christ leads us into relationship with those we do not yet know? Let me offer us a few beginnings, and here I’ll use Raymond’s three categories of gathering in love, up-building one another through teaching, and our being sent into the world for the purpose of healing, both ours and the healing of others.

First, there is no better time than now to look together at our future as a diocese. We are ten years past the split – this is the tenth anniversary, a little earlier, actually, in the fall – there has been a lot of healing and there are signs of new growth. Back in the spring, the Standing Committee and I outlined some areas we would like to see get some special attention as we meet the challenges of the coming years. We’re calling it a Mutual Ministry Review for the whole diocese, but I suspect there are a number of things you could call it. We chose Judy Stark, an experienced consultant who is used to helping dioceses with this

sort of thing, and asked her help to achieve three goals. First, out of the Standing Committee's conversation, what came was that we want to continue to build trust and collaboration among our parishes and other ministries. We wanted this to help us make common mission a reality. And we've heard a lot of that today, and the communication that is necessary in order simply to keep up with each other in terms of the basic facts of our lives, that we could join one another in mission. Second we want to clarify the role of the bishop and staff in moving this mission forward. We are not the Diocese of Los Angeles. Our staff is relatively small, and we want to make sure we are helping in the best way we can. And finally, we want to streamline the size and functions of the various governing bodies – particularly Council, Standing Committee and Trustees – so they can more efficiently support the mission of our diocese, which is now roughly half the size we were a decade ago. One time I woke up in the middle of the night and had an image, from a dream, of the structure of the diocese as the bridge of the USS Enterprise sitting on a tugboat (*laughter*). We need to do something. As we laid these out, Judy asked us to consider these goals within the scope of a larger question, namely what do we imagine God wants this diocese to look like in five, ten, or fifteen years, and how can we get there?

We assembled a working group of ten, including representatives of the governing bodies I mentioned, along with two of my staff, and met with Judy on September 29th. We talked and prayed and thought and complained and dreamed and threw masses of words onto reams of newsprint, it seemed to me, and came out with what I think was a pretty good beginning, but we'll see, [with] far more questions than answers. And our next step came into view, particularly, to gather the clergy of the diocese in convocation on the 28th of this month, to get their input and buy-in.

It's hard to summarize the work we did, but one moment stands out in my mind. Also, we do have a certain baseline of confidentiality, so I'm not going to report anything that anybody specifically said, but Judy asked us at one point in the day to break into small groups and "invent a diocese." So we did! There were three groups and this is what came out of ours. (*An image on a screen shows what the bishop's group wrote on newsprint that day.*) It was, the diocese as a school for love and faith, hope and healing. Friends, this was the 29th of September, well before any of the events I've just mentioned. This means all the governance bodies would function as teachers, and the bishop – well, the bishop would be – who else but Fred Rogers?

So, excuse me. (*The bishop removed his clerical collar to reveal he was wearing a shirt and necktie. He then began put to on a cardigan sweater, reminiscent of how Fred Rogers began his television shows. Someone quipped, "You know, Mister Rogers sang as he did that," to which the bishop responded by leading those assembled in singing, "It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood..." Upon finishing this wardrobe change, the bishop zipped up the sweater and people applauded.*)

So, if you look at this, moving on, the ministers – all of us, lay and ordained, remember – even those called to be teachers, are students as well. The world is our classroom. Our library, Scripture and tradition, though we will read and learn from everything we can, but that's the core of it. And the local church, as it says on the newsprint, is a lot. Various things came to mind: it's a community center, a maker of space, a summer camp, a ropes course, a place of prophecy and recovery, and I would say [it's] an enormous kitchen table. And above all, it is the Eucharistic heart of its neighborhood, the place of common prayer, of deeper life in Christ, which, I admit, I am now adding to that newsprint. The thing that fascinated me is that two other groups had different but compatible takes on what we could be, and all of this points in the same direction – namely it is important to start with a bold vision of how the Good News, as we know and proclaim it, is the medicine the world needs at this particular moment in history. But we have to implement that vision or it is nothing but words. And that does means focusing on things like governance, ministerial functions, administration, and concrete means for collaboration among parishes. We will continue to work with Judy through the winter and spring, and the hope is, as we do so, we will be engaging all of you, all our communities, in this conversation, with a view to completing the

process along with specific recommendations by Pentecost. So please, do keep that in your prayers. And also keep in your prayers the Bishop's Discretionary Fund, which is paying for this.

