My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings and blessings as we enter the Church’s life-giving season of Pentecost and the Lord’s gift of a new Bishop. As St. John the Divine describes in his visionary revelation, the time is now upon us to look and see what the Holy Spirit is bringing about, in our Diocese, in our personal lives, in our families, in our congregations, and into this time of our history.

The risen Lord Jesus entrusts us with the gifts of Grace, Hope, Justice, Mutual Love and Mercy. The time to embrace the Spirit’s gifts of resurrection and new life is everyday, every week, every month and every year as our temporal reality progresses towards its completeness in Christ. For we followers of Jesus, whose emboldened faith seeks the presence of the living Christ in every person, place and situation, now is the time when “every eye will see him, even those whose sin has pierced the crucified-risen one.”

The undoing of the powers of sin and death were accomplished by Jesus on the Cross. Life is victorious over death, light is victorious over darkness, and the whole creation is beloved and redeemed in the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. “Look! Look closely! There are no barriers in this life to approaching the Alpha and Omega. There are no obstacles within us or outside us that can inhibit us from union with God or each other. The gift of the Holy Spirit is given to the whole of God’s creation. The risen Christ has not abandoned us, but walks with us on our earthly Emmanuel road to lead us to recognize and follow Jesus in our midst.

“Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wait. So it is to be. Amen.”

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

–Reflection 1:4-8

So it is to be.” During the Jewish celebration of Shavuot/Pentecost – fifty days from the end of Passover – the New Testament tells us that the Holy Spirit of the Living God was poured out upon the first followers and so empowered them for their mission: to gather together the great diversity of humanity as God’s people. God’s Holy Church. Led by the Spirit of the Risen Christ, the Church lives and moves and has its being. It is fired up in every age to gather the whole flock of believers into one community of Faith, Hope and Love. The Church is refreshed by God’s breath in the Spirit-endowed gifts of Holiness, Generosity, Faithfulness and Community. These gifts of the Spirit inspire the souls of every truth-seeker – God seekers! St. Peter boldly preaches a sermon on that day so people can understand what was happening to them, who they were to become in Christ, and what transformations would happen in the world because of them. In his sermon he cited a portion of a prophecy from Joel.

“In the last days,” God says, “I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters with prophesy. Your young men will see Visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants – men and women alike. And they will prophesy.”

The visions and prophecies of God are always revealed to the Church’s time as well as in unexpected times. “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord Christians realize and celebrate that life is about beginnings and endings. For us in the Diocese of the Rio Grande the election of a new Bishop is a sign that the great Shepherd of our souls continues to leads us forward.

We have experienced the gift of God’s Care, Love and Grace. We are now celebrating the hope of the Lord’s will being done. Our future is bright and the DRG is poised to begin a new and exciting chapter of God’s mission in New Mexico and Far West Texas. Look! Look very closely! We are being made new, “So be it.” This is God’s doing. As the prophet proclaimed, “every eye will see!” Holy Spirit open our eyes to see more clearly. Holy Spirit bring us into new being once again.

Every ministry of all the baptized in the Christian community is subject to the will and purpose of God in building up the Kingdom Jesus announced and revealed. For our Diocese life has changed, not ended. Our sense of a new beginning is an ending and this ending is yet a new beginning!

A new thing is now happening and the Lord’s blessings will continue. We joyfully thank God for our new Bishop and for the many gifts and talents which will be shared with us. As the prophecy of Joel assures us, the Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon the whole church and new visions will be seen through the eyes of our faith. “Look again.” Look closely. “So, it is to be.”

Therefore, my sisters and brother throughout this Pentecost season I pray that we will continue to be inspired and fired up in every congregation in the DRG by proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel and Jesus as Lord and Savior. The Church must embrace the vision of Christ’s redemptive love in the world and to be an incarnate example of God’s transformative love in serving and caring for all God’s people.

This church season is life-giving because it begins with the assurance of a bold witness and apostolic faith and action. Just as the Holy Spirit of the Living God was poured out upon the church’s first followers, so also today are we empowered and guided by that same Holy Spirit “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Pentecostal blessings upon each and everyone one of you. Your Bishop.

+ Michael

Bishop Awarded Turquoise Chalice

The New Mexico Conference of Churches awarded the Turquoise Chalice to the Rt. Rev. Michael L. Vono, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, “in recognition of his ecumenical spirit and achievements.” The award was presented at the 2018 Circo Diocese of the Rio Grande in the NM Conference of Churches; the award citation stated: “As Bishop Vono retires this year we honor his commitment to building up the ecumenical community. “Bishop Vono’s energetic leadership fostered the ecumenical movement in New Mexico as he:

• Significantly strengthened the participation of the Diocese of the Rio Grande in the NM Conference of Churches;
• Established a new retreat center: a resource for all the churches;
• Lead with a spirit of joyful welcome, creating relationships of mutuality at the highest level of New Mexico churches.

The citation further stated: “The New Mexico Conference of Churches will remember Bishop Vono as a friend among his colleagues. His personal commitment to worship, speaking with a common voice and giving witness to our unity in Christ, has left its mark on the Conference. We are grateful for his cheerful engagement, his persistent questions, and his unqualified support of ecumenism.”
Historic Election for the Diocese Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn Elected Next DRG Bishop

The Electing Convention Saturday May 5 at the Cathedral of St. John, Albuquerque, was historic. Not only was a noted cleric of The Episcopal Church elected, but for the first time in the history of the Diocese of the Rio Grande a woman was on the ballot. The Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn, Canon to the Presiding Bishop, was elected on the third ballot. Finishing a strong second was the Rev. Canon Lucinda Ashby, the Canon to the Ordinary for the Diocese of Idaho. The Rev. Simon Justice, rector of the Church of the Good Samaritan, Corvallis, Oregon, withdrew after the second ballot. All three candidates impressed the members of the Diocese during the Walk Abouts in Albuquerque, El Paso, Roswell and Santa Fe. Diocesan Constitution and Canons require a majority, determined by the total number of those eligible to vote, in Lay and Clergy orders on the same ballot.

Of the total (204) eligible lay delegates, 103 represented a quorum and were required for an election. Of the total (204) eligible lay delegates, 103 represented a quorum and were required for an election.

Ballot 1 Clergy/Lay
Ashby 29 / 60
Hunn 35 / 98
Justice 10 / 16

Ballot 2 Clergy/Lay
Ashby 28 / 48
Hunn 47 / 117
Justice 1 / 10

Ballot 3 Clergy/Lay
Ashby 20 / 44
Hunn 55 / 131
Justice withdrew

After the bishop-elect receives the canonically required consent of a majority of the Episcopal Church's diocesan standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will ordain and consecrate the new bishop November 3 in Albuquerque following the conclusion of the Annual Diocesan Convention.

Introducing the Next Bishop of the Rio Grande

May 6, 2018

Dear Diocese of the Rio Grande,

I already feel such love and gratitude as we look forward to our future together. I am giving thanks for so much we cannot yet see - the relationships we will build and the ministry and the love and opportunities. I am also feeling at least some nervous expectation. Meg and I are eager to begin making a home among you in a few short months. May God bless and guide us in the years ahead.

Faithfully, Michael

The Reverend Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn, Bishop-elect

Introduction

This is not an autobiography of my life - it’s the story of a relationship between God and me and the strange combination of influences and experiences, of people, culture and place. Looking back it’s clear that God has always been there, comforting, challenging, and calling me to action. So many times I've felt like a fish out of water, until someone reached out and welcomed me as God is always reaching out to welcome us home. The path of my ordained life did not follow the pattern you might expect just by looking at me. Each of us is more than what can be seen at first glance.

