

The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth E-Newsletter



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Welcome from the Communication Director

Welcome to the first edition of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth E-Newsletter. Our plan is to send this out every other month.

"Welcome" is a theme that seems to be defining our diocese these days, as congregations both in their buildings and in alternate spaces welcome all to join in worship, ministry, and outreach. We are the incarnation of the familiar church signs that say "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You."

Web minister Elinor Normand and I hope that this newsletter will become yet another of the many ties that bind us together as we all work in this part of The Episcopal Church to reconcile the world to God through Jesus Christ.

The newsletter will mirror information that is on our diocesan web site, www.episcopaldiocesefortworth.org and offer you information and resources that we hope will be of use to you in your ministry, whatever form that takes. We haven't yet named this newsletter. Please send us your suggestions.

Please feel free to send information, story suggestions, and photos to us to include in future issues of the newsletter. (Remember, we do not identify children by name on the web site and we do not use their photos without permission of their parents or guardians. We have a model photo release form if you need one.)

Please forward this to any of your friends who have not yet signed up for it. It is easy to do – it's the Texas Two-Step. Just go to the diocesan website.

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In this issue:

Gwichyaa Zhee

A message from Bp. Ohl

Diocesan Youth News

Social Media and You

The 139th Niobrara Convocation

Niobrara History

St. Luke's – Stephenville News

Building Up Hope

Gwichyaa Zhee (Gwich'in for "house on the flats")

By the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor

One of All Saints' Wichita Falls seven outreach programs is to assist with expenses necessary to teach and train Native leaders in the vast interior of Alaska. Of the 24 congregations in the Interior Deanery, only seven can be reached by road. The other 17 congregations can only be reached by airplane, boat or snow machine. Most of the churches in the Interior are simple one-room log structures, without offices, phones or indoor plumbing and often heated with wood-burning stoves. Only nine of the 24 congregations have resident clergy; however, this does not mean that the other 15 churches are not active. Strong lay leaders take responsibility for the life of many of these congregations, while others struggle to keep the faith alive.

The Yukon River dominates the geography of the Interior Deanery. It is 1,875 miles long, 1,400 of those miles lie within Alaska...the remainder in Canada. The people of the Interior rely on the river for transportation in the summer months, and for their food supply...a run of salmon that arrives usually in mid-June.

Gwich'in Anglicans have been in world news over the last several years as prominent opponents of oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Almost 20 years ago our General Convention at Phoenix passed a resolution, at behest of Gwich'in people, opposing exploration in the Refuge. – Owanah Anderson

I have come to Gwichyaa Zhee (Fort Yukon) once again. I first came here in the fall of 1993 with the Rev. Anna Frank. It was so long ago that I don't remember our purpose for the trip. But, I do remember this. One of the Elders, Annie James, told Anna to come over to her house because she had fresh moose nose cooking. Anna became excited and told Annie that "we" would be over. I facetiously thought, "Oh great, just what I want, fresh moose nose."



*The Rev. Canon
Ginny Doctor*

Later we walked over and Annie told us to help ourselves. Anna dished up two bowls of moose nose. I said to myself, "I am just going to eat this fast and get it over with." So, I did, didn't look at anything or anyone, just ate moose nose. It was okay. Anna looked at my empty bowl and asked if I wanted more and I told her no because I knew she would want more.



*The Ven.
Anna Frank*

She looked away and then said, "You weren't supposed to eat the hair." If I had been watching Anna eat, I would have learned that. I broke one of my own rules; we always have to watch what people of the land do when we come from outside of that land. So, now I probably have a moose hair ball in my stomach!

Things have changed in Gwichyaa Zhee since 1993, especially with St. Stephen's Church. Our work in Fort Yukon is bounded in a great history. The English came from Canada down the Yukon River and brought mission when the land was still Russian territory. American Episcopalians established mission among the Athabascan Indians at Fort Yukon in 1898; the present little log church building was erected in 1942.

St. Stephen's is resplendent with many saints, both militant and triumphant. The years without full time clergy have taken its toll on our facilities but not the hearts of the people who remain steadfast, faithful Episcopalians. Last June, one of our Gwich'in clergy accepted a call to St. Stephen's. Mary Nathaniel was a deacon for many years but then discerned a call to the priesthood. The people then discerned a call to the priesthood. The people of St. Stephen's struggle to provide Mary with housing and a modest stipend.