Second, is the question of teaching, up-building one another in love, as Raymond put it. You know we are launching the "Love. Teach. Heal. Academy," the point of that is to give a common understanding of Episcopal faith and practice for folks from various parishes across the diocese so you can learn together and be equipped for leadership in your congregations and neighborhoods. I know that many of you have very good adult education programs in your churches and this is not intended to replace those, but rather to enrich them. You see the great advantage here – the great advantage of being a diocese – is that we learn together by making relationships across parish boundaries, increasing (hopefully) trust and collaboration in the process. [The Reverend] Canon Natalie Hall, as many of you know, has been out on maternity leave for several weeks – Welcome, Evangeline! In view of which, we have seen the original launch date was a little ambitious, so we want to get the word out that we're still accepting registrations. We want to make sure everyone who wishes to be a part of the first cohort can do so; and we will take the time over the next few weeks to make sure everyone is connected with my office and with each other, without adding into their lives anything more than you might have to schedule in during the holidays. We're not going to do that to you. And I think at this stage, everybody who has actually submitted a registration or expressed an interest has received at least one contact back from us. We will keep going in that direction.

Along with this, the design of the Anglican track at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary is nearing completion. It has been a longer process than I thought it was going to be, but it turns out, actually, that was good, since Pittsburgh Theological Seminary went through a comprehensive revision of its curriculum. [The Reverend] Canon [Cathy] Brall, the first one in how many years? Twenty-five? Something like that. The first in twenty-five years. So, we wanted to make sure that the track is compatible, and that our design is compatible, with the emerging curriculum. I expect that will be ready to go as well in 2019, and that several of you have offered help in consulting and even teaching in the program, which is help I look forward to with gratitude, since we also intend this to incorporate an educational formation element across orders of ministry. So, lay leadership, diaconal candidates, and candidates for the priesthood can all learn together in the same context, rather than being segregated according to order.

Third, is the healing piece, which is nothing less than the journey of the Gospel into the world. I just want to take a little moment to point out some of the signs. You saw in [today's] Eucharist the multiple signs of actual and emerging ministries that your sisters and brothers are presently engaged in. There is a list that came with your leaflets. I would say it's pretty impressive. Isn't it? It's engaging. It's beautiful. Some of these are corporal works of mercy, as we used to call them in the old days, which is taking care of people's fundamental bodily needs for health and life. Some are intentionally evangelistic, bringing people through Word and discipleship into personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Others are somewhere in between, modeling the love of Christ and pointing to Him, not to ourselves, as the source of power and life.

Here are a few that are actually being supported by the budget of the diocese. First is Dan Isadore's ministry, the chaplaincy at the University of Pittsburgh and at Chatham. He's on two campuses now and building a community of Church in both places. Earlier this year, and you'll see a slide of that in a second, I celebrated the Easter Vigil at Chatham – the first time that has ever been done, I think, by an Episcopal bishop. And that was a lot of fun. Dan and [and wife] Hallie also convene something called Zoe, or House of Life, in their home more than a couple times a month now, I believe, which begins with a simple table liturgy, then people break into small groups and discuss the readings. There's a brief homily. They, then, process the Word as they have received it and those groups report back out, so that individuals stand up and without actually being told they're giving a homily, that's actually kind of what

happens. They speak the Word as they hear it. There's prayer and then the Peace, and everybody gets down to the business of eating everything in sight. These [participants] are twenty-somethings, people in their young twenties, and they're building quite a community. The last time I was there, I think they had 35 in attendance, and there are more on the way.

