Together SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2019

in the
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE
OF THE RIO GRANDE

2019 CONVENTION

Photo by Raymund Roney
Reflecting on Our First Year Together

By the Right Reverend Michael B. Hunn
Bishop, Diocese of the Rio Grande

It is hard to believe that it’s been nearly a year since Meg and Dodi and I arrived to begin our life and work in the Diocese of the Rio Grande. The welcome we have received throughout the Diocese has been heartwarming and gracious. I cannot tell you how blessed I feel to be your Bishop. I cannot tell you how much we have come to love and cherish and care for all of you. Together we have learned a lot. We have worked together to clarify the difference between what we should do together at the Diocesan level, and what ministry is better left to local congregations. We cut 10% of our budget to adapt to the depletion of the St. Clement’s settlement fund, and together we thought long and hard about our priorities for the future.

We have begun transforming the focus of our diocesan staff – focusing their attention on congregations to help each congregation thrive – big and small, rural and urban, Texan and New Mexican. We have made a commitment to invest in our next generation of church leadership – focusing on youth ministry and family ministry at the local and diocesan levels – by increasing our less-than-part-time Diocesan Youth Minister to full-time in order to support congregational and Diocesan-wide youth ministry. Our young people must be our priority.

Knowing that the way we have done things in the past will not work in the future, we have committed to a bold new experiment – a three-year commitment to put a curate in the Big Bend region of our Diocese. If this project works well and provides the priestly ministry those small far-flung rural Texas congregations need at the price the Diocese can afford, we could replicate that model in other parts of our Diocese.

We have committed to re-imagine what the Episcopal Church might look like and become clearer in the years ahead, but we are committed to it and to our indigenous neighbors.

This new process of building our budget together has been incredibly challenging. In a country that is deeply divided by partisan bickering, we have come together across political and theological divides and bridged vast geographical distances to work together in the name of God. We have built trust with one another as we trust that in Jesus Christ we are one body, because we all share in one bread, one cup.

We have responded with love and compassion as thousands of people have sought asylum in the United States by crossing the southern border of our Diocese. We have responded as a man, filled with hate and racism ideology, shot and killed many of us and terrorized the largest city in our Diocese.

Together we will continue extending the love of God in this place. We will continue to deepen the roots of our faith and broaden our reach, like trees standing beside streams of water.

It has only been one year. And we will have many more years of serving God together. I want you to know I love this Diocese deeply. I want you to know I feel a deep gratitude in my soul for the chance to serve with you. I am extremely excited about the future we will share together with God.

#ElPasoStrong
El Paso Shooting Memorial. (Photo by Ruperto Miller)

She told me about how she and her mother, who is 81 years old, dove under the table at the Walmart and hid from the gunfire while shots rang out. If you were watching the news, you would have seen the video of her running from the shelterings in El Paso, you saw the video she took while hiding under the table.

She saw the gunman face-to-face just a few yards away while her reloading weapon. “I felt like I was looking into the eyes of the devil,” she told me. “I knew as soon as he got the gun loaded he was gonna point it directly at my mother and me. But then he didn’t, he heard a noise, he turned and started shooting in the other direction. My mother and I dove under the table. Really we were praying for a miracle and our prayer was answered when the Virgin Mary protected us.” She told me she felt the hand of God with her, and tears welled up in her eyes. She wondered out loud why she had been spared. And why others died that day.

“When he walked away in the other direction, the door of the building opened and a brave Walmart employee was yelling to us, ‘Get out now, get out now,’ he yelled.” She told me it felt like it took ages to help her mother get to her feet. “I took my mother by the arm. ‘We’ve got to go now,’ I said, and we turned to dash for the door. ‘Wait,’ my mother said. ‘I have to get my cup of coffee.’ ‘Mom, leave the coffee, we’ve got to get out now!’” She told me, both of them laughing at the memory.

I will always remember my dinner with this woman for the rest of my life. There is something particularly poignant in this moment because the woman I’m talking about, she was...LIKE TREES PLANTED BY STREAMS OF WATER

BISHOP’S MESSAGES

Gummen Attack the DRG-Supported Shelter in Juárez

By the Right Reverend Michael B. Hunn
Bishop, Diocese of the Rio Grande

One Sunday during the last week of August the shelter the Diocese of the Rio Grande supports in Juárez was attacked by three gunmen from a drug cartel. About 8 pm the back door burst open and three men entered carrying pistols. They demanded money and any money that was available. Those people who didn’t have money or resisted were beaten, battered and bruised. At least one man’s ribs were broken. Perhaps the most devastating of all, the robbers stole the immigration documents that these asylum seekers need to make their claim with the Border Patrol. Already traumatized, these asylum seekers are desperately waiting for their appointments without money, without their cell phones, without documents.

And it happened in the shelter that is run by us. As Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande, I feel in my gut that people who had robbed and beaten were...Continued on page 13
About the Diocesan Positions Open

CATHEDRAL CHAPTER – Though by Canon this body functions as the governing body for the Cathedral, the Cathedral Vestry is responsible for the ordinary operations of the Cathedral parish. The Chapter is the canonical body that serves in the capacity of the search committee when the office of Dean of the Cathedral is vacant. The Cathedral Vestry and Wardens are members of the Chapter, as are the Bishop and Dean, along with three (3) at-large members, elected for three-year terms. This Convention we will select one (1) lay or clergy person for a three (3) year term, and one (1) lay or clergy person for a two (2) year term. Meets as called.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIZED – Shall advise and assist the Bishop with the implementation of Title III of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, determine the present and future opportunities and needs for ministry of all baptized persons, and in the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry and assessment of readiness therefore. This Convention we will elect one (1) clergy person for a four (4) year term. Meets 3 times a year, and as called.

STANDING COMMITTEE / TRUSTEES OF THE PROPERTY – the council of advice for the Bishop. Consists of equal numbers of lay (3) and clergy (3) members with staggered terms; there is a two-year limit. Lay members must have been adult communicants in good standing in this Diocese for at least one (1) year. If there is no bishop, this body governs the Diocese and arranges for an election. It determines certification of candidates for Holy Orders according to the Canons, supervises secular legal functions, manages diocesan properties, advises on diocesan personnel policies, and oversees the overall personnel policies and procedures. Meets as called.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL – Reviews diocesan mission, vision, plans, programs and goals. Determines Fair Share policy and levels, and oversees the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry and assessment of readiness therefore. This Convention we will elect the following:
- One Lay or Clergy Person for a two-year term
- One Lay or Clergy Person for a three-year term

COMMISSION OF DISCIPLINARY BOARD – Shall advise and assist the Bishop with the implementation of Title III of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, determine the present and future opportunities and needs for ministry of all baptized persons, and in the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry and assessment of readiness therefore. This Convention we will elect one (1) clergy person for a four (4) year term. Meets 3 times a year, and as called.

Floor Nomination Procedures

1. A biographical information (nomination) form is required from candidates to be nominated from the floor. The form is available at: https://www.dioceserg.org/ForCongregations/Clergy/diocesan-convention

2. No candidate may stand for election to more than one of the following positions:
   - Standing Committee
   - Diocesan Council
   - Commission on Ministry

3. At the time of the report of the Nominating Committee, the floor will be opened for other nominations.

4. All required signatures of clergy, senior warden or bishop’s warden must be included on the form, all clergy candidates must have the endorsement of their area dean.

5. No candidate may stand for election to more than one of the following positions:
   - Standing Committee
   - Diocesan Council
   - Commission on Ministry

6. No supporting speeches for candidates will be permitted, either for those nominated from the floor or those nominated prior to convention.
About the Diocesan Positions Open

DISCIPLINARY BOARD – The specific duties, functions, and responsibilities are set forth in Title IV of the Canons of The Episcopal Church. Briefly, the Church and each Diocese shall support their members in their call to Christ and seek to resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected. Proceedings represent the responsibility of the Church to determine who shall serve as Members of the Clergy of the Church, reflecting the polity and order of this hierarchical church. The Board is composed of nine (9) members, four (4) Lay and five (5) clergy elected for four-year terms. This Convention will elect one (1) lay person and one (1) clergy persons for four (4) year terms. Meets once a year, or as called.

GENERAL CONVENTION DEPUTIES – At the Convention occurring two years prior to each General Convention of the Church, the Convention shall elect clerical and lay deputies, plus alternates, to represent the Diocese at the succeeding General Convention and any Synod of the Province. Each clerical deputy must be canonically and actually resident in this Diocese for at least one year prior to election. Each lay deputy must be actually resident and an adult communicant in good standing of a congregation of this Diocese for at least one year prior to election. The deputies shall serve until their successors are elected or designated. This Convention will elect four (4) lay persons and four (4) clergy persons for three (3) year terms as Deputies, and four (4) lay persons and four (4) clergy persons for three (3) year terms as alternates.

STANDING COMMITTEE, CLERGY (CANON 4)

The Rev. Jan Hosea
St. Chad’s Episcopal Church
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 12
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2010

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?

Two years ago I was elected to fulfill an unexpired term. I would like to have a full term to complete the work started in these last two years. The Standing Committee has undertaken some big tasks to update and reconcile all policies for the DRG to insure completeness, accuracy, congruency and appropriateness of these policies. I believe that continuity is important in this position and I am willing to continue to serve in this capacity. The Standing Committee members also serve as the Trustees of the Property for the DRG and that work is crucial for building working relationships with churches, both parishes and missions.

Bishop Michael has begun some exciting work and I would like to be a part of developing the programs and policies of the diocese on this journey.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

Currently: Standing Committee, elected from Standing Committee to be liaison to Council, Disciplinary Board (term ends this year, not running for an additional term) Diocesan Stewardship Chair, Diocesan Chaplain for Daughter of the King (4 years, ended in August) Congressional Life and Development Team. I have also served on COMIB. Before I was ordained I was a vestry member and warden. These experiences give me insights into what our congregations are facing from the lay viewpoint.

As a business owner and former Chief Executive Officer and Development Officer for large non-profit corporations, I learned management and facilitation skills that serve me well today. I earned a Master’s Degree in Philanthropy and Development and later taught in that program. All of these experiences directly apply to the work we do on the Standing Committee and as Trustees of the property.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

This time of change is challenging. I desire all of our congregations the ability to thrive and I believe I have skills and knowledge that I can lend to that process.

