

## THE 81<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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General Convention will take place June 22-28 in Louisville, KY. I was asked to write down some thoughts as I prepare to go.

I am looking forward to worshipping with 1,200-1500 Episcopalians...now THAT'S a MEGA-CHURCH!!! I'm also looking forward to seeing who God chooses to be the next Presiding Bishop and how his/her vision will build on or redirect the church's priorities that Michael Curry presented.

In preparation for this General Convention, a podcast, hosted by the President of the House of Deputies, Julia Ayala-Harris was created to discuss upcoming resolutions and legislation. Each week, 2 people who have been appointed to serve on Legislative Committees were guest and talked about their respective committee's work. In addition to the people's legislative discussions, each was asked what they are most looking forward to when we meet in Louisville. A common thread was that of people really looking forward to the big family reunion. This is my 7<sup>th</sup> General Convention as a Deputy, and I understand that. I have met so many people and made connections that I would have never made...and we're all members of the Episcopal part of God's family. I look forward to reconnecting with my brothers and sisters in Christ. This is especially true after the restrictions that were in place 2 years ago in Baltimore at the 80<sup>th</sup> General Convention. Extreme measures were taken post COVID. One of the places at General Convention where so much relationship building and learning takes place is in the Exhibit Hall... there wasn't one in Baltimore. I'm excited about that again too.

I have been appointed to serve during General Convention on the Congregational Vitality and Data-Driven Initiatives Legislative Committee. The committee has had 2 Zoom meetings, including a time for people to speak to the resolutions that have been assigned to the committee. That committee will be working through resolutions that include topics like Addressing Church Decline and Fostering Church Revitalization, Rebranding the Parochial Report, Developing Sustainable Congregational Revitalization Ministries, Recommending Use of Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers, and Creating a Task Force on Church Property Development. And these are just one committee's topics. There are 25 Legislative committees! I think I'm most excited about the discussions that will take place with regard to the Parochial Report (each church's annual "state of the church" report). It's time to think seriously about how we define and quantify what ministry is in our rapidly changing world. And piggybacking on that, I look forward to the discussions surrounding how we can make the event of General Convention more productive from an equipping and training for ministry viewpoint. We have proved through dealing with COVID that much of the legislative work can be done virtually, ahead of the weeklong in-person meeting... meaning we can gather as a big church family and do some ministry together to really impact the host city while we're there, and spend time together doing bible studies, and sharing ideas and resources with each other.

As always, Prayer Book Revision discussions will continue on the floors of both the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies... this will be an ongoing discussion for ever and ever, Amen...

I'll report more once I return from Louisville...In the meantime, I covet your prayers!