

The 33rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska
St. Matthew's Church, Fairbanks
October 4-7th, 2007
“In the hands of the Holy Spirit”

Thursday October 4th

At the Eucharist immediately preceding the first business session the Rev. David Elsensohn, Chair of the Standing Committee, gave the **State of the Diocese Address**. He pointed out that Bishop MacDonald had helped us to put ‘the gospel in the center of this sacred circle’. Since the Spirit is within and lives in us, Dave requested the bishop’s address committee to circulate among us to listen and see what the Spirit is saying to us, and report to convention later.

Call to order: 8:50 p.m. Dave explained to assembled delegates that in the absence of the bishop, the senior active priest, the Rev. Jim Basinger, would call the meeting to order.

The Rev. Jim Basinger called the **meeting to order** at 8:55p.m.

The Rev. Teresa Thomas was elected **secretary** of convention.

The **roll call** resulted in a quorum.

The Rev. George Silides was appointed **parliamentarian**.

Roberts’ Rules of Order were adopted with exceptions for calling the question and laying on the table. Voting by voting paddles was approved.

The Rev. Dave Elsensohn was unanimously elected **president** of the convention.

The **committees** with the roster as published (see insert #1) were approved with the addition of Dennis Hansen to the Nomination Committee.

Three resolutions not previously filed were read and the convention approved them for inclusion. They were:

Major Gifts Campaign,

Resolution from Anti-Racism team,

Resolution for a suffragan bishop for indigenous peoples, and for a suffragan bishop for congregational development.

The **resolutions** referred to dioceses from the 75th General Convention were **read and received**.

Convention voted to grant **seat and voice** to non-delegates.

An **ad hoc committee for Information Technology** was created, with the Rev. Dawn Allen-Herron, Michelle Evans and John Crittenden as members. Non-delegates Deborah O’Hara and Gail Loken also volunteered to serve.

Convention recessed at 9:40 p.m. until October 5th at 9:15 a.m.

October 5th Friday

Convention reconvened. The Rev. Helen Peters, recalling Bishop Mark with affection, thanked his office for their support, and rejoiced to report that their bell was now

operational in a strengthened belfry.

The Rev. Dave Elsensohn established an **ad hoc committee** of one member from each deanery to **determine the beneficiaries of the convention eucharist offerings**. (NOTE: *Because this committee did not meet, the Standing Committee subsequently designated that the offerings from convention be deposited in the "Delegate Fee Assistance Fund" to help provide scholarships to delegates to the next diocesan convention.*)

Jack Coghill addressed convention on the history, progress, purpose and nature of the **Major Gifts Campaign**. Hiring fund-raising professionals had caused unnecessary expenditure, and this arrangement had been discontinued. The fund had a projected surplus of \$64,000 for two projects, support for the Father David Salmon School of Ministry and the Hudson Stuck Fund for Mission Travel.

For the **Transition Committee** Cathy Davis explained the nature and scope of their activities designed to assist both the outgoing and the incoming bishops. It was moved, seconded and passed that on Saturday convention delegates should decide the city for the consecration of the new bishop on May 2nd 2009.

The Rev. Dave Blanchett distributed manuals for congregational preparedness in the face of disaster, and announced that posters featuring all native ordained ministers in the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska were available.

The Rev. Jan Hotze invited those present to meet later to explore the formation of a prayer-centered fellowship.

The Ven. Norman Elliot provided insight on the membership and workings of the **United Thank Offering Committee**, and read a plaque to be presented to St. Augustine's, Homer, as the recipient of an award for church construction.

A beautiful Power Point presentation informed delegates the record of recent activities of the **Partnership between the dioceses of Navajoland and Alaska**.

For the **Search Committee** Clarence Bolden and Shirley Lee detailed their activities. Questionnaires had already been circulated throughout the diocese, but since it was thought that not everybody had had a chance to weigh in with their suggestions for a new bishop, each deanery was to meet, brainstorm ideas, record and report those to the whole convention assembled in plenary session at a later time.

The Rev. Dave Elsensohn announced **appointments** made by the Standing Committee in place of the bishop to be approved by convention. Present but retiring members of the Standing Committee had been invited to stand for re-election. For the Commission of Mission and Ministry, the Rev. Michael Curran and Marg Snapp with chair Becky Snow, and the Rev. Willard Neakok were appointed. The Rev. Dave Blanchett was appointed to Faith into Tomorrow. In addition, the Standing Committee nominated the Rev. Marilyn Duggar as Treasurer, Eric Wohlforth as Chancellor, and Tim Middleton as Vice-Chancellor. All these nominations were approved by convention. Delegates then dispersed to address questions brought to them by the Search Committee. Convention recessed until Saturday October 6th.

