

DEPUTIES TO GENERAL CONVENTION

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh was well represented at the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, held in Salt Lake City between June 25 and July 3, 2015.

General Convention is a two-house legislative body containing a House of Bishops, consisting of all bishops in The Episcopal Church, and a House of Deputies, consisting of four lay deputies and four clergy deputies from each diocese, plus alternates.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh deputation consisted of: the Rt. Rev. Dorsey McConnell (House of Bishops); the Reverends Jim Simons, Nancy Chalfant-Walker (co-chair), Scott Quinn, and Bruce Robison; and lay deputies Steve Stagnitta (St. Andrew's), Jamie McMahan (Calvary), Mary Roehrich (St Andrew's) and Jon Delano (St Paul's, Mt. Lebanon). The alternate deputies attending were the Rev. Bill Geiger, Michael Braxton (Calvary) and Joan Gundersen (Redeemer). I want to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their work and dedication to this ministry.

Among our deputation, several had important assignments affecting legislation:

- Jim Simons chaired the Dispatch of Business for the House of Deputies, which controls the legislative calendar. Also, Jim is an elected member of the Executive Council.
- Bishop McConnell served on the Special Legislative Committee on Marriage.
- Steve Stagnitta served on the Congregational Vitality Committee.
- Bruce Robison served on the Church Pension Fund Committee.
- Jamie McMahan served on the Stewardship and Development Committee.

More than 250 pieces of legislation were acted on by Convention. A highlight was the election of a new presiding bishop. The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry from the Diocese of North Carolina was elected on the first ballot in the House of Bishops, with a count of 121 out of 174 votes. The House of Deputies concurred, 800 to 12. Bishop Curry is a very energetic person who is very interested in growing the church and revitalizing it through evangelism. He will be installed at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, on November 1, 2015. The term of the presiding bishop is nine years.

A budget of \$125 million was passed for the next three years. This includes \$2.8 million for evangelism initiatives (including church planting, church growth, and digital evangelism). The church planting initiative consists of planting 30 new congregations in inner city and Latino communities. This was part of the work done by the Congregational Vitality Committee. In addition, Mission Enterprise Zones were funded for an additional three years, to allow congregations to request grants.

The Structure Committee reduced the number of standing committees (those meeting between convention) from eleven to two: Liturgy and Music; and Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons.

Two resolutions were passed regarding marriage equality. One approved trial liturgies and the other changed the wording of the canon on marriage to be gender neutral.

A complete summary of actions can be found on General Convention's website, www.generalconvention.org. Please feel free to contact any of us who attended.

Respectfully yours,
Steve Stagnitta
Deputation Chair