Clergy Shortage, the last part (for now)

I bet there are a number of you who read my articles on the clergy shortage in the diocese and thought, "I don't care, my congregation won't change."

I don't blame you. Who wants to change? I was born and raised at the Episcopal Church of the Holy Nativity in Clarendon Hills, IL. When I was a kid, Sunday worship services were held at 7:30 am and 9:30 am. These days the 7:30 Holy Eucharist has been discontinued, but the 9:30 am continues. Holy Eucharist has been held at 9:30 am every Sunday since 1958, so I get tradition.

But I also get the commission we have from Jesus to make disciples — not just at 10 am on Sunday morning. We are to share the Good News of God through Christ with as many people as we can, in any way that we can, for as long as we can. One of the ways we are strengthened and encouraged for this work is through the act of corporate worship, using the glorious liturgy of the Episcopal Church, week in and week out — a group of people who may have never become friends if not for the weekly commitment to corporate worship, a worship that strengthens, emboldens, and encourages us to go out and make disciples.

What is more important: meeting at the same time and same day we've met for 70+ years, or spreading the good news of Christ to as many different people as possible?

I love this diocese and the congregations that make up this diocese. Each congregation has unique gifts and is a blessing to our greater whole. If I could provide us with a passel of supply clergy, I would, but I can't. So, on behalf of the Bishop and the Deans, I am asking those of you longing for regular clergy coverage: consider changing.

Remember: ***Proverbs 3:5-6*** *— "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge God and God will make straight your paths."*

Our path is straight, even if scary. For God knows the way and our trust in the Almighty will help us take the necessary steps.

--Canon Cathy