

**The 143rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Albany
June 10 -12, 2011**

**Bishop's Address
by
The Right Reverend William H. Love**

Dear Friends in Christ – Welcome! The 143rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Albany will now come to order. Let us pray:

Almighty and ever living God, source of all wisdom and understanding, be present with all those who take counsel at this 143rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Albany, for the renewal and mission of your Church. Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it. Teach us in all things to seek first your honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it. Grant that Your Word may be truly preached and truly heard, Your Sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. By Your Holy Spirit, fashion our lives according to the example of your Son, and grant that we may show the power of your love to all among whom we live. Inspire our witness to your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, that all may know the power of His forgiveness and the hope of His resurrection, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (BCP pp 816-818)

As most of you know, the Diocesan Convention is the only time each year that we can all come together as a Diocesan family – fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, ordained and lay leaders alike, adults and youth, representing each of our 120 parishes and summer chapels scattered across the 19 counties and 20,000 square miles known as the Diocese of Albany.

I trust and pray that this 143rd Annual Convention and accompanying Junior and Senior Youth Rallies and Vacation Bible School will not only be a blessing to each of us, but most especially that it will glorify God and help build and strengthen His Kingdom.

The theme of this year's Convention is **“Be Filled With The Holy Spirit”** in honor and recognition that this Sunday is the Day of Pentecost, one of the seven principle feast days of the Church and often regarded as the birthday of the Church.

It was on the Day of Pentecost (just over 2,000 years ago) that God poured out His Holy Spirit mightily on the Apostles giving them power to be His “witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) Luke reports that 3000 new believers came to Christ that very day – a testimony to what can happen when the Holy Spirit is at work.

Holding Convention on Pentecost Weekend presents a number of unique challenges back in our home parishes for which I am very much aware, and yet in many ways I can't think of a better time for representatives from the entire Diocese to come together as the Body of Christ. It is my most sincere hope and prayer, that before we leave here this weekend, the Lord will once again pour out His Holy Spirit mightily upon each of us gathered here at Camp of the Woods as well as the rest of the Body gathered in Christ's name throughout the Diocese. May we too be empowered through the Holy Spirit to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our local communities and throughout the world in this generation.

One of my greatest challenges each Convention, is trying to figure out how to recognize and say “Thank You” to so many wonderful, faith-filled, dedicated individuals who give so much of themselves day in and day out serving our Lord and His Church. As I have discovered over the past couple of years, I could easily spend most of the Bishop’s Address (and in fact have done so) just saying “Thank You,” and still not mention everyone or highlight every ministry that deserves special recognition and praise.

As Paul reminds us in his Letter To The Romans: *“Just as each of us has one body with many members and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.” (Romans 12: 4-6)*

Each gift, whether large or small by the world’s standards, is in fact a gift from God intended for the overall health and well being of the Body of Christ and is thus worthy of giving thanks and praise. This Diocese and the world in which we live have been blessed by your sharing, as members of the Body of Christ, God’s many gifts to you.

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, recognizing (as stated by Paul) that we are “One Body in Christ” made up of many members, I would ask you to please stand, if you are able, as “One Body”, in order that I may say ONE huge, heartfelt THANK YOU to each of you in honor and recognition of all that you do (known and unknown) -- serving our Lord and His Church in this Diocese and throughout the world. I give thanks to God for you and feel honored to serve by your side. May the Lord bless you richly this day and for ever more. (You may be seated.)

You will notice throughout Convention, in between events, a variety of “Thanks and Special Recognitions” posted on the overhead screens, compliments of the tremendous hard work of Maggie Hasslacher.

One of the great blessings of coming to the Diocesan Convention is the opportunity to meet and visit with friends and brothers and sisters in Christ from around the Diocese, as well as from the wider Anglican Communion. This year we are blessed and honored to have with us once again, The Rt. Rev. Todd McGregor, Bishop of Toliara, Madagascar, and his wife, the Rev. Patsy McGregor. Originally from Vermont, Todd and Patsy along with their two daughters moved to Africa in 1991 to serve the Lord and His Church ministering in both Kenya and Madagascar. Their many sacrifices in the service of our Lord are both humbling and awe inspiring. Bishop Todd will be our guest preacher at the Convention Eucharist tomorrow afternoon. In addition, he and Patsy are leading several workshops. Bishop Todd and Patsy – Welcome back to the Diocese of Albany.

