

January 29, 2008

Members of the Diocese of the Rio Grande:

Associated with this letter is the long-awaited compilation of data from the table discussion exercise at the Diocesan Convocation in October, 2007. Recall that the same three questions were posed to all the table groups. A note taker among the participants at each table faithfully jotted down both key thoughts and individual reactions to the three questions. Each note taker then delivered to me the notes they had taken at their table.

Over the period from October until now I have slowly gone through the many, many pages of notes I received at Convocation. I simply transcribed the notes into a single document containing all the comments recorded by the note takers. The document in question is entitled "Convocation Table Dialogues." I have not sought to re-group responses under each question, nor have I attempted to summarize the individual thoughts transcribed.

When I presented this compilation to Standing Committee at our meeting on January 29, 2008, I offered the following cautions about the data and their application:

- Very little consensus that appeared in the data, except that we pretty much all grant that this Diocese is quite diverse and that additional communication in the style employed at Convocation would be good for the Diocese to engage in.
- It was not necessarily clear from the note takers' papers whether a given comment represented a generalized opinion at their tables or whether it represented the view of only one individual; therefore, it would be risky to ascribe too much weight to any individual comment in the compilation document.
- While the Standing Committee intends to read carefully through the compilation in order to glean from it input to the processes for effecting Diocesan healing and for electing a new Bishop, these data will be complemented by additional data to be collected from more listening and conversation throughout the Diocese in the months to come. This compilation, as instructive as it is, will be a beginning and is certainly not the end of the listening and understanding that will characterize the healing we all want to see happen in this Diocese.
- So, as the Standing Committee intends to do, please use this compilation as a very valuable reference document. It will be enriched by future conversations and analyses and summations.

My fellow Standing Committee members and I want to thank all those who participated in the table conversations at Convocation. The data tend to illustrate the honesty and general respect with which the interactions took place. We certainly want to encourage much more of that as we move forward together into the future.

I personally want to thank my fellow Standing Committee members and everyone in the Diocese who waited patiently to see the compiled data from these table conversations.

Sincerely,

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Member, Standing Committee
Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande

EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE RIO GRANDE

October 20, 2007

Convocation Table Dialogues

As part of the 2007 Convocation of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, an exercise took place in which delegates were randomly assigned to discussion tables. Each table was asked to talk about the same three questions. It was the intention of the Diocesan Standing Committee, in its soon to be assumed role as Ecclesiastical Authority for the Diocese, to use the information from the table discussions as guideposts for its own work in the Diocese and as an initial assessment of the kind of persons for whom we should be looking to be candidates for election to Bishop.

The questions discussed and the data captured by note takers at each discussion table are presented below.

QUESTION #1: How would you characterize the Diocese of the Rio Grande today, in terms including but not necessarily limited to its state of health, its coherence or divergence, and its prospects for Godly and enlightened leadership?

- Let the local church take care of itself; leave the politics to the leadership
- The Diocese is not healthy; it seems like each local parish is turning inward and taking care of itself in a healthy way.
- The local parishes are the healthy tree; the Diocese appears to be the unhealthy branch.
- We feel isolated.
- Sad to lose a leader of any kind.
- Grieving.
- No coherence.
- Two emotions: tired of the fight, strong ray of hope for focus on mission and ministry.
- We have lost sight of what we are about – need to refocus.
- Many people were hurt by the polarity.
- “The only sin passion can commit is joylessness.” Dorothy Sayer.
- Polarization has created a chasm.
- Impact of St. Clement’s departure is not a shock; impacts the Diocese, not the Southern Cone.
- All spectrums need to stop and refocus.

- Isolation is the end result of pursuing our agenda.
- Generally, people want to stay in the Episcopal Church.
- Search committee was stacked in the search for the last Bishop.
- Individual parishes are flourishing because they are focusing on the love of Christ.
- Reconnect with the National Church.
- Diocese wants to stay (or come) together, but is struggling with diversity.
- Diocese is looking for cohesiveness and love to hold together.
- Healthiest Diocese we have been.
- Look for Mission mindedness.
- We have been captured by (diverted by) all the issues at hand.
- Concerned about a long period without a Bishop (we're going to be floundering).
- Fearful of the discord relative to St. Clement's.
- Troubled by the sale of St. Clement's at "bargain" amounts.
- We need to love each other and not fight over money issues.
- Diocese is unified that it cannot be diverted by national issues and national visibility.
- We are a family and we may have discussions, but we must always welcome each other back.
- Seems to be agreement that there is good will – no name calling.
- Diocese is healthy.
- We need to be cautious and not act too fast in searching for a new Bishop.
- Look for a positive outlook in a new Bishop.
- Void of leadership shouldn't cause diversion.
- Engage in a deliberate listening process – surveys or whatever.
- People are ready to talk now.
- Get on it now – things are happening nationally and we need to get ahead of the curve.
- We need a parent like a family.
- This Convocation has been good.
- Even if we are OK, the national issues will have an impact on our choices for Godly leadership.
- Good health – budget solid, St. Francis moved to parish status, other signs of good health.
- Not so good – St. Clement's left and Bishop resigned.
- Good that Standing Committee and Diocesan Council exhibited solidarity last June in their joint meeting and resolution.
- We're able to communicate diverse ideas in ways that can be heard and respected.
- Deep issues need to be resolved.
- Sometimes people stand up and call each other heretics; some congregations still plan to "walk"; problems with communications persist in some places.
- Diocese trying to isolate itself from the National Church.
- Those who want to leave should leave – then we can begin to get healthy.
- Everyone who believes differently from the National Church should stay and try to bring about change, not run around threatening to leave.
- We need a lot more opportunities for people to speak out and communicate.

- We need some group to come and help mediate, give us skills to communicate better.
- Deaneries are not doing as much as they could or should to help; there have been spurts of good work, but then it falls off.
- All Deaneries are now headed by clergy; originally there were to be four years with clergy leadership in a Deanery followed by four years of lay leadership; that rotation would be healthy.
- The Deans need to communicate well with other Deaneries.
- Optimistic.
- Lethargy.
- Seriously ill.
- Deaf, dumb, and out of touch.
- Important that the Bishop is leaving possibilities.
- Local churches are thriving, growing, and doing ministry.
- Diocesan focus on missions bypasses old congregations.
- Felt like we're being divorced.
- Unity more important than division.
- We've been angry with each other in the Diocese for ten years; it's just never quite come to a head.
- This is not the end; others will lead.
- Issues have not been discussed; there is always contention when resolutions come up.
- We are dead in the water, looking for direction.
- Our people don't know what's going on.
- We don't discuss the issues.
- Mourn the loss, but understand this is a symptom of a Church no longer following Scripture.
- A lot of us take comments personally but still listen.
- State of the Diocese is related to the state of the National Church.
- No one's talking.
- Talking doesn't work.
- We have work to do.
- We can't be about polarizing ourselves.
- Aren't we secure enough to say the Nicene Creed together?
- Can we compartmentalize? – Don't know / no we can't.
- We have to talk about the issues.
- We still have divergence, even with regard to the health of the Diocese.
- What are we going to get if Jeffery can't take it?
- Don't like fighting, but don't think it's necessarily unhealthy.
- Find a way to stay together.
- We have to look at each other through the eyes of Christ.
- Local congregations are for the most part thriving, growing, healthy, doing ministry, respect each other; not the case at the Diocesan level.
- We're ill, suffering lethargy, looking for direction, angry, political, polarized.
- Prayer is our hope for Godly and enlightened leadership.

