

FALL 2015



The North Carolina DISCIPLE

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A NEW DAY FOR THE CHURCH





 **The North Carolina
DISCIPLE**

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COVER PHOTO

The Most Rev. Michael Curry stands before the doors of Washington National Cathedral as they open to admit him to his installation service as the 27th Presiding Bishop. Photo by Summerlee Walter.



INSIDE COVER PHOTO

The 27th Presiding Bishop and the 26th Presiding Bishop face each other before the presentation of the Primate Staff. Photo by Summerlee Walter.

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ABOUT



The North Carolina DISCIPLE

The North Carolina Disciple is the quarterly magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. Other diocesan communication vehicles, including Please Note, a weekly e-newsletter, and the diocesan website, www.episdionc.org, are used for more time-sensitive, day-to-day news.

Contact the communications staff at communications@episdionc.org with any questions or feedback regarding these communications, or to submit ideas, articles and photos.



At a Glance Facts: This Magazine...

- Is printed with soy inks, which are more environmentally friendly than traditional petroleum-based inks.
- Is printed on FSC® certified paper — paper certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council™, an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.
- Is printed and mailed in Morrisville, North Carolina. The printer has been using an internal paper recycling system for paper production since 1995.

Delivery occurs during the first week of the following months:

October / Fall Issue
January / Winter Issue
April / Spring Issue
July / Summer Issue

GREETINGS FROM
THE PRESIDING BISHOP

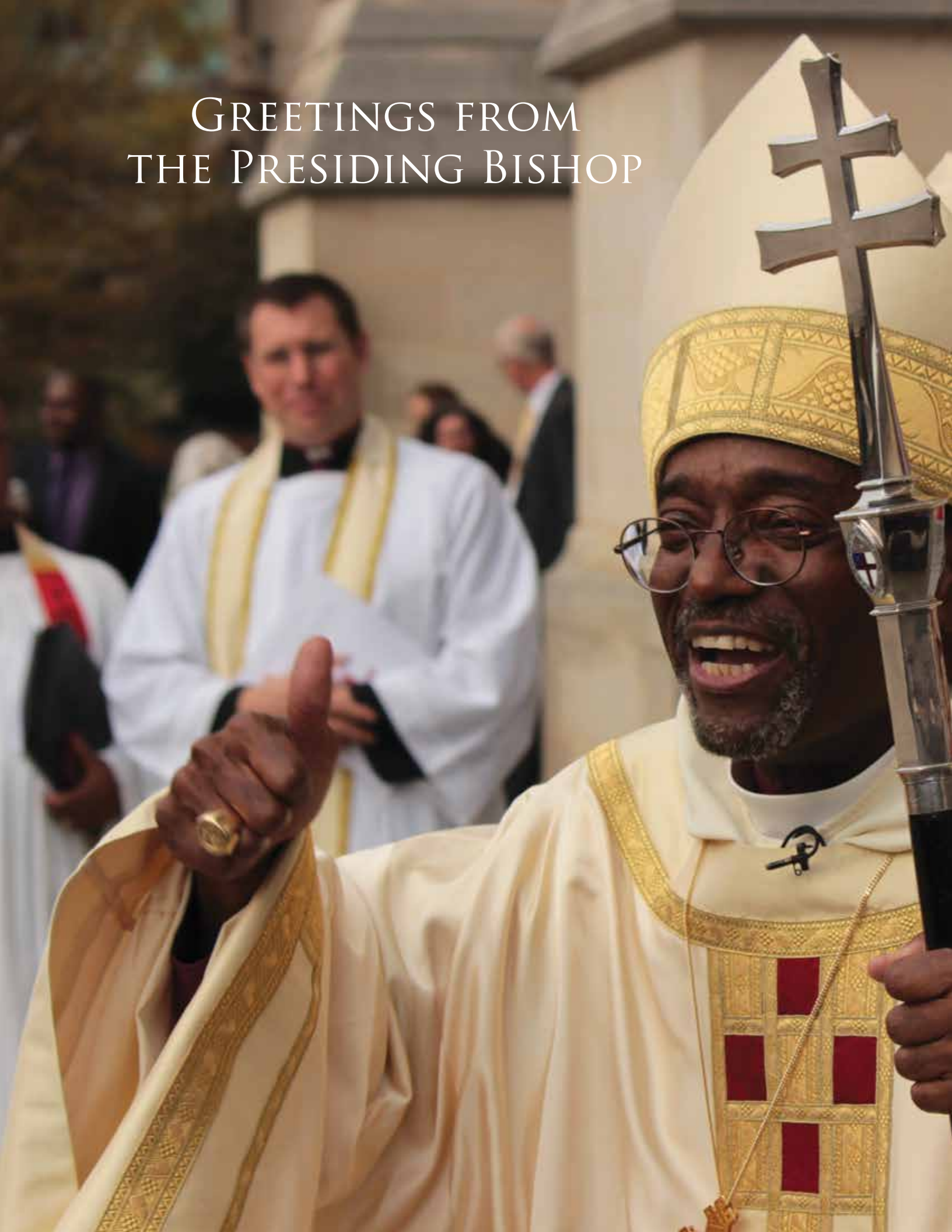




Photo by Summerlee Walter

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

Well, I'm on the plane flying from Raleigh to New York. This may be a fitting context within which to write you, my family in Christ named the Diocese of North Carolina.

I've tried to say thank you to Bishop Anne and the incredible staff of the Diocese, and they really are incredible. I've tried to say thank you to the unwaveringly and deeply dedicated clergy, lay leaders and to all of our people. Serving with you as your bishop has been one of the greatest joys and deepest privileges of my life.

You are God's.
You are good.
You are disciples of Jesus in the 21st century!

To you I say thank you.
For you I thank and praise God.
With you I am so richly blessed.

So now, we all embark on a new journey on the Jesus way.

While I am quite literally leaving home, my true home - like yours - is in God.

And God will never let us go.

St. Paul said it this way:

"I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39)

The late Dag Hammarskjöld was a devoted disciple of Jesus, who served him by working for peace and the common good as the General Secretary of the United Nations in the 1950's. After his death, his diary was found and later published as a book titled *Markings*. One of the entries said this:

"For all that has been --
Thanks!

For all that shall be --
Yes!"

My brothers and sisters in Christ,
God love you.
God bless you.
And keep the faith.

Your brother,
+Michael

AROUND THE DIOCESE

This edition of "Around the Diocese" features a tortoise, a stuffed monkey, custom mitres and Moravian chicken pies.

Remember to send photos of happenings in the life of your congregation to communications@episdionc.org.

Photo by Summerlee Walter



The clergy of the Diocese gather for one more photo with the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry after the Clergy Conference Eucharist at St. Paul's, Winston-Salem, on October 6.

Photo by the Rev. D. Dixon Kinser



Chicken pie chefs gathered in the kitchen at St. Paul's Winston-Salem to help with preparations for the 69th Annual Bazaar and Luncheon to be held on November 18. Both traditional Moravian chicken pies and chicken pot pies were fresh-frozen for sale.

Photo courtesy of St. Francis, Greensboro



Not all animals blessed during the Feast of St. Francis are furry! On October 4 the Rev. Milton Williams blessed a hungry tortoise at St. Francis, Greensboro.

Photo by Beth Crow



Young people gathered for youth leadership training and some fun community building at St. Mary's, High Point, on Saturday, Sept 26.

Photo courtesy of St. Philip's, Durham



During the final week of September, the Justice and Reconciliation Ministry at St. Philip's, Durham, hung a banner in front of the church proclaiming "St. Philip's Is Talking About Racism" as a way of saying publicly to the entire community this is a topic the congregation is willing to discuss.

Photos by Christine McTaggart



On October 3, more than 50 people gathered in the pouring rain for the dedication and wall-raising of the Bishop Johnson Hospitality House, a Habitat for Humanity build dedicated to Bishop Bob Johnson's memory. His wife, Connie, joined the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry and the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple in congratulating Sing Mei Nmawn and other members of the homeowner family. Later, that day's build group celebrated before raising the first wall.



Photo courtesy of the Rev. Deborah Fox



Members of Episcopal Campus Ministry - Raleigh paint the Unity Shack, which raised more than \$2,000 to support the Episcopal Coalition project through Habitat for Humanity of Wake County.



