

**AGENDA - Eleventh Annual Convention**  
Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan - October 21 & 22, 2005  
Grace Church, Port Huron

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2005**

- 3:30 p.m. Registration (Gathering Place) **POLLS OPEN**
- 7:00 p.m. Eucharist and the Bishop's Address (Grace Church Sanctuary)
- 8:30 p.m. First Business Session
- Opening Prayer and Welcome
  - Convention Business (Rules, Roll call, Credentials, Clergy Changes, Appointments, etc.)
  - Introduction of Candidates
  - Treasurer's Report, Budget
- 9:25 p.m. Announcements
- 9:30 p.m. Social Hour (Dining Hall, downstairs)
- 9:45 p.m. **POLLS CLOSE FOR NIGHT**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2005**

- 7:30 a.m. Continental Breakfast (Dining Hall)
- 7:30-8:30am Registration (Gathering Place) **POLLS OPEN & CLOSE**
- 8:30 a.m. Second Business Session Opening Prayer (Sanctuary)
- Announcements
  - Report of Constitution and Canons
  - Via Media Presentation
  - Report from Youth Coordinator & Camp Chickagami
  - Report on Mutual Ministry Teams
  - Report on Michigan Interfaith Trust
  - Report from Young Adult Ministry Coordinator
- 9:30 a.m. Special Order of Business Keynote Address, The Rev. Dr. Jay Emerson Johnson
- 10:45 a.m. Workshops
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch (American Legion)
- 1:30 p.m. Third Business Session (Sanctuary)
- Report on Diaconal Ministry
  - Report on Windsor Commission
  - Report on ERD
  - Report on Jubilee Centers
  - Resolutions
  - Elections Report
  - Other Short Presentations
  - Excellence in Ministry Awards

Close of Business, Closing Prayers, Recessional and Send Out, Adjourn

**GENERAL RULES**  
**Diocesan Annual Convention**  
**October 21 and 22, 2005**

1. Each business meeting of the Convention will open with a prayer.
2. All Resolutions to be considered by the Convention must be submitted in accordance with Title 1, Canon 3, Section 6.
3. All reports which have been printed and distributed to members of the Convention prior to the convening of the body and not requiring Convention action shall be presented by title only.
4. On the request of any ten members of the Convention, a roll call vote shall be taken and entered in the minutes.
5. No member of Convention shall speak twice on the same subject until all others desiring to speak shall have had the opportunity to speak one time. Each speaker shall be allowed up to three (3) minutes per speech.
6. All committees shall be appointed by the President with the consent of the Convention except where other provisions have been made.
7. Except for the election of a Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor, all elections shall be governed by the provisions of Title 1, Canon 6, Sec. 2, 3, 4.
8. The Committee on Resolutions shall report to Convention its action on each submitted Resolution.
9. The Rules contained in "Robert's Rules of Order - Revised" shall govern the Convention in all cases to which they are applicable, and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church and this Diocese or the special rules of order of this Convention.
10. The Rules shall not be suspended or amended except by a vote of two-thirds of the members voting, a quorum being present.
11. Alternate Delegates may replace only Registered Delegates.
12. Food and drinks shall not be permitted in the Nave of the Church and other places so designated by the host Congregation.

# **JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EASTERN MICHIGAN**

**Grace Episcopal Church  
Port Huron, Michigan**

## **FRIDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 21, 7:00 P.M.**

The evening began with Holy Eucharist, which included the Bishop's Address as the Sermon.

## **FIRST BUSINESS SESSION – 8:25 P.M.**

On October 21, 2005, the day and place designated for the meeting of the Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan, The Rt. Rev. Edwin M. Leidel, Jr. called the Convention to order.

Bishop Leidel called upon The Rev. Robert Trask, Rector, Grace, Port Huron and Mary Lou Creamer, President of the Blue Water Convocation to welcome the Convention.

Bishop Leidel explained that we are gathered together to celebrate our life together as God's people, for formation opportunities (keynote speaker and workshops), and to conduct the business of the Diocese.

### **ELECTION OF SECRETARY**

The Bishop introduced Ms. Barb Meikle, St. John's, Midland, and asked for a motion from the floor to elect her Secretary of Convention. Motion was made, seconded, and passed.

### **ELECTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

The Bishop introduced Ms. Sue Shirkey, Grace, Port Huron, and asked for a motion from the floor to elect her Assistant Secretary of Convention. Motion was made, seconded, and passed.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

The Bishop introduced the following people: Mr. Edward Henneke, Trinity, Flushing, Chancellor of the Diocese; Mr. Dean Bedford, St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc, President of the Standing Committee.

### **QUORUM**

A roll call of congregations was taken with the delegates standing as their congregation was called. All but one (1) congregation (St. Paul's, Saginaw) were present. Bishop Leidel declared that a quorum was present.

### **RULES OF CONVENTION**

The Chair noted the Rules of Convention had been included in the Delegate Packet. He recommended adoption of the Rules and asked for a motion to that effect. Motion was made, seconded, and passed. The complete list of Rules appears elsewhere in the Journal.

## **CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

Bishop Leidel recognized The Rev. Gail Vince, Administrative Assistant to the COM and Chair of the Credentials Committee. The Rev. Vince moved that “pursuant to Title I, Canon 2, Section 2, forty-two congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Michigan have filed their Parochial Reports in a timely fashion and will have voice and vote of their lay delegates and clergy at this convention. Nine other congregations were late, but have been appropriately forgiven by the Bishop according to our canonical provisions and with the approval of this convention, they too shall have voice and vote.” Motion was supported and passed.

## **VOTE FOR ELCA PASTOR LYLE KLEMAN**

Bishop Leidel called upon the Chancellor of the Diocese, Mr. Ed Henneke, to explain the specifics of the voting rights of Hope - St. John’s Interim pastor, Pastor Lyle Kleman. After the explanation of the Chancellor, a motion was passed to give Pastor Kleman voting privileges at the Convention. The Bishop presented the annual license to Pastor Kleman.

## **ELECTION OF CHANCELLOR AND ASSISTANT CHANCELLOR**

The Chair nominated Mr. Edward Henneke, Trinity, Flushing, as Chancellor and Mr. Jeffrey Endean, St. John’s, Saginaw, as Assistant Chancellor. Both were elected by motions made, supported, and passed.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

Bishop Leidel announced and welcomed the following Diocesan appointments:  
The Rev. Mary Jo Schuetz, Bishop’s appointment to the Commission on Ministry  
Ms. Sarah Parks, Bishop’s appointment to the Commission on Ministry  
The Rev. Anna Leigh Kubbe, Co-coordinator of Diocesan Youth Ministry  
The Rev. Elsa Pressentin, Dean of Saginaw Valley Convocation  
Mr. Eric Wood, Diocesan Coordinator of Young Adult Ministries  
The Rev. John Good, Chair of the Nomination Task Force

## **INTRODUCTIONS OF CANDIDATES**

The candidates for election to the Standing Committee, Ecclesiastical Court, and Trustees at this year’s Convention were asked to come forward at the request of the Chair and introduce themselves.

## **CLERGY CHANGES**

Bishop Leidel announced the following clergy changes:  
The Rev. Tracie Loffhagen, Rector, All Saints’, Marysville  
The Rev. John Walmsley, Missioner, St. Elizabeth’s, Higgins Lake  
The Rev. Rob Skirving, Rector, St. John’s, Midland  
The Rev. Rick Schark, Rector, Trinity, Lexington  
The Rev. Frank Davenport, Voc. Deacon, Trinity, Bay City  
The Rev. Joan Kemp, Voc. Deacon, St. Matthew’s, Saginaw  
The Rev. Mike Bell, Tran. Deacon, Calvary, Hillman/Grace, Long Rapids  
The Rev. Joshua Hoover, Rector, St. Jude’s, Fenton  
The Rev. Susan Speir, Priest in Charge, Grace, Lapeer  
The Rev. Mary Delaney, Priest in Charge, St. John’s, Alma

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

The chair called upon Mr. Bob Meikle, Treasurer of the Diocese, to present the 2004 Financial Report and the 2006 budget. The three main points stated are: 1) that the diocese does have financial assets in place for growth 2) there will be challenges in the future, and we need to start planning for those challenges today 3) we need to start considering long-term options. For diocesan operations in 2004 revenue and expenses balanced out. There is no surplus built up, and for 2006 there are substantial expenses related to the nomination and transition for a Bishop Co-adjutor, which must come out of the general operating fund. A deficit budget of \$142,000 is predicted for 2006.

## **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2005 – 8:30 A.M. SECOND BUSINESS SESSION**

Bishop Leidel called upon The Very Rev. Charles Hoffacker, Dean of Blue Water Convocation, to offer the opening prayer.

The Secretary of Convention completed the roll call by asking if delegates from St. Paul's, Saginaw, were present. They were present.

Bishop Leidel called upon the nominees for Commission on Ministry to introduce themselves.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTION AND CANONS**

Bishop Leidel recognized The Very Rev. Charles Curtis, retiring Dean of the Saginaw Valley Convocation, and Chair of the Constitution and Canons Committee who presented the following amendments:

### **I. Submitted by the Committee to complete editorial work done at previous Conventions**

Move to amend Title III, Canon 3, Sec. 2 (line 5) as follows,  
...Convocation ~~Assembly~~ *Council* and Chancellor...

And to amend Title III, Canon 4 (line4) as follows,  
.....of the Church Pension Fund in that ~~parish~~ *congregation* shall be paid...

Motion was supported and passed.

### **II. Submitted by the Standing Committee to change the schedule of the Committee on Nomination of Bishops**

To amend Title III, Canon 3 as follows,

#### **CANON 3      Of the Election of a Bishop**

Sec. 1. The election of a Bishop or a Bishop Coadjutor of this Diocese shall be in an Annual Convention, or in a Special Convention called for that purpose. The concurrence of two-thirds of the members of the Convention present and voting shall constitute an election.

