Together we can learn God's dream for us!

In April of this year I began a series of what I call, "clergy dream days." During each of these days I meet one-on-one with an active clergy person in the diocese in order to support, encourage, listen, and if need be, help them discover what God's dream is for them. I suspect this joyful work will carry through all of 2017 as I meet with clergy people in backwards-alphabetical order based on their last name.

Beginning in December of this year I will be offering, "lay dream days." Each of our seven new deaneries will host a lay dream day for all the congregations in their respective deanery. All lay members of each congregation are invited to attend. The dates and locations of each lay dream day are printed on the next page, as well as which churches belong to which deanery. Each lay dream day will begin at 10 AM and conclude at 2 PM.

I hope you will mark your calendars. These days are designed to gather information about your dreams for your congregations and to further discover and affirm our understanding of God's dream for each of our congregations.

Your diocesan staff hopes that these days will provide valuable information to allow us to develop ways to support you in living out God's dream for you. The laity dream days will allow time for fellowship, worship, song and an overall opportunity to build stronger bonds with one another in our deaneries. I hope all of you will choose to participate. The body of Christ, to be fully functional, needs the involvement of all of its members.

Laity dream days are designed for our lay members; therefore clergy are not invited. The only clergy present will be myself and a member of my staff who will gather and record your ideas in order to help guide us in our preparation of materials to strengthen you in pursuing God's dream for your congregation.

In no way are we seeking to exclude our clergy. The clergy are currently engaged in one-on-one dream days with me. The clergy dream days have been a gift and I trust the laity dream days will also be a source of joy. I am very much looking forward to time together with you.

With deepest heartfelt thanks for your faithful ministry!

The Rt. Rev. John S. Smylie