Photo courtesy of the Rev. Matt Johnson

The Rev. Matt Johnson, rector of Good Shepherd, Rocky Mount, blesses a stuffed monkey during the church's Blessing of the Animals service. It's just further proof that all are welcome in the Episcopal Church!

NEW, NOTABLE & NEWSWORTHY

APPLICATIONS FOR LIFT EVERY VOICE 2016 ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED



Beth Crow, diocesan lead youth missionary, recently returned from Southern Africa, where she traveled in preparation for “Lift Every Voice: 2016,” the second phase of the three-year Lift Every Voice grant. (Read her recap of the experience in the “Diocesan News” section on episditionc.org).

During her time there, she met with potential guests for

next summer, including individuals and organizations that serve to heal a wounded nation still recovering from the dark days of apartheid. The trip served to reinforce the profound importance of Lift Every Voice, a program designed to give youth and young adults an understanding of social injustice that will help participating young people develop a vision and skills to lead their dioceses’ programming around race and inclusivity.

Applications for Lift Every Voice 2016 are now being accepted. Additional information on the program and the applications can be found at episditionc.org. The deadline to apply is January 15, 2016.

TWO BISHOPS, TWO EVENTS, ONE WEEKEND!

BOLD LIKE JESUS: AN ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE

January 21-23, 2016; Christ Lutheran Church, Charlotte



How can you be *Bold like Jesus*? Listen curiously, build relationships deeply, tell the Gospel confidently, commit to a bold step in your community.

Bold like Jesus brings together Lutherans, Episcopalians and Moravians from across North Carolina to

explore what it means to be *Bold like Jesus* in a complex and changing world.

The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple is among the presenters and will introduce keynote speaker the Rev. Becca Stevens of Thistle Farms.

All are welcome, and registration is open. For more information, visit boldlikejesus.wordpress.com.

TRINITY INSTITUTE: LISTEN FOR A CHANGE

January 21-23, 2016; NYC

Racial justice is a matter of life or death; we can’t afford to stay silent and tacitly accept the (mostly) invisible systems that support inequalities, create suffering and deny human dignity. Rather, we need to have an open dialogue — a process that starts with listening.

Trinity Institute is an annual theological conference and this year’s topic recognizes that many of us avoid

conversations about race because they’re difficult, uncomfortable or could risk being perceived as prejudiced. The conversations in TI2016 will be learning opportunities: chances to talk skillfully about charged issues with people who might have differing perspectives, with less apprehension. These life-giving conversations will teach us more about the racial issues of our time, including structural racism, mass incarceration and policy change. The Most Rev. Michael Curry is among the presenters.

The conference takes place in New York City, but it is also broadcast via the internet to a network of Partner Sites (churches, seminaries and other organizations) around the country and the world. Anyone is welcome to become a Partner Site, and special diocesan pricing is available. For more information on becoming a Partner Site, contact Ayliffe Mumford at ayliffe.mumford@episditionc.org; for more information on TI2016, visit trinitywallstreet.org.

- Adapted from trinitywallstreet.org



#ADVENTWORD

If you are looking for a collaborative, connective way to celebrate Advent, once again SSJE is offering #AdventWord, a global Advent calendar. Participants respond with images and prayers to a daily meditation received via email. Joining images and prayers contributed from people around the world, the global Advent calendar brings people together in communion and wonder.

Participants can submit on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram using the hashtags #AdventWord and the hashtagged word of the day. For example, beginning November 29, the first #AdventWord is #WakeUp. Using those two hashtags will add the participant's submission to the calendar.

To sign up or see the calendar, visit adventword.org.



DO YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING “EPISCOPAL STYLE”

If your holiday shopping list includes anything church-related this year, consider one of the several unique gift shops located at churches throughout our diocese. Supporting them gives far more than the gift you purchase.

THE CANTERBURY SHOP

The Canterbury Shop, located at St. Michael's, Raleigh, was founded in 1990. Staffed entirely by volunteers, all proceeds from the shop go to St. Michael's Outreach and Mission efforts; since its inception, more than \$75,000 have gone to support those efforts. Each year, the Missions Grants Committee, using proceeds from The Canterbury Shop, distributes funding to various organizations in the area, including The Green Chair Project, StepUp, Interact and the Shepherd's Table Soup Kitchen.

Visitors to the shop will find a unique collection of items, including prayer books, greeting cards, scarves and accessories, gifts for all occasions and seasonal items. For more information, directions and store hours, visit holymichael.org.

THE SACRED GARDEN BOOKSTORE

The Sacred Garden Bookstore can be found at Holy Trinity, Greensboro. Sacred Garden first opened in January 2007 to be a sacred space for the entire Greensboro community. Centrally located between downtown and Fisher Park, it is meant to be a place where people can stop in to find rest, solitude and sanctuary in the midst of their busy everyday lives.



While operated as a ministry of Holy Trinity, the bookstore offers widely ecumenical resources to guide individuals in their unique journey of faith. With books, coffee, gifts, speakers, events and meeting spaces available to nonprofit, church, and other community groups, our hope is to help foster and facilitate meaningful dialogue that leads to both an inner awakening and an outer call to serve. For more information, visit holy-trinity.com.

GOODNEWS

GoodNews, located at Christ Church, Charlotte, is a mission of the parish's Episcopal Church Women. The shop donates all of its sales proceeds in the form of grants to worthy nonprofit initiatives, especially those focused on the needs of women and children in the local community and abroad. In its 40 year history, GoodNews has funded grants totaling more than \$1,000,000.

In addition to selling books, cards, candles, lotions, jewelry, handbags, decorative pillows, baby and children's gifts, household and kitchen items, men's accessories, crosses and paper products, GoodNews also sells frozen and refrigerated foods prepared by Christ Church volunteers. In addition, works by local artists are exhibited on the upper level of All Saints' Hall and sold through the shop. For more information, visit christchurchcharlotte.org/goodnews.

In addition to these shops, many churches also have smaller gift shops open a limited number of hours each week. Check your local churches' websites to learn more.

RESOURCES FOR ADDRESSING RACISM NOW AVAILABLE

The Bishop's Committee on Racial Justice and Reconciliation has compiled an extensive collection of resources for use by congregations interested in addressing racism in their communities. Included in the resources are workshops, films and documentaries, books, field trips and programs. All can be found on episditionc.org.

The resources available on the website are also those referenced in Resolution 200.3. On Racial Inequity and Injustice, which asks that every year each congregation undertake at least one initiative aimed at addressing systemic racial inequity and injustice.

The committee encourages you to share what your congregation is doing to address systemic racial inequity and injustice. Send your news and suggested additions to the resource list to committee members Ayliffe Mumford at ayliffe.mumford@episditionc.org and Beth Crow at beth.crow@episditionc.org.

REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR BISHOPS' BALL 2016

Bishops' Ball is moving! The weekend will again take place at Camp Walter Johnson, but, instead of taking place in early December, it will run January 29-31, 2016.



This year's theme is "Deeply Rooted," and the weekend will feature small group discussions and activities, large group presentations, games, music, worship and more, including a possible campfire or talent show. One thing that's definitely not changing is the weekend's main event: a formal dinner and dance. The Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple will be in attendance, and registration is open in the "Events" section at episditionc.org.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

November

- 19 Pre-Convention Forum, "Telling It Like It Was - Six Voices Highlight Ministry Among African Americans in the Diocese of NC, 1865-1945," 8 - 10 p.m., Downtown Winston-Salem Marriott
- 20-21 200th Annual Convention, Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem
- 22 Safe Church Training Level 2, 1 - 4 p.m., All Saints, Concord
- 26-27 Diocesan offices closed

December

- 3 Fresh Start, held regionally. Contact Canon Catherine Massey.
- 20 Ordination to the Sacred Order of Priesthood, St. Philip's Chapel, Canterbury School, Greensboro
- 24 -
- Jan. 4 Diocesan offices closed.

January

- 7 Fresh Start, held regionally. Contact Canon Catherine Massey.
- 29-31 Bishops' Ball "Deeply Rooted," Camp Walter Johnson, Denton. Registration is now open in the "Events" section of episditionc.org.

Look for additional events and more detailed event information online at episditionc.org, or contact the Diocese at (919) 834-7474, toll-free at (800) 448-8775. Upcoming diocesan events and events from around the Diocese are also featured in Please Note, the weekly diocesan e-newsletter. Sign up on our homepage.

