



OUR JOURNEY together

MARCH / APRIL 2020

IN THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF THE RIO GRANDE

Photo by Bruce McKeown

BISHOP'S MESSAGE

We are here to learn God's DEEP & COMPLETE LOVE for each and every one of us!

When Jesus was asked, "What's the greatest commandment", what's the most important thing he said: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul and with all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

This is what the church is all about! Helping people fall in love with God with all that they are! All our heart. All our mind. All our soul. All our strength. And we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. When you hear those words does it feel like that is what your Episcopal Church is doing? Is your church helping you love God with your whole heart? Is your congregation showing you the love God has for you every time you step in the door or go to a parish event or hang out with parishioners?

I hope your answer is:

"Yes, Bishop! My Episcopal Church right here in the Diocese of the Rio Grande is a place which is a constant source of encouragement to love God! Our congregation is teaching me to love God by my daily prayer and time spent with God. Whenever we gather, people are always telling stories about their love of God and how that love is making their lives worth living. The thing is, somehow in my congregation there is this deep sense that God loves each and every one of us so completely and so passionately that we're not afraid of anything the world might throw at us. I think we're able to love God with all our hearts because we are so deeply and constantly aware of how deeply God is loving us every single day. In our church we are constantly sharing ideas about how we can practice the love of God, how we can more and more come to understand God's love for us as individual people, and how we can support each other, how we can show God's love for each other. The examples are just too many to count!

"But it's not an emotional thing, it's not gooey and sentimental. My church has countless opportunities to love God with my whole mind. The teaching here is excellent and every single person in my church is always learning about holy scripture and theology in prayer. About the history of the church and the Saints and the people who have gone before us. We're learning about our world because God made the world. The fact is that, in this church, we understand our purpose to be a community of learners studying God's love for us. We are all hungry to learn more about God and God's love. And that is not all. Because we're all learners we're all teachers too.

Every person in our congregation, old and young, of every income level, is expected to teach as well as learn. And we're amazed at what God has given us right here in this congregation. We all witness about what God is doing in our lives, and we learn from each other. We teach holiness to each other. By word and example, just like it says in the baptismal covenant!

"And it's not all in our heads. In my church there's this deep soul. Everyone is loving God from the deepest parts of ourselves. So we share our deepest fears and hopes. We talk about our kids and our grandkids and the things that keep us up at night. We talk about how loving God deeply from the depths of our soul is what is giving us the strength to face the troubles in our lives. We talk all the time about how loving God so deeply is giving us the courage to forgive those who have hurt us in our lives. And it's not a cheap kind of forgiveness. It's not a forgive and forget kind of forgiveness. But rather we are finding healing for our wounded souls as we share God's love in our church.

"We disagree a lot, it's not like we're all of the same mind about anything. But we love God so much that we know God loves every one of us and so, especially when we disagree about really important stuff like politics or the church budget, our conversations are strangely filled with this deep sense of love and respect for one another. And we find God even when we are in conflict and disagreement, because God's love is so real and deep in our souls.

"But you know, Bishop, it's not easy, loving God like this. We have to work at it. We are not perfect, but we realize that loving God with all our strength is like a muscle that needs exercise. So we work on loving God even when we don't feel it. Even when it's boring we support and encourage each other to keep working at loving God. We are like those trainers at the gym for each other. We say, 'Hey, you can do this! Give it one more try. Love God, keep praying for another day. Keep coming to Bible study. Keep learning, keep sharing, keep teaching, because God's love is real and if you can't see it right now then lean on me this week because I might need to lean on you next week.' And the more we practice loving God with all our strength the stronger our love for God and each other gets!

"We can even love people who aren't that easy to love in our church. We don't let them bully or act a fool or harm anyone, but we are strong enough in our love of God that we can love, well, just about anybody! And you feel that when you walk in here. No matter where you're from, no matter

what you've done, no matter what you've been through, this is a church where we know that God loves you even if you're not so sure about that. And we've worked so hard at loving God and loving each other, this is a place strong in love.

"And because we're so in love with God in our church, we love our neighbors too. All of them. It's the strangest thing! It's like we're not even trying. Our love for God and the love God is showing us here in this little church just kind of splashes out all over the neighborhood! All over the town, all over the city. Each person here, we are so full of love that we are doing all kinds of stuff in the community because we all have different neighbors and it's as if God is whispering to each one of us to care for different parts of our community.

"It's not like the old days when we had an outreach committee that did a project or two every year on behalf of the church. We're all doing stuff, loving stuff, and we're sharing what we're doing together and we're asking each other for help. Every week at coffee hour we have time for people to share what they are doing to love their neighbors and to ask the rest of us to help. And somebody always pitches in and somehow there's always enough money to do what needs to be done. And it's not political at all. I mean I know we're different but it's like that doesn't matter because God is loving us all so much that we kind of figured why not love each other too?"

Is that the way your church feels? Is that the way your vestry meetings and annual parish meetings make you feel? Is that the way Diocesan meetings and Diocesan Convention feel to you? Because if the purpose of our being church is to know God's love so deeply that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves, then that is the spirit that should permeate every single thing we do in this Diocese - from our conversations about budget to our conversations about scripture, we should feel that powerful contagious love of God.

If that is your experience here in the Diocese please let me know! There are a lot of wonderful things happening in this Diocese and I want to make sure we share those with everybody. We can inspire one another. We can encourage one another and we can ask each other for help doing what God is calling us to do.



And if that is not your experience then hear this: Your Diocesan leadership, your Standing Committee, your Diocesan Council, your Diocesan staff, and I myself personally as your Bishop are committed to helping each congregation and individual in the Diocese of the Rio Grande to be places where God's love is so real, so contagious, so honest and so obvious that we are all learning to love God with all we are, and from that love we are loving our neighbors in ways we cannot yet imagine.

In the places where that's already happening we want to celebrate it and share it! And the places in the Diocese where that's not happening, we need to teach and learn from each other.

Don't get me wrong, we are a strong Diocese already and we are doing wonderful things throughout Far West Texas and the state of New Mexico. But sometimes we all need reminding what it's all about. Sometimes we can all feel burned out and we need encouragement. So that'll be my job from now on, to remind us all about the point of being church in the first place. What's the reason for our being a Diocese? Why has God put us here? Why do we have these congregations scattered about?

We are here to learn God's deep and complete love for each and every one of us. We are here to devote all we've got into helping people love God with all their hearts and all their minds and all their souls and all their strength. And from that love to love their neighbors as themselves.

We can't help others fall in love with God if we are not madly and deeply in love with God ourselves. So that is our work, my friends, to help each other fall in love with God and from God's love for us to learn to love our neighbors as ourselves.

I cannot tell you what a joy it is to serve you in this Diocese and I can't wait to see what God has in store for us in the years ahead!

In God's deep and abiding love,
+ Michael

SAVE THE DATE:

Chrism Mass, Noon Tuesday, April 7
Albuquerque or El Paso

All Laity are welcome to attend and share with the Clergy in the sacred ritual that concludes with the blessing of the Holy Oils for healing and anointing.

There will be two opportunities to attend:

St. Alban's Episcopal Church
1810 Elm Street, El Paso

Cathedral Church of St. John, 318 Silver Avenue, Albuquerque.

Diocesan Clergy are asked to please plan to attend one of these services.



Bishop and Archdeacon Patty Soukup prepare the oils for blessing

Bishop Hunn's Spring Schedule

Palm Sunday - Church of the Holy Faith, Santa Fe (Ecumenical service)

Holy Tuesday - St. Alban's (tentative)

Easter - Cathedral of St. John

May 3 - St. Mark's, Albuquerque

May 17 - St. Michael and All Angels, Albuquerque

May 31 - St. Philip's, Rio Communities/Belen

June 14 - Church of the Holy Faith, Santa Fe

June 28 - Christ Church, Hillsboro

June 28 - St. Paul's, Truth or Consequences

Bishop Hunn takes a selfie with Fr. Michael Drinkwater at the Celebration of New Ministry at St. John's, Alamogordo February 22.





DIOCESAN

Canon Lee Curtis leads discussion

LEADERSHIP RETREAT: Sharing how God's love is manifest in our lives

For the first time any of us could remember, the leadership of the Diocese of the Rio Grande met for a two-day retreat at Bishop's Ridge in January. Members of the Standing Committee, Diocesan Council, diocesan staff and the Bishop met together for a time of prayer and fellowship and strategic planning for the future. We spent time together sharing how God's love is manifest in our lives, telling each other the stories of how we fell in love with God for the first time or how our awareness of God's love for us was made real in our lives after we had drifted away from God and the church.

