

RECORD OF THE 2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Minutes of the 159th Annual Convention (Unapproved)

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Episcopal Church in the United States November 9 A.D. 2024

The 159th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of The Episcopal Church in the United States (the “Diocese”) was hosted by Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on Saturday, November 9th, 2024.

Registration of Convention Deputies began at 8:00 am in order for the necessary certifications to be completed.

The Convention commenced at 9:00am. The Right Rev. Dr. Ketlen A. Solak, Bishop of the Diocese, called the Convention to order, and after her opening prayer, the Bishop asked the Very Rev. Aidan Smith, Dean of Trinity Cathedral, to offer a general welcome. Following his welcome, the Convention continued with a service of Holy Eucharist. The Bishop noted that the day’s offering would be given in support of Episcopal Relief and Development’s Hurricane Fund.

At the conclusion of the liturgy, The Bishop called on Ms. Madison Canales to relay the logistical notes and information necessary for the conduct of the Convention.

At the conclusion of Ms. Canales’ presentation, the Bishop called on Mr. Bryan Webb, the Judge of Assessments, and asked him to give his report. He reported that all parishes other than Holy Cross, Homewood were in compliance with canonical requirements.

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Betti Rottschaefer, the Judge of Audits, who reported that all parishes, were in compliance with the canonical requirement on audits for the year.

The Bishop called on the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair to certify the roll of clergy entitled to seats as well as the lay deputies authorized to represent parishes entitled to representation at Convention. Canon Shoucair dispensed with a formal roll call and accordingly certified the roll.

The Bishop then called on the Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre, who on behalf of Diocesan Council, nominated the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair as Secretary to Convention to serve until the next annual Diocesan Convention. There being no other nominations, Canon Shoucair was elected unanimously as Secretary.

The Bishop then appointed the following persons:

Ms. Heather Hurst as Parliamentarian for the Convention.

Mr. Jon Delano as Judge of Elections.

Mr. Andy Roman, Mr. Andy Muhl and the Rev. Canon Kimberly Karashin to serve on the Committee of Claims of Lay Deputies to Seats.

Ms. Madison Canales as Convention manager.

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

The Secretary reported that there were eighty-three (83) lay deputies present whose credentials had been received before the Convention. He also reported that there were thirty-five (35) clergy present who duly affirmed that they were of regular standing and canonically and physically present in the diocese for the past three months. This brought the total deputies present to one hundred sixteen (118), which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business. The Bishop called for the approval of the minutes of the 158th Annual Convention of the Diocese as found in the 2024 Preconvention Journal, which was then duly moved, seconded and approved by unanimous vote.

The Bishop then called on the Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre, Vice-President of Diocesan Council who moved the adoption of the Standard Rules of Order and printed agenda. The Resolution, moved and seconded, was passed unanimously.

The Bishop then announced that the Convention would break for breakfast and district meetings. The Bishop asked Mr. Jon Delano to provide the necessary information for the conduct of business at district meetings.

The Convention reconvened at 11:15am at which time the Bishop asked Mr. Jon Delano to report on the results of the district elections, which he did as follows:

District 1

Chair: The Rev. Carter Hawley; Vice-Chair: Ms. Nicole Butler

District 2

Chair: Mr. Don Block; Vice-Chair: The Rev. Cameron Soulis; Board of Trustees: Mr. Ralph Egerman

District 3

Chair: Mr. Jon Delano; Vice-Chair: Ms. Denise Peden

District 4

Chair: Ms. Crystal Stein; Vice-Chair: The Rev. Cynthia Gainer; Board of Trustees: Mr. Daniel Sirianni.

The Bishop then called upon the Rev. Dr. Julie Smith, chair of the Diocesan Nominating Committee, who presented the slate of nominees as set forth in the Preconvention Journal, section D, and moved that the nominations be closed. The resolution passed unanimously.

The Judge of Elections then invoked the standard rules of order B-2, and moved that the Secretary cast a unanimous vote of Convention for the listed nominees in all uncontested open positions as follows: **Standing Committee** (1 lay); **Constitution and Canons** (1 clergy, 1 lay); **Cathedral Chapter** (1 clergy, 1 lay) ; **Board of trustees** (2 lay); **Growth fund** (1 position lay or clergy). The resolution passed unanimously. The Judge of Elections then directed the Secretary to let the minutes reflect the results of the uncontested elections as follows:

Standing Committee: Mr. Anthony Crisafio.

