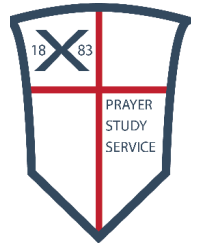


ST. ANDREW'S CROSS

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew



SEPTEMBER 2017

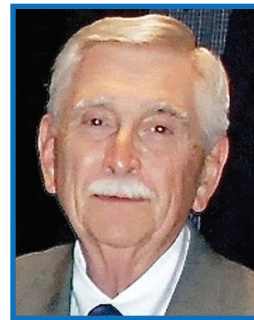
Harvey spares windows



Hurricane Harvey spared the iconic stained glass windows at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church in Houston. Windows that glorify the Daughters of the King and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew adorn the church thanks to the sons of Van and Rhett Parham and Alex and Gwen McIntosh, whose son Scott died in Iraq in 2008 on his second tour of duty with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division called Operation Freedom 5.

photos by Patrick Parham and Tom Welch

Regional workshops represent our future



President
Jeff Butcher

Brothers and our Ministry Partners,

Just before attending our National Conference in Louisville in July I was invited to the United Methodist Men gathering in Indianapolis. Their theme was Discipleship is a Contact Sport. My travels are telling me in some parts of the country this has real meaning.

We just completed our fifth Regional Workshop. Our kudos to the leaders from Long Island, Hartford, CT; Houston, TX; Springfield MO; and Rocklin, CA. Combined total attendance was 230 men, associates, clergy and newcomers. We still have Socorro, NM and Chicago, IL to close out 2017. The will make five down and 17 to go for 2018.

This is exciting because these sessions are designed to train, educate, recruit and motivate (TERM). One annual BStA meeting per year with 50 people does not meet these guidelines. Besides, 24 attendees are Executive Board members who are meeting monthly via ZOOM conference call.

Our major cost is travel. We are providing two member teams for each regional session. We are presenting a boot camp for officers and new members on two primary subjects: Chapter Growth and Discipleship. Chapter Growth includes heavy emphasis on building relationships with millennials.

Our dear friend and supporter The Rev. Canon Scott Gunn of Forward Movement wrote recently, "Sometimes in our churches, I think we forget our marching orders, the ones given to us by Jesus. It's easy to become a Preservation Society or a Museum of Maintenance or a Social Club of those we love. No one wants this, it just happens over decades. But our directions from Jesus



Brothers visit our new national office in Louisville, Kentucky in July during a National Council meeting. Regional workshops will be the wave of the future, President Jeff Butcher says.

couldn't be more clear:

"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. (Matthew 28:19-20)"

Canon Gunn's comments were quite moving to me. I truly believe our return to a local grassroots driven community will pay huge dividends in the future. We are on the march again disciplining men and youth. I salute each and every one of you who have devoted their time and talent to make these regional workshops (summits) so successful.

If you have been given an opportunity to attend but missed the train. We will be back again. If you have one of them coming up, please take advantage to expand your knowledge, meet other Brothers and become excited about being a disciple for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Carpe Diem

Contact your diocese to help when disaster strikes

As I write, I'm watching the destruction from Irma just a couple of weeks after watching the destruction from Harvey.

I was with our Brothers in Houston just one week before Harvey swamped the area. These two storms happened within days of the 12th anniversary of Katrina.

That one I can speak of in first person. There is nothing like watching a wall of water 12 to 20-feet high and 60 miles wide come inland for two solid miles before washing back out to sea. This is what we witnessed in my home state of Mississippi on Aug. 29, 2005.

In the aftermath of the storms, we in the Brotherhood have a unique opportunity to provide long-term assistance to impacted areas. Our own Jack Hanstein made multiple trips to Long Beach, Mississippi, to aid in reconstruction efforts following Katrina.

A few months after that storm I was working in the affected areas assisting clients. At my hotel late one afternoon I met a group of men from Birmingham, Alabama. Their church, an AME Church, had committed a team to the area for 52 consecutive weekends following the hurricane. They had four teams of eight that rotated

such that each team had a weekend and coordinated efforts with the other teams for streamlined ministry.