The leadership of the Diocese are all in agreement that the purpose of having a diocese is to support the congregations as they reach out to individuals and families to help everyone know God's love in their lives. We spent time talking about how we could help our congregations help people love God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all their strength. We imagine what it would look like if that exciting and fulfilling love of God was the defining characteristic of everything we do. We began to imagine ways of measuring the effectiveness of our ministries not by the numbers of people who attend but by the qualities of those ministries and how well they help people love God and their neighbor. It is one thing to do outreach ministry, it's another thing to be so in love with God that we reach out with the love of God to the neighbor. We talked a lot about helping the people of the diocese of the Rio Grande see the defining characteristic of everything we do. We began to imagine ways of measuring the effectiveness of our ministries not by the numbers of people who attend but by the qualities of those ministries and how well they help people love God and their neighbor. We talked a lot about helping the people of the diocese deepen their spiritual lives and deepen their loving relationship with God.

There was so much energy and excitement in the room as we started talking about God's love for us that we wanted to share it with the whole Diocese. So this spring we will be coming around the Diocese again and yes, we will talk about the budget, but before we do that we will have a time for us to each to talk about

our relationship of love with God, how it started, what sustains it, and how God's love is changing our lives.

We can't wait to hear your stories and to plan together how we can make loving God with all we've got and loving our neighbor can be our defining work!



Bishop Hunn celebrates Eucharist

Grant to SPREAD GOOD NEWS In Big Bend

By the Rev. Michael Wallens

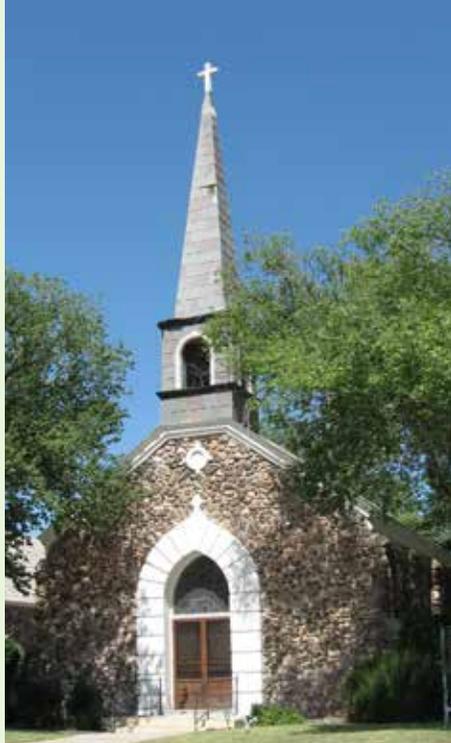
We are embarking upon a widespread endeavor to proclaim and share Christ's love throughout Far West Texas. We will focus largely on the Latino population in all areas, as the Latino population is a majority group throughout our greater region that is vastly underrepresented within the Episcopal Church.

A Curate, based at St. Paul's in Marfa, Texas, will be arriving to assist with the five churches and communities within our full area. He will be based at St. Paul's and travel weekly to the other four communities within the region.

The first year will include extensive outreach training and equipping volunteers in all five towns with comprehensive skills and materials to move forward in an Evangelical direction.

We will also conduct two area-wide revivals to deepen our area's relationship with Christ. Through proclaiming and sharing Christ's love throughout all of Far West Texas we will be welcoming everyone to join us in embracing a new relationship with Christ.

By empowering all Christians to strengthen their relationship with Christ we hope to strengthen our own church's impact within our community and region. Through this ministry we are eager to achieve an overall deepening of our own relationship with God in Christ.



LOOKING TOWARD HILLSBORO St. Michael's and All Angels and Christ Church Receive Evangelism Grant

By the Rev. Joseph H. Britton

Two congregations of the Diocese, one northern and urban, one southern and rural, have received a joint grant for \$5,000 from The Episcopal Church to sponsor retreats for newcomers to the faith. St. Michael and All Angels Church of Albuquerque will partner with Christ Church of Hillsboro to offer four retreats in 2020, on fifth Sundays of the month, taking advantage of the desert landscape of southern New Mexico to draw participants deeper into the mystery of God, using the tradition of desert spirituality and Jesus' own pattern of retreat to "a solitary place" (éremos topos, Mark 1:35) as a starting point for spiritual discovery.

St. Michael's is a large, spiritually progressive parish in an urban center in the northern part of the state with an already active newcomers' ministry. Through its rector, Joseph Britton, it has connections to the town of Hillsboro, a rural community in the southern part of the state, where he owns an ancestral home. Hillsboro has a small Episcopal community, Christ Church, served by Woody Peabody, a retired priest who journeys 110 miles to hold services twice each month. This program will not only develop an innovative program of evangelism built around these two communities, but also strengthen the diocese by bridging the north/south, urban/rural separateness that divides it, creating a prototype for collaborative ministry that could

then be adopted by other congregations.

Ten or twelve inquirers from St. Michael's will spend a weekend on retreat in Hillsboro, led by its pastor and lay Discernment Guild. The participants will stay as guests of the parish at the Black Range Lodge in the nearby village of Kingston, and then participate in formational conversations and fellowship at the pastor's home in Hillsboro, amplified by solitary walks in the surrounding desert. Christ Church will host Sunday worship in the historic Union Church (1890), adding a new missional vitality to its life as a community that currently numbers about a dozen active members.

Programming will be built around marking the hours of the day with liturgies to "greet the dawn" and "welcome the night," framing discussions based both in the classical Christian literature of the desert, and also more contemporary works. The goal is to let the landscape itself be the teacher, finding images and metaphors in the desert for the spiritual life in Christ.

What the two congregations find most exciting about this vision is that it benefits all involved: inquirers at St. Michael's, the people of Christ Church, and the diocese. It practices evangelism by creating an innovative platform for deepening the spiritual life of newcomers to the faith, while building a fruitful partnership across the diocese's geographic divides as a model for future collaborations.

Evangelism Grants Fund **SIXTEEN PROJECTS**

At its February 2020 meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church ratified awards of more than \$66,000 in Evangelism Grant funding to sixteen Episcopal communities. The committee received 74 applications from across the church and requests far exceeded the funding allocated in the budget.

The Episcopal Evangelism Grants program, designed to fund local and regional evangelism efforts, began in 2017 as a result of the 2015 General Convention's increased investment in evangelism galvanized by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. Grants provide up to \$2,000 for an individual congregation and up to \$8,000 for multi-church, diocesan and regional collaborations. Among the sixteen Evangelism Grants were

- A Solitary Place, Episcopal Diocese of Rio Grande: \$5,000.
- Big Bend Episcopal Mission, Episcopal Diocese of Rio Grande: \$8,000.



Sweet Friendships Refresh The Soul And Awaken Our Hearts With Joy... Proverbs 27:9

By Madeleine Fazenbaker, St. James, Clovis, NM

You may remember that I am homeschooled. I chose this for myself seven years ago. I knew that my parents had a lot on their plates, and living with family responsibilities that were required in Alamogordo and Clovis, 250 miles apart. I also knew that they had little control over the distance, travel, timing and frequency to respond to those responsibilities. They did everything they could to keep our family well and cared for. It was that commitment that put us in the position we were in, and would be what led me to make the decision I made. The only way my parents could meet the needs of my grandparents was to homeschool me. We all knew that I was giving up lots of milestone events that kids who attend school enjoy. Things that other kids take for granted or completely blow off as unimportant are important to me. Even just making and maintaining friendships has been hard. Living part-time in two towns, I have not had the same life experiences that other kids my age had. There are trade-offs in any decision you make. Events that I missed in high school were off-set by some really good experiences I had being homeschooled. I knew I was blessed by the things I was doing, but I was also saddened by the things I was missing.

The one constant thing I had was a reliable friend, Bethany West. I have known Bethany since before kindergarten. We did not become good friends until about the time my life changed seven years ago. We did not have a youth group at my own church, so I joined the one at Bethany's church. Bethany welcomed me and from then on, no matter what happened, she stuck by me. Two years ago, when we were in Clovis for several months straight, before, during and after my grandfather's death, I did not know that Bethany had a plan for me. The timing didn't work out for us to return to Alamogordo that spring, so Bethany's plan was put on hold for an entire year, when she had her last chance to fulfill it. Bethany is tenacious! She does not accept defeat. I am so thankful for that!

Bethany was a senior last year, and was bound and determined to carry out her plan to give me an "All American Normal Teenage Experience!" She fulfilled a dream I have had since I was 6 or 7 years old, when my sister was in high school. Bethany showed up on my front porch one afternoon, with a giant bouquet of lollipops. Her goofy attempt at a

“

Are you looking at the person who is so often overlooked?
The opportunities to serve the Lord are sometimes placed in our path every day.