The first opportunity on the agenda is the 2020 budget which should be discussed and passed at this convention. Next would be working with our congregations, especially aided ones to ensure their vitality. The first step to implement the vitality priority is to create teams of specialists in our deanery areas to address the ever changing needs of our congregations. For example, teams to do vestry (Bishop’s committee) training, Stewardship, Membership. The border crisis is an ever-changing target of opportunity to be Jesus in the world. As we continue to address the needs of the Asylum Seekers and others we must be the advocate for fair and just treatment and do radical hospitality. Priorities of programmatic emphasis include working with Hispanic/Latino peoples and Indigenous peoples including pueblo nations, Comanche, Navajo and Navajoapland communities. Dialogue is imperative to understand the needs.

We cannot forget the marginalized, especially homeless, elderly, mentally challenged, grieving, and veterans. All are a part of our church family and need specialized care.

Growth in our churches includes numbers as well as spiritual depth. As we continue to seek new and younger members, we must be vigilant to the needs developing in our current membership. Setting the example and opening doors for growing depth of spirit is a challenge we, as clergy, must take very seriously. The diocese can provide opportunities for workshops and retreats to meet this objective.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

Daily morning prayer, weekly Eucharist, usually including a mid-week Eucharist, one-on-one pastoral care, spiritual direction, walking in the hills for quiet time with God and listening to the Holy Spirit. I appreciate my clergy colleagues’ willingness to listen when needed and I enjoy being a sounding board for other clergy. I continue to do Continuing Clergy Education and reading for each of the last 3 years I have been on a team going to Uganda, Africa. The Mustard Seed Babies Home, an orphanage in Homa, was started by a church from the US and the Anglican Church in Africa. What an amazing and humbling experience it continues to be! Our Diocese is primarily rural and many small communities do not have access to churches. What an opportunity for Missions and Missionary work.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

Attending church regularly. Trying to be an active involved member whenever possible. Charity work and volunteering when possible. Reading daily devotionals and studying the Bible. Helping others, sharing with others the gifts with which I have been blessed by God.

Ms. Mia Priesskorn
St. Francis Episcopal Church
Rio Rancho
Years in present congregation: 5
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1953

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?

I was honored to be appointed to the Standing Committee February 13, 2018. I have found the work to be very important and I would like to continue serving the Diocese.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I served for 10 years as Treasurer of St. Paul’s Peace in Las Vegas. I served 22 years as Convention Delegate from St. Paul’s/Peace and San Gabriel the Archangel. I have also served on Bishop’s Committee for four (4) year terms at St. Paul’s Peace. I served three terms on the Northeast Deanery Board. I moved to Albuquerque, began attending San Gabriel the Archangel. I was Senior Warden for one year and started my second term, and serving until its closing in February 2019. I then transferred to St. Francis, Rio Rancho.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

Our Mission Churches are both a challenge and an opportunity. Mission Churches need more financial help. The help they receive keeps the doors open, but if they had help with web sites, programs to enable them to be out on their committees doing missionary work, they might achieve growth and become financially solvent. They are an opportunity because there are many throughout our Diocese, and they could accomplish amazing things and be on even greater asset. Our Diocese is primarily rural and many small communities do not have access to churches. What an opportunity for Missions and Missionary work.

STANDING COMMITTEE, LAY
Mr. Tim Kruse  
Church of the Ascension  
Cloudcroft, New Mexico  
Years in present congregation: 8  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1982

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
Being a member of Diocesan Council these past two years has been both challenging and hope filled as we work through transitions in leadership and in securing financial resources needed to equip our missionary outposts to witness Christ’s Good News. I feel called to continue working with the members of Council as we continue being transparent and responsive to the needs and concerns our diocesan community expresses.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?
I am currently the treasurer for our parish, have been for the past seven years. I know the challenges of financial/building management and liturgical support in a small congregation in a remote area. I am a retired RN with extensive experience in both data management and personnel management in a state regulatory agency. I’ve been active in the church most of my adult life having been a lector since age 12, a Eucharistic Minister since age 18, an Augustinian friar; a hospital chaplain with seven units of Clinical Pastoral Education, a postulant for Holy Orders, an inspector/investigator in long term care facilities and more recently, as a licensed Worship Leader and lay at large member of Diocesan Council.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
The Episcopal Church is challenged to bring Jesus’ Good News to our world. We have an opportunity to create new means of bringing that Good News to our local area by utilizing various media platforms to increase communication, to minimize travel-time and cost thereby maximizing productivity. by organizing Team Ministry groups of ordained and lay ministers to bring the Good News and sacramental ministry more economically and efficiently to persons in our vast geographic area, and by working to transform our all too prevalent attitude of “scarcity” into one of gratitude for the abundance we have received.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
I am sustained in my spiritual life by the sanctification of life, time and space by routinely praying the Daily Office with my spouse who is a brother in an Episcopal religious community, by the weekly celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and by a weekly lectio divina to choose the hymns and prayers to be used in our weekly Sunday services. My financial management tasks for our parish, and work on the diocesan budgets, also nurture my spiritual life by encouraging me to be thankful for all the many gifts we have received and the sacred duty I have in working with others to manage those gifts for mission.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY OF THE BAPTIZED (CANON 16)
4 members elected by convention for a 4-year term; 2-term limit; odd years elect 1 clergy; even years elect 1 lay.

The Rev. Dr. Jeanne Lutz, Retired  
Las Cruces, New Mexico  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1988

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
From January 2012 until June 2019, I served as interim priest-in-charge for four parishes in the Southwest Deanery. During that time, I journeyed as spiritual director alongside many parishioners from these and other churches, including the ELCA congregation I served for eight years. Among them were several persons in discernment regarding their vocation. I continue to exercise the ministry of spiritual director for several persons in the ordination process from two denominations. I was Dean of the Southwest Deanery and a member of Diocesan Council from 2012–2015, giving me the opportunity to get to know people from all over the diocese and to learn something of how things work. Having been a priest for 30 years in Albuquerque and Las Cruces, I have had ample experience with parish ministry, both lay and ordained, along with hospice chaplaincy.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
It is not enough to talk about diversity in the Church without encouraging the most important diversity of all—that of thought, opinion, and theological perspective. In my observation, the Episcopal Church needs to concentrate harder on Jesus’ High Priestly Prayer “that they may be one.” In Christ, we can disagree without sacrificing what has always defined us as Episcopalians, our ability to reason together in loving and respectful dialogue. I see the DRG attempting to do this as we face some politically and socially divisive issues. God grant us grace to continue on this path.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
I am sustained by the Daily Office and its biblical lectionary, along with regular worship and reception of the Eucharist, and wide reading of both religious and non-religious books. (I love a good mystery!) I am sustained by my contact with others in the body of Christ, in small gatherings, group study, and one-another. My times with husband and sons sustain me, along with the traveling we do together and exposure to new lands and new people! And I am sustained by the view of the Organ Mountains from my backyard and east windows!

CATHEDRAL CHAPTER (CANON 18)
One Lay Person or Clergy for a three-year term; One Lay Person or Clergy for a two-year term.

The Rev. Canon Jean Campbell  
St. Francis Episcopal Church  
Rio Rancho, New Mexico  
Years in present congregation: 4  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1990

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
This is an exciting time in the life of the Cathedral of the Diocese of the Rio Grande with the election of a new Dean. The Cathedral has multiple ministries; as a congregation ministering to those who worship on a regular basis, to the city of Albuquerque, as the seat of the Bishop and gathering place for the Diocese, as well as a public face of the Church in this Diocese. I want to work to support and nurture the ministry of the Cathedral to be a place of refuge and hope for the whole Diocese.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?
I have served as a Trustee of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in NYC, as a lay and clerical Deputy to General Convention, as Rector and Vicar of parishes in the Diocese of NY. I have served as a consultant in the field of Liturgy, and have served on the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music for the National Church as well as the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. I hold an MA in Liturgical Studies from the University of Notre Dame. I now serve as the Canon for Ecumenical Affairs for the Cathedral of the Rio Grande and assist at St. Francis, Rio Rancho.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
I believe the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Church are to nurture and grow disciples who are so rooted in their life in Christ that they ready and able to offer the gifts that God has given to us to minister in the name of Jesus Christ.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
A daily practice of Morning and Evening Prayer, meditation, and intercessory prayer as well as Bible study, and the weekly celebration of the Sunday Eucharist.
The Honorable Joseph Alarid
St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Years in present congregation: 16
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2005

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
I have been privileged to have served the Diocese of the Rio Grande as a Deputy to General Convention since 2009. The longer one serves as a deputy, the more one is able to understand and be effective in church governance, which I believe is a valid and necessary ministry in the church. I was elected to my second term on the Disciplinary Board for Bishops and serve as its secretary. I was also appointed to the Joint Standing Committee on Nominations for the General Convention. If returned to the House of Deputies for the next General Convention, I will help our Diocese have a strong and respected voice in the House at the next General Convention of our church.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

Since I began attending St. Michael and All Angels in 2003 and being received in 2005, I have been a Deputy, Vestry Member, and Junior Warden. I have served as a servant of Worship since 2004 and continue to do so. In addition I have served on various Parish and Diocesan committees, and commissions. I have served as a member and president of the Disciplinary Board and have served as Vice Chair and Chair of the Disciplinary Board of Bishops, starting in 2009 and concluding this year. At the church level, I was appointed to The Joint Standing Committee on Nominations for GC'80 in 2021. I am Secretary of the Disciplinary Board for Bishops where I was elected by my second six year term in 2018. I believe involvement in all these various areas of church governance have broadened my horizons for continuing to participate in the governance and leadership of our church. Experience in serving on the councils of our church allows one to set the agenda for future discussions, not just participate in those discussions.