To our chapters in and near the impacted areas I encourage you to join with your diocese to aid in their disaster relief teams. We have an opportunity to help in so many ways.

I found myself this week praying for those men from that AME church in Birmingham. I know what they'll be doing yet again. Simply sending gift cards to the area dioceses with a note to use where needed with storm recovery is a great help. Working as a Brotherhood chapter we can answer a call through "prayer, study and service."

Pray for God to guide our thoughts. Study the situations to find where the most difference can be made.

Then implement the plan of service. May God bless you as you live to bless others.



**Interim
Executive
Director
Tom Welch**

Our Website:
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Brotherhood offers Discipleship Training

By Jim Goodson

FREEPORT, New York – Discipleship Training is one of five ministries the Brotherhood is developing or strengthening in 2017-2018. Others are Scouting, Restorative Justice, Veterans Services and Racial Reconciliation.

National Vice President Brother Tom Martin heads up the Discipleship Training effort; he outlined methods and objectives during a presentation to Province 2 Brothers May 10 at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration in Freeport, New York.

"We want to help men become better disciples and reaching out to the millennial generation," Brother Martin said.

"We realize the prevailing culture is not the culture we grew up in.

Many people today do not think God is important. Many millennials (18-34-year-olds) are suspicious of churches and other prevailing institutions. They feel isolated yet they are looking for meaningful relationships and are optimistic about the future.

"They are God's children, just like us, and represent our nation's future. We have a responsibility to introduce them to Jesus, just as that has been done for us."

Brotherhood President Jeffrey Butcher described characteristics of the millennial generation at April's national council meeting (Summer 2017 *St. Andrew's Cross*), which includes findings that the millennial generation is much less likely to attend church regularly and don't believe other generations care much about them.

Brother Martin challenged Province 2 Brothers to define discipleship. "What does a disciple do?" he asked.

"Actually, our Brotherhood disciplines of prayer, study and service lead us to discipleship. We pray and study to align our hearts and our head with God then put what we've learned and felt into His service. Praying and studying but ignoring service would be like a golfer studying the golf swing in a book but never going onto the course. Or learning how to play the piano without ever touching any keys.

"It would be pointless."

What disciples actually learn to do is to create an environment that allows others to get to know Jesus," Brother Martin said. "It's about building relationships, engaging others in conversation and being the kind of person that people will feel comfortable opening

their hearts to the Lord. It's possible to be an excellent disciple and never utter the word 'Jesus.' "

Discipleship is not attached to any sort of fear or reward system like hell or heaven, Brother Martin said. "I know some people have used techniques like that in the past, but it's been proven that those systems don't have a lasting impact," he added.

By following Jesus' example, the original disciples created an environment that fostered the world's largest religion.

"Jesus began with the notion that every person on the planet has value and something to offer," Brother Martin said. "The Bible is full of examples of this."

"Jesus always thought of others first and created an environment for others to get to know Him. And He always communicated with a message suitable for His audience,

such as in parables."

The Brotherhood training demonstrates how God uses us to make us better disciples.

"As disciples, we work along a continuum," Brother Martin said. "We move from Beliefs to Thoughts to Action to Results.

"If we start with Beliefs and continually deepen them, our discipleship will likely be successful. But if we splice out Beliefs and begin with Actions, we may not be as successful with our discipleship as we could be."

"How many times have you taken an Action without thinking and it didn't work out so great. And you end up thinking, Man that was dumb as a box of rocks, what was I thinking?"

"So if we are disciples, everything begins with our Beliefs. Just as our disciplines begin with Prayer. Without Prayer and Beliefs, our discipleship can be limited and not as effective as Jesus wants it to be."

"There are programs that can be obtained that provide elements of implementing a Discipleship program within a Church through the local Brotherhood Chapter - No Man Left Behind, Lead Like Jesus, Just A Cup of Coffee, for example - that we can arrange to be provided as needed," Brother Martin adds.

For more information about Brotherhood Discipleship Training events at upcoming regional conferences visit *The St. Andrew's Cross*, www.brothersandrew.net or contact Brother Tom Martin at TTMARTINHOME@Gmail.com.



