

Morning: Friday 7/6

Open with silence, deep breath. Ring singing bowl (app)

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. Amen.

Slide 1: ECW logo

By now, you are aware that this is our logo, bearing the theme of this Triennial Meeting. It was designed by Daryl Storey, a graphic designer and member of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Bellevue, Washington [is Daryl here, by the way?] I love the movement of the design, the way it evokes the wind and fire of the Holy Spirit.

As I spent time looking at this great curve, this visual representation of the movement of the Holy Spirit, I started seeing something else as well. Life and ministry is not just about *going*, is it? We also return home. See how return is implied in the swirling?

Slide 2: ECW logo with dots

It is a spiritual truth that we never stay in one place spiritually. As the Rule of St. Benedict says: always we begin again. Every day, we are on a journey to God. We may fail or stumble, but God always welcomes us to begin again. What is wonderful about this is that there is always a chance for a new start; we are never stuck. What can be frustrating, though, is that: We will never fully arrive, at least not until we come to that heavenly kingdom where there is no pain or grief. So for now, we must embrace the journey.

In mythology—in all great stories—there is a phenomenon, a pattern, (most famously associated with Joseph Campbell) known as the **hero's journey**. The hero's journey is the common template in literature. In all the great stories from the Odyssey to the Bible to the Hobbit to the Chronicles of Narnia to Harry Potter and Star Wars, the hero and heroine always follow a pattern: they leave home, have adventures, fight and win hard battles, learn things, and return home transformed. This is a universal pattern in all the great stories. (**Slide 3: The Hero's Journey**)

Over the next few days we will go on a Heroine's Journey of our own. We will honor women who have gone before us who are our models, our guideposts for our own journeys. Today, on this first day of our journey, we start at home. It all starts at home.

Slide 4: Joshua 24:15—As for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

You have heard the phrase: “Home is where the heart is.” Home is the place where the journey begins. As Kellie said last night at the welcome dinner, everything we do stems from our Identity and our Mission. Our identity is forged at home, and it is from home that we set out on our mission. We must know who we are, and to whom we belong. The more we know our own history—our personal history, our communal history—the stronger our grounding. When we know who we are and have a strong sense of place, we build our foundation on rock.

Slide 4: Queen Emma

One person who knew the importance of home is this woman. The first guidepost on our journey is: Queen Emma of Hawai'i. Born in 1836, Emma was raised by four parents, two natural and two adopted. When she was 20, she married the Hawaiian King Kamehamea. Both Kamehamea and Emma were known for their humility, approachability and kindness to their people. After a smallpox epidemic, Emma went about “with notebook in hand” to solicit from rich and poor the funds to build a hospital, which still exists and bears her name to this day. Emma and her husband are responsible for the Church of England sending missionaries to establish the Anglican Church in Hawai'i. After her husband's death, Emma committed her life to good works. Emma was fully devoted to her home, and her entire life was lived in the service of the Hawai'ian people. She was responsible for schools, churches, and efforts on behalf of the poor and the sick. Queen Emma reminds us that to be rooted in a sense of home is to stand on a foundation of rock. She and her husband are observed in the calendar of Episcopal saints on November 28.

Over the next several days, we will begin our days at 9 a.m. with music and meditations, and then close each morning just before lunch with shorter mini-meditations. In my presentations each day, we will follow the path of the Heroine's journey. We will build on what we heard yesterday during our opening celebration, when the national board were introduced in the context of the women who have gone before. In our meditation time, we will hear the stories of some of the spiritual heroines in our tradition, women who have gone before us and on whose shoulders we stand. These women will serve as our guideposts along the way. Those who have gone before us are our heroines in the faith, models for us, are worthy to be remembered and emulated. We will see how their journeys reflect our journeys. We will receive encouragement from their stories and receive strength for our own journeys, for the roads we travel.

Let us pray.

O Sovereign God, who raised up Queen Emma to be ruler in Hawaii, and inspired and enabled her to be diligent in good works for the welfare of their people and the good of

your Church: Receive our thanks for her witness to the Gospel; and grant that we, with her, may attain to the crown of glory that never fades away; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Redeemer, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.