"prom-posal" was full of laughter and tears. And she told me I was going to prom with her and her friends, and to leave it all to her, she had the entire thing arranged. She said to get a dress and she would take care of the rest. Then she told me she wanted to do this the year before, but we were not home from Clovis then, and the suspense had been killing her for a year. She said she was really thankful we were home at that time, so she would get another shot at playing Fairy Godmother. It wasn't just me who was missing life as a teenager while my family was going through all this, Bethany was missing being with me too. I didn't see that at first. I didn't realize my family issues had an effect on her also. Now I realize what a true friend I have.

Bethany doesn't do anything half way. My All American Teenage Experience started with a "photo shoot" with her friends on "Steep Hill Road" just outside the Alamogordo city limits. There I met Bethany's friends. One girl did not want to go to the dance for personal reasons, but Bethany, the Fairy Godmother, doesn't leave anyone out of the program! She invited her to have dinner with us prior to the dance, and we had a great time. I truly believe I would not have had as much fun, if I had gone to high school and had the opportunity available to me as an AHS student.

Like every story I've ever heard of an Alamogordo prom, it was crowded, hot and sweaty! But it was the best night of my life! I got to dance. I saw our neighbor, Officer Lacoca, who was on duty with the police department at the dance. My friends and I watched the drama of high school play out on the dance floor, like we were watching bad actors in a made-for-TV movie, and laughed. I got to go to the midnight movie, then breakfast, then home. I met new friends and felt like Cinderella at the ball, but with a later curfew. It beat all my expectations, and was better than I could have ever imagined. And Bethany and I finally got to share a milestone together. It was fun being a regular All American teenage kid for one night. I can't thank Bethany enough. She gave me the greatest present I could have imagined. Bethany is a blessing to me. She has a servant's heart. Her goal in life is to become a children's minister. She is so different from any other teenager I know. She and I are a lot alike. I keep looking for things to repay the great kindness. I haven't come up with anything yet. But one day, when Bethany needs something or someone to help her with a problem, I'll be there.

I hope I get to be someone's Fairy Godmother one day. I think the key to that is to look up from your phone and look around you. Are you looking at the person who is so often overlooked? The opportunities to serve the Lord are sometimes placed in our path every day. The question is: do we take the time to pay enough attention to see them? And like Bethany, are we tenacious enough to see them through? I was really glad God saw fit to have us home at that time last spring. Otherwise Bethany would have been beside herself with the failure of her plan for the second time, and I would have been depressed again about missing another event in life. God was good to both of us that night. He delivered us home, safe and sound, and with great memories of a fun time for a couple of average American teenagers.

SNOW SLAM 2020

Valentine's,
Dragons,
Snow, &
Youth

by Paula Mote, Youth and Young Adult Missioner

Snow Slam 2020 in Ruidoso started on Friday, February 14, with 28 youth, four young adult chaperones, and eight adult volunteers. Adding another Valentine's Day to my list of favorite Valentine's days. All of the participants arrived safely and enjoyed the traditional Snow Slam opening meal of pizza! The opening worship incorporated favorite songs Lean on Me, Pharaoh, Pharaoh, and Sanctuary with 2 Timothy 1:7 "The Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline." The bible verse was used to encourage everyone to embrace the dragons in our lives that come in the form of fear of the unknown, personal insecurities, and things that we do not have control over, by turning to Jesus.

After a night of sleep on the Church of the Holy Mount floor and breakfast from McDonald's, everyone loaded into the vans to go to Ruidoso Winter Park for some snow tubing. We could not have asked for a more beautiful day. Sun was out, wind was down, and a Girl Scout was selling cookies. After tubing we returned to the church for lunch and Valentine gift bags and chocolate. The afternoon was filled with a bit of free time and being introduced to The Way Of Love by listening to a bible verse or the definition of a practice and then moving to a part of the room where that practice word fit best and discussing why that was the choice. It became a game of trying to make the prompt fit into "Rest" so that people could sit in a chair. For dinner we were blessed to have been served a home-cooked, that is church-cooked meal by Betsy, a member of the church and "cook extraordinaire". After dinner we played some Minute to Win It games and shared in fellowship.

Sunday morning brought packing and pancakes! Pancakes were provided by the men's group and were some of the best I have had at church. The choir director invited any who were interested in singing with the choir to come rehearse and sing at the service. We had two youth and one adult volunteer participate. Vans were loaded and after the service, we all returned to our various deaneries of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.



Playing Minute to Win It games



Snacking after tubing



Tubing was a hit



Taking to the tubes

Women's Ministry ENRICHES & INSPIRES



The goal and mission of Women's Ministry in the Diocese of the Rio Grande is to "connect and support all women in their diverse ministries..." In 2020 there will be events at several locations around the diocese. Make plans to join us for one or more of these times of sharing faith and fellowship. All women, and friends, are invited to the RE-Lent Retreat on March 14 at St. Luke's, La Union, nearer El Paso than Las Cruces, to reflect and prepare for Easter with Canon Lee Curtis. Registration is \$20 to cover supplies and lunch. More info is on the Women's Ministry website (www.VarietiesOfGifts.blogspot.com) and In The Loop.

Start your summer with an inspirational event at St. John's, Alamogordo, on June 6. Linda Rounds-Nichols, member of the Women's Ministry Council from Holy Spirit, Gallup, will be leading our Bringing Creativity to Prayer and Worship retreat. Linda is a Veriditas-trained Labyrinth facilitator, a SoulCollage® facilitator, a member of the Spiritual Care Association, and of Spiritual Directors International, and is a lifelong spiritual seeker. She says, "Through our creative endeavors, we can hear the heartbeat of God our Mother, sense our own inner voice, see how color and image, words and movement depict our deep feelings, longings and regrets. Creativity helps us delve deeper inside, and using creativity in prayer helps us curl up in Abba's lap, cuddle up in Jesus' arms and share what is in our heart." Come experience prayer and worship in new and creative ways! A special tour of the Shroud Museum in Alamogordo will be available on Friday afternoon. Make it a nice long weekend and stay for church on Sunday and visit White Sands! If you can't travel to Alamogordo, Linda will be offering a similar event at St. Bede's in Santa Fe on July 25.

Our 8th Annual Bosque Weekend will be November 20-21, 2020, with the Rev. Carolyn Metzler. She will help us find God in Wildernesses. For Lent of 2021, we'll return to the Bosque Center on March 5-6, 2021. The Rev. Jane Ross will guide us into Lent through the study and presentation of the play Women of the Gospel Witness Jesus.

Digital opportunities help connect women across the diocese. Women's Ministry of DRG on Facebook and the Women's Ministry website are resources to keep you up-to-date on events and speakers, as is the regular e-newsletter. Sign up for the weekly email Lectionary Study by Elaine Aniol Wilson MDiv at wdrstudy@gmail.com. You can also join her ongoing class at the Cathedral each Wednesday at 10:30, as you are able. Contact Cindy Davis, Coordinator of Women's Ministries (cynthiadavisauthor@gmail.com), if you have questions and/or suggestions to help us determine the path for this important ministry for all women of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

Diocesan Daughters of the King "Re-ignite the Flame"

By Johanna Binneweg, Vice President, Daughters of the King

The Daughters of the King of the Diocese of the Rio Grande had a Visioning Retreat in early January. Daughters from nineteen chapters were present, from as far away as Taos, Las Cruces, and Farmington. We had two very informative sessions.

In the first session, Friday evening, we spent time just getting to know one another and enjoying each other's company. Saturday morning, we opened with Morning Prayer, and for our program we discussed the life of our chapters. Since we are each busy with our own chapters and have not had much opportunity to visit other chapters, we all found this discussion very stimulating and informative.

Our treasurer, Stacy Quinn, gave an inspiring testimony about the Theology of Giving, Goal #6 of our Strategic Plan, and introduced Johanna Binneweg to give her presentation. Johanna is our Diocesan Vice-President and the chair of the Strategic Plan Prayer Team for the National DOK. She

explained that the Strategic Plan has been in the works since 2018, and is now ready to be presented at the local level, in each chapter. The hope is that through studying each goal of the plan, which are explained in detail in a booklet available on line, each individual chapter, and especially each member, will re-discover the Christian faith and ideals that first led her to become a Daughter, thus "Re-igniting the Flame." After discussing our chapter meetings and the Strategic Plan, we addressed the larger question of what an Order is. We all found these discussions very valuable.