Sec. 2. Whenever the Bishop of this Diocese shall call for the election of a Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor, a committee shall be appointed to be known as "The Committee for the Nomination of Bishops" (*the Committee*), to consist of thirteen persons: four persons, including at least one layperson and at least one presbyter or deacon, appointed by the Standing Committee; one layperson and one

presbyter or deacon from each Convocation, elected by their respective Convocation ~~Assembly Council~~, and the Chancellor. The members of ~~said~~ the Committee shall be appointed not less than ~~one hundred eighty (180)~~ *two hundred seventy (270) days prior to before* the date set for the Convention at which such election is to be held (*the Electing Convention*).

(a) The appointment of members shall be made known to the Secretary of the Convention by the Authority making the appointment and the Secretary shall convene the first meeting of the Committee.

(b) The Committee may at any time fill any vacancies in its membership for whatever reason caused. Vacancies in the clerical membership shall be filled with ordained persons, and in the lay membership with lay persons.

(c) The members of the Committee shall continue as members thereof until the close of the Convention at which the Bishop or Bishop Coadjutor shall have been elected or until the Committee shall have been discharged by action of the Convention.

(d) The Committee shall choose its president and secretary from among its members, and shall have power to adopt rules and regulations governing procedure, not inconsistent with this Canon.

(e) The Committee shall call for, receive and may itself propose for its consideration names of persons who may lawfully be elected to the episcopal office to be filled, and shall fix the time within which such suggested names may be filed with the Committee, but in no event less than ~~forty five (45)~~ *one hundred fifty (150) days prior to before* the date set for the *Electing Convention at which such election is to be held*. Should the name of any member of the Committee be proposed for consideration as a nominee for the episcopal office, that member ~~may~~ *shall either* withdraw from consideration; ~~otherwise the member shall~~ *or* withdraw from the Committee.

(f) The Committee shall inform itself as to the persons so proposed and, after due consideration, shall select not more than five, whom it deems qualified for such office. The Committee shall prepare a report to the Convention giving the names of the persons so selected, together with a brief biographical sketch of each. ~~(h)~~ The Report of the Committee shall be printed and mailed by the Secretary of the Convention to each of the lay delegates and clergy of the Convention not later than ~~twenty one (21)~~ *ninety (90) days prior to before* the date set for the *Electing Convention at which such election is to be held*.

~~(j) Nominations may be made from the floor at any time after the Report of the Committee shall have been presented, and until the close of the Convention or until an election shall have taken place, except when a vote is being taken.~~

*(g) Nominations may not be made from the floor of the Electing Convention. Nominations by petition may be presented to the President of the Standing Committee at least seventy (70) days before the date set for the Electing Convention. Such nominations must be signed by at least eight (8) lay delegates and/or clergy (electors) of the Electing Convention and accompanied by a letter of assent from the person so nominated.*

*(h) Background and other checks as required by Diocesan hiring policies shall be ordered for each of the nominees (whether chosen by the Committee or submitted by petition). Results of the background checks will be reported to the lay delegates and clergy of the Electing Convention.*

*(i) The President of the Standing Committee shall forward to the Secretary of Convention not less than thirty five (35) days before the date set for the Electing Convention the names of the lawful candidates nominated by petition.*

*(j) The entire list of nominees (those chosen by the Committee and those presented by petition as indicated by (g) above) shall be printed and mailed by the Secretary of the Convention to each of*

*the lay delegates and clergy of the Convention not later than thirty (30) days before the date set for the Electing Convention.*

~~(g)~~ (k) *The Committee shall arrange with the Convocations for appropriate opportunities for the nominees and electors to become mutually acquainted.*

~~(j)~~ (l) *The presentation of the Report of the Committee shall be the first order of business at the said Electing Convention and it shall constitute a nomination of each of the persons therein named. If any person so nominated shall withdraw, the Committee may substitute the name of another person theretofore considered by the Committee and deemed qualified, and such a substitution shall constitute a nomination of the person so named. ~~(k)~~ In the case of persons nominated by the presentation of the Report of the Committee, there shall be *no more than* one seconding speech of not more than five minutes and there may be only one further seconding speech of not more than three minutes for each of the persons nominated by the Committee.*

*(m) Names of persons nominated by petition shall be presented by the Secretary of the Convention in an order determined by lot. In the case of all other persons nominated, For each such nominee there shall be a nominating speech of not more than ten minutes, and a seconding speech of not more than five minutes, and there may be only one further seconding speech of not more than three minutes. ~~for each person nominated from the floor.~~*

Motion was supported and passed.

### **III. Submitted by the Standing Committee to establish in Canons a Camp Chickagami Committee**

To add a new Title I, Canon 27, as follows,

#### **Canon 27      *Of the Camp Chickagami Board***

*Sec. 1. The operation of Camp Chickagami shall be under the direction of the Camp Chickagami Board.*

*Sec. 2 The Camp Chickagami Board shall consist of twelve (12) persons. At least seven (7) of the members must reside in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan. All members shall be elected or appointed to three year terms, beginning and ending immediately following the Annual Convention, with the exception of the initial Board membership provided in (d) below. No member having served two or more consecutive years shall be eligible for election or appointment to an immediate succeeding term. All members shall serve until a successor is installed.*

*(a) In 2006, and every three years thereafter, four (4) members will be elected by the Annual Convention in accordance with the provisions of Title I, Canons 5 and 6. Should any vacancy occur, the Standing Committee shall appoint a replacement to fill the unexpired term and so notify the Secretary of the Convention within ten (10) days of such appointment.*

*(b) In 2007, and every three years thereafter, at least ninety (90) days before the Annual Convention in that year each Convocation Council shall elect one member and notify the Secretary of the Convention of that election. The Secretary of the Convention shall notify the Delegates and Clergy of said elections at least thirty (30) days prior to the Convention. Should any vacancy occur, the Secretary of the Convention shall notify the respective Convocation Council which shall elect a replacement to fill the unexpired term, and so notify the Secretary of the Convention within ten (10) days of that election.*

*(c) In 2008, and every three years thereafter, at least ninety (90) days before the Annual Convention in that year the Bishop shall appoint one member, and the Standing Committee shall elect one member, and each shall notify the Secretary of the Convention of that appointment or*

*election. The Secretary of the Convention shall notify the Delegates and Clergy at least thirty (30) days prior to the Convention. Should any vacancy occur, the Secretary of the Convention shall notify the respective Bishop or Standing Committee which shall appoint or elect a replacement to fill the unexpired term, and so notify the Secretary of the Convention within ten (10) days of that election. At its first meeting after the Annual Convention the Board shall appoint two (2) members and so notify the Secretary of the Convention within ten (10) days of such appointments. Any vacancy may be filled by the Board with a replacement to fill the unexpired term.*

*(d) At least ninety (90) days before the Annual Convention in 2006, the Convocation Councils, the Bishop, and the Standing Committee shall appoint the requisite number of members to serve until the beginning of the full terms as provided in (b) and (c) above, and shall notify the Secretary of the Convention of that appointment or election. The Secretary of the Convention shall notify the Delegates and Clergy at least thirty (30) days prior to the Convention. The Board, at its first meeting after the Convention shall appoint two (2) persons to fill a partial term until the Annual Convention in 2008 (and any vacancies that may occur in those partial terms) and so notify the Secretary of the Convention within ten (10) days of said appointments.*

*(e) A President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected from among the members of the Board at its first meeting following each Annual Convention.*

*(f) The Board shall establish a schedule of at least four (4) meetings each year and publish said schedule, and may meet otherwise at the call of the President of the Board, the Bishop, or the President of the Standing Committee.*

*(g) A quorum shall be seven (7) members. A majority of the members present shall constitute the action of the Board.*

*Sec. 3 The Board shall have such powers and duties as may be assigned to it by the Standing Committee. The Board may, subject to the Standing Committee, adopt its own procedures and rules for the performance of its duties and functions, provided that it shall in all matters be governed by the Constitution and Canons of the General Convention and of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan, the actions of the Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan, and all pertinent policies of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan adopted by the Annual Convention, the Bishop, and/or the Standing Committee.*

*Sec. 4 The Board shall file with the Bishop and with the Standing Committee a copy of the Minutes of each meeting, and it shall submit a written report to the Annual Convention, to be filed with the Secretary of the Convention at least sixty (60) days before the Convention.*

There was support for the motion. The Rev. George Cleaves, St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc, asked for clarification regarding the sentence in Sec. 2 that states "No member having served two or more consecutive years...", and whether the intention was to use the word "terms" instead of "years". It was determined that the wording is correct as printed, meaning that there is a one-term limit. An additional comment was made that with the creation of a Camp Chickagami Board, we appear to be moving in the direction of becoming a "Program" diocese, as opposed to a "Grassroots" diocese.

The Very Rev. Charles Curtis moved that the following words be inserted in the sentence in question to alleviate confusion – No member having served two or more consecutive years (of a term) shall be eligible for election.... The addition of the phrase was supported and passed.

The Very Rev. Martin Field, St. Paul's, Flint, moved an amendment to the sentence discussed previously - that it be changed from "years" to "terms". He stated that two or three years may not be enough time to provide the continuity and continuing skill on the board. The amendment was supported and passed. The amended sentence is – No member having served two or more consecutive terms shall be eligible for election....

The Rev. Bruce Michaud, Trinity, Alpena, asked for clarification in Sec. 2 where it is stated "At least seven (7) of the members must reside in the Diocese", and whether this is a requirement for board members to be part of an Episcopal parish or if it is geographical residence. The Very Rev. Charles Curtis stated that his understanding was that this sentence referred to geographic residence and that non-Episcopalians were eligible.

The Rev. John Good, St. Alban's, Bay City, asked for further clarification on the definition of "reside in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan". Bishop Leidel and Rev. Curtis confirmed that it is geographical residence, regardless of denominational affiliation, since the Camp is used by so many groups.

The motion was passed as amended.

#### **IV. Submitted by the Standing Committee to change the manner in which overages and shortfalls in congregational tithe payments are allocated**

To amend Title I, Canon, Sec. 2 as follows,

##### **Title I. Canon 13. Section 2**

(a) Of the monies so forwarded, *an amount equal to 60% of the first 10%* shall be retained .by the Treasurer of the Diocese for the operation of the Diocese and for that portion to be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church, and *the remainder up to 40%* shall be set apart by the Treasurer of the Diocese to fund the missionary, educational, and social service work of the Church through the four Convocations, in equal shares.

