

June 16, 2009



Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Christ

We will be gathering together as Christ's body for our 172nd annual convention November 20 and 21 at the Westin Yorktown Lombard Center in Lombard, the venue where we met for last year's convention. This will be a time to reaffirm and deepen our connections with each other and with God's mission for the one holy catholic and apostolic church. Our theme of Become and Believe: Engaging God's Mission embraces the calling of all the baptized to pray, proclaim the Gospel, and promote justice, peace and love.

At last year's convention I shared my framework for engaging mission: Grow the Church, Form the Faithful, Change the World; and you responded with your insights, experiences, and dreams inscribed on hundreds of Post-It notes, a visual representation of our vision. We expanded on this mission map at an all-day gathering Dream, Share, Build March 28 in Downers Grove, and at the April 25 Leadership and Ministry Fair. Your contributions have been shared with our consultants, Fleishman-Hillard Chicago, which will use them in developing a focused message, and branding strategy which they will present at the convention. This is the same group that assisted Episcopal Charities and Community Services with its honing of mission, message, and marketing.

Through workshops, worship, presentations, and encounters with fellow disciples at our November convention we will engage God's mission in at all levels of our life and ministry.

In order to ensure that our clergy and delegates are well-informed and there is ample opportunity for prayer and discussion around the issues coming before convention, I urge you to certify your delegates, submit names for nomination to diocesan office, and compose and submit resolutions that you feel our convention needs to address. Forms for each are included in this

mailing. I especially urge you to seek out qualified persons willing to stand for election to diocesan offices

Each resolution deserves serious attention as part of the pre-convention packets and in the debate on the floor of convention. To give our clergy and delegates adequate time to review materials, the final deadline for resolutions to be received at the diocesan center is **October 2**. Any arriving after the deadline will not be included in the pre-convention packets and will receive attention only after all pre-filed resolutions are considered at convention and only if time allows. Please make this important information available to the members of your congregation who may wish to draft a resolution.

On Friday evening of convention we will gather for fellowship and dancing and to celebrate remarkable examples of the Good News of God's Kingdom being incarnated in our congregations and the wider community. To keep costs reasonable and allow more flexibility for dining and networking opportunities, we are opting for a reception with appetizers and beverages in lieu of a sit-down dinner. The evening will include a presentation on diocesan messaging strategy developed by Fleishman-Hillard; and of course music that will move many of us to the dance floor.

Some other special events for this year's gathering are a health fair offered by the Episcopal Church Medical Trust on Saturday morning, the Clergy Spouse/Partner Luncheon on Saturday, and photo sessions for a new diocesan and ministry directory.

This is an occasion for the whole community of the Episcopal Church in Northern Illinois—clergy, delegates, children and youth, adults of all ages, new to the church and seasoned in church, all the baptized—to be together as one: breaking bread, connecting, reflecting, learning, mentoring, praying, proclaiming, and challenging and inspiring each other to bring God's reconciling love to the world. Please join me for two days that will bring great blessings to our ministry as the body of Christ.

In Christ,



Jeffrey D. Lee
Bishop of Chicago