I've been a priest for 23 years, an Episcopalian all my life. I'm an Anglo-Catholic Evangelical Episcopalian. My spirituality is contemplative and my prayer life is guided by the marks of the Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross, but my ministry has been about action: getting things done efficiently, faithfully and effectively. I'm progressive in some ways and conservative in others. I'm an active baseball player and catcher, a bicycle mechanic, and an organic gardener. I've got one son (20) who is a jazz drummer, another son (27) who is a welder, blacksmith and filmmaker and a four-year-old daughter who is an artist, ballerina, princess, firefighter or Wonder Woman depending on the day. I'm married to a priest who is a brilliant writer and preacher and a loving pastor. She is also my best friend and the love of my life. My soul traveled all over the Episcopal Church, but it does my heart good to sit on the porch with my family after spending the day digging in the garden.

I've been deeply formed by people but also by places. From the plateaus of New Mexico to the hill country of Texas, from England to New England to North Carolina, from Chicago to New York God has worked on my soul through many different cultures. I'm also deeply aware of how formative my childhood and teen years were in the tone for my adult life and ministry.

These seeming contradictions, the peculiar diversity of influences, places and people that have shaped me, make sense if you know where I come from. From a long line of teachers and artists and homesteaders who moved out West in the 19th century and did whatever they needed to make a life for themselves.

I hope this story of my relationship with God, will show you why I have a deep sense of call to the Diocese of the Rio Grande rooted in my understanding that the differences between people and cultures are conversations waiting to be had and not battles to be fought.

My Roots

New Mexico is the first place I remember - the plateau above Santa Fe where White Rock sits, and the pews of Trinity on the Hill in Los Alamos. Dad worked at the Lab researching solar technology. Mom worked at the historical museum with a particular interest in Ancestral Puebloan people and their rock art. Together my parents designed and built a passive solar house with an archway, an attached greenhouse and other untreated experimental features - most of which actually worked.

My neighborhood was the kind of place where the kids had to come home when the streetlights came on, where we were told not to play near the cliff tops and then were trusted to explore the canyons and caves on our own. It was a place where a bicycle was all a kid needed to feel free. I will say the elementary school science fair was particularly daunting in Los Alamos, but other than that it was a great place to grow up.

Our family was usually the last to leave church on Sunday morning because Mom and Dad were always in some meeting or choir practice. I was an acolyte as soon as I could hold a torch. The Episcopal Church was the only thing we did on Sundays - it was woven into everything we did - my childhood was filled with liturgical memories: posadas and pageants, luminarias and Lenten devotions. To this day the faith of the Episcopal Church is the framework for my whole life. The singing of the choir, the rhythm of the prayers and the scent of incense seeped into my soul gradually week after week.

Three characteristics of my parents: their faith, curiosity and love for people and cultures, their willingness to build something new, and their deep involvement in the Episcopal Church have shaped the way I engage the world to this day.

Texas

We moved to Austin, Texas the year I started Junior High. To say that was a cultural shock would be an understatement. From an international lab environment where most everyone's parents had PhDs and no one ever talked about work outside the office (because it was classified) to the capital city of the great state of Texas was a huge distance geographically and an even larger one culturally.

In Texas I was part of a court mandated effort to integrate the public schools. As a teenager I spent each school day in an environment where I was the outsider - one of a few white kids in a predominantly Latinx and African-American neighborhood. Finding my place in a place culturally different from my own was not easy, but the process of opening up to difference, of learning to listen and empathize, from the feeling of comfort to the feeling of discomfort, when I felt uncomfortable meant I made friends from all over the city. We sold breakfast tacos to pay for our baseball uniforms. I learned to breakdance, line dance and polka – all of which I did poorly – because if you wanted in on the high school dance you had to do it. Those years gave me a love of all sorts of people and a respect for different cultural realities which has shaped my theology and the way I engage in ministry. Today, I work with Episcopalians from many cultures and languages using those same lessons I learned as a teenage headliner.

In Austin I came to know Jesus in a personal way and began to study Scripture with intent. I was blessed by young adult mentors and youth group leaders who cared about my faith, my issues, and my spiritual growth. Looking back, I see how those adults were intentionally forming us as leaders and pastors for the church. We practiced prayer. We sang. We served and we led at the parish and Diocesan levels. There was no sense that we were “just kids.” As Youth Chaplain for the Diocese of Texas, Rector of Happening 4B, and as an active member of my local church, I learned a lot about forming Christian community and helping people draw nearer to God which I still rely on as an Canon to the Presiding Bishop.

Continued on page 13
It didn’t go as expected. “I thought it would be a more polarized experience and that people would have come in with... Volland said, “but people who, caliber-wise, could serve in any diocese in the Episcopal Church with distinction.”

The pilgrimage began and ended in prayer and was hemmed in at each stop with prayer at the Walk-About events and along the way. All the candidates have expressed gratitude for the warm and friendly welcome all around the diocese.

Holy Spirit Rested on Bishop Search Committee

By Jim Gordon Associate Rector Church of the Holy Faith

It didn’t go as expected. “I thought it would be a more polarized experience and that people would have come in with an agenda,” The Rev. Catherine Volland said of the recently completed Bishop Search Committee process. “I thought some folks would have one candidate they’d support, or have one characteristic or another they were looking for, that people would draw a line in the sand on what was important to them — in theology or gender, in being from the diocese or not being from the diocese.”

No, it didn’t go as expected, it went as hoped. “There was so much listening and mutual respect that no one got polarized or defensive and we were really open to the candidates and the process,” Volland, the rector of St. Bede’s in Santa Fe, continued.

“A critical part of the process was the fact that we opened every meeting with a fullsome period of prayer, prayer that was not done by rote, and that at other points in the process when we felt the need, we also turned to prayer. The results indicate that this had to be the Holy Spirit at work, nothing short of that would have gotten us to where we needed to go,” said “that would be with three excellent candidates.”


Each event was also available via live stream, with more than 1,500 views of the videos during and after the events. The Transition team hoped this would offer those who couldn’t attend in person the opportunity to hear the candidates and appears to have been very successful.

News about the Transition, including upcoming Retirement Events for Bishop Vano, is available at www.dribishoptransition.org, and on the Transition Facebook page (DRG Bishop Transition).
Roswell: A Week in Community

Holy week in Roswell was a week of ecumenical unity in walking the path from Pilate’s court to the Cross at Golgotha. Participating churches in this year’s Holy Week noon services and luncheons were St. Andrew’s, First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, St. Mark’s Evangelical Lutheran, and First Church of the Nazarene. The week’s theme was “People at the Cross.” Pastor John Guthrie of First Presbyterian shared a message of the Cross through the eyes of the Centurion to begin the week at St. Andrew’s. Fr. Dale Plummer of St. Andrew’s closed the week to view the Cross from the perspective of the “Good Thief” at the First Church of the Nazarene.

Other participating Pastors included Pastor Tina Cross, First United Methodist; Interim Pastor Larry Sydow, St. Mark’s Lutheran; Pastor Larry Lacher, First Church of the Nazarene.

Good Friday in Silver City

+ Jesus Christ Superstar

On Good Friday the Church of the Good Shepherd in Silver City hosted an ecumenical production of an adapted version of Jesus Christ Superstar (by Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice, 1970.) Attendees filled the church to capacity. Members of the cast represented Good Shepherd, the United Church of Christ of Silver City, First Presbyterian and several other churches. Over $350 was raised for the work of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem.