The discussions were so thought-provoking, in fact, that the Board has decided to "take the show on the road." We have divided up the diocesan DOK chapters by Deaneries, and we plan a VERY INFORMAL and



SIMPLE meeting at one church in each Deanery in the next few months. Any Daughter who is interested may attend. The Diocesan Officers, Johanna Binneweg, Dona Ace, Linda Brown, and Stacy Quinn, plan to be present at each meeting. The meetings will be from 9-3, with a lunch break. The first meeting will be Saturday, March 14, at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Las Cruces for the Southwest Deanery Chapters.

WOMEN'S QUIET DAY AT CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAITH

Hildegard of Bingen--An Invitation to Wholeness and Holiness

By Bonnie Hardwick



Dean Peggy Patterson leads the retreat



Retreat filled Palen Hall



Kathlene Ritch explains her work

A group of 100+ women gathered at the Church of the Holy Faith in Santa Fe on Saturday, February 8, for the eighth annual Women's Quiet Day. Many came because they look forward to this yearly pre-Lenten day of study, reflection, sharing, and silence. Others were drawn by the topic: *Hildegard of Bingen - An Invitation to Wholeness and Holiness*. And still others were attracted by this year's much-loved speaker, the Very Reverend Dr. Peggy Patterson, former Associate Rector at the Church of the Holy Faith. All were uplifted and refreshed.

Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) saintly German Benedictine abbess, was a visionary, a mystic, a writer, a composer and, as was clearly revealed by Dean Peggy, a woman very much for our time as well.

To everyone's surprise and delight, Dean Peggy began by reading the life of St. Hildegard as told in the children's book, *The Secret World of Hildegard*, by Jonah and Jeanette Winter. The assembly settled

in to hear of the colorful spiritual visions that began in the gray, gray, gray world of Hildegard's childhood, even before she entered a Benedictine monastery at the age of eight. After years of holding them inside, the visions blossomed into writings, colorful paintings, soaring chants, and a manifest joy in God's creation. Color reproductions of some of the paintings done by Hildegard's sisters of "the wondrous visions" she saw with her "innermost eyes" served as inspiration for participants to draw and share their own mandalas, incorporating personal experiences and new perceptions of holiness.

As abbess, Hildegard also brought to monastic life a rule that stressed wholeness as the foundation for holiness—a sensible and nourishing diet, attention to sufficient rest, and a "green and juicy spirituality . . . replenished by the living waters of Scripture." She was also an herbalist and healer. We were particularly intrigued by her prescription of "nerve cookies"—a sugar cookie with various spices and possibly

almonds - three to five of which would alleviate a nervous condition!

Throughout the day, Hildegard's chants pervaded our times of reflection and creativity. In the afternoon, parishioner Kathlene Ritch illustrated the innovation of her soaring melodic line in comparison with the plain chant common at the time. The music of Hildegard continued as Kathlene graced us with her lovely voice at the Eucharist as well.

As the culmination of the day, women filled the Church of the Holy Faith with song and prayer for the celebration of the Eucharist. Dean Peggy's sermon spoke of her own very personal experience of holiness and wholeness, interweaving the readings of Moses meeting God in the burning bush and the Samaritan woman encountering Jesus at the well. And at the Communion, we were told to take a white feather as a reminder of Hildegard's teaching that each of us is "a feather on the breath of God."

Photos by Cathy Gronquist

WHAT IS UTO? What Does It Do? What Can I Do?



We hear about the United Thank Offering, especially in May and November, when we are encouraged to bring in the money from our little blue boxes. What is UTO? What does it do? What can I do?

Although women in the 19th Century could not serve in leadership positions of the church, they became the prime source of missionary support and funding that undergirded the general church budget. The voluntary affiliation of Episcopal women in the work of The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (DFMS) was often the single most important source of support. When the DFMS was founded in 1821, Women's Auxiliaries formed in Episcopal churches. Fifty years later, Women's Auxiliaries were finally represented on the Board of Missions.

By 1882 The Episcopal Church was supporting 29 missionary bishops, 7 foreign and 22 domestic, who increasingly looked to the Women's Auxiliary for support, and the women of The Episcopal Church responded generously, becoming a primary funder for the work of the missionary bishops. Among the domestic missionary bishops was The Rt. Rev. George Dunlop, assigned to the Missionary District of New Mexico and Arizona and holding the first Convocation of

what would become the Diocese of the Rio Grande at the Exchange Hotel in Old Town Albuquerque in 1880.

The United Thank Offering was established by the Women's Auxiliary Board in 1889 for the support of specific mission projects and individual missionaries. The first United Offering totaled \$2,188.64 and was used to build a church in Anvik, Alaska, and to send a woman missionary to Japan. Women's Auxiliaries across The Episcopal Church continued to fund work both within individual parishes and for the larger church through what became lovingly known as Blue Boxes - a daily reminder to offer thanksgivings for life's blessings.

Between the 1950's and 70's, as women took on more leadership and liturgical roles, most Women's Auxiliary groups became part of the newer Episcopal Church Women - ECW. In 2012 the UTO Board adopted new bylaws and a Memorandum of Understanding, and Theology of Thankfulness to guide and better define the spiritual discipline side of the ministry.

What does UTO do? Grants! In 125 years, the United Thank Offering has collected and given away \$133,355,181.05. This represents 5,121 grants. 100% of the money given to UTO is granted back into The Episcopal

Church. Many programs in the Diocese of the Rio Grande have benefited from UTO grants, including the Bilingual Borderlands Youth Ministry at St. Paul's, Marfa, last year (see the last edition of Together).

What can I do? Use your Blue Box every day to remember blessings and drop in a coin or two. Then during the Ingathering at your church, bring your offering to join with others around the Episcopal Church to extend the blessings around the world. There is even a UTO Blue Box App!

If you have further questions about UTO contact Cindy Davis, UTO and Women's Ministry Chair, or visit UnitedThankOffering.com. If you are interested in becoming your parish UTO rep or having Cindy speak to your church, contact Cindy (utoCindydrg@gmail.com).

(Based on material from A Brief History of the United Thank Offering) <https://tinyurl.com/vuugx9q>



Presiding
Bishop Michael
Curry Calls
for **GOOD
FRIDAY
OFFERING**

In his Good Friday letter, Presiding Bishop Curry asks each Bishop and congregation to consider providing assistance for the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

"Love is at the foundation of the Good Friday Offering of our Church which provides an opportunity for every parish throughout our Church to be connected with the ministry of love and compassion carried out by our Anglican sisters and brothers throughout the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East," Presiding Bishop and Primate Michael Curry wrote to the bishops and clergy of The Episcopal Church. "Love is at the heart of the meaning of the cross. Love is at the heart of the life Christ calls us to live. Love is at the heart of the movement Jesus began and which we live in our own time. I believe our partnership with those who keep the faith of Jesus alive in the region where our Lord walked and began his movement is a significant aspect of our work as part of the church catholic," he wrote.

Information, including bulletin covers and bulletin inserts on the Good Friday Offering, is available at <https://episcopalchurch.org/global-partnerships/good-friday-offering-resources>

For more information, contact the Rev. Canon Robert Edmunds, Episcopal Church Middle East Partnership Officer, redmunds@episcopalchurch.org.

Cathedral Celebrates the MINISTRY OF THE NEW DEAN

On Saturday January 18 the people of the Cathedral of St. John were joined by Laity and Clergy from the Diocese of the Rio Grande for the Celebration of New Ministry of the Very Rev. Kristina Maulden presided over by the Rt. Rev. Michael Buerkel Hunn.

Dean Maulden was honored by participants from the Diocese of Oklahoma, including Homilist the Rev. Tom Dahlman, Rector of Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Shawnee; Litanist the Rev. Spencer Brown, Curate at St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, Broken Arrow; and Verger Dr. Mark Shackelford from the Dean's previous call, Trinity Episcopal Church, Tulsa.