National Vice President Tom Martin addresses Province 2 Brothers about Discipleship Training.

Chapter is nothing short of powerful

Where even visitors quickly become members

By Conrad Jones

ASHBURN, Virginia - The St. David's chapter continues to grow and welcome new members into the Brotherhood.

The chapter has nearly doubled its membership since January 2016 and the feeling of welcome inclusiveness and fellowship with new visitors keeps them coming back as new members.

In keeping with the Brotherhood's three disciplines of Prayer, Study and Service, the Ashburn, Virginia chapter has been busy these first eight months of 2017.

They were cooks for the St. David's Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper in February.

Then, on April 29, Brother Ken Courter organized a county-wide Health and Wellness event, which offered information, health screenings and a blood drive with more than 60 local agencies and professionals offering services to the community of Sterling, Virginia.

The Brothers helped with putting up tables and chairs, promotion, marketing, crowd control, traffic, found English and Spanish interpreters, ran the lost



Brothers Philip Martin, Ted Miller and 'Buz' Price welcome you to Saint David's Episcopal Church in Ashburn, Virginia just west of Washington, D.C.

and found department, were hosts and monitors for breakout sessions and cleaned up.

What a way to participate in the Brotherhood's National Day of Service.

Then, led by Brother Philip Martin, the Brothers participated as a group in the Leesburg, Va. gathering of the National Day of Prayer on May 4, when an estimated 100 people gathered in observance at the Loudoun County government offices.

The chapter proudly displayed its banner and wore their pins. The Brothers keep a centralized prayer list posted on their website and update it regularly for those in need of special prayers.

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The B4 event: Beef, Bird, Beverages and Brotherhood

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They recently posted an audio on the church's Facebook page of the combined voices of 28 Brothers reciting the Lord's Prayer during the opening of a meeting. The power of prayer inspires this fellowship of men.

They continued their busy activities schedule by giving carnations to all mothers at the two church services on Mother's Day and manned the grill for the big parish Pentecost Picnic in June. The rest of the year is filled with field trips, the annual Beef, Bird, Beverage and Brotherhood (B4) event for the parish men in August and the Seafood Feast of St. Andrew in November.

And last but certainly not least, the chapter is recently discovering that its regular bimonthly meetings seem to be lasting longer these days. This is due in most part to the meaningful and sometimes emotional testimonials of personal faith as we study the Gospel lesson for the following Sunday's reading.

What was usually planned for 30 minutes of reading and discussions has now expanded to 45 minutes on the agenda (and that's cutting it short!). Witnessing 25 or more men, of different ages and in most cases different faith backgrounds read the Gospel lesson for the following Sunday and then discuss its relevance to their daily lives is nothing short of powerful.



Busy St. David's Episcopal Church counts on its large Brotherhood chapter for numerous projects. The year is only half over and the church and chapter have offered a Pentecost Picnic, field trips, carnations for mothers, a Beef, Bird, Beverages and Brotherhood event and a health fair, among others. At the huge St. David's Episcopal Church Health Fair are, from left Ken Courter, Conrad Jones, Doug Braun, Barb Tulipane (Ken's wife), Bill Brucato, Ed Harmon and Aron Green. In the top photo Brother Conrad Jones offers a carnation. Below are cooking Brothers Philip Martin and Ed Cullen, who worked both the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper and the more challenging B4 event which stands for Beef, Bird, Beverages and Brotherhood.



Reconciliation requires action not talk

By Jim Goodson

FREEPORT, New York – Any progress made toward racial reconciliation will come from action, not from talking about it.

That's a big part of the message The Rev. Cecily Broderick brought to Brothers April 29 at the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration on Long Island.

"We have long moved past the talking stage," The Rev. Broderick said. "We are moving away from the era of political correctness. People today feel free to express themselves in ways that my grandparents would refer to as 'being nice.' They used words and slurs. You saw it in the presidential campaign. Not just about general issues, but what they said about each other. And each other's spouses.

"It was disgusting.