Cathedral Chapter: The Rev Elizabeth Locher; Mr. Anthony Turo

Constitution and Canons: The Rev. Dn. Jack Brownfield; Ms. Madison Canales

Board of Trustees: Mr. Nicholas Byrd; Mr. Robert Lucas

Growth Fund: The Rev. Dn. Guy Brown

The Judge of Elections then instructed the Convention on the manner of casting votes for the two (2) contested elections, namely the clergy position on Standing Committee and the Commission on Ministry.

The Bishop then called upon the Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre to present a resolution from the Social Justice Committee as set forth in the Preconvention Journal. After debate, as well as procedural motions and a proposed amendment to the resolution, the Convention voted to table the resolution in its entirety and return it to committee for further consideration.

The Convention then went into a fifteen-minute recess.

Following the recess, the Bishop then called upon Mr. Jon Delano to report on the results of the contested elections, which he did as follows:

For the Standing Committee: The Rev. Brandon Cooper (59); **The Rev. Natalie Hall (60)**
For the Commission on Ministry: **The Rev. Dr. Moni McIntyre (75);** The Rev. Erin Morey (39)

The Bishop then called upon Mr. James Neral to present a report from the Diocesan Compensation Committee. Following his report, Mr. Neral recommended the adoption of the revised Compensation Guide and all its Appendices as set forth in the Preconvention Journal. The motion, moved and seconded, was duly approved by Convention.

The Bishop then called upon Dr. Joan Gundersen, who on behalf of the Constitution and Canons Committee, moved adoption of the canonical change regarding deputies to Provincial Synod as set forth in the Preconvention journal. The motion, moved and seconded, passed. Dr Gundersen then moved a change to the Rules of Order to approve the implementation of ranked choice voting for deputies to General Convention. The motion, moved and seconded, passed.

The Bishop then called upon Mr. Jamie McMahon who on behalf of the General Convention deputation of the Diocese, reported on his experience of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church held earlier in 2024.

The Bishop then called upon Ms. Florence Atwood, Chair of the Standing Committee, who presented a report of the Diocesan Mutual Ministry Review.

The Bishop called upon Ms. Elaine Zevkovich, Diocesan Treasurer, to present the 2025 Diocesan budget. Following Ms. Zevkovich's report and discussion, the budget was approved by Convention.

The Bishop then delivered her Convention address as set forth on Exhibit A attached hereto.

At the conclusion of her address, the Bishop announced that the 2025 Diocesan Convention would take place on November 15 of that year, with more details to follow.

The Bishop then declared the Convention adjourned and offered a closing prayer for the Diocese.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair

EXHIBIT A

Bishop's Address 159th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh November 9, 2024

I first want to offer deep gratitude to Dean Aidan Smith and to the staff and members of Trinity Cathedral for hosting our Convention.

I also want to recognize and offer our appreciation to our Convention Manager, Ms. Madison Canales, and the other members of the Planning Team.

I especially want to thank Mr. Andy Muhl and Ms. Andrea Rath for their extra efforts, as well as to all of the volunteers who are helping make our Convention go smoothly.

I offer our gratitude to our Diocesan Liturgical Officer, Mr. Rich Creehan who has prepared the Liturgy and also recruited the participants for the worship service, and gratitude to the Chancellor of the Diocese, Mr. Andy Roman, and to the Parliamentarian, Ms. Heather Hurst, the Judge of Elections, Mr. Jon Delano, and to the Secretary of Convention, the Rev. Canon Jim Shoucair.

I want to recognize and thank the members of our Diocesan Office Team:

Ms. Shanaz Alam-Denlinger

The Rev. Dan Isadore

The Rev. Canon Kim Karashin

The Rev. Canon Eric McIntosh

Mr. Andy Muhl

Ms. Andrea Rath

Ms. Marlene Rihn

Ms. Elaine Zevkovich

As you may already know, Elaine is retiring soon, and I take this opportunity to ask you to join me in offering her our heartfelt gratitude for her invaluable service to the diocese during these last two and a half years.

I would like to highlight here the work that Canon Kim Karashin did with the great assistance of Dr. Tim Austin on the laborious project of putting together our diocesan Safe Church Policy.

They both dedicated more hours than we can possibly know to this special project. Please join me in thanking them.

I must mention that Ms. Alisa Huston is no longer serving in her capacity as writer for our diocesan newsletter, Grace Happens. Alisa stepped down from this role because of a significant increase in her workload as it relates to her career as an English professor.

I am grateful for Alisa's contribution during the last year and wish her well.

I now introduce to you a new staff member, the Rev. Miguel Carmona who is the Diocesan Missioner to the Brookline Community.

The emphasis of his ministry will be in outreach to the Spanish-speaking residents in that area, and to determine the feasibility of starting a new worshipping community in Brookline.