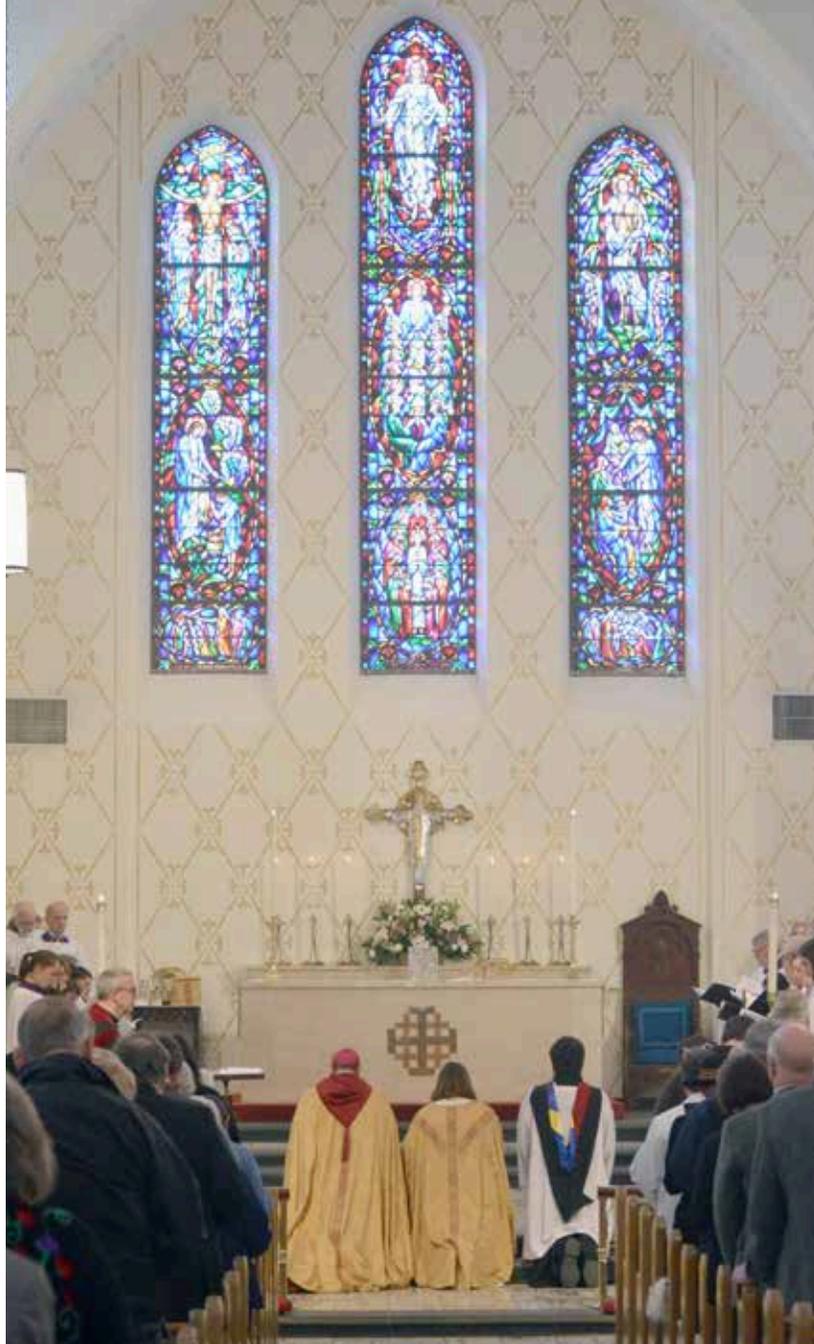
Bishop snaps a photo
Bishop Hunn obliges the Dean for a photo of her supporters from the Diocese of Oklahoma.



The Dean and her family
Bishop Hunn introduces Dean Maulden's family: her husband Anthony and their sons Andrew and Richard.



The Eucharist
Archdeacon Patty Soukup points for Dean Kristin Maulden.



The Litany
Dean Maulden kneels between Bishop Hunn and Canon Curtis for the Litany for the Mission of the Cathedral.



The Presentation
Dean Maulden stands before Bishop Hunn, who is assisted by Canon Lee Curtis as she affirms her call to the Cathedral.

Northwest Deanery Goes "ALL IN" Relational Ministry

Fr. Alex Lenzo and facilitator Lyle Griner

On Saturday, February 8, the Northwest Deanery explored the topic of relational ministry as seen through the lens of Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan.

Led by Lyle Griner, founder of All In Relational Ministry, participants from nine congregations gathered at St. Francis, Rio Rancho, for a day of listening, sharing, and story-telling, an experience that Lyle describes as "learning real skills for living love."

Each congregation received the All In training manual, which will facilitate continued use of these skills in various ministry contexts, and all participating congregations will have access to two follow-up group calls with Lyle.

For further information, go to <https://peerministry.org/all-in-relational-ministry/>.



Participants in relational ministry

Fr. Alex Lenzo and facilitator Lyle Griner



THE TREE OF LIFE Fully in Bloom

St. Mark's Episcopal Church dedicated the completed courtyard and mosaic in memory of Cecil Fish, widow of former St. Mark's rector, the Rev. Charlie Fish. Their family renovated the courtyard in her memory and the congregation collaborated with mosaic artists Manuel Hernandez and Lisa Domenici in completing the Tree of Life. The courtyard is open to the public Monday-Thursday, 9-2, and Sunday mornings.
(Photo by David Martin)



Bishop Hunn stands with Fr. Jim Hunter and his wife, Jeannine

Jim Hunter Retires from St. Mary's

On Sunday February 2, the congregation of St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Albuquerque, gathered to say farewell to the Rev. James W. Hunter. Bishop Michael Buerkel Hunn officiated at the service for the ending of a pastoral relationship. Father Jim joined the congregation as its fourth rector January 1, 2008.



Through January and February, Albuquerque Episcopalians young and old have met at different area Episcopal churches to study the Bible stories from Acts which we will explore this summer, lifted our hearts and voices in song, and tried out crafts related to the stories. Our next step is to flesh out the details of worship, large group activities, and marketplace crafts for our summer program.

We invite those who want to collaborate creatively with the VBS team leaders to join us in these creative pursuits. These meetings, locations TBA, will be Thursday, 4/23, 8:30-10:30 Sunday, 5/17, 4-6

There is much more about this exciting program on the website. Please check it to see details, fun photos from VBS past, as well as a link to register: nwdeanery.weebly.com/vbs

We look forward to learning, playing and growing with you!

For more information contact Leslea Lehoucq: 505-259-7840 or l.lehoucq@stchadsabq.org

GENERATIONS 2020: Age-Inclusive Faith Formation

Evenings Sunday, May 31 through Wednesday, June 3, 5:30-7:45

St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, 601 Montano NW

For several years now, through the collaboration of some Albuquerque

Episcopal churches, we have presented a Vacation Bible School program for children preschool through middle school. Recently we've discerned a call to evolve this summer program and create an age-inclusive experience of immersive faith formation which we're calling "Generations."

Celebrating the Feast of the Rev. Absalom Jones

On Thursday, February 13, the Episcopal Church celebrated the feast of the Rev. Absalom Jones. Blessed Absalom was a priest, prophet, and activist. He understood the essential connection between loving Jesus and advocating for racial justice and equity.

If he were living today, he'd likely be calling out the unacknowledged, unaddressed white privilege in our church as well as how racism is one of the "evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God" (BCP, 302).

Similarly, he'd likely be calling together people of faith and people of good conscience to renounce and resist white nationalism. Let us all ask Blessed Absalom to pray for us and with us to be emboldened to follow his example!

For more info about Blessed Absalom, look in Lesser Feasts and Fasts as well as <https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/jones-absalom-1746-1818/>

“ ...essential connection between loving Jesus and advocating for racial justice and equity.”



Rev. Absalom Jones



Celebrating Absalom

A few of us got together on the campus of UNM to pray Evening Prayer to commemorate the holy life and work of Blessed Absalom, including the Very Rev. Kristin Kopren (left), the Rev. Chuck Jones and the Rev. Dr. Jeanine Driscoll. If you are interested in participating in an intensive anti-racism workshop, please send an email to rector@canterburyabq.org.

The **REV. CANON SCOTT RUTHVEN** Retires After 31 Years!



Father Scott is honored at retirement fest.

“

I lift up my eyes to the hills-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. -Psalm 121

On January 5, St. Andrew's in Las Cruces held a wonderful retirement celebration for Fr. Scott Ruthven. Fr. Scott served at St. Andrew's for 17 years, St. John's in Alamogordo for 11 years, and four years at Trinity in Connecticut as curate, then as assistant rector. He was the Canon Theologian in the diocese for many years, served on the Diocesan Council three times, served as Dean of the SW Deanery three times, and was a delegate to General Convention five times.

In addition to his service to the DRG, Fr. Scott served as a chaplain in the USAF Reserves. He retired in 2015 as a Full Colonel. When asked, Fr. Scott replied, "One of my great honors was to serve as chaplain in Kuwait for 7 months. I could not have done it without the amazing support from St. Andrew's. Thank you!"

Fr. Scott's final worship service at St. Andrew's was a Dixieland style Jazz Mass. The church was packed and a whole lot of toe tapping was going on! A reception was held afterwards with many testimonies to the ways God used Fr. Scott to minister to them.