Saturday October 6th

The Standing Committee appointed the Revs. Paul Klitzke and Gordon Blue co-chairs of the **Youth Commission**. The Standing Committee appointed the present memberships of the **Nomination and Elections Committee** and the **Constitution and Canons Committee** to continue until the next convention.

The Rev. George Silides gave an update of progress made at Trinity Episcopal Church in Juneau. The tragedy of the fire that destroyed the historic building had turned into a blessing.

The chair of the **Nomination and Election Committee**, Stacy Thorpe, announced the following candidates successful in being elected:

Standing Committee: The Rev. Enoch Adams (Arctic Coast Deanery clergy), Mary Margaret Davis (Interior Deanery lay), the Rev. Robert Thomas (South Central clergy).

FIT (Faith into tomorrow): Alice Holinger.

Ecclesiastical Court: Winona Hawley.

Youth Commission: Christopher Downey (Arctic Coast Deanery youth), Lillian Johnson (Arctic Coast Deanery adult), the Rev. Bessie Titus (Interior Deanery adult), Haley Hanson (South Central Deanery youth), Gail Loken (South Central Deanery adult), Samantha McNeith (South East Deanery youth), the Rev. George Silides (South East Deanery adult). The youth nominee for the Interior Deanery was ineligible because of her adult status.

General Convention 2009: Elected are the Rev. Bessie Titus (clergy seat #1), the Rev. Michael Burke (clergy seat #2), the Rev. Dave Elsensohn (clergy seat #3), the Rev. Robert Thomas, (clergy seat #4). The Rev. Dave Blanchett (clergy alternate #1), the Rev. Jan Hotze (clergy alternate #2), the Rev. Katherine Hunt (clergy alternate #3), and the Rev. Dawn Allen-Herron (clergy alternate #4). The following lay deputies are: Becky Snow (lay seat #1), Stacy Thorpe (lay seat #2), Clarence Bolden (lay seat #3), and Lana Palmer (lay seat #4). Mary Margaret Davis (lay alternate #1), Mary Ellen Harris, (lay alternate #2), Lena Simmons (lay alternate #3), and Christina Talbott-Clark (lay alternate #4).

Resolutions

Resolution #1 A resolution from the Interior Deanery

BE IT RESOLVED that the 33rd Convention of the Diocese of Alaska supports the Interior Deanery in calling upon the next Bishop of Alaska to call for the election of an Indigenous Suffragan Bishop to serve the Native peoples of Alaska within eighteen months of consecration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Indigenous Suffragan Bishop will provide pastoral and spiritual care for our Indigenous Congregations. *Passed unanimously.*

Resolution #2 A resolution in support of a call for Suffragan Bishops.

BE IT RESOLVED the 33rd Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska

establish immediately a Suffragan Bishop's Task Force to develop a plan for implementation of this resolution, to be acted upon by our newly elected Diocesan Bishop, within 12 months of his or her consecration. *Passed.*

Resolution #3 Resolution in Regard to Bishop's Major Gifts Campaign

BE IT RESOLVED that from this day forward this campaign be known as the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald Major Gifts Campaign and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 2007 Convention adopt the following plan as its initial step towards the continuation and success of this Gifts Campaign.

Phase one of the Bishop's Major Gifts Campaign focused almost exclusively on a capital funds drive aimed at potential donors outside of the Diocese of Alaska. A new phase, Phase II is hereby launched which has two focuses. The first focus is collection of outstanding pledges; the second focus is a renewed effort to establish a program of planned giving in each of our congregations and at the Diocesan level.

Phase II – Major Gifts Campaign Track (1)

As we expand into Phase II we express our gratitude for pledges and gifts received to date and especially to Bishop Bruno for his Diocese's pledge to this campaign.

The cases produced by the Gifts Campaign will be offered to the Episcopal Search Committee as input or seed for their work: "Keeping Jesus as the Light in the Wilderness – the case for the Father David Salmon School of Ministry." And "The Hudson Stuck Fund for Mission Travel."

With the election of a new bishop, this campaign is to be repositioned to the maximum benefit of the new bishop's ministry. In the period before this election the Major Gifts Campaign Committee will continue to solicit gifts and pledges.