- Church is a self-weeding garden – those who have fundamental problems with direction and philosophy will leave and go where they're more comfortable.
- We need unity, not fragmentation.
- Focus needs to be on God.
- With each crisis, the structure becomes stronger (a broken bone heals stronger).
- The process of Anglican and ECUSA dialogue is creating discussion and strength.
- That's what's happened in the tone of this Convocation.
- There are moderates and they create the expectation.
- We're moving forward together, creating a good state of health.
- During times of stress, use the BCP to pull us together under the authority of Christ.
- Divergence means splitting up.
- Most of the wealth of St. Clements came from bequests.
- With these recent events, those will dry up.
- Folks who worked hard for that money don't want it taken over by New Yorkers.
- DRG is currently very flat. We're all tired. We've been in a war and now we have a lack of vitality.
- The idea of a long-term interim is good because it will give us time to build, to have a mission and vision.
- Cohesiveness/divergence aren't either good or bad in and of themselves.
- How they are utilized is what makes the difference.
- Individuals and individual churches are developing their own missions with the lack of direction coming from the Diocese.
- Entire ECUSA is lacking in mission. The entire church is fewer in numbers.
- We need enlightened leadership.
- To heck with what's going on in the National Church; let's work locally.
- The "asking" all went into the Diocesan Office – now the money goes to the Deaneries.
- In many ways, we're very healthy: outreach is growing, more tithing is happening, more mission Churches, Gospel is spreading, and we're serving the poor.
- We're isolated from each other; geography is an issue.
- Individual churches are doing wonderful things, but we don't know what's going on among the different churches.
- Some have left. Many do not know about mission churches. However, Big Bend mission is growing. There is disagreement about the homosexual issue, but people still worship together.
- Communication is problematic across the Diocese.
- The fact the St. Clements left is an indicator that we are not as healthy.
- Financially, we seem to be doing OK.
- Mid-point of the spectrum is healthy, but we need to bring in the two extreme sides.
- Communication may help bring in the other sides. At least we should have loving conversations.
- It is important that all worship together, make sure all are welcome, and all are open.
- As in divorce, some views are not reconcilable.

- View of the absolute authority of Scripture and its interpretation is an issue; as opposed to reliance upon the three legged stool.
- Looking at other Gospels not included in the Canon. Difference here, too; others believe that the Canon is complete.
- We need to show respect for different views.
- We need to “gentle ourselves down.” Try to really appreciate each other. Honor each other. Do not immediately go to polarization. Engage in gentle dialogue that is respectful to all.
- Respect the person, even if you don’t respect the view.
- Really have a dialogue. Get people together who want to have a dialogue in this loving manner. We need leadership willing to do that.
- Love the idea of discussion, but have heard the same requests for 10 years. Have we gone too far to do this (to be able to have good discussion)?
- Avoid divorce. As in divorce, children are impacted.
- St. Clements is a great model for leaving with grace.
- Churches are only getting one side of the issue, especially small churches. Need to have both sides of the issue presented to all churches.
- Sadness, missing the Bishop, painful to deal with the reality of things, stepping out of our comfort zone.
- The Diocese is alert, growing; not all are happy, but we are healthy.
- Episcopal “movement” uncomfortable, but can be healthy.
- Diocese is fractured and large geographically.
- It is almost impossible to look at the Diocese as homogenous.
- Difficult to handle divergence.
- People won’t consider coherence and won’t embrace change.
- Are we healthy enough to call a new Bishop?
- We need a period of mourning before looking.
- We have the Standing Committee to rely upon.
- Commit to a period of mourning for healing and to identify who we are.
- Need discernment: Who are we? Geographic separation, improve communication, share ideas.
- God is calling us out of our comfort zone.
- Individually, parishes are doing well, although they are diverse.
- Need to celebrate the good that is happening in the parishes.
- We are Anglican – different is OK.
- Where are we called to be the same or to agree: in the Creed and in the Sacraments.
- We have to love.
- People are feeling anxious about our beliefs in the Creed and about the Sacraments being compromised.
- We are in a judgmental posture; some are being called heretics.
- Loss of St. Clements is critical; need unity, not fragmentation, feeling that we have been abandoned by our Bishop.
- It seems that the Diocese is either very liberal or very conservative, with not much in between.

- Next Bishop needs to be a healer.
- Diocese reflects the polarization of the nation.
- How divergence is handled is very important.
- Need conferences between lay and clergy to discuss the future of life in the Diocese.
- Most people in the Diocese just want to go to Church, and there is much confusion about what is going on.
- The Diocese is characterized by being fractious, with personal prejudice, fear, self-righteous indignation, homophobia.
- Splinter groups – Anglican or Episcopalian – you have to make a choice.
- Difference of culture impacts the church; i.e., homosexuality.
- Issues: homosexuality, church hierarchy, “man wrote the Bible and man can change the Bible,” challenged to be politically correct.
- Our human nature leads us into pointing fingers at one other.
- Our divisions are caused by differences in the interpretation of Holy Scripture.
- We are healthier now because of the departure of St. Clements; that congregation dominated the conversation.
- Our health is not good; we don’t have many youth, average age of the congregation in many parishes is 50+. This is a major concern.
- Obvious splits, such as the situation at St. Clements.
- Other splits may well be inevitable.
- Is there a plan, at the national level, to stop further falling away – to stop further splits over crucial issues?
- We feel doubly disadvantaged: 1) the church on the national level had made controversial decisions, and 2) our Bishop is leaving us, so we don’t have a leader to show us the way.
- Yes, we feel a loss, but so did the disciples when Jesus died. Other leaders will arise in this time of strife and need.
- The opportunities right now are endless.
- Change is seldom comfortable, but perhaps it’s time for a new leader to take us down a new path.
- The elections during this Convocation show a move toward a more middle ground.
- The national church appears to have chosen sides. Should we choose a side or can we just continue to enjoy and live with our diversity?
- If we are on the conservative side, we should stay in the national church and strengthen it rather than run from it.
- We should forgive the people of St. Clements and love them. We don’t have to agree with others in our own families to love them. We can’t judge others, setting ourselves up as God.
- Change is good. St. Clements’ departure may actually be healthy.
- Open communication is a sign of health.
- The clergy overall are older and are not healthy.
- We need younger people in leadership positions.
- In diversity, we find common ground.

- It is unhealthy to be as isolated as we are; we need more opportunities to discuss what we see as problems and as answers. Our geography poses a problem. We need to dialogue with each other.
- What is at our core? We are believers and worshipers of Jesus Christ.
- We need an interim Bishop with full authority, maybe someone who can come in and pull it all together.
- Part of our divergence is our personal interpretations of Scripture.
- We need to listen with respect and not attack each others' beliefs.
- Be more concerned with who we worship and not who we worship with.
- We are upset and grieving that our Bishop has left us.
- Congregations are uncertain about where the church is going.
- Nobody talks about what is happening in the church, possibly because of fear, perhaps out of reluctance to voice personal views, because that may invite fighting and arguing.
- The Diocesan newsletter does not communicate about issues in the national church and the feelings and the standing of our Diocese.
- We need to shed the baggage from past years and concentrate on the present and the future of the Diocese.
- The issue is not gay rights and inclusiveness, the issue is faithful Christian leadership from the national church.
- This problem started three General Conventions ago and was not addressed at that time.
- What makes a Christian a Christian? Fear of being labeled "un-Christian" has kept many silent.
- Concern about where we are going to get our next Bishop has intensified feelings of anger within the church.
- Leaders within the church have not responded to correspondence or to questions from congregations. We want to know how our leaders feel.
- People in the pews are either clueless as to what the true issues plaguing the church are or they simply don't care, as long as their building is there with a priest in it.
- Changing from more conservative to more liberal.
- Differing interpretations of Holy Scripture, clergy advocacy of own personal opinions, divisions between lay and clergy – all these are divisive issues.
- Clergy need to be held to higher standards (we have too many clergy with too wide a vision).
- Problems with what people believe in the Diocese, but none of these problems cannot be overcome.
- Diocese fragmented by issues.
- The church is a family that is a holy entity with the Lord at its head; within it we can disagree but cannot leave except as a last resort.
- Level of anxiety lower.
- The departure of St. Clements will have a domino effect, creates fear and nervousness, even through locally, we are cohesive
- Fairly healthy because of the make-up of our congregations (small). This will bring us together. Need to focus on people, evangelism, and the work of the church.

- Local congregations may be diverse in their thoughts and concerns, may not be seeing common ground; we need to get together and try to understand each other.
- Most of us yearn to learn to live together; to be able to disagree but love each other, to learn to accept each other.
- Basic good health expressed in the peaceable way St. Clements left the church, instead of paralleling the ways it has happened in other dioceses.
- In general, we are more healthy at the parish level than we are at the Diocesan level.
- Parishes are involved in lots of mission and outreach work.
- Some parishes are being ignored by the Diocese.
- Some parishes don't have resources and are dying.
- Striving to stay in the middle of the road in the present controversies is characterized as being weak.
- Some others besides St. Clements will leave; this is not over.
- The issues have not been discussed and we haven't created any resolutions.
- Convention has been killed – the issues are not honest, issues are not discussed, there is no transparency.
- Our people are in the dark.
- What is the range? What is agreed upon and what is not? What can we live with and what is non-negotiable?
- There is grief about St. Clements departure.
- Issues pending: homosexual ordination, New Hampshire, part of a church that is ignoring that Christ is the only way to God.
- We like the via media, but are dismayed at the election of the Presiding Bishop – her orthodoxy is in question.
- We have to get back to work for the Lord. We can't solve all the problems; we're just polarizing each other.
- Are we not secure in our own faith? Can we agree to disagree? Can we be united?
- We must discuss the basics of orthodoxy – sin, sickness – it is primary, it is at the root.
- Our way out will require a leader stronger than Bishop Steenson.
- We're very healthy because we're still talking with each other with love and with respect for divergence of opinion.
- We've seen a 10-20% decline in attendance in parishes.
- Not healthy at all; there is a split; the Bishop is leaving; there is agony over the connection with the Episcopal Church.
- It will be a long road to bring the DRG back together.
- There has been a 50% decline in membership in the congregation; we lack children and young people.
- There is chaos in the DRG; we are looking for a time of reconciliation as we search for a new Bishop.
- This is a difficult time for the DRG, with both the Bishop and St. Clements leaving.
- It is positive that we are still speaking with each other and that there is an effort by the Standing Committee to be transparent and communicative.
- Our response to the problem is important to healing; we need to work together to figure out where we go from here.

