

51st Annual Diocesan Convention Workshops

Each 75 minute workshop will be offered twice on Friday, February 18, from 1:30pm to 4:30pm.

The Changing Church: Key Trends Impacting our Churches Today

This workshop will cover the ever-changing church landscape and key trends shaping our churches today. We will cover trends that are currently impacting religious organizations, including the Episcopal Church and our diocese. Areas covered will include:

- Overall trends impacting all churches today
- Recent research and data from Church Pension Group (emerging ministries, demographics, etc.)
- Clergy deployment trends in the Episcopal Church and our diocese (eg. bi-vocational clergy, lay leadership, women clergy)
- Diocesan research and statistics
- How to study and explore your church neighborhood (tools and resources).

Facilitated by: Dwight Babcock, Diocesan Administrator

Developing & Equipping Leaders for the Church

In this workshop, we will discuss trends in the Episcopal Church and how they are affecting methods for forming and equipping leaders in our local parishes and missions. We will focus on the work of our own diocesan school for ministry and how it can be a resource for your congregation.

Facilitated by: The Rt. Rev. Russell Kendrick, Bishop

The Theology of Partnership - Ubuntu

Ubuntu – a way of being together in which we experience the light and love of God in all persons. A journey into fellowship with “the other” that knows no bias. A commitment of oneself to the other in trust, without fear of losing control. A readiness to love the other and to accept the responsibility of true partnership in serving the common good.

A way of responding to Japanese theologian Kosuke Koyama’s belief that the most pressing and urgent question facing the world is, “Can we live together?”

This Diocesan Convention workshop will offer an opportunity for participants to reflect on John’s words as they relate to the theology of partnership as defined through the concept of Ubuntu.

All workshop participants will:

Articulate their understanding of Ubuntu as it relates to partnership and seek to identify hidden influences/commitments that impede or support their full participation in partnerships with diverse groups external to the congregation.

Articulate a leadership model of ministry based on the concept of Ubuntu that responds to contemporary challenges.

Facilitated by: The Rev. Deacon Clelia Garrity, The Rev. Canon Lee Curtis, and Rev. Cecil Williams

Defining Our Work as Partners in Racial Justice and Equity

In this workshop, we will explore the challenges, fears, resources, and opportunities inherent to the ongoing work of racial reconciliation. Drawing from the initiatives of the Episcopal Church and our own diocesan Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation, we will explore what it takes for us to

develop helpful avenues of advocacy and action that impel us closer to the dream of realizing the dignity and worth of all persons. Topics include: defining our fears and hesitancy, deep listening, moving from awareness to action, and utilizing resources such as the Sacred Ground Curriculum.

Facilitated by: The Rev. Dr. Joy Blaylock, Missioner for Discipleship and Dean of the School for Ministry.

Planting a Ministry of Presence: Rediscovering Connection with Neighbors and Community through New Episcopal Communities

Ministry of Presence is a term often overheard in the meeting rooms of chaplain interns participating in Clinical Pastoral Education (a program that helps prepare seminarians and others for ministry in hospital settings and beyond), BUT, what if we expanded that notion to more fully encompass ministries in our parish settings and neighborhoods? Beloved Community Outreach Center of Mobile is a New Episcopal Community actively discovering how ministry of presence in public spaces can shape and direct how we connect with our neighbors, especially those outside our church walls. We hope that in sharing about what we are learning, through ministries like Prayers in the Park, Free Listening, Beloved Mobile Week, Thanksgiving and Christmas in the Park, and more, we can spark conversation and discernment about how we continue to, in the words of Bishop Curry, grow “a church that looks and acts like Jesus.”

Facilitated by: The Rev. Mary Alice Mathison, Missioner for Mobile and Associate for St. Luke’s, Mobile

Two Loops Model – The Ups and Downs and Twists and Turns of Being the Church in the World

Living out the mission of the church is not a linear process. It is full of twists and turns we don’t always anticipate- like a global pandemic. Those ups and downs and fluctuating circumstances can be unsettling. But God has a way of showing up in the unexpected. Part of what makes the church a living, breathing, ongoing community is that it goes through cycles of highs and lows. There’s beauty, goodness, purpose and even invitation in all phases. What happens if we re-imagine changing and unexpected circumstances, as invitations to fresh possibilities? What if they are not the end of the story but the beginning of a new chapter? What might that chapter look like for the church in your context? Join the Rev. Lydia Johnson as we explore the Two Loops Model of organizational transformation and share stories of Good News in the midst of change.

Facilitated by: The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson, Missioner for Development