We are also most blessed to have with us once again our two very dear and special friends -- Bishop Harold and Liz Miller, from our sister Diocese of Down and Dromore, in Northern Ireland. Because the Miller’s have to leave early on Sunday to fly to Switzerland for a ecumenical evangelical conference, we decided to give them a break this year and let them just enjoy being here and not have to work too hard for their keep. Bishop Harold did, however, lead a wonderful workshop earlier this afternoon, entitled: “Five Things I Would Say to Leaders from the Confession of St. Patrick.” Bishop Harold and Liz, you and the Diocese of Down and Dromore have been and continue to be such a blessing to all of us in the Diocese of Albany.

In addition to the Miller’s, we are honored to have with us from Ireland, Daniel Black (Lay Leader in Willowfield), Jane Corbett (Lay Leader in Dromore), Rev. Colin Davis (Rector of Carrowdore and Milliisle), Alistair Morrison (Ordinand), Mary Munyangaju (husband is Rector of Killyleagh), Rev. Chris Pollock (Rector of Saintfield), Rev. Simon Richardson (Rector of Hillsborough), Richard Waller (Church Army Officer) and Rev. Roderic West (Rector of Moira). Roderic is our new link or contact person with

Down and Dramore. He will be our officiant at Morning Prayer tomorrow and will be available to answer questions you may have about our link. We are very grateful that so many of our friends from Northern Ireland could come to Albany and be part of the Convention. Welcome!

Additionally, we are excited to have a group of Youth Leaders from Down and Dromore assisting this summer at Beaver Cross. I believe some of them are here with us this weekend.

We welcome Mother Miriam, Sister Mary Elizabeth and Sister Mary Lucia of the Sisters of St. Mary. The Lord continues to bless us richly through the Sisters' Spirit-filled presence in our Diocese and their unceasing prayers.

Having been back for just over a year now, it is such a joy to welcome Bishop Dan and Carol Herzog. Ever since they returned, they hit the ground running and haven't stopped. Bishop Dan will be the preacher tomorrow evening at the Healing Service.

This weekend is very special for a number of reasons, not only is it the birthday of the Church, but it is also the 85th birthday of our very own Bishop David Ball, the retired 7th Bishop of Albany. Bishop Ball, in honor of your birthday and in thanksgiving for your presence with us and your many years of faithful service to our Lord and His Church, we would like to present you with a birthday cake. It will be served later this evening at the Tee Pee following our opening session.

There is one other noteworthy anniversary that we need to recognize this evening. This year marks the 30th Anniversary of Cursillo in the Diocese of Albany. If all the Cursillo Secretariat and everyone who has ever been on a Cursillo Weekend would please stand. In honor and recognition of 30 years of faithful ministry to our Lord and His Church in the Diocese of Albany by the Cursillo Community, we would like to present you with an anniversary cake which will be served at the Tee Pee later this evening as well.

There will be a special celebration tomorrow afternoon for the Cursillo Community and anyone else interested, entitled: "Celebrating 30 Years of Bringing Friends to Christ." May the Lord continue to bless you and the Cursillo ministry in this Diocese for many more years to come. (You may all be seated.)

Before moving on, we need to take just a moment to recognize and welcome the new clergy and their families who have moved to the Diocese since last Convention:

- The Rev. Dr. Steven Peay is with us from Wisconsin. Fr. Peay is the Professor of Church History at Nashotah House Seminary and one of our regular contributors to the Albany Episcopalian. He is leading a workshop entitled, "You Have To Know The Story Before You Tell It," and will be the preacher at Morning Prayer on Sunday.
- We are pleased to welcome back Fr. Darius and Stephanie Mojallali and their son Mathias. Fr. Darius has been called as the new rector of St. John's, Delhi and St. Peter's, Hobart.