- Our congregation has seen a 50% increase in attendance, but mainly from people coming back; we do see a significant reduction in children and youth.
- We need to keep talking and asking for God's direction.
- Lay people are leading church where there is a change in clergy leadership; it is difficult for the congregation to grow without a priest; our city is going to double in size over the next 5 to 10 years, and we're having difficulty being there for our larger community.
- Hard to attract youth when we're having internal problems with the Episcopal Church; we can't compete with the mega-churches (e.g., Calvary in Albuquerque).
- We're in trouble; mainline churches are in trouble.
- Deep theological divisions are substantive and will continue to fracture our church.
- Diocese is conflicted and so is the national church; more parishes will try to leave the Episcopal Church and the Diocese.
- We can worship together despite our differences; we can work through our differences.
- The leadership needs to be the Christian teachings of the Bible.
- We get in trouble when we talk about delivering the Faith by the Saints for all time; there are baselines for Faith; difficult when we only consider Scripture.
- Diocese is chaotic, concerned with putting out fires; hard to plan long term when we're dealing with short term issues.
- Parishes don't even know, "What is your mission? What are the core values of the DRG?"
- DRG has both an identity and a health crisis.
- Core values are what holds us together as a people in Christ.
- We're not on the same page as the Diocese on what it means to be Episcopalian.
- We might be able to arrive at a coherent message within the DRG if we continue to work through it theologically and prayerfully.
- We're part of a corporation that is going the wrong way.
- Congregations are going to have to make a decision (i.e., take sides) about staying in the Episcopal Church or not.
- If the leadership is divided, the people will wonder what is the truth. What decisions will the leadership make to bind us together?
- We are presently two churches under one name, we are heterogeneous.
- Some have talked about the possibility of two Dioceses.
- We know where we disagree? Can we reach a place where we understand?
- If we are going to disagree, we need to disagree on an objective basis.
- There will be about one third of our churches leaving the Diocese.
- Some growth has been experienced in spots, but we have lost members overall.
- Some wonder if we are stronger for the losses.
- We need to stand unified.
- There is a new feeling of the need to stay the course; there is greater willingness to pull together.
- We're in a state of flux, a state of transition.
- We're in shock over our Bishop leaving to become a Roman Catholic.
- We're losing a great leader; we respect his feelings.

- There may be a power shift coming.
- There is always tremendous change when a new Bishop is elected.
- It has been years since anyone has read about happy events and news about the Episcopal Church.
- We want to be good people doing good things.
- Need to look more forward than backward.
- We're in a period of grief, due to the loss of our Bishop, the departure of St. Clements, and the state of the national church.
- We're tired of the fight; we want to move toward unity in Christ's church.
- We need to refocus our mission, and continue to win people to Christ's saving grace.
- Right and left need to come to a balance in Diocesan missions and goals.
- We need to heal as a church body, to function as Christ's family.
- We have communication failures. We need to communicate successful actions of our parishes. Diocesan activities need to be better communicated to the parishes.
- Congregations have been devastated. The Diocese is unstable.
- Diocesan House is unresponsive or selective in its responsiveness.
- The Diocese has been politically focused.
- The Diocese has been exclusive rather than inclusive; people are being pushed away rather than being invited in.
- There is more interest in form than in function.
- There is unease, distress, and grieving.
- There are adversarial relationships; we seem at war with one another.
- We want the Diocese to be united, but our turmoil divides us.
- Diocesan support is selective, and Diocesan House is an obstacle to parishes calling a rector.
- Strength of the Standing Committee and the churches will keep us together.
- We need to focus on living according to what Christ would want.
- We are involved, and this is the first step.
- The most important thing is to respect God and Christ and stay away from divisive issues.
- We cannot let divisiveness work its way into the search process for a new Bishop.
- Strong lay leadership is crucial; lay leadership must balance Diocesan leadership.
- On the cusp of growth, because the radicals have left.
- Healing has begun.
- Our focus needs to be on serving God.
- Without a Bishop, we don't have a church.
- We can lead by committee; we must have a leader.
- DRG was healthier 5 years ago.
- Many churches are struggling financially, and their people are leaving because of the current issues and the lack of young families.
- We feel great hope at this Convocation; tension and ugliness seem to have subsided.
- Pressing issues in the DRG and in the parishes could still split our Diocese apart.
- There remains some lack of civility still.
- In the departure of our Bishop there are both issues and opportunities.

- While we are healing, we need time for more healing.
- We need a couple of years, maybe, before getting a new Bishop and a new direction.
- DRG seem to be a loving Diocese that welcomes diversity.
- DRG is somewhat dysfunctional.
- The Diocese is getting better; there is a shift toward the center. There is a sense of relief, as though, “It’s over.”
- There is distrust of the Diocese and the Standing Committee concerning exercise of their fiduciary responsibility, especially with regard to the recent deal on St. Clements.
- Great message of reconciliation; we are the body of Christ.
- The Diocese is a ship with no rudder; we lack the kind of leadership we need.
- We are still recovering from the lack of a spiritual center under Bishop Kelshaw.
- Communication patterns are poor; we would like to see them improve.
- We need to look and listen carefully; God is at work.
- Like the idea of the Cathedral and the Diocesan office being back together.
- Diocese is diverse and broad, but accepting.
- Parishes are of a certain philosophy, and those philosophies differ; there are no neutral parishes.
- Episcopal Church is in a better state than many U.S. churches because we can rely on our Scripture, traditions, and intelligence as the foundation of Christ.
- Membership is slipping and gaining based on what is occurring with the national church.
- We need to do and give to our communities instead of just being in them.
- We are stronger as individual parishes than as a Diocese.
- Other Dioceses view the DRG as reactionary and conservative.
- El Paso is deeply troubled.
- West Texas – small congregations, separated but can meet together.
- St. Marks – if it stays the same, all will be OK. There is diversity.
- Diocese – we are sick, disturbed.
- Openness (First Commandment), inclusiveness, no problem with women.
- Differences lie in interpretation of Scripture; we’ve had 200 years of discussion about the Bible.
- Healthy about the St. Clements situation – we should be able to take the property with us.
- We are in shock over the departure of Bishop Steenson, but we understand his reasons.
- We are a geographically diverse Diocese and congregationally diverse.
- It seems we are in hard times by having “Episcopal” on our church sign.
- Bishop Steenson is true “via media.”
- Ambiguity is difficult, but it shapes us.
- The fact that we are talking shows that there is some health in this Diocese.
- Honor all, but there are essentials and non-essentials.
- Us vs. them tears us down.
- We obviously have a problem in this Diocese.

