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December 14, 2022

Bishop Ketlen's 2022 Convention Address



Remarks to Convention delivered by the Right Reverend Ketlen A. Solak, D.Min., to the 157th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh on Saturday, November 19, 2022

A printable version of the Bishop's address is [available here](#).



Election Results: 2022 Diocesan Convention

Standing Committee

Clergy: The Rev. Laura Di Panfilo, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Lay: Wesley Rohrer, St. Andrew's, Highland Park

Board of Trustees

Sheila Stagnitta, St. Andrew's, Highland Park

Constitution & Canons

Clergy: The Rev. Dn. Carter Hawley, unassigned

Lay: Charles C. Bell, St. Matthew's, Homestead

Regional Disciplinary Board

Joseph M. Macklin II, Trinity Cathedral, Pittsburgh

Commission on Ministry

Patricia B. Dunkis, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Cathedral Chapter

Clergy: The Rev. Kris Opat, St. David's, Peters Twp.

Lay: Shahnaz Alam-Denlinger, St. Thomas, Oakmont

Deputies to 2024 General Convention

Clergy Deputies

1. The Rev. Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan, Trinity Cathedral, Pittsburgh
2. The Rev. Eric McIntosh, St. James, Penn Hills
3. The Rev. Neil Raman, Calvary, East Liberty
4. The Rev. Jeff Murph, St. Thomas, Oakmont

Clergy Alternate Deputies

- A1. The Rev. Brandon Cooper, Christ Church, North Hills
- A2. The Rev. Noah Evans, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon
- A3. The Rev. Kris Opat, St. David's, Peters Twp.
- A4. The Rev. Charles Fischer, St. Paul's Mt. Lebanon

Lay Deputies

1. Jon Delano, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon
2. Florence Atwood, Calvary, East Liberty
3. Steve Stagnitta, St. Andrew's, Highland Park
4. Jamie McMahon, Calvary, East Liberty

Lay Alternate Deputies

- A1. Lisa Brown, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon
- A2. Michael Braxton, Calvary, East Liberty
- A3. Joan Gundersen, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill

Elected by District

District 1

Chair: Maximillion Elliott, Emmanuel, North Side

Vice Chair: Bruce Quayle, Christ Church, North Hills

District 2

Chair: The Rev. Dn. Carter Hawley, Unassigned

Vice Chair: Don Block, St. Stephen's, Wilkinsburg

Diocesan Council: Bryan Webb, Redeemer, Squirrel Hill

District 3

Chair: Lisa Brown, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

Vice Chair: Rev. Terry Hunt, All Soul's, North Versailles

Board of Trustees: Eric Linn, St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon

District 4

Chair: The Rev. Biff Carpenter, St. Francis, Somerset

Vice Chair: Sue Lear, St. Francis, Somerset



A Note of Appreciation from Bishop Ketlen

I am grateful that my first Annual Diocesan Convention with you took place successfully a month ago.

I am particularly thankful to Ms. Florence Atwood, who, in her capacity as Convention Manager, went above and beyond the call of duty to organize Convention this year. Florence's organizational gifts shone brightly as she served as Vice-Chair of the Transition Committee, and she generously shared her gifts with us once more in the role of Convention Manager.

Please join me in offering our profuse and deepest thanks to Florence, and in the note that she has written below, she offers our gratitude to all who were involved.



A Note of Thanks to All Involved with Convention

It was a cold but wonderful weekend as we gathered both online and in person to give thanks for our abundance and do the work of the diocese while celebrating our ministry together. Many people representing more than a dozen parishes worked long hours beginning in April to make this first post-Covid convention happen. They deserve our heartfelt appreciation for all their efforts.

Thanks to those who participated in our programs and ministry fair, sharing information and experience with all who attended:

- Christ Church, North Hills: The Mustard Seed Project, Afghan Resettlement Project and Run for Thy Neighbor
- St. Peter's, Blairsville: Laundry Love Ministry
- Jeremiah's Place
- Daughters of the King and Anglican Fellowship of Prayer
- Stevenson School for Ministry
- Shepherd Wellness Community
- The Social Justice and Outreach Committee
- Christian Associates of Southwestern PA
- Committee on Race and Reconciliation/Beloved Community Initiative
- University Chaplaincy Program
- Calvary Bookstore
- St. Mark's, Johnstown: Portable Labyrinth
- Memorial to the Lost
- CeaseFire PA
- The Rev. Erin Morey for coordinating the Ministry Fair displays
- Ms. Lisa Brown, program coordinator, presenter and creator of the beautiful diocesan prayer banner