In addition to those who have moved to the Diocese or become canonically resident, we have had a number of ordinations this past year, to include the following individuals to the Diaconate: Deacons: Randy Lukas, Karl Griswold-Kuhn, Thomas Pettigrew, Susan Plaske, Alex Riffée, Blake Sawicky, and Kino Vitet. Nine of our transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood – The Reverends: Kathryn Boswell, Rose Ann Felty, Nathaniel Lee, Neal Longe, Thomas Malionek, Hanna Mudge, Tyler Slade, David Sullivan and Christina Vance. Congratulations to all of our newly ordained deacons and priests. May the Lord bless you mightily in your new ministry.

On a sadder note, while welcoming several new clergy to the Diocese this year, unfortunately we have had six deaths among our retired clergy: Fr. Robert Clark, Fr. Robert Eggenschiller, Fr. Donald Gardner, Fr. Joseph Gross, Deacon Clement Hulick and Deacon Barbara Letteney. In addition, late Wednesday evening, Nancy Caron, the wife of Fr. Joe Caron passed away after a long battle with cancer. Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord: and let light perpetual shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

For the remainder of my address, I would like to briefly focus on the following: 1) Diocesan Highlights this Past Year; 2) Current Issue Facing the Diocese; 3) A Vision for the Future.

Overview of Diocesan Highlights:

As I look back at the past year, I can't help but give thanks to God for all that He has been doing in and through the people of the Diocese. I am humbled, encouraged and excited as well as feeling a bit exhausted and rejuvenated all at the same time, if that is possible.

Last fall, after months of planning, writing and editing by a very dedicated team, all 27 sections of the new Diocesan Confirmation Curriculum were posted on the Diocesan Website for use throughout the Diocese and the wider Church. While there is still an occasional editorial tweak here and there, it is a quality program that has received very positive response from those who have used it both from within and outside the Diocese. I highly encourage its use by all clergy and lay leaders in preparing the young people of the Diocese of Albany for confirmation.

There is a wonderful new spirit of excitement and cooperative team-work between the Cathedral of All Saints and Christ the King Spiritual Life Center, resulting in several outstanding ministry and teaching initiatives benefiting the clergy and laity of the Diocese. Dean Dave Collum and Canon Matt Baker will brief us on some of those ministry initiatives in their updates tomorrow morning.

In January, a five month pilot workshop on Christian Spiritual Direction and Formation co-sponsored by the Sisters of St. Mary and the Spiritual Life Center was launched with 30+ participants involved. It was the precursor to what is to be a two-year expanded program designed to help strengthen the spiritual lives of folks across the Diocese.

January's three Parish Leadership Conferences were among the best attended and most well received in recent history. Our guest speaker Mr. Whitney Kuniholm, President of Scripture Union USA, inspired us as he shared his vision of a Bible-reading revival and introduced the E-100, a simple but highly effective Bible reading plan which helps identify and lead the reader through 100 of the most essential scripture passages covering 20 key themes or subject areas in both the Old and New Testament.

The vast majority of the parishes in the Diocese have accepted the E-100 challenge and are using it for both individual study by parishioners and parish small-group Bible studies for both adults and youth. It has been such a joy to hear from people of all ages around the Diocese share how E-100 has helped them discover the Bible in ways that they had never achieved before. It truly is blessing and transforming their lives. One person in their 70's wrote saying that they had many false starts in the past, and for the first time they are really reading the Bible and how excited they are to be learning so much. You can learn more about the E-100 on the diocesan website. If you've not yet discovered the E-100, I encourage you to do so. You will be blessed.

In March, The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, made her first canonical visit to the Diocese of Albany. During her three days with us, she had a chance

to meet many of the clergy and lay leaders from all over the Diocese as well as witness first hand some of the mighty works the Lord is accomplishing in and through the Diocese of Albany. I was very appreciative to the Presiding Bishop and all the people of the Diocese for the gracious and positive tone of the visit.