- State of health better than is has been.
- Problems are based more on dollars, not in our worship or spreading of the Gospel.
- We need to grow together.
- The Big Bend Mission is a good example; they have forgotten the political and are doing God's work.
- We have in the past held on to the past; we have an opportunity to build on what Bishop Steenson has started.
- It's not clear how we can have unity when the conflict between liberal and conservative has come to a head; will have to make personal decisions.
- There is no bending at the extremes of either side, either in the Diocese or in the National Church.
- The orthodox church members are being pushed out.
- Progressives ask, "How many have to leave before the Church breaks?"
- Why can't we live in harmony like they do in small churches and welcome everyone.
- Remember, you can only make a difference if you stay within the church.
- Folks who leave won't solve perceived problems.
- People aren't panicking about the Bishop's departure; many are stunned, but are accepting it.
- Move right on and find a new Bishop; continue life as Episcopalians.
- Bishop Steenson tried to maintain an on-going conversation with all sides.
- We are unsettled and divided on the national church; the Diocese is very diverse.
- A broad difference of opinion on issues within the Diocese and the national issues have caused even more division.
- We are not healthy; we are much in need of reconciliation.
- There is not much outreach going on.
- Turmoil of the last year has sapped our energy.
- We could always use better communication.
- There is a lack of trust internally, especially relative to the departure of St. Clements.
- Maybe we could add to the Together newsletter a couple of columns on issues, pro and con.
- Website needs to be updated more regularly.
- Spend more time on mission development goals.
- We need a reconciling interim Bishop.
- Standing Committee and Diocesan Council need to work closely together.
- Perhaps we should have "town meetings" around the Diocese.
- Minutes of leadership councils should be placed on the Web.
- The Diocese is fragile; what has happened in the larger church could lead to fracture.
- We have been fractured for a long time, due to lack of inclusivity in the Diocese and due to theological exclusivity.
- We don't feel safe with one another.
- The state of our local churches is characterized by aging congregations and congregations not reflective of the population in the communities our churches are in (minorities especially).
- There are some exceptions where small churches are vibrant and are growing.

- There is a contrast between small churches in rural areas and large churches in cities; in rural areas it is very difficult to attract people.
- Larger churches in cities are able to offer a variety of worship styles; music is very important in this.
- Episcopal Church was wandered away from traditional Biblical teachings; there is no core doctrine or many have chosen to behave contrary to doctrine. This is why we're not attracting folks.
- We need for church leadership to set the example in areas of behavior.
- The DRG is unstable, listing, not sure what direction it is going in. There is uncertainty, uneasiness, and we are leaderless.
- Some aren't really sure what's going on and how it affect them and their church.
- There is anxiety and a spectrum of views.
- There is an issue with the lack of communication within the Diocese; includes lack of communication in past hurts, etc.; perhaps this is due to hesitancy to share information and the process by which decisions are made. We need to open up communication to the entire Diocese.
- There are strong leaders in the Diocese who are willing to speak out, but the negative side of this is that people are labeled when they do speak out; this creates anxiety and folks quit talking.
- Mission work of some parishes isolated; parishes need to work together.
- Leadership is focused on the politics and not on the mission of the church; some are in it to put themselves in control.
- Prospect for Godly and enlightened leadership depends on the make-up of the search committee and how long we have to prepare for an election.
- We need a recognition of divisiveness and we need a process for healing.
- We are a Diocese under renovation, always building – the present controversy is just a small pebble in the road.
- We are not growing; two congregations have closed in the Diocese.
- Some churches have lost people due to what is happening in the National Church.
- We can lose parts of the body and still be vibrant; it just depends on which part is lost.
- Health is pretty good right now; we're holding together. If more churches leave it will be a big problem for the Diocese.
- Convocation is almost boring this time. There is a muted calmness, a different atmosphere than there has been.
- We were going through changes, people were rushing to the end while still trying to establish the goal.
- We need to put high priority on the unity of the church.
- The most contentious folks have left the Diocese; we can have a better discussion without highly contentious folks involved.
- Some are embarrassed to identify themselves as Episcopal.
- Other denominations are dealing with similar issues.
- Some congregations are prospering by concentrating on Jesus Christ and the mission of the church in the community, fostering feelings that everyone has an important part in the church.

- Many believe differently enough that they are prepared to go off in a different direction; we may have convergence or divergence.
- The Anglican Church was born in controversy and it continues to live in controversy.
- In Christ we can walk along the middle way.
- Looking back on the process we used to select Bishop Steenson, we wish there would have been more time for reconciliation and discussion.
- As it turned out, Bishop Steenson was in fact our interim Bishop after the departure of Bishop Kelshaw.
- There is a perception that we are in a bad place, but we are not. There is a perception that we can't get along, but we can. The bottom line is that we love one another.
- Small congregations are committed to a life together.
- Clergy are not good about building community among the clergy.
- There are no Diocesan programs other than Camp Stoney. Is this due to a lack of vision?
- There has been a lack of leadership from our Bishops for a while – more strong personalities and wrestling rather than a parent.
- We are in a healthy place compared to where we have been (women serving, for example).
- Bishop Steenson is as close to a parish priest as we have had; disappointed that he is not continuing.
- The clergy (as members of a parish) did not like their priest (Bishop Steenson).
- We are in a good place and getting better. We have to pray and be patient.
- We need to read Paul's letters to the Corinthians on how naughty children must get along.
- The church is always facing flaps like the present one and like the flap over women's ordination. There is too much of the church contemplating its own navel. Our Bishops have been too absorbed in the fire fights.
- We have good people and good clergy here, but the goodness gets diffused by the Bishop. Maybe a good shouting match would clear the air.
- We are happy to be in a church with diversity and freedom.
- The Diocese is healthier now. Before the Episcopal Church just drifted; now there is dialogue, and, boy, do we talk!
- This is healthy and we have to look at what we believe and why we believe it.
- We need a strong leader, and this is an opportunity to get us there.
- The Diocese is healthy in some smaller parishes, but at the macro level there is a lot of turmoil that has inhibited the growth of smaller missions.
- There is incredible excitement in particular parishes, but as a Diocese we seem flat.
- We need Diocesan programs to bring us together.
- At a time of incredible opportunity, we are sad the Bishop is leaving, but we need to emphasize the positive and address the issues rather than fighting one another.
- We are Christ's people, and we need to act like it.
- Some have not seen evidence of the "Big Tent" Episcopalianism. We may not agree, but God expects us to respect one another. We need to focus on mission.
- There is hope for reconciliation, but that's not possible when you leave. Dialogue then ceases.

- There is concern for the financial health of the Diocese with the departure of St. Clements.
- The hippo is still in the room; current actions seem contradictory.
- Some are concerned we may be viewed as a renegade Diocese.
- In the secular world, the issue of voting rights in the '60s united people across all lines; we need a similar vision to unite us.
- In the case of the 1928 Prayer Book, another church was created. The young were counseled to stay and adapt, while the old might go and simply die off.
- We had all been under a Big Tent where all felt included, but now we have become polarized; this prevents us from doing God's work.
- Everyone is trying to hold together, but there are reasons for the split.
- The problem in this Diocese is that those in power will not allow others in.
- The Episcopal Church has left us.
- Has anyone here been saved lately?
- We are in trouble: There are deep theological differences. Are we going to believe the Scripture is the inspired word of God or not?
- My Scripture is my heart – to love – to feel the pain.
- What do we believe? People are denying the Creed.
- We have always had people who say weird things.
- There are two commandments: Love God and Love Thy Neighbor.
- Division in the church leads to tension and a decline in the health in the church.
- We are not in good health, we are in disarray.
- "I am an Episcopalian first and an Anglican second."
- We are not healthy, but we are not dead. There is and has been resurrection always.
- We are committed to staying with the Episcopal Church.
- We love the community, but we are theologically at odds.
- We fall into a trap. We are so involved in the "thing," the "polity," that you forget about why.

QUESTION #2: Where would you like the Diocese of the Rio Grande to be in five to ten years – or however far out you can think about with any real clarity – again at least with respect to the dimensions mentioned in the first question, above?

- We want the Diocese to concentrate on the Bible and its teaching.
- Emphasize the love of the Church and not its politics.
- Diocese needs to emphasize the love of the Lord – leave out the politics.
- We need to be open to all people.
- Revitalize the permanent Diaconate.
- Lay ministry needs to be increased.
- In five years, a Diocese with a common ministry.
- I'd like for us to be a model Diocese that other emulate.
- We need representation in Province Seven.
- We need more involvement in the National Church.
- The things that are strong we need to strengthen.
- We need our prophetic voice heard.
- More than social gatherings, we need to made disciples.
- Let's share with each other what works in our congregations.
- We need to be a voice for spiritual growth and be inclusive.
- We need to focus on church planting.
- We must play a bigger role in our communities through evangelism.
- Need to consider how to grow smaller churches.
- We need stronger churches to help the smaller churches.
- When we have differences, we don't run away; we don't bully by calling others heretics; we stay and talk and listen and respect.
- Communication is a priority.
- We have a clear set of fundamental beliefs that we adhere to – no more drifting and wandering.
- We have the resources to help us communicate better – facilitation of communications within Deaneries and among Deaneries.
- Younger people in our midst.
- The Church as a place for everyone.
- Respect each other as Christians, all loving Jesus.
- Nicene Creed, Trinitarian Belief as a fundamental.
- Call others "brother" regardless of their beliefs.
- Not drawn into the attractiveness of the secular world.
- Reconciling people to God and people to other people in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:10).
- Able to discuss together all aspects of the Bible and our faith.
- Leadership that is clear about the fundamentals of our faith and that leads us spiritually with this.
- Deaneries that play stronger roles in leadership and communication.
- Strong leadership that promotes discussion in parishes, Deaneries, and the Diocese.
- See through Christ's eyes.