"So I have to tell you my attitude about questions like race, gender, economic equality is that it's not about talk; it's about actions. My focus on racial reconciliation is going to be on what our bishop said during diocesan convention, which is that racial reconciliation is at the forefront of our diocesan ideals.

"And I was shocked through my stockings down to my shoes to hear that the Brotherhood is going to be engaged in prison ministry.

"So what I want to do is look at the issues of today's -isms' – sexism, racism, classism and economic disadvantage where it has to do with criminal justice and incarcerations.

"But before I go there, I want you to think about who you are.

"When I think about who I am, there are two salient characteristics. One is that I am my parents' daughter. When I was ordained, I remember being asked by the head of the black caucus, 'What are you?'

"I didn't know what he was talking about, so he asked me again, 'Cecily, what are you? I mean if you are going to serve in the church are you going to be Hispanic



The Rev. Cecily Broderick talks about the impact of incarceration on church attendance at The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration in Freeport, New York.

**'Gentlemen, here is your mission field'
- The Rev. Cecily Broderick**

or black?'"

The Rev. Broderick told the Long Island Brothers she was initially stunned by the question.

"I told him he was asking me if I was going to be my mother's daughter or my father's daughter. I told him I was the daughter of parents who expected me to be in church every Sunday. It is something I have not been able to accomplish with my own children."

By being in church every Sunday, The Rev. Broderick came to understand the primary part of her identity.

"I am a child of God," she said. "Understanding I am

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Severe incarcerations present a mission field

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- In 1972, some 300,000 people were in prison. Today, 2.4 million people are in prison and another seven million are on probation or on parole;
- The United States has the highest rate of incarceration in the world;
- In urban communities like Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and Houston, one-in-three black men are in prison, on probation or on parole;
- 34 percent of black people in Alabama have lost the right-to-vote;
- One-in-nine people killed on death row have later been found to have been innocent;
- One-in-17 white men have a likelihood of being sent to prison in the U.S.;
- One-in-three black men have a likelihood of being sent to prison in the U.S.;
- One-in-101 white women have a likelihood of being sent to prison in the U.S.;
- One-in-18 black women have a likelihood of being sent to prison in the U.S.;
- In 1925 about 200,000 people were incarcerated. In 2015 that number had climbed to 105 million;
- The number of parents in prison has increased 80 percent from 1991 to 2007.

that I could be called the N-word and not be crushed. So I think the way to harmony in our communities regarding racial issues has to do with activism more than by talking."

The Rev. Broderick didn't worry about visiting congregations that were not used to women priests because she didn't think of herself as anything but a child of God "serving in love," she said.

"So if you are going to become involved in racial reconciliation, if you are going to become a group, a gang, a posse, a Brotherhood that is going to serve the incarcerated, particularly the children of the incarcerated, you are going to have to know who you are.

"You are going to have to know who you are."

She then played a TEDTalk video that offered some disturbing statistics (chart at left).

"Statistics like this strike fear in the hearts of black people in the United States," TEDTalk speaker Byron Stevenson said in the video played to Long Island Brothers. "Imagine if one in nine airplanes crashed. We wouldn't let them take off."

The Rev Broderick, looking at these and other harrowing statistics, turned toward the Long Island Brothers after the TEDTalk video had finished.

"Gentlemen, here is your mission field," she said. "You can call it prison ministry, racial reconciliation or just reconciliation. We are not fully human

unless we pay attention to suffering, poverty, unfairness and injustice.

"Am I any less or more than the mother who writes a hot check so she will have a home for her children?"

She then handed out a list of ministry opportunities for reconciliation and praised the Brotherhood for its newest ministry. "I know you men are committed to doing the right thing," she said. "But will you do the right thing when it's hard?"



We need YOU to update your chapter officer information!

Visit www.brothersandrew.net

Click on "Contact Us" then

"Update Chapter Officer Information"

Small, coastal churches need help in Texas

By Jim Goodson

ROCKPORT, Texas – Brothers wishing to help churches and their parishioners recover from the devastation from Hurricane Harvey can make a big difference by helping the smaller coastal communities along the Gulf of Mexico.