Lastly, please join me in applauding each and everyone involved in our Convention today and in our ministry as a diocese for their great contribution to the well-being of our common life.

ADDRESS

You may remember how, last year, I concluded my address with several words of admonition:

First, I reminded us of how: Life is so short!

... of how: Time is of the essence!

... of how: Faithfulness to God is the true source of joy!

What's more, I unabashedly stated that:

GOOD NEWS ABOUND!

... that JESUS IS ALIVE and wants to guide us and work with us in genuine partnership.

... that OURS IS TO DO OUR PART!

Lastly, I affirmed how It has been, and continues to be a joy for me to serve as your bishop.

... and how I looked forward to our continued journey, working together with you to see to the realization of OUR VISION as expressed by our new VISION STATEMENT:

GROUNDING IN CHRIST, GROWING ANEW!

AND, I expressed how my deepest wish is for EVERYTHING WE ARE TO DO and BECOME be to the GLORY of GOD.

Even if beginning my Convention Address with these former words of admonition strike you as repetitive, I choose to reiterate these words because they remain true and because they resonate deep into my heart.

I truly wonder:

What if **EVERYTHING** THAT WE WERE TO DO AND BECOME truly be to the GLORY OF GOD?

What if we were to be much more open and available to God by resolving to be deeply GROUNDED IN CHRIST with the intention of GROWING ANEW?

I cannot help but think of this statement written by St. Paul to the Corinthians: “And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” (1 Cor 2:1-2 NAS)

What if we were to relate to each other and to those we encounter in our wider communities with similar determination?

What if we were to remember minute by minute, or even day by day, or month by month, all year-around that JESUS IS ALIVE... that Jesus wants to guide us and work with us in genuine partnership?

What would our individual and communal lives look like?

Would our love for Jesus and our desire to SHARE HIS GOOD NEWS be rekindled with fiercely burning passion?

Would we seek to do even more to MODEL our lives after the principles of love taught and exemplified by Jesus?

This life modeling would not mean that we would do everything right.

Instead, this life modeling would lead us to readily practice forgiveness, and to exhibit what St. Paul calls the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

What if **EVERYTHING** THAT WE WERE TO DO AND BECOME truly be to the GLORY OF GOD?

Would we be more attentive to how INTENTIONAL we are about what we do and how we engage in mission?

Life continues to be short!

Time continues to be of the essence!

AND, OURS IS TO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT IN GOD’S MISSION...

...OURS IS TO BE INTENTIONAL ABOUT OUR ENGAGEMENT IN GOD’S MISSION...

... to learn how to be partners with each other and with Jesus with the goal of placing KINGDOM BLOCKS on the great, solid, costly KINGDOM FOUNDATION Jesus has already laid for us to build on.

I am hopeful... very hopeful!

I am filled with EXPECTATION—expecting that, in the short time we may be granted to have together, and God willing, we will grow in manifold ways and succeed in achieving KINGDOM GOALS to a MEASURABLE degree.

As I have alluded in my Convention Journal report, while there is so much more to achieve, it is my great hope that we are collectively, and modestly (with emphasis on modestly), beginning to reflect the principles of our new mission statement: *Grounded in Christ, Growing Anew!*

Since we last met for Diocesan Convention, I want to celebrate how, on account of the individual and collective efforts of many, we have succeeded in achieving a number of the initiatives and activities I proposed last year as they relate to our diocesan priorities.

In regards to FELLOWSHIP, the two most popular initiatives and activities were the Ministry Celebration Day, and the Clergy Breakfasts.

Those who were present at the Ministry Celebration Day seemed to appreciate being there, gauged by the lively conversations and the enthusiastic responses expressed during the session.

The Clergy Breakfasts have also been well received and the breakfasts will be back by popular demand.

In regards to COMMUNICATION, we can celebrate having a full-time director of communication, having a new logo, and making preparation for a new diocesan website as several companies are working on submitting a Request for Proposal. [PAUSE]

In terms of our priority for GROWTH, we have made some good strides.

The first achievement I want to highlight and celebrate is the formation of our Curacy Program.

This program has successfully been launched thanks to the diligence of a six-member Working Group who embraced the challenge of creating this program in the same way as the team from Mission Impossible embraced theirs.

This group went above and beyond the call of duty, tirelessly working to create this program from the ground up.

I will now ask each of these individuals to stand so that we may offer our collective gratitude to each and all: the Rev. Noah Evans; the Rev. Canon Cathy Brall; the Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra; the Rev. Cameron Soulis; the Rev. Canon Natalie Hall; the Rev. Annis Rogers.

