

## A message from Bishop Stephen T. Lane

*The commandments, you shouldn't commit adultery, you shouldn't murder, you shouldn't steal, you shouldn't desire what others have, and any other commandments, are all summed up in one word: You should love your neighbor as yourself. Love doesn't do anything wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is what fulfills the Law. As you do all this, you know what time it is. The hour has already come for you to wake up from your sleep. Now our salvation is nearer than when we first had faith. The night is almost over, and the day is near.* Romans 13: 9-12

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

Welcome to the 198th Convention of the Episcopal Church in Maine.

This year marks both the end of Convention's seven-year journey around the Diocese of Maine and a return to Bangor in the new Cross Center. This Convention also marks the second year that our business will be conducted in just one day. From all reports, and based on the first two successful Spring Training Days, a one-day gathering each fall works well.

Our theme this year is "*Jesus is here, right here, right now.*" We continue to reflect on how, in our daily lives and as members of local communities of faith, we accept God's invitation to join God in our neighborhoods and on ways to strengthen the discipleship practices that enliven our faith and our ministries. That is our most important work.

In our business this year, we will consider a resolution that will establish the steps by which the Diocese will elect our next bishop. Members of the Standing Committee have designed a very collaborative process to engage as many members of the Diocese as possible. In other business, we will move another step closer to establishing a living wage for all lay employees of the Diocese, discuss compensation for clergy, and elect diocesan officers. We'll adopt a budget for 2018 and elect clerical delegates to Diocesan Council at Area caucuses.

Building on our experience of the past few years, we will continue moving in the direction of using less paper for Convention. This Convention booklet will be available only as a downloadable PDF from the Diocesan website and an email notification to all clergy, delegates, and alternates. You may print them out or download them to your tablet or laptop computer.

As you approach the Cross Center look for the signs and balloons. A team of red-aproned volunteers will be on hand at each entrance to assist you.

Everything you need for the Convention is in this booklet (or may be found at the Convention link on the homepage of the diocesan website at [www.episcopalmaine.org](http://www.episcopalmaine.org) ). Please make every effort to attend a pre-Convention hearing or watch it online. Ask questions and learn more about the issues under consideration. Please don't forget to bring your booklet (e-copy or print) both to the hearing and to Convention.

I hope you are looking forward to Convention. I'm looking forward to seeing all of you. My call for a successor will cause each of us to look forward. My assurance to you is that as we look forward - continuing the good work and ministry that is flourishing in many corners - we will keep our eyes on Jesus.

Faithfully,  
+Steve