“There’s a lot of money flowing into Houston from all over the world, but the smaller towns along the coast don’t have access to these resources,” Houston Brother David Hobbs says. “Here in Houston we have NFL stars raising money and lots of corporations willing to help out. But Rockport, where the hurricane first made landfall, has nothing like that.

“Our church here in Tomball (a Houston suburb) has received about \$100,000 worth of gift cards and truck loads of supplies, including five trucks from New York – more than we need or can store, so we have been acting as a sorting station to help people and other nearby churches. Brother Joe Sturdevant is in charge of this sorting through the supplies here at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd and sending them where they can do the most good.”

Hurricane Harvey made landfall as a Category 4 hurricane in Rockport on Friday, Aug. 25. Corpus Christi and the Coastal Bend area were all in its path. As Harvey continued to move northeast and devastate the Houston area with substantial flooding, its destruction along the coast became clear as church members and clergy began to assess the conditions of their church buildings.

There was a lot of teamwork throughout the Houston area, Brother Hobbs said. Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Dickinson offered office space to the United Way, whose own offices were flooded, Brother Hobbs says.



Parishioners have already begun repairing St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Rockport, Texas.

Help needed most in coastal cities, towns

All of the churches along the Texas Gulf Coast are still standing but there is considerable damage, which is to be expected after a direct hit from such a large storm. Much of the damage includes fallen and broken trees and limbs, as well as large amounts of debris distributed by the 100-plus mph winds and the storm surges.

Some of the churches in the diocese sustained roof damage and broken windows, and many of the coastal communities are without power and will be

for some time. Rockport, Port Aransas, Aransas Pass and Refugio took the hardest hits from Harvey, and while the church buildings are mostly okay, the communities are dealing with devastating losses of property. It's estimated that four of every five structures in Rockport were destroyed.

The rectory, where the Rev. James Derkits and his family live in Port Aransas, was destroyed. Derkits is the rector of Trinity-by-the-Sea in Port Aransas. While the family and helpers sort through personal items and work through the massive cleanup effort, the church has its doors open as a respite center for weary workers, residents, and volunteers.

Many of the needs in the coastal community are still being assessed and, at this time, only residents are getting

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Help coastal churches

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into the City of Rockport. The Rev. Sean Maloney, rector of St. Bartholomew's, Corpus Christi, is serving as a "needs organizer" for the Southern Convocation.

The Rev. Nancy Springer, assistant rector of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Harlingen, is the chair of the diocesan Commission on Disaster Response. All volunteer efforts need to be organized through Rev. Springer, as she is matching interested teams with the needs across the Diocese of West Texas. Rev. Springer can be reached at 210-382-1195 or nspringer@staec.org.

Wharton, Texas is southwest of Houston. Nearby is the tiny village of Glen Flora, where Episcopal Diocese of Texas staffers found five families trying to live amidst almost totally destroyed trailer homes. The diocese spent about \$100,000 to buy new trailer homes for them to live in.

The churches across the diocese are doing what they are supposed to be doing; they are responding and issuing calls to action by making numerous hygiene kits and gathering and organizing volunteer efforts. The response has been incredible.

"I am exhausted, but amazed by the people, resources, and love that keep pouring in," The Rev. Derkits said.



Extensive damage to Camp Wingmann near Avon Park, Florida was the subject of a workday Sept. 16 which included repairs to two damaged buildings and the removal of heavy tree trunks and branches.

Irma damages camp

By Jim Goodson and Jeff Butcher

AVON PARK, Florida - Most of the damage from Hurricane Irma as it brushed up the west side of Florida seems to have occurred at Camp Wingmann and its mostly wooden structures.

Two buildings were severely damaged and a number of the camp's large oak trees were up-rooted.

Camp work days are being scheduled by The Rev. Ed Bartle; the first was held Sept. 16 despite a lack of electricity and running water at the camp.

In other damage from Irma, only minor damage was reported by the three Episcopal churches in Gainesville: Holy Trinity, St. Andrew's and the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation. All were, for a time, without electricity.

There was some minor flooding at St. James' Episcopal Church in Port Charlotte.

Perhaps the most damage oc-

Keep all of those affected by Hurricane Harvey in your prayers.