~~(b) Should any congregation vary its amount more or less than this 10%, the overage or shortfall shall be added to or deducted from the amount set aside for the work of the particular Convocation in which such congregation is a part. Any amounts received in excess of the first 10% will be distributed in the same manner as provided in (a) above.~~

(c) Should the Standing Committee....

There was support for the motion. Jerry Kabell, St. John's, Alma, spoke about the origins of the diocese and the notion of congregations tithing, emphasizing the "grassroots". He pointed out that we don't need to focus on the mechanics of how we are going to fund the diocese, but on sharing with our local congregations and raising up in our congregations the joy and the hope that leads to increased giving.

Bishop Leidel called for a vote. The motion was passed.

#### **V. Submitted by the Standing Committee to change the manner in which congregational financial obligation to common mission through the Diocese is determined**

And to amend Title I, Canon 13, and Title I, Canon 19, Section 2 as follows,  
**Title I. Canon 13.**

##### **Canon 13 Of Diocesan Finance**

Sec. 1. The Standing Committee shall prepare, ~~not later than December 31 of each year, for presentation at the Annual Convention~~ a Budget for the following year including a minimum of 10% of the Diocesan unrestricted income to be our share of the support of the Episcopal Church. The Standing Committee will then notify each congregation of that Diocesan Budget.

Sec. 2 The Budget of the Diocese shall be based *in part upon the contribution of its congregations for the common mission and ministry of the Diocese.* ~~upon the forwarding to the Treasurer of the Diocese~~

~~by each congregation the first~~ *A congregation's Minimum Congregational Contribution shall be an amount equal to 10% of the average of its annual Total Operating Revenues (Unrestricted/Undesignated) for the preceding three years as reported by each congregation on Line "A" of the Annual Parochial Report. each month for the common mission and mission of the Diocese.* Total Operating Revenue includes pledges and open plate, ~~assistance from the convocation,~~ unrestricted endowments, gifts, bequests, and interest; other operating income such as rental and building use donations; gifts from congregational organizations; and all other unrestricted income. ~~The annual Total Operating Revenue is the same amount as was found on Line "B" on the 1997 Annual Parochial Report.~~

*Sec. 3 The Treasurer of the Diocese shall inform each congregation by July 1 of its Minimum Congregational Contribution for the next calendar year as set forth in Sec. 2 above. Within sixty (60) days each congregation shall respond to the Treasurer of the Diocese in writing as to its commitment for the next calendar year. Each congregation not able to make a commitment equal to at least its Minimum Congregational Contribution should inform the Standing Committee in writing of its desire to enter into a constructive dialogue pursuant to Title I, Canon 22, Sec. 3.*

*Sec. 4 Each congregation will forward by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month to the Treasurer of the Diocese an amount equal to at least one twelfth (1/12th) of its commitment for that calendar year.*

*(a) Of the monies so forwarded each month, an amount equal to 60% of the monthly portion of the Minimum Congregational Contribution in Sec. 2 above shall be retained...*

*Renumber Sections 3-7 to be Sections 5 - 9*

**Sec. 4 6.** The Standing Committee shall *routinely* advise each congregation of the percent of Total Operating Revenues given by that congregation for the common mission and ministry of the Diocese in the previous year *and any amount still owed to the Diocese pursuant to Sec. 2 above.*

**And Title I. Canon 19, Sec 2.**

*(j) A congregation will contribute to the Diocese at least ten percent (10%) of its Total Operating Revenue, also called NDBI (Not Disposable Budget Income), as outlined in Title 1. Canon 13. Sec. 2*

There was support for the motion. The Rev. Charles Curtis, Trinity, Flushing, stated that we need to move forward, and to learn to live together with the commitments that were mutually made. This amendment is not intended to be punitive and allows room for discussion.

Mr. Bob Meikle, Treasurer of the Diocese, commented that the proposed changes are meant to simplify giving and make it easier to predict how much we will give at all levels. It is hoped that a dialogue can be initiated when parishes are struggling so that assistance can be provided.

Mrs. Sue Shirkey, Grace, Port Huron, commented that she supports this amendment from a congregational viewpoint and also from the Diocese. Being able to plan their tithe commitment in advance assists with the budgeting process. Also, the Diocese would have difficulty providing support to the congregations if they have no idea what their revenue will be from year to year.

Ms. Shirley Seely, St. Paul's, Port Huron, stated that even though she is from a parish that is experiencing financial difficulties, it has been good for them to engage in conversation with the Standing Committee and the Diocese, to work out what they need to do to bring the parish back into a full tithe. She fully supports the amendment.

Mr. Jack Carlsen, Trinity, Flushing, proposed an amendment in Sec. 2 to remove the phrase "for the preceding three years as reported by each congregation on Line A on the Annual Parochial Report". There was support for the amendment.

Mr. Dana Howard, Grace, Long Rapids, spoke against the proposed amendment. The purpose of the original amendment was to simplify the accounting so that the Standing Committee and the parishes would be able to do their budgeting more efficiently. The use of the three –year average assists in future planning but there will be instances where it is detrimental to a congregation. In those cases, parishes can come to the Standing Committee to negotiate what the tithe should be.

Mr. John Hickman, Grace, Port Huron, made the point that if the phrase about the three-year average is to be stricken, the word “average” must also be stricken, as there is no time frame for the average to be determined against. He is against the proposed amendment.

The Rev. Gerry Rehagen, St. Andrew’s, Gaylord, spoke in favor of the amendment. He noted that his parish has had to dip into their reserve accounts, which they had already tithed on, to meet expenses. The diocesan data shows a distortion, with St. Andrew’s at 6%, when they have actually tithed 10% on the revenue outside these reserves. The amendment has merit based upon the financial status of some parishes, if not all of them.

The Rev. Elizabeth Chace, St. Francis, Grayling & St. Bartholomew’s, Mio, made a plea for “Anglican” discussion – the Diocese is not “they”, the Diocese is “us”.

Bishop Leidel called for a vote on the amendment proposed by Mr. Jack Carlsen. The motion was defeated.

Bishop Leidel called for a vote on the original amendment. The motion was passed.

## **GENERAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS**

Resolutions A-039, A-143, and B-005, which were amendments to the Constitution of the General Convention, were read.

## **REPORT ON VIA MEDIA**

The Rev. Bruce Michaud, rector of Trinity, Alpena, and The Rev. Mary Jo Schuetz, rector of St. Paul’s, Gladwin, gave a brief overview of the Via Media program. This formation tool involves a shared meal, a video clip, and small group discussion. It is useful for engaging newcomers, as well as sparking renewed enthusiasm in congregations.

## **SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Bishop Leidel recognized the convention’s keynote speaker, The Rev. Dr. Jay Emerson Johnson, who spoke about “Courageous Living in Challenging Times – An Invitation to Dance”. The text of the address is found in the journal.

## **WORKSHOPS**

Following the keynote address, the delegates attended the following workshops:

Evolutionary Christianity: Anglican Ministry among Hopeful Wallflowers led by Jay Johnson

Via Media – Sharing the Joy of Who We Are! led by Marnie Bash

Hope for Diversity led by Claudia Hollinger

Hope-filled Future of Eastern Michigan led by Elizabeth Morris Downie, Peter Cominos, Gail Vince

Hope for Youth Spiritual Formation led by Kris Forsyth

Hope-based Development Tools for Congregations led by Todd Ousley

## **SATURDAY OCT. 22, 2005 – 1:30 P.M. THIRD BUSINESS SESSION**

Bishop Leidel opened the session with prayer.

### **ELECTIONS REPORT**

Mrs. Michelle Weaver, Chair of the Election Committee, reported the following:

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE**

The Rev. Tracie Loffhagen  
Mr. Paul Dolza

The Rev. William McClure  
Mr. Charles Reagan

#### **ECCLESIASTICAL COURT**

The Rev. Mary Delaney  
The Rev. Sue Rich

#### **PROVINCIAL SYNOD DEPUTIES**

The Rev. William Boli  
Ms. Mary Lou Creamer

Bishop Leidel indicated that for nominations to the Trustees, there were two positions for four-year terms and one position for a one-year term. Since the by-laws do not indicate how to determine who will fill which vacancies, Bishop Leidel moved that the two nominees with the highest number of votes, shall fulfill the four-year terms. Motion was supported and passed.

#### **TRUSTEES**

Mr. Jim Schuetz (4 years)

Mrs. Joyce Thewalt (4 years)

The Rev. Frank Davenport (1 year)

### **YOUTH MINISTRY & CAMP CHICKAGAMI REPORT**

Mr. Tom Smith, Director of Camp Chickagami, reported that the camp calendar was almost completely booked this past summer with camps, group bookings, and individuals making use of the facility. Two new cabins were built, each with the capacity to hold twelve campers. In addition to the Leader-in-Training, and Counsellor-in-Training programs, next summer another new camp will be added for those of junior high age.

Mrs. Kris Forsyth, Diocesan Youth Coordinator, introduced some of the young people who accompanied her to the Episcopal Youth Event this past summer. Our diocese sent seventeen young people to E.Y.E. The Rev. Anna Leigh Kubbe, Co-coordinator for Diocesan Youth Ministry, accompanied by young people from our diocese, attended a Prov. 5 Youth Ministry Network meeting and a planning session for next year's General Convention Youth Program.

Next years plans include focusing on supporting congregations and meeting the needs of their young people. They want to bring adults that work with youth and children together for some "Sabbath time", and also plan to launch a peer ministry training program at Camp Chick next summer.

### **MUTUAL MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT**

Mr. Brian Chace, member of the Mutual Ministry Development Team, shared with the assembly about Mutual Ministry Support Teams (MMST). A MMST is a team of people who have been prayerfully selected to support the ministry of the church (congregation). In Eastern Michigan, this team is licensed by the Bishop to carry out leadership, which would otherwise be the role of the rector (two local priests,

two vocational deacons, one catechist, one evangelist, and one administrator). It takes two to three years to complete the process of discernment and competency development. Having a MMST can be an effective and exciting way of enabling and supporting the ministry of the baptized in community.

