

July 21, 2010

Dear Fellow Followers of Christ:

I am writing to update you on the conversation that has been going on with St. Michael's Episcopal Church. As many of you know, this Sunday, July 25, I will preside over the 10:00 am service at St. Michael's Church. The Rev. Ed Dohoney, from the Diocese of West Texas, will be with us at the Church of the Holy Spirit for our worship service. A crock-pot luncheon will follow the service this Sunday (so please bring a dish to share) and I will join you all for this celebration when things wrap up at St. Michael's!

Since January, we have been in conversation with the congregation at St. Michael's about a potential call to common mission. The conversation has centered around the Great Commission in Chapter 28 of Matthew's Gospel:

And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

To help facilitate this conversation over 140 surveys were sent out to the membership of the Church of the Holy Spirit asking your input about the possibility of joining forces with St. Michael's to serve Christ in Northwest San Antonio and throughout the world. The overall opinion from those who responded to the survey is that we, as a congregation, welcome the opportunity to invite the congregation of St. Michael's to join us in common mission.

On Wednesday, July 7, the task forces from each church met to discuss the results of these surveys (St. Michael's filled out the same survey) and with your clear voice of welcome and hospitality; it was decided to move into the next phase of conversation. One part of this next phase is my going to St. Michael's so that I can experience their worship and see them in their context. This visit is happening this Sunday, July 25, as I mentioned above.

The Bishop's Committee of St. Michael's will meet on this same day, Sunday, July 25, to determine, as the spiritual leadership, if they are ready to fully enter this dialogue knowing all that they will give up as well as all that they will gain.

If the Bishop's Committee of Saint Michael's decides to move forward with the conversation about a call to common mission, both congregations will hold congregational meetings for all those who are adult (age 16 and older) confirmed communicants in good standing. St. Michael's will vote on joining us and we will vote on welcoming them so that together we can serve in common mission. This vote will most likely take place in mid to late August or early September. If both congregations vote yes then we will quickly and intentionally develop a plan to join together in common mission.

I ask your prayers for this conversation and extend my deepest gratitude to the members of the two Task Forces on the Call to Common Mission (Alfredo Castillo, chair from Holy Spirit and Mike Foster, chair from St. Michael's) and to The Rev. Ed Dohoney who has helped guide this process. Please feel free to email me, jroberts@chssatx.org, if you have any questions. See you at the Crock-pot luck this Sunday!

Faithfully,
The Rev. Jason T. Roberts