To help churches along the Texas Gulf Coast visit: www.dwtx.org/ disaster-response for updates and volunteer opportunities.

To help churches in Houston visit: www.epicenter.org.

To make a donation to Camp Wingmann please send support to 3404 Wingmann Rd., Avon Park, Florida 33825.

curred in the Florida Keys, whose three churches were likely badly damaged. Access to the Keys was restricted to Sept. 19 and the extent of the damage was unknown at presstime.

In South Carolina, Brother Larry Biddle reports some storm surge from North Myrtle Beach to the barrier islands in Beaufort as well as some flooding in Charleston.



Representatives from many of the 15 Episcopal Diocese of Dallas Brotherhood of St. Andrew's chapters gather at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Garland to study the Gospel of Matthew and to hear a report about the national council meeting

photo by Jim

Goodson

Dallas planning on growth

GARLAND, Texas – Dallas area Brothers participated in a lesson based upon Matthew 7: 13-14 and 24-27 to lead off a quarterly meeting Saturday, Sept. 12 at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. Brothers also heard a report from Assembly President Mike Modell after his return from a recent national council meeting in Louisville.

They also heard about plans for two new proposed chapters.

The new chapters are from the Church of Our Savior and St. Matthias' Episcopal Church in Athens.

"Several of the chapters expressed an interest in learning how we (Holy Trinity) do our Bible studies," Dallas Assembly President Mike Modell said. "So most of our chapter showed up and we undertook a lesson for them, just as we do at every meeting."

After going through the order of worship straight from the Brotherhood Handbook, Brothers read Matthew 7: 13-14: "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and

there are few who find it."

Some were reminded that such Biblical quotations from Jesus led to the work ethic of the Puritans that first colonized America and their work ethic that became one of the cornerstones of life in the United States.

"But remember we are talking about the kind of work that leads to eternal life," Holy Trinity The Rev. J.D. Brown said. "I think Jesus is telling us to pay attention and not miss the narrow gate. It's more a case of preparation. It's the difference between building a house in Dallas or building a house in a flood plain."

On this particular Saturday, the news on TV was about the fate of immigrants who came to the U.S. illegally as children – many barely into their teen-age years. The talk turned toward what the proper Christian response should be to these young people often called "Dreamers."

"There's just no easy answer to that complicated question," Fr. Brown said. "Jesus told us the road

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Dallas Assembly hears report from national

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through the narrow gate would be hard – and this issue is no different.”

Holy Trinity parishioner Bob Sharp said that for those willing to put in the work and trust in God, this dilemma could be worked out. “Too often we don’t put God first and rush toward simple, expedient solutions. But by going back to God, it seems obvious what our response should be.”

The same principle applies to couples who come to him for marriage counseling, Fr. Brown said. “When I tell them our pre-marriage course lasts four-to-six months, they often get peeved. So I ask them, ‘How long do you want to be married?’ ”

Brother Sharp said he developed a great appreciation for art of Pablo Picasso. “Before I took a course on modern art, I thought of Picasso’s paintings as something a three-year-old could do. But when I learned about all that had gone on before in the art world, I realized what he had accomplished by changing the very idea of what a painting is all about.”

A retired Brother who took a job as a greeter at a local grocery store said he found that the more he worked at truly greeting the customers, the more friends he made and the more enjoyable his part-time job became.

National Council report

Brother Modell’s report on the Brotherhood’s National Council meeting in Louisville was welcome news to the Dallas area Brothers, who were pleased to learn that the organization’s Constitution and Bylaws will be amended to expand the pool of votes at future National Council meetings.

Each chapter will have one vote, as will each assembly and each province.

“Some type of electronic voting method will have to be developed so that chapters not present will be able to vote in real time, President Modell reported, adding that the just-completed meeting could be observed on your computer.

The assembly president also described the five ministries the national Brotherhood is concentrating on: Scouting, Restorative Justice, Discipleship Training, Veterans Services and Racial Reconciliation.

THE BROTHERHOOD TODAY

BROTHERS WHO HAVE DIED

Stephen D. Bishop

Chapter director Stephen D Bishop, 71, died on July 19, 2017 after a brief bout with cancer.

