

## **Report from the General Convention DioCPA Delegation**

The 81st General Convention occurred June 23-28, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky. The Diocese of Central PA was represented by four clergy deputies, four lay deputies, and one alternate from each order. The deputies were The Rev. Shayna Watson, The Rev. Canon Kate Harrigan, The Rev. Jennifer Mattson, The Rev. Grant Ambrose, and The Rev. Anjel Scarborough. Lay deputies were Ms. Amy Swiernik, Canon Anthony Alexander, Ms. Sarah Reid, Ms. Drew Dorgan, and Mr. David Wirick. All deputies had opportunities to vote in legislation. Bishop Scanlan was present in the House of Bishops. Bishop Baxter and Mrs. Baxter were also there in their respective roles. The diocese was also represented in the official Youth Delegation of the church and supported by diocesan staff serving in various roles. We had a well-represented group from the ECW, and The Stevenson School for Ministry participated in the Exhibition Hall. In addition, there were numerous volunteers who represented various ministries and who helped staff the General Convention. We were well represented!

Three Deputies served on Legislative Committees. The Rev. Canon Kate Harrigan served on Committee #15, Environmental Stewardship and Care of Creation. This committee focuses on environmental issues and seeks to support parishes and dioceses in being responsive to caring for creation and the environment, as well as establishing programs, networks, and initiatives for the Care of Creation.

Dr. Anthony Alexander served on Committee #14, Ecumenical & Interreligious Relations. The committee receives and proposes resolutions on relations between TEC and churches outside the Anglican Communion, and it seeks dialogue, communication, and action with other religions. Ms. Amy Swiernik served on Committee #13, Stewardship & Socially Responsible Investing. The committee receives and proposes resolutions on stewardship and socially responsible investing.

### **Legislative/Election Highlights**

The list provided below are actions the Deputies of the Diocese highlighted. A full list of actions taken by the full House of Deputies can be accessed at [www.generalconvention.org](http://www.generalconvention.org)

- The election of the House of Deputies President and Vice President
- The election of the Presiding Bishop
- Removal of enslavers from the calendar of commemorations listed in the calendar of the church year
- Persons added to the calendar of commemorations listed in the calendar of the church year, including Harriet Tubman and Howard Thurman
- Affirmation of the Navajo Lands becoming a missionary diocese.
- Changes to the lectionary, catechism, marriage rite, and Eucharistic Prayer C to have more inclusive language
- Authorized use of alternative texts for Good Friday liturgy.

- Affirmation of the continued conversation toward Full Communion with the United Methodist Church
- Calling for a ceasefire in Gaza
- Celebrate the Juncture of the Episcopal Dioceses of Eastern and Western Michigan
- Creation of a staff position for Director of LGBTQI and Women's Ministry
- Establish a Standing Commission on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
- Amending the Constitution and Canons relating to the Mergers of Dioceses
- Declare Gun Violence a national Health Crisis

### **Impressions**

Deputies reported a feeling of hopefulness and gratitude at the opportunity to participate in the wider polity of the church. The ongoing work of the Convention and the interim bodies shape the future of the church and work toward truth-telling and reconciliation for the errors of the past. The General Convention allows reconnecting with friends and colleagues in ministry that impact all Episcopalians from the parish level to the wider church. The host diocese provided a fun night, including a disco, food trucks, and other cultural events. A walk hosted by the Bishops against Gun Violence was well attended. There were many opportunities to worship together from a night of Revival to gathering for Morning Prayer and Eucharist which were deeply meaningful times of prayer.

The Spirit moved in mighty ways at this gathering. We truly are the Episcopal Branch of the Jesus Movement and enthusiastically so. We have done so much good work but it is obvious we have much work yet. We celebrated the juncture of dioceses in Michigan and Wisconsin as well as the full welcoming of the missionary Diocese of Navajo land. We may soon celebrate our own reunion with the Diocese of Bethlehem at the next General Convention. The old wineskins are being replaced with new wineskins in many ways. We live in exciting times!

The next General Convention will be held in July 2027 in the Diocese of Arizona.