Phase II – Planned Giving Track (2)

The congregations of the diocese of Alaska are invited to engage in a Partnership with the Diocese and Episcopal Church Foundation to conduct empowerment building through planned giving and pledge activities. In return for this service, our parishes are asked to give back to the Major Gifts Campaign to pay for the service and to make a seed offering to the campaign.

As part of a planned giving program, the Diocese will establish a diocesan legacy society, a witness society, for any person who has remembered any part of the church in one's estate planning. This effort will be adapted to the cultural practices of each of our communities. *Passed.*

Resolution #4: A resolution concerning Anti-Racism Training.

The Resolutions Committee noted that because this calls for a change in the bylaws of the diocese it recommends that this resolution be forwarded to the Constitution and Canons Committee so that it can be presented at the next convention. This convention approved this recommendation to forward it to the Constitution and Canons Committee.

The **Transition Committee** recommended the churches in the Anchorage area host the ordination and consecration of the next bishop, which would take place in Anchorage on May 2nd 2009. *Passed.*

Committee on Next Convention recommended St. Mary's, Anchorage for the Electing Diocesan Convention (34th), Jan 22nd 2009, with the Anchorage area congregations co-hosts. Child care was recommended. The first convention of the VIII Bishop of Alaska, October 2009, should take place in an Alaskan village. *Passed.*

The **Bishop's Address Committee** was charged to circulate and hear the whisperings of the Holy Spirit. The members reported the following aspirations: improve communications, take leadership in environmental issues/concerns and solutions, increase commitment to (Millennium Development Goals, create a visible prayer center in the diocese, explore ways to celebrate our close relationship within the diocese, implement our commitment to children and youth.

The **Budget Committee** chair the Rev. Marilyn Duggar, moved the 2008 Transition Budget of \$895,634 as proposed, seconded by the Rev. Michael Burke. *Passed.*

For **Episcopal Relief and Development**, Dennis Hansen invited volunteers who could immediately respond to disasters to sign up. Housing, though not transportation, would be provided in such an eventuality.

The **Courtesy Committee issued the following:**

BE IT RESOLVED that we express our sincere thanks to all those involved in organizing and hosting the 33rd Convention of the Diocese of Alaska, especially recognizing the Diocesan staff, the Rev. Scott Fisher, and the staff and congregation of St. Matthew's Church.

Thanks to the following for Convention planning, transportation, and meals:

Sr. Warden Bruce Gadwah, Pauline Wilson, Bonnie Hameister, Harry Fields, and all of the people who supported them in their work. We are thankful for all the food donated by St. Matthew's members, the peoples of the Interior, particularly Nenana and Beaver, and all of the other donations made by families and parishes.

BE IT RESOLVED that we express our thanks to St. Jude's Church, North Pole, for hosting the Clergy Retreat.

BE IT RESOLVED that we express our thanks to those who made presentations to the Convention, especially by the Bishop Search Committee and the Transitions Committee.

BE IT RESOLVED that we thank the Diocesan staff: the Rev. Canon Ginny Doctor, Suzanne Krull, Lynette Winfrey, the Venerable Anna Frank, the Rev. David Blanchett, and Sherrill Kiser. We also express our thanks to Tree Nelson, who worked on video photography and computer work behind the scenes.

BE IT RESOLVED that we thank the Rev. Kathleen Wakefield for her years of dedication, ministry, and service as Diocesan Treasurer. We offer our thoughts and prayers to Kathleen and her family. We express our thanks to the Rev. David Elsensohn for presiding at this Convention, the Rev. George Silides, parliamentarian; the Rev. Teresa Thomas, secretary, and the Dispatch of Business committee for working to make the meetings of this Convention go smoothly and efficiently.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we express our sincere gratitude to Bishop Mark for his ten years of ministry among us and we wish God's blessings on his family, and on his continued ministry in Canada and Navajoland.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we express our sincere appreciation to all the clergy, delegates, and guests who have gathered here in the hands of the Holy Spirit. Above all, thank God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, in whose hands we have been held and whose guidance leads us into a bright future. *Passed.*

The business section of the 33rd concluded, the closing Eucharist was celebrated by the Ven. Anna Frank, when some of the 52 new members of the **Society of St. Simeon and St. Anna** were inducted.

The 33rd Convention of the Diocese of Alaska adjourned *sine die.*

Inserts:

Committees and membership

Budget as passed

Resolutions referred to dioceses from the 75th General Convention, January 1st 2007

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Teresa Thomas, secretary to 33rd Convention, Diocese of Alaska