Last year Good Shepherd hosted a dramatic reading of an adaptation of “The Beams are Creaking,” a play about Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Douglas Anderson, 1985.) The offering of dramatic renditions of Good Friday themes is emerging as a new community ministry of Good Shepherd Church.

Bloom where you are planted

By Madeline Fox

Greetings from Clovis – the windy city on the Tour de Church Sign! Are you one of those people who love rainy days, so you can stay in and do your hobbies? We are praying for rain, which was the message on the Westminster Baptist Church sign this week. Being here, I am trying to bloom where I am planted. I’ve been trying a new hobby, making dolls. Last month, the seniors of the yote-yote is a bad habit for me. I know there is some really bad stuff on yote-yute, and I try to stay away from creepy stuff.

So, if your hobby is cruising you-tube, stop cruising and start using what you are learning for something that makes you walk through that door and serve the Lord. Thank you St. James, I love your perspective!

PS. I was told by a regular reader of the Sonshine Corner that my vocabulary is not that of a teenager. As you know, I’m homeschooled.

This week’s vocabulary list includes the following words:

lure, enthusiastically, and perspective.

all of which I think I used correctly in this text. They say if you use a new word in conversation, 5 times in one day, you can remember the word and you can use it in your vocabulary. I try to use as many words as I can from my vocabulary list in my articles. The one word I could not fit in this week, but I really love, is “extensively.” So I want to challenge you to increase your vocabulary extensively! Now, see if you can use that word 4 more times today! Apparently teenagers have overused the word “apparently” to the point of being annoying. Let’s change that – the word of the week is: “extensively!” Let’s go out there and serve the Lord extensively!

My ears run thick with the red, yellow, green, black and blue hues of comic book ink. For far as back as I can remember, the heroes of Superman and the fast-talking Spider-Man, to the wacky Captain America and the Holy Scriptures. At some points in my life, the ‘canons’ of Marvel and DC Comics have probably been more important than the stories of Abraham, Ruth, and the Twelve. My priorities are rightly ordered now, but the stories of superheroes whether in print or on the big screen are still significant sources of identity for me. Growing up, comic books were both a form of reality escapism and a kind of reality formation. Before the advent of serious comic book film adaptations, ‘nerd culture’ as it is known now wasn’t so mainstream or accepted. Nerd culture was not pop culture. It was sub-culture. For sure, characters like Superman, Spider-Man and Batman were widely known and loved. But they were known and loved as broad cultural artifacts, characters that somehow belonged not just to comic book readers, but to the wider American public. You didn’t need to read an issue of Action Comics to know that Clark Kent was the alter ego of Superman, or that Spider-Man was really a dopey kid working as a newspaper photographer.

But to be a fan, to collect, to search through long boxes and attend conventions, to buy the small of a Mylar bag and the feel of a perfectly cut, 24 page comic, that was a sub-culture, and the comic book world was sub-culture. Comic books and costuming were so my way for me to move beyond some of the negative experiences I had growing up as one of the ‘nerds’. In those stories, I could fly with Superman, journey into the Shi’ar galaxy with X-Men, see with Scarecrow, and fight captives with Captain America. Whatever struggles were going on in life, family, or school, I could escape by reading those books. But they were also reality forming because, by reading issue after issue, I gained a deep appreciation for imaginative narrative and the way it can offer serious moral guidance. Comic books, when done well, can be truly pedagogical while at the same time being wildly imaginative. Comic books, when done well, can be truly pedagogical while at the same time being wildly imaginative. Think, for example, of the morally and emotionally charged story of Spider-Man in his quest to save the alien planet of Symbiotes, a story about an alien planet facing destruction, and the exploits of its last son, who can fly, is indestructible, and can shoot heat vision from his eyes. Wildly imaginative, yet a story that explores some deep moral questions. Originaly created by two Jewish boys in New York, Superman tells the story of an outsider coming to grips with the struggle to find his place within a new culture and a new set of values using a role model in the form of a man of great experience. Originally created by two Jewish boys in New York, Superman tells the story of an outsider coming to grips with the struggle to find his place within a new culture and a new set of values using a role model in the form of a man of great experience. Using larger than life characters, they have the power to teach and proclaim truths.

With the meteoric rise in popularity of superheroes at the cinema, these stories are reaching a brand new audience, many of whom might never consider opening a comic book or a Bible. And yet, their power to teach and proclaim truths can be truly pedagogical while at the same time being wildly imaginative. Think, for example, of the morally and emotionally charged story of Spider-Man in his quest to save the alien planet of Symbiotes, a story about an alien planet facing destruction, and the exploits of its last son, who can fly, is indestructible, and can shoot heat vision from his eyes. Wildly imaginative, yet a story that explores some deep moral questions.

This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue. This is just one example, however, of the way such stories come alive with virtue.
Deborah Smith Douglas Presents “Deepening Prayer” for DOK Assembly

All Daughters of the King, are encouraged to mark their calendars for Deepening Prayer, the Diocesan Daughters Assembly on August 3-4 at the Bosque Center. New officers will be elected, and other business in the Order will be conducted. Deborah Smith Douglas will be the keynote speaker for Assembly. On Friday evening all Daughters are invited to visit with her about her book, The Praying Life, which is available from Dana Ace at St. Chad’s, acarden@gmail.com. Services by 10:30 AM following the DOK business meeting, Douglas will lead our annual retreat. The day will end with Eucharist about 3:00 PM. Her talks will be open to all, space permitting, and are sure to be inspiring. Registration info for Daughters will be available in May, and open registration will open in early July.

Daughters of the King are more than a group of women who get together to pray and study. Daughters of the King come in all ages and are at all stages of their Christian journey. The Vision statement of The Order of the Daughters of the King is “Christians of the Holy Spirit, our vision as Daughters of the King is to know Jesus Christ, to make Him known to others, and to become reflections of God’s love throughout the world.” The Order of the Daughters of the King is an international Order with 52 chapters in this Diocese. This sisterhood of women and girls each take a life-long vow to “lift high the cross” by living out a Rule of Life that embodies Prayer, Service, and Evangelism. If this sounds interesting, speak to your priest, contact Cindy Davis, diocesan president (cynthiaavisauxauth@gmail.com), or the Daughters of the King chapter in your parish. You can find more information on the National website: doknational.org, or at dkdaguilhas.blogspot.com.

Scotland’s First Female Bishop Consecrated for Aberdeen and Orkney

[Anglican News Service] The Primes of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Bishop Mark Strange, has consecrated the province’s first female bishop during a service in St Andrews Cathedral, Aberdeen. Bishop Anne Dyer was elected by the Province’s Synod last November as the Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney after the diocese twice failed to complete the electoral process. The congregation, which included a number of civic and church dignitaries, battled through extreme snow to reach the cathedral. The province first opened the doors to the consecration of women to the episcopate 14 years ago, but Bishop Anne is the first female selected in Scotland.

In January, the Primus issued a public rebuke to 18 clergy from the diocese who published an open letter criticising the selection of Anne Dyer, saying it “directly goes against the established wishes of the Diocese on the view that it would have been our new Bishop would hold and minister to us from the perspective of them.” Bishop Mark said that the election “followed a period of deep prayer and reflection on the part of the bishops” and that “the bishops fully believe and trust that they have been led by the Holy Spirit in their election of Canon Dyer. She too shares that conviction and looks forward to becoming the new Diocesan Bishop in response to God’s call.”