My purpose for this trip to Fort Yukon was two-fold. Firstly, all of our facilities are in need of repair and I needed to get a sense of what we should tackle first and what kind of resources are available in Fort Yukon.

Secondly, Mary asked me to help her do training in the use of the Book of Common Prayer and teaching confirmation class. Mary is often called upon to travel to Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek, and Beaver, three Gwich'in villages without clergy, and wanted to train lay readers to do Morning Prayer and funerals in the event she was unable to travel to them. We trained two women and two men. Now we have to follow up with encouragement.



St. Stephen's, Fort Yukon, AK



*Gracie Thomas, trainee,
with
the Rev. Mary Nathaniel
in a birch grove*

After the training, we talked about the Mission House that sadly is caving in. Mary presently lives there and would like to stay there if we can fix it. She remembers the Rev. Walter Hannum, one of those militant saints who was the priest at St. Stephen's in the 1950's. He had a choir that she sang in and said she remembers those hymns from the 1940 Hymnal. She also remembers Father Hannum having classes in the Mission House. There was a long table with him and other men sitting there, teaching and learning. This was the Yukon Flats Training Center where Father Hannum trained folks like David Salmon, Titus Peter and Donald Oktollik. He was preparing them for ordination and all three were ordained by Bishop Gordon. All three are now saints triumphant.

Maybe what we did here today will inspire and excite the hearts of others to take on the ministry. I keep telling folks, "It's OUR ministry. It's OUR responsibility. Father is not coming home!"

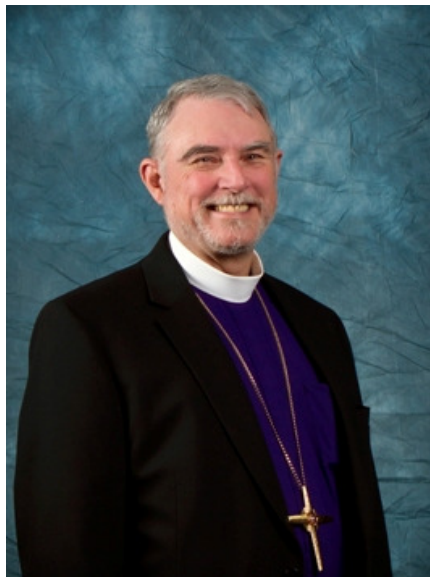
After church we went out to the home of one of the Church Committee members. She cooked a delicious goose dinner with all the fixings. We dined at her outdoor kitchen and I can't remember a goose tasting so good. It was snowing cotton wood, and that means the salmon are on their way. We ate, talked and shared many laughs. It was a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon and it reminded me of my homelands when my grandmother would cook all day Saturday so she could feed everyone on Sunday afternoon.

Soon it was time to climb aboard the Navajo Piper and head back to Fairbanks. Gwichyaa Zhee is one place that I don't wonder if I'll be back because I know God draws me there. This is a holy land with many holy people, past and present. We, with the help of our supporters have to keep the holiness going just like those two rivers, the Yukon and Porcupine keep flowing and going.



St. Stephen's church has a moose hide frontal with tiny bead embroidery, made to honor returning veterans from World War II. Among the women who helped make the frontal was Hannah Solomon, now age 103. She made tippetts for seven presiding bishops from James DeWolf Perry (1931-1937) to Frank Griswold (1998-2007).

A Message from Bishop Ohl



Thank you for reading the new e-newsletter. My hope is that you will find this a valuable communication tool and will encourage everyone you know to do the "Texas two-step" to register and receive the e-newsletter themselves.

As an inaugural offering I want to fill you in on some of my travels for the summer. In mid-June Sheila and I were planning to travel to the Black Hills of South Dakota for the 139th Niobrara Convocation of the Lakota and Dakota Indians. (Most people use the term Sioux for these peoples.)

However, having to deal with storm damage to our home meant we had to cancel those plans. Sandy Shockley from St. Mary's Hamilton and her granddaughter were able to go, however, and her account can be found in this newsletter.

This year the Convocation was held at the Diocese of South Dakota's Camp Thunderhead in the Black Hills near Lead, SD. The Niobrara Convocation is NOT a powwow, but a several day prayer meeting. The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, the ECW and other groups make presentations, and congregations from all of the reservations make offerings to sustain the mission work that continues across Indian Country in South Dakota.