Ms. Diane Butler
Cathedral of St. John
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Years in present congregation: 10
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1976

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
Representing the Diocese of the Rio Grande at General Convention over the past several years has been immensely rewarding. Through long and deep discernment I sense the call to serve another term. We are at a moment in the life of the Church where legislative decisions made in 2021 may have a tremendous long term effect on revitalization of dioceses, parishes – actually, the entire body of Christ’s church. The opportunity to represent my dioceesan governing body of our beloved Church for one more term would be a great honor.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

Gratefully, I have had the opportunity to serve in numerous positions at the parish diocesan, and world-wide church levels. I currently serve on the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church and as Jr. Warden at the Cathedral of St. John. Previous experience includes membership on several diocesan committees including Standing Committee, Disciplinary Council and the Commission on Ministry of the Baptized. These opportunities and serving on a church staff and other non-profits have broadened my knowledge and experience with church and organizational governance.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

We are seeing renewal in our diocese at this very moment and have an incredible opportunity to continue emphasizing who we are as Christians and Episcopalians. In these times of strife and division we are provided with the opportunity to live the Way of Love as our Presiding Bishop and Bishop advocate. The challenge in doing so means relinquishing oft-treasured ideas about the institutional church, careful allocation of limited resources, and daily acting out our belief that we are all God’s children.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
Most important to my spiritual life is the weekly service of Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral and gathering with others to share in community. Slowly but surely I am learning to find God in the small moments of daily life, quiet time in meditation, working with colleagues toward common purpose, the beauty of nature, and acts of service.

Canon Mark Edw. Childers
Church of the Holy Faith
Episcopal Church
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Years in present congregation: 19
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2007

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
Currently serving as a Lay Deputy-Alternate to General Convention. In the fall of 2018, I was appointed by the Executive Committee of the Episcopal Church to serve a six-year term on SCLM (Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music). Serving as a Lay Deputy to General Convention would provide the platform for a cohesive relationship in my work on behalf of this Diocese and the wider Episcopal Church.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

In November of 2017, I had the privilege of being one of the five Episcopal celebrants at the Diocesan Clergy Conference, working in tandem with music colleague Dent Davidson, Music Chaplain to the Episcopal Church House of Bishops. Over a period of two and a half days, we along with the Clergy, immersed ourselves in the discussion of how God calls us, as individual communities in our diocese, to help the people of God “catch a glimpse beyond the veil” through Liturgy and Music.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

Our greatest opportunity comes from who we are as Anglican Christians. Our tent is broad and our table is large enough to draw all people “into an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.” That’s not to say that we have to be all things to all people, but that all of God’s children can find places within the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement and specifically the Diocese of the Rio Grande. Our challenge is to be vigilant in our ministry to all of God’s people in the midst of a broken world.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
I am sustained in my spiritual life by continuous study of God’s Holy Word, living deeper into the Episcopal tradition, and specifically the Diocese of the Rio Grande. Our greatest opportunity comes from who we are as Anglican Christians. Our tent is broad and our table is large enough to draw all people “into an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.” That’s not to say that we have to be all things to all people, but that all of God’s children can find places within the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement and specifically the Diocese of the Rio Grande. Our challenge is to be vigilant in our ministry to all of God’s people in the midst of a broken world.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
Nothing compares to it and there is no greater gift I have received from my faith. In addition praying the Daily Office and reading Scripture strengthens and sustains me in my faith.
Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I have served the DRG for the last twenty years, ten of them as Dean of St. John’s Cathedral, through a challenging transition for the Diocese, and then through the episcopate of our former Bishop. With our new Bishop, the DRG is going through another exciting time of transition and exploration, and it would be a blessing to continue to serve our diocese at the national level at the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

The Very. Rev. Mark Goodman
St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 15
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1991

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I believe the Episcopal Church has significant gifts of offer today’s world and tomorrow’s generations. My hope in representing the DRG at General Convention would be to help steward and shape those gifts, so they can be maximized and shared in new, creative ways. The next decades will bring a sea change of tastes and ideas. Deputies will be tasked with preserving what’s vital, while also adapting to modern needs. While I certainly claim no expertise or special knowledge on these matters, I have long seen my calling as helping to be a bridge for the Church to future generations.

The Rev. Jeremiah Griffin
St. Chad’s Episcopal Church
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 25
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2013

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I have had the honor of serving the diocese as Treasurer and was elected to represent the diocese at General Convention 2015 (Alternate) and 2018 (Deputy). I served on the board and as Chair of the Interfaith Community Shelter in Santa Fe. What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

The greatest opportunity for this diocese is changing, to live into the call to be a Missionary Diocese in New Mexico and Far West Texas, proclaiming the Gospel. The greatest challenge continues to be how to do so in a “thin place” that occupies vast areas while building community among ourselves and those whom we bring to Christ.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

The foundation of my spiritual life remains the Eucharist. I try to attend Morning and Evening Prayer as able and am particularly enenched by the up lifting Evensong that we hold on feast days. Bible Study, currently St. John’s Gospel and the study of Spiritual Classics, currently The Crucifixion by the Rev Fleming Rutledge play critical roles. I am blessed to be in a parish where Christian fellowship is put into practice, and that helps sustain me in everything I do.

Dr. Guy Gronquist
Church of the Holy Faith
Santa Fe, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 11
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2009

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I feel called to service at this time because of the important topics being brought before General Convention, among them Prayer Book revision, pension equity and the ongoing need for reconciliation in a wounded and angry world. Lessons learned from previous attendance would continue to help me navigate the complicated and fast-paced agenda that comes before the House of Deputies.

The Rev. Richard Rohr
Richard Rohr’s Living School

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

I have served the DRG as an alternate or deputy to six General Conventions (2003-2018). I have an excellent understanding of the operation of General Convention and have served in four Conventions on the Legislative Committee on National and International Concerns, the Committee on Social Justice and International Affairs. I am the DRG’s representative on the Province VII Council and, from that position, was elected to serve a six-year term on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, ending in 2024. I will be at the October meeting of the Executive Council, in Montgomery, Alabama, during this year’s Diocesan Convention.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

In a general climate of partisanship, lack of civility in public discourse, and fear of the other, we have opportunities to exemplify balanced conversations, gracious Christ-centered hospitality, and inclusive ministries that reach out to all. In short, we have the opportunity to demonstrate what it means to be the Church as Beloved Community. The challenges are those faced by all churches at this time: shifting patterns of attendance and giving, decreasing adherence to organized religion, a political climate that can limit partnerships, and diminishing resources. To meet the challenges and answer the opportunities will call upon creativity, perseverance, and prayerful engagement.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

Since leaving the Cathedral in 2017, after ten years as Dean, I have found that my family has taken an increasingly central place in my spiritual life. Time spent together in conversation, fun activities, cooking and sharing meals all are spiritually nurturing. My work with the Executive Council is also a source of spiritual life. Being more keenly aware of the problems throughout the world, and what the Episcopal Church is doing to address them, as well as being part of the problem-solving process, is a form of exercise in prayer that is enriching.

The inclusion of LGBTQ people – what more could one want? But knowing how to spread these things in alluring, organic ways that come with those are certainly most pressing. What’s for sure is that, while a one-size-fits-all solution will not be found, God’s Spirit will continue to lead and guide us.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

Study of nearly all types – theology, natural history, science, and ecology. Prayer, both contemplative and corporate. Beginning fall of 2019 I’ll be starting Richard Rohr’s Living School program. Generally being outside feeds me – either hiking, running, biking, fishing, hunting, you name it. And being with my family of course, especially doing one of the aforementioned outdoor activities! Spiritual direction keeps me from growing complacent, as does taking on new teaching assignments around the parish.
Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
As a newly ordained transitional deacon, I am eager to immerse myself in the governing structure of the church in order to enhance my ability to serve the diocese and its people. I have much to contribute to the church both from my prior experiences and from my academic background. I have a keen attention to detail and the awareness of the patience required for negotiation and resolution of complex issues. Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?
I served as a first-time deputy to GC 2018 and as Co-secretary of the Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations Committee. In that committee, I helped to write Resolution A012. Now that I have “learned the ropes,” I believe I can work more effectively. As a member of the Diocesan Disciplinary Board, I care deeply about reconciliation and the health of our Church. As rector of St. Francis in Rio Rancho, I navigate the relational, administrative, financial, and spiritual dynamics of a local faith community. This year I worked ecumenically to host Rio Rancho’s first MLK Jr. Day worship service.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
A. Rethinking and reinvigorating the diaconate.
B. Reassessing technology as medium of worship, catechesis, and disciple-making.
C. Clericalism (challenge). Affirming and utilizing all spiritual gifts (opportunity). Clergy are still seen as the primary ones who pray, evangelize, and catechize.
D. Clericalism (challenge). Affirming and utilizing all spiritual gifts (opportunity). Clergy are still seen as the primary ones who pray, evangelize, and catechize.
E. Fear (challenge)—of vulnerability, of failure, of being the one to whose feet we bow.
F. Evangelism. We need ecumenical partners to make the church more visible. Developing, sustaining, and encouraged by the Eucharistic community are enabled to deepen their relationship with the Holy Trinity and with each other. These welcoming communities, no matter what their size, are the life-blood of a growing church. Developing, sustaining and growing these communities also present the greatest challenge for the church. This is a special challenge for parishioners who do not yet know the deep love available to them and who are not yet interested in seeking that healing love.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
The most important sustenance for my spiritual life is my daily practice of Centering Prayer, a discipline of sitting with God in intentional silence. Over the years, it has become as important to me as breathing and as life-giving. Centering prayer has helped me listen, truly listen, for God’s presence in everyone and everything. Additionally, the daily office readings and Scripture study have been a powerful influence on my spiritual growth. Of critical importance, also, is my active participation in the 12-Step community without which none of my growth could have happened.

Proposed Amendment to Canon 10
Submitted by: Dr. Victor Rivas, Senior Pastor, Church of the Holy Cross, Edgewood

1. DEPUTIES TO THE GENERAL CONVENTION AND PROVINCIAL SYNOD

At the Convention occurring two years prior to each General Convention of the Church, the Convention shall elect clerical and lay deputies, plus alternates, to represent the Diocese at the succeeding General Convention and any Synod of the Province. The number of such deputies shall be determined by the General Convention, and an equal number of alternates shall be elected. The deputies elected to the General Convention shall also represent the Diocese at the Synod of the Province.

