

## Update from the 235<sup>th</sup> Convention - Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

Thank you all for the opportunity to represent Advent at this year's convention.

It was the first Diocese Convention I have ever attended and thought it would be neat to share some of the highlights I observed and experienced.

- It is amazing when you think the 1<sup>st</sup> Convention was held in 1783 and this has gone on for 253 consecutive years.
- 400+ people singing in the Cathedral at 38<sup>th</sup> & Market Street in Philadelphia, PA sounds really impressive.
- For the first time, this convention tried electronic voting using hand held devices. It worked OK on some simple elections where we were only voting for (1) person, but on the more complex elections where 3-4 people had to be voted on and elected at the same time it broke down and we needed to go back to the paper ballot system.
- I never realized that to be elected to any Diocesan position it requires a candidate to receive votes from 50% or more of the clergy, and votes from 50% or more of the churches. Advent as a church receives (1) vote, so our (3) representatives needed a majority consensus on who to vote for. Lynn Hade, as clergy, receives (1) vote. It can take multiple ballots until a person(s) running meets the above requirement and is elected.
- There were (5) key resolutions reviewed and voted on at this convention. These are approved by a simple majority of people present, so basically everyone gets a vote in this area.
- The key resolution was whether or not to allow the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania to Incorporate. Incorporation has a multitude of key organization and operational advantages which made a lot of sense to me. It should allow the Diocese to operate much smoother and more quickly than it has in the past. There was overwhelming support for this resolution, so allowing the Diocese to incorporate did pass.
- Each resolution comes up for a vote. Two microphones are provided, one is for "Pro" the resolution and the other is for "Con". Anyone present may participate. They alternate between Pro & Con around each resolution for a maximum of (20) minutes and then a final vote is taken. No one person has more than (3) minutes to speak. Most of the debate only lasted 5-7 minutes or less.
- Lunch was really good. I had a great roast beef sandwich. 😊
- The Diocese is living off of the interest or revenue its endowment generates. The 140+ churches in the Diocese only contribute to about 65% of the budget. The Diocese is running a (-\$873,000) budget deficit in 2019. It is not a healthy long-term situation, but it works especially since the stock market is up and the endowment (at \$75 Million) is healthy.....right now.
- Almost 60% of the 2019 Diocese budget is for outreach mission work.
- Based on what I can see from the 2019 budget the Diocese is running pretty lean and does not appear to have too much extra labor capacity.
- Our own Lynn Hade was elected to the Diocese "Disciplinary Board". Hopefully, she will have nothing to do in the foreseeable future.

- Bishop Gutierrez has done a great job of uniting this Diocese. This convention felt positive with a lot of hope and energy going forward.
- I thought my first experience at Convention would be equivalent to watching paint dry. It had its moments, but for the most part I look forward to going next year.
- I would highly recommend to any of you to consider running as a Diocese Representative at our annual parish meeting in May. It opens your perspective around the church and the great things we are doing in other areas in the Diocese, plus it is a very easy job that only requires one evening and one day to perform your yearly duties.

If you have any other questions around this year's convention feel free to reach out to me.

Karl New