

The Newsletter

The Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Northwest Texas

Number 208

September 2009

51st Annual Diocesan Convention

“Walk in Love as Christ Loved Us.”

The 51st Annual Diocesan Convention began Saturday, September 12 with the opening eucharist and ordination to the diaconate of Todd Baxley at St. Andrew's Church, Amarillo. In his sermon, Bishop Mayer told of learning in a homiletics class that “the Good News is what God has done, what God is doing, and what God has promised,” not what the “Church ought to do about the human situation” as described by a student in that class. To new deacon Todd Bishop Mayer observed, “Todd, the truth is that people throughout this diocese... see in you already the heart of a servant - the heart of a deacon. For to those who have served with you..., and perhaps especially those who have been served by you - just for one example, the children of Happy Camp. To them you are an icon to the Good News of God's unconditional love, and complete and total acceptance.”

The Saturday session was held at the Amarillo Civic Center. Clergy, delegates and visitors experienced several spiritual practices or “stepping outside the left brain.” In the morning the Rev. Kelly Conkling presented “Art as Spiritual Practice” and shared ways in which she uses art to deepen her spirituality. Deacon Les Jackson followed in sharing praying and meditating with icons as spiritual practice. Following lunch Nancy Igo led the convention in the use of Sign Chi Do as spiritual practice, and Deacon Art Goolsbee closed the meeting with ten minutes of Centering Prayer. Bishop Mayer, in his convention address stated, “All of these are practices which take us beyond the intellect, beyond the rational, even beyond the constant racket, the constant inner chatter of words... and the practice of that letting go - that self-emptying - will change us. Practice can make the gifts of patience, and kindness, and courage, and forgiveness, and inner peace possible... Practice can make the gift of an awareness of God's presence possible. Practice can make the gift of communion with God and one another possible.”

Mr. David Morrow of Santa Maria Virgen, Midland, shared his experiences with ministries in the Dominican Republic in words and photos and invited interested members of the diocese to participate with him in these ministries. Katy Hoskins, Director of Promise Camp explained how the camp touches the lives of not only the campers, but the counselors, volunteers, and campers' family members, and shared photos of the camp. Deacon Todd Baxley, Director of Happy Camp, and Carole Wolf of St. Christopher's, Lubbock, shared the experience of discovering thirty children at a school across the street from St. Christopher's who wanted to

attend Happy Camp and how the addition of those children to the thirty already enrolled was accomplished with two phone calls. Todd shared pictures of Happy Camp with the convention. Katy and Todd both expounded on how the camps and those involved show the love of God to children who might not otherwise have an opportunity to experience this love in any other place. Katy presented a photo album of the past five Happy Camps to Deacon Roland Rose who received a standing ovation from convention.

Under the heading of diocesan business the following were elected to diocesan offices: the Rev. Jo Roberts Mann, St. Andrew's, Amarillo; and Mr. Michael Ryan, Emmanuel, San Angelo; to the Standing Committee (2012). Mr. David Stidham, St. Andrew's, Amarillo, to the Board of Trustees (2014); and the Rev. Clifton Mann and Archdeacon Chris Wrampelmeier both of St. Andrew's, Amarillo, to the Ecclesiastical Trial Court. Clergy new to the diocese and in new positions, guests, and seminarians and spouses present were introduced by the bishop.

It would be hard to believe that anyone departed the Saturday session of the convention feeling anything less than an icon of the Good News.

Impromptu entertainment in the form of hundreds of dogs and cats receiving their immunizations across the hallway added to the joyful and spirited feeling of the day.

A dinner and dance followed at the Amarillo Club on the 31st floor of the Chase Bank Building. The views of Amarillo and beyond and the sunset topped off an evening of dining, visiting new and old friends, and a packed dance floor.

Convention reconvened Sunday morning in the nave of St. Andrew's Church to complete business: adoption of the 2010 budget and apportionments as presented, a report from Mrs. Gwen Burns on the Church Periodical Club's ministries throughout the year as well as Triennial in Anaheim, and a report from Texas Tech Canterbury Chaplain Phil Webster.