Why spend our time going to the Convocation? The Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth is in the process of developing a companion relationship with the Diocese of South Dakota, especially the Convocation. One need not travel to Africa, Central America, or other far off places to discover poverty and need, and especially to find Episcopalians who are struggling within the boundaries of poverty to proclaim the Good News of God in Christ. You may not know that the two poorest counties in the United States are on reservations in South Dakota. And yet our work continues.

I have been moved to tears on many occasions as congregations and individuals have presented their offerings to the bishop, offerings that embarrass me because of their sacrificial depth. One wonderful 104-year-old woman made her offering in the Dakota language and presented a check for far more than anything I could imagine. She has now become my image for the widow offering her "mite" at the Temple in Jerusalem.

My prayer for this year was that we could begin to outline some ongoing connections between parishes in the Diocese of Fort Worth and missions on the "rez", and Sandy was indeed able to begin that work. I ask all of us to open our hearts to respond to need -- both the needs of the Convocation and our need to learn from our brothers and sisters in South Dakota.

Sheila and I will travel to St. Paul, Minnesota for the Episcopal Youth Event with 9 youth and 3 leaders from Fort Worth and 2 youth from Dallas who will be travelling with us. EYE, as it is called, is a gathering of high school aged youth from all over the Episcopal Church, including those in many of the other countries that TEC covers, including Haiti, Honduras, Taiwan, Europe, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. This year is the first time youth from the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth have attended EYE, and I am delighted that we have such a great group who are attending.

EYE is a boisterous, energetic, frenetic time for teaching, connecting with about 2000 youth from around the Church, worship, and MUSIC, lots of LOUD MUSIC! The joy that these young

people bring and share with one another and with us who are the adult leaders is absolutely infectious.

I have been to EYE several times, and each one has been more inspiring than the last. The first EYE I attended in Terra HOT (it was 114 degrees two days we were there) saw only 6 bishops present. We six began to encourage other bishops to attend to encourage their youth in ministry development. There are, I believe, 35 or so registered for St. Paul. The young Christians are delighted to have their own bishop present and participating in EYE. I am convinced that my presence is vital to the ongoing work of developing young Christians in Fort Worth for years to come.

I ask that you pray for our youth and leaders in attendance at EYE in St. Paul June 22-26th. Pray for safety in travel, for energy (especially for our adult leaders) and for joy for all. My guess is that you will hear from our young Christians about this life changing event. Thank you for reading the new e-newsletter, and thanks in advance for encouraging others to register to receive it themselves. May the summer be a time of refreshment and spiritual renewal for you and for all of our diocese.



Diocesan Youth News

EYE a big hit with Fort Worth youth



Waiting at DFW for delayed flight

Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth was well represented at the Episcopal Youth Conference 2011 held in Minneapolis/St Paul, MN. There were ten youths total in the delegation: eight from the Fort Worth diocese, and two from the Dallas diocese. Four of the teens were from St Martin-Keller, two from St Stephen's-Hurst, one from St Mary's-Hamilton, one from All Saints-Wichita Falls.

The EYE is a triennial gathering of youth from throughout the Episcopal Church. There were about 800 youth gathered from as far away as Hawaii, Ecuador, and Europe. This EYE was more technologically linked than any previous. There were live Twitter and Facebook conversations happening 24/5 (we were there five days). From beginning to end, there were more than 12,000 Facebook posts. The conversations are still happening. If you are interested, the Twitter tag is #eye2011, and the Facebook page is EYE 2011: Episcopal Youth Event.

Music and worship were also quite innovative at this EYE. The event featured an amazing live band. Most of the music was quite traditional but also very upbeat. All present were encouraged to move, dance, clap, and have fun praising God.

The speakers were engaging and challenging to this newest generation of Episcopalians. Dr. Rodger Nishioka was a crowd favorite as he challenged the teens to take on their roles as prophets in the church. (A video of Dr. Nishioka presentation is on our website.) The presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Katherine Jefferts Schori, opened the EYE worship with words of global stewardship. (A video of Presiding Bishop's sermon is on our website.) The Rt. Rev. Brian Prior, Bishop of Minnesota, closed the EYE worship after blessing the Habitat for Humanity



Blessing the Habitat House

house built on site and hearing the sermon preached by Bonnie Anderson, president of the House of Deputies.

