

Daily posting from the West Tennessee Deputation at General Convention in Columbus, Ohio

Saturday, June 17, 2006

By Stephanie Cheney, Director of Diocesan Operations for The Diocese of West Tennessee, who is in Columbus for the General Convention

Greetings from Columbus. Today was not as frenetic as most days have been. However, all things are relative. Today was the main Eucharist of Convention, and it was also the UTO Ingathering. It's an impressive sight to be in a cavernous convention hall filled with Christians from all across the globe who are joined together in celebration of the Eucharist. UTO representatives and bishops from across the church marched in solemn procession as the service began. The Eucharistic music for the morning was commissioned to celebrate the ministry of Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, who was the celebrant for the service. Dr. Jenny Te Paa, a lay person from New Zealand, a seminary professor and a member of the Lambeth Commission, preached a powerful sermon. Hopefully, her text will be made available online.

Prior to afternoon legislative sessions, there was a joint session of the houses to introduce the Presiding Bishop Nominating Committee, explain the process they used in choosing candidates, and introduce the candidates. There were five candidates put forth by the committee and three nominated from the floor. (Biographical information on all the candidates can be found on the ENS link on the diocesan web site.) The election will be held on Sunday.

I again worked in the House of Bishops. Their session was shortened because of an early evening dinner planned for bishops and spouses. However they did deal with several pieces of legislation.

Following the close of their session, I got to the House of Deputies in time to hear a moving tribute to the Very Rev. George Werner, who is retiring as President of the House of Deputies. He was presented with many gifts and testimonials, a fitting tribute for all his work over the last six years.

The deputation did not meet, however several of us went to dinner together. Julie Denman, Bill Taylor, Barkley Thompson, Brad Foster, Reynolds and I went to a classic German restaurant that has been a popular spot in Columbus for 117 years. It was located in a charming neighborhood, the German District, the sausages and beer were excellent, and the "ump-pah band" was in full swing. It was a nice ending to the day and to the half-way point of Convention.

God's peace be with all of you in West Tennessee. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers in the days ahead.