As an active member of our church family, Steve will be sorely missed. In addition to his Brotherhood responsibilities, Steve was a Path to Shine volunteer teacher, a Lay Eucharistic Minister, a co-captain of our church’s team of MLK Weekend home repair volunteers and a volunteer at a local homeless shelter.

He was a veteran of the United States Navy, active member of his neighborhood watch group and a consummate grill-master!

Most importantly, he was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother and uncle.

Godspeed, Steve!
Your Brothers in Christ
Holy Trinity Parish
Decatur, Georgia

Ed Reid

Plantation, FL

Larry Keaton

Garland, TX

Robert Donald, Jr.

Pascagoula, MS

Joel Walker

Brother Joel Walker was a longtime member of the former Church of the Resurrection, now the Episcopal Church of Grace and Resurrection of East Elmhurst, New York. He was one of the founding members of the Brotherhood chapter at Resurrection and remained an active member until his recent passing..

Bill Vincent

Tariffville, CT

Practical evangelism

When he was elected, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry said he wanted to be known as a CEO, a Chief Evangelism Officer. His election was part of a wider surge of interest in the knowledge and practice of evangelism in our Church.

At the same General Convention in 2015, in an almost unprecedented move, the church-wide budget was amended from the floor to add \$2.8 million for evangelism initiatives.

Evangelism matters a great deal. And if you want to tell people about Jesus, you'll want to learn more about Jesus – the “stuff” of sharing the Good News.

A new day for evangelism

Forward Movement and the Presiding Bishop's Office recently co-sponsored an Evangelism Matters conference that was oversold, with a waiting list. That speaks volumes. If you had told me several years ago that the Episcopal Church would host a conference on telling people about Jesus and that there would be a waiting list, I'd have thought you were delusional. But here we are. It is a new age.

Practical evangelism

The core theme of the conference, repeated again and again, is that sharing Good News is a good thing – because it leads to transformation.

We learned about cardboard testimonies. You write before and after messages on the two sides of a cardboard sign. Flipping the sign reveals the effect of God's transforming love. You can see an example of what this looks like on [YouTube](#). Part of the power of an exercise like this – which could work in any vestry or congregation – is that it empowers us all; it helps us realize that all we need is a simple, short phrase or two to reveal the transforming love of Jesus Christ at work in our lives.

The workshop sessions were filled with practical ways to practice effective evangelism. There was a presentation on how to practice “elevator evangelism.” Imagine you're in an elevator and you have just a few seconds with someone to share your story of transformation. Through a bit of preparation and some practice, we can all be ready to bear witness to what God is doing in our lives. We don't need to go to seminary or memorize the Bible; we just need to stand ready with 30 seconds or so of our own story.

Welcome Connect is an excellent free program created to help congregations be more welcoming to seekers and to help newcomers make connections with church ministries.

There were plenty of other workshops for those starting

new churches, for incorporating new members into the life of a church community – in person and online. You can see the array of workshops and download handouts on the Evangelism Matters website.

While practical tips were a clear part of the conference, perhaps more remarkable was the shared sense that evangelism is something that we Episcopalians can and must do – and that we are capable of doing it. We don't need to live in fear, thinking that evangelism is impossible.

Rather, we can live in hope that God's spirit abides in us and that we have already been equipped to proclaim the Good News of what God is doing in our own lives and in the world.



**The Rev.
Scott Gunn**

The Rev. Scott Gunn is executive director of Forward Movement, whose mission is to inspire disciples and empower evangelists. He supports the Brotherhood and has often consulted with our leadership.

Forward Movement offers a Bible study guide that can be of tremendous help for chapters (see below).

FREE DOWNLOADABLE COURSE

Many of us are intimidated by the Bible - it feels too distant, too difficult to understand and too long. Exploring the Bible is a 26 session, all ages curriculum that uncovers the vast, sweeping story of God's extraordinary love for ordinary people in a clear and easy-to-follow format.

This free resource is designed for adult formation and easily modified for youth groups as well. Free download online at ForwardMovement.org/ExploringTheBible.

