

Highlights from the 229th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia

More than 430 lay and clerical delegates from across the Diocese (including Amanda Dupree, Paul Rosbolt, Ava Liberatore, Father Burl, Father Matthew, and Brandon Huffman) gathered at the Fredericksburg Convention Center, November 2 – 4 2023.

Convention Highlights:

- The theme of the Convention was *Closing the Gap Between Religion and Life*. In his address, Bishop Stevenson reminded us that “a life lived in the power of the things of religion – that life is a powerful life. These words remind us that we are called to action by the God that loves us – action that leads to justice for those who so rarely – if ever – are given it – action that leads to the reconciliation of broken relationships of peoples, and cultures, and life expressions.”
- Dr. Catherine Meeks, founding Executive Director of the Absalom Jones Center for Racial Healing, addressed the Convention virtually via Zoom. Highlights from her address included:
 - Healing is about working on your own woundedness and taking the healing you have received to the outside world.
 - God is amazingly good at making sure that what we need to get well will show up for us when we are ready to get well. The Red Sea didn’t part until someone put their foot in the water.
- Four individuals were elected to the Diocesan Standing Committee, two clergy and two lay: The Rev. Kristen Farrington, The Rev. Weston Matthews, Ms. Christine Crosby, and Ms. Susan Magill.
- The Convention adopted four resolutions: R-1a) calls for the Episcopal Church to continue to provide the Book of Common Prayer in printed form; R-2a) calls for the Episcopal Church to provide a process for bishops and deacons to transfer from churches in full communion with us; R-3s) calls for the endorsement of state legislation which would make it easier to build affordable housing on church property; R-4s) is a multi-pronged resolution addressing the war between Israel and Hamas, which calls for us to pray for peace, donate to American Friends of the Diocese of Jerusalem and other reputable charities to address the acute medical needs in Gaza; denounce bigotry towards Muslims and Jews in our communities, advocate for a two state solution, and bring to justice the perpetrators of the October 7th massacre.
- The Convention passed a budget balanced at \$6,070,600 on the strength of increased parish contributions. Featured in the 2024 diocesan budget is increased funding for campus ministry, a four-fold increase to the Bishop’s Minority Scholarship program, and the calling of a Minister for Congregational Vitality.