I must also mention the support given to the group by Ms. Elaine Zevkovich and the Rev. Canon Kim Karashin.

We extend to each and every one of you our deepest gratitude on behalf of the entire diocese.

I now take the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate our newly ordained deacons [please stand as I say your names] the Rev. Guy Brown, the Rev. Deanna Briody, the Rev. Jack Brownfield, and the Rev. Theodore Somes who are now engaged in the curacy program.

These four deacons are serving as curates at various parishes, and a significant part of the program consists of their participation in a monthly group study session under the guidance of the Rev. Canon Cathy Brall and the Rev. Jonathon Jensen who co-coordinate these monthly group study sessions.

The second achievement that I want to highlight and celebrate is the formation and the work of the New Episcopal Communities Task Force.

This group, formed shortly after our last Diocesan Convention, has met regularly during the last year.

This group has worked hard to discern and offer a set of recommendations.

Ms. Katie Ong, who is a member of St. Francis, Somerset, and who is also an experienced professional project management consultant, agreed to serve as Chair of the NEC Task Force in a volunteer capacity.

The other committee members who have contributed to this effort are: Ms. Jane Burger, the Rev. William “Biff” Carpenter, the Rev. Laura DiPanfilo, the Rev. Jonathon Jensen, Mr. Eric Linn, Ms. Terri Roman, the Rev. Marty Wright, and Ms. Elaine Zevkovich.

Please join me in expressing our deep gratitude to the members of the NEC Task Force.

The task force has provided me with their report and recommendations, which I will highlight in another section of my address.

In addition to these, I must highlight a third achievement, which is that of having undertaken and accomplished our first Mutual Ministry Review.

Please join me in thanking Ms. Florence Atwood, who carefully organized and shepherded this process.

Now the pertinent question is: What is next?

First, we will stay the course, seeking to pursue priority goals consistent with the broad structure of our diocesan vision.

Hence, we will continue to create opportunities to nurture fellowship, while organizing fewer diocesan-office-led events.

For example, we will plan for another Ministry Celebration Day and the Thursday Clergy Breakfasts will continue.

However, we will allow room for fellowship opportunities to organically come to the fore with the help of a small group of volunteer facilitators, led by Kathy Baird, who will interface with the leaders and people in our parishes who are interested in engaging in inter-parish fellowship.

A deeper focus will be on communication and growth.

In terms of communication, we will seek to accomplish the goals not yet achieved such as, having a new website and sharing the stories of ministry happening around our various parishes.

What's more, a small group of volunteers, led by Jon Delano, will work with me and with our communications director to help support our communication efforts.

In terms of growth, first, I want to mention that Calvary Church has undertaken an exciting initiative, which you will hear about in a video we will play at the conclusion of this address, and an initiative that we will spotlight more widely in the coming months.

Second, during the next year and beyond, we will review and work at implementing the recommendations made by the New Episcopal Communities Task Force.

At this point I would like to share with you an excerpt from the group's report stating:

In shaping these recommendations, the task force discussed the existing capacity of members across the Diocese to pursue the development of new Episcopal communities. It was clear that there were no clergy or laity available to launch such an effort at this time, and that any new endeavors would require recruitment and the establishment of a diocesan level structure to support new church plants. With an understanding of those limitations, the task force decided to focus on two priorities:

- 1) Figuring out a way to assess the feasibility of and support of a new Episcopal community at the diocesan level; and
- 2) Supporting existing congregations with growth through new ministry development, particularly ones that meet local needs.

There are more details in the report, but this excerpt highlights the two priorities to focus on as we move forward.

At the end of my address, and in the video, I have already mentioned, you will hear conversations with several members of the NEC Task Force touching on the inspiration and aspirations behind their work during the last year.

As you can see, the willingness to engage and the collaboration of many have enabled us to accomplish a few goals.

I affirm that we are beginning to reflect the principles of our new mission statement: *Grounded in Christ, Growing Anew!*

I celebrate our progress in succeeding to achieve what we have been able to achieve.

It is my hope that this willingness to engage in our joint ministry will continue to grow.

Lastly, I want to share how, one of my goals is to work with our governing bodies to reflect on how we can re-imagine using our resources for greater mission support and effectiveness.

Another goal is to increase our capacity to support our various initiatives at the diocesan office level.

To that end, we have budgeted for another executive level staff position.

I am so deeply grateful for our life and ministry together.

I am so deeply grateful for the privilege and joy of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

May God bless us as we continue to journey together, and may we be deeply grounded in Christ and grow anew.