You heard a little about Natalie Hall's community of Mary Magdalene, which is meeting in the afternoons at St. Stephen's, Wilkinsburg, resuming [the First Sunday of] Advent. One of the things that is so beautiful about that is that the parish didn't say, "How can we get these folks to come to the morning service?" Instead, what they said was, "This is beautiful. Let's see what we can do to get behind it." And that ministry of servanthood is very touching and effective, as we see.

Brandon Mozingo is the deacon-in-charge at St. Stephen's, McKeesport. That congregation is going through a remarkable reassessment of its life and its engagement with the community. That has been going on for a while now, since the night, I remember, we were sitting in a Mon Valley Mission meeting in the basement of St. Stephen's with about 20 people, and 20 brothers and sisters from Bethlehem Baptist next door came down to join us, because they said they were in Bible study and they saw our lights on and decided that God wanted them to study with us, together. And since then, the life of the two communities has been engaged with a joint healing service back and forth, and lots of good conversation and discernment as to the next direction for our work in McKeesport and in the Mon Valley.

The Reverend Eric McIntosh continues as priest-in-charge in Penn Hills, which is a rooted congregation in that neighborhood, and continues to be a pastor in person not only to those who gather on Sunday, but also within the neighborhood that is around that church.

The Reverend Torrey Johnson, who could not be here today, is the new priest-in-charge, an ELCA pastor, at Holy Cross, Homewood. Through an innovative ministry, which he is calling the Episcopal-Lutheran Alliance, which is receiving significant funding from the Bishop's Discretionary Fund, he has opened the doors of that church in all kinds of magnificent ways, welcoming youth in, in summer and now afterschool programs that are burgeoning and really raising the profile of Holy Cross, once again, as a center for healing in that community.

And finally, [the Reverend] Canon Jay Geisler is embarking on a ministry in recovery, to recovery communities, that will include the establishment of three-quarter way houses under his supervision. He's also assisting churches as they extend their invitation and welcome to addicts and those in need in their communities. And we have a proposal before the Widow's Corporation that, if approved, would also subsidize part of his salary, that portion which is being paid for by the diocesan budget. It would subsidize one-half of that, and he will wind up – I'm amazed at this – as the Recovery Missioner for the five dioceses of Pennsylvania. So, pray for this. They are very excited at the possibility of this working.

Now, there are plenty of other moments, and you have submitted some of them. We're just going to go through them here, real quickly, and if this is your parish, shout out what this is. (*Images of ministries from around the diocese began to appear on a screen. The bishop and those present interactively described the photos.*)

"*Laundry Love!*" Laundry Love, at St. Peter's, Blairsville. My favorite story is when you were in there and talking with someone who was washing their clothes, and you got to know them. At some point, she asked, could her children be baptized? And you said yes. And she said, "Could we do it here? Or do we have to go to church?" Which sounded to me like the Ethiopian saying to Philip, "Here is water! What is wrong with me being baptized here?" Which, maybe the answer is, "Will you fit in the tub?" No, don't get in the machine, please (*laughter*).

Calvary, East Liberty – that is the nursery school, and the bazaar for that community. Again, one of the places where the doors of the church are open to the neighbor.

Atonement, Carnegie – *“That’s the hot dog lunch for the Boys and Girls Club next door in the summertime.”* And on the left is the Christmas Day Open House. How many people do you get for that who come in? *“We serve about 200, about 100 in the church and 100 take-outs to people who can’t make it to the church.”*

St. Michael’s of the Valley in Ligonier – you see there, the movie night, in the lower right corner. It draws kids from all across the neighborhood for entertainment on summer evenings. And the fair, on the upper left hand corner. In the middle, one of the most time-honored outreach efforts of Anglican clergy, the blessing of the hounds! And that is James Simons doing exactly that.

