

50TH ANNUAL GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

The 50th Annual Convention will be held **Oct. 12-13, 2018**, at the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center.

A ministry mall, workshops, worship and dinner highlight Friday's activities. On Saturday, voting clergy and delegates from the diocese's 76 congregations will gather to approve the 2019 budget, consider resolutions, elect persons to various boards and committees and hear **Bishop Dabney Smith's** convention address. To help celebrate our first half-century, Presiding Bishop **The Most Rev. Michael Curry** will be in attendance.

* * See Page 5 for additional information and Page 6 for Altar Guild volunteer opportunities * *

FROM THE DESK OF SARAH . . .

The next thing on everyone's agenda is the Diocesan Convention honoring our 50 years as a diocese. The altar guilds of the diocese can play a big role in both enhancing the worship service on Friday evening and supplying treasures for the annual exchange of liturgical items. Remember, if you have something big, it can be photographed and we will post it for all to see. Clean those sacristies and have it at the Convention Center by Thursday, October 11 during the afternoon. We also need help manning the tables. If you can come for half a day or all day on Friday, or Saturday until 1, please try. Let me know so I have an idea how many helpers we have.

The Eucharist at 5 PM on Friday will be our biggest ever and we are honored to have the presiding Bishop Michael Curry as our celebrant. We are still working on the staging and having at least 6 communion stations. I hope you can be part of this wonderful event. We expect up to 1500 people.

You may like to know that our diocese is one of few that have actually had a diocesan altar guild serving its bishops since 1970. The DAG has been responsible for the purchase of the handmade, folding wooden altar that we use and also the purchase of the communion vessels and the beautiful Jacobean frontal. Our big, brass candle sticks came from the Church of the Redeemer in Sarasota. This group has maintained teaching programs through the years and supplied many a church with basic items.

Please remember we will be burning old white linens at DaySpring in November. These will be deconsecrated at that time. Bring them to Convention!

We still need a newsletter editor and deanery representatives! Contact me if you have questions or want to volunteer.

Always remember that our work is dedicated to the glory of God. Serving is an honor and a blessing.

Sarah Hill

Diocesan Directress

sarahhill.fl@gmail.com

(727) 525-8340

JOIN THE PROVINCE IV ALTAR GUILD

The Province IV Altar Guild is comprised of members from the nine states in our geographic area: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and part of Louisiana. Membership in the P-IV AG gives you an opportunity to network with wonderful altar guild members from the southeast. P-IV AG dues (\$20 a year) include a subscription to their twice-yearly newsletter, **Sacristy Sense**. Make check payable to P-IV AG and send to Treasurer **Phyllis Bruce**, 402 Circle Drive, Fairhope, AL 36532-2603.



JOIN THE NATIONAL ALTAR GUILD

The **National Altar Guild Association** (www.nationalaltarguildassociation.org) serves Episcopal altar groups and individual members of altar guilds. Among other things, NAGA is responsible for all the logistics involving Eucharists at General Convention, for making and providing stoles to military chaplains, for providing or assisting dioceses with providing disaster communion kits, and for being a source of information for “all things altar guild”. Membership in NAGA (\$35 a year) includes a subscription to the quarterly newsletter, **Epistle**. Make check payable to NAGA and send to Treasurer **Marcia Himes**, 45 Farview Circle, Riverton, WY 82501-9760



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA ALTAR GUILD

DUES REMINDER FROM THE BOARD

Dues notices are mailed (e-mailed) out in January. If for some reason you forgot to pay your **2018 Diocesan Altar Guild Dues**, pay them now! Dues notices for 2019 will go out in January. Dues for a church are \$20.00; dues for a mission are \$10.00.

Make check payable to: Altar Guild, Diocese of SWFL and put “Altar Guild Dues” on the “FOR” line. Send payment to:

Diocese of Southwest Florida
ATTN: Diocesan Altar Guild
8005 – 25th Street East
Parrish FL 34219-9405

CHURCHES AROUND THE DIOCESE . . .

St. Giles Episcopal Church (St. Petersburg Deanery)
8271 - 52nd Street North, Pinellas Park, FL 33781
727-544-6856



Founded in 1958 under the guidance of Fr. Smith, St. Giles grew from a dozen plus families to several hundred. The church originally had a cross on the top and bells in the tower which were rung before each service. Unfortunately, winds caused the cross to move and leaks to form in the roof, so the tower had to be lowered and the cross and bells removed. Later additions included office space, classrooms, and space for a food pantry.

For the past eight or so years, this church has become bilingual with a Spanish-speaking priest and a congregation that was not originally Hispanic. St. Giles' has a very active worship life with one English and one Spanish service each Sunday. They have a full Spanish choir and their music is more modern with drums and other instruments. They are starting a Spanish Bible study this month.

St. Giles church recently celebrated their 60th anniversary with a Family Fiesta weekend. They sponsor a Food Pantry for those who live in their zip code and offer students a chance to do Community Service Hours through volunteer work. Once a month they offer a luncheon as an outreach to residents of St. Giles Manor which is adjacent to the church. They offer other community dinners monthly. This is an active parish that works and worships well together.

The Altar Guild at St. Giles stays busy and joyous. Their work is evidenced not just on Sunday's but at all services, including funerals and special celebrations throughout the year. Members set up the altar before and after each service, maintain the care of the linens, keep track of and order the wine, hosts, candles, oil and other supplies used in services. Congratulations and many thanks go to the team members: Susie Baars, Ronny Brown, Virginia Clarihew, Mary Lemon, Mary Speck, Meredith Wilson and Glen Woodyard.