The diocese has two centres in part on her stated views on sexuality. In an interview this week with local newspaper The Press and Journal, Bishop Anne addressed the concerns, saying “the Scottish Episcopal Church officially acknowledges that there is not one view on marriage within our church today. We hold differing views according to our consciences, but it is the bishop’s role to try to hold diversity together, to enable those who disagree to find common cause and purpose, and see Christ present in every person. But I imagine this is one matter which people will have much to say to me in the months and years to come.”

Ahead of the service, Bishop Mark commented “it is a great privilege and honour to consecrate Anne as the new Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney and to welcome her to the College of Bishops. This will be a very special moment in the life of the Scottish Episcopal Church and it is heartening to hear of all the good wishes that people have expressed for the new stage of ministry and leadership that Anne now takes up in the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney.”

After the service, he said “I am delighted that despite the weather conditions, and the difficulties, Cathedral was full of people who simply rejoiced in response to the words ‘greet your new bishop’ with thunderous applause. It was for many of us a moment of spiritual joy.”

Let Us Be Grateful, United Thank Offering

By Ricke Sherritt

DRG UTO Coordinator

Did you know that gratitude makes you joyful? William Blake (1757-1827) is poet, an artist and an Anglican, as he was baptized in St. James Church, Piccadilly, London. He said, “Gratitude is heaven itself!” Today, David Brooks, author and NY Times commentator, finds the same joy in being grateful and says, “Gratitude happens when some kindness exceeds and excludes expectations, or even when it is undeserved.”

One of the UTO’s repeated expressions is “Let us expand the circle of gratitude.” We do that by giving consistently to UTO, and your gifts are passed along in grants for opportunities in programs that Episcopal churches provide for those who desperately need our help. The grants are manifold in our country and a few foreign ones.

Some of last year’s grants are 1. Renovate a school in Arizona. 2. Renovation and equipment for Leal, San Juan Mission, for Navajo Coders. 3. Translate the BCP into modern Gwich’in in Alaska. 4. Build a community center that includes a food pantry, free clothing shop for veterans, information center, free health screening and much more. 5. Purchase vehicle for San Juan Mission in New Mexico. There are many more grants to read about. If you want to read more of them, go to Episcopalchurch.org, then to United Thank Offering 2017 Grants. The number of grants where your gifts went is breathtaking, and this certainly expresses our gratitude for which we can be joyful.

Women’s Ministry Invites Input

What does Women’s Ministry look like in the 21st Century? It’s no longer women gathering over tea to pray or getting together to do good work. Women are now active in the total life of the church and community.

To support the varieties of gifts of today’s Christian women, for the past 7 years the Women’s Ministry in the diocesan church has offered retreats for reflection, gatherings for fellowship and rejuvenation, and events to inspire. Women around the diocese have come together for outreach and community, while celebrating our diverse talents and active lifestyles. Where do we want to go from here?

This year, we are anticipating an exciting event on August 17-18, when Boldly Forward will be held at the Bosque Center. This will be a time to look at the lives of some Biblical women, and continue developing our vision for going boldly forward in our lives in Christ in the Diocese of the Rio Grande. What new and continuing opportunities for outreach, retreats, inclusion of all ages, worship, and inspiration can we offer?

We are asking for all women to think about what Women’s Ministry means to you and to share that on the Women’s Ministry website (VarietiesOfGifts.blogspot.com) or Facebook page (Women’sMinistryODGRG). You may also complete the survey that will be emailed out in May, or simply share ideas with Cindy Davis, Coordinator of Women’s Ministries (cynthiaavisauxauth@gmail.com). If you feel called to be part of the Women’s Ministry council, contact Cindy.

HOPE RAISES FUNDS FOR ER&D

For the second consecutive year the women of Hope+in+the+Desert Episcopal Church have raised funds for Episcopal Relief and Development as part of their Lenten discipline. The funds have been raised specifically for micro-credit loans for women in third-world countries, allowing them to start home businesses to support themselves and their children. The Hope members are proud to share that they raised enough for five micro-credit loans this year.
**Bishop's Visitations**

**Holy Family Celebrates New Vicar**

Friends and church family members of Holy Family, Santa Fe, gathered at their Celebration of New Ministry Sunday, February 25. The Rev. Corinne Hodges was instituted as the new Vicar. The bishop gave an excellent sermon on trust, faith, perseverance and the unexpected.

(Photograph by the Very Rev. Canon Carole McGowan)

**Bishop Bailey Visits St. Mark’s**

Bishop Bailey visited St. Mark’s, Albuquerque, on February 25, and posed for a photo with the group who participated in confirmations, receptions and reaffirmation.

**Bishop celebrates**

Bishop Bailey visited St. Mark’s, Albuquerque, on February 25, and posed for a photo with the group who participated in confirmations, receptions and reaffirmation.

**Bishop Confirms 2 in Rio Rancho**

On March 4, Third Sunday of Lent, Bishop Michael visited St. Francis Church, where he confirmed Zeke Ward, an acolyte at St. Francis, and Ms. Erica Rozolsky, a member of Our Lady in the Valley, Albuquerque. Having the two together, from different parishes, reminded me of our oneness in Christ and in mission. There are no churches, just one Church, of which we are all members. Zeke is an active member of St. Francis, a junior at Cleveland High School, and a Special Olympics athlete, excelling at shotput, golf, bowling, track, basketball, swimming as well as other sports.

Afterwards, the Bishop met with children and youth and St. Francis’s vestry. He encouraged the Vestry, especially new vestry members, counseled them on navigating political waters, and told them to continue being committed to the “joy and transformation” of the community, which is part of their vision statement for 2018.

**Bishop Celebrates at Marfa**

Fr. Mike Wallens, Vicar of St. Paul’s, Marfa, Texas, stands with Bishop Michael Vono following the gathering for his visitation. With the Bishop are (from left): Allison Scott who reaffirmed her commitment, Chris Ellerbee, who was received into the church, Isaac Wonsowski, a future bishop, Deb Bloomer, who was received, and Keri van Zeyst, who was confirmed.

**Blessing of the Bikes**

The Rev. Paul Moore and Sarah Guck were chaplains to the Tour of the Gila again this year. They blessed the bikes and their riders and were available for any pastoral needs during the race. Moore was at the start on Day 2 and Guck was present at Days 3 and 4. She was also at the finish line on the final day.

**Confirmations in Clovis**

Bishop Michael Vono is flanked by the Reverends Suzanne and Alan Brockmeier as he lays hands on one of three persons confirmed during Bishop’s visitation to St. James Episcopal Church in Clovis, NM. Confirmed were Mike Hailey, Lizzy Lakin and Marie Pickard.
Holy Faith, Santa Fe, Donna Lukacs Celtic Illuminated Manuscript Workshop
- Artist, iconographer and teacher Susan Kelly vonMedicus returns to Holy Faith for a workshop on June 22–June 24. No artistic experience is necessary and all materials are provided. Students will make an illuminated page based on images from the Book of Kells. The theme is “living in peace” with animal images and students will choose a text on the theme. Students will immerse themselves in the mystical images, decorative devices, materials and history of the early church as expressed in Ireland. The fee, including materials is $225. If students wish to use prepared true deer skin vellum there is a surcharge of $40. Other options are a vegetable vellum (non-animal approximation) or Bockingford oatmeal color rag paper. Please indicate preference when registering. Registration with deposit is needed to hold your place. Please send registration including your name, email, phone number and $125.00 deposit to Susan Kelly vonMedicus, 408 Skippack Pike, Fort Washington, PA 19034 or Paypal accepted at email:eikon68@aol.com. Email ek68@aol.com with any questions.