- Out from under the authority of TEC if its not leading us to the authority of Christ.
- Moving further away from the Anglican Communion.
- Not sure Anglican Communion knows where it is going.
- Diocese is diverse, but don't want to see any more fracturing or departures.
- Diocese should maintain its orthodoxy.
- Don't want to see tilting to one side or the other.
- Leadership, unity not at the expense of orthodoxy.
- Build relationships with those in disagreement.
- Familiarity is the key; need trust.
- Can we get leadership that hears our fears and embraces it and helps?
- Commit to pray.
- Need someone with the courage of his/her convictions.
- Don't want to see tilting too far to one side; stay balanced.
- In our congregations, we seem to be able to get along, despite our differences – we need that at the Diocesan level.
- Familiarity is the key; develop trust and love for each other, but go back to love as the basic foundation.
- We need to communicate and build relationships.
- We need to tap into the worldwide growth in Christian vitality.
- Reasons for the rebirth/revitalization of Christianity include 1) population increases in the southern hemisphere and population decreases in the northern hemisphere, 2) partnerships with third world countries and Episcopal outreach is working, 3) Jubilee ministries.
- Other churches are reaching out to new groups and to immigrants, providing for their needs, preaching a social Gospel – once they're there, then have the theological discussions.
- Truth, communication, and open exchange has been discouraged.
- Newsletter has diminished to almost nothing.
- This should be called a Convention, not a Convocation.
- We're not talking, not planning.
- We're not a family; we're a hierarchical organization.
- We're not having open conversations about where we are.
- See one another as gifts rather than as sides.
- Age of the congregation is an important factor in the growth of the church; e.g., letting younger membership in. Without this, membership will decline.
- St. Mark's focus is on evangelism. I want to see people coming to Christ. I want to see and evangelical Diocese.
- Deeper thinking Christians, growing in discipleship.
- Life speaks loud about Christ. Model Christ-like behavior. We are not modeling this in the Church right now.
- Do not want to set the standard for separation, but rather for bringing together. Unity should be the standard.
- Want to see Christian apologetics being taught to all.
- Know we are Christians by out love.

- Stronger emphasis on healing; e.g., Order of St. Luke chapters the norm rather than the exception.
- More children in the church; need to bring more children and families into the church.
- Education in the church.
- Articulate the gift of being an Episcopal Christian. Some are coming to our Church from other denominations.
- Become able to communicate with the outside world, especially about what Anglicanism has to offer.
- Spiritual formation of the clergy; we need good knowledge and wisdom about living.
- Chose our clergy to be the best fit for the congregations they serve rather than focusing so much on the seminary they came from.
- Variety is important.
- Both the ordained and the laity must take seriously the need to avoid teaching false teaching.
- Be together working in the world and loving each other.
- Be in a place where things can be discussed.
- Exhibit togetherness, share information freely, without being or feeling threatened.
- The existing Diocesan website is hard to follow, leading to suspicions that information is being withheld.
- Need to allow for reconciliation, grief, healing, and discernment.
- Interim Bishop might be helpful with reconciliation.
- We need a facilitator.
- Media fuels the conflict, especially in the absence of real information.
- We need a competent releasing authority for real information.
- We are healthy, but moving out of our comfort zone into awareness, and are being challenged to ask, "Is this what I believe in?"
- We need to declare, "This is who we are, this is what we believe."
- We need to rely upon the Creed, the Sacraments, the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Catechism.
- What are the requirements for being an Episcopalian?
- Take a strong position; accept all; keep the discussion open; bring people together to worship according to the BCP; show people that we can be flexible.
- Five years from now, we want to have the same Bishop (without further turnover at the top).
- Want the bleeding to stop over national church issues.
- Want to be part of the Anglican Communion.
- Want to find a way to become a unified Diocese.
- Want to be financially stable.
- Want there to be a Diocesan Canon Missioner to the laity, and another to the clergy.
- There should be two annual Diocesan meetings: one devoted to business and the other devoted to communication and togetherness.
- Let loose of the personal agendas. Modify our thoughts so that we have a common goal.
- Use an interim Bishop to help us through the healing process.

- Dialogue about our differences in an open and peaceful way.
- Agree to disagree, in necessary.
- We've faced divisive issues in the past. Keep our focus on unity, "our common goal."
- Acknowledge Biblical authority and difference in interpretation.
- Our main goal is to follow Christ.
- How do we get there? Pray to God for direction. Listen for God's response.
- Be in endless discussion about unity.
- We want to become a family, despite our differences, depending upon prayer and more interaction with one another (so that we are exposed to each other's humanity, so the we can recognize that divine spark in each of us) to get there.
- We need to stop thinking in terms of "liberal" or "conservative," etc., and work together for God, work to do His will, stop focusing on our differences.
- Be more involved with the communities around us.
- Jesus chose 12 very diverse people for his disciples.
- Need to be more of a reflection of our cultures.
- Don't be so concerned with theology.
- Possibly gather as a Diocese a second time each year to take workshops in helping the community.
- We need to change our focus from looking at each other to looking outward.
- Need to heal some of the hurts we have; you can't simply ignore what has happened.
- We need more communication.
- Through working together, we find our common ground.
- Would like to see the Diocese excited about that God is doing.
- We need more faith in one another.
- We need to get our and deliver the Word.
- Updates need to be posted on our Diocesan website, with pointers to Anglican websites.
- We would welcome updates from the pulpit, but don't pound it to death.
- Hold discussions at another time for detailed arguments.
- Continue this type of discussion group in our parishes and as a Diocese.
- Agree on what and how to discuss these issues within our Church.
- Deanery meetings could possibly serve as a forum for these discussions.
- Anxiety about not knowing what our leaders are feeling and thinking keeps us from planning for the future.
- Church leadership is un-communicative and many times unavailable.
- We need to know before we move forward.
- Up to date information should be dispersed in a timely manner.
- Biblically based (exception taken to interpretation).
- Doing divine work, in spite of disagreements.
- Inclusive.
- Stay in the Episcopal Church.
- We need transparency at the Diocesan level; inform us about actions to be taken and how decisions were made.

- Improve communication from top to local level.
- Elections: need more information about candidates, as well as people already on committee, council, etc., in order to vote intelligently.
- Re-examine the possibility of breaking up the Diocese into two separate Dioceses; decentralization would improve coherence and communications.
- Out from under the authority of ECUSA; they are not leading people to Christ.
- We are out of step with Anglicanism.
- Some are not sure that Anglicanism is the way to go.
- We don't want to see the DRG fractured, but we have to maintain our orthodox reputation. We need to stay unified on that.
- We've been an oasis of unity.
- It's worth preserving unity, unity without leaving our commitment to Jesus.
- Familiarity with each other is lacking; we need to know each other to better trust each other.
- We need to listen to each other; we need to retrain ourselves to listen and to leave our ego at the door.
- What we need to do is to continue to stick to the knitting.
- It's working at the parish level.
- We'll probably break apart like the Lutherans did; we don't see us coming together in the next 5 to 10 years because the Episcopal Church won't align with the Anglican Communion. Hope we could remain in the Anglican Communion, but don't know how that could happen without something like synods.
- Jesus' reconciling love keeps us together as one body (the foundation); division has to be seen as somehow limiting ourselves in our listening to Jesus.
- Our current divisions are temporary barriers to the one love from God; be joyous in the reconciling love of Christ.
- We want the DRG to remain intact, remain as part of the Episcopal Church, and as part of the Anglican Communion (and/or Anglican traditions).
- We want to and can be in full communion with the diversity of the Diocese.
- Afraid that the church is disintegrating and dividing; other churches are putting Bishops in our Diocese; the whole Anglican Communion is in trouble because we're stepping on each other's territorial toes.
- New Bishop must allow parishes to follow their own lead.
- Get on with the business of finding a new Bishop – within a year.
- Institute prayer and Bible study groups in each parish – trust Christ.
- We need to grow the membership.
- If the camp grows, we will grow.
- It is necessary to prepare for change.
- It is not the same for the calling of a new Bishop. We need to get on with the election; delay only prolongs the chaos.
- We need to focus on the development of a strong youth organization; develop leaders and encourage discernment for ordination.
- Expand the family of God; emphasize enjoyment, doing things together, celebrating God together.