Fr. Scott does not have any fixed-in-stone retirement plans yet, but for now he will continue to teach theology at the DRG IONA School, learn the fine art of relaxation and try to perfect his omelet.

From all of us at St. Andrew's and the whole DRG... THANK YOU!



Bishop Confirms 6 at St. James

The Rev. John Tober, Rector of St. James distributes Prayer Books to confirmands. Photo courtesy of MT Photography

On January 5, 2020, Bishop Hunn confirmed six members at St. James in Las Cruces. Those confirmed were: Phillip Benson, Catherine Fern, Glenn Fetzer, Sarah Gormley, and Phala and Lawrence White.

St. James has started having a combined service four times a year. This combined service allows for our 8:00 am parishioners to get to know and have fellowship with

our 10:30 am parishioners. We purposely had this combined service on Confirmation Sunday to provide the congregation the opportunity to commune and get to know all of our newest confirmed members.

The service was conducted by Bishop Hunn, followed by a bountiful and delicious potluck enjoyed by all to help welcome our new members to St. James.



Meet the New Rector and Family

The Rev. Michael and Sarah Drinkwater stand with their son Grant alongside Bishop Michael Buerkel Hunn at St. John's Episcopal Church, Alamogordo on Saturday, February 22, following the Celebration of New Ministry. Fr. Drinkwater is the new rector of St. John's. Sarah and he are expecting another member of the family, a daughter due in May. (Photo by Ann Bagby)



St. James creates its own Facebook Page

St. James Episcopal Church Las Cruces has a new Facebook page. It is called **St. James Episcopal Church Las Cruces NM 88007**. You would be surprised how many St. James Facebook pages already exist! We hope to add new photos and articles as they become available. Questions? Please contact Jennifer Terrazas at jenterr53@gmail.com We also have a newly revised web page. That address is: <https://stjameslascruces.org/>

THE SPANISH MINISTRIES from Salvador Lopez Family, EC of Lincoln County

Another year, Salvador and Araceli Lopez have been able to provide Lopez Toy Drive through the Lincoln County Episcopal Church. One more year making families happy, seeing children smile, and seeing the community support for this program. This year, we were able to help 55 families with a total of 89 children. We are happy to be able to provide this Toy Drive another year and we had the opportunity to also send presents and gifts to children in the Children's Specialty Hospital (Hospital de Especialidades de Cd Juarez) in México.



We were able to put smiles on the faces of children battling cancer during the holidays. The presents were delivered on January 6, the day of the Three Wise Men. This is one of the reasons why this programs still exists, being able to put a smile on childrens' faces. This will be another year where low income families will receive holiday gifts, clothing, and food, including turkey, provided to the Region IX Early Head Start and Head Start Program.

Most donations are from members of the Episcopal Church and also from donations from people in Texas, California, and companies such as Walmart, Albertson's, Walgreen's, Cornerstone Bakery, and families of the Alto community.

On December 14, we gathered at Holy Mount Episcopal Church with fellow volunteers to wrap the gifts and put together food baskets. On December 21, we delivered the children's gifts and food baskets to the families.

This program is comprised of the support from the entire Lopez family, Araceli, Carolina, and Mauricio, including the grandchildren.

In Spanish

Un año más Salvador y Araceli Lopez fundadores de Lopez toy drive, Lincoln County Episcopal Church annual toy Drive. Un año más de poder hacer felices a familias, de ver sonrisas a los niños, más apoyo de la comunidad para este programa, este año 2019 podremos ayudar a 55 familias con 89 niños. Quiero compartir qué además en este 12th López Toys tuvimos la oportunidad de enviar juguetes a Cd Juárez Chihuahua México al Hospital Infantil de Especialidades (niños con Cáncer), los cuales se entregaron el día 6 de Enero que es cuándo reciben juguetes de parte de los Reyes Magos. Es una de las razones por lo que este programa es el poder ver las ilusiones de los niños en sonrisas y amor. Un año más que estás Familias de bajos recursos recibirán regalos, ropa y comida incluyendo pavo son estas son de Región IX Early Head Start y Head Start Program.

La mayoría de las donaciones son de los miembros De la Iglesia Episcopal y también de donaciones de personas de Texas, California, que están dispuestos a ser parte del programa y también mencionar a Walmart, Albertson's, Walgreen's, Cornerstone Bakery y Familias de la comunidades de Alto y Ruidoso.

Programa que cuenta con dos eventos, los cuales empiezan el 14 de de Diciembre el la Iglesia Episcopal Holy Mount con voluntarios para envolver los regalos y finaliza en Diciembre 21 que es entregar los regalos y comida e la casa de las Familias que están pasando con problemas financieros lo cual esté programa fue fundado.

Cabe mencionar que esté programa está basado en el Apoyó de toda la familia López Araceli, Carolina y Mauricio, con sus respectivas familias incluyendo Nietos



The Ministers of the Toy Ministry

Clovis gets a Valentine

By Mary Rose Paterson, St. James Episcopal Church, Clovis, New Mexico

“

Father really does know what is best.

I wanted to share with you what I did for the widows, widowers, singles and those who are ill in our Parish on Valentines Day.

God would not leave me alone about it. Ikept arguing that I'd just been laid off and I needed to not spend money. He kept after me and I yielded. I am so happy I did.

So many were hurting that day and it really bright a lot of joy. If we listen, Father really does know what is best.



Bishop's Ridge Celebrates 3rd Open House

By Christopher Jewell

Bishop's Ridge hosted eighty individuals at the Third Annual Christmas Open House on December 20. A large number of our guests were from the local community of Cañada de Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and from Albuquerque. Among those attending were Bishop Michael and Meg Hunn, the new Cathedral Dean Kristi Mauldin, and NE Deanery Dean Kristen Kopren.

We also welcomed guests from The Santa Fe New Mexican, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Santa Fe, and SITE Santa Fe throughout the late afternoon and early evening. Musicians from the Santa Fe Traditional Music Festival played songs of the season along with traditional bluegrass music.

There were activities for the children and plenty of food, including tapas provided by Drift and Porter of Santa Fe. Thankfully the weather was fine and a good time was had by all! We hope to see you next year at the Fourth Annual Christmas Open House at Bishop's Ridge.



Cathedral Christmas Pageant

Mary Jewell directs and herds the Heavenly Hosts at the Christmas Pageant at the Cathedral of St. John in Albuquerque.



High Mountain Christmas

Dreams Really Do Come True! Heartfelt thanks to the Spencer Theater for inviting High Mountain Youth Project of Ruidoso to set up a "Wish Tree" in the lobby.

HMYP volunteers Clayton and Catherine Alred, Toni Arnold, Vicki Thompson and Julie and Richard Cintron, crafted the wish cards and decorated the tree. Ornaments on the tree were created by our students.

Generous theater patrons donated \$1,425 for school supplies, meals, and shoes for this project! (photo courtesy of Clayton Alred)

UGANDA MISSION of Hope 2020

By the Rev. Wally LaLonde
St. Andrews, Las Cruces



Mission of Hope is a ministry to the Mustard Seed Babies' Home in Uganda. Since 2004, MOH has made annual short-term missions to the Mustard Seed. The idea began in 1991 when Rev. Kathy LaLonde was asked to help start an orphanage in Hoima, Uganda, in response to the AIDS crisis. The Home opened its doors in 1994 and has saved the lives of so many orphaned children. Today 70 children are under the care of the Mustard Seed Babies' Home.

Six people from New Mexico, two from Pittsburgh and three from Uganda made up our team. Every year we do a VBS with the younger children. They did arts and crafts, played games, learned Bible Stories, and of course, ate snacks. The older children participated in a two-day retreat called "Healing the Orphaned Heart." It was a powerful time of learning, discussion, sharing and prayer. We also conducted a "Life Skills" workshop for them. Our goal was to better prepare them for life after the Babies' Home

with useful, everyday skills.

A favorite time for the kids is the Christmas party. We give them gifts provided by their sponsors, have music and dancing, and the children all get a new Sunday outfit also provided by their sponsors. It is so encouraging to them to receive so much love from so far away.

Mission of Hope was able to leave money for several projects that were badly needed. The metal railings around the porches have become rusted, broken, and some even missing. They need to be replaced for the safety of the children. Also, from the sudden storms that come up, many of the windows are broken and need to be replaced, also for safety. The Babies' Home owns some farm land where they grow crops for food production. Last year we left money for two additional acres to be cleared, plowed, sown, weeded, and harvested. It worked so well, this year we left money for more work to be

done on the farm with the hope of improving the nutrition of the children and increasing crop production for sale. On several acres, sugarcane was planted and will be used as a cash crop for the Home.