CHRISMON Project

Lynn Pittenger, Altar Guild Director, St. John's, Brooksville FL

Chrismons are ornaments displaying Christian symbols (Chrismons is a contraction for 'Christ monograms'). They were first developed by Frances Spencer and the women of the Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia. Many churches display a Chrismon tree, usually decorated with handmade ornaments, during the Advent and Christmas seasons (<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/what-are-chrismons>).

In January of 2017, I began a project at St. John's Brooksville to stitch and finish two sets of Chrismon ornaments. One set will remain at St. John's; the other set was made for sale to an interested church, preferably in the Diocese of Southwest Florida. There are 54 ornaments in each set -- they are counted cross stitch, beautifully finished with beads or cording in silver and gold. Each ornament is 4.5" to 5" in size. As a longtime member of the Embroiderers' Guild of America, I was able to call upon chapter members to stitch for this project. I ended up doing most of the finishing myself . . . 78 ornaments!



Cross-Stitched Ornaments



During Advent



Lit on Christmas Eve

St. John's has two trees, one at each end of the altar rail. We divide the 54 ornaments between the two trees, placing a few ornaments on each tree each Sunday in Advent. The finished trees are lit on Christmas Eve. In the photos, there are only 24 on each tree because we were not even finished with the first set. This year will be the first year with the complete set in place.

If an Altar Guild or Vestry wishes to purchase the set, please contact me through my e-mail lynpitt1216@tampabay.rr.com or call St. John's in Brooksville at 352-796-9112 and the church will pass the inquiry along to me. We are asking a minimum donation of \$500.00 for the 54 ornament set.

DIOCESAN CONVENTION PREVIEW

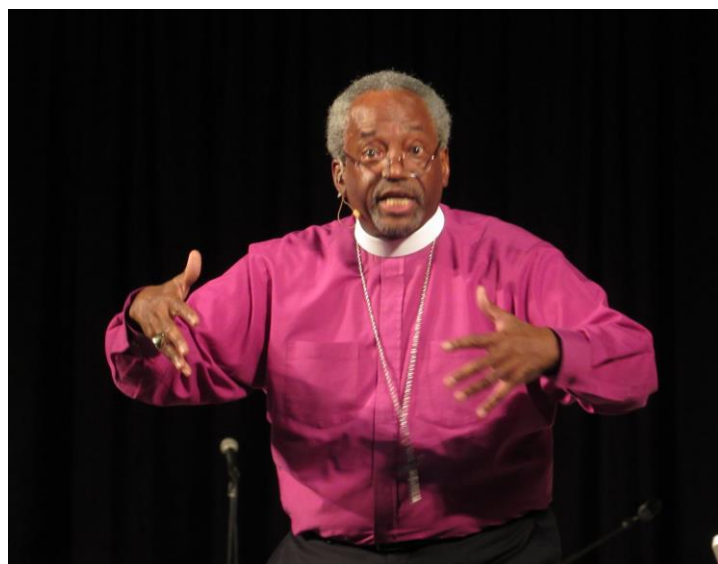
(Excerpt from *Southern Cross*, Volume 49, Issue 2, Pentecost 2018)

In addition to the normal business of convention, the event will be highlighted by the visit of the presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, the **Most Rev. Michael Curry**. On Oct. 12, Bishop Curry will lead a plenary session for the entire diocese; that evening he will preside and preach at a 5 p.m. Holy Eucharist to which the entire diocese is invited.

“This convention will be not only a celebration of what Christ has done in the last half century in our diocese, but what can and will be,” said **Bishop Dabney Smith**. “This will be a special weekend and time together.”

Annual Convention is a two-day affair. Friday is always a day of seminars, fellowship and training, highlighted by a Holy Eucharist with the entire clergy and leadership of the diocese. While the 5 p.m. service has always been open to all, this year there is a special invitation for people from across the diocese to attend. The service is always a special moment for the diocese. All of the active clergy and many retired clergy serve, vest, and process in the service. The music is always exceptional; **Dwight Thomas**, the organist and choirmaster at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, will lead the music, which includes a convention choir. The service is a high mass, including incense. Our **Archdeacon Kathleen Moore** and vergers from the cathedral will assist to ensure everything runs smoothly. Following the service, there will be a reception out on the lawn, overlooking the Peace River.

Bishop Curry at General Convention, Austin, Texas, July 2018



For Altar Guild members, being a part of preparing and cleaning up for a Eucharist of this size is quite an experience! If you have never had the pleasure of serving on Altar Guild for General Convention, where three to five thousand receive the sacrament in 15-20 minutes, Diocesan Convention will give you a “taste” of what it is like to work behind the scenes of a service for more than a thousand. It is truly the experience of a lifetime!

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813-478-2444

Venice - VACANT

HELP WANTED: Secretary. Deanery Directors for the Manasota, St. Petersburg, and Venice areas. Editor of AltarGram.

If you love Altar Guild and enjoy sharing ideas, there are plenty of (unpaid) opportunities for you!

Secretary keeps minutes of Board meetings and Annual meeting.

Deanery Directors are members of the DAG Board and are encouraged to attend the quarterly Board meetings at DaySpring. Primary responsibility is to maintain phone or email contact with the altar guilds of the churches in your Deanery to let each other know what is going on.

Editor of AltarGram collects news from around the Diocese and shares it in newsletter – basic computer skills very helpful!

If interested, contact Sarah at 727-525-8340.

IMPORTANT DATES

THURS. OCT. 11, 2018 1:00 PM

Help DAG set-up Free Market tables for Diocesan Convention

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center
75 Taylor Street
Punta Gorda FL

FRI. OCT. 12 & SAT. OCT 13, 2018

50th ANNUAL DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center
75 Taylor Street
Punta Gorda FL

VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH FREE MARKET TABLE

VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH EUCHARIST