

Being One Church

Diocese of NWPA Mission Conference

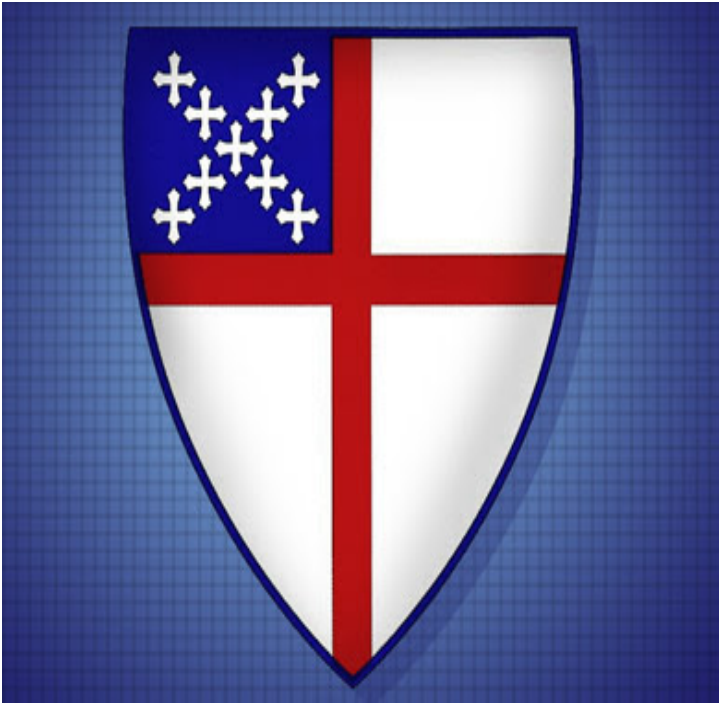
May 16, 2015

Being One Church

What does it mean to say that we are “One Church” as a diocese?

Is it just the latest churchy buzz phrase, like “shifting paradigms” was in the late 80’s and “intentionality” and “non-anxious presence” were in the 90’s and early 2000’s?

Like the supreme justice once said about pornography, it’s easier to show examples of being one church in reality than it is to offer a neat definition.



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Most of us – clergy and laity – tend to view being the Episcopal Church in our communities as similar to being a local McDonald's restaurant, i.e., the franchise model.

We pay our diocesan assessment for the right to use the name and signage and have some services from headquarters, like Bishop's visits.

But... There is a different articulation of how to be the Church... One Church and this model is based on Biblical principles:

- The Body of Christ (1Corinthians 12:12-31)
- The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20)
- The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40)

Diocese of Texas, 1998, Claude E. Payne, The Gathering, Clear Vision

Set out a vision for the diocese that said something like:

We are One Church of miraculous expectations, made up of all sorts and conditions of folks, being equipped to be disciples who make disciples through the ministry of our missionary outposts through the transformational power of the Holy Spirit.

It also included a **Big Holy Audacious Goal** to grow the diocese from 85,000 baptized members to 100,000 in 10 years.

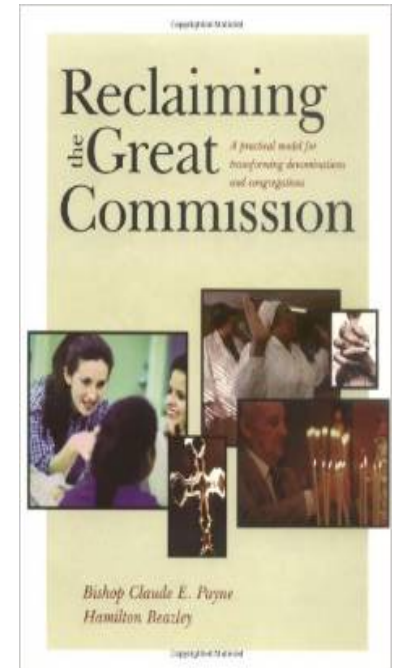
Reclaiming the Great Commission -

by Bp. Claude Payne and Hamilton Beazley

FYI, there is a guide for the book for
a 16-session study

with vestries and other parish leaders written by
Bp. Bena of Diocese of Albany available online at:

[http://www.ewaidssynod.org/images/
GreatCommission-Bena.pdf](http://www.ewaidssynod.org/images/GreatCommission-Bena.pdf)



Do you know our Diocesan Mission Statement?

The Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania
is:

One Church of miraculous expectation under the
Lordship of Jesus Christ equipping transformational
leaders for transformational ministry through our
missionary outposts - our congregations.

Governing Principles of the One Church Model:

- a. The Diocese is perceived as one church rather than a collection of congregations.
- b. Each congregation is viewed as a missionary outpost.
- c. Congregational members perceive themselves as disciples making disciples.
- d. The Diocese (with its missionary outposts) perceives itself as a community of miraculous expectation.
- e. The community's core value is love based on the Great Commandment.
- f. The Bishop is the chief missionary and the symbol of unity.
- g. Through lay-based ministry, the missionary outposts meet the spiritual and emotional needs of both the churched and the unchurched.

Characteristics of One Church Congregations:

- a. They embrace evangelism as fundamental to their ministry, and church growth as a natural and desirable result.
- b. They communicate the Good News in clear language that is devoid of Christian jargon and that is meaningful to the unchurched.
- c. They make the Church and the Christian faith relevant to everyday life, especially as a source of meaning, spiritual growth, and glorious transformation.
- d. They emphasize the power and importance of prayer and provide multiple opportunities for individual and group prayer.
- e. They create more small groups within the congregation through which individuals can experience community, meet personal and spiritual needs, and share their faith and fears.

Characteristics of One Church Congregations (Continued):

f. They provide many educational opportunities for both adults and children to learn more about the Christian faith, spiritual growth and the work of the Church.

g. They offer multiple lay ministries to teach service and discipleship and to involve members in Christian service.

h. They accept doubt and disbelief as part of faith and are tolerant of disciples in the making.

i. They encourage honest sharing among members about their faith and its effect on their lives.

j. They provide meaningful experiences of worship that offer an encounter with God and a message that is relevant to the struggles and joys of daily life.

k. They enthusiastically welcome visitors and newcomers and attempt to integrate them rapidly and deeply into the life of the Church.

One Church



Us