St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon – The Vigil, which you see [The Reverend] Noah Evans blessing the new fire, that same light... *“The same wood used for the Mt. Lebanon Vigil on Washington Road out front, was taken to Chatham University for your Vigil.”* And in the middle, that’s a gathering of your kids here as they were in Washington, DC, to participate in... *“the March for Our Lives after the Parkland shooting.”*

St. Thomas, Northern Cambria – the blessing of a hound of another sort, and the sponsors. And on the right there, that’s another outreach piece.

Christ Church, North Hills – that is... *“Run for Thy Neighbor.”* It even fits in our theme! It’s a major fund-raiser... *“It benefits Hearth, which is a women’s and children’s shelter.”* And, on the right... *“The Mustard Seed project in Rwanda.”*

St. Thomas, Oakmont – *“We went on a mission trip with Episcopal Strong and brought hope to the communities down there.”* And this is in Texas? *“This is in hot Texas, after Hurricane Harvey.”*

St. David’s, Peters Township – You see the Farmers Market at the top, and... *“the SHIM [South Hills Interfaith Movement] garden.”*

St. Stephen’s, Wilkesburg – much of its outreach to the community, [through] NYOP, the Neighborhood Youth Outreach Program.

Trinity Cathedral, Pittsburgh – there are three things. First of all, their food pantry, which is actually a cooperative effort drawing in volunteers from across this diocese. The two other elements are ways in which we made an impact in the community: first, the Blessing of the Bells, as they were revved up again – they all work – everything is gorgeous and we’re adding an extra one, that we found in the basement, into that tower; and on the left, the report on the local news from the commemoration of 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., at which Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, Bishop of the United Methodist Conference in western Pennsylvania, was the preacher, and where Mayor Bill Peduto also participated.

Social Justice and Outreach – and this is... *“The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.”*

I think that is the last of the slides that we have, but you have seen as you go through your conversation, more and more, that there are events and activities and prayer and heart and movement, that is not only taking the Gospel into the world, but that when you go into the world you start meeting people in a way that shows Christ was already there. This has huge impact, and I’m just going to point to one specifically. On Monday, we buried Marilyn Dilg, Art’s wife of 57 years. And, Arthur, a beloved priest in this diocese. She struggled bravely for several weeks, and just finally asked that she be allowed to go to her

Lord. And so, she had the life support withdrawn and she departed within a few hours. Her funeral was absolutely packed. I was so proud of the clergy and people of this diocese who were all there, and who had so many years of knowing her. But, I think, even though I knew her for not anything like that, my experience was the same. I said to her at one point, as my wife and I were talking to her, that I never quite met anybody who loved so radiantly, so completely, and with such great effect across so many lives by just being Marilyn. I said, "I am convinced, Marilyn, that carpets of roses spring up behind you as you walk." And she smiled at me and said, "Oh, I know that's not true!" (*laughter*) Then I pointed out to the congregation in my [funeral] sermon, "But it is true! Because, those roses were in all of your lives or you would not be here."

And that is the point of this entire day, that as you preach the Gospel, you have no idea where the seed of the Gospel is going to grow and flourish. That is all God's business. But at the same time, it is, for sure, that He has called you to scatter those flowers with the trust that He will nurture and grow them.

I told [Marilyn] once that I want to be like her when I grow up, by which I mean I want more than anything to have that love embodied in me, by the grace of God, to dwell in that love all the time, the love of Jesus, even in the presence of my enemies, or those I once thought to be my enemies. I think you aspire to the same, or you wouldn't be here. In the end, my friends, what we're learning is that "Love. Teach. Heal." is not an instruction book, not a slogan, but a way of life, continually answering the question, "Who is my neighbor?" [and] proclaiming the love of God in Christ who has made us His own. And when we finally know that – in some way we already know that, but in a way He hopes we know it better – then anywhere we are sent will be home, and anyone we meet will be neighbor, and the prayer we hold in our hearts will be the prayer of the Holy Spirit, declaring that we are truly children of God.

In Jesus's name. *Amen*. Thank you.