

## Diocesan Convention of Northern California

On the first weekend of November this year I was honored to join five others, The Rev. Christy Laborda Harris, Deacon Kate Sefton, Marie Capria, Carole Ward, and Marshall Ward as the delegation representing St. Stephen's to the Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California. We traveled to Cameron Park, CA and gathered for dinner that first evening. At that time, we had a chance to get to know each other a bit better, begin to discuss the issues that would be presented to the convention, and to break bread together.

We met early the next morning, in convention with all the other delegates, to hear reports from hard-working committees, we voted on the installation of new members to the Standing Committee and Board of trustees, voted on the first four (of five) Resolutions presented to us, and were inspired by the words of both the keynote speaker, Lisa Kimball, PhD., and Bishop Megan Traquair. I was personally interested in the Report from the Committee regarding "Project (Re)Start. As presented, this great project allows parishes to join in the effort to provide disaster readiness supplies to our communities by assembling and distributing those supplies as they are needed in the midst of a disaster.

The remaining Resolution required additional discussion and reflection. That resolution, R5-2023, concerns the practice of what is known as "Open Communion", or the offering of the Eucharist to those who have not been baptized. Even though I have a very strong opinion on this issue, I was extremely interested in the discussion which gave me a much better understanding of how others think/feel on both sides of the question. The resolution, as presented, declared that "there are no exceptions" to inclusion of all others. After delegates voted to amend the resolution to remove that declaration, we voted on the amended resolution. The result of the vote was "nay". The resolution will now go back to the committee to be reworked and re-presented.

It seemed to me that the process of voting this year was a new experience for most of us. We voted by phone, - some more quickly and efficiently than those of us who encountered unruly or obstreperous phones! In the end we prevailed, and the work got done!

Please mark your calendars for April 26-27, 2024 so you will attend the FEARLESS FAITH REVIVAL where Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, will preach as well as meet with our youth and clergy. A fabulous and rewarding day has been planned. Don't miss it!!!

My impression of the convention was extremely positive. It was great to have the chance to mingle with folks from the other parishes in our Diocese. I felt a palpable excitement in the air because we were once again able to meet in person to learn from each other, and to gain perspective on how others are thinking and acting. Bishop Megan led the workings with an inspired and masterful hand – so masterful in fact that we finished four hours early!!!