## **MICHIGAN INTERFAITH TRUST FUND REPORT**

The Rev. Elizabeth Morris Downie, board member of the Michigan Interfaith Trust Fund, reported that the merger of the McGhee Economic Justice Fund and the Michigan Housing Trust Fund is complete and working well. They are able to offer loans for economic justice. Through investing in the Michigan Interfaith Trust Fund, contributions assist in making loans available for affordable housing, community development projects, small businesses, and multiple-use facilities. The loan policies favor low-income, minority borrowers, and projects that create jobs.

## **YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY REPORT**

Mr. Eric Wood, Coordinator for Young Adult Ministry, shared some information about his new role. The church identifies young adults as those between 18-30(ish) years of age. Eric attended the Young Adult Ministries Network meeting, whose purpose was to come together before General Convention 2006 to bring awareness to the needs of young adults. Three areas of focus at this gathering were advocacy, relationships, and resources. Here in the diocese, Eric hopes to concentrate on the relational aspects of this ministry at the congregation and convocation level, and is looking for people who are passionate about it to become involved.

## **DIACONAL MINISTRY REPORT**

The Rev. Sherry Young, Archdeacon of the Diocese, reported on a new program being implemented for Vocational Deacons. This new process will help candidates formulate who they are in the church, and what gifts they offer. The discernment process remains the same but will be followed by the creation of a formation community. The congregation becomes involved in the formation with the candidate so that everyone learns together. Two sites have been chosen to spearhead this program – St. Paul's, Flint and Transfiguration, Indian River.

## **WINDSOR REPORT TASK FORCE**

Mr. Ed Henneke, Chancellor of the Diocese and Chair of the Windsor Report Task Force, reviewed the mandate that the committee had been given by the Bishop – to review the Windsor Commission Report, analyze it, and try to determine how it impacts our diocese, and if so, how we should react to it. A diverse group of people came together and in spite of their differences on specific issues, agreed that they held essential beliefs in common. The Windsor Report did not address the right or wrong of the sexuality issue, but was a report on how we Anglicans can address our differences. The complete report of the task force is contained later in this journal. A resolution was offered, the text of which, is contained in the resolution of special courtesy to be moved at the end of this convention.

## **EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

The Rev. Judy Downey, Diocesan Representative for ERD, reported that this diocese has been very generous in its giving to ERD, but especially since the recent natural disasters. ERD has a very formalized method in handling a disaster. The phases involve: 1) immediate financial aid (food, shelter, medical supplies), support for Episcopal Migration Ministries (relocation), 2) assessment, building partnerships, and developing work plans 3) recovery supervision of clean up (employee jobless), provide

semi-permanent housing, and trauma counseling 4) long-term development (3-5 yr. plan to assist local partners to address short-term and long-term needs). 92% of the money given to ERD goes directly to assistance.

## **JUBILEE CENTERS REPORT**

The Rev. Elizabeth Chace, Rector of St. Francis, Grayling, and St. Bartholomew's, Mio, Mr. Paul Brunnell & Ms. Carol Moggo, St. Francis, Grayling, gave a short presentation about Jubilee Centers. This project of the National Church is a way to celebrate the ministries that congregations are already doing, and to "dare" other congregations to participate by doing deliberate acts of mercy and justice. It must involve at least one of the following: human rights advocacy, human service program, lay leadership empowerment, and evangelism in action. At St. Francis they have a Thrift Shop where clothing is provided for those in need. People who are employed there are empowered by the training and skills they acquire, and the revenue that the store generates is used for outreach. Another part of this Jubilee project is called GRACE Center, which has grown into a much-needed child and family services agency. It now has a staff of 4-7 with a new building and has helped 5,000 people since its inception in 1987.

## **RESOLUTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Chair recognized Mr. Charles Parker, Grace, Lapeer, Chair of the Resolutions Committee. Mr. Parker moved adoption of the following resolution presented by the Standing Committee on behalf of the Anti Racism Ministry Task Force.

WHEREAS, the besetting sin of racism at both the individual and institutional levels continues to divide us one from another; and  
WHEREAS, this Diocese of Eastern Michigan committed itself at its inception to opposing the sin of racism; and  
WHEREAS, the Episcopal Church in the United States of America has, through actions at the 70<sup>th</sup> General Convention in 1991, the 73<sup>rd</sup> General Convention in 2000, and most recently renewed in Resolution A010 of the 74<sup>th</sup> General Convention in 2003, established and mandated a program of anti-racism training; therefore be it  
RESOLVED, that the Diocese of Eastern Michigan continue its support for the anti-racism training program based upon the national church model and presented by the diocesan Anti-Racism Ministry (ARM); and be it further  
RESOLVED, that all clergy of the diocese and all lay persons in leadership roles, paid or volunteer, who have not completed the training be required to do so within nine (9) months of their initial appointment or election; and be it further  
RESOLVED, that all other lay members of the diocese be strongly encouraged to complete the training; and be it further  
RESOLVED, that all congregations of the diocese report yearly those persons in the congregation who have completed the training, and those still in need of it.

There was support for the motion.

The Rev. Peter Cominos, Rector at Trinity, Bay City, expressed a concern that parishioners being asked to take this training will say that they have already completed a similar training at work, school board, etc. Rev. Cominos proposed that the motion be amended to state:

RESOLVED, that all clergy of the diocese and all lay persons in leadership roles, paid or volunteer, who have not completed the *Diocesan ARM training* be required to do within nine (9) months of their initial appointment or election;

The amendment was supported and passed. The amended resolution as supported and passed.

## **COMPLETION OF ELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mrs. Michelle Weaver, Chair of Elections, reported the following:

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY  
The Rev. Rick Schark  
Mrs. Sue Schlanbusch

Michelle thanked all of the candidates. Bishop Leidel thanked Michelle Weaver for her report and congratulated the newly elected. He thanked all those who had been nominated for making themselves available for service.

## **REPORTS**

Bishop Leidel asked the Convention to receive by title, the reports from the Standing Committee, Trustees, Commission on Ministry, Convocations, Anti-Racism Ministry, Camp Chickagami, Companion Relationship Task Force, ERD, Jubilee Ministry, Ministries Resource Center, Planned Giving, Registrar, Sheridan Scholarship, UTO, and Windsor Task Force. A motion was made, supported and passed. Reports are found in the Journal.

## **ANTI RACISM MINISTRY REPORT**

Claudia Hollinger, Co-chair of the Anti Racism Ministry Task Force, reported that unfortunately the Task Force had been unable to conduct any workshops in any convocation this past year. The workshops consist of videos, large and small group discussions, exercises, dialogue, and scripture references. The ARM Task Force hopes that with better communication and advertising, all new leaders will be able to attend a workshop in 2006.

## **NOMINATION & TRANSITION COMMITTEE REPORT**

The Rev. Elizabeth Morris Downie, Chair of the Nomination Committee, reported that the committee has been hard at work receiving written answers to questions, and will be conducting phone interviews with all nominees. Candidates will be announced in February. She emphasized the need for prayer and a willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit in this very important decision.

The Rev. Peter Cominos, Co-chair of the Transition Committee, also emphasized the importance in being open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Rev. Gail Vince, Co-chair of the Transition Committee, reported that the primary function of this committee begins with the electing convention. She emphasized that the delegates that parishes choose for this convention should be good listeners, and be prayerful.

## **KINKIIZI FRIENDSHIP TASK FORCE**

Ira Leidel, Co-chair of the Kinkiizi Friendship Task Force, updated the gathering about the Diocese of Kinkiizi. In January 2006 the funding of the sixty-six girls at Nyakabungo School is finished. The Archbishop of Uganda has asked that a moratorium be placed on the financial giving of Eastern Michigan congregations to Kinkiizi while the Anglican Communion works out a way forward utilizing the principles of the Windsor Report.

## **BISHOP'S EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY AWARDS**

Bishop Leidel presented the Bishop's Excellence in Ministry Award, a pin that is a replica of the Seal of the Diocese, to the following:

**Canon Yung Chou**, dedicated retired priest, received post humously by Abea Chou

**Linda Albright**, dedicated member of Calvary, Hillman, received by Laura Ingles (senior warden)

**Bill & Cathy Elliott**, dedicated stewards of the Diocese

**Charles Hoffacker**, long-time Dean of the Blue Water Convocation

**Charles Curtis**, retiring Dean of the Saginaw Valley Convocation

## **APPOINTMENTS**

The Chair recognized Dean Bedford, St. Christopher's Church, Grand Blanc, President of the Standing Committee, for presentation of the Appointment List of the following 2006 Convention Chairs:

Constitution and Canons – The Very Rev. Charles Curtis, The Very Rev. Martin Field, The Rev. Elsa Presentin, Mr. Charles Reagan, Ms. Linda Rathburn, Mr. Eldon Card.

Committee on the Admission of New Congregations – The Rev. Glenn Stone, The Rev. Todd Ousley, Ms. Virginia McNabb, Ms. Michelle Tonn

Credentials Committee – The Rev. Gail Vince

Resolutions Committee – The Rev. Mary Delaney, Mr. Charles Parker

Clerk of Nominations – Mrs. Sue Shirkey

## **COURTESY RESOLUTIONS**

The Chair recognized Mr. Charles Parker, Grace, Lapeer, who moved the adoption of the following Special Courtesy Resolution presented by the Diocesan Windsor Task Force:

WHEREAS, recent events in the life of the Episcopal Church have exposed significant differences of opinion in how to serve the Lord and who may take roles of leadership in His Church, be it

RESOLVED, that this 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan does extend grace to all those who by conscience and their understanding of the Lord's teaching have felt called away from our Communion, and does offer blessing to all those who have remained, recognizing that God works in each of us in His own way, and be it

RESOLVED, that we affirm our commitment to let Christ show through each of us to the world – in love.

The motion was supported and passed.

