FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Episcopal Church of North Texas Votes Unanimously to Reunite with The Episcopal Diocese of Texas

JUNE 18, 2022: The Episcopal Church in North Texas, (ECNTX) formerly the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, today voted overwhelmingly to reunite with the Episcopal Diocese of Texas (EDOT). The vote was the sole business of a Special Meeting of Diocesan Convention at Trinity Episcopal Church, Fort Worth. The vote was unanimous for reuniting with the Diocese of Texas – 69 to 0.

This action follows the June 9, 2022, reconvening of the 173rd Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas that also overwhelmingly voted to reunite with The Episcopal Church of North Texas: 526-14. The purpose of the reconvening was expressly to vote on two resolutions: the first being, reuniting with the Episcopal Church in North Texas, and the other, authorizing a Bishop Assistant.

Bishop Scott Mayer said in his sermon at the Opening Worship of the Special Meeting, "This event today is not about closure. It's an outward visible sign of faith, hope, and love by a liberated people."

He spoke of the years between the schism in the diocese in 2008 and this 2022 vote to reunite with the Diocese of Texas.

"As for the journey, along the way this liberated diocese learned that God can, indeed, set a table in the wilderness. We learned about manna from heaven – learned about 'daily bread.' And, we ate the bread of angels.

"And what engenders such admiration and respect around the Church and in your respective communities is your conscious choice to live and love. You did more than weather the storm. You did more than survive the journey. You chose life and love. You gave away your money, your time, and your security for the benefit of others. The communities and people you serve can testify that your presence and witness matters in this world. You make a difference. And you are great."

What happens next

Because these votes are happening within 90 days of General Convention, which meets July 8-11 in Baltimore, the reunification must be approved by both the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. If General Convention votes to approve the reunification, it becomes effective at the close of General Convention and the Episcopal Church in North Texas will cease to exist as a diocese. It will become a fourth region – the North Region -- of the Diocese of Texas, with Bishop Mayer as an assisting bishop over the region. He will remain the diocesan bishop of Northwest Texas. All congregations of ECNTX become congregations of the Diocese of Texas. All clergy canonically resident in ECNTX will become canonically resident in EDOT. The staffs of the two dioceses already are working on details and logistics of the transition.

History

The Episcopal Church in North Texas was born out of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas (1849), becoming part of the Missionary District of Northern Texas (1874), then part of the new Diocese of Dallas (1895), then becoming the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth (1982).

In February of 2021, the Supreme Court of the United States declined to hear the appeal of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, which let stand the decision of the Supreme Court of Texas awarding most of the property -- including the name of the diocese -- to people who left The Episcopal Church in 2008.

Just as they did in the immediate aftermath of the 2008 schism, the displaced congregations found new places to worship and missed not a beat in carrying on the vital ministries and outreach to their neighbors. The diocese also decided on a new name - the Episcopal Church in North Texas.

In the Fall of 2021, Bishop Mayer called together a discernment group of clergy and lay leaders to begin the process of identifying and evaluating options for the future of the Episcopal Church in North Texas.

The Discernment Group eventually concluded that exploring a reunion with the Episcopal Diocese of Texas (EDOT) made sense.

In January of 2022, the Discernment Group sent to the Standing Committee of ECNTX a recommendation that the Episcopal Church in North Texas reunite with the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

On April 12, the Standing Committee of ECNTX voted to engage in conversations with the Diocese of Texas about potential reunification. On behalf of the Standing Committee, Bishop Mayer reached out to Bishop Doyle with an invitation to visit ECNTX and open formal conversations between the dioceses.

Bishop Doyle responded, "We are family, we love you, and we are delighted to explore this with you."

Bishop Mayer said, "We are being welcomed gratefully and gladly into a diocese that shares our values. We believe this reunion will strengthen both parties, equipping The Episcopal Church to reach the people of North Texas, the fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States, more effectively with our message of God's unconditional love."

"As we move toward a new future together, we are unified by the Love of Christ Jesus who prayed for us – that we all may be one and we are thankful for this reunion," said Bishop Doyle.

For more information, please visit www.reunion2022.or, or contact Tammy Lanier at 281-543-7845 or Katie Sherrod at 817-909-0070.

Founded in 1838 by the Episcopal Church as a mission to the people of Texas, the Diocese of Texas has been led continuously by the Holy Spirit to plant ministries and congregations to partner with and serve the wider community. Today the diocese spans more than 46,000 square miles and encompasses 57 counties. We are headquartered in historic downtown Houston with offices in Austin and Tyler. Led by the Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle, the ninth Bishop of Texas, the diocese is more than 400 clergy, 167 congregations, 70 missional communities, 22 campus

missions, chaplaincies, foundations, institutions, and over 72,000 parishioners serving our neighbors. We embrace all people with mutual love and respect. We are one Church reconciled by Jesus Christ, joining God's mission to reconcile others and build up the kingdom of God.