While there were a number of highlights during her visit, I was particularly moved and inspired by the two presentations on the wide variety of mission and outreach ministries sponsored by our parishes locally, nationally and overseas. Over the past couple of years we have had parish and diocesan sponsored mission trips to Madagascar, Nigeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Thailand, Burma, Bolivia, Peru, Dominican Republic, Haiti and a youth mission to Ireland. These mission trips have focused on a variety of needs: medical, educational, building construction, fresh water programs, solar panels for electricity, children's ministry, and many other special need ministries, all within the context of sharing the love and Good News of Jesus Christ.

Within the United States, we have had parishes sponsor mission trips to Appalachia and assist with the clean-up efforts in New Orleans. At home in our local communities, our parishes have been hosting and participating in a wide range of local outreach to include such things as: local food pantries, soup kitchens, over-flow shelters for the homeless, sleeping bag ministry to the homeless, providing clothing and winter coats to the needy; support to an ever growing population of local Burmese refugees; after school programs for children; various ministries to the elderly; and sidewalk prayer table ministries just to name a few.

In each of these mission and outreach ministries, whether at home, down south or abroad, the Lord is touching and transforming the lives of everyone involved – the servants as well as those served. It is so exciting to see what God is doing in and through His people – you my brothers and sisters in Christ. What the Lord asks of us is our obedience and willingness to serve and He will take care of the rest – giving us gifts, abilities and opportunities we could never have imagined. If you haven't already, I encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and become a missionary for the Lord Jesus Christ. While the Lord calls some to go to foreign lands, most are called to reach out to, serve, and share the Gospel with those nearby. We live in one of the largest mission fields in the world.

One of the last highlights of the past year that I would like to touch on is the calling of our new Diocesan Youth Ministry Director, Fr. Tyler Slade and his wife Audrey. They are a dynamic team, truly committed to serving our Lord and His Church, particularly the youth. During their first several months with us, Fr. Tyler and Audrey have been driving all over the Diocese visiting parishes and meeting with their youth ministers and young people. In addition to planning and leading a multitude of youth programs at Christ the King and Beaver Cross, they are committed to helping train and encourage youth ministry leaders in the parishes. Tomorrow morning Fr. Tyler will update us on some of the new initiatives and the growing youth ministry in the Diocese.

While I'm sure he will talk about it tomorrow, one of the greatest youth ministries the Diocese has to offer is our Beaver Cross Summer Program. If you have not yet registered your kids or the other kids in the parish, please do so right away. Scholarships are available to assist those in need. The camping season is only a few weeks away.

Current Issues Facing The Diocese:

I would like to move now to some of the current issues facing the Diocese. While there is much to be encouraged about as we have just heard, and the overall health of the Diocese is good, there are a few ongoing issues that we can't afford to ignore, one of the largest of which is the slow, but continued decline in Church attendance.

The average Sunday attendance (ASA) for the Diocese of Albany in 2010 was 6491. That is down by just a fraction from the 2009 ASA of 6498, however, it is down by 839 from the 2003 ASA of 7330. While our rate of decline has not been as steep as some of our surrounding dioceses, that is nothing to brag about. No doubt the political climate and on going turmoil in The Episcopal Church and Anglican Church has played a large part in the decline, however, we would be naïve to think that was the only factor.

If we are to reverse the decline, we have to take a serious look at not only what is going on at the provincial and international level, but also what is happening in the Diocese and our individual parishes. Are there local community or societal issues such as Sunday morning hockey or soccer practice contributing to the decline of church attendance by young families with kids? What are we doing at the local parish or diocesan level to address or counter these concerns? What are we doing to reach out to the un-churched and invite them into the body of Christ and a saving relationship with our Lord? Is there something going on in our local parish such as break down in communications, power grabs or internal bickering that is driving people away or seen as uninviting? Having the courage to ask and seek solutions to some of these questions can make a huge difference in whether people choose to come and feel welcome at Church.

One thing we can't blame the decline on is a lack of need. We live in a state in which 85% of our neighbors either don't go to church regularly or have no church affiliation at all. The need for people to come into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ has never been greater. People are dying spiritually all around us, tragically some of whom are in our own pews.

Another concern that continues to plague many of our parishes and ultimately impacts the Diocese is lack of finances. Often it is attributed to or blamed on the above concern – decline in attendance. While there may be a connection in some parishes, especially in very small parishes or where an individual who gives generously to the Church either leaves or dies, it is not the primary cause.

