

Post-Convention report to the Diocese

The recent Diocesan Convention played a pivotal role in the ongoing work of the Episcopal Ministry Discernment Team (EMDT). Following an extensive presentation by the team and opportunities for table discussions and questions-and-answers, the convention overwhelmingly approved the following resolution:

Affirming the work of the Episcopal Ministry Discernment Team

The Diocese of Northern Michigan, meeting in convention, October 17-19, 2008, affirms the work of the Episcopal Ministry Discernment Team to date and expresses support for the process they have designed leading to the affirmation (election) of the Bishop and Episcopal Ministry Support Team (EMST) in February 2009.

In a sense, the convention functioned like a congregational “Affirmation Weekend,” providing a mid-course evaluation of the process to date and pointing towards its final expression when, in this process, the diocese will gather again to “affirm” the results of the work of discernment at the Special Diocesan Convention in February.

The Discernment Team’s presentation at convention included four video clips from our Companion (Jo Gantzer) and Reflectors (Bruce Caldwell, Tom Ely, and Fredrica Harris Thompsett) with their assessment of what has been accomplished and what remains to be done. Since then, the entire presentation has been updated to include the results of the convention and will be made available to each congregation in the diocese in the form of an easy-to-use DVD. The team encourages its use throughout the diocese when it is released in a few weeks.

In light of the convention’s encouraging endorsement, the discernment process has continued to move ahead. In the beginning, 28 names were presented to the team from sources within and outside the diocese (and the country). Of those, 11 completed the paperwork and one subsequently withdrew, leaving 10 individuals to



be considered. Teams of 2-4 EMDT members conducted phone interviews with the candidates’ references and reported on the results of those interviews. In two subsequent meetings, the team has “sifted” the number of individuals being considered for the position of Bishop/Ministry Developer to four. Telephone interviews with those candidates and additional references, again conducted by teams of EMDT members, will be completed in time for the November 15th meeting. Note: the Special Convention dates have been moved ahead a week so that the first date will be February 21 (February 28 and March 7 will be the snow dates).

In addition to the discernment of the Bishop/Ministry Developer, the team has been working on the selection of regional representatives for the Episcopal Ministry Support Team (EMST). They have received names from the four regions. They expect to announce those names at the same time as the Bishop/Ministry Developer’s name is released in January.

Timeline	
Nov 15	EMDT receives reports of phone interviews <i>Background checks</i>
Dec 6	Discernment of Final Group of Bishop/Ministry Developer
Jan 3	EMDT conducts personal interviews with finalists
Jan 10	Alternate date for interviews
Jan 17	Final discernment (and release) of names for EMST (including Bishop/Ministry Developer) <i>Bishop/Ministry Developer and EMST visit the diocese</i>
Feb 21	Special Diocesan Convention (or Feb 28 or Mar 7)