STAY IN TOUCH



Keep up with our diocese through social media!

www.facebook.com/EpiscopalDioceseNC
www.twitter.com/EpiscopalINC
www.instagram.com/episditionc
www.vimeo.com/episcopalnc



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Diocesan House Welcomes New Staff

The Diocese of North Carolina welcomed four new staff members during the last few months:

THE REV. CANON EARNEST GRAHAM

Regional Canon

The Rev. Canon Earnest Graham became part of the diocesan leadership team as a regional canon located in the Greensboro and Winston-Salem convocations.

In addition to serving as a regional canon working with clergy, lay leaders and congregations, Canon Graham brings a great deal of creativity to his new position. Prior to attending seminary, he worked as an illustrator and a graphic artist in advertising. Graham brings that creativity with him into his ministry in the church, in groups and in communication. He continues to practice art, creating comic book translations of the Bible; he is currently working on selections of the Psalms.

Ordained in 2001, Graham comes to the Diocese from the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia where he has been serving as interim rector of Hickory Neck Episcopal Church in Toano, Virginia. Prior to this call, he was the rector of St. Matthew's in Chesterfield, Virginia.



BRITTANY LOVE

Missioner for Young Adult Ministry

Brittany Love joined the diocesan staff as the new missioner for young adult ministry. In her new role, she is working to build communities of fellowship, worship and service among young adults, both collegiate and non-collegiate, churched and unchurched. She is also directing A Movable Feast, the diocesan mobile ministry of hospitality and evangelism. As diocesan young adult missioner,



Love supports the work of our campus ministers who are themselves young adult missioners on a local level.

Love has experience working in a variety of ministerial settings, including youth, college, young professional, adult and hospital ministries. She most recently served as an Emerging Ministries Pastor in Montreal, Quebec, where she focused on missional young adult ministry. Love holds a Master of Divinity from the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies at Duke Divinity School as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Ministry, with a concentration in Youth Ministry and Missions, from Milligan College.

Local churches and other ministries are encouraged to contact Love at brittany.love@episdionc.org to schedule use of the A Movable Feast trailer for "Going to Galilee" events.

The Rev. Chantal McKinney

Missioner for Hispanic Ministry in Winston-Salem

As lead missioner in Winston-Salem, the Rev. Chantal McKinney is working with a team of Episcopalians from three Winston-Salem churches. Their work is focused on building relationships with those outside of the church for the sake of asset-based neighborhood development, as well as to assess the potential for creating a bilingual worshipping community.



The Rev. Rebecca Yarbrough

Jesse Ball duPont Funds Grant Coordinator

The Rev. Rebecca Yarbrough, deacon at St. Alban's, Davidson, and a leader of Galilee Ministries of East Charlotte, is working with the bishops and ministry leaders throughout our diocese to develop proposals for funding through the Jesse Ball duPont Fund to support and promote our diocesan mission.



A TIME OF TRANSITIONS

By the Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple

CAN I GET A WITNESS?

Guiding the Diocese through change

The past 15-plus years have been a quite a ride for the Diocese of North Carolina. We have witnessed the rise of a remarkable Christian leader in our beloved diocesan Bishop Curry. Now Michael Bruce Curry has been called to go forth and proclaim the Good News in other parts of God's holy vineyard. He has been called to go and share his witness to the plains, the mountains, the valleys and the streets across our country and throughout the world.

But what about us? What about those who are feeling slightly left behind? What about Galilee and radical welcome and the missionary Diocese of North Carolina?

We wouldn't be human if we didn't admit just a little bit of worry, a touch of anxiety, maybe even a deep-down note of fear. What if things all fall apart?

As St. Paul once said, "God forbid!" As Jesus has promised, "I will not leave you comfortless." As Julian of Norwich reminded us, "All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

Diocese of North Carolina: we are going to be just fine! We are blessed with a great abundance of gifts – first and foremost in the faith, creativity and energy of our people. One of the great achievements of the last

15 years is the collaborative approach your diocesan staff takes to mission and ministry. We are well prepared to move through the upcoming transition and carry on with the missionary spirit of Galilee. Because of our team structure and regional deployment, we are able to adapt to each challenge in a variety of ways, deploying various staff members according to the particular reasons and seasons. Transition is a season to give witness to the faith that is within us, as well as the faith Bishop Curry has in us. This is our time to demonstrate that the Diocese of North Carolina is in the vanguard of the "Jesus Move-

ment” Bishop Curry is extolling the whole world to hear, see and join.

Because Bishop Curry would tell us it has never been about him; it has always been about following Jesus.

For the next 18 months or so, until we elect and consecrate a new bishop diocesan, I will serve as the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese of North Carolina. This is a role the bishop suffragan is allowed to assume under the canons — or laws — of our diocese. This means while we don’t have a bishop diocesan, we do have someone responsible for the episcopal duties described in our Constitution and Canons. I will have the title Bishop Pro Tem, a way of saying bishop for a temporary period. Since I have tenure as a bishop suffragan, I will return to that role when we elect a new bishop diocesan. The call of a bishop suffragan is a willingness to step up when necessary and step back when needed. I am ready and willing to do so.

We will shortly be announcing the addition of an assisting bishop to our staff for the interim period. This will be a bishop who has retired from duties as a bishop diocesan in another part of The Episcopal Church. This bishop will bring a wealth of experience as well as fresh perspective to help us chart the way ahead. We are still going to Galilee. We have started many new endeavors as well as renewed the energy of our current congregations. This is no time to stop, though it is a time to be quite judicious in the balance between starting new ministries and strengthening the existing ones.

I, like many of you, was not surprised that Bishop Curry asked the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn to join him as a canon to the Presiding Bishop. This makes all the sense in the world, yet also opens up another tender spot of grief and loss. Michael Hunn is a disciple of enormous faith and gifts. The degree to which your diocesan staff has become more available to the churches of our diocese is due in no small part to his tireless dedication to team building, innovation and responsiveness to emerging issues in the diocese and the wider church.

Despite the fact Canon Hunn will be greatly missed, we have another staff person ready and willing to step up. For the last three years Canon Hunn has been joined in his work by Catherine Massey in her role as deputy transition officer. As many of you know, Catherine is a wealth of knowledge and “get it done” energy. Her organizational skills are outstanding. During our interim period, Catherine will become the Canon for Transition and Pastoral Ministries.

To our great good fortune, our Canon for Administration, Marlene Weigert, will continue to lead our outstanding administrative staff. Canon Weigert continues to adeptly navigate the complexities of insurance, finance, human resources, property management and so much



The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple

more. The phrase “administrative staff” just doesn’t capture the passion and commitment and wisdom our employees bring to the work of keeping us dynamic and effective agents of ministry. The entire diocesan staff, regional canons, missionaries for youth and young adults, and the communications team will continue their outstanding contributions to the vitality of this diocese. The Standing Committee, Diocesan Council and the Trustees, as well as our numerous commissions and committees, will make sure that we remain focused upon serving God, loving our neighbors and shining with the light of Christ.

Things are changing. They will not be the same. Some exhilarating times are now part of history, and it is time for us to look to the needs of the present and the promise of the future. The earliest apostles and disciples knew a great deal about bidding one another farewell as they embarked upon various paths. Some stayed close to Jerusalem, others were called to great distances. They remained faithful in the prayers and the breaking of bread. They remained constant in learning and discerning the Word of God that all might clearly hear and faithfully follow Jesus. All were called to take courage and go forth to love and serve the Lord. So these are really not entirely new times. This is our time to go, and do likewise.

The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple is the Bishop Pro Tem of the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact her at bishopanne@episdionc.org.



In light of Hunn’s appointment to serve the new Presiding Bishop, Bishop Curry and Bishop Hodges-Copple asked Catherine Massey to become the Canon for Transition and Pastoral Ministries. Massey, who has served as deputy transition officer since April 2013, will continue much of the work previously done in partnership with Hunn.

In her new role, she will serve congregations and clergy in transition and be the Bishop Pro Tem’s link to the Discipline Board, the Pastoral Response Team, the Safe Church training program and the Commission on Ministry for the Priesthood. She will support interim ministry in the diocese and continue as a facilitator of Fresh Start. Two members of the clergy will be named to assist Massey in working with clergy and congregations in transition, as well as pastoral care for clergy and their families.