Mr. Parker moved the adoption of the following Courtesy Resolutions:

1. WHEREAS, as the early Church sought places of shelter from the challenges of the world around them to exercise what was then the very courageous act of coming together to worship our Lord, the congregation of **Grace, Port Huron**, proclaiming Jesus as its beacon and a light to its community, has offered a gathering place to our diocesan family,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that this 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan does offer grateful thanks for the generous hospitality of this congregation and its people, and does pray that the grace of the Holy Spirit will remain among them, inspiring their continued faithful witness.

2. WHEREAS, the **Blue Water Convocation**, in an expression of our common mission and ministry, has contributed its resources and the talents of its people to support this gathering of the diocesan family,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that this 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan thanks the host convocation, and prays that it will remain filled with the Spirit in support of our grass-roots ministry.

3. WHEREAS, our presenters, **Marnie Bash, Claudia Hollinger, the Rev. Elizabeth Morris Downie, the Rev. Peter Cominos, the Rev. Gail Vince, Kris Forsyth, and the Rev. Dr. Todd Ousley**, have so graciously shared of their expertise,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that this 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan does thank them each for their particular contributions toward our spiritual dance.

4. WHEREAS, our keynote speaker, **the Rev. Dr. Jay Emerson Johnson**, has joined us to encourage us to find the courage of the unseen hope to accept the invitation to join in the spiritual dance,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that this 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan does extend its most grateful thanks for his teaching, witness, and ministry, and prays that as he has inspired us, the Spirit may continue to inspire him, and maintain his courage on the quest for the new and unseen world.

The motions were supported and passed.

## **CLOSING**

With joy and thanksgiving, Bishop Leidel announced the dates for next year's convention, after which he led a prayer, followed by a blessing and a hymn. The convention was declared closed.

# Address to the 11<sup>th</sup> Convention of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan

The Rt. Rev. Edwin M. Leidel, Jr.

October 21, 2005

Grace Church, Port Huron

*"The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope." - Romans 8*

Bill Cosby is a good story teller. A case in point is his story of the First Parent.

After creating Heaven and Earth, God created Adam and Eve. And the first thing He said to them was, **"Don't!"**

"Don't what?" asked Adam.

"Don't eat the fruit from the forbidden tree."

"Forbidden fruit? Really? Where is it?"

"It's over there," said God, wondering why he hadn't stopped creating after making the elephants.

A few minutes later God saw his kids having an apple break and He was angry.

"Didn't I tell you not to eat that fruit?" the First Parent asked.

"Uh huh," Adam replied.

"Then why did you?"

"I dunno," Adam stammered. "Eve started it."

Eve hammered back, "Did not!"

"Did so!" And so it went on.

So God created an appropriate punishment for Adam and Eve. **And that punishment was that they should have children of their own!**

Thus the pattern was set and has never changed.

*"The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope." - Romans 8*

Testing things out. Asking questions. It's all about expressing our gifts of curiosity and creativity. Thank God for the opportunities that we have to experiment – to experiment with a hope that we have in Christ, of making all things new. It's in such environments of parental love that we grow.

When I was a parish priest, I often thought in my child's heart that my bishop was a sort of God-parent who was the last resort of accountability should I push the authority of my office to some fuzzy limit. I've always appreciated working with bishops and vestries who gave space for testing new and creative ideas. The other way around has also been true. Vestries and bishops for the most part, value clergy with adventuresome spirits.

Participating in God's creative birth pains requires a loving and respectful environment.

I am a very **different** person because of the fact that my wife Ira has vowed to love me no matter what these past 42 years. Ira's response to my saying this is usually, "Oh Ed – there still is hope for you!" We grow because of the interactive life that we have with one another.

In this context there is something I want to say to you, my beloved family in Christ. "I am a far better person today, because of the life that I have been invited to live with you these past ten years." Furthermore, I want to say, thank you for the loving and hope-filled environment that you worked to create in this diocese.

Recently I have been introduced to the self-revealing and hope-filled writings of Anne Lamott. Here is a fellow traveler through life who acknowledges with humor and humility that God is not finished with her

yet. Near the end of her book, Traveling Mercies, she cites the words of poet Langston Hughs, as she witnesses to the love given to her by her friend Mary who had just died.

*The night is beautiful,*

**So, the faces of my people.**

*The stars are beautiful,*

**So the eyes of my people.**

*Beautiful, also, is the sun,*

**Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people.**

As I approach my last year with you as your bishop there is a temptation in the heart of this somewhat senile old romantic to rehearse all of the accomplishments of our years together. I have painfully listened to others do this on the eve of their retirements. I refuse to inflict such self-serving reveries on you tonight. What I want to do instead is tell you what a joy it is to be among you, and how thankful I am for what you have given and continue to give me.

Your energy, love and ministries have changed me. You've "grown me up." Because of you, I believe I am today just a bit more *patient, aware, humble, trusting and tolerant*. Let me briefly explain.

You have taught me **patience**. Pete Clapp and many others taught me how to slow down and listen to the grassroots before plowing ahead with some new idea. Patience and waiting and prayer allows time and many hands and voices to birth a vision that is of God, and a vision that will last. Contrariwise, lots of interesting but unseasoned ideas paraded one after another can just wear a diocese out. Dioceses need long advent seasons to properly craft and age the stuff that God has destined us for.

You have taught me **awareness**: you have taught me how to see through the collective eyes of our grassroots vestries and convocation councils; through the eyes of our commission on ministry, standing committee and mission council; through the eyes of Todd and Tom and Molly and Katharine and Barb and Deb. Rob Voyle, of appreciative inquiry fame, has taught us to see God's active presence in all of our habitations and ministries – whether what we see be great or small.

In the "roofless church" in Evansville, Indiana there is a sculpture of a blind Virgin Mary. Her womb is transparent and reveals an infant Jesus whose large eyes have become the eyes through which Mary sees. I really believe that God revealed a mission for us last year through the eyes of all of who gathered in the four regional town meetings that ultimately created our new diocesan vision statement.

You have taught me **humility**. Ira does this best. But many of you have joined in to make sure that the ground that I stand on is never any higher than the ground that you are standing on. When Saint Paul boasted, he boasted of his weakness; for it was through his weakness that God's Grace was given space to bless and transform. He claims that his weakness therefore became his strength. Perhaps in some analogous way, my inadequacies and blunderings have given space for the gifts of many others to shine forth and build a firm foundation for this first stage of our diocesan life.

You have also taught me to **trust** – to trust at a much deeper level than I have ever done before. Bishop Steve Charleston called trust to our attention at our fourth Convention in Saginaw - when he stopped in the middle of his address, turned and looked at me and expressively said, "Bishop Leidel trust your people!" I listened. Six months ago I was asked to speak to the leadership of the diocese of El Comino Real about the innovative structure and texture of our diocese. They video taped my presentation and sent an edited copy to every congregation. They titled a major part of the video, "**Trust or Die**." That's what they heard me say, trust or die. You have taught me well.

You have taught me **tolerance**. After the election of Gene Robinson, many individuals and some of our congregations were thrown into turmoil because their bishop, their deputation and their national Church had confirmed Bishop Robinson's election. I was angrily advised by some to resign, repent and pay more attention to God. It was a tense and hurtful time for all, whatever views one had on Robinson's election. Amazingly, we have come through that dreadful season relatively intact. And even more amazingly, we are stronger and wiser for the experience. You have taught me how to be respectful, even when

disagreeing on something that has strong emotional content. Thanks to all of you who rode out this turbulent storm with me to a gentler and calmer harbor.

*“The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope.” - Romans 8*

The miracle of change and transformation is that it is almost always accomplished in relationship with others – in mutuality.

Therefore, an observation that I would share is that, as I have changed and grown, so have we all. As tonight’s Gospel of the disciples’ breaking Bread in Emmaus with their risen Lord suggests; it is in the **breaking** of Bread that the Christ in each of us is recognized. So it is Sunday after Sunday as we gather to share to connect our brokenness with Jesus’ brokenness. In the Eucharistic mystery Christ’s very Heart and Hands become our own hearts and hands. As you elect the second bishop of Eastern Michigan this coming May, I shall eagerly welcome our new bishop into this unique and loving family that God is shaping to become more and more *patient, aware, humble, trusting and tolerant*.

*“The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope.” - Romans 8*

Tonight’s lessons are focused on the Christian virtue of hope. I harvested our lessons from the last chapter of Jay Johnson’s new book, [Dancing with God: Anglican Christianity and the Practice of Hope](#). In the Roman’s lesson, Paul says that God is a **God of Hope**, and it is precisely that kind of hope-filled God that fills us with “joy and peace” and it is that “joy and peace” that transforms us into Christ-like sacramental signs that “abound in hope” for the sake of others. **Hope breeds hope.**

Years ago when Ira and I were in Milwaukee we were involved in something called the local church experiment. The slogan of our project was written on a huge banner in the parish hall. It read: “The Local Church, The Body of Christ, The Hope of the World.” That’s what we are. We’re “hope breeders.” And what’s really nifty about all of this is that Anglicans are especially suited to hope-breeding.

Paul says that we hope for what cannot be seen. Hope keeps us ever expectant, ever vigilant. Jay Johnson, from whom we will hear tomorrow, puts it another way. Jay calls hope “**restless energy**.” He says it is this restless energy that keeps us focused on the road ahead – the road of the never ending journey. Jay says that “as the Anglican concept of *via media* implies, Christian faith invites a sense of movement and travel, a way forward that rests neither here nor there but journeys through the mysterious place in between.”

Fulfillment is an illusive thing. It’s like trying to clutch onto dry sand with your fingers.

Back to the delightful and soulful writings of Anne Lamont. She majors in writing about wisdom for the journey that calls us through hope, but never quite finishes us. In her latest book, [Plan B](#), she reflects about her on-going, never finishing journey. She says,

“I’ve wanted to be a writer my whole life. But when I finally made it, I felt like a greyhound catching the mechanical rabbit she’s been chasing for so long – discovering it was merely metal, wrapped up in cloth. It wasn’t alive; it had no spirit. It was fake. Fake doesn’t feed anything. Only spirit feeds spirit.... ‘Making it’ had nothing that could slake the thirst I had for immediacy and connection.”