One of our little girls, Mary Ajuna, heard Kathy wasn't feeling well one day and made a gift for her out of a few pieces of Christmas icicles she found. It was so heartrending! Like the little drummer boy, she gave what she had from her heart. We have experienced this same spirit of gratitude, generosity and love from these precious Ugandan children every year.

We want to thank everyone who helps and supports us on this Mission of Hope. Thank you to all the sponsors of the children who keep the Home funded and able to do this good work. It is amazing what we can do together! Whenever we go, if we keep our eyes and hearts open, we will see God at work. Amen.



Environmental Events and Resources to Ponder

Sr. Joan, Executive Director, New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light

I am reading a book of essays, *Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis*, which draws on wisdom from faith leaders, scientists and others. Rev. Jim Antal, minister and author of *Climate Church*, *Climate World*, which some of the NM IPL faith communities are studying, offered several points for reflection as we move into spring, Earth month and more deeply into the spiritual challenge of climate crisis.

Rev. Antal explains this is a moment for which the Church was born. Since climate change is and will continue to affect everything in life and in our congregations, from worship to social and ecological action, he poses a challenge. "What would it be like if clergy were to give at least as much attention to collective salvation in their sermons as they now give to personal salvation?" And "What if every religious leader inspired by Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* made this declaration to their

congregations: Because we are living on the hinge of history, I need to devote 25 percent of my leadership to combat climate change."

There is much to ponder as we move more deeply into the call of Love in Action for the Future.

Here are a few events and resources that might help Love become Action and Hope in our region.

Human Health Risks from Oil and Gas Development, Physician, Dr. Anne Epstein
NMSU-Carlsbad Campus, 1500 University Dr in Carlsbad, Saturday, March 7, 3:30-5:30

NM IPL is accompanying faith leaders and people of faith in the Permian Basin who share concerns for God's creation, sacred land, water, air, and community health and well being in a large oil and gas boom in their region. A Permian Basin group of residents, Citizens Caring for the Future, has formed and is composed of faith leaders,

people of faith and their neighbors. The presentation on health risks in the Permian is open to those who are interested and concerned. Dr. Epstein will cover toxic air emissions from oil and gas development, with a focus on benzene; ground level ozone resulting from air emissions and the resulting risk to public health; scientific studies showing direct adverse effects on human health for people living in the midst of dense oil and gas development; risk of gas well explosions for people living close to wells. If you live in the region and would like to work with the faith leaders and people of faith contact joan@nm-ipl.org.

Religious Criteria for Climate Action, Dr. Larry Rasmussen, internationally known Ethicist and Author

*Albuquerque First Congregational United Church of Christ, 2801 Lomas Blvd
March 13, 6:30-8:30 pm
and March 14, 9-noon.*

Continued on page 18

Compass Rose Society Names BISHOP DANIEL G. P. GUTIERREZ President



HOUSTON, January 29, 2020 –The Compass Rose Society, an international charitable organization supporting the Archbishop of Canterbury's ministry in the global Anglican Communion, has named as its president The Rt. Reverend Daniel G.P. Gutiérrez, bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania.

Gutiérrez succeeds the Rt. Reverend Andrew Doyle, bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Texas, who served as president of the society for six years.

Gutiérrez is the 16th bishop of the second oldest and fourth largest diocese in The Episcopal Church. He serves as one of only two Hispano/Latino bishops in The Episcopal Church outside

of Province IX. Before his calling as Bishop, Gutiérrez had a distinguished career in both The Episcopal Church, where he served the Diocese of the Rio Grande as Canon to the Ordinary, and in public service in New Mexico.

He currently serves as chairman of the Board of Trustees for Episcopal Community Services, The Church Foundation, and the Widows Corporation, and as a board member for The Church Farm School, Episcopal Academy, The Gathering of Leaders and Forward Movement. He also is a trustee of the General Seminary of The Episcopal Church. In addition, Gutiérrez is a conferee of the Venerable Order of St. John, a co-convenor of the Bishops United Against Gun Violence, and serves on the Religious Leaders Council of Philadelphia.



Lucinda Ashby Consecrated as Bishop of Diocese of El Camino Real in California

Bishop Lucinda Ashby was ordained and consecrated January 11 as the fourth bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real. She is seen after the consecration service with Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves (left), who served as diocesan bishop of El Camino Real for 12 years, and the Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori (right), previous presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church, who ordained Gray-Reeves in 2007 as California's first female bishop. Ashby was a candidate in the Episcopal election in the Diocese of the Rio Grande in 2018. The Diocese of El Camino Real was founded in 1980 and has approximately 10,000 members in 42 congregations spanning five counties, celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. (Photo: Elrond Lawrence/Diocese of El Camino Real)



Environmental Events Continued from page 17

What needed gifts do faith communities bring to climate action? Together we'll explore spiritual practices that are ecological, ethical, ecumenical, and reflective of the sacred. We'll wrap them in prayer and ritual and ask how they intersect five areas that comprise a way of life. Contact joan@nm-ipl.org to register. Cost is sliding fee scale from \$10-\$50 with no one turned away. Light snacks will be served.

Love Made Visible: Engaging in Sacred Activism

NMIPL April Earth Month of Faith and Action

This year's theme *Love Made Visible: Engaging in Sacred Activism* calls for prayers and actions to care for creation and our communities as we face climate crisis. Congregations and individuals are encouraged to choose an activism "Challenge" to bring the moral call to the public. National Interfaith Power and Light has sermons, prayers, activities, postcards, a film and more available to help in planning something large or small in your community. NM IPL can assist if you desire: joan@nm-ipl.org.

Find the flyers and other promotional materials here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/o3l7l43d8gvmwb6/AACSCtIHh2OKTFyXcO-GQrsva?dl=0>

Order a kit here:

<https://www.faithclimateactionweek.org/order-supplies/>

Rio Grande Diocese Denied Waiver From "Asking"

From Episcopal News Service

The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande was among the five dioceses denied waivers from the mandatory fifteen percent "asking" in support of The Episcopal Church. Also denied waivers were the dioceses of Albany, Dallas, Florida and Springfield. The denials of waiver mean the five dioceses are ineligible this year to apply for grants from Episcopal Church programs, such as Becoming Beloved Community, church planting, Constable Fund, Roanridge Trust and United Thank Offering. "This is very disappointing," said the Rt. Rev. Michael Buerkel Hunn, Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande, who cited

the diocese's inability to meet the financial obligation. Other bishops explained their underpayments as rooted in longstanding theological disagreements with General Convention on issues of human sexuality. Rio Grande had been among the dioceses that were on the brink of leaving The Episcopal Church in 2003, but Rio Grande's Episcopalians now want to be full participants in The Episcopal Church. "It's our church. We're a part of it, and that really matters," he said. "It's no longer a 'won't pay' diocese, but rather a 'can't pay' diocese, according to Hunn, who saw the other side

of this process in his previous role as canon to Presiding Bishop Michael Curry for ministry within The Episcopal Church.

"I don't want to be a bishop of a diocese that's not paying its fair share," Hunn said, but "there's no way we're going to get to

15 percent this triennium." Shortly after he took over as bishop just over a year ago, the Assessment Review Committee rejected a previous plan that tried to reach 15 percent too quickly. Hunn submitted a follow-up plan last year to hit the target by 2032, but the committee deemed that timeline far too long. The committee ultimately chose not to recommend a waiver for Rio Grande, because the committee felt it was "not asking too much" of Rio Grande to submit a new plan for getting closer to 15 percent sooner. Hunn said he is disappointed his diocese is now ineligible for churchwide grant programs, which have benefited Rio Grande in the past. After the diocese's recent budget cut, he said he needs more time to develop a realistic timeline, but Rio Grande will pay its full assessment. "We are coming home, and we're happy about it," Hunn said. "But we've got a long way to go."

Bishop Hunn responded to the announcement of the refusal in a Facebook video post, which may be viewed at: <https://www.facebook.com/bishopmichaelhunn/videos/879404309164364/>



The Episcopal Church invites U.S Help Shape the Future Through Civic Engagement: The 2020 Census and Election

Episcopal Church Office of Public Affairs

In the United States, 2020 is a year for federal as well as state and local elections and, as the beginning of a new decade, the year for its decennial count of people living in the country. The Episcopal Church encourages Episcopalians to participate in both. Taking part in the census and voting are both a right and a responsibility. They are also part of the Christian calling to love one another. Each person benefits, or suffers, from how their community functions, thus each person carries a responsibility to engage the processes and mechanisms that help them function.