By Canon Catherine Massey

A CREATIVE AND GRACIOUS LEADER

After serving the Diocese of North Carolina for more than nine years, the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn, Canon to the Ordinary for Programs and Pastoral Ministry, is answering another call as he joins Presiding Bishop Curry’s staff as Canon to the Presiding Bishop for Ministry Within The Episcopal Church. In this new role, Hunn will be responsible for supporting the ministry of the Presiding Bishop among Episcopalians. This includes supporting the Presiding Bishop’s role as president of the House of Bishops, chief pastor to the Church’s 108 dioceses and the areas of special jurisdiction for the Presiding Bishop, and chief theological educator and evangelist.

Catherine Massey, who served with Hunn in recent years as deputy transition officer, shared thoughts on her friend and colleague as he prepared to depart the diocese.

Anyone who knows me is quite aware I am a terrible typist. I regularly and incorrectly type “church” and “discernment” and “transition.” When I was approached to work with Canon Hunn, I was clear that while I was intrigued by the work, and he could rest assured that in the end I’d get it right, he should never look at the first draft of anything I did. He smiled and told me he was a rotten speller and that our working relationship would be one where we were colleagues and not boss/assistant.

So began more than five years ago what I’d call the best job I’ve had so far.

Canon Hunn is a creative and gracious leader; he’s a teacher and lifelong learner who can talk about chickens and permaculture in one breath and listen with his whole heart about what God is calling one to do in the next. From him, I’ve learned to relax and allow the Holy Spirit to guide this important work we do together, to pray when I’m anxious and to be open to what God is calling me to do daily. From crisis management, to call, to conflicts, this colleague I’m proud to call my friend has shown many of us here in the diocese and the wider Church how to be better leaders and



The Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn

better Christians, and to walk more clearly and joyfully with Jesus.

Many who have seen us work note we truly enjoy working together and find real joy and engagement with each meeting or process. And we laugh. A lot.

I’d like to think I’ve taught Canon Hunn a few things: some slick technological tricks, the wisdom of Brene Brown, and how to make a meeting or conference run super smooth. Ask him about that book he’s finished... and the next one in his head. There is no doubt in my mind I’ve received far more than I’ve given (that’s the real magic of this work, you know) and for that I’ll be forever grateful.

AN EPISCOPALIAN'S EPISCOPALIAN

Margo Acomb, longtime executive assistant to the bishop, announced her retirement after 17 years of service. Acomb joined the diocesan staff in 1998 under the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Robert Johnson and has been in the position of executive assistant to the bishops since Bishop Curry's consecration in 2000. Between her time with the Diocese and her prior work as a parish administrator, Margo has served The Episcopal Church for more than 30 years. She will remain on staff through the end of the year, guiding her successor in her new role and assisting with special projects.

Bishop Curry reflected on his partnership with Margo.

I have been truly blessed to serve these 15 years as your bishop. The blessings for me have been the people of this diocese and the staff who serve them. Maybe the greatest example of that for me has been the deep privilege and real joy of serving with Eve Marguerite Acomb, known to us all as Margo.

I often have a lot of nice things said about me and get credit for even more. But if truth be known, I probably get the credit for a lot of things Margo has actually either done or made sure got done. Margo does more behind the scenes than will ever be known; because of her skills and focus, she's kept me organized, on schedule, on track, and – perhaps the greatest gift to me – free to be fully present with the people of the diocese.

She has also adapted as the diocese and the world grew and changed. There have been a lot of changes over the years – staff, offices, and, a great example, the tools we use to do business. When we first started working together, email was in its infancy and my calendar was kept on paper! Margo will be the first to tell you she's not “techie,” but she learned every new technological innovation that became part of our life. Whether it was the journey from paper calendars to online versions or filing cabinets to Dropbox, she learned it all, embracing the new.

But with all of her adapting, the never-changing rock on which she stood was her love of our Lord and this Church. Margo and I were once talking, and I asked her if she remembered the bishop who confirmed her. She recalled she



Margo Acomb

was 12 or 13 years old at the time, and the service was in Doncaster, England. She paused and said, “It was Bishop Ramsey.”

“As in Archbishop Michael Ramsey?” I said. “The Archbishop of Canterbury?”

“Yes,” she said, never missing a beat. “But he was just a bishop at the time.”

Margo is truly a well-rounded person. She is an avid tennis player, golfer, bell ringer, chorister and a devoted person known as “GoGo” to her grandchildren.

Margo Acomb is an Anglican's Anglican and an Episcopalian's Episcopalian. She is the real deal. And when she answers the phone, you know you've reached The Episcopal Church. As it says in the Bible, well done thou good and faithful servant. God bless you, and keep the faith.

Your brother,
+Michael



Elizabeth Dawkins, former program support coordinator at Good Shepherd, Raleigh, joined the diocesan staff on October 12 as Margo Acomb's successor. Dawkins served with Good Shepherd for more than 15 years and possesses both the strong skills and proven dedication that will suit her dynamic new multi-faceted role.

“Elizabeth has been a valued and trusted staff member of Good Shepherd for a long time, and we have every confidence she will thrive in her new role at Diocesan House,” said Bishop Hodges-Cople.

LET IT SHINE!



In the spring of 2000, we greeted a young bishop who was born into gospel-based discipleship, steeped in Anglican tradition, and tested and steeled in the 'hoods of Baltimore, Cleveland and Buffalo. We watched him grow into a rock-star bishop, whose smiling face now pops up on thousands of Facebook pages around the world. It's hard to let go of this special relationship, but we are also eager to see his powers of persuasion elevated to new levels and reaching into new communities.

Under the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry's leadership, our diocese moved through times of excitement as well as uncertainty and even some trials and tribulations. Normally reserved Episcopalians learned to turn to the person next to us in the pew and say – with a nervous laugh – “God loves you and so do I!” We've witnessed a growth in discipleship by taking a hard look at what it really means to practice “all are welcome.” Attentive to changing times and new needs, Bishop Curry helped us see that evangelism means we can actually go deeper into our Anglican traditions as well as deeper into our increasingly diverse communities.

We have been challenged to share our own faith stories with friends and strangers – in word and action. We are more passionate than ever to walk with the humble and meek as well as to seek justice and show mercy.

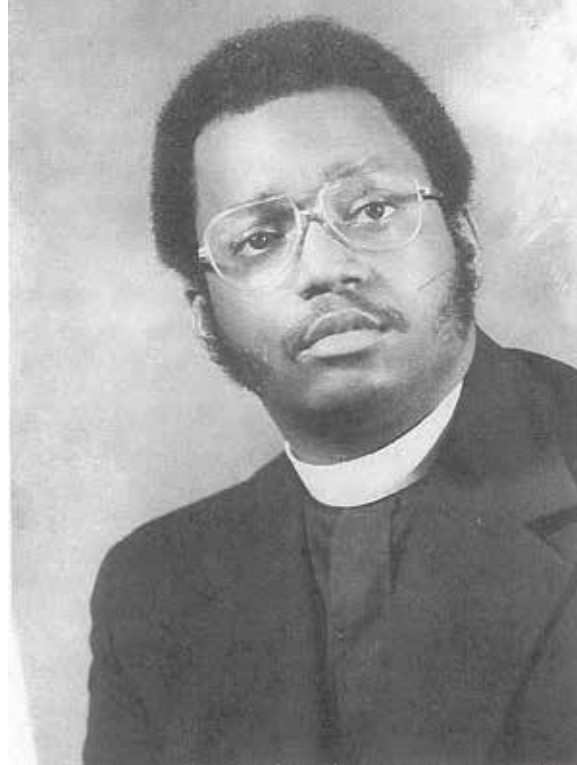
We've had front row seats to a movement to be the church beyond our doors, to be disciples making a difference. Bishop Curry has made a difference in our lives and in the life of this diocese for generations to come. Now we find ourselves in a bittersweet mix of celebration and grief. We are excited that Bishop Curry will bring his wise and deft diplomatic hand to the vagaries of our church structures. We know the Word will be faithfully preached and enthusiastically received. We know he will let the light of Christ shine - let it shine, let it shine!

- The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple

There are countless words to describe the Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, but perhaps the ones that best speak to who he is are those he's shared with us over the last 15 years.