*“The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope.” - Romans 8*

And so here we are ten plus years into our journey as a diocese. A part of the Anglican scenery that we are traveling through is very noisy right now. There is more “creation-groaning” going on then we know what to do with. But there is always that restless energy called hope to pull us along. Archbishop Eames, the convener and evangelist for the Windsor Report, dodging many theological bombshells flying back and forth, spoke earlier this month at Virginia seminary about his hope for a deeper rebirthing of Anglicanism. He said,

"I remain a convinced Anglican. I remain a firm believer that God has a purpose for the Anglican Communion. But I also remain convinced that the Anglican attitude about the nature of the Church needs fresh recognition; that Anglicanism needs a theology of relationships, and that a new feeling of trust across our Communion cries out for new means of cementing what we all most long for -- unity in the life of Christ..."

"I suggest that it is possible to turn crisis into opportunity."

*"The whole creation has been groaning... we wait with hope." - Romans 8*

After we had set the theme for this convention, "*Courageous Living in Challenging Times: an Invitation to Dance*," a little book came out with a title mimicking that of our Convention. Mark Hanson, the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America just released, Faithful and Courageous: Christians in Unsettling Times. It would appear that we Episcopalians and Lutherans are on the same wave length. Bishop Hanson suggests that it is our Christian calling to be always open – to be "**other-wise**," ever **thought-full** as we practice a "**mind-full** generosity." He says that we are living in a time when "we need to resist the temptation to settle for easy, simplistic answers, even though they sound self-assured." We must learn to love the questions and live in their ambiguities. He says that in these times he is "more concerned about a church – congregation, synod, or denomination – that *seems* to be tension-free, than one that is actively engaged in questions and even conflict."

In less than six months from now you will elect Eastern Michigan's second bishop. And so a new chapter in our life will begin. You will be building on a foundation whose cement is not yet quite dry. With you I look forward to the next chapter with a restless energy. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing; so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

God Bless you.

Remember how God loves you. God will always be present with you to strengthen and sustain you.

You are doing an amazing thing. You are a unique and special people. There is no other diocese like you. God has a special purpose for you.

You are capable of lives of great joy and meaning that will bear much fruit. It's what you are here for.

Take care of one another.

And finally, thank you for inviting me to partner with you on this amazing and challenging journey.

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## Courageous Living in Challenging Times: An Invitation to Dance

Convention Address  
The Diocese of Eastern Michigan  
October 22, 2005  
The Rev. Jay Emerson Johnson, PhD

The first letter of Peter includes this deceptively simply exhortation: Always be ready to give an account of the hope that is in you (3:15). To the Christians in Rome, the Apostle Paul wrote, "Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen?" (8:24).

I want to invite you to consider this morning what it might mean to "give an account of unseen hope" and to suggest that giving such an account requires considerable courage. I extend this invitation

with some urgency and against the backdrop of an uncertain future. For today we live on the brink of a new kind of world, the shape of which none of us can yet see with any clarity. Postures and strategies upon which we have relied in the past no longer appear to work. The most basic assumptions of civic life and common prayer have come under intense scrutiny. Even the conditions for sustaining genuine conversation seem to have disintegrated beyond repair.

In a time such as this, and for many more reasons that all of you could easily number, this new world is desperate for an account of hope. The challenge we face, which Christians have always faced, is that we hope for what we cannot see. So this will take considerable courage, the same kind of courage it takes to dance. And this is by no means a frivolous image. The music is playing, the dance floor calls to us, yet no one is sure of the steps for the dance. Historically and quite remarkably, Anglican Christians have been willing to get on the dance floor anyway, willing to risk looking foolish, willing to stumble as we learn the steps, and all for the sake of the divine dance of life itself. That's the kind of courageous witness to hope this new world desperately needs and this morning I want to invite you, as it were, to dance again for the first time.

But first, I bring you greetings in the name of Christ from the Diocese of California and from the Church of the Good Shepherd in Berkeley, where I usually hang my ecclesiastical hat on Sunday mornings. I'm particularly pleased to be here in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan and I even brought my mother with me, because she was born and raised just down the road from here, in St. Clair. My father was born and raised in the U.P., in a tiny town near Houghton and Hancock, and I was born in Ann Arbor. In many ways, being among you this weekend is a wonderful experience of returning to my roots.

Let me assure you, however, that traveling from California to Michigan did not require a passport. Though I must say, given the deep divisions in our country and in our church, more than a few people today feel like aliens in their own land, and for a wide range of reasons. As I'm sure we all know or at least have heard, there's a growing sense of crisis in our worldwide family of Anglican Christians and more than a little anxiety over what shape our Anglican Communion will take in the years ahead. Contrary to the typical portrayals, the cause of this crisis does not simply reside in the disagreements between North Americans and Africans. There are just as many disagreements between dioceses and between congregations in the Episcopal Church itself. The same is true, by the way, for congregations and dioceses on the African continent, which are just as diverse as the ones in our own backyard.

### **Facing a World-Ending Moment with Hope**

As we ponder the disagreements in our Anglican family today, it is certainly tempting to locate the cause of our distress, both here at home and internationally, in the election and confirmation of Gene Robinson as the Bishop of New Hampshire. I believe we must resist that temptation. Gene Robinson's episcopate may be the catalyst but it is not the cause of the sense of crisis we now face. To suppose it is the cause will distract us from addressing the challenges that we simply cannot afford to avoid, challenges that have been brewing and percolating over the last twenty or thirty years. Regardless of the positions we wish to take in today's debates over human sexuality, the debate itself makes plain what has been true for some time now: The world, as so many of us have known it, is coming to an end.

I'm not trying to be overly dramatic or merely provocative. The sense of crisis with which we live today comes from the labor pains of a new world, the shape of which none of us can see clearly. The challenge this poses to all of us, as it has throughout Christian history, is to live into that unseen world with hope, and in so doing offer a courageous witness to the good news of the Gospel.

Let's recall here that the sense of crisis with which we are living today is by no means new. All sorts of worlds have come and gone since the gospel texts were first committed to parchment. Let's remember, for example, how the world of Medieval Christendom came to an end in the Protestant Reformation. I suspect most of us fail to appreciate just how unnerving this must have been and the extent to which the Reformation disrupted not only religious but also political, economic and cultural assumptions. The Pope was referred to in some quarters as the "Antichrist" and Martin Luther himself was even referred to as the "Angel of the Apocalypse" as many at that time believed the world was in fact

coming to an end. And they were right – the tightly organized and carefully constructed world of European Christianity unraveled, the effects of which still haunt modern western society today.

Back then and just like today, Christians faced an unknown future; they faced the prospect of a new yet unseen world taking shape all around them; and just like us they faced the daunting task of giving an account of their hope. As Episcopalians, we have inherited the response to that kind of challenge forged by sixteenth and seventeenth century English Christians. Divided by the desire to hold on to the old world and the insistence that a new one was emerging, our English forebears faced the very real prospect of civil war. And how did they respond to this crisis? They could have devised a theological system to which everyone must conform. They could have created an ecclesiastical blueprint with clear lines of authority and a final court of appeal to settle disputes. Protestants and Catholics alike had already tried both of those approaches and with seriously mixed results. What emerged instead from the English Reformation was the now familiar image of the *via media*, or the “middle way.”

Now to be sure, this refusal to pitch a tent in either the Catholic or the Protestant camp can seem indecisive and look quite mushy. The *via media*, however, is not a place of muddle-headed thinking. It is not a place of stagnation where we become paralyzed by indecision. It is not a place where we never take a stand on anything for fear of being impolite. Indeed, it's not a *place* at all. As the phrase *via media* itself implies, it's about movement, it's a way to travel through and forward. It is in fact a restless image, infused with the restlessness of hope itself.

As Anglican Christians have learned over the centuries and often through intense moments of struggle, hope is not the same thing as optimism. This is precisely the galvanizing insight that shaped the world-changing work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Those old enough to remember will recall those turbulent days in the 1960s when yet again the fabric of an old world was coming apart at the seams, the world of deep racial segregation, the world of Jim Crow and whites-only drinking fountains, the world of fire hoses and police dogs and church bombings. And into that world-ending moment, Dr. King stepped and took his place among a long line of prophets animated by the restless energy of hope.

As Dr. King so astutely observed, only the optimist can fail to notice the end of the world. Optimism relies on forgetfulness, on covering over a painful, wounded past and insisting that the way things presently stand is basically sound and proper. Hope on the other hand relies on the hard work of memory and is perpetually restless, never quite satisfied with how things presently stand. Hope is convinced that there's a new world coming, even when that world cannot yet be seen. In this sense Christian communities are not optimistic about the future; but we are deeply hopeful.

Josiah Royce, an American philosopher at the turn of the twentieth century, wrote a great deal about what it means to be a community. A genuine community – in contrast, say, to a dinner party or a street mob or a picnic with co-workers – a *genuine* community, Royce wrote, is a community of both memory and hope. A genuine community engages in the hard work of remembering all that has come before, even and especially the painful moments. But it does not merely dwell on the past; a genuine community is also forward-looking, animated by the hope those memories inspire. And this, Royce argued, is the true genius of Christianity. By gathering week after week around the Eucharistic table, Christians not only remember the suffering and death of Jesus. The purpose of such memory is to inspire hope, a restless hope that refuses to believe the world of crucifixion is the only world there is. In that potent and dynamic mix of memory and hope we catch a glimpse of what Royce called the “homeland of the Spirit,” where as the Apostle Paul described it, we shall at last know and we shall at last love even as we ourselves are fully known and loved (1 Corinthians 13).

Anglican Christianity continually remakes itself with that hard work of memory and that restless energy of hope. By returning again and again to the *via media*, to that image of movement and travel, Anglican Christians have insisted that not just some of us but all of us are aliens in this world; that our true native land, our homeland has not yet appeared; that many more worlds must first pass away before the world that Jesus called the “kingdom of God” will emerge.

In the meantime – in these mean times of passage and transition – how shall we then live? How shall we live as people of faith, as people of that unseen hope? Therein lies the challenge of our times.