All of the teens and adults in the Ft Worth delegation were excited to have Bishop Wallis Ohl's interaction. There were shared meals, stories and many laughs. It was fun to watch Bp. Ohl two-step in the procession from the Habitat house into the closing worship!

Fall Rally

The Diocesan Youth Council is hosting a Fall Rally at Camp Carter on September 24th. The Rally will take place from 10am to 5:30 pm. Themes are "Come as you are" and Hospitality, with presentations on prayer, EYE, a scavenger hunt and other fun activities. All youth of the diocese who are in junior and senior high are invited. Event Coordinators are The Rev. Amy Haynie, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, e-mail: amy_david_75077@yahoo.com and Rob Huttmeier, St. Stephen's, Hurst, e-mail: robhuttmeier@yahoo.com.


Youth Ministers Network

The first meeting of the Youth Ministers Network was held on June 6th at St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Youth ministers from around the Diocese met over dinner to offer peer support and exchange resources. These meetings will continue every month at different locations. The next meeting is on July 16 at 6 pm; the location is still being confirmed.




Social Media and You


Whether Twitter and Facebook are mysteries to you or things you use frequently, Br. Thomas Squiers, the Social Media Coordinator for the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, can be of assistance.

 Br. Thomas sends out news feeds on Twitter and Facebook regularly. Some daily feeds include meditations, mentions of Saints Days and other feasts, etc.

"You can follow the diocese daily on Twitter at www.twitter.com/DioFW. If you have a Twitter account, our "handle" is DioFW. If you are tweeting, don't forget to use our hashtag #DioFW at the end of your tweet," Thomas said.

 "On Facebook - we now have a NEW page (which means if you are on the old page - you need to add yourself to our new page due to Facebook's change in how they do Pages)

which can be found here: <http://j.mp/lb7WG5>. Just go to that page and click "Like" so that you can begin receiving postings in your feed."

 RSS (short for Really Simple Syndication) is used to publish frequently updated works, such as blog entries and news headlines. They benefit readers who want to subscribe to timely updates from favored websites. You can subscribe to a feed by clicking a feed icon in your web browser that initiates the subscription process. RSS allows users to avoid manually inspecting all of the websites they are interested in and instead subscribe to websites so that all new content is pushed onto their browsers when it becomes available. To set up your own RSS feed, click on the RSS symbol on our homepage.

And of course, you can also keep up with what is going on by checking the diocesan website regularly: www.episcopaldiocesefortworth.org. Please consider signing up to receive e-mails from the diocese here: <http://bit.ly/mdwQcq>.

And if all of this seems like a foreign language, Br. Thomas is available to help translate. "You can call on me directly and I will be happy to go over this with you. I also assist parishes with Social Media setups, etc. Just send me an e-mail at SocialMediaCoordinator@episcopaldiocesefortworth.org if you need further assistance," Br. Thomas said.



Niobrara - 2011

"Everywhere I looked, I saw a lot of need."

Sandy Shockley of St. Mary's, Hamilton, attended the Niobrara Convocation in South Dakota in mid-June. Bishop Wallis Ohl and his wife Sheila had planned to also attend, but storm damage to their home in Oklahoma required their attention. So Shockley was on her own, a situation to which she adapted in no time.



*Bp. John Tarrant,
wife Pat and daughter Jessica*

"The country in the Black Hills is gorgeous. I arrived there on a beautiful Wednesday afternoon and was the first guest to register. I met a lot of wonderful folks, including the bishop of South Dakota, John Tarrant, his wife Pat, and their daughter Jessica. I also met the Venerable Paul Sneve, archdeacon at St. Matthews in Rapid City, and the women from the ECW of the Black Hills Deanery," Shockley said.

"Bishop Tarrant assured me there is a great deal of mission and outreach needed in the diocese. I met the wife of the priest representing the Diocese of East Tennessee and it is my thought that since we are both companion dioceses to South Dakota we might jointly do some mission work together. More hands make the work lighter," she said.

"Everywhere I looked I saw a lot of need. I did not realize there was so much discrimination still going on. They are working very hard to save as many Native American young people as they can. I hope we can be a big part of that effort," Shockley said.

