

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 1, 2005
All Saints Day

The 47th annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Northwest Texas wrapped up its business in Lubbock on October 30 with a festive celebration of Holy Communion, emphasizing the convention's theme of "Many Gifts: One Spirit."

During the three-day convention, hosted by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Lubbock, delegates from throughout the diocese focused on the joys of evangelism, on the many opportunities for community ministries, and on the issue of reconciliation within the church.

It was in the area of reconciliation that the high point of the Convention was reached.

A resolution giving parishioners the option of redirecting a portion of their pledge away from the Episcopal Church at the national level was at first defeated narrowly on Saturday, October 29, but was then approved on a 101-71 vote the following day. The resolution – a continuation of one approved in 2003 and 2004 – was again brought before the Convention on a motion to reconsider by clergy delegates who expressed a strong desire for the diocese to "hold together" during these difficult days following General Convention 2003.

Several delegates at the Lubbock Convention said it was important for the diocese to continue honoring the views of all, even though there was widespread disagreement on the issue.

"We are a family in this Diocese," one delegate remarked after Sunday's closing worship service. "And members of a family often disagree on issues. But they're still a family."

Another delegate said the Diocese of Northwest Texas "is known throughout our province for our love, and we need to remember that our love and respect for each other is what is most important."

As the diocese has done the past two years, parishioners will be given the option in 2006 of electing – in writing – to direct that none of their pledge be sent to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.

A second resolution, urging General Convention in 2006 to affirm the church's historic place in the worldwide Anglican Communion, was narrowly defeated.

The Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Bishop of Nevada, was the keynote speaker at the Convention. Her remarks throughout the weekend focused on evangelism and community ministry – and on the importance of being filled with the joy and excitement of the Lord in reaching out to the less fortunate members of society. Her challenge to the Convention was to "let go and get lit" by the power of the Lord in our service to others.

More than 200 lay and clergy delegates and guests from around the diocese attended the Convention.