A. Speakers are to state name, home parish or mission, and city.
B. Speaker’s are to speak only for themselves, not for others.
C. Speakers are expected to listen to others as they would like others to listen to them.
D. Speakers are limited to a reasonable period of time to speak, no more than four minutes, unless the Chair allows a greater period.
E. In the event there are many speakers on a particular agenda item, the Chair may limit each speaker’s time to speak to fewer than three minutes.
F. Speakers will alternate, pro and con, for as long as time set aside for debate allows.
G. Speakers are expected to avoid raising voices and interrupting.
H. Speakers are expected to treat others with courtesy and respect, regardless of their views.
I. Members of Convention and guests are expected to refrain from verbal outbursts and reactions to the comments of speakers.
The Rev. Justin Gibson  
St. Francis on the Hill  
El Paso, Texas  
Years in present congregation: 15  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2018

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?  
I am excited by our work at the diocesan level. I want to be a part of the Standing Committee in order to help navigate and process change within the diocese in a way that brings our mission and ministry together as the Episcopal Church. Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?  
I am recently ordained, but I have been a full-time vicar for almost two years. Outside of parish work, I am involved in refugee ministry and the Border Interfaith alliance in El Paso. What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?  
I have long thought that the Episcopal Church is the best kept secret in Christendom. Being a voice of reason and providing a spiritual depth to the world around us will be challenging and present many opportunities if we want to be more than a light under a bushel. What sustains you in your spiritual life?  
A healthy spiritual life is an active one for me and I don’t get very far by myself.

The Rev. Corinne Hodges  
Church of the Holy Family  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Years in present congregation: 1.75  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2007

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?  
I have served three very different dioceses as an ordained priest and believe I have experience that may be valuable. Chicago was the largest with many congregations and rich in resources. Northern Indiana was the smallest with rural missions and urban ministries. The Rio Grande is the largest geographically. In addition, I have served as full-time rector, part-time vicar and assisting priest. I have witnessed first-hand how the Holy Spirit can do amazing things and build churches from small beginnings. This witness would allow me to best represent and consider the diverse voices within our diocese. Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?  
In the Diocese of Northern Indiana, I served on the Standing Committee, the Commission on Ministry, the Cathedral Chapter Board and on the Search Committee for the Eighth Bishop of the Diocese. In Chicago, I served as Assistant and later Campus Chaplain at a Presbyterian Homes continuum care retirement community. I was active in the leadership of that facility, representing members, families and staff. In my previous career in public relations, I represented various non-profits and clients. Listening to both sides and eventually coming to sound decisions. What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?  
In our cultural context, immigration and the border top the list. We can speak to the issue in ways other dioceses cannot. The ECUSA has the challenge of reaching out to younger people. The Diocese of Chicago did some creative things as far as involving youth at diocesan conventions. Perhaps the greatest opportunity I can speak to at this time is how to support missions. There are ways of making regular tasks, like figuring out the monthly fair share, easier. I have seen these other ways and would like to share this with our diocese for consideration. What sustains you in your spiritual life?  
Daily Morning Prayer, the Holy Eucharist, spiritual retreats on top of mountains, a few trusted friends, and completing a gratitude list each night before I go to sleep.

Ms. Catherine Bailey  
St. Michael and All Angels  
Episcopal Church  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Years in present congregation: 19  
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1976

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?  
As Deputies, we are gaining the respect of our fellow deputies and the respect of the wider church. I have long thought that the Episcopal Church is the best kept secret in Christendom. Being a voice of reason and providing a spiritual depth to the world around us will be challenging and present many opportunities if we want to be more than a light under a bushel. What sustains you in your spiritual life?  
A healthy spiritual life is an active one for me and I don’t get very far by myself.
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Transformation, not Transaction: Finding New Ways of “Being” in 2020 Budget

By The Rev. Canon Lee Curtis, Canon to the Ordinary

Through most of my time in seminary, tips made up the majority of my income. Whether it was through delivering pizzas, serving, or bartending, the vast majority of what I took home was never a fixed hourly rate, or a salary, but what was on the penultimate line of a credit card slip, or whatever “keep the change” amounted to. While our national system of tipping leaves much to be desired, what it always led me to focus on was that the outcome of my evening hinged not on a simple transaction, not just an fee-for-service, but rather the relationships that I could form in those brief periods of time where I was interacting with my guests. Transaction was never going to be enough.

I didn’t come to that realization easily. For much of my life in the service industry it felt like tips were always a roll of the dice, some predetermined factor that I had only limited control over. It was the last restaurant I worked in when the trainer said a line that changed my entire perspective: “Service is one person forming a heartfelt connection with another person.” In the limited time that I had to spend with these guests, these people who were in my section or at my bar, connection had to be the priority.

Connection could get you through the nights when the kitchen was backed up. Connection could get you through a bated order, or an undercooked steak. Connection was the heart of the matter.

This has held true in my life of priestly ministry. Connection, relationship, heartfelt connection is what builds us up. It’s what holds us together. It’s what keeps calling us to living a life of abundance, a life where we, through God’s grace, are more than the sum of our parts. While money is a tool, it is only a part. It is only a tool. And it is only a good tool insofar as it leads us into relationship, into transformation.

Throughout this year’s budget process, we have had to make difficult decisions in balancing our mutually-discerned priorities with the facts that we are no longer receiving an annual disbursement from the sale of St. Clement’s, and that we are committed as a diocese not to increase fair share. If money is a tool, then our toolkit is changing, and that change can be a gift. As we have looked at re-evaluating the Poverty and Outreach Board budget, what our latest budget proposes, and what we are keen to put into place is this:

- Based on our new financial reality, the Poverty and Outreach granting process is unsustainable. That money was primarily available through the stewardship of the proceeds of the sale from St. Clement’s.
- Even if we were able to fund Poverty and Outreach granting at previous levels, this diocese is discerning that we are called to move, to engage with our neighbors in ways that lead to transformation, rather than simply sustaining good programming.
- God is calling us to move into new ways of being, both as a diocese and as individual parishes. The days when we could program our way into thriving are no longer, if they ever existed at all.

What we have then, in this 2020 budget, is an invitation into a new way of being together, and those parishes which have done such good work through stewardship of Poverty and Outreach grants are the ones who can help us lead the way forward. This year, in order to move us into a new season of transformation, we are creating a new Initiative, funded with some of what we would have previously designated for POB grants. The Mission Development Initiative will still focus on alleviating the needs of the least among us, while inviting parishes taking part in the work into a community of mutual learning.

It is our goal and our great hope that, through this process, we can move our communities into self-sustaining outreach models that foster relationship and mutuality.

The Bishop, the Diocesan Council and I are already working on ways in which we can bring to the table the best talent and expertise the Diocese has to offer, in order to make this learning community as purposeful and as inspiring as it can be, and all with the mind that when we create meaningful relationships with those whom we serve, our service fosters relationship, and that relationship leads to more than we can ask or imagine. Through the Mission Development Initiative, it is our hope that the resources, expertise, and leadership which the Diocese has to offer will lead us out of boom-or-bust cycles of granting and into an abundant, sustainable model for serving our neighbors.

We heard you!

Responding to concerns raised at the deanery meetings in August, the Diocesan Council, at the meeting in September, changed the proposed budget to include some funds available for local congregational outreach efforts. However, this is not a long term strategy.

In future, diocesan support for local outreach efforts will come not in grant dollars but in helping each congregation raise the funding needed for these efforts.

Because:
- Grant funding is not a sustainable way to support ministry.
- Pooling grant funds in the diocesan budget meant some people were “winners” while others were not - every year.
- Our goal is making sure each congregation thrives, because thriving congregations, big or small, have the resources they need for what God is calling them to do.
- Also, we need to work together and learn to communicate the needs of our outreach ministries, so that those who are interested in helping will know how to get involved.

Diocesan Convention: Frequently Asked Questions

Compiled by the Very Rev. Canon Michael Perko

Q. Who can be a Convention delegate?
A. Any “Communicant in Good Standing.” Diocesan Canons define this as someone over 16, who has received Communion at least three times in the previous year, and contributes to the Church.

Q. Is there someone in my congregation who’s been a regular attendee for a long time, but hasn’t been Baptized, Confirmed, or Received as an Episcopalian? Can that person be a delegate?
A. No. The canons are clear that a person needs to be an Episcopalian, and that person is not.

Q. I’m a Convention delegate, but I can’t attend. Can someone serve as my proxy?
A. No. A delegate must be physically present to exercise voice and vote.

Q. I’m a Convention delegate, but I can’t attend. How do I go about getting a replacement?
A. That’s up to the rector/vicar/priest-in-charge. The replacement can be appointed or elected.

Q. I’m a warden, but I can’t attend. How do I go about getting a replacement?
A. A warden cannot be replaced. This is because 5/6 he attends ex officio, and there’s no substitution for an officeholder who can’t attend. The only available option is for you to resign as warden, and allow someone else to be appointed/elected in your place.

Q. I’m a delegate from my congregation, but I was just elected/appointed to a position that gives me ex officio delegate rights. Do I get two votes?
A. No. The norm of “one person, one vote” still is followed. It probably would be best if you resign your position as a congregational delegate so that someone else can be elected/appointed.

However, if you were an ex officio delegate from your congregation (i.e., a warden), and you’ve been elected/appointed to a diocesan position that gives you an ex officio vote (e.g., lay Standing Committee or Diocesan Council representative), you either have to resign one of these positions, or your congregation loses a delegate, since there are no substitutions for ex-officio members.

Q. If I’m an alternate, can I be seated with my congregation’s delegation?
A. No. To avoid confusion about who can speak or vote, alternates can’t be seated at the table with their congregation’s delegation. They are, however, welcome to sit in the visitors’ gallery at the back of the hall.