“What is a diocese? Why does it matter? I am convinced that a diocese shows us there is more to the world than just me, my family, my local church, my neighborhood, my tribe, my group, my country, my anything else. A diocese is a constant reminder that we are called by Jesus to be a Church for others...[It] is a community of communities, a missionary network of shared ministry that connects congregations and clergy to each other, to the wider Church nationally and globally and to the wider world.”

- *Disciple*, Fall 2010



“More and more....”

“Discipleship happens as we come, as we learn, and as we live differently in the community of Jesus. We are transformed and share in God’s mission of transforming the world.”

- Pastoral Address,
187th Annual Convention,
2003

“We are not just a congregation, a diocese, an American Church. We are the Church catholic, the Body of Christ in the world, the whole world.”

- *Disciple*, Fall 2014



“Come, let us go to Galilee!”

- Pastoral Address, 195th Annual Convention, 2011



“I love this Church,
I love our Lord,
and God is not finished
with us yet.”

- Sermon, 78th General Convention, 2015



“Life must be lived against the backdrop of that
which is greater than the self... And because you
are part of something greater than yourself, you
will be capable of more than you ever could be
on your own.”

- Pastoral Address, 185th Annual Convention, 2001



“Why not?”

Why not a world where no child will ever go to bed
hungry again?

Why not a world in which poverty is truly history, a
thing of the past?

Why not a world in which every person is treated and
valued as a child of God?

Why not a world reconciled to our God and to each
other as children of God and brothers and
sisters of one another?

Why not a world that looks less like the nightmare
of our human devising and more like the dream
of God's creating?

Why not?”

- *Crazy Christians*, Church Publishing, 2013



“The closer we draw to...God, the closer we come to each other. And the closer we come to each other, the closer we come to God, because we have all been created in the image and likeness of God. That’s how God created and structured the world.”

- Pastoral Address, 186th Annual Convention, 2002



“I have a hope, a dream, and a prayer for us, the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. It is that when we mark our 200th anniversary in the year 2017, the face of the Episcopal Church here will reflect the face of the peoples of North Carolina in all of our variety and God-given diversity. And that it will be known of us far and wide that, ‘All are welcome in this place.’”

- Pastoral Address, 193rd Annual Convention, 2009

“Now I’ve got one word for you. If you don’t remember anything else I say this morning, it’s the first word in the Great Commission: GO! And the reason I lift up that word ‘go’ is because we are the Jesus Movement. Go!”

- Sermon, 78th General Convention, 2015



“God bless you, and keep the faith.”

THE 200TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

Beginning our new chapter

The 200th Annual Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina will take place November 20-21 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem. Convention highlights include the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple's first Pastoral Address as bishop pro tem; a keynote by Mary Parmer, congregational development consultant and coach; a presentation about the bishop transition timeline; and the return of the A Movable Feast trailer serving hot beverages and snacks outside the Benton Convention Center.

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

The biggest change to Convention this year involves the Holy Eucharist, which will take place in the Convention Hall at 10 a.m. on Friday morning. The Eucharist will include the Pastoral Address. By opening with worship, everyone at Convention will be reminded that the Holy Spirit moves among the body, guiding prayerful discernment.

The Convention will also no longer elect members to the Board of Trustees of Penick Village due to a change in the organization's bylaws.

RESOLUTIONS AND ELECTIONS

The deadline to submit resolutions and nominations was October 12 at noon. All resolutions and nominations submitted by the deadline are available in the pre-Convention materials linked to the Annual Convention page at episdionc.org. Late resolutions and nominations are in order during the first legislative session of the Convention. The Convention must agree to consider a late resolution by a two-thirds vote. Late resolutions amending the Constitution or Canons are not allowed. A late nomination must have a nominator and two seconders, all from different parishes or missions.

This year, the Convention will elect two clergy and one lay person for three-year terms on Standing Committee; two clergy and three lay people for three-year terms on Diocesan Council, plus one member of the clergy for a



MEET THE KEYNOTER

This year's Convention keynote will be delivered by Mary Parmer, a congregational development consultant based in Texas. She will share her work as creator and developer of Invite Welcome Connect, a newcomer ministry from the Diocese of Texas that will help our Diocese extend the evangelism skills we began practicing with Go Speak: Sharing Our Faith. Parmer also serves as Director of the Gathering of Leaders, a national leadership group of young Episcopal clergy, and was recently appointed to the Task Force on Clergy Leadership Formation in Small Churches.

Learn more about Parmer and Invite Welcome Connect by reading an article about her recent visit to All Saints, Concord, in the "Read All About It" section of episdionc.org.



one-year term; and one lay person for a three-year term as a Trustee of the University of the South.

The resolutions before Convention are:

- **Resolution 200.1. On the Election of the XII Bishop of North Carolina**
Authorizes the search for a new bishop diocesan and establishes procedures and a timeline
- **Resolution 200.2. On Amending Canon 15 to Permit Members of Diocesan Council to Serve Two Successive Terms**
Allows members of Council to serve two full successive terms
- **Resolution 200.3. On Racial Inequity and Injustice**
Asks that every year each congregation undertake at least one initiative aimed at addressing systemic racial inequity and injustice
- **Resolution 200.4. On a Fossil Fuel Divestment Study**
Establishes a committee to study divestment in North Carolina in response to the 78th General Convention Resolution C045, which urges all dioceses and parishes in the Episcopal Church to consider divestment from fossil fuels
- **Resolution 200.5. On Tasking the Charter Committee for Hispanic Ministries to Recommend Next Steps for the Diocese**
Asks the Charter Committee for Hispanic Ministries to review and recommend concrete next steps to be taken by the Diocese
- **Resolution 200.5. On Amending Canon 44 to Allow Youth Vote at Convention**
Allows the seven youth representatives elected by convocations seat, voice and vote instead of only seat and voice

FOLLOW LIVE

Convention will stream live on the diocesan homepage at episditionc.org.

Follow Convention on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with #DioNC200.

THURSDAY NIGHT FORUM

The diocesan History and Archives Committee invites Convention attendees and those interested in diocesan history to attend “Telling It Like It Was - Six Voices Highlight Ministry Among African Americans in the Diocese of NC, 1865-1945” at 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 19, in the Winston-Salem Marriott across from the Benton Convention Center.

This program features the actual words of six Episcopalians who spoke their minds about both the achievements and the failures of their Church in the years following the Civil War. The Rev. Brooks Graebner, historiographer of the Diocese, and Lynn Hoke, project archivist, will provide the historical framework. Volunteer voice-actors will present dramatic readings from selected source materials.

The evening includes readings from:

- **Bishop Thomas Atkinson (1807-81)**
Bishop of North Carolina during the Civil War and its aftermath
- **Anna Julia Haywood Cooper (1858-1964)**
An educator, author and early graduate of St. Augustine’s School born into slavery in Raleigh
- **John Henry Mingo Pollard (1855-1908)**
Archdeacon for Colored Work from 1898 until his death
- **Bertha Richards (1873-1968)**
Dean of Bishop Tuttle School at St. Augustine’s who pioneered integrated boarding
- **Sarah Louise (Sadie) Delany and Annie Elizabeth (Bessie) Delany (1889-1999, 1891-1995)**
Authors of the best-selling book, *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters’ First 100 Years*, which sheds light on some of their father Bishop Delany’s struggles in the Church

Advance registration is not required for this free event.

THE OPEN DOOR HOUSE CHURCH

Talk about welcoming the stranger at your door.

In 2013, two Spanish-speaking Honduran families visited St. Andrew's, Greensboro, looking for an Episcopal Church home. Around the same time, a U.S.-born member of the congregation married his Spanish-speaking fiancée in a bilingual wedding service. All three families attended the English-language Sunday services faithfully, the youth even serving as acolytes, but they could not help but miss worshiping in the language and styles of their home cultures.

In January 2014, the Rev. Audra Abt, bilingual assistant to the rector at St. Andrew's, offered to start La Misa, a Spanish Eucharist. The plan was to hold it midweek once a month. The expectation was that the gathering would be small, perhaps 10 people, and would likely be comprised of the Spanish-dominant Latino members of the congregation.

But, as so often happens, things did not go as planned.

From the start, the attendance was double what was originally expected. About half the attendees gathering in St. Andrew's chapel each month were English-dominant members of the congregation who now counted those celebrating La Misa as friends.