One of the first things Shockley noticed when she arrived was that the sign at the entrance to



Battered sign

Thunderhead Camp is in really bad shape. When she remarked on that to Tom Lutes, supervisor of facilities and maintenance, he replied that it was on a long list of things that needed to be done with very little money.

"Well, those of you who know me know what I did then. I promised a new sign. So I am asking for contributions, and what isn't used for the sign will be sent to the Diocese of South Dakota for other needed work."

Shockley presented all the women with Guardian Angel necklaces as gifts from the Diocese of Fort Worth. She also helped set up chairs in the large tent used for worship services and meetings. The weather had turned cold

(41 degrees), windy and rainy, presenting a challenge for Shockley's wardrobe, which was more suited to Texas heat. But she persevered, attending the opening worship which was in the Dakota language, and all the meetings. She also was present at the Sunday ordination of Patricia Whitehorse Carda to the priesthood, and at an auction of quilts to raise money for the mission.



Ordination of Patricia Whitehorse Carda

"I was presented with a beautiful quilt in a Star pattern as a gift from the ladies," Shockley said. She plans to have a table at diocesan convention with information about the Diocese of South Dakota and will offer the quilt for sale at a silent auction as a fund raiser.

She also met Brother John from Taize in France. He and the Rev. Rita Powell, the coordinator for youth and young adult ministries for the diocese, are working to put together a Taize event next summer in South Dakota. The Rev. Powell took a group of young people to the Episcopal Youth Event in Minneapolis after the Niobrara Convocation ended.

"I gave Rita all the Guardian Angel necklaces and Transformation Crosses that I had left to give as gifts to the young people and included a note saying they were from the people of the Fort Worth Diocese," Shockley said.

Next year's convocation will be in the southern part of North Dakota on the Missouri River near Fort Yates.

"I would love to see a wagon train of motor homes and travel trailers arrive there from Fort Worth. We have a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the health of some of the missions on the reservations," she said.

IF YOU GIVE, please make the checks out to the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth with "Thunderhead Camp, SD" in the memo line. Mail the checks to the diocesan offices at 3550 Southwest Loop 820, Fort Worth, TX 76133.



Niobrara History

The first Niobrara Convocation was held in 1870 and except for few interruptions, this summer gathering has been held annually at different venues on the nine South Dakota Indian Reservations. The character of Niobrara Convocation is described by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, an award winning author, daughter of a Lakota priest and mother of another:

The Niobrara Convocation, although it has no Indian ceremonials with it, has served the same social function as the old Sun Dance, when friends and relatives came together in the summer from all directions. The convocation custom of the Indians from the different reservations camping together was not unlike the traditional affairs held in the camp circle each summer by the various tribes.



Harney Peak which rises 7,244 feet in S.D. Black Hills

Several presiding bishops and one president of the United States – Calvin Coolidge in 1927 – have attended Niobrara Convocations. Twenty-one hundred were present in 1987 at Rosebud Reservation when Edmond Browning was a guest. As many as 4,000 came by buckboard and model-T in 1920. An old priest told of a thousand tents dotting the hillside at the Church of Our Most Merciful Savior on the Santee Reservation near the hamlet of Santee, Nebraska.

Niobrara is the name of a small river in northeast Nebraska. Niobrara was also once the name of an Episcopal diocese which had no geo-graphical boundaries but had jurisdictional oversight of the Great Sioux Nation and thereby over-

sight of all Lakota/Dakota peoples of the high plains. And, Niobrara is the name of one of the Reservations of the Diocese of South Dakota, although, in fact, it's located in Nebraska.

It was to the valley of the Niobrara River that the Santee Sioux were banished following the "Minnesota uprising" of 1862. After years of government treachery and deceit, the Santee people rose up and broke free of the Minnesota Valley reservation. Many lives were lost, and despite the fact that Santee Christians saved the lives of missionaries and some settlers, all of the surviving Indians were imprisoned and later expelled to the Dakota Territory. Thirty eight were hanged, virtually without trial and no interpreters, at Mankato, Minnesota.