St. Paul’s Peace, Las Vegas, Rev. Madelynn Johnston, Vicar
St. Paul’s Peace had an awe-filled joyous Easter after experiencing the days and liturgies of Holy Week. We began Holy Week by celebrating the Liturgy of the Palms and processing from the Children’s Chapel to the Church, then celebrated each of the liturgies of Holy Week sharing them with our brothers and sisters in Christ from the First United Methodist Church and the First United Presbyterian Church. For the first time, we hosted the Maundy Thursday liturgy in the Children’s Chapel. It turned out to be a perfect setting appreciated by all who attended.

Trinity on the Hill (TOTH), Los Alamos, Claire Singleton
On February 11, TOTH bade a fond farewell to Rev. Louise Weiss after the 10:30 am service. Although she officially retired from clergy duties on December 31, 2017, the parish wanted to show its appreciation. We celebrated Louise with a potluck lunch and special cake, and we wish her a long and happy retirement. She is still living in our parish and worshipping at TOTH, as well as remaining on hand to serve if required.

LA Cares provides food boxes for the food insecure in Los Alamos. In February, seven members of TOTH helped out at the LA Cares sorting party, as part of the Outreach Ministry, and hope to do so again in the future. On a different level of outreach, TOTH again sent a house-building team to Juarez, Mexico, to build a home for a needy family, working through Missions Ministries of Colorado. Plans are already being made for the next mission trip.

Holy Cross welcomes new Rector
Church of the Holy Cross, Edgewood, gathered for the Celebration of New Ministry for the new Rector, the Rev. Kristin Kopren on February 11. Pictured are the Rev. Rev. Adams Lovekin, founding Vicar of Holy Cross, seated, the Rev. Canon Raymond Raney, the preceding Rector, and the Rev. Kristin Kopren. Clergy from around the area participated in the event. (Photo by John Ball)

St. James, Taos, Gwendenn Glenn
St. James, Taos will host its annual Empty Bowls Event on Saturday, April 28, to raise funds in support of its weekly Food Pantry. Local potters will donate handmade bowls. Local restaurants will donate delicious soups and desserts. Community members will donate items of value for a silent auction. For $25, each attendee can choose and take home a lovely bowl, bid on items of value and enjoy a hearty lunch of soup, bread and dessert. Proceeds help buy the food. St. James gives away to the hungry each Thursday afternoon, 12:30 – 4:00.

St. Jerome’s, Chama, Rev. Canon Colin P. Kelly, Ill, Vicar
During Lent our St. Jerome’s Bible Study group studied Embracing the Uncertain. A Lenten Study for Unsteady Times by Maggie R. deVega. The author has selected scripture stories from the post-Transfiguration, pre-Passion journey of Christ and reflects on how Christ leads us to “engage life’s uncertainties, not ignore them.” It is so easy for us to be overwhelmed by the challenges of life in today’s world and, perhaps, to seek to flee them. Jesus faces them head on and provides the path for us to do likewise.

LA Cares provides food boxes for the food insecure in Los Alamos. In February, seven members of TOTH helped out at the LA Cares sorting party, as part of the Outreach Ministry, and hope to do so again in the future. On a different level of outreach, TOTH again sent a house-building team to Juarez, Mexico, to build a home for a needy family, working through Missions Ministries of Colorado. Plans are already being made for the next mission trip.

Holy Spirit, El Paso, Celebrates new Rector
Bishops flank the Rev. Canon Kathleen McNells on Saturday, April 14, at Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, El Paso, for the Celebration of New Ministry. Canon McNells welcomed Bishop Jerry Lamb and Bishop Michael Vono for a feast following the service.

Holy Family, Santa Fe, Camille Donoghue
Holy Family Santa Fe celebrated Maundy Thursday, prefacing the usual foot-washing service with stuffing socks for the homeless. Congregants stuff new socks with snacks and toiletries to pass out to people on the street. We managed to stuff 99 pairs! A pizza dinner went along with the outreach project. The socks were well received, as related by Becky Darden, “Kristina and I were driving home after the Easter service, pulling to a stop at the Opec Trail/ST Michaels Dr. intersection. An older man, looking weary, was standing on the road island. I rolled down the window and started to hand out the filled sock. He dropped his sign, smiled hugely, clapped his hands, and cried “oh goodly, goodly, goodly, goodly, goodly!” We didn’t say a thing, he already knew all about the sock and contents!! He carefully, with two hands, laid the sock with his knapsack as if the sock were a treasure so precious. Then he turned and smiled another enormous grin, and gave us the “two thumbs up”.

St. Jerome’s, Chama, Rev. Canon Colin P. Kelly, Ill, Vicar
During Lent our St. Jerome’s Bible Study group studied Embracing the Uncertain. A Lenten Study for Unsteady Times by Maggie R. deVega. The author has selected scripture stories from the post-Transfiguration, pre-Passion journey of Christ and reflects on how Christ leads us to “engage life’s uncertainties, not ignore them.” It is so easy for us to be overwhelmed by the challenges of life in today’s world and, perhaps, to seek to flee them. Jesus faces them head on and provides the path for us to do likewise.

LA Cares provides food boxes for the food insecure in Los Alamos. In February, seven members of TOTH helped out at the LA Cares sorting party, as part of the Outreach Ministry, and hope to do so again in the future. On a different level of outreach, TOTH again sent a house-building team to Juarez, Mexico, to build a home for a needy family, working through Missions Ministries of Colorado. Plans are already being made for the next mission trip.

Holy Spirit, El Paso, Celebrates new Rector
Bishops flank the Rev. Canon Kathleen McNells on Saturday, April 14, at Holy Spirit Episcopal Church, El Paso, for the Celebration of New Ministry. Canon McNells welcomed Bishop Jerry Lamb and Bishop Michael Vono for a feast following the service.

Holy Family, Santa Fe, Camille Donoghue
Holy Family Santa Fe celebrated Maundy Thursday, prefacing the usual foot-washing service with stuffing socks for the homeless. Congregants stuff new socks with snacks and toiletries to pass out to people on the street. We managed to stuff 99 pairs! A pizza dinner went along with the outreach project. The socks were well received, as related by Becky Darden, “Kristina and I were driving home after the Easter service, pulling to a stop at the Opec Trail/ST Michaels Dr. intersection. An older man, looking weary, was standing on the road island. I rolled down the window and started to hand out the filled sock. He dropped his sign, smiled hugely, clapped his hands, and cried “oh goodly, goodly, goodly, goodly, goodly!” We didn’t say a thing, he already knew all about the sock and contents!! He carefully, with two hands, laid the sock with his knapsack as if the sock were a treasure so precious. Then he turned and smiled another enormous grin, and gave us the “two thumbs up”.

St. James, Taos, Gwendenn Glenn
St. James, Taos will host its annual Empty Bowls Event on Saturday, April 28, to raise funds in support of its weekly Food Pantry. Local potters will donate handmade bowls. Local restaurants will donate delicious soups and desserts. Community members will donate items of value for a silent auction. For $25, each attendee can choose and take home a lovely bowl, bid on items of value and enjoy a hearty lunch of soup, bread and dessert. Proceeds help buy the food. St. James gives away to the hungry each Thursday afternoon, 12:30 – 4:00.