For the true challenge today is not whether the Anglican Communion will have a recognizable future. The times in which we live demand more from us than fretting over what it means to be in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. I do believe it's critically important to remain in conversation about that issue. At the same time, however, I worry about how easy it is to devote oneself to an institution and in the process forget why the institution was created in the first place.

Indeed, I believe these challenging times pose some uncomfortable questions for us. Has our anxiety over Anglican unity eclipsed the Gospel call to mission? To what extent have our institutional disagreements derailed our energy for ministry among those in need? Is it perhaps time to realize that the old world of nineteenth century Anglican identity is giving way to a new world, to the challenges of twenty-first century Gospel witness? Walter Wink, a biblical scholar and theologian, puts this issue even more pointedly. According to Wink, whenever an institution devotes more energy to its own survival than to its mission, that institution becomes demonic.

To be clear, I am not suggesting that we abandon our Anglican identity. To the contrary, the challenge today is to understand our Anglican identity, not as an end in itself, but as a tool to refresh and enliven our Christian witness and ministry. The point, in other words, is not to become better Anglicans. The point is to draw on Anglican traditions to become better Christians, to become people who offer a compelling and vibrant account of an unseen hope.

### **World-Ending Challenges and the Invitation to Dance**

The materials your bishop sent to me when he extended the invitation to be here this weekend made abundantly clear that this diocese cares deeply about Christian mission and ministry. They also made clear how keenly aware this diocese is of the many challenges we all face in putting that mission into practice today. Among those many challenges I want to mention just three and to suggest how these three broad challenges can shape a new world and a new opportunity to dance.

#### *1. Global Communications Technology*

First, global communications technology now grants nearly immediate access to a staggering amount of information. This has become an extraordinarily helpful and world-changing tool in many respects; it also presents an unprecedented challenge. We now know just how different Port Huron, Michigan is from, for example, Papua, New Guinea, or from San Paulo, Brazil. We now know that the vast majority of Christians on this planet do not speak English as their native tongue. We now know that Christian values are not simply the same thing as western European cultural values, which is exactly why such fierce debate is raging over what it means to proclaim the Gospel in a vast marketplace of competing ideologies, religious traditions and cultural mores.

Religious communities now face the nearly irresistible temptation to monitor, police and regulate the beliefs and practices of their brothers and sisters living on the other side of the planet – not mention the ones living on the other side of town. This temptation is clearly not new in the history of Christianity, but now we have the means to do it – efficiently, quickly and accurately. We could, of course, use this amazing technological ability to forge deeper bonds of unity and cooperation. Sadly and even tragically, the more we learn about our differences the greater the temptation becomes to divide and conquer. There's nothing new about that, either.

This world already knows and only too well what it looks like for communities to fracture over disagreements, to splinter into political parties and special interest groups and competing loyalties. In fact, this world simply expects family feuds as a normal and even natural part of life, even when they lead to entrenched animosity and conflict and war. That's just the way things are. What this world does not know, however, is the kind of communion that does not depend on conformity. What this world has not yet seen is a community willing to say, "Yes, we have some differences of opinion and even some very deep disagreements with each other, but we're willing to live with those disagreements and even learn from them because of our love for each other."

Ever since the sixteenth century Elizabethan settlement, Anglican Christians have been remarkably willing to live with differences of opinion. In a history marked by Evangelical, Anglo-

Catholic and liberal broad church sensibilities – and sometimes all at once and even in a single congregation – Anglican Christians have never insisted on full agreement on all matters as the prerequisite for communion. Can we now imagine a new world of bearing lively witness to unity-in-difference? Can we account for the kind of hope that would lead us to break bread with people who are different from us, even with our enemies? Can we stand courageously at the Eucharistic table and say to a deeply divided and conflicted world, yes, we disagree, but see how we love each other?

## *2. The Gap Between Rich and Poor*

Second, we are witnessing today a truly unprecedented gap between rich and poor, between the “haves” and the “have-nots,” and this at a time when Earth’s resources are nearing the level of scarcity. While this was made dramatically and tragically clear here at home in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, those cultural and economic conditions along the gulf coast are simply a daily fact of life for the vast majority of people on this planet and no amount of emergency preparedness will address those conditions or the growing crisis over natural resources. Whether or not our troops are in Iraq for the sake of oil, this much is clear: The day is soon coming when this world will be at war over drinking water, and over arable land for growing food, and even simply for the physical space in which to live on a seriously overpopulated planet.

As people living in the wealthiest country in human history, where consumerism is not only our national pastime but also our national religion, we face the nearly irresistible temptation to spend our way to a sense of security, to purchase self-protection at the price of hoarding natural and economic resources. Sadly, there’s nothing new about this either. The world of modern western society simply expects that each of us will care mostly about our own self-interest. This world already knows and only too well that free-market economies depend on competition and the survival of the fittest.

This world does not know, however, what it looks like for a community to give its life away in order to find it. This world cannot understand generosity in the face of scarcity or why its standards of success lead only to despair or how gaining even the entire world means losing one’s soul. Anglican traditions have always been a bit odd and slightly out of step with modern western culture. As Anglican Christianity came of age at a time of Enlightenment individualism and now lives in a society where self-help books have all but replaced any notion of the common good, Anglicans have insisted that Christian faith is irreducibly social and communal. Can we now imagine a new world of bearing witness not to self- but to social-actualization as the highest good? Can we account for the kind of hope that would lead us to give away what we have because it’s more than we really need? Can we stand courageously at the Eucharistic table as people who find abundance in the life of service?

## *3. The Evolution of Science and Technology*

Third, we live in a world where science and technology have evolved much faster than faith and ethics. We have made and continue to make astounding discoveries about how the universe works but no one really knows what it all means. We continue to make remarkable advances in technological ability, medical procedures and even ecological manipulation. But just because we can do something we’re not sure whether we should. Meanwhile, our society continues to divide the world between religion and science, as if they must necessarily compete with each other. The current debate between evolution and intelligent design notwithstanding, this world knows that religion cannot explain reality. The world where theology was considered the “queen of the sciences” has long since passed away and when explanations are required, this world now turns, not to the local parish priest, but to the local physician, the local therapist, the local meteorologist. This world knows where to look for explanations, and it’s not religion. What this world does not know, however, is where to look for invitations.

At its best, Christian theology does not try to explain reality. After all, if we can explain something we’re more likely to think we can control it, or worse, we take it for granted as something that’s no longer very interesting. And what we mean by the word “God” ought to be at least interesting if not

endlessly fascinating. No, at their best our theological traditions don't explain reality; they invite us into the profound mystery of reality. They invite us to the very brink of worship, where words and explanations no longer matter as we find ourselves lost in wonder, love and praise.

Anglican traditions have never shied away from science. To the contrary, Anglican Christians have always understood scientific discovery as an invitation into the fathomless depths of divine creativity. Can we now imagine a new world of religious faith need not compete with science? Can we account for the kind of hope that relies less on explanation and more on invitation? Can we stand not only courageously but also humbly at the Eucharistic table, ready to admit and even joyfully so that there is always more to learn, and that our understanding of the universe and even of God can only be partial and necessarily incomplete?

Running throughout these challenges is the common thread of uncertainty, of an old world giving way to a new one that we cannot yet see. Living with that kind of uncertainty takes courage, or what Christian traditions call faith. And it's the same kind of courage, the same kind of faith it takes to step foot on a dance floor without first being sure of the steps for the dance. Imagine stepping foot on a dance floor after studying the steps for a waltz and the band suddenly strikes up the music for a rumba, the steps for which you've never studied. The dance floor is exactly the same one on which you learned the waltz, but now the music is unfamiliar, the rhythm is disorienting, and you're not sure exactly what you should do next.

For many, that's a rather odd way to talk about faith. After all, religious faith and religious institutions are supposed to provide a way to organize an otherwise messy world. They lend a sense of security in the midst of perplexity, a sense of guidance in the midst of confusion. How strange to suppose that religious ideas might evolve over time, or that religious faith would actually welcome new insights or that a religious institution, like the church, could admit that it was wrong about this or that in the past and will likely be wrong about something else in the future.

In times of uncertainty, this world simply expects religious institutions and religious leaders to speak with at least as much authority as Martha Stewart does about gardening or Bob Villa does about home improvement or Dr. Phil does about interpersonal relationships. In a world of celebrity experts, people just expect religious leaders to speak with the same kind of authority. Let's remember, however, that some of the most cherished stories in the Bible suggest something quite different. In the experiences of Abraham and Sarah, and of Moses, Miriam, and Ruth, in the lives of Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, John the Baptist and that persecutor Saul who later became the Apostle Paul, to name just a few, religious faith has very little to do with certainty. To the contrary, in all those stories and more, faith means finding the courage to take risks, to set out on an adventure without any clear map of the road ahead.

Here's the thing: *Anglican Christians already know this*. Our turbulent and at times rather wacky history already bears witness to "courageous uncertainty." We already know that faith continually invites us to find new ways to dance with the old steps. We know what it looks like to dance along the *via media*, to bring our rich and diverse traditions into creative conversation with an unknown future. We know what Matthew Jesus is meant when he described the kingdom of God like a wise householder who brings out of the treasure chest that which is both old *and* new (13:52). We likewise know why Jesus tried to prepare his disciples for how unnerving this kind of faith can be; remember, he said, what can happen when new wine is poured into old wineskins – before long those old skins will burst (Matthew 9:17). As Anglicans, we know that the long history of Christian traditions has always exhibited that perpetual tension between the old and the new.

Clearly, we are not the only ones who know all these things. But in the midst of today's challenges I believe we are particularly well poised to bear witness to that unseen hope we discover along the *via media*. To do so courageously is not what this world expects but it is, I believe, exactly what this world needs. So let me invite you this morning to dance again for the first time and to do so by returning to the Eucharist, which is perhaps the quintessentially Anglican thing to do. I want to suggest this morning that gathering regularly around the Eucharistic table, though a simple act

of sharing bread and wine is also a profound act of hope. At that table, we join the dance without knowing precisely what shape the choreography will take. But we do know this: The dance will lead us into a new and unseen world.