As an official partner of the United States 2020 Census, The Episcopal Church and Episcopalians can help make the count as accurate as possible. The census is a self-portrait of the United States. Our constitution requires the federal government to count everyone living in the country every 10 years. The tally must include people of all ages, races, and ethnic groups, all citizens and non-citizens. Every household should complete a census form by April 1, 2020.

The 2020 Census takes place March through July. This

decennial count has a profound impact on the electoral system by determining how many Congressional seats are allocated to each state, as well as shaping how more than 130 federal programs allocate funding and other resources to best serve the population. Census data is also a factor in calculating funding levels for schools, infrastructure projects, and certain services delivered by state and local governments. A more accurate count means that the U. S. government can more effectively respond to the needs of communities.

As an official partner for the 2020 Census, The Episcopal Church is coordinating engagement with the Census Bureau across the United States. Research shows that a person is more likely to respond to the census if they hear about it from someone they trust, so individuals can help to promote filling out the census, paying particular

attention to historically undercounted populations. See The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations census engagement toolkit for ideas of how to engage, including Complete Count Committees and educating others on the importance of the census.

The U. S. election presents opportunities to participate in the democratic process to elect officials who have the responsibility of crafting new legislation and policies to improve the country and the world. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry encourages individuals to, "cast your vote, not on a partisan basis, not based on your biases, but vote your values. Vote the values of human dignity and equality. Vote the values of the rock on which this country was built. Vote."

The Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations Vote Faithfully toolkit provides guidance and resources on both casting an individual vote and helping others do the same.

Find the census engagement toolkit, the Vote Faithfully toolkit, and other civic engagement resources here: <https://episcopalchurch.org/OGR/civic-engagement>



'THE SOUL OF OUR COUNTRY'

A Conversation with the Presiding Bishop on his Lenten Call for Prayer and Fasting

By Egan Millard, Episcopal News Service

When reading Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's 2020 Lenten message, you may notice something different from previous years. For one thing, the tone is noticeably solemn, with phrases like "profound division," "genuine crisis of national character" and "great national concern and urgency." But there's also an invitation from Curry to join him and a group of other Christian leaders in weekly fasting on behalf of the United States as it grapples with "violence, discord, and confusion," in the words of the Prayer for Our Nation found in the Book of Common Prayer, which Curry invokes in his message.

Curry and the same group of diverse leaders from evangelical, mainline Protestant and Catholic churches released the "Reclaiming Jesus" statement in 2018. This year, in light of what they see as a worsening political and cultural crisis in the U. S., those leaders are committing to fast every Wednesday from Ash Wednesday (February 26) until the week before Advent in November. But why fasting? And why now? Episcopal News Service sat down with Curry at the Executive Council meeting in Salt Lake City on February 15 to talk about what led to this statement and invitation. The conversation below has been edited and condensed for clarity.

ENS: Many people today have come to see fasting as a sort of archaic form of self-punishment. What does fasting mean to you?

There are a lot of ways that people can fast. Abstinence, giving up something, is a modified form of fasting. Some people fast by giving up food – but you drink water, no matter what – until sunset, and then there's just the 24-hour fast. Part of fasting is a spiritual practice that makes me realize how dependent I am on my habits. We need food to live – that's not the question. I'm more dependent on the excess that is beyond what is necessary for living. I have a feeling I'm not alone in that! So it is



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry at the Executive Council meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, on February 15, 2020. (Photo: Egan Millard/Episcopal News Service)

not punishment, it's just kind of a calling back to what is essential, both biologically and spiritually. What do you really need to live? And that is quite liberating.

ENS: What does it mean to fast in the context of prayer and repentance? How does fasting connect with the political situation in the U. S. right now?

We are in a desperate situation right now when we are often failing to learn how to live together with difference. And this has nothing to do with partisan politics. This is bigger than that. Democracy depends on the human

capacity for relationship. If those relationships aren't there on some fundamental level, the very fabric of the democracy is not going to hold. That is a house divided against itself. And Jesus said it before Lincoln quoted it: "A house divided against itself will not stand." And that is not about where you stand on issues. That's deeper. That is a deeper spiritual, relational reality. How do you get a toehold on that? That is a spiritual issue, and it's going to take some spiritual engagement.

When I was in conversation with some of the other Reclaiming Jesus leaders, I said, "Let's do this even if we don't get a big following.

Let's do it anyway." Especially about the fasting part. The people who were in that group are Republicans and Democrats and Independents. I mean, it's a mix. And there's a lot of stuff we don't agree on. But we're all Christian and we're clear about that. Where we agreed was that our nation is in spiritual trouble. So we have to claim spiritual resources that help us engage that. It doesn't solve everything, but it's a first step. Fasting is in the biblical tradition – not just in the Christian tradition but other traditions as well. It goes back to Judaism, to be sure, but it's in other religions – prayer and fasting in times of real and great peril, where divisions are deep. Gandhi sometimes fasted to stop violence between Hindus and Muslims. It didn't always work, but sometimes it did.

There's something about the fast where you put more of yourself out there than just talking to God about it. I can't do everything, but this is a little something I can do. And it's a reminder to me of how serious this is. I don't think I've ever before prayed and fasted during Lent with a particular intention in mind before. But I've always done it as a spiritual practice. I grew up doing that.

ENS: It is typically thought of as an inward practice, but you're saying it can lead to an outward change, right?

Yes. When the group was talking, people kept looking for solutions. We didn't have any. What do we do in this situation? And so part of fasting is a cleansing – biologically, too – but then there is a cleansing to open us up to hear the Spirit. How do we help each other through this? I don't have those answers, but I believe in a God who does.

ENS: Is this the first time the Reclaiming Jesus group has made a specific invitation for prayer and fasting for national unity?

Yes, it was really specific. I think the last time we did it, it was a more general thing. This time, our nation is in peril. I've not seen it like this. And this is not about the president. This is not about the Democrats. Something is fundamentally wrong. We need God. God is not going to do it for us, but God will do it with us. And this is one profound way – a fast day each week throughout Lent, for example, or for the rest of the liturgical year – to actually pray for this country. In the U. S. we pretty much live in areas where people are like us or think like us. Some of that is racial, but it's bigger than that. America has re-segregated in a new form: people who agree with me. There's no real conversation. There's no relationship going on. Even the sources of information that we get are segregated. That means you don't have the capacity to recognize where you have differences and where you have common ground.

So that's why I'm almost pleading with Episcopalians – get on your knees. And if your knees can't take it, if you just had a knee replacement, get on a metaphorical knee and pray. And if you're not the kind of person who's comfortable praying off the cuff, that's why I took a prayer right out of the prayer book. There are some good prayers in there! God's not looking for you to put on a show. He just wants you to pray. Take this Lent and really pray for the soul of our country. Not that we will be greater than anybody else – pray for the soul of our country.

– Egan Millard is an assistant editor and reporter for Episcopal News Service. He can be reached at emillard@episcopalchurch.org

Together is a bi-monthly publication of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande.

BISHOP & PUBLISHER

The Rt. Rev. Michael Buerkel Hunn

EDITOR

The Rev. Canon Raymond Raney

EDITORIAL BOARD

The Rt. Rev. Michael Buerkel Hunn

The Rev. Canon Lee Curtis

Rev. Canon Raymond Raney

Ms. Mary Jewell

GRAPHIC DESIGNER - Kathy Montoya

COPY EDITOR - Ms. Fran Kemp

PROOFREADERS

Ms. Mary Jewell • Ms. Fran Kemp

SUBMISSIONS:

Editorial comment and correspondence may be mailed to:

Diocesan House

6400 Coors Blvd., NW

Albuquerque, NM 87120

Submissions and Inquiries should be emailed to: Together@dioceserg.org

PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS

Please submit high resolution photographs with stories to ensure the best possible print reproduction. Email to: Together@dioceserg.org

TOGETHER DEADLINES FOR 2020

MAY/JUNE 2020

Submission deadline: April 10

JULY/AUGUST 2020

Submission deadline: June 5

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

Submission deadline: August 7

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

Submission deadline: October 9

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

Submission deadline: December 4

COVER PHOTO:

Volcanic Rock Formations

City of Rocks State Park

between Deming and Silver City, New Mexico

Photographer: Bruce McKeown

PRINT VERSION OF TOGETHER NEWS

The print, mailed edition of *Together* is no longer provided free of charge. To subscribe to the print version, please visit www.dioceserg.org or contact Toye Robertson at (505) 881-0636.

Notification of when the online edition is available for download may be requested by emailing IntheLoop@dioceserg.org.

WEEKLY DIOCESAN NEWSLETTER

Persons also may subscribe to the weekly diocesan email newsletter by requesting to be added to the distribution list by emailing IntheLoop@dioceserg.org.