St. Jerome’s, Chama, Rev. Canon Colin P. Kelly, Ill, Vicar
During Lent our St. Jerome’s Bible Study group studied Embracing the Uncertain. A Lenten Study for Unsteady Times by Maggie R. deVega. The author has selected scripture stories from the post-Transfiguration, pre-Passion journey of Christ and reflects on how Christ leads us to “engage life’s uncertainties, not ignore them.” It is so easy for us to be overwhelmed by the challenges of life in today’s world and, perhaps, to seek to flee them. Jesus faces them head on and provides the path for us to do likewise.

LA Cares provides food boxes for the food insecure in Los Alamos. In February, seven members of TOTH helped out at the LA Cares sorting party, as part of the Outreach Ministry, and hope to do so again in the future. On a different level of outreach, TOTH again sent a house-building team to Juarez, Mexico, to build a home for a needy family, working through Missions Ministries of Colorado. Plans are already being made for the next mission trip.

Holy Cross welcomes new Rector
Church of the Holy Cross, Edgewood, gathered for the Celebration of New Ministry for the new Rector, the Rev. Kristin Kopren on February 11. Pictured are the Rev. Rev. Adams Lovekin, founding Vicar of Holy Cross, seated, the Rev. Canon Raymond Raney, the preceding Rector, and the Rev. Kristin Kopren. Clergy from around the area participated in the event. (Photo by John Ball)
EL PASO—Holy Spirit Church Rocks!

The church rocks with rocks, thousands of colorful landscaping rocks that now cover much of the once-barren land that comprises the property in northeastern El Paso. New plants and other shrubbery dot the church grounds and further enhance its appearance.

The new rock landscaping is but one of several upgrades being done to the surrounding property, as well as the interior of church buildings. These upgrades will be carried out in a three-phase plan to give the church, built in the early 1990s, a new look as it looks to the future and new growth.

Funding for the church’s capital improvements comes from the sale of some of its adjacent land for the construction of a commercial enterprise.

The Rev. Canon Kathy McNellis, rector of Holy Spirit, sees this facelift as actions that will “propel us forward and prepare to welcome all those whom the Lord will bring to us.” She sees Holy Spirit as becoming a more “multi-purpose” facility, which is more welcoming to the surrounding community.

“We are moving in the right direction,” points out Norene Petman, senior warden and parish administrator. Phase One is complete, she adds. Overall, the upgrades are 85 percent finished. They include:

1. A fresh coat of paint in earth tones on the exterior of the main building to replace the original sun-faded red.
2. New kitchen appliances and new paint in the parish hall.
3. New water heaters.
4. New central air conditioning for main building and parish hall. No more problems with swamp coolers.
5. Junior warden happier.
6. Garden area landscaped between church buildings and canopy installed.
7. New piano and organ for the church. Underseaing Bishop Michael Vono’s theme of “Sing a New Song” Phase Two is coming in the spring and will include more landscaping to include “quiet places” to meditate. Also, there will be new flooring in the parish hall.

“We are moving forward,” McNellis says. “We are casting a vision to the future. We are on the cusp of a wonderful future as we seek to serve the community in Christ’s name.”

Healing the Veteran Heart

"Veterans do not need more barbecues, picnics or trips to amusement parks. These are all very nice and I have enjoyed most of them. What we do need is community, connection to ourselves, each other and to God" – The Rev. David Peters, author and veteran

Peters goes on with his comments saying, “Moral injury disrupts the connections in a veteran’s life. The memories of things done and left undone paralyze many, causing withdrawal and isolation.”

In his book, Post-Traumatic Grief, Peters explains the experiences he had as an active duty ground soldier and the PTSD that has resulted from that time in service. He says that war must be morally neutral in order for people to live through the experiences and then each person must have a place to debrief his or her spirit.

Beginning May 31 from 5:30-7 on Thursday evenings and running for six weeks, St. Chad’s Episcopal Church will host a group to help our veterans to allow time to talk and put into perspective the moral injury suffered by veterans and others. Each session will be followed by a fellowship dinner provided by the church. The sessions will be facilitated by The Rev. Jan Haseoa and will follow a format developed by Brite Divinity School.

For an application or more information, contact The Rev. Jan Haseoa at St. Chad’s Episcopal Church, 856-9200.

Uncovering More of Our Church’s “Roots”

The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande has a rich and colorful history in its work to serve the spiritual needs of the people of the high desert and mountains of New Mexico and far West Texas. There have been several books written about the history of the Diocese and many more written about the individual churches themselves. Within every church there are possibly many more stories to tell.

My wife and I became involved in an exercise last year that started out as a simple inquiry and turned into a fascinating journey to write a story about several young men who were members of the First vested choir in the early 1900s at St. James, and were students at what was then known as NM College of Mechanic and Agricultural Arts, now NMSU.

The inquiry started when a piece of furniture was moved and revealed a part of a stained glass window dedicated to the memory of two individuals. As a member of the vestry at the time, I asked if anyone had contacted the families of the individuals whose names were inscribed on the east panel of the window that had been blocked. It turned out no one in the church knew much about the individuals or their families. A booklet written in 2000, A Tour of St. James Church by Lorraine Southward, mentioned the windows, but gave little additional information.

My wife Marge, a retired reference librarian, led the charge in finding out information about the young men. Her research involved examining publications held in the Rio Grande Historical Collection at the NMSU Library, including regional newspapers and NMSU yearbooks. On the web, she gleaned information from Ancestry.com and online cemetery records.

More information was found in Diocesan records which are on file at the Institute of Historical Survey in Las Cruces to locate the graves of two of the young men.

The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande has a rich and colorful history in its work to serve the spiritual needs of the people of the high desert and mountains of New Mexico and far West Texas. There have been several books written about the history of the Diocese and many more written about the individual churches themselves. Within every church there are possibly many more stories to tell.

My wife and I became involved in an exercise last year that started out as a simple inquiry and turned into a fascinating journey to write a story about several young men who were members of the First vested choir in the early 1900s at St. James, and were students at what was then known as NM College of Mechanic and Agricultural Arts, now NMSU.

The inquiry started when a piece of furniture was moved and revealed a part of a stained glass window dedicated to the memory of two individuals. As a member of the vestry at the time, I asked if anyone had contacted the families of the individuals whose names were inscribed on the east panel of the window that had been blocked. It turned out no one in the church knew much about the individuals or their families. A booklet written in 2000, A Tour of St. James Church by Lorraine Southward, mentioned the windows, but gave little additional information.

My wife Marge, a retired reference librarian, led the charge in finding out information about the young men. Her research involved examining publications held in the Rio Grande Historical Collection at the NMSU Library, including regional newspapers and NMSU yearbooks. On the web, she gleaned information from Ancestry.com and online cemetery records.

More information was found in Diocesan records which are on file at the Institute of Historical Survey in Las Cruces to locate the graves of two of the young men.

We also reached out to the public library in YsLand City, MS, and found an extremely helpful librarian who provided us with background on one of the more interesting individuals in the group of young men we named “Choir Boys.” That led to an inquiry to their local newspaper for more details about the young man and ultimately led to an article in that publication about our search. Throughout this search, our rector, Fr. Nicholas Funk, was supportive and enthusiastic about our endeavor.

