

BISHOP

Report to Diocesan Convention 2023

The theme of our November 2022 Diocesan Convention, *Giving Thanks for our Abundance*, helped us focus on offering deep gratitude to God for the profuse grace shown to us as a diocese. The dedicated service of our 2022 Convention Manager, Florence Atwood, and the team of volunteers who contributed to the success of our gathering was a blessing for which we are grateful. During worship, I emphasized in my sermon how the most appropriate way to express our gratitude to God, the One and Undivided Trinity, is to break open the alabaster jars of our hearts and offer the sweet and costly perfume of extravagant devotion to Jesus Christ. The continuous act of giving thanks to God is one of the hallmarks of the Christian life. I continue to be thankful to God for all the many gifts we have received, and during this coming year I look forward to nurturing our joy in God and in each other.

These are some of the highlights of this past year:

- Members of diocesan staff have continued to faithfully serve the diocese with utmost dedication. A few changes have also taken place, which are noted in parentheses. Kudos to: Shanaz Alam-Denlinger, the Rev. Canon Dr. Catherine “Cathy” Brall (concluded July, 2023), Rich Creehan, Crystal Goforth (concluded July, 2023), the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall (concluded June, 2023), Alisa Huston (started June 2023), the Rev. Dan Isadore, the Rev. Canon Kim Karashin, the Rev. Canon Eric McIntosh, Jo Ann McLaughlin-Klemencic (concluded May, 2023), Andy Muhl (New Role as Communications Director, July 2023), Andrea Rath (started August, 2023), Marlene Rihn (new title of Senior Financial Administrator, May 1, 2023), and Elaine Zevkovich.
- We now have a more robust Communications Team (Andy Muhl, Rich Crehan, Alisa Houston).
- The Chancellor of the Diocese, Andy Roman, has continued to faithfully counsel us.
- The chairs and all of the members of our committees have done their share, as you can see in their various reports.
- The active and retired clergy blessed us by their continued dedication to ministry.
- We supported many of our parishes with needed grants.
- We offered support to several of our parish Vestries during clergy transitions.
- We clarified our process of discernment for those considering a call to ministry and updated the relevant manual, and we supported several individuals engaged in the process of discernment toward ordained ministry.
- We began to reestablish a presence on university campuses for more consistent outreach to students.

- We expanded the reach of our social justice ministry, especially in regards to working toward an end to gun violence. The Beloved Community Initiative expanded its circle of Sacred Ground groups, and several individuals participated in anti-racism trainings.
- We explored the potential of establishing a new Episcopal community.
- We explored the potential of participating in the Stevenson School for Ministry new Lay Program for Worship and Preaching.
- Several individuals participated in the Love, Teach, Heal Academy (LTH) program, which concluded in June.
- We deepened our ecumenical and interfaith relationships. I started to serve my first term as a member of the Executive Committee of Christian Associates of Southwestern Pennsylvania (CASP).
- I continued engagement in the Councils of the Church through the gatherings of the House of Bishops. We spent some time reflecting on the vocation of bishops at this time when so much seems uncertain, and I participated in the monthly gatherings of the Executive Council for Province III.
- My 30 parish visitations included 30 confirmations, 30 receptions, and 4 baptisms. My other episcopal duties included:
 - Ordinations: 2 deacons;1 priest
 - Clergy funerals: 2
 - Chrism Mass: 1
 - De-consecration of Church building: 1
- My annual visit at Sheldon Calvary Camp involved worshipping with and blessing a great group of young counselors.
- I am happy to say that I am now a member of the senior class in the College for Bishops, and I am looking forward to “graduating” next year.

Glory and praise be to God for the many good things that are happening among us in our diocese.

Faithfully,
 The Rt. Rev. Ketlen A. Solak, D.Min
 Bishop Diocesan