- The vision for the Diocese needs to be connected with and in line with the wider Church.
- Bring in an outside group to guide a healing process for the Diocese.
- Bring back the importance of the permanent diaconate.
- Provide a wide range of training resources to clergy and churches.
- Become a Diocese with a common mission and the means to achieve it.
- Strive to make sure that the laity, vestries, Deaneries, and the Diocese understand their roles in the formation and execution of Diocesan mission.
- Appreciate small parishes.
- We want the Diocese to be moving forward in one direction.
- We want it to be moving forward in mission and in ministry.
- We want to be focused on Christ and not on ourselves.
- We need to go back to the basics; go back to the beginning and worship God.
- Continue to be a member of ECUSA; but, we'd like ECUSA to get back to the basics.
- We want to see this Diocese go back to orthodox beliefs and to the Bible.
- DRG is too large for one Bishop; need to split into two Dioceses (north and south).
- There is hope because the Diocese was not in fact devastated by the departure of St. Clements and our Bishop.
- Be a Diocese that is based on Scripture but that accepts divergent views.
- Be open to diversity, to argument, division, discussion without enmity.
- Strive to develop more and smaller churches where people know each other.
- Be more open to the spirituality of New Mexico. Look outward instead of fussing with each other.
- The kind of conversation conducted at Convocation should be a model for the DRG with respect to listening and really hearing.
- Diocese should remain aligned with the Anglican Communion.
- Diocese should place more emphasis on youth.
- Center of the Diocese at the Cathedral – like this idea.
- Want the Deanery system to be abandoned as it currently works; don't like the funds to be sent to the Deaneries.
- Regular communications from leadership to all; cover significant business, events, decisions, concerns.
- Regular e-mail communications; improved Diocesan newspaper.
- We want the Diocese to be centered on prayer; there's lots of work to do.
- Need to get serious about mission planting and developing new congregations.
- Need to be more accepting of ordained women.
- Diocese will not survive unless we bring in children and Hispanics. There is also an opportunity to pull in Roman Catholics (healing services will be important in this respect).
- We will only survive if we put the political in the back seat and put the love of Christ first. We are Episcopalians first.
- We are one generation away from being out of business.
- We need to be more reconciled with the National Church.
- In the future, we want to see the acrimony dissolved; healing, talking to each other.

- Get rid of the Deanery system; Deaneries are more organizational than they are spiritual.
- We need a good newsletter.
- There is hope and growth and good communication.
- We want our youth programs to attract youth and young families.
- We need to learn more about the national church.
- We want to see more churches planted within the DRG.
- Healing will take a long time.
- Don't actually experience division within our parish, because of our parish unity; we're doing what we do.
- We need to clarify who we are and where we're going; we can't be divided.
- We need to avoid being judgmental and love one another.
- Focus on diversity of different viewpoints, on doctrine, learning from each other.
- People with different viewpoints can meet together.
- Encouragement to do this must come from our leadership.
- We need someone committed who can bring people together.
- First impressions are important; we need to convey that we are welcoming.
- We must start to feel welcoming, happy to see people come to our churches.
- We need to become a loving Diocese; we need to have "welcoming" modeled for us.
- We have begun to come together as a Diocese; a prime example is the caring atmosphere at this Convocation.
- It is time to change by allowing differences in people's thoughts and beliefs.
- We need to become a Diocese that proclaims the Great Commission; we need to be known for what we are for rather than as for what we are against.
- We need to be relevant to our population.
- There should be no more no-man's land; we need to spread our Episcopal presence.
- We would be happy with another Bishop like Bishop Steenson.
- With regard to the process used last time, the selection committee communicated poorly; we do not need another nominee like Martin Mins.
- We need strong leadership in the future.
- Interim process allows for truth telling and discussions about where you want to go.
- We need someone who teaches us how to discuss rather than how to argue.
- Our future has a lot to do with what happens in the national church; this will have an effect on how people see and respond to us.
- We will be better off if we can develop tolerance for each other.
- We don't function independently; we need good leadership to help us be cohesive.
- Two critical issues loom ahead of us: 1) is Christ the only way to salvation, and 2) what is our understanding of Holy Scripture.
- Those with differing viewpoints get marginalized.
- Bishop Steenson has shielded us from many of the repercussions of what is going on in the larger church.
- Over the next five years we need to embrace diversity and come to understand and appreciate our different perspectives on what it is we really believe.
- Let's have a Bishop, for sure.

- People on both sides seem to be feeling that they may get pushed out, that their views are not appreciated. They are being told they are wrong in their understanding of Scripture, etc. All are fearful of judgment.
- The National Church has set the example for not listening to each other.
- People are divided and no longer listen to each other or are willing to examine and evaluate where they are in light of what the Bible says.
- We don't know how to get to a place where we can listen without judgment.
- The issue of our varied understandings of Scripture continues to emerge.
- Need to really understand each other; aligning with sides is the problem.
- We need a long-range and a short-range plan and an examination of what roles are required to get us there; we need a strong leader who works with conflict resolution.
- We'd like to see the DRG honor and reflect diversity.
- We'd like to see the DRG with a regularly published newsletter that is a quality piece, with a website/list serve for the Diocese, covering a spectrum of positions on the issues.
- We'd like to see the DRG dealing with substantive issues and not dealing with political, personal issues.
- We want a DRG where no one fears to speak their mind on any subject, where openness and honesty are truly valued.
- We'd like to see an active companion Diocese relationship.
- We'd like to see the spreading of the Gospel as a focus of all clergy and lay people, among all parishes and missions of the DRG.
- Our church is too old, funded by an endowment with no people.
- We would like for our Diocese to be growing and vibrant.
- We still have things to get through over the next five years.
- There is a sense of cohesiveness because of the hurdles we are jumping together and are going to have to jump over in the future.
- We have had "bumps" in the past (prayer book, hymnal, etc.) and we have survived. We have come through stronger.
- We hope our gains are more than our losses.
- Camp Stoney is a good barometer; the fact that it is growing is good.
- We might want to consider satellite camps in the Farmington and the Las Cruces areas.
- Rotation of clergy among churches within the Diocese would be good. Look at the Diocese as a company or corporation.
- Jesus is our CEO; we need to read the Bible rather than the Internet.
- Teach God's word; new families and children will be drawn by God. They will not come back to a void.
- In the future, we want to Diocese to exhibit a strong mission of Christian love. The political examples of today are a poor example. We had hoped Bishop Steenson would unify us in love.
- Look for a two-year interim Bishop to create a healthier climate, vision, communication, and structures. Invoke a planning process, commitment to values, and a healthy Bishop selection process.

- Honor the diversity of opinion in the Diocese and respect each other and seek common purpose.
- Continue to be a part of the Episcopal Church, and strive for better financial health (mission costs money).
- What we are doing today is the right thing; we need better communication.
- Over the long term, we are an association with outreach and mission; but first we need infrastructure and communication.
- It all goes back to how we interpret the Bible; Biblical passages in the past have seemed to support slavery, oppression of women, and now homosexuality is sin. We need to resolve these issues.
- There is usually more than one interpretation of anything; not achieving unanimity is not failure. We need to pray for greater tolerance and open-mindedness. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.
- In my Father's house there are many mansions.
- It is a principle to be welcoming; we are here to help each other.
- It is our business to gather; it is God's business to sort.
- We need to have mission, something to do!
- We don't need to rush into selection of a new Bishop.
- We need to change the Diocese in order to assure that a healthy Bishop who comes in stays that way.
- We ought to conduct an exit interview with Bishop Steenson to explore what kinds of changes the Diocese might need to make.
- Some would like to see us be a more positively Bible-oriented church; Scripture has been used to kind of punish people or to divide people.
- In ten years, we hope we are healed.
- We will have a Bishop that will hold up beliefs, as in the Apostles Creed.
- Diocese of Bethlehem is unified, we have adopted a mission mind, which comes from the people.
- We need a vision, a missionary vision, doing work for a companion Diocese.
- What do we do to grow our churches?
- Our problem with the Bible is interpretation.
- What are WE going to do – we could give OUR job away to the leadership.

QUESTION #3: Given your answers to the two questions above, what kind of leadership and what sort of Bishop should we be looking for when it comes time to enter fully into the search process?