Thanks to all who served to make our Friday worship, Saturday hymn sing, and Eucharist a deep expression of our spiritual life together:

- The Rev. Julie Smith and Maximillion Elliott, worship coordinators

- The Rev. Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan
- Mr. Michael Salmon and Mr. Mitch Stecker, organists
- Our ushers, acolytes, lectors, lay Eucharistic ministers, deacons, and assisting priest

Thanks to all who provided hospitality and registration services to make our convention run smoothly and to provide a festive dinner and celebratory atmosphere:

- Ms. Elizabeth Gassler and Mr. Andy Muhl, registration coordinators
- Ms. Lee Hart and Ms. Maximillion Elliot, hospitality coordinators

Thanks to those who served in ways seen and unseen to provide the structure and technology required to run our business meeting and pre-convention gatherings:

- The Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra, pre-convention gathering coordinator
- Mr. Jon Delano, pre-convention gathering moderator
- Ms. Elaine Zevkovich, Diocesan Treasurer for her presentations
- Our convention business meeting coordinators Mr. Andy Muhl, the Rev. Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan, the Rev. Canon Kim Karashin, Ms. Kathy Baird, and the Rev. Canon Jim Shoucair.
- Mr. Eric O'Brien, technology assistant
- The Very Rev. Aidan Smith, Dean of Trinity Cathedral and the entire Cathedral staff
- Our helpline volunteers, Mr. Eric O'Brien and Ms. Annie Ensminger

Thanks to our hosts at Trinity Cathedral and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary for their hospitality and assistance to provide comfortable facilities for our convention.

And finally, on behalf of myself and Bishop Ketlen, thank you to the clergy, lay deputies and all who attended this convention. We hope you enjoyed seeing one another, catching up, and most of all celebrating the abundance we are blessed with here in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

— Florence Atwood, Convention Manager



2022-23 Bishop Visitation Schedule and Cycle of Prayer Now Available

Bishop Ketlen's 2022-23 visitation schedule through the end of June 2023, is now available for download and printing by [clicking here](#).

The Diocesan Cycle of Prayer for December 2022 through the end of June 2023 is [available here](#).

These documents, along with many others, are available on the Diocesan website under the [Resources tab](#).



EMPTY CHAIRS:

10 Years After Sandy Hook,
15,000 Pennsylvanian lives
have been taken by gun violence.

JOIN US TO HONOR THEM.
December 15th | 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Bidwell Presbyterian Church
1025 Liverpool Street | Pittsburgh PA 15233





Advent Quiet Day at St. Mark's, Johnstown

Advent Quiet Day 2022 will be held in-person and via Zoom on Saturday, December 17, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at [St. Mark's Episcopal Church](#), 335 Locust Street, Johnstown, PA 15905



A Quiet Day is a period of respite when time is set aside to be quiet, spend some time with God and refresh your spirit for the days ahead. Quiet Days frequently are held during Advent and Lent. Though the structure of the event remains the same from year to year, the theme differs for each event. The theme of our 2022 Advent Quiet Day is "The Hymns of Advent."

The event consists of alternating periods of meditation and quiet time followed by final prayers and a vegetarian lunch. During quiet time, there are activities set up in the parish hall for relaxation and books available for learning, or you may find a quiet spot in the church or offices to read and/or meditate. Participants are asked not to talk until after the final prayers. If you are at home, please consider the quiet times as sabbath time and be as quiet as possible.

If you wish to participate via Zoom, please contact the Rev. Nancy Threadgill at revnancy-stmarks@atlanticbbn.net or (814) 535-6797 in advance of the event to obtain login information.



Caption Contest

St. Nick visited Christ Church, North Hills, on December 6, to help celebrate the Feast of St. Nicholas. While he was there checking his naughty and nice lists, he was spotted with the Rev. Brandon Cooper and the Rev. Canon Jim Shoucair.



Please help us write an appropriate caption for this photo. Post your caption in the comments on the diocesan Facebook page.



Blue Christmas Service

A Blue Christmas service will be held Wednesday, December 21 at 6 p.m. via Zoom and in-person at [St. Mark's Episcopal Church](#), 335 Locust Street, Johnstown, PA 15905.

Blue Christmas is held on the longest night of the year. This liturgy is a quiet, meditative service especially for those for whom the Christmas season is a profoundly sad and lonely time, a reminder of loss and brokenness. The death or impending death of a loved one, loss of health or employment, family crises, separation or divorce, and depression are some of the many reasons that Christmas can be painful and isolating. Our lighting of candles during the service offers an opportunity for remembrance, reflection, prayer and spiritual healing. One can grieve knowing they are not alone and be comforted and strengthened by the love of Christ and those present. A light shines in the darkness. Come for yourself, for someone you love or for those who suffer around the world.