Here in Eastern Michigan, this diocese will soon have a new bishop. Your plans and conversations are already underway for that election and I imagine some of you are hoping to elect a skilled administrator. Others are hoping for a good fund-raiser. Still others will want an experienced pastor and counselor. All of those skills and qualities are important and deserve serious consideration. In the midst of those deliberations, however, allow me to offer a reminder: the primary responsibility of any bishop is to live among Christian communities as the chief Eucharistic minister. In the long history of Christian traditions on such matters, whenever a bishop is present it is his or her prerogative to preside at the Eucharistic table. Why? Because above all else it is the bishop's vocation to bear witness to the memory and the hope we enact at that table.

In all the many varieties and changes through which Anglican Christianity has traveled, this much has remained constant: Anglican Christians continually fuss over the liturgy. And we do that because we seem instinctively to know the importance of being shaped by the Eucharistic story, that story of God's own self-giving in love. All the many other tasks and responsibilities of a bishop derive from and are rooted there, in that Eucharistic table of fearless memory and the restless energy of hope.

This then is the great dance of faith: to be shaped and reshaped, again and again, by the story of God's own self-giving in love. For in that story we find the courage to give our own lives away for the sake of love and abundant life. To be shaped by the Eucharistic story means we are people who have doubts but who are no longer afraid to take risks. We can risk giving ourselves away in love because that story of God-in-Christ reminds us how strong love really is, that love is in fact stronger than even death. We can risk bold choices in our conduct of life because even in our moral failures that story promises forgiveness and reconciliation. We can risk new ideas and experiment with diversity and welcome the stranger because that story pushes us to imagine God's realm of grace as much larger than we now realize and to admit that our sense of communal identity is probably too small. We can risk making the sharpest critique of even the most cherished social conventions, we can risk standing up to the most powerful institutions and corrupt governments of this world because that story insists there's a new world coming.

We can risk all these things because our dignity and even our sense of safety and security do not depend on the state, or on our socio-economic status in society, or even on being correct. All of this depends instead on the Beloved Community, that community of both memory and hope, that community shaped and reshaped by God's own self-giving in love.

### **Breaking Bread with Strangers**

Let me conclude this morning with the community where this great dance of memory and hope began. The gospel according to Luke describes the aftermath of crucifixion, those devastating days when so much energy and time spent on a new world seemed entirely for naught. In those days, as Luke tells it, two disciples were walking along a road to a village called Emmaus. Along the way they encountered a stranger, someone they didn't recognize and whom they assumed they had not met before. And didn't their hearts burn within them, they would later say, when that stranger opened the Scriptures to them, when that stranger spoke in new and challenging ways about their life and their pain and their fear? And were they not compelled to invite this stranger to stay with them once they arrived in Emmaus and to share a meal together? It was then, according to Luke, when the bread was broken in the meal they shared, that those disciples finally recognized this stranger from whom they had learned so much along the road. He was none other than the one whose death they had been mourning on that road. And in that very moment of recognition Jesus disappears (Luke 24:13-35). Jesus yet again becomes their unseen hope.

I believe this story carries some powerful insights for our common life and mission as Anglican Christians today. The road in this story can remind us of the *via media*, that our life together is marked

not only by movement but also restless travel. Like those two disciples in the story, this road is best traveled with others and it will be marked by intense conversation and vigorous debate, even over the most basic aspects of our common life, like the Scriptures and the traditions. This is not, however, a road marked by certainty and perfect clarity of vision. To be sure, there are moments, there are glimpses of breath-taking insight when our unseen hope actually does appear along the road and in our midst and it can set our hearts to racing with anticipation and even joy – but just as quickly that moment vanishes yet again.

The strong temptation in such moments is to settle down there, to cease our traveling and settle down on that very spot of joyful encounter. I suspect few of us would be surprised if those disciples had decided to build a shrine in Emmaus, and started collecting money for its upkeep and maintenance, and established a committee to set policies for visitors, and devised rituals to honor what happened on that very spot. What I've just described, of course, the institutional history of Christianity, the history of settling down and getting organized, the history of establishing patterns and procedures for a well-ordered community. And there are many reasons to be profoundly grateful for that history.

But that's not what happened in Luke's story. Those disciples did not stay in Emmaus. That very hour of Eucharistic encounter of breaking bread, Luke says – not the next morning or the next week, but that very hour they took to the road again, animated by the restless energy of their unseen hope, fueled by their sense of mission. And this, it seems to me, suggests one of the strangest and frequently overlooked aspects of Christian life and liturgy: *The Eucharist is not supposed to be satisfying.*

Even though the word Eucharist means thanksgiving, it's not supposed to make us feel the way we so often do after feasting on our late-November Thanksgiving Day meal – full and bloated. There's a theological reason why we receive only a morsel of bread and just a sip of wine at that Eucharistic table. Rather than providing satisfaction, the Eucharist is supposed to awaken our desire and sharpen our hunger – not just for more bread and more wine, but our desire and hunger for the new world God has promised in Christ, our yearning to at last fully join the dance of life. The mere nibble we receive at the Eucharistic table can remind us that God's abundant life has not yet arrived in its fullness and that the choreography for divine Communion is far from finished.

Let's be honest here: the fierce debates today and that sense of crisis with which we're living as Anglican Christians can and do sometimes derive from superficial and even petty aspirations for institutional power and control; Christians are, after all, just as human as anyone else. Upon closer scrutiny, however, even the most crass political maneuvers can point to a deeper theological and spiritual insight. Rather than merely tolerating our Anglican tendency to argue and disagree, embracing those unsettled qualities of our institutional life can serve as a critically important reminder. While this reminder should by now be blindingly obvious, I think it's crucial to say it out loud from time to time: The church is *not* the kingdom of God. Or to put this in another way, just like our participation in the Eucharist, life in the church is not supposed to satisfy us. To the contrary, it's supposed to awaken that restless energy of unseen hope, that energy of mission on the road to a new world.

It is that restlessness and the courageous faith it inspires that make us church, a people who insist on hoping for more than we can now see. The perpetually unsettled and at times, turbulent relations in the worldwide Anglican Communion and even here at home in our own dioceses and in our own congregations can actually give voice to the good news of Christian faith: There is still more to hope for in our dance with God.

In the meantime – in these times of uncertainty and transition toward a new world – Luke's Emmaus road story gives us something quite practical to do, something with which Anglican Christians are already quite familiar. Luke encourages us to share a meal. More than that – and this seems particularly important for Anglican Christians today – this story can remind us that one of the most courageous and therefore faithful things we can do is to break bread with strangers, to share that meal with those who are different from us. And this, Luke seems to be saying, is quite simply yet quite profoundly how we dance with hope.

**CONGREGATIONS IN UNION with CONVENTION  
of the DIOCESE OF EASTERN MICHIGAN  
October 21 and 22, 2005**

<u>Place</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Organized</u>	<u>Admitted</u>
Alma	Gratiot	St. John's	1885	1995
Alpena	Alpena	Trinity	1866	1995
Atlanta	Montmorency	St. Mark's	1960	1995
Bad Axe	Huron	St. Paul's	1881	1995
Bay City	Bay	St. Alban's	1965	1995
Bay City	Bay	Trinity	1854	1995
Bridgeport	Saginaw	St. Mark's	1962	1995
Cheboygan	Cheboygan	St. James'	1880	1995
Corunna	Shiawassee	St. Paul's	1865	1995
Davison	Genesee	St. Dunstan's	1953	1995
Dryden	Lapeer	St. John's	1902	1995
East Tawas	Iosco	Christ	1880	1995
Fenton	Genesee	St. Jude's	1860	1995
Flint	Genesee	Christ (inactive) **	1907	1995
Flint	Genesee	St. Andrew's	1915	1995
Flint	Genesee	St. Paul's	1839	1995
Flushing	Genesee	Trinity	1942	1995
Gaylord	Otsego	St. Andrew's	1954	1995
Gladwin	Gladwin	St. Paul's	1903	1995
Grand Blanc	Genesee	St. Christopher's	1941	1995
Grayling	Crawford	St. Francis'	1956	1995
Harrisville	Alcona	St. Andrew's-by-the-Lake	1956	1995
Harsens Island	St. Clair	St. Paul's	1926	1995
Higgins Lake	Roscommon	St. Elizabeth's	1959	1995
Hillman	Montmorency	Calvary	1884	1995
Holly	Oakland	Nativity Community Church	1961	1995
Indian River	Cheboygan	Transfiguration	1958	1995
Lapeer	Lapeer	Grace	1878	1995
Lexington	Sanilac	Trinity	1871	1995
Long Rapids	Alpena	Grace	1896	1995
Marine City	St. Clair	St. Mark's	1863	1995
Marysville	St. Clair	All Saints'	1953	1995
Midland	Midland	Holy Family	1957	1995
Midland	Midland	St. John's	1870	1995

Congregations in Union with Convention, continued --

<u>Place</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Organized</u>	<u>Admitted</u>
Mio	Oscoda	St. Bartholomew's	1987	1995
Otter Lake	Lapeer	St. John's	1883	1995
Owosso	Shiawassee	Christ	1858	1995
Port Huron	St. Clair	Grace	1840	1995
Port Huron	St. Clair	St. Paul's	1873	1995
Rogers City	Presque Ile	St. Luke's	1942	1995
Rose City	Ogemaw	St. Andrew's	1948	1995
Saginaw	Saginaw	Calvary Memorial	1889	1995
Saginaw	Saginaw	St. John's	1851	1995
Saginaw	Saginaw	St. Matthew's	1954	1995
Saginaw	Saginaw	St. Paul's	1854	1995
St. Clair	St. Clair	St. Paul's	1848	1995
St. Johns	Clinton	St. John's	1864	1995
Sand Point	Huron	St. John's	1957	1995
Sandusky	Sanilac	St. John's	1903	1995
Standish	Arenac	Grace	1901	1995
West Branch	Ogemaw	Trinity	1901	1995

\*\*Now known as Christ Enrichment Center