The Convention Eucharist, complete with bagpipes, ended the 51st Diocesan Convention. Bishop Mayer preached and the Rev. Clifton Mann celebrated. Under the direction of Margaret Lacy, music at both convention eucharists could only be described as heavenly.

Phyllis Tickle St. Nicholas', Midland - October 17 & 18

Founding editor of the Religion Department of Publishers Weekly, Phyllis Tickle will spend a time of teaching and learning at St. Nicholas', Midland, October 17 & 18. She is one of the most respected authorities and popular speakers on religion in America today. An Episcopalian and the author of more than two dozen books, her most recent, *The Great Emergence*, is a powerful and insightful look at both the history of major changes in Christianity and the directions our faith may well be moving in the years ahead.

For more information log on to stnicksmt.org. The lecture will be Saturday, October 17th, 9:30am--3:30pm in the Nave of St. Nicholas'. She will also be preaching Sunday, October 18th, at the 9:00am Service at St. Nicholas'.

Pre-registration is recommended. Please call St. Nicholas' Episcopal Church at 432-694-8856 or email Darryl Knapp at darryl@stnicksmt.org to reserve your book and lunch. Registration of \$25 includes a box lunch and a copy of Phyllis Tickle's book "The Great Emergence". You may also pay the morning of the lecture. Doors open at 8:30am for registration. St. Nicholas' is located at 4000 W. Loop 250 N., Midland, Tx.

Recommended Hotel is the Comfort Suites, 4706 N. Garfield St., Midland, Tx, 432-620-9191. Please mention you are with St. Nicholas' for a discount.

Prayers and Thanksgivings

Please continue to keep the Rev. Jim and Kathleen Liggett (St. Nicholas', Midland, in your prayers. Kathleen's condition is grave and she will be moved to Hospice of Midland this week.

Please also keep the Rev. David Scott in your prayers as he recuperates from blood clots in his leg and dehydration.

Your prayers are also requested for Fr. Barry Ferguson, affiliated with St. Paul's, Lubbock, who runs a mission in downtown Lubbock. He is hospitalized with double pneumonia.

Carolyn Hearn, Editor - diocese@nwtodiocese.org

Celebration of New Ministry

The Rev. Layne Smith will be installed as Rector of St. John's, Odessa, on October 28, 7 PM.

Bishop Mayer Appointed

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori has appointed Bishop Mayer to the House of Bishops Membership Committee and the Standing Commission for Ecumenical Interreligious Relations following the 76th General Convention. He will attend a meeting of all Church Commission, Committees, Agencies and Boards in Chicago on November 17-20.

Calendar

Sept

22 +Canterbury Evensong, St. Mary's, Big Spring
25-26 Deacon Formation, Lubbock
27 +Emmanuel, San Angelo, Visitation

Oct

4 +St. Mark's, Plainview, Visitation
+Canterbury, Lubbock, Visitation, 6 PM
7 +St. Nicholas', Midland, Stewardship
9 +St. Christopher's, Lubbock, Icon Class, 6:30 PM
11 +St. Christopher's, Lubbock, Visitation
17-18 +Phyllis Tickle, St. Nicholas', Midland
18 +Holy Trinity, Midland, Visitation
20 +Trustees, HEC, 10 AM
28 +St. John's, Odessa, Celebration of New Ministry

Nov

1 +St Luke's, Levelland, Visitation
6-7 Deacon Formation, Lubbock
8 +St. Mark's, Coleman, Visitation
15 +St. Matthew's, Pampa, Visitation
22 +Good Shepherd, Brownfield, Visitation
27 HEC Closed, Thanksgiving Weekend

Dec

4-5 +Deacon Formation, Lubbock
13 +St. Barnabas', Odessa, Visitation
20 +St. Mark's, Abilene, Visitation
24-31 HEC Closed, Christmas Holiday

+indicates Bishop Mayer in attendance

The Newsletter Deadline: September 10