"One of the surprises is that the [non-Latino] people who have responded aren't the Spanish speakers at St. Andrew's," said Abt. "The folks who have responded did so not because they want to practice their Spanish, but because they feel called to be hospitable and connect with other human beings."

APPLY FOR A GRANT

Iglesia Puerta Abierta is an inspiring example of how the Mission Endowment Grant works with other resources. In addition to the Mission Endowment Grant the ministry was awarded in 2015 to help support the dedicated time of a bilingual missionary, Iglesia Puerta Abierta has also received a United Thank Offering Grant, an MRST Seed Grant and a grant through the ECF Fellows program.

The application deadline for the 2016 Mission Endowment Grant is November 30. For more information, visit episidionc.org and select "Grants and Scholarships" from the "Resources" tab.

"I've seen people on their phones, with Google Translator, typing out the sentence they want to say, waiting for it to translate and showing the screen to the other language speaker, who then responds," Abt shared. "That is time consuming, it's uncomfortable, and you really have to consider what you're saying. In some ways it's the most meaningful communication you can have. It tells me a lot about what people are yearning for and the lengths they'll go to to connect with another human being and to live into welcome. It's been special."

By summer, it was clear this ministry had taken root, and church leaders spent some time discerning the question: If this ministry were to continue, did it present an opportunity to expand its worship in ways that would enrich the entire congregation?

The Latino leaders responded with a radical welcome. They invited all members of the St. Andrew's congregation – Spanish-speaking, English-speaking, Latino and non-Latino – to step outside the walls of the church and be the church in their Greensboro neighborhood.

THE OPEN DOOR

The model for house church community focuses on gatherings in neighborhoods and homes. Deeply Scriptural, it features lay-led Bible study, prayer, table fellowship and local service to others. Priests serve as travellers, presiding at home Eucharist, offering ongoing formation for lay readers, and delivering news of other house churches.

Wherever it is, the cross stands in the center of the gathering, a Eucharist is shared, and reflection and discussion on the Gospel or another scripture passage honors how God can speak through all members of the church. Except in the coldest weather, the door to the home remains open so the voices raised in song reach the streets and neighbors, taking the worshipers out into the community while simultaneously extending an invitation to come inside.

"The model for doing house church is not unusual in other parts of the world," said Abt. "In places where there are no resources to build big churches or employ clergy, the house church model is what is done. Lay leaders are the neighborhood conveners, leaders of the prayer groups and of reaching out into the community, and priests are like circuit riders. Our Latino members are perfect leaders to show us how to bridge to what church might look like to us in the future, where there's a link between the neighborhood churches and the

central parishes.”

The Holy Spirit’s presence among the La Misa community at St. Andrew’s was already felt in the multicultural, bilingual gathering of people who faithfully attended the chapel services in Spring 2014. But when the Latino members invited the gatherings into home-based worship that summer, the Holy Spirit moved even more. People from other Episcopal churches, Lutherans, Roman Catholics and even a few “nones” began to attend. Most came by personal invitation, but some came because they were neighbors and curious.

“This ministry has shown us a lot about what it means to overcome barriers,” said Abt. “Not just in terms of culture or language, but to invite a neighbor into our home to worship, and, on the opposite side, to let ourselves be the guest and allow someone else to extend the welcome to us. It’s about learning to recognize and receive the gifts that someone else might have to give.

“Being a guest in the home of someone who is clearly more or less affluent [or in some other way different] than you can be uncomfortable. To walk into someone else’s space and not judge or feel guilty and instead really start to understand another’s reality can really open you up to the barriers within and around you.”

THE EXTENDED WELCOME

The roots are growing deep. Iglesia Puerta Abierta is now in partnership with other Episcopal churches in the Greensboro area, as well as with a Methodist church with whom St. Andrew’s is now co-hosting a multicultural youth group ministry. Community partners like FaithAction International

help the ministry engage in leadership development, outreach and support for immigrant families in the local area. The Produce-2-People program see congregants of both Iglesia Puerta Abierta and St. Andrew’s coming together to get fresh food to neighborhood areas that need it the most.

Perhaps most importantly, the idea of Iglesia Puerta Abierta is starting to spread to other neighborhoods. Those roots are still to grow, but the seeds are planted.

“We have an ideal goal of claiming our diversity, the beauty and messiness of that, and also living into a reconciled, diverse community,” said Abt. “But to do all this takes a commitment to each other and coming back again and again even when it’s uncomfortable. Seeing our differences and having to work together to negotiate those differences, trusting in Christ’s power at work to help us, are what build and sustain these relationships.

The people responding are making a choice to be part of this ministry instead of something else. They’re sacrificing time with someone or something else that means something to them, whether its time with family, friends, playing sports, etc. That can be hard at first, but hopefully the time spent living into these genuine relationships and encountering Christ with others ultimately enriches us enough that what we gain carries over into the other areas of our life, including communities that might initially suffer from the choice to take a seat at God’s table.”

Christine McTaggart is the communications director for the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact her at christine.mctaggart@episdionc.org. The Rev. Audra Abt is the assistant to the rector at St. Andrew’s, Greensboro. Contact her at audra.abt@episdionc.org.



Scenes from Iglesia Puerta Abierta. Photos courtesy of the Rev. Audra Abt.



By the Rev. Lisa Fischbeck

EVANGELISM: WHERE DO I BEGIN?

When the newly minted Baptismal Covenant came out in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, Episcopalians everywhere reacted to the question: “Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Jesus Christ?”

As a layperson at the Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill during the early 1980s, I led a small group discussion of the Covenant, in which we talked about a different question of the Covenant each week. This “Good News” question was certainly the most disconcerting for those who gathered. Some feared that to “proclaim the Good News by word” was the equivalent of proselytizing, of trying to convince someone that they needed to believe a certain way. Others were convinced that any talk about the “Good News of God in Christ” would make those who are not Christian feel uncomfortable. To a person, the group wanted instead to focus on how they could proclaim by “example” what they believed. And the conversation turned to being kind, helping the poor, visiting people in the hospital, etc.

WHAT IS EVANGELISM?

Evangelism simply means to share the Good News of the Christian faith publically or personally. And the call is given, not only in the Book of Common Prayer and in the more recent Five Marks of Mission, but also in the Gospels itself: “And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.’” (Mark 16:15)

But many of us have a hard time talking about our faith. Many consider it nearly or definitively rude to share our faith with others who may not believe as we do. Some of this is born of bad experiences we have had with proselytizers. But a lot of it, I suspect, is because we don’t really know just what “the Good News” is for ourselves.

WHERE TO START

It may help to start with something less directly about our faith. Most of us would not hesitate to share good news about a movie or a book that has just come out. In

GO SPEAK 2016: EVANGELISM IN ACTION

In listening to Bishop Curry preach, it's clear that it's time for Episcopalians to work on our evangelism comfort level. Go Speak: Sharing our Faith is a great entry point to this practice and a powerful experience that brings us all closer together in our faith.

On May 16, 2016, small groups of 8-10 Episcopalians will gather in homes and other informal settings across the Diocese. Under the direction of a trained moderator, participants share personal stories of how God has moved in their lives.

The hope is that dioceses across the country will be taking part in this on May 16 as well, making this a truly nationwide sharing of faith and connecting us all, both as Episcopalians and as followers of Jesus.

At this point, we are asking each congregation to appoint a Go Speak coordinator. For more information, visit episditionc.org, or you can send your coordinator's name and contact information to communications@episditionc.org.

those situations, we wouldn't be highly invested in whether or not the person we are speaking to then chooses to see that movie or read that book. But we would be glad if they did. Could sharing the Good News about our faith start with something similar?

Could we say we go to a church that is a really good community of love and support? Would we be comfortable saying that our church has a good music program? If this is good news for us, it would not be pushy or offensive to say it is. It would simply be a statement of fact, a statement about something we enjoy and would like to share with others.

That's a good warm-up. Next might be to consider what we really do believe in our hearts is the Good News, the Gospel, about God and Jesus. This often leads

classes at church, we could sort through just what the Good News is for us and how we might express it in our own terms. Something like, "I believe God is with me no matter what happens," or "I believe God loves me no matter how much I mess up," or "The closer I get to Jesus, the closer I seem to get to God" might be a better match.

A next step, and one that is really powerful, is to challenge ourselves to start a sentence with, "Because I am a Christian, I..." or "As a Christian, I..."