In the late 1800s—when the buffalo was gone, the Indian wars over and Reservation scheme in place—the U.S. government assigned various churches oversight of Indian tribes. The Episcopal Church was assigned the "the Great Sioux Nation." At one time 28 Episcopal chapels dotted the Pine Ridge, the largest of the South Dakota reservations and home of the Oglala Lakota. The Black Hills, sacred to several tribes, were within the boundaries of Pine Ridge Reservation. The boundary was short lived. In violation of the Fort Laramie Treaty that forbade Anglo presence, George Armstrong Custer led an expedition into



The Rev. Samuel D. Hinman

the Black Hills in 1874 and discovered gold. A hundred-plus years later the U.S. Supreme Court ruled seizure of the Black Hills to have been illegal and in uncommonly terse language the Court stressed:

. . . a more ripe and rank case of dishonorable dealing will never, in all probability, be found in our history.

The Court recommended compensation for the land; the Congress appropriated \$17-million which is sitting somewhere, drawing interest. The tribes emphatically stated that they wanted the land back not the money. To this day, the issue is unresolved.

The Episcopal Church is on record in support of returning the land to the tribes. However, the Diocese of South Dakota owns a camp in the Black Hills, and it is there that the 139th Niobrara Convocation took place.

Third World Living Conditions

Year after year the poverty rate of America shows that the poorest counties of the U.S. are located on South Dakota Indian Reservations, and Pine Ridge Reservation usually holds the record for being the poorest of all:

- As of 2011, population estimates of the Pine Ridge Reservation range from 28,000 to 40,000.
- 80% of residents are unemployed (versus 10% of the rest of the country);
- 49% of the residents live below the Federal poverty level (61% under the age of 18);
- Per Capita income in Shannon County is \$6,286;
- Native American amputation rates due to diabetes is 3 to 4X higher than the national average;
- Death rate due to diabetes is 3X higher than the national average;
- Life expectancy on the Pine Ridge is the lowest in the Western World, 48 years for men and 52 for women;
- Teenage suicide rate on the Pine Ridge Reservation is 150% higher than the U.S. national average for this age group;
- The infant mortality rate is the highest on this continent and is about 300% higher than the U.S. national average;
- More than half the Reservation's adults battle addiction and disease. Alcoholism, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and malnutrition are pervasive.



For your information:

On December 26, 1862, the US Army carried out the largest mass execution in U.S. history at Mankato following the Dakota War of 1862. Thirty-eight Dakota Native Americans were hanged for their parts in the uprising. A military tribunal had sentenced 303 to death. President Lincoln reviewed the record and pardoned 265, believing they had been involved in legitimate defense against military forces. Episcopal Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple had urged leniency in the case, but his position was not politically popular in Minnesota. Lincoln's intervention was not popular at the time. Two commemorative statues are located on the site of the hangings (now home to the Blue Earth County Library and Reconciliation Park).



St. Luke's - Stephenville News

Worship and fellowship have taken center stage for the summer at St. Luke's – Stephenville.

- On June 12, St. Luke's hosted its annual fish-fry following the 10am service.
- On June 25, more than 40 parishioners and friends attended the Texas Rangers baseball game against the New York Mets.
- An Independence Day Weekend cookout is planned for July 3, following the 10am service.
- St. Luke's is also planning its fall Sunday school schedule with a big "back to school" / St. Hamburger's Day festival at the end of August.
- In addition, ministry plans are being discussed for the newly-chartered Episcopal Campus Ministry at Tarleton State University.



Building up Hope

"Building Up Hope" is the theme of the 29th Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth will be November 18 and 19 at the City of Hurst Conference Center, 1601 Campus Drive, Hurst, 76054.

It comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:10-12.

⁹⁻¹¹God didn't set us up for an angry rejection but for salvation by our Master, Jesus Christ. He died for us, a death that triggered life. Whether we're awake with the living or asleep with the dead, we're alive with him! So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it. ¹²⁻¹³And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. Overwhelm them with appreciation and love!

Specific plans for the convention are in process now. Discussions include ways to organize the convention around, as Executive Council member Jackie Meeks put it, "faith building." At their May meeting, Executive Council members suggested that the non-business parts of the convention should be designed to support and enhance the ministry of the diocese – to be an additional expression of the work being done by our parishes and missions. It also was suggested that convention would be a good time to recognize the "heroes" among us, the largely unsung saints who day in and day out go about the work of the church.

So stay tuned – this is shaping up to be a different kind of convention than this diocese has seen before.