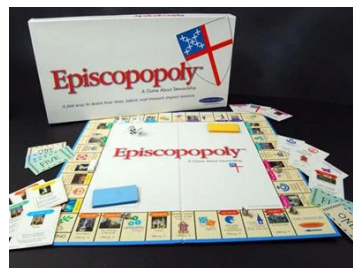


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A Last Minute Gift Idea

Taking a religious twist on Monopoly, which remains the most popular board game played by families at Christmas, is **Episcopopoly**.



Borrowing from Monopoly's theme, players move around the board with game pieces which include a bishop's hat, a chalice and a Bible. Properties are Episcopalian churches from across the country. A church offering is required for any player landing on a property if they don't own, and if a cathedral is erected on a property, more offerings are required. The game is won when a player builds a cathedral with the highest possible steeple.

Episcopopoly is available at the [Calvary Bookstore](#) for \$25! Enjoy with family and friends or give as a fun gift.

The Bookstore is open on Sunday from 8:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Calvary Church, 315 Shady Ave., Pittsburgh PA, 15206. During the week, contact the Bookstore at 412-661-0120 ext. 133 (please leave a message) or by email at bookstore@calvarypgh.org. We can arrange for contactless pick-up of your items. A variety of payment methods are accepted.



Around the Diocese



Bishop Ketlen's Visitation Schedule:

December 18: Nativity, Crafton

December 24: Trinity Cathedral (Christmas Eve)

January 8: St. James, Penn Hills

January 15: Redeemer, Squirrel Hill

Parish leadership is reminded to complete and submit [this form](#) at least two weeks in advance of their visitation. Bishop Ketlen's visitation schedule is [available here](#).

To schedule time with Bishop Ketlen, contact her virtual assistant, Crystal Goforth, at 412-721-0853, ext. 256, or via email at assistant@episcopalpgh.org.



Parting Shots

The Rev. Erin Morey was ordained to the Sacred Order of Priests by Bishop Ketlen on Saturday, December 10, at St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon.



The good news continues in the South Hills. The McMurray-based *Almanac* and Washington-based *Observer-Reporter* published reports about St. Thomas', Canonsburg, and St. David's, Peters Twp., medical debt relief campaign.

Local Episcopal churches help eliminate \$1.68M in medical debt

By JON ANDREASSI
Staff writer
jonandressi@observer-reporter.com

Two Episcopal parishes in Washington County teamed up to help eliminate \$1.68 million in medical debt in western Pennsylvania and beyond.

Both St. David's Episcopal Church in Peters Township and St. Thomas in Canonsburg worked through the nonprofit RIP Medical Debt. The organization's website allows for groups to set up a GoFundMe-style campaign for their region.

According to the Rev. Canon Cathy Brall, priest in charge at St. Thomas, RIP Medical Debt does a \$250 match for every dollar donated, more than the initial \$100 Brall believed they would match.

"We originally set our goal to raise \$5,000. That would allow us to basically relieve about \$200,000 worth of medical debt," Brall said. The churches ultimately raised \$6,704.75.

The way RIP Medical Debt is able to relieve debt is by pur-



COURTESY OF ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Parishioners look at results of their campaign at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Canonsburg last month.

chasing the debt in bundles for a cheaper price, according to its website. People will then receive letters in the mail informing them that their debt has been erased.

Those who benefited from St. Thomas' and St. David's efforts started receiving letters informing them in mid-October.

This means groups will know where the money went and how much, but the bene-

went to Allegheny County, where more than \$290,000 in debt was taken care of for 257 people.

"While we may have some control over our health, most emergencies that lead to medical debt are unexpected and largely unavoidable. Since health insurance is typically tied to a job, anyone unemployed is at high risk. Anyone in a difficult financial situation is already struggling, so adding thousands of dollars of debt just makes things untenable. As Christians we are called to support and care for the poor and those in need," said the Rev. Kris Opat, priest in charge for St. David's, in a press release.

Brall said they were blessed the churches were able to help so many people, and hopes others are inspired by their efforts.

"We have no idea who these individuals are in the debt portfolio. So for us as churches, it just sort of seems like a gospel thing," Brall said.

"The gospel is about spreading God's grace and God's love to everybody. Even people that you don't personally know."

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Easing the burden

Local Episcopal churches help eliminate \$1.68 million in medical debt

By Jon Andressi

Staff writer
jonandressi@observer-reporter.com

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Has your parish been featured in the news?
Please let us know via email at info@episcopalpgh.org