Q. What do I do if I have other questions about Convention?
A. Contact Canon Raney at raney@dioceserg.org, or Canon Lee Curtis at Lcurtis@dioceserg.org.
The Very Rev. Christopher Adams
Trinity on the Hill
Episcopal Church
Los Alamos, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 4
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2013

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande are uniquely positioned to offer both words and actions of light and hope to a world in pain. As decisions are made about the future of the Church at General Convention, which necessarily impact the diocese, I would love to be part of the deliberation process. On a personal note, experiencing the wide diversity of the Church in such a concentrated way would help me grow and expand as a faithful priest of this Church.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?
In the DRG, I serve on Diocesan Council. I am also the Dean of the Northeast Deanery. Being involved in deliberations and discussions on the diocesan level, I believe my experiences might help me to be more tuned in and focused on General Convention matters that would directly impact our diocese. In my ministry in a previous denomination, I was a voting member at two national church gatherings. I am aware of the demands such gatherings place on deputies, but I remain excited about the possibility of serving.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
The Episcopal Church is uniquely positioned as a “big tent” church to respond to the shifting social norms of the world. As an international church, we are able to offer perspective to an increasingly diverse and multi-national United States of America. This is an incredible opportunity, but a challenge as well. Are we willing, as an institution, to respond with openness and flexibility to the changing demands on our common life? Are we willing to elevate and celebrate new voices of leadership that don’t look or sound like the prevailing leadership culture of ages past? Within the DRG, the same opportunities and challenges exist. Are we willing to more fully embrace our identity as a multi-cultural diocese in order to open up new, fresh possibilities for the future?

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
Prayer, for me, most often takes the form of laughter. Reading and watching comedy, particularly stand-up comedy, revives me and gives me hope. The Eucharist, as an encounter with the broken body of Jesus, sustains me and shapes my own posture to the needs of a broken world. I write poetry and fiction, spend time in conversation with friends, celebrate love where I find it, and see the face of God in my son. He is a true joy...

Holy Spirit, rich in the gifts of God and rich in the love of Christ. I want to be a part of sharing this with the larger Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Daniel E. Cave
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church
La Union, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 7
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 2006

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
Having lived in the Diocese since 2003 and serving St. Luke’s since 2012, and having attended the last GC as an alternate, I now feel that I have some insight as to the strengths and challenges facing the larger Church. We are a people that are diverse, giving, loving and seeking to be faithful. I believe that we have the opportunity to show the wider Church what committed, Christ-centered living and giving looks like. Some would like to say that we are a poor Diocese. I would say to them that we are rich in the

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
On a number of levels, in our missions and parishes and at the Diocesan level, I truly believe we need to prayerfully consider how to deepen our collective trust in God and God’s plans for the Church. In many ways we operate as an agent of the world instead of an agent of God. I believe that the Church really does have the solutions to the evils that attack us each and every day, and we need to get out of the four walls of our churches to give that answer away. We have the people (look what Jesus did with 12 misfits). We have the Holy Spirit (Holy Baptism page 308), we have strength (1 Timothy 1.7), and we have Jesus the Christ with us (Matt 28:20).

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
Morning and evening prayer with my wife, daily personal and weekly group Bible study, weekly fellowship with Godly men and women and dedicated quiet time with my Lord.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
I love the Episcopal Church, and I love serving in our branch of the Jesus Movement. I am excited about the leadership and vision of our new Bishop, and I would like to continue to support the ministries and mission of the Diocese of the Rio Grande in any way possible. Having served for many years in another part of the country, I have a broad perspective of the church that would inform my ability to represent our diocese at the next General Convention, in addition to my enthusiasm for the people, congregations, and future of the DRG.

The Very Rev. Kristin Kopren
Church of the Holy Cross
Edgewood, New Mexico
Years in present congregation: 4
Ordained/Confirmed/Received: 1997

Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?
I love the Episcopal Church, and I love serving in our branch of the Jesus Movement. I am excited about the leadership and vision of our new Bishop, and I would like to continue to support the ministries and mission of the Diocese of the Rio Grande in any way possible. Having served for many years in another part of the country, I have a broad perspective of the church that would inform my ability to represent our diocese at the next General Convention, in addition to my enthusiasm for the people, congregations, and future of the DRG.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?
Throughout 22 years of ordained ministry I have served the Episcopal Church in a variety of capacities. During two decades in the Diocese of New York, I have served as curate, priest-in-charge, associate pastor of urban, suburban, and rural parishes, as an Episcopal school chaplain, and as an area dean. As rector of the Church of the Holy Cross and dean of the Northwest Deanery, I have embraced my new position at this time?

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?
The challenges facing our diocese and the wider church are myriad, including financial struggles; the increasing expense of seminary education; lack of resources for outreach and diversity initiatives, and the loss of children, families, and young adults in our midst. The opportunities, however, are immense, as people hunger for spiritual community and connection. As our Bishop reminds us, we are equipped to help folks develop deeper roots of faith and to reach out to our neighbors. Through a combined focus on discipleship, stewardship, liturgy, prayer, and service, we can humbly trust the Holy Spirit to move within and through us.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?
Daily prayer is the bedrock of my spiritual life. Without it I am left ungrounded, floating through life without a connection to Christ’s presence, with little openness to God’s will, and with few means of expressing gratitude and praise. My prayer life includes the daily offices of scripture, and offering of thanksgivings and petitions. In addition, spiritual reading, Bible study, and fellowship continually nourish me in my walk with Christ. The Eucharist is the center of my worship life, as those gathered around the altar are united with Christ and the world to offer of thanksgivings and petitions. In addition, spiritual reading, Bible study, and fellowship continually nourish me in my walk with Christ. The Eucharist is the center of my worship life, as those gathered around the altar are united with Christ and the world to offer
Why do you want to serve the Diocese in this position at this time?

I wish to serve in this position as a way of communicating with the National Church about the life and needs of rural small Episcopal churches as well as life and needs along the southern border. This would also be a good opportunity to build a network of support for our Borderland Ministries as well as learn about life and needs in other rural Episcopal communities.

Describe experiences and positions you have held, or currently hold, in the church and the world that will have helped you prepare for serving in this position?

I currently serve the Diocese as Co-chair of the Rio Grande Borderland Ministry. In the Diocese of Chicago I was the Youth, Family and Young Adult coordinator which was a Diocesan staff position. In the Diocese of Maryland, I served on a team of clergy and lay people who worked with helping people discern a calling and vocation. I am a Spiritual Director and a member of Spiritual Directors International.

What, in your opinion, are the greatest opportunities and challenges facing the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of the Rio Grande at this time?

The Borderland serves as a microcosm of these opportunities and challenges facing both the Diocese and the National church. Then we can determine the actions to take together. Clear communication of stories and ways to participate in God’s ministry is vital.

What sustains you in your spiritual life?

I wonder if the question needs to begin with “who” rather than what. It is Christ who sustains me. Because of that, I am able to seek Christ in the environment, people and opportunities which cross my path. This happens through prayer, listening and being open to the work of the Spirit. Being raised Jewish, I have a strong connection to Teyve (Fiddler on the Roof) relationship of continuous communication with God as each day unfolds.
Camp Stoney 2019 was filled with saplings (campers) being nurtured by trees (staff and volunteers) in many different stages of growth. Psalm 1:3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper. It all started with Family Camp visiting the stream that runs through the property in years that experience snow pack during the winter. We built what became affectionately known as the "FamDam" dam. Although the number of families attending was small, it was a wonderful camp that allowed our mostly new staff to let their roots start to spread a little deeper.

Summer Fun Camp took the stream and started a tree growing in the Lodge. On one wall the Co-Deans, Father Wally LaLonde and Jeannie Locicero, started the deep roots and broad reach with traced hands and feet. The Deans were not expecting that this creation would stay up through the rest of the camping season, to be added to, and to grow deeper in the roots and broader in the reach. Excursion, I mean Adventure Camp and Grace Camp followed, adding to the roots and the branches. Adventure Camp more than doubled in size this summer, showing that our roots from Summer Fun, Harry Potter, and Narnia are growing into branches. This group of 18 youth spent a good portion of one day at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church helping to set up, serve, and clean up in the soup kitchen. Father Jeremiah Griffin successfully planned an overnight trip to Holy Ghost Campground this year. Grace Camp, once again, showed me how unconditional love, a bit of scripture, and some great activities can give a young person that little bit of grace to push their roots deeper and stretch their branches, from climbing a 25 foot climbing tower to coaxing a giant Junior Counselor, Bruce, to have fun in the pool.

Next up, Narnia Camp! The Queens and King brought to life "The Dawn Treader" with a little help from the campers, staff, Jill Cline and Mother Pam. This camp is able to use Aslan to help feed the roots of campers so that they may grow stronger in their knowledge of Jesus, and to show them that they must reach out to those who may need help in broadening their thoughts on how they fit into the world.

Harry Potter Camp, although smaller than the year before, still had the largest attendance for the summer. The professors (Deans and Chaplains) spent the week nourishing the students (campers) with this prayer: "Holy God, you have planted us like trees in the rich soil of community, and watered us bountifully with your life-giving Word. May our roots grow deep, may our branches reach wide, and may we bear good fruit this day and always, through your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen." With this in mind they were able to once again defeat He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

We ended with Superhero Camp which added some new faces and had a more even distribution between Heroes and Heroines. Father Alan Brockmeier and Mother Suzanne Brockmeier, with the help of Deacon Brian Pickard mirrored the virtues of superheroes to biblical counterparts, creating a nutrient-rich foundation for the roots to deepen and the branches to broaden. In this the campers are growing in their relationship with Jesus to become a permanent member of the “Righteousness League for Christ”.

The blessing of the 2019 Camp Stoney season is that each camper, whether they came to one camp or four, was encouraged to deepen their relationships with God so that, as they continue to grow with Jesus, they will have a broader reach to share the Word with the world. Thank you to everyone for encouraging your families and friends to send their children to Camp Stoney. 2020 looks to be a great year for "Deep Roots, Broad Reach: Walking the Way of Love."
I want to share a story I recently read about Sgt. Andrew Lee. Sgt. Lee had been in the army, deployed to Iraq twice, and when he returned home after the second deployment, decided he was finished with the army. He got a job in a factory, and as a means of “therapy” for his PTSD, he became addicted to video games. He said he would work eight hours in a factory, come home and play games four hours, or more, after that. It was not productive, it did not seem to help his PTSD, even though he chose it to be his coping mechanism, the thing he thought would bring some ease to his mind and life. Eventually, his brother, who was a firefighter, told him to “stop walking around like a zombie and find something to do.”