As I travel around the Diocese, I continue to hear all sorts of reasons why parishes are struggling financially. Often it is the poor economy, or the loss of a major donor, or escalating fuel bills and operating expenses, the cost of clergy, or any number of other reasons – all of which are legitimate concerns.

However, the ultimate culprit in almost every case is our inability or unwillingness to trust and obey the Lord when it comes to our money. God, through Holy Scripture, commands us to tithe a minimum of 10% of our income. Unfortunately, the vast majority of people have not yet come to discover the truth and blessing of tithing.

God asks us to tithe, not because He needs the money. Whether we realize it or not, everything that we have is already His. But rather, The Lord asks us to tithe so that we will learn to trust Him and participate more fully in being good stewards of that which He has entrusted to us for the building up of the Kingdom. God has a wonderful way of taking that which we give back to Him, blessing it, multiplying it many times over, and then giving it back enabling us to do even more in helping to bless others in the name of Christ and to the glory of God.

If we as the body of Christ really started taking tithing seriously, the financial picture in our individual lives and that of the Church would be turned upside down in a positive way.

The excuse most often used for not tithing is that things are tight financially and we simply can't afford it. I would argue just the opposite – that we can't afford not to tithe. Tithing is one of the most important steps in cutting us free from the financial albatross and spirit of poverty that is dragging so

many people down, reeking havoc in their lives. The Nike motto of “Just Do It” is the best advice or counsel I can offer anyone when it comes to tithing. You will be amazed at what the Lord does when we trust Him. I have never known anyone to include myself that regretted or wanted to turn back from tithing once they started. As much as I believe in and commend tithing, we can’t nor should we try to force people to tithe. It must be their choice.

Switching gears, while there are other concerns which we could address, due to time constraints, I would like to focus on one issue that will be coming before us tomorrow morning during the business session. It pertains to our response to the Title IV changes passed by the General Convention in 2009 and that go into effect July 1st of this year. For those who may not know, Title IV is the disciplinary canons in the Episcopal Church which govern how we are to handle disciplinary issues amongst the clergy.

Fr. King, Chair of the Diocesan Constitution and Canons Committee will brief us tomorrow on the changes and the rationale for adopting Proposed Resolution #1, the Resolution to Amend Diocesan Canon 14 to coincide with the Title IV changes. As he will share with us tomorrow, there are very good reasons to be concerned about the new Title IV, however, given our current circumstances, adopting the proposed Resolution to Amend Diocesan Canon 14 is our only real option at the moment if we are to avoid the potential of not having anyway to deal with disciplinary issues if they should arrive over the next year.

Proposed Resolution #2, if passed, will bring our concerns with Title IV to the attention of the Standing Commission on the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, with the hope that necessary changes and improvements to Title IV could be addressed and acted on at the upcoming 2012 General Convention.

A Vision for the Future:

For the last several minutes, I’ve tried to highlight some of the ways the Lord has been working in and through the people of the Diocese over the past year as well as address some of the concerns of the present. If we are to continue the successes of the past and deal with the concerns of the present, it is essential that we keep our focus on the vision the Lord has given us as stated in our Diocesan Vision Statement:

The Diocese of Albany is One Church fulfilling the Great Commandment and Great Commission, moving from membership to discipleship; equipping, emboldening and sending disciples to make disciples.

As I have stated in the past, I truly believe that this statement captures that which the Lord is calling us to do and who He is calling us to be – one body made up of many members united in our efforts to live into and fulfill the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

These two commands need to be the underlying guide and motivation of all that we do individually as brothers and sisters in Christ and corporately in our parishes and the Diocese. There is no greater calling in all of creation than to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength and to love our neighbor as our self. And then to go out into all the world sharing God’s love, making disciples of all nations, teaching all that the Lord has taught us, inviting people into a saving relationship with the Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

In an effort to assist us in living into this Vision in answer to the Lord’s call, there has been a team of very gifted and dedicated folks working over the past year to produce the Diocese of Albany’s new DVD Teaching Series on the Marks of Discipleship. I’ve asked Dean Collum to introduce and provide an overview of the DVD teaching series tomorrow morning during the Plenary Session. A tremendous

amount of planning, labor and love have gone into the creation and production of the Marks of Discipleship Series. It is a high quality professional product that will be a blessing to all who use it.

