



August 8, 2011

Dear PEP Supporter:

Three years after many of its members left The Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh is on the mend and looking for its next permanent bishop. PEP members are prominent among its leaders.

Accomplishments

Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh played a large role in bringing the diocese to where it is today.

- In 2002, the Episcopal Women's Caucus provided the first systematic opposition to the schismatic plans of our former bishop, and PEP was soon organized to continue that work.
- PEP advocated for The Episcopal Church in a diocese hostile to it, countered propaganda with facts, encouraged wider participation in diocesan affairs, and told the world what was happening in Pittsburgh.
- PEP was an organizer of Via Media USA, which has provided mutual support to Episcopalians in dioceses threatened by radically conservative bishops.
- PEP maintained independent contacts with The Episcopal Church and with Province III, which led to strategic planning with Episcopal Church leaders at venues outside the diocese.
- PEP reached out to conservative clergy disillusioned with their bishop, which led to creation of the critical coalition known as Across the Aisle.
- PEP members played major roles in planning for a post-schism Episcopal diocese and executing those plans.

Of course, PEP did not accomplish its work alone. Non-members played significant roles in preserving the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, and the legal strategy of Calvary Church was of incalculable value.

Looking Ahead

In these happier circumstances, some have questioned whether a Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh is still necessary. In fact, PEP has had a low profile lately, as key members have worked hard to build up the diocese and the wider church. Your Board of Directors believes that PEP is indeed necessary and viable in 2011 and beyond,. Here are some reasons why:

- PEP can present programs of importance and bring in outside speakers not provided for in the diocesan budget. This past year, for example, we had a presentation by Gay Jennings, a member of Executive Council, and a pro-and-con presentation on the Anglican Covenant, which will be a major topic of discussion at General Convention 2012.
- PEP continues to facilitate the purchase of software at a discount for the diocese and for individual parishes.

- PEP has begun making donations to build up the diocese. We intend to give gifts to re-starting parishes such as St. James, Penn Hills, and are donating courses on topics such as church history to the Resources Center that is now a Lutheran-Episcopal enterprise.
- PEP will continue to encourage Pittsburgh Episcopalians to stand for election to diocesan positions. We will recommend candidates and provide analysis of resolutions and canonical changes coming before convention.
- PEP continues to monitor the situation in dioceses recovering from or threatened by schism, offering support and advice when it can.
- With the integrity of the diocese no longer in doubt, PEP can become a voice for progressive ideas in our diocese.
- The PEP Board of Directors is considering changes in our bylaws that will make PEP a leaner organization that can spend less of its time in organization maintenance.

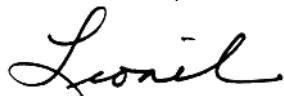
More generally, PEP is needed to encourage appreciation of and participation in The Episcopal Church. We are working to overcome the isolation of parishes from one another and are encouraging the building of Christian community in our diocese.

Supporting PEP

Your PEP membership and dues are as important now as they have ever been. It is again time to renew your PEP membership. (Memberships run from September 1 to August 31.) Please renew your membership now, and consider giving more than the suggested minimum this year. Also, consider how you might contribute to the PEP mission by helping produce our newsletter, update our Web site, or perform other tasks.

A membership form is enclosed. You may use it or register (and contribute) on-line at <http://goo.gl/pqibu>. Also enclosed is a flyer about the annual PEP picnic planned for August 15, 2011. Please join us. The picnic provides an opportunity for you to submit your membership form and annual dues. It is also an opportunity to invite friends who might also want to join PEP. We hope to see you there.

Yours in Christ,



Lionel E. Deimel

Vice President, Progressive Episcopalians of Pittsburgh

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