Sgt. Lee met his girlfriend, who is now his wife, and she said to him once that even though she liked being with him, she didn’t feel as though they did much together, and she would like to have an activity they could do together. So, as a gift to her for Christmas, he signed them up for a quilting class at a local fabric store. He expected to use the experience to sew something for his mother as a gift also. They went, and it turned out he was good at it, and fast, and he hadn’t even known he would like it. From there the interest grew and it was becoming a hobby that was replacing the video games. He met a Vietnam veteran who invited him to come to a quilt guild meeting where they made quilts for “Quilts of Valor.” He started making quilts for soldiers that had PTSD, some of whom he knew and some he didn’t. It was giving his quilts away to these veterans that seemed to give him something he had lost. He mentioned that when serving in a war zone, you have to lock away your emotions as a survival measure. He had lost touch with his emotions. It was giving the quilts he made away, that gave him back some of his emotional balance to his life. So essentially, this new found talent healed him, and healed his heart. His new passion keeps that love growing in him, as he continues to sew his way into the hearts of others. At the time the article I read was written, he had given away 35 Quilts of Valor.

He was recently recognized at a Tennessee quilt show for a quilt he made depicting the battle of Iwo Jima. It is a work of art. Sgt. Lee might never have known the joy his new talent would bring him, if he had not first tried to give a gift to his girlfriend that then propelled him into a new passion. Was it divine intervention that put that thought into his mind to give her a quilting lesson as a gift? Possibly, or maybe it was divine intervention when she asked him to do some activity with her so she could get to know him better. Obviously God wanted these two to be together. He does work in mysterious ways! But one of the lessons I take away from this is that God is love, and God is using Sgt. Lee as His hand to transform by God through these events into better beings, possibly even better and more focused than we were in the first place. It’s all in how you look at it. And we can’t always see it plainly, sometimes it is revealed to us slowly and quietly.

It is terrible that Sgt. Lee suffered from PTSD from his experiences in Iraq, and he was on the fast track to nowhere with those video games. He could have stayed on that track and become lost. He got off that bad track by a small and seemingly unrelated act of love in the gift to his girlfriend. He has since been put on a track of success and comfort with his newfound talent, being exposed to not only his own healing, but to help in the healing of others. He is the sum total of his experiences and has found his way to the top of the heap, and his path is lined with quilts. On that new path to peace, he found camaraderie with a Vietnam vet who encouraged him, and hopefully Sgt. Lee will do the same someday with someone else who needs help on his or her path. It is a chain reaction, pass along kindness, and help anyone you can, even with the smallest compliment or gesture. We all need the encouragement of others. That is what builds loving emotions, which Sgt. Lee said was missing in his life after Iraq. I don’t know if Sgt. Lee knows it or not, but God is love, and God is using Sgt. Lee as His hand to touch the hearts of others.

This story touches me because you all know I saw! I started sewing for charity as a way to relieve stress. I know firsthand the way to feel better is to do good for someone else. For the past few weeks, Mom and I have been sewing red, white and blue pillowcases for veterans in nursing homes again. This batch will go to Civics for Veteran’s Day this November. I know most people think nursing homes are depressing, and I often feel really sad after I’ve been to visit one. But it is a small gesture, and keeps my heart alive with emotion. So I encourage you to do something similar – you don’t have to sew, and it doesn’t have to be pillowcases or quilts. But do something kind for the forgotten and overlooked. Exercise the emotions in your heart like you exercise any other part of your body to keep it fit. It will help you keep mentally balanced. And I believe it makes Jesus happy.

The “Tour de Church Sign” of the day said: Breathe it all in, love it all out. I’d like to add to this, “You can’t do everything, but everything you can do can be done with love.”
Entertaining Angels Unaware: Annual Bosque Center Weekend for Women

All women, lay and ordained, are invited to the Annual Women’s Ministry Weekend at the Bosque Center on November 15-16. The theme will be Entertaining Angels Unaware. Who are the angels named in the Bible? What exactly are angels? Have you met an angel, heavenly or human, in your life? How can each of us be an angel? The Rev. Pat Green will be our speaker and help us answer these and other questions. We will look at Hebrews 13 and other scripture during our conversations. Come to learn, share, and enjoy time at the Bosque Center with sisters in Christ from across the diocese! Registration forms will be available in September on the Women’s Ministry website (VarietiesOfGifts.blogspot.com). The weekend will start on Friday evening and end mid-afternoon on Saturday. Rooms will be available at the Bosque Center for the weekend, and women from all corners of the diocese are encouraged to attend.

This summer, two Blessed Angels were elected Presiding Bishop of the ELCA.

Elizabeth Eaton was re-elected Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on August 6 at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. On the first ballot, 897 votes were cast and 670 votes were needed for election. Eaton received 725 votes, which is 81.19% of the vote. Eaton is the first ELCA Presiding Bishop to win re-election on the first ballot. Her first term as Presiding Bishop began in 2013.

The first ballot for Presiding Bishop was cast during the first plenary August 5. The vote was declared invalid because of an unconstitutional early vote on the amendments to the bylaws of the ELCA constitution. This included an amendment that gave the ELCA Council the right of vote at a churchwide assembly, which included the election of the Presiding Bishop. “Thank you, Vice President Horne. And thank you to all of you, and thank you to the voting member who rightly brought to our attention that we were not following our own procedures,” said Eaton, addressing the assembly after the election results were announced. “The law is in place for a reason, but I’m really happy for the gospel part right now. We’re church, church first.” Eaton said, recalling the first of the four emphases she introduced after her election in 2013. “Our lives are not only supported but our lives are surrounded, and our lives have their basis and meaning in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. And especially as we experience that in our lives and are changed by that in word and sacrament. That’s where we get any authority or certainly any integrity to do works of love and justice, because we’re church.”

The 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly met August 5-10 at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. The assembly – the highest legislative body of the ELCA – participated in plenary discussions to decide how to go about God’s work as a church. The assembly also spent time in worship and Bible study.

The Women’s Ministry Council is already planning a Lenten retreat and a summer event or two. Mark your calendars for the Bosque Weekend on November 20-21, 2020 when the Rev. Carolyn Metzler will be our speaker. Sign up from the website to get regular e-news on these and other events. Follow us on Facebook (Womens Ministry of DRG). If you have questions, or would like to join the Council to help us determine the path for this important ministry, contact Cindy Davis, Coordinator of Women’s Ministries at cynthiaadavillasutor@gmail.com.

Anglicans in Canada Elect First Woman Primate

Vancouver - Linda Nichols, Bishop of the Diocese of Huron, was elected fourteenth primate of the Anglican Church of Canada on July 13, becoming the first woman in the history of the church to hold the position. “You have bestowed on me an honour that I can hardly imagine, and it is terrifying. But it is also a gift, to be able to walk with the whole of the Anglican Church of Canada from coast to coast to coast,” Nichols said in a brief impromptu speech on her arrival, after the vote at Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, where the election was held.

Nichols was installed on the final day of General Synod—July 16—succeeding Archbishop Fred Hiltz, who has served as primate since 2007. She was elected on the fourth ballot, with 64.2% of the votes of both houses. In the third ballot, 15.5% of the votes of both houses were changed by that in word and sacrament. That’s where we get any authority or certainly any integrity to do works of love and justice, because we’re church.”

The Most Rev. Linda Nichols

The Reverend John W. Price

The Reverend John W. Price, Author of Revealing Heaven, the Christian Case for Near Death Experiences in history from the University of Texas in ’61 and from Virginia Seminary in ’64 with a MDV. He served as parish priest for 33 years, concurrently serving as Chaplain (COL) in the TX Army NG. He now serves as Chaplain for the FBI. For 7 years he was Chaplain at St Luke’s Episcopal Hospital in the TX Medical Center, where experiences found their voice in his book.

After the lecture, light refreshments will be served.
The Very Rev. Kristina Maulden elected Dean of the Cathedral of St. John

The Episcopal Cathedral of St. John has named The Rev. Kristina Maulden as its 27th Dean. Maulden was nominated by the Right Rev. Michael Buerkel-Hunn, Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande and elected by the Chapter on July 11. The Rev. Maulden is currently the Interim Rector at Trinity Episcopal in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In her 12 years at Trinity Episcopal, she has collaborated on innovative worship and formation programs that bring new families to Trinity on a regular basis. She is a proficient teacher, team builder, innovation and dynamic preacher. Dean-Elect Maulden received her undergraduate degree in microbiology and did graduate work at the University of Texas, Austin, in biochemistry. She and her husband, Anthony, are the parents of two teen-age sons.

I hope to share with the people of St. John’s a vision of who and what the Cathedral can be for people looking to find the love of God inside and outside its walls. I have joy in my heart at the thought of making my home with the St. John’s Cathedral family,” Maulden wrote in her first communiqué to the congregation. In remarking on the call of the Rev. Maulden, Bishop Hunn said: “We are blessed in Kristina to have a Dean with deep experience in leading a congregation very similar to our cathedral—one with a Royal School’s Church Music program. She has experience in growing stewardship there and has led a process of dramatic growth in attendance of young families. Her wisdom, pastoral care, preaching and liturgical leadership will be a blessing to our Diocese for years to come. I am eager to welcome her and her husband and sons to the Diocese of the Rio Grande.”

On behalf of Vestry, Senior Warden Charlie Hawkins said, “The election of Reverend Maulden to be our next Dean is a milestone in the 137-year history of St. John’s Cathedral. We eagerly anticipate joining in ministry with Kristina as a welcoming community in the heart of downtown Albuquerque.”

Dear People of St. James,

Peace and Blessings to you all! We are ecstatic to be joining you all in the holy life of St. James. As we discerned a call to you, we constantly prayed for clear signs and symbols of God’s call to us. Those holy bread crumbs to our call were overwhelmingly evident in our conversations with the search committee, in our visit, in your vestry’s hospitality and in the process and questions asked in our meetings. Our call to be with you was even more clear as we learned about your current ministries, and desire to continue to discern how God is calling you to love your neighbors. The unique community and natural beauty of northern New Mexico that caused us to be awestruck, was more evidence of this call.