Many of us do not hesitate to express our opinions about the need for affordable housing or reducing our carbon footprint, or our opposition to the death penalty or to a war. A big step in evangelism, in sharing the Good News, is to own our faith as a reason for believing

But a lot of it, I suspect, is because we don't really know just what "the Good News" is for ourselves.

us into language and terminology we either do not accept or simply do not understand. Is the Good News that "Jesus died for your sins?" Is it that "God became incarnate in Jesus?" How about "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life"? That's not our usual grocery store, soccer sidelines or dinner table conversation. It may not even be what we believe in our heart of hearts. Or, if we do believe, we are not confident enough to take the conversation further if our Good News is questioned or challenged.

It would certainly be helpful if, in conversations and

or acting the way we do.

All of this seems to come more easily to some of us than to others. There are plenty of honest reasons for that. But it is good for each and all of us to receive the challenge, to ask ourselves earnestly how we would define and express the "Good News of God in Jesus Christ" in our own lives. Then practice it, which is to say, be mindful and intentional about being who we are, and what God calls us to do, and try to do it.

The Rev. Lisa Fischbeck is the vicar at The Advocate, Chapel Hill. Contact her at Vicar@TheAdvocateChurch.org

By the Rev. Robert Black

ON DISCERNMENT

A powerful tool for everyday life

“Almighty God, may you guide us to seek the Truth: come whence it may, cost what it will, lead where it might.”

That subversive and bold prayer, attributed to Phillips Brooks, has always resonated with my sense of discipleship and the holy task of discernment.

Discernment is a powerful and helpful tool to use when we are searching for such Truth. It is a deliberate process in which many voices are considered with a goal of coming to a peaceful resolution. “Discern” is from a Latin word, meaning to “separate” or “perceive.” As we all know, there are competing truths and agendas in our world. It seems our culture is filled with disagreements and battles. Civility and genuine dialogue are too often absent from our public discourse, so it should be no surprise results are also lacking. We are frequently torn apart by our divisions, entrenched in our sense of right and wrong, and restrictively defined by labels like “conservative” or “liberal.”

Few of us will ever be in complete agreement on all points of theology, and to lay claim to the fullness of Truth is to create an idol. But our divisions can offer us a glimpse into the depth

and breadth of God, giving us a healthy sense of humility. Our disagreements can be the start of a rich dialogue. Or, as they often do, controversial or disparate points of view on topics can work against God’s desire that “we all be one” (John 17:21) and cause division. However, the Good News we proclaim is that what unites us is stronger than those things which seek to divide us. God’s love and mercy are more powerful than our fears and differing beliefs.

DISCERNMENT EVERY DAY

Discernment, though, is not reserved just for monumental decisions like how to handle a nuclear deal with Iran; it is a tool that can be used every day. When conflict arises, big or small, discernment can be used to help us to see that conflict not as a negative, but rather as an opportunity to engage each other in dialogue. There are no questions too big to be asked, and no topics that are off limits. Our society is in desperate need of conversations that involve true discernment – whether about balancing individual rights and the good of the community, presidential candidates, racial reconciliation or social inequal-

Discernment is not about reaching unanimous consensus or having “winners” and “losers,” but rather seeks to understand God’s will in a community of faith.

ity. Here in the Diocese of North Carolina, we'll soon need some discernment as we prayerfully select our next bishop diocesan. What we all must remember is that discernment is not about reaching unanimous consensus or having "winners" and "losers," but rather seeks to understand God's will in a community of faith.

Throughout Scripture, discernment is a process used when God calls someone to go to a new place or do a new thing. We might think of the stories of Abraham (Genesis 17), Mary (Luke 1), Isaiah (Isaiah 6), Moses (Exodus 3) or Gideon (Judges 6). Though the specifics of these situations differ, each beckons the called to do the work of discernment. Some calls are clearer than others, but what these Biblical moments of discernment all have in common is the fact that in every instance, the text makes it clear God is present.

PART OF THE TAPESTRY

For our daily moments of discernment, whether deciding something serious like what sort of medical treatment to pursue or something less significant, such as what clothes to wear to an interview, being grounded is important. Discernment is more than simply making a decision. Discernment isn't about lists of "pros" and "cons," but is instead about being attuned to a larger vision. By inviting the Holy Spirit into our deliberations, choices are transformed into calls, decisions into discernments.

It is essential we frame our decisions and stories within the larger tapestry of God's dream. As Episcopalians, we pray to the God who "caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning" that we may "so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlast-

ing life." (BCP, p.184) The goal and purpose of discernment is to align our lives in such a way that the Kingdom might come more fully on earth as it is heaven. We, therefore, go to Scripture to ground ourselves in that hope. When we are called upon to make decisions, big or small, we might then be more aware of God's hope for the situation in which we find ourselves.

The Sacraments are another way in which to ground ourselves in discernment. Sacramental living focuses our attention to the reality of God's love and grace that surrounds us at each and every moment of life. One of my favorite poetry verses is from "Aurora Leigh" by Elizabeth Barret Browning, as it speaks to the Sacramental nature of life:

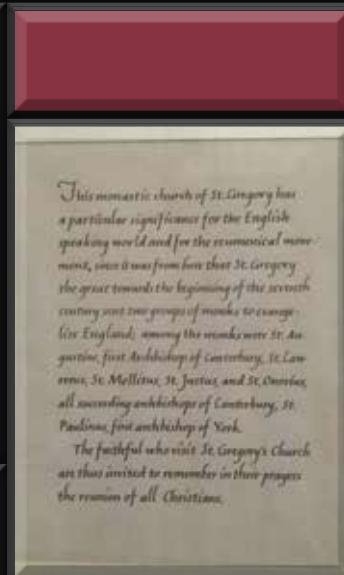
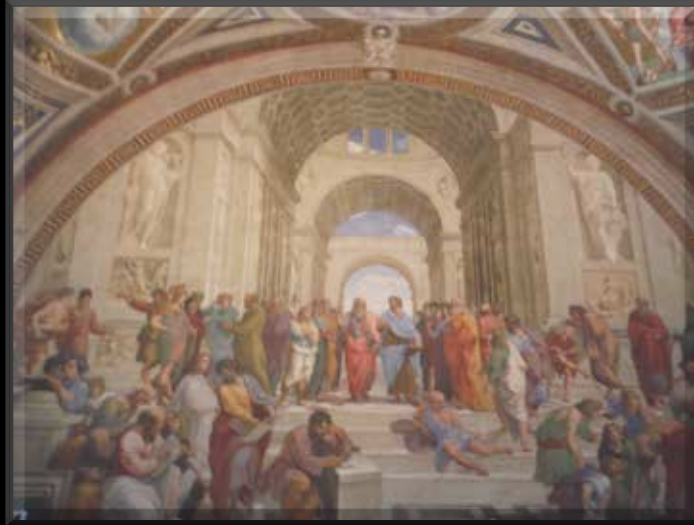
Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

Partaking of the Sacraments roots us in the knowledge that earth is crammed with heaven. Sacraments also invite us to listen more than we speak, and good discernment comes through listening to the Spirit. And so when it comes time to discern, the Sacraments will have prepared us to look at the issue not only as a temporal one, but also as an opportunity to more fully encounter the presence of God.

At the end of the day, discernment is not a Magic 8-Ball you check in with for answers. It is a process, one that offers us an alternative to the competitive nature of debates, and as such, is a part of the salvation that God offers to us. May we all discover its magic in the days ahead.

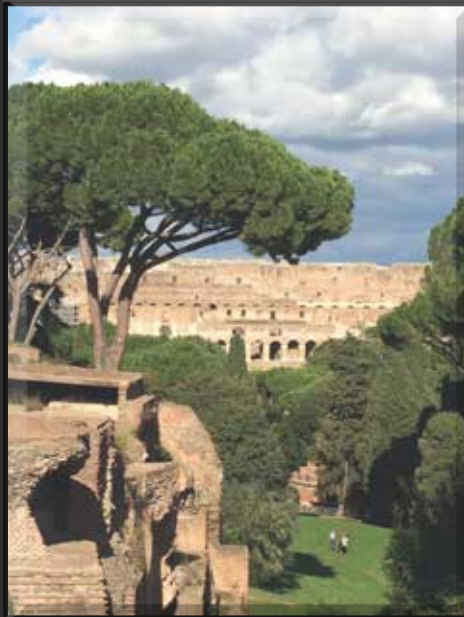
The Rev. Robert Black is the rector of St. Luke's, Salisbury. Contact him at rblack@stlukessalisbury.net.

