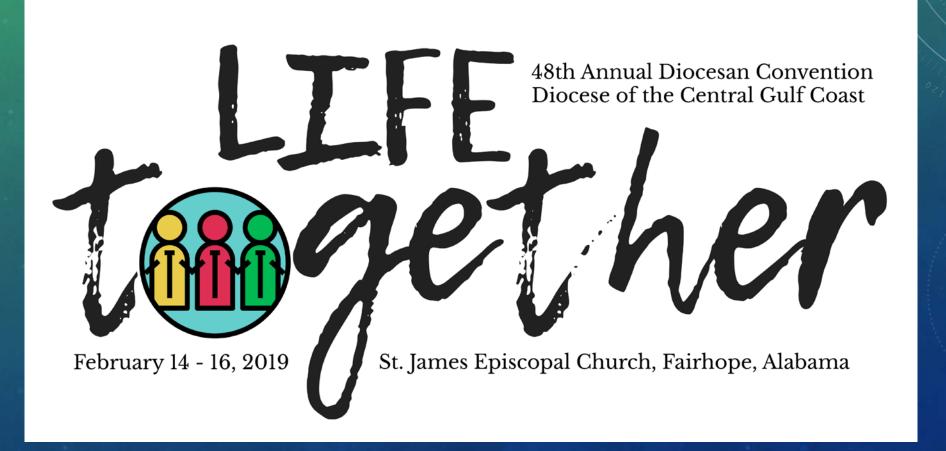
Small Group Discussions



Knowing & Telling Our Stories

What draws me to this church?

- + | was invited.
- + The inclusiveness and welcoming
- + The acceptance of many views
- + The ability to question
- + The door is open to all, welcomed from another tradition
- + It's very okay to disagree.
- + The liturgy; The tradition
- + The sameness; doing things together; can go anywhere and be on the same page
- + Born into this tradition; it's home
- → "Via media" it's the middle way
- * Loving God and each other
- → You became my family

Here's what | want you to know:

- + God is here. You are loved. There is a place for everyone.
- You are accepted and included in love.
 Even though we aren't judgmental, we have a strong faith!
- + We are all God's children; whatever we have to endure, God is there.
- + We can support and love each other despite many different perspectives.
- + Living our baptismal covenant is real and empowering.
- + Everyone can take communion; there are no guilt trips, just let God love you and you can start over.

Conversation & Our Covenant

Divisions we see in our families, churches, communities:

- + Fear
- + Blind clinging to believes that entrench opinions and fear of "the other"
- + Political; conservative vs. liberal
- + Socio-economic and class
- → Wide differences in social and political power within the community
- + Lifestyles
- + Old and new
- + Race; Nationality
- + Education
- + Generational
- + Negativity
- + Sense of hypocrisy in the church
- + Seeing the other as the enemy

How we seek reconciliation:

- + Sacred listening
- + Finding common ground
- + See the other person as Jesus sees them
- + Actually listening and not cutting off the other
- + Decide we can serve God together in spite of differences
- + Taking action
- + Ask ourselves how we live into our faith and let that be more important than differences and divisions
- ★ Reconciliation for what? Not everyone can agree what differences we are arguing over
- → Not enough emphasis on contrition before
 the start of reconciliation

Looking Outward: Our Story in the World

low we're engaging people during the week:

- + St. John's Talks
- + Bible & Book studies
- + Blessing of the animals
- + Help at Manna food bank
- + Food pantry
- + Prison ministries
- + Choir
- + Facebook
- + Fine Arts Series
- + Share with workers
- + Laundry Love
- + Hot dog Love
- ♦ Supper at Grace
- + Thrift shops
- + Family Promise

What else might we do to in the community:

- + Freedom School
- + Laundry Love
- + Navy chaplain with NAS
- + Ashes to Go
- + Evangelism
- + Theology on tap
- + Invite, Welcome, Connect
- + Praise & Worship block parties
- + Community events
- + Float in Mardi Gras parade
- + Ecumenical programs; work together + Assist Wilmer Hall in some way
- + Do more with Kairos
- + Justice ministries
- + Active listening to discern needs