

## Highlights of the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church

I was a deputy to the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention of the Episcopal Church from July 8-11 in Baltimore. This was my second convention as a deputy from the Diocese of Easton. Our deputies consisted of 5 clergy including Rev. Charlie Osberger, Rev. Mary Friel, Rev. Mark Delcuze, Rev. Patrick Collins and Rev. Frank St. Amour and 5 lay including Eddie Vance, Sandra Bjork, Charlotte Meyer, Kathleen Wise and me. Bishop Santosh Maray was our deputy to the House of Bishops. Rev. David Michaud was on the support staff for convention.



*Left to right: Mary Friel, Sandra Bjork, David Michaud, Mark Delcuze, Charlotte Meyer, Tom Shuster, Patrick Collins, Bishop Santosh Marray, Frank St. Amour, Kathleen Wise, Charlei Osberger, Eddie Vance.*

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry delivered the sermon at the Holy Eucharist at the opening convention on Friday, July 8, 2022 in Baltimore, Maryland. He noted that there was a growing gap in public opinion in America between the teachings of Jesus and the people who claim to follow him. He called on all of us to follow Jesus's teachings to walk in love in order to close the gap. Bishop Curry reminds us of the commandment that Jesus gave us "to love each other as I have loved you."

Rev. Gay Jennings, President of the House of Deputies, called the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention to order following the service. The secretary of convention reported that there were 400 clergy and 402 lay deputies in attendance. The convention proceeded to act upon the resolutions offered by the various committees of the church.

The convention adopted several resolutions related to the promotion of racial justice and reconciliation including the creation of an Episcopal Coalition on Racial

Equity and Reconciliation, and establishing funding for truth telling and reconciliation programs regarding the Episcopal Church's operation of Boarding Schools for Native American children.



*Bishop Curry's Sermon*



*Easton Deputies on the House Floor*

The convention adopted a resolution to authorize the comprehensive review of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and other liturgical texts and materials of the church. The convention also voted to continue the Task Force on Ministry to Individuals with Mental Illness.

The convention began the second day with several elections. Julia Ayala Harris of the Diocese of Oklahoma was elected President of the House of Deputies and Rev. Rachel Taber-Hamilton of the Diocese of Olympia was elected Vice President of the House. The house also elected members of the Search Committee for the Next Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council of the Church.



*Julia Ayala Harris accepting the election results*

Following elections, the convention adopted a resolution on Evaluating Experiments in Adaptive Change to the Governance of the Church. Convention also adopted a resolution calling for the Study of Congregation Vitality Indicators and one establishing a Task Force on the State of Membership in the Church.

Convention then focused on the selection of sites for the 82<sup>nd</sup> General Convention in 2027. Following much debate about suitable host states, the convention approved four possible sites: Charlotte, NC, Phoenix, AZ, Pittsburgh, PA and San Juan, PR. The convention also affirmed the selection of Louisville, KY as the site of the 81<sup>st</sup> Convention.

The third day of convention began with Holy Eucharist with a sermon by Bishop Eugene Sutton, of the Diocese of Maryland. The Bishop spoke of the need to tear down the walls of separation and repair what's broken in our lives with love. He called on us to reflect on the truth of our history as a church and strive for reconciliation.



*Bishop Sutton of the Diocese of Maryland, our host in Baltimore*

The Joint Committee on Program, Budget and Finance presented the 2023-2024 Biennial Budget of the church of \$100,493,452 to a joint session of the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops. The budget was later approved by both houses.

Convention then proceeded to adopt a resolution to make Additions to the Calendar of Commemorations of the 2018 Book of Lesser Feasts and Fasts.

The closing day of convention began with Morning Prayer and included a sermon by President -Elect Juia Ayala Harris. She called upon the church to prepare for the future by embracing the “wild violets that grow between the bricks in the patio”. Following prayer, Dr. Rodney Coldren, our convention health monitor, was pleased to announce that only 26 cases Covid-19 had been reported among convention deputies in four days.

On the final day we concluded the last of the elections and adopted a resolution approving Holding Future Convention Committee Meetings and Hearings Prior to Convention in Person and via Virtual Means.

The convention concluded with several resolutions thanking outgoing officers, convention staff and committee leaders, a welcome to the new President and Vice President and a farewell address by President Gay Jennings.



*Gay Jennings Farewell address*



*Easton Deputation Post Convention Meal*

There were many other actions, testimonies, discussions, reports, committee meetings and business conducted at the convention but they are too numerous to mention in this brief report.

Tom Shuster, Deputy, Diocese of Easton