Bishop Anne Goes to Rome



Clockwise from top: Raphael's "The School of Athens." The bishops suffragan with the rector of St. Paul's Within the Walls, the Episcopal Church in Rome. The Rose Window in St. Paul's. The Rt. Rev. Hodges-Copple in St. Peter's Square awaiting the Pope. The monastery at San Gregorio Magno al Celio. Greeting Pope Francis. The altar at St. Paul's. St. Augustine's cathedra. Michelangelo's Pieta. Greeting Pope Francis. All photos by the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple and John Hodges.





It may not be on par with the parting of the Red Sea, but in my mind it was a miracle, or a series of miracles, that combined to place me atop the steps of St. Peter's Basilica, facing out into St. Peter's Square and almost literally to Pope Francis's right hand on Wednesday, October 7. From the lofty and also humbling moment of being introduced to the Pope to the humbling and also exhilarating work at a shelter for refugees in the basement of St. Paul's in the Walls, Rome, my pilgrimage to Rome with eight other bishops suffragan was thrilling.

I will be writing further about this experience in our next edition of the Disciple. For now, I thought you might enjoy some of the images from the Eternal City.

We stayed at the monastery at San Gregorio Magno al Celio. This is the site of the first Holy See and where Gregory the Great commissioned St. Augustine to take the Gospel to the people of the British Isles. It was quite a moment to stand at the very cathedra where Augustine knelt to receive his charge. I can't help but wonder if the heavens cheered when male and female bishops from the U.S. came full circle to offer their own prayers of thanksgiving for the brave missionary spirit that drove our ancestor into such strange and dangerous territories.

We seemed surrounded by great works of art no matter where we went, including the arts of architecture, sculpture, frescos, food, and landscaping.



By Christine McTaggart

BRIDGING THE GAP

Holy Comforter's Bilingual Preschool

Imagine a world where children interacted with no bias toward race or cultural differences, talking to each other in not one, but two languages. Think about the possibilities if children had the chance to learn and grow together without the barriers that create cultural and socioeconomic divides, because they were taught instead to celebrate their differences and see the beauty in diversity.

Holy Comforter, Burlington, did those things in 2013 when it began the work of discerning whether opening a bilingual preschool would help to overcome some of the challenges local children were facing.

A GALILEAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Though they didn't know it at the time, the process actually started in 2011, when Holy Comforter entered into a partnership with Harvey R. Newlin Elementary School, a Title I school located only a mile or two from the church's campus and comprised largely of African-American and Latino students.

The Rev. Adam Shoemaker, rector of Holy Comforter, describes Newlin principal Larry Conte as a "short, Italian Bishop Curry," and the "best partner you could ever hope to have." A passionate advocate for his kids, Shoemaker said "to hear him talk about Newlin sounds a lot like Bishop Curry's Galilee vision." Conte wants to do what's going to work, he's willing to ask for help, and he responded when Holy Comforter raised their collective hands to offer assistance.

Holy Comforter's partnership with Newlin began as an Augustine Literacy Project site. The church sent tutors to the school, but, as was suspected from the start, partnering with a school like Newlin opened doors to new avenues of ministry as the relationship grew. Four years later, the partnership now includes a backpack program, a reading-buddies program, a Newlin summer camp, an annual welcome back brunch for Newlin faculty and staff, and an annual Newlin Day at Holy Comforter, where students and families join parishioners in worship.

In the midst of working with the school, leaders and volunteers came to realize there were not many teachers at Newlin - or in any of the local public schools - who spoke Spanish, even though the Spanish-speaking population is growing rapidly in Alamance county. It was also discovered that an increasing number of kindergartners were arriving at Newlin with linguistic deficiencies and not really prepared to start elementary school.

"In addition to the challenges faced by Spanish-



speaking families, we were also finding families [of other cultures] who were not accustomed to enrolling their kids in a preschool setting,” explained Shoemaker. “The result is not enough kids starting Newlin with the classroom experience that other kids traditionally have.”

THE SOLUTION SEARCH

Holy Comforter has a history of starting schools. They do it about once every 30 or 40 years. There is ample classroom space, and in 2013 the underutilized space sat vacant during the week. Infrastructures were in place, so that year Shoemaker convened a committee of parishioners and community partners to begin discussing the possibility of starting a bilingual, multicultural school that would be unlike any other in Alamance county. Other churches operated preschools, but most of them served a homogenous population, namely white, upper-middle class kids.

“In Burlington, you hear people talk about East Burlington and West Burlington,” said Shoemaker. “Being from West Burlington means being white and privileged. East Burlington means the opposite of that, and train tracks in many ways actually divide the two. Holy Comforter sits on the edge of both, and we’ve always seen ourselves as a bridge between East and West.”

The vision of a multicultural school meant being open to all, and so began two painstaking years of groundwork: lots of committee work, feasibility studies and relationship building with community partners took place before the decision was made to make the vision a reality.

Holy Comforter found support in several institutions. Centro La Comunidad came on board; as a branch of Catholic Charities, they are also a Latino advocacy organization. Alamance Partnership for Children provided vital information and counsel in the planning process. Elon University also lent considerable support. University president Leo Lambert has a track record of supporting efforts to widen access to education and as a result, Elon utilized its classes for projects that used the prospective preschool as the basis to do research for and provide recommendations to Holy Comforter.

The school’s logo was even designed by an Elon student. Its artwork features children and train tracks, representing the gap the school is endeavoring to bridge.

“I cannot overstate the collaborative and collective effort it took to make this school happen,” said Shoemaker. “Without everyone’s efforts and contributions, it may never have happened.”

VISION BECOMES REALITY

The doors opened in August 2015. Within a month, the school was two students shy of being 100 percent enrolled. Two classes are offered: the “younger” classroom of older 2- and 3-year olds meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays and has a waiting list for open spaces, and the “older” classroom

of older 3- and 4-year olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Among the 22 students can be found African-American, Caucasian, Latino, Indian, Arab and Sudanese children. All classes are taught in both Spanish and English by Eva Green-Baysmore, the school’s director and lead teacher, and Maribel Flores de Hoppert, the school’s trilingual assistant teacher.

“Because we’ve been so intentional about being diverse, multicultural and multilingual,” said Shoemaker, “the communities of color that are sometimes hidden in the background in Alamance county are hearing about the school and seeing us as a true place of welcome for their children.

“It is such a joy to see these kids together, speaking different languages, learning and growing together.”

WORKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Among the many pieces that came together to open the doors was a \$50,000 grant from Impact Alamance, a fund created as a result of the merger of Alamance Regional Medical Center and Cone Health. The fund exists primarily to assist organizations helping children in Alamance county.

The grant helped with the costs of renovating the classrooms and planned playground upgrades, but its most notable use has been the scholarship assistance Holy Comforter is committed to providing to families who may not have the means to afford even the minimal cost to attend the school. Additional funds have also been donated toward the scholarships, as the ultimate goal is to create an endowment that will support the scholarship fund long-term.

LESSONS LEARNED

When asked about the keys to the school’s success, Shoemaker attributed it to two things. “One thing that really helped us was staying flexible and adaptable. When you start a project like this, there is some risk involved in even trying. We started slow and set our sights small in terms of what we were hoping to accomplish, but we stayed flexible. We listened to what others had to say.

“And we built relationships; we utilized and leveraged every relationship we had in our community. We had a mix of parishioners and non-parishioners on our planning committee. Our current committee chair is not a parishioner – she’s a member of the local Catholic church. But she’s a Latina woman who has deep ties to this and had started a school at an Episcopal church before. Our approach is how we’re embodying the Galilee vision – we’re reaching out to folks and offering them a leadership seat at our table to help us discern what it is we need to do. That relationship building has been absolutely critical. We wouldn’t be where we are today without them.”

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Take part in #AdventWord. #AdventWord is a global-spanning digital Advent calendar produced by the Society of Saint John the Evangelist (SSJE). Learn more on page 9.

Practice your evangelism. Answer the question “What does the Good News mean to me?” and save the date for Go Speak: Sharing Our Faith taking place across the Diocese on May 19.

Make your mission vision a reality. Apply for a Mission Endowment Grant by November 30. Learn more on pages 22-23.