Our final result is a story of seven young men who had all served as members of the choir while they were students at the college. The St. James Choir was an integral part of the university and the Las Cruces community. Sadly, all of the young men were struck down in their prime from a variety of illnesses or physical conditions that likely could have been cured with today’s medicine.

An eighth person who was memorialized in one of the windows was a young man whose father was one of the principal founders of St. James. He served as the “Cruiser” or cross bearer when leading the choir into the church and was likely befriended by all of the young men in the choir. He died at the age of 14. Two beautiful stained glass windows at St. James were dedicated to the memory of seven of the young men in a special ceremony in 1906. The windows were dedicated a short time after the windows were dedicated and he is memorialized on a plaque adjacent to the memorial windows.

We hope you take time to ponder the lives of those who have been memorialized in your own church and perhaps, like my wife and me, take a little extra time to find out what made those individuals worthy of being remembered for their work at the church. It may turn into a fascinating story that helps you and others gain a greater appreciation of the rich history of your church.

A copy of the article we wrote is available on the St. James website under the New/Events section using this link: www.stjameslascruces.org/news—events.html
Introducing the Next Bishop of the Rio Grande

Continued from page 3

In November of 2017, St. Michael & All Angels Church received an urgent request from the New Mexico Faith Coalition for Immigration Justice: asking us to provide emergency housing for a family from Angola who had entered the United States seeking asylum and had the temporary legal status in this country, but nowhere to live. The family had fled Angola the previous May, after the father had been beaten, tortured, and threatened with death by the police. The mother and children themselves had also been beaten. Together they traveled through Cuba, Central America and Mexico on their way to the United States, presenting themselves at the United States border in El Paso in October to seek asylum. By that time, they had left little except the clothes on their backs.

St. Michael’s responded to the Faith Coalition’s request for housing with a flurry of activity, making room for the mother and children in what is our parish office complex. The mother and her daughter, age 10, and her son, 8, have been living at the church ever since. The husband remains in detention at an immigration center in El Paso, as is typical in asylum cases, awaiting the processing of his application. The children attend a nearby elementary school, where they are flourishing, and St. Michael’s parishioners help the mother and children to create something like a normal home life. Members of the congregation have taken them on the four-hour drive to El Paso to visit their husband and father on several occasions. Parishioners are also helping with the family’s expenses and legal matters, with additional financial support from outside the parish.

At the time of the Faith Coalition’s request for help, St. Michael’s had been in discernment regarding offering sanctuary to immigrants who are under threat of deportation. Two other local congregations had already taken that step. The Albuquerque Friends Meeting, and the First Congregational United Church of Christ. Vestry member David McGuire recalls that, “conversational topics often veered into the hypothetical, as we worried about ‘what if’ and ‘what if that.’ But this family isn’t ‘hypothetical.’” As Joe Bilton, our parish’s rector, observed, “Having this family join the St. Michael’s family has allowed our parish to face to face-to face the real humanitarian crisis that is occurring in our country around the issue of immigration, just below the surface. It has given us an opportunity to welcome Christ into our midst.” Aluding to Matthew 25, he noted that it seemed as if it was Jesus who was knocking at the parish door, and if the congregation did not receive the family in, it had turned away Christ himself. “I did not see how we could expect to thrive spiritually, if we turned our backs on Jesus,” he said. As a natural extension of St. Michael’s long-standing commitment to the full inclusion of all people, the presence of the family has energized the parish to respond in a multitude of ways. At the annual Good Friday Urban Way of the Cross in downtown Albuquerque, for instance, McGuire shared his experience that, “For me, as for many of us, doing good has often meant writing checks and having generous intentions. Helping this family find a new beginning for their lives has allowed me to practice things I have said and heard for Sundays on end, but have not followed. This family has blessed our church by bringing the Gospel to life for us.”

If you are interested in discussing the blessings and challenges of offering shelter or sanctuary to immigrants at your church, we would be glad to share our experience with you. As parishioner Dick Lamport remarks, “The extent of physical and psychological burdens on the asylum seekers is difficult to comprehend even as we provide what comfort and support God has given us the grace to do.” We certainly don’t profess to be experts. But we are finding our way day by day, just like the family we are hosting.

If you would like to contact us, please email Dick Lamport, a member of the Immigration Committee, at giftplanner@comcast.net, or call 415-970-2380.
A Milestone: the 25th House Built in Juárez

By Gerry Fairbrother, PhD, with comments and help from members of the St Bede’s group.

This year marked the 25th house built in Juárez by the St Bede’s group. Our group from St Bede’s is almost always accompanied by other community members and some years, like this year, we built with members of Trinity-on-the-Hill. The building is done under the auspices of Missions Ministries (MM), and as partners with the MM team on the ground in Juárez, MM makes it a point to hire local Juárez workers, so many of our buildings are done in Spanish. We have tried to tell a story about local customs and conditions. This year the two churches, along with the MM team, each built a house, so there were two houses for two families build this year. I was pleased to learn that Deans of other Episcopal groups in Santa Fe and elsewhere joined us in our work together at the Mission Ministries compound.

The two families were deeply moved by the house and by the expression of love and caring represented by the builders. The gift changed their lives. We, the building teams, were moved as well, and we, too, were changed by this experience.

Building the house and turning it over to the family

The houses were each built in a day and a half, an amazing feat. We started with the basics put in place by the MM team: a concrete slab and boards cut to size for the house. The first day, walls were erected, insulation put in house walls, and electrical dry walled in place and the roof built. On the morning of the second day, the houses were painted inside and out and furnishings for the family and other gifts put inside. Houses typically have electricity, but not running water. The St Bede’s group gave our family a cistern, as we typically do, to hold water, delivered weekly, for cooking, bathing and other household needs. Both teams gave their families a stove, in addition to toys, furniture, and other household items, and Trinity-on-the-Hill also gave their family a refrigerator.

The ceremony handing over the keys and blessing the house is the highlight of the trip. The family and pastor say what getting the house means to them. And we say what building the house and getting to know the family means to us. The statements are heartfelt and often tearful. After handing over the keys, the family enters their new home for the first time, and sees the beautifully painted walls, the stove, furniture and other gifts. Both families were overwhelmed, and shed more tears. The children were gleeful at seeing the toys.

We left more than a house this year, as in other years

In almost all years, we have noticed and responded to other needs. And always, this response requires learning more about life in Juárez and our families. This year was no exception. Some of the group had talked about organizing a mission that addressed medical needs and this year plans were laid for a diabetes prevention workshop. The Episcopal Church is dedicated to drawing other vulnerable communities and intentionally caring for God’s creation. We provide additional insights. You can contact us at the church offices.

Diocesan Liaison

In the position of liaison for the Dioceses of the Rio Grande, and I am writing to describe EPPN, some of its work, and what liaison activities might look like.

What is the work of EPPN?

This office is active in a variety of important social issues. Their website highlights these major topics: Environment, Immigration, Hunger, Healthcare, Water, and Food Security. Before my retirement three years ago, I was a member of St Bede’s in Santa Fe and am a retired health services researcher. Before my retirement three years ago, I was a member of St Bede’s in Santa Fe and am a retired health services researcher. Before my retirement three years ago, I was a member of St Bede’s in Santa Fe and am a retired health services researcher.

EPPN statement on immigrants and other vulnerable communities

The Episcopal Church is dedicated to drawing a circle of protection around vulnerable communities and intentionally caring for God’s creation. We advocate on a range of other issues where we see the church including restoring, sustaining, and empowering communities affected by the U.S. criminal justice system. We advocate for federal budget funding to support the poorest and most-vulnerable among us, and we advocate for affordable, accessible healthcare for all Americans.

The Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN) is a grassroots network of Episcopalians across the country dedicated to an active ministry of public policy advocacy. It is run by the staff of Presiding Bishop Curry at the Office of Government Relations of the Episcopal Church in Washington, DC. The Episcopal Public Policy Network is a member of the Fe chapter of RESULTS, a national anti-poverty advocacy group and the Health Action New Mexico. So, I have stayed current with policy issues, and have good background for EPPN work. I also speak Spanish, attend the Spanish service at St Bede’s, and am active with the groups in Santa Fe that support immigrants.

Where do we go from here?

The national office knows WHAT it would like to see happen. HOW this is to happen is something to be worked out together. I will be meeting with Deans to start the process. I am open to ideas and happy to work with others. In fact, that is the point!
Two Ways to Approach the Prayer Book

[Episcopal News Service] "The prospect of revising the current Book of Common Prayer is filled with risk, complexity and potentially great promise." That is the gentle invitation that the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music put before the Episcopal Church five months before the start of the 79th General Convention. The church does not revise the prayer book lightly or frequently. The current book dates to 1979, which replaced the 1928 version.

The General Convention asked in 1997 that the Standing Liturgical Commission, as it then was known, develop a comprehensive plan for prayer book revision. The group worked and convention approved it in 2000 but failed to provide adequate funding. However, that effort resulted in the liturgical commission's developing a series of supplemental liturgies known as "Enriching Our Worship." In 2015, General Convention changed the liturgy and music committee with presenting a plan for a comprehensive revision of the Book of Common Prayer to the upcoming gathering July 5-13 in Austin, Texas. After considering four different approaches, the SCLM is offering the comprehensive plan, as requested, as well as a way for the church to spend time discerning the future shape of its common prayer. The SCLM has included "guiding assumptions," work plans, suggested processes and tools, hundreds of pages of supplemental material and budgets for each approach.

The approaches are described in a portion of the SCLM's Blue Book report released to the church February 13. The prayer book subcommittee's report is here. All the information represents what the group explored and synthesized, according to the Rev. Devon Anderson, SCLM chair. It is being offered to General Convention as a resource to help guide the conversation on what should be done.

The first option would move the church immediately into a full-blown prayer book revision process that would be complete in nine years. The second option calls on the church to plumb the depths of the current Book of Common Prayer's theology, as well as its usefulness as a tool for unity in a diverse church, for evangelism and discipleship.

The commission sees this work as part of the reconciliation for which Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has called in Becoming Beloved Community. The Episcopal Church's Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Reconciliation, and Justice: "One concrete way to invest in 'the flourishing of every person' as described in that document, is to offer the poetic beauty and depth of the Book of Common Prayer in the languages in which it is 'the prayer of the church,'" the commission says.

The commission estimates that beginning comprehensive prayer book revision would cost $1.9 million in the 2019-21 triennium alone, and the entire revision process would cost between $7.7 and $8.8 million. The estimate for the second approach is $1.1 million for one triennium only, a price tag that includes the suggested translations project but not a formal prayer book revision process.

General Convention will Again Grapple with Same-Sex Marriage Questions

[Episcopal News Service] On June 26, 2015, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, the 78th General Convention was in its second day. A few days later, convention authorized two new marriage rites for trial use (Resolution A036) by both same-sex and opposite-sex couples. The bishops and deputies also made the canonical definition (via Resolution A036) of marriage gender-neutral. When the convention authorized the liturgies in 2015, bishops and直营 needs of congregations. The book includes church-year-specific things such as seasonal blessings, a Christmas Festival of Lessons and Music, and a service for All Hallows' Eve. The committee has prepared a revision that modernizes "archaic language" and adds new material, some of it at the specific direction of convention to "cut red tape for changing liturgies," the committee says.

The commission estimates that beginning comprehensive prayer book revision would cost $1.9 million in the 2019-21 triennium alone, and the entire revision process would cost between $7.7 and $8.8 million. The estimate for the second approach is $1.1 million for one triennium only, a price tag that includes the suggested translations project but not a formal prayer book revision process.

General Convention will Again Grapple with Same-Sex Marriage Questions

[Episcopal News Service] On June 26, 2015, when a U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalized same-sex marriage nationwide, the 78th General Convention was in its second day. A few days later, convention authorized two new marriage rites for trial use (Resolution A036) by both same-sex and opposite-sex couples. The bishops and
Let me set the stage--
The year is 1999, April 20th. Google defines this day as a massacre.
Did you know that 13 people were turned into angels by bullets that day?
Did you know that 20 others lived with scars, a massacre against their own skin?
I tend to wonder if that morning there was a bad feeling in the air. I tend to wonder if breathing was parallel to trying to drink a thick and frozen milkshake through a straw. Was the air thick and frozen that day?
What about December 14, 2012? Newton Connecticut isn’t the coldest place on earth but I bet that day that deep breaths became ice skating rinks and words and condolences slid across them.
Children lined up hands on each other’s shoulders and tears creating canyons down their faces. Parent's huddled together like newborn chicks
Sandy Hook Elementary was the star of the news cast that night.
Did you know that the core of the earth and the base of stars is iron? Humans have 3 to 4 grams of iron in them. And despite the circumstances I’d like to believe that in those 11 minutes 26 more stars were added to our universe.
I’d like to believe in the iron streak that tangle into the mess the world has become. And yet 5 years 8 months and 17 days later 15 people were moved down like grass on a sticky summer morning. Dew drops became blood that day.
When we don’t know someone we can’t truly imagine a face. But every single one of those people had heartbeats.
In autumn we expect leaves to fall not bodies! But 700 am bus rides could be last breaths and walking out on that front porch can be your last view.
Campers are invited to come explore their inner superhero!
Campers are invited to come explore their inner superhero!
Campers are invited to come explore their inner superhero!
Campers are invited to come explore their inner superhero!
£275 per camper.
Meet Harry Potter, Aslan, Iron Man, Marvel, Rover, Wonder Woman, and many summer camp activities. £275 per camper.
Campers enjoy s’mores, songs, and worship!£275 per camper.
Incorporating all the fun camp activities with bible study and worship. £275 per camper.
£275 per camper.
£275 per camper.
£275 per camper.
JUNE 17-23
(Junes 13-18)
(Ages 8-12)
FAMILY CAMP
£275 per camper.
Early Bird Discount Available Through April 13, 2018
To register, visit: www.bishopsridge.org
For more information email pmote@dioceserg.org
SUBMISSIONS:
Editorial comment and correspondence may be mailed to: Diocesan House 6400 Cours Blvd NW Albuquerque, NM 87102
Submissions and Inquiries should be emailed to: Together@dioceserg.org
TO GETHER SUBMISSION DEADLINES FOR 2018
JULY/AUGUST 2018 Submission deadline: June 15
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2018 Submission deadline: August 10
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2018 Submission deadline: October 12
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2019 Submission deadline: December 7
PHOTOGRAPHY SUBMISSIONS
Please submit high resolution photographs with stories to ensure the best possible print reproduction.
Email to: Together@dioceserg.org
COVER PHOTO:
Iris The Bosque Center Albuquerque, NM Photo by Raymond Raney
SUBSCRIPTION
Visit the Together website at www.dioceserg.org for archive copies of the newsletter.
If you wish to subscribe to the Diocesan weekly e-mail newsletter send an e-mail to iris@dioceserg.org