- We all want a Biblically focused, traveling Bishop, one who reads and preaches the Bible 365 days a year.
- Leave the politics to CATO and the rest of the Diocesan staff.
- He/she needs to visit each church often.
- The office is NO help at this time.
- We want a Bishop of the people, and one who is decisive.
- The office needs to respond to necessary business in a timely manner.
- Look at an experienced Bishop?
- Trained interim Bishop.
- A Bishop focused on Christ.
- We need another Bishop Jeffery.
- Open, loving, never met a stranger, and very spiritual.
- Someone who holds on to the traditions of the Church and the region, and is accepting of a variety of people.
- Pastoral skill but who is out front, leading with a sense of direction.
- Some who is articulate and who listens to the worldwide Church (Windsor compliant).
- The last process (i.e., the exposure of candidates) was good.
- We need an open process.
- We need a Godly preacher, teacher, who can work with other clergy; be a pastor to pastors.
- Need someone who will step out, take risks.
- Need someone with a sense of humor.
- Traditions need to be continued.
- We need to create more pastoral collegiality, and we need to be more supportive of the next Bishop; could we have supported Jeffery more?
- Bishop who visits Deanery meetings to answer questions and give spiritual leadership.
- Strong leadership in parishes and Deaneries – communicating, goals set and met.
- Interim Bishop who would help us heal and has had experience, education, and gifts for healing ministry.
- Lengthy interim so we can have real, clear communication to have healing time.
- Some what to move ahead with finding a Bishop now – to lead us in that better communication; don't wait three years; leadership now is important.
- Need someone who will articulate our position – a communicator.
- All we do is talk about our problems and don't do anything about them.
- Need to learn to communicate.
- Need to listen first.
- Where is Jesus Christ in all this?
- Need someone who is not so kind.

- Maybe too many layers in our structure – too little access to the leadership.
- Someone who will provide us access and accept accountability.
- Unless the Standing Committee acts quickly, and gets a Bishop that can give us these things, and takes us out of TEC, the Diocese will disintegrate.
- Someone who says what needs to be said with compassion, conviction, and love.
- Want someone who will stick with us under TEC.
- Relationship with the Anglican Communion needs to be addressed by the Bishop.
- Disconnect between the Diocese and the parishes – DRG is too political.
- We need a communicator.
- We need someone who is not so “kind.”
- We need someone who will help us get along on the Diocesan level as we do at the congregational level.
- Need access and accountability.
- Need compassion, conviction, and LOVE.
- Reconstruct the CONVENTION.
- Have open discussions facilitated for real communication of divergent ideas prior to search for Bishop, so that we know what we want.
- We need Church support for theological exploration; learning for all who are interested.
- We need deeper education and discussion at the Diocesan School for Ministry.
- Make sure resolutions offered at Convention are pre-distributed so that we can have time to reflect and be prepared to discuss, debate, and reach consensus.
- We need an interim, pastoral Bishop who will perform as a functionary while exploring our needs and desires through discussion which is facilitated by folks without personal agendas.
- Process and committee should be reasonably diverse to include the entire Diocese.
- We need a Bishop who’s willing to train leadership who are liturgically and theologically capable of addressing the conflict between Christianity and Islam.
- We need a Bishop who can help a geographically spread out and diverse community of Christians.
- The Bishop needs to have a vision that pulls the DRG together.
- The Bishop needs to be a communicator, and one who can reach out to churches and missions.
- Need a Bishop who is present and responsive; who ministers to our flock without forcing a preconceived agenda on the DRG.
- [Noise level during the exercise and groans when told time’s up indicates the need for and excitement generated by having conversations.]
- We need a listener who loves us and accepts us all.
- One who accepts diversity.
- One who believes in the historic creeds and who takes the Great Commission seriously.
- Trust that God is going to help us find the best person; be without fear as we go through the process.
- We should all be brave, courageous and go forward; God is with us.

- We need a Bishop who is strong and courageous, but who will pay attention to what God (in the Scriptures) has told us to do.
- Words that define a Bishop for DRG: open, friendly, compassionate, visit all churches, Biblically wise, warm, loving, well grounded, walking the Christ-like walk, thoughtfully spiritual, faith-defending evangelist, reconciliation.
- After a period of reconciliation, done under an interim Bishop and the Standing Committee together, select someone who will work with diversity, who recognizes differences of opinions, who is willing to accept us and to work with us, who has an open and collegial style, and who will stay within the Episcopal Church.
- The Bishop should commit to being here for a long time.
- Be a good listener and communicator.
- Avoid being polarizing.
- Someone from outside the Diocese.
- Someone who is a leader, with a proven leadership record.
- Someone who is a “God person.”
- Someone who knows why he or she wants to become Bishop here.
- We need a leader who will lead us through the process of healing.
- We need someone who will encourage and facilitate conversations to bring us into unity.
- We need someone who is diplomatic and strong, but not “strong willed.”
- We need someone who is open and flexible.
- We need an interim for enough time to work through issues of grief.
- Clergy need to give voice to congregational thoughts and concerns.
- Some parishioners feel “like a family,” while others feel tension and division.
- We need someone who want to be a healer, not a political person; someone who will look out at us in love and ask, “What do you need?”
- It will be difficult to find someone who will want to step into this difficult position.
- Perhaps we should wait until after the next Lambeth Conference to choose a new Bishop, so that he or she will at least know what situation they will be operating under.
- We need a reconciler, a Godly person, a person of balance.
- We need a Bishop who is a believer, and who allows us to have our differences.
- We need a Bishop who is willing to work with other denominations.
- We need a Bishop who doesn’t need a label and who doesn’t need to label.
- We need to come to an understanding of who we are.
- We want a Bishop who is loyal to the Word of God as it is written, but who is willing to discuss both sides, and who accepts us all, whether or not he or she agrees with us.
- Questions to think about: Do we want to seek a commitment from our next Bishop for a 20-year term in office? Is our Diocese too big? Do we want a Suffragan Bishop in the south?
- Our next Bishop should be a true pastor to individual parishes and make himself or herself more visible, with more visits to the outlying missions and chapels.
- The Bishop needs to have a heart for planting new missions and churches.
- Bilingual (English/Spanish) capability would be an asset.

- Bishop should have an understanding of the business of the church as well as the liturgical aspect (a CEO type).
- Concentrate on the true mission of the church (What is the true mission of the church?).
- Teach the Gospel; be the Gospel.
- The Bishop should define for the Diocese what our mission is and make it public.
- Bring in a third-party negotiator to walk us through our choices and guide us to a decision.
- We need someone who is well-respected, can effect change within our Diocese, as well as within the House of Bishops – someone with charisma and innovation, a leader who can unify us by knowing us and making himself or herself known to us.
- We need an interim Bishop for 18 to 24 months to allow us time to search.
- We need as Bishop one who looks to the Lord and who understands human failure.
- We need someone who understands but does not accept divergent views.
- We need a good pastor and a shepherd.
- We need someone who is willing to be unpopular with some in making decisions and in taking positions.
- We need someone who is able to give comfort (i.e., strength) to people and to congregations.
- We need to focus on who we are as a Diocese.
- We need a Bishop who will help us define who we are and head us toward that.
- We are now in a position as a Diocese to really become healthy; take the time to heal instead of trying to find a Bishop right away.
- Standing Committee should bring in someone to help with the healing process.
- The interim Bishop selected should be someone to prepare the Diocese to elect a Bishop. (Wait for an election until after the Lambeth Conference.)
- We are in mourning. Allow that to run its course before trying to elect a new Bishop.
- Qualities of a new Bishop: leadership, sincere believing Christian, recognizes the place of Christ, expresses and lives a holiness (is a man of God), behaves as a Christian.
- We need a Bishop who can discern and attract good people to work around him, and who will work hard to communicate with the Diocese.
- We need someone with some administrative savvy, and who can delegate.
- We need someone strong enough to help us connect to spiritual power.
- We need someone who listens, and who does not strive to impose his personal point of view on others.
- We need someone who will lead us to focus on becoming the presence of Christ in the world.
- We need a reconciler.
- We need leadership that hears our fears and still leads us.
- We need someone who can find and communicate consensus.
- We need someone who is orthodox and who can articulate a position.
- Find a Bishop strong in his beliefs.
- We need to increase access to the Bishop and accountability both ways (Bishop to congregations and congregations to Bishop).