I want to take a moment to tell you about myself and my family. I am currently priest at Good Shepherd in Lookout Mountain, TN. My wife, Aloyse (pronounced A-loy-se), and I have been married for 7 years. We met in NYC while I was attending General Theological Seminary. Aloyse has a BA from Knyan College, a BFA from The San Francisco Art Institute, and an MFA from The Pratt Institute. She has been working for the Episcopal Church’s Church Pension Group for the past 10 years, and is currently the Director of Strategic Planning and Operation for Client Relations. She will be entering kindergarten. He loves animals, the outdoors, and Legos. Our younger, Fox, is 3. He is a precocious boy who you will hear singing the hymns. Being dad to these two boys and husband and partner to Aloyse is the greatest work of love to which I can ever be called.

As for me, I grew up on a small Appalachian farm in Blount County, TN, between Knoxville and Maryville. My parents were born and raised in Knoxville and my grandparents and my mother lived in the area. I am the youngest of three children. Both my siblings were career military families and have retired back to Blount County. I received a BA in Cultural Anthropology from the University of the South, Sewanee TN, and an MDIV from the General Theological Seminary in NYC. I have been a middle school teacher, a youth minister, a child safety advocate, a foot care provider on the AT, and a priest and pastor since college. My passion is walking with people along the ordinary paths of life, where we can encounter the extraordinary resurrected life all around us. I am an Eagle Scout and avid outdoorsman. I love to camp, hike, hunt, fish, tell stories by campfire, float down a river and spend time in the wild. Aloyse is an avid downhill skier, as are our boys. I’m not there yet, skiing the southern Appalachians didn’t prepare me well – yet being the operative word! We are closing down life here on Lookout Mountain and will be taking a little time to rest, pack and prepare for our move to Taos. Our first Sunday with you will be August 18 and I will be settling into the office the week prior. We look forward to meeting each of you. Thank you for inviting us to walk with you in this life of faith.

In the Light of Christ,

Mac+

The Rev Fred M. Brown

Together

NEWS OF THE CLERGY

5

REST IN PEACE:
The Rev. John Penn

Rev. John W. Penn, BZ, of Ruidoso, passed away Wednesday, July 24, in Ruidoso. He was born September 1, 1936 in Tulsa, OK. He was ordained as an Episcopal Priest in 1967 and he retired in 2003. He moved to Ruidoso in October, 1989 from El Paso, TX and was at the Church of the Holy Mount until his retirement. He is survived by his children, David Penn, Lisa Driscoll, Michael Penn and Joel Penn, two grandchildren, Lauren Penn and Lindsey Penn, and one great grandchild, Judy Carvina. He was preceded in death by his wife, Susan Penn on August 1, 2007. He served was August 15 in the Church of the Holy Mount in Ruidoso.

Holy Cross, Past and Present

On July 21, the Church of the Holy Cross in Edgewood celebrated the return of our Founding Vicar, Father Adams “Ads” Lovekin and members of his family, along with visits by retired Deacon Beth Noland and her husband, Chuck, and former supply priest Father Phil Dougherty. It was a joy to welcome all of these beloved former clergy and their families on the same day!

St. James, Taos, Welcomes New Rector & Family

Left to right: Deacon Michael Coburn, recently assigned to Holy Cross, Deacon Beth Noland, Mother Kristin Kopren, rector, Father Phil Dougherty and Father Ads Lovekin, seated. Photo credit: Olivia Masterson

The Rev. Doug Boyle talks with Jerome Williams following Fr. Doug’s last service at St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross of the Rio Grande. The service was August 15 in the Church of the Holy Mount in Ruidoso.

Socorro Vicar Tours with NM Tech Physics Club

Physics students showing Fr. Steve how to use a telescope. (photo by NMT student - Christopher Baco)

During his sermon on Sunday, June 2, Father Steve Stephens told of spending time online in an unsuccessful attempt to figure out what the parishioners and community members who study, research, and teach physics at NM Tech do in their work and school lives. After the service, a physics student approached him and offered to give him a tour of the physics department and explain what happens where. Further discussion the following Sunday made it clear that this tour needed to happen on a Sunday, when the buildings and various labs were normally closed, which meant that the student needed to ask other physics students for help to make this tour happen. This turned out to be a blessing, as it enabled Father Steve to have direct interactions and build relationships with students whom he otherwise would not have met. The NMT Physics Club students then spent the next week planning, getting permission to use equipment and give lab tours, moving equipment from closed labs to the Physics Club room, and preparing demonstrations to show what physics is, and specifically what physics research happens at NM Tech. On June 18, the Physics Club members joined Epiphany members for coffee hour after the service and then Fr. Steve went on tours of the Workmen Building and the Elson Observatory. The Physics Club students were able to use interactive demonstrations to teach concepts of physics in general, and made use of department conference posters showing the specific Atmospheric Physics and Astrophysics research that is unique to NM Tech. Most important, Fr. Steve got to know the NMT Physics Club students, and they got to know him. They shared with him the unique advantages and challenges they face as physics students at NM Tech which they would not have if they were attending another university. They shared how the student clubs at NM Tech provide the sense of community that students rely on for support. The Physics Club students also learned that they can come to Fr. Steve for conversation and support as well.
Holy Faith, Santa Fe, Donna Lukacs

Blessing of the Animals on October 6 at 4 p.m. – Join us in the St. Francis garden of The Church of the Holy Faith with your pets. Following a brief prayer service, we will bless dogs, cats, and other pets on leashes or in carriers (please). Pets will receive special “cookies,” a signed certificate with their name and a prayer for the year ahead. Dr. Brent Parker will once again be at the “Ask the Vet” table. There will be refreshments for all their human friends, as well as special activities for families.

St. James, Taos, Gwenneth Glenn

The Reverend Craig B. Anderson, Ph.D., retired, explains the Liturgy of the Word during the first of two Instructed Eucharists at St. James, Taos. Wearing a Canterbury Cap to reflect the academic nature of his address, Bishop Anderson also modeled Eucharistic and Office vestments including miter, zucchetto, crochet, and chimere as well as other vestments used by bishops, priests, and deacons in various liturgies. Retired Bishop Anderson paused now and then to explain what we were doing and why. Bishop Anderson went on the following week to explain the Liturgy of the Table.

St. Jerome’s, Chama, Rev. Colin Kelly

St. Jerome’s, Chama has been blessed this summer by the presence of Cheryl Crews and her husband, Retired Army Chaplain Jim Crews. Cheryl directs several choirs in San Antonio, TX. She and Jim have a cabin near Chama and we are greatly thankful for their presence and Cheryl’s willingness to play the piano and lead the singing while Sue Ellen Kelly is undergoing cancer treatments. which are producing good results so far!

Holy Family Celebrates Summer in the Park

This past July, members and guests of Holy Family, Santa Fe, celebrated summer by worshiping in God’s great creation. Their first-ever Worshop in the Park was held at Southwest Area Node Regional Park, followed by an abundant and glorious picnic potluck. The morning was a great success and the church plans to hold a similar outdoor service on the south side of Santa Fe in October.

Guardians of the Children blessed at Epiphany in Socorro

More than 20 members of the Guardians of the Children motorcycle organization, Rio Grande Chapter, visited Epiphany Episcopal church in Socorro on August 11. Following the Sunday service, their presiding bishop gave a blessing on their work with children who suffer from abuse. Fr. Steve, known in the Guardians as Father Papatez, is chaplain to the local chapter. He was delighted that the group was able to visit and raise awareness on interventions for child abuse.

The mission of Guardians of The Children (GOC) is to recognize and react to child abuse and educate the public to do the same, to serve as advocates, to provide strength and stability to families in crisis, and to be the answer to the prayer of an abused child or teen for courage, support and protection. The organization was established in 2006 in San Antonio, TX.

The service was also attended by visitors from other denominations as well as the local trainer for Court Appointed Special Advocates – CASA. For more information about the work of the Guardians, please visit their website at http://www.gocriogrande.com

Episcopal Pride in El Paso

St. Alban’s and St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal churches joined together to march in support of their brothers and sisters in Christ at the Pride Parade in El Paso.

Blessing the Animals at the Pride Parade

On June 19, the New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light (NM- IPL) office and the Church of the Holy Family in Santa Fe along with other faith leaders and community members blessed the animals, including dogs, cats, and other pets, at the Episcopal Pride Parade in El Paso. It was an opportunity to bless the animals in support of the LGBTQ community and align with a section of the Pride Parade.

The animals were blessed in the name of God, Brother Sun, and Sister Water. The blessing was performed by Fr. Michael Sells, Priest of All Saints Episcopal Chapel in Farmington, and other faith leaders and community members.

The blessing was in line with the Season of Creation Reflections and Action Plan, which encourages individuals to take action in support of Mother Earth. The Season of Creation is an annual spiritual observance that highlights the importance of caring for the environment and creating a just, healthy and sustainable world.

New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light (NM-IPL) is a faith-based organization that works to promote energy justice and the care of our common home. They believe that addressing energy poverty and climate change is not possible without Earth. Life is a time to offer gratitude for Sister Water, Brother Sun, and how our bodies and souls are nourished. Probably the greatest reminder during this holy time is that we are governed by Earth. Life is not possible without Earth.

New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light has many films, resources and information to assist you and your community. Please contact us. joan@nm-ipl.org.

Here are some suggestions for your actions on behalf of Mother Earth during the Season of Creation:

• Submit a report to the New Mexico Environment Department addressing need for ethical concerns as they craft a methane rule for the state. nm.methanestrategy@state.nm.us.
• September 20–27 youth around the world are calling for action on climate change through “Climate Change Strike”. Work with your youth to have a prayer service, educational event, or walk with them in the streets if this is their action.
• Plan a special prayer, movie, educational event, nature prayer or activity during the Season of Creation.

New Mexico Interfaith Power and Light has many films, resources and information to assist you and your community. Please contact us. joan@nm-ipl.org.
Retracing the Roots of the Civil Rights Movement

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Human Rights and Social Justice Ministry

For more photos and personal reflections of the participants, go to St. Mark’s website (stmarksoaks.org). For more information, contact the author, Desean David Marín, (950) 262-2484.