Each parish in the Diocese will receive a copy at no charge for use with its congregation. If you are serious about truly living the Great Commandment and Great Commission as Disciples making Disciples, the Marks of Discipleship Teaching Series will be of tremendous value. This is a wonderful follow up to the E-100 Bible Study.

I am very appreciative to Dean Collum as well as Fr. Bruce and Shay Mason, Kevin Kallsen of Anglican TV and each of the twelve presenters for all their efforts and the outstanding fruit of their labor.

As we talk about the vision or future of the Diocese of Albany, I hope you have been picking up on a key component that I believe is absolutely essential not only for our long term growth and vitality, but for our effectiveness as the people of God and Christ's witnesses in upstate New York and even to the ends of the earth. That key component is a sound grounding in Holy Scripture. The Lord doesn't want us to read the Bible simply as an act of piety or the fulfillment of a religious obligation. But rather, He calls us to read the Bible daily because it is His Word. It is one of the chief means that He has chosen to spend time with us and reveal Himself to us in order that we might come to know and love Him; to trust Him; to be comforted and upheld by Him; to be strengthened and encouraged by Him; and to discern His will in our life.

In John's Gospel, Jesus said, "Now this is eternal life: that thy may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent." (John 17:3) We can't know God if we don't spend time with Him in His Word. We can't know God if we don't listen to Him. We can't know God if we ignore or reject His Word as revealed in Holy Scripture. We can't believe in or appreciate all that God has done for us and promises us if we don't know Him. If we don't know God, and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, we have no eternal life.

We wonder why people aren't more committed to coming to Church; why they don't give more generously in the collection plate; why they are unwilling to be better stewards of that entrusted to them; why they are unwilling to invite others to Church; why they are unwilling to participate in and even lead various ministries within the Church; why they don't read their Bible and say their prayers more faithfully; why, why, why, the list can go on and on.

I would suggest one of the major contributing factors to all the whys and all the major concerns discussed earlier is that while many people may know about God, they still have not fully come to know Him. Once they do, their lives will be transformed forever. One of the best places to start to get to know God and our Lord Jesus Christ, is in His Word.

The E-100 and Marks of Discipleship are intended to help us do just that. As wonderful as they may be, they are absolutely useless unless you choose to use them. Getting to know God and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ through His Word can make all the difference in our individual lives as well as that of our parishes, this Diocese and the Church at large.

If the Church is to be is to accomplish its mission of bringing people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ – Bible Study and prayer must be a priority in each of our parishes. There is NO excuse for any of our parishes not to support and hold Bible Studies and prayer ministry.

If we are to reverse the declining ASA in our parishes regardless of how large or small they may be, we need to get serious and do something about it. I would suggest that the absolute best place to start is

by stepping out of our comfort zone and inviting people to come to Church with us. The worst they can say is no. Chances are at least 50% of those who don't go to church would accept an invitation if asked.

If every person in every congregation committed themselves to inviting a friend, neighbor or acquaintance to church this year and refused to give up until they found someone who accepted their invitation, our current ASA of 6491 would double in one year.

There is no church growth method more effective than a personal invitation. What is stopping us? There is no greater gift that you have to offer than the love of Jesus Christ.

In loving God -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit, entrusting our life to Him, to include our time, talent and treasure, committing ourselves to be in relationship with Him through His Word and Sacraments and sharing our faith with others, we will in fact be living out our Diocesan Vision as "One Church fulfilling the Great Commandment and Great Commission moving from membership to discipleship; equipping, emboldening and sending disciples to make disciples.

May the Holy Spirit come mightily this Pentecost weekend, cleansing our hearts and souls and minds, our entire being, filling us with His power in order that we may go forth boldly into the world as a witness and channel of God's love and mercy and healing grace. God Bless You! Amen.