- Standing Committee needs to act quickly to get a Bishop who speaks with conviction and authority and who takes us out of ECUSA.
- Qualities of a new Bishop should include: compassion, orthodox conviction, and love.
- We need someone who will keep us unified.
- Address seriously the relationship between ECUSA and the Anglican Communion.
- We need someone interested in compliance with the Anglican Communion.
- We need a place for diversity in the leadership (not just in the Bishop's office, but also in Diocesan House).
- We need a Bishop who will be an example of loving one another despite our differences.
- Don't rush to get a new Bishop.
- We need someone who can bring people together.
- We need a stable, clear vision.
- We need someone with the ability to go up against the national church.
- Where is "Scripture, Reason, and Tradition?" Some seem to be relying only on Scripture.
- Possibly we need to split the Diocese in to two: north and south.
- Bishop Steenson was a good start, but we need someone stronger who can support cohesiveness.
- We need a Bishop who is a pastor, a teacher of the Faith, who can train us in evangelism, an apostolic, Christian leader who can bring people together even though we have differences.
- We need someone who can take the heat.
- We need a Bishop who will work with clergy; allow congregations to develop in their own ways.
- We need someone with a high tolerance for difference.
- We need someone who will lead by example.
- We need outreach from the Bishop; someone who will show up and help when there are problems.
- We need for a Bishop a strong and pastoral person, who, like Bishop Steenson, is accessible, and who is Bible based.
- Find a Bishop with Bishop's Steenson's knowledge, goodness, pastoral care, love, and communication.
- Seek out someone for Bishop who believe in the Episcopal Church.
- Find someone who is pastoral, loves the Lord, reads Scripture, has people skills, is grace-filled, and who is filled with the Holy Spirit.
- We need a leader with the ability to say both "yes" and "no," takes initiative and is not just reactive.
- We want someone who is a "Kingdom thinker," is communicative, is transparent, accountable, humble, exhibits a love of Christ, and is Scripture based.
- Rely on the interim Bishop for healing.
- We need to rely on a trained interim Bishop.
- Some feel it is too early to begin the Bishop search and discernment process, since many individuals are involved in their own personal discernment.

- Strive for good communication will all of the Diocese.
- Our new Bishop should be a good shepherd of Christ's body.
- We want a Bishop who is flexible, but not pliable.
- We want a Bishop who is strong, without being controlling.
- We want a Bishop who has a firm belief in the supremacy of Scripture.
- We want someone who is diplomatic and a capable administrator (but an administrator who can delegate).
- We want a spiritual leader who is not a revisionist.
- We want someone who is inclusive rather than exclusive.
- The new Bishop must be a representative of Christ.
- We need somebody who can come in and review the fiscal situation of the DRG.
- We need a strong Bishop who will not allow this Diocese to be split, someone who can control the clergy.
- We need a spiritual leader, rather than a political leader.
- We need an Episcopal Anglican Bishop.
- Our new Bishop should be a healer, with a pastor's heart; should be grounded in Scripture, pastoral, Biblically Christ-centered. He should be a reconciler, a mediator, strong enough not to be "rolled" by factions.
- We should consider a woman Bishop and have women as candidates for Bishop.
- We should take our time with the Bishop search process; it felt rushed last time. Let's take time to do a self-study.
- Our new Bishop needs to be a moderate, someone who listens to all voices, someone who hears the minority as well as the majority points of view.
- We need someone who embraces different points of view.
- We need a Bishop who is dedicated to Diocesan communications.
- Conduct a truly national search.
- We need a Godly person as Bishop.
- We need a Bishop who is honest, broad, and accepting.
- We need a "proud Episcopalian pastor."
- We need someone as Bishop who supports the tenets of the church.
- We need someone who is people-oriented, intelligent and well-versed in Scripture, who is a strong leader and who will do what is right (rather than simply striving to be liked).
- We need someone who can live up to the job description.
- We need to approach the search for a Bishop in the practical way one would use for a CEO search.
- Our new Bishop needs to exercise more "police power."
- Our Bishop should take care of the people first.
- We need a Bishop who is pastoral, who occupies the middle ground.
- He needs to be human.
- We need someone whose philosophy is based on Scripture.
- We need to ask, "Do they show it, believe it, live it?"
- Philosophy is more important than gender.
- We must have an open search committee.

- Give us for a Bishop someone with clarity (essentials and non-essentials), with tolerance (Bishop Steenson did this well), with vision and strategy, who is a pastor and a mediator, and who will err on the side of compassion.
- We all want a pastor.
- Take our time to get a new Bishop, but not too long.
- We need time to heal.
- Three years is a long time to be without a shepherd; we need loving kindness.
- We've got to have people talk about things in a loving way, but we need a shepherd.
- If there is an interim, he will not be a true shepherd.
- The search committee and the standing committee need to have input from all sides.
- There are issues coming from ECUSA that will cause us to leave.
- We need to get the Presiding Bishop here to understand what is happening in ECUSA, and to understand her.
- We need pastoral help with healing.
- For Bishop, we need someone in the middle, someone without an agenda, without preconceived notions.
- We need someone who will take a balanced approach so that all sides will be heard.
- We need the selection committee to be balanced; it should not be stacked.
- This is not a political election.
- We need to include in our regular Sunday prayers support for the Standing Committee and for the Selection Committee.
- A balanced search committee is mandatory.
- As a Bishop, we need someone who is broad-minded and Bible oriented.
- We need a pastoral person with leadership skills (a strong and genuine leader).
- We need an orthodox evangelist.
- We need a strong advocate for church unity.
- We need someone who is nurturing and accessible.
- For our new Bishop, we need a good pastor to the clergy, and someone who is trustworthy.
- The Bishop sets the tone for what happens in the Diocese.
- Leadership also comes from Standing Committee and Diocesan Council.
- During the selection process, we need to listen to each other.
- Allow more information about the candidates for Diocesan-wide elections.
- Floor nominations should be in delegate packets.
- Need more description of responsibilities for various offices.
- Youth program and Camp Stoney important to unification of purpose.
- Having a Bishop that focuses on politics is not healthy.
- We need someone who is pastoral, apolitical, and centrist.
- We need someone who sets a leadership example with good moral values and standards.
- We need a reconciler.
- We need to choose someone as Bishop who will be long term and provide traction required to take hold and lead the DRG long term.
- As Bishop, we need a person who is a communicator and who is open.

- We need someone who is available, a “field Bishop,” out and about in the Diocese.
- We need someone with courage and conviction to deliver on what they say.
- We need as Bishop a man or a woman of God, grounded in the tenets of our faith, who has a personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We need a person of prayer.
- We need someone with a commitment to the long haul, someone who has leadership ability.
- The person we select for Bishop does not need to be an administrator – we can have others do that; the person does need to be a teacher, preacher, and a courageous leader.
- The DRG does need to find a way to get behind whoever is elected Bishop.
- We need a reconciler, someone who will deal with diversity rather than ignoring it.
- The interim Bishop for this Diocese needs to be with us up to two years; someone who will help us develop our profile.
- We need a healing process and we need to allow people to speak their views without fear; we need a Diocesan-wide forum in which people can share their views.
- We need to deal with Diocesan grief and mourning.
- We need as Bishop a pastoral person, like Bishop Steenson. CEO of our Diocese needs to be a pastor.
- We like the features of our past Bishops: (Steenson) accessibility, personable, pastoral, people person, conciliatory; (Kelshaw) youth oriented, teacher, able to speak to the people and to their hearts.
- Our new Bishop needs to be Biblically based, not afraid of tough love, who won’t break Canon Law.
- We need to adhere to the Biblical mandate not to drag churches into court.
- We need as Bishop someone who is willing to make hard decisions.
- We need someone who is orthodox, and is willing to maintain and support the doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church.
- We need to ask candidates, “Would you work to stay within the Episcopal Church? If you could not, would you try to take the whole Diocese with you?”
- We also need to ask, “What do you believe about the unerring nature of Scripture, both the Old and the New Testaments?”
- As Bishop, the person we pick should be a communicator – should have a passion to communicate.
- We should be careful – the kind of person we need may not be the kind of person we want.
- We need a man of God who will lead us where we need to go, not where we want to go.
- We are teenagers on the rebound. We have no idea of who we want or need. We need reflection before we can know.
- In our Prayers of the People each Sunday, we need to pray for patience and for God’s guidance in the selection.
- We need a group decision, reflecting the diversity of the Diocese, and hopefully we need to be apolitical.
- Watch out – we tend to choose a Bishop who is the opposite of the prior one.

- Continuing discussion forums in the Diocese would be helpful.
- We want to look for a Bishop that will take what the people want to do and then support them in how to do it.
- As our new Bishop, we need someone who is committed to the Episcopal Church, for the long haul.
- Church is the people; Bishop would be a support to the people.
- We need a Bishop who will support the truth of Scripture.
- We need someone who is committed and who is a visionary.