

Registration form may be obtained online, www.diocgc.org

*Social and Fellowship times are BYOB. [Bring some to share, if you wish.]

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17:

4:00 pm Registration
5:00pm [Alves] Welcome Reception
6:00 pm [Alves] Dinner
7:00 pm [Alves] Session I
Changing the Conversation
7:45 [various] Breakout sessions [Vestry meetings]
9:00 pm [Alves] New Zealand Night Prayer

SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18:

8:00 am [Wilson] Breakfast
9:00 am [Alves] Morning Prayer
9:30 am [Alves] Session II
How Does Your Parish Live Out What it Believes?
10:15 Break
10:30 [Alves] Session III
Where shall we go and to whom?
Noon [Wilson] Lunch
1:00 pm [Alves] Session IV
Creating Congregations of Generous People
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm Free Time
**** Optional activity for Saturday afternoon:
@ 3:00 pm, Golf cart shuttle to Co Rd 1 and Mary Ann Beach Road for Parade.
Mardi Gras Parade!
Krewé of the Mullet Mates
4:00 pm [Alves] Session IV
Toward Creating a vision:
Open Space Technology
5:30 pm Social Time*
6:00 pm [Wilson] Dinner
7:00 pm [Various] Vestry Meetings
8:00pm [Alves]

8:15 pm Fellowship and Networking*

SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19:

8:00 am [Wilson] Breakfast
9:00 am [Alves] Wrap-up
10:00 am check out of rooms
10:30 am [Chapel] Holy Eucharist
11:30 am Pick up Box Lunches for eating at Beckwith or on the road.

Conference expenses provided by a Grant from the Roanridge Trust, administered through the Office of Congregational Vitality The Episcopal Church

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The conference facilitator is the Rev. Dr. Margaret Shepherd, whose D. Min from Wesley Theological Seminary was obtained in Congregational Development. She is a graduate of Shalem Institute's *Clergy Life and Leadership, Going Deeper* program, and the Clergy Leadership Project of Trinity Wall Street.

Plenary sessions will be followed by breakout sessions for individual churches to process the information presented, in order to lead the church in ways best suited to the mission of the church. Cooperation and networking between nearby small churches will be fostered for the sake of Christ's mission. The ultimate desired outcome is the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, maximizing the use of the powerful and beautiful tools that are part of our Episcopal heritage.

Small churches often struggle with change and the challenges of maintenance and growth. Focusing on the practices which Episcopalians hold in common help to, in the words of Diana Butler Bass, foster congregational vitality. Growing in numbers may not be the end result, but growth in life together, spirituality, and a deeper understanding of theology and scripture, and yes, greater self-esteem almost always is an end result. This is exactly the place to turn—to tradition, practice, story, and history. There has been a major shift in the Episcopal Church in the last ten years. Some of this shift has resulted in chaos and conflict, some has resulted in a church going back to its tradition and spirituality. We will look at

some ways, probably different from the usual model, to hold vestry meetings, ways of looking at the parish through different lens, and ways of communicating as a result of taking a good look at who we are and what the vision might be.

Conference Coordinator is The Rev. Martha Kreamer. The Rev. Sandra Mayer will serve as Chaplain.

POINTS TO PONDER

I. Are we listening to God-or Listening to ourselves? Do we go into a vestry meeting with "our" agenda, or God's?

II. What Does Place Have to Do with It? The Ethnography of Place.

What does our place say about us? (Ethnography simply means "what is.")

III. What About Our Family System? How Do We Listen to God and To One Another. Do we have people who "set us off," who triangulate, causing fractured family systems?

IV. What is God Really Calling Us to Do?

V. What is Radical Hospitality?

How does what we do enable us to reach out to those beyond our doors with "their backs against the wall?" ___Howard Thurman.

VI. How do we "write the Vision?"

VESTRY RETREAT CONFERENCE OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE CENTRAL GULF COAST

With
The Rev. Dr. Margaret Shepherd
Rector, St. Andrew's by the Sea,
Panama City, FL

Friday, February 17, 2012
to
Sunday, February 19, 2012



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