The Road to Alabama, March 2019

Early in 2018, a class was offered to adults at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church titled Conversations on Race. The idea for the class grew out of concerns expressed by several church members about recent fatal shootings of black teenage boys and men by police. The purpose of the six-week class was to focus on the issue of race in America, with a goal of providing a safe place for people to learn about and discuss racism. The first sessions were led by the pastor of a nearby American Methodist Episcopal (AME) church. She gave a brief history of her church and then facilitated conversation among the mostly white class participants about their thoughts on recent shootings and their reactions to race. The class was an enormous success for a number of reasons. First, the conversation was always engaging and reflected our individual perceptions of racism. Second, we were allowed to explore the difference between individual acts of racism and the immense power of institutional racism. Class members quickly realized that a six-week conversation would only begin to tap the deep roots of racism in America, so we committed to continuing the class. This time we would center our attention on the writings of Dr. Martin Luther King. Before the end of the year, the class had grown to 60 participants. Two more classes offered additional information and insight about our legacy of racism. The Conversations on Race class evolved and took on a new identity as the St. Mark’s Human Rights and Social Justice Ministry. In 2017 the study of race issues expanded to include active participation in local public events, conversations having to do with issues of social justice. The Women’s March, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Parade and Commemoration, the Gay Pride Parade, and rallies for immigrant rights. Several members of the group trained to be voter registrars and volunteered to sign up new voters. Money was raised to purchase and present a set of Howard Zinn’s book, The People’s History of the United States, to a classroom in a local middle school. Several more sessions of Conversations on Race were held in the fall of 2017 which involved the study of books about racism. Our conversations ranged from the history of rethinking that contributed to the segregation of communities which continues to this day. In addition to the class that was negotiated today, Jim Crow laws, to mass incarceration, to Reconstruction, and to the Civil Rights Movement. Our book study phase started with Martin Luther King Jr.’s book, Where Do We Go From Here. We then read and discussed Bryan Stevenson’s book, Just Mercy. For many in the white-dominated Human Rights and Social Justice Ministry at St. Mark’s, these books were the first they had read by a black writer and were seminal in deepening an awareness about racism in our country. Stevenson’s book was the true seed that germinated into the idea of a pilgrimage to Alabama. Bryan Stevenson is the founder and Executive Director of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). Stevenson’s original mission as an attorney was the defense of death row inmates. But his vision for EJI came to include the establishment of a Legacy Museum in Montgomery, which would provide details about our country’s long history of slavery. Along with the museum, Stevenson envisioned the building of a National Memorial for Peace and Justice dedicated to more than the 4,000 black men who were brutally lynched in the United States. These sites were opened in the fall of 2018. Toward the end of the study of Just Mercy, Gary Gunthorpe, one of our group’s facilitators, expressed his dream of having a group from Albuquerque take a journey to Alabama to explore America’s roots of racism. It was an idea immediately embraced by group members and serious planning for a pilgrimage began in the spring of 2018. Under the leadership of Gary Gunthorpe and Kelly Newman, the spiritual journey to Alabama was discussed and planned. A first group of ten committed themselves to go on the pilgrimage. Some were members of the original class, others were members at St. Mark’s, plus a couple not associated with the class. We had an emotional experience for each of us as Planning meetings were held at the church for pilgrims to get acquainted, and to allow them an opportunity to tell why they felt it was important to take part in such a trip. Possible activities for the five-day pilgrimage were discussed and researched. As sites were considered, Kelly made necessary contacts to find out how to secure museum reservations, set up tours and purchase tickets. Travel, hotel and van reservations were made in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore area. The itinerary of visits to museums, churches, and memorials was hammered out by the group as we readied ourselves for departure.

DAY 1

Upon arrival in Birmingham, our first stop was the 19th Street Baptist Church where, on September 15, 1963, a bomb made by Ku Klux Klansmen blew up beneath the steps of the church. Our teacher, Ted, described the bombing in vivid detail. Four girls were instantly killed and 22 others in the church were injured. Four Klansmen were ultimately arrested and charged with the bombing but sadly were given only fines for their crime. It took more than ten years to arrest, try, and convict them for the deaths of the four girls. At the conclusion of our tour of the church, we walked across the street to Kelly Ingram Park where sculptures of the brutal treatment of peaceful protesters of men, women and children were memorialized. Afterward, we headed toward our home base in Montgomery, we discussed what we learned about the bombing and the struggle for human rights in Birmingham. Each of us began to better understand the extreme sense of terror that was visited upon members of the 16th Street Baptist Church and every black citizen of the city.

DAY 2

We started our second day in Montgomery at one of the two EJI institutions, the Legacy Museum. It was intentionally established on the sacred ground of a former slave warehouse. A self-guided tour provided an environment in which each of us as we discovered truths about the 400 year history of enslaving African men, women and children. The afternoon was devoted to guided tours of the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church as well as the church parsonage where his family lived while Dr. King was pastor from 1954 to 1960. Wanda, who led us into the church, guided us with singing and wise words. Then as we stepped into the parsonage, Twyla vibrantly told us stories about the King family’s home life during the tumultuous months of the bus boycott. That evening we gathered at a restaurant to meet and have dinner with the gracious members of the black congregation at The Church of the Good Shepherd. It was a touching and memorable event for members of the two groups as they enjoyed talking and bonding together.

DAY 3

We drove an hour from Montgomery to Selma, site of the 1965 March for Voting Rights. We were met that misty morning by the unforgettable Joanne Bland, a woman of imposing size with the demeanor of a drill sergeant who seemed single minded in her efforts to educate us about Selma’s history. She led us to the steps of the Brown Chapel AME Church where the Voting Rights March of March 1965 began. A visit to the tour of Selma which was highlighted when we paused to view the mansion of a former plantation, and then continued on to an all-white cemetery which contained an area glorifying the memory of the Confederacy. We ended our time with Joanne as she described her childhood in the Jim Crow-ruled-and-segregated town of Selma. She included searing memories of the violence she and so many suffered in the Bloody Sunday Voting Rights March, and told us how important it is for us to share the truth of what we learn about Civil Rights History in Alabama.

DAY 4

Our first stop was the Alabama State History Museum, located within sight of the Confederate Capitol building. The museum provided a self-guided tour to explore the history of Alabama, which is as much like that of many states in our country. Stories of exploitation, Indian removal and genocide, and enslavement of African men, women and children, course through Alabama’s history. We left the Alabama history museum and went to the Rosa Parks Museum, a recent addition to Montgomery’s Civil Rights Trail. This museum uses interactive technology to transport you via virtual reality from the city bus to the epic Montgomery boycott. Our entire afternoon was spent at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. This memorial, symbolizing and documenting the lynching of more than 4,000 black people of all ages, rendered us speechless. Every name on this memorial is invited to reflect on the brutal terrorism inflicted on blacks for the 70s-years between 1870 and 1950.

DAY 5

Our last day was spent in the warm embrace of The Church of the Good Shepherd. We had the honor of attending their Sunday Service, then were treated to a potluck lunch with members, children from the community, and the pastor, Mother Betsy. Bonds were strengthened with our brothers and sisters at this church.

What Now?

On our pilgrimage, we bore witness to the legacy of white supremacy in the United States. At the same time, we were in awe of the strength of conviction, resiliency, organization and faith which fortified civil rights efforts that changed the nation. We must reflect on our history and ask ourselves why we haven’t gotten farther ahead in the fight for human rights and social justice. Slavery gave us the legacy of tearing families apart. We’re still doing it. The battle for the right to vote for blacks and minorities is still being fought even after lives were taken over 50 years ago in the cities we visited. Mass incarceration continues today in disproportionately high numbers. Unarmed black men are being murdered by police. Human rights of women, the LGBTQ community, the poor and homeless, Jews, Muslims, immigrants, and refugees are often threatened. White supremacists have morphed into White Nationalists, bringing an alarming rise in hate crimes. Yes, the power structure of institutionalized racism was laid out far us in Alabama, so what now? WeEpiscopalians must take racial reconciliation seriously enough to experience the eye opening, heart breaking truth of our nation’s racial history. Perhaps another, Diocesan-wide pilgrimage is appropriate?
Voice of a Broken Heart in the Borderland

By the Rev. Mike Larrick, Assistant Rector, St. Andrew’s, Las Cruces, NM

“For love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love, rivers cannot sweep it away.” Song of Solomon 8:6-7.

It is a city of deep faith. I will never forget how my heart felt full of so many emotions as I stood in a softball field with hundreds of El Pasoans praying together, singing together from many cultures, and sharing the stories of those who lost their lives, of those who didn’t, and the heroes who helped total strangers by putting their own lives at risk.

Watching the fine priests and lay leaders of the Diocese of the Rio Grande as they rolled up their sleeves and worked with their neighbors to help heal the city of El Paso has made me so proud to be the Bishop of that city. And although healing takes a long time, I am sure that our congregations will help the city heal the city of El Paso has made me so proud to be the Bishop of that city. And although healing takes a long time, I am sure that our congregations will help the city heal.

It was a good first step. Later that week several of us joined other people of faith in El Paso to consider how to respond, in love. Bishop Hunn was there and encouraged folks to support one another and to consider one another as we move together. We listened to stories of people closely touched by the shooting. We took time to speak and to listen to one another to get our feelings and fears out. We asked our Public Officials to tell us what they would do to help and to heal.

Since then, I have watched the news, listened to the debates, and struggled to keep hope alive. Will this behavior of hatred and violence in our country ever stop? What can stop it? Psalm 40 begins, “I waited patiently for the Lord; I turned to me and heard my cry.” We may feel like we have waited long enough and it is time to act and bring about change, but “unless the Lord build the house the workers labor in vain.” Ps 127:1. So, I continue in prayer and I look for what the Lord would have me do.

We all have parts to play in God’s plan of salvation. We are all called to prayer, worship, and service. We are also to speak the truth and call out evil when we can. For now we wait in the hope that proclaims. Love is stranger than hate, stronger even than death. Christ’s victory over death and the grave is a vision of God’s love in our hearts. We know, and we believe that one day, with a lot of prayer and hard work, love will indeed conquer hate. Amen.

#ElPasoStrong

Continued from page 2

is something so real about their description of those moments, which they thought would be their last. And the laughter of a daughter trying to get her mother out the door made us all chuckle at the bravery of her mother wanting to take her coffee with her.

There are many of these stories in El Paso today. And many other stories of people whose husbands and children and future hope have been taken away from them. And their town and its culture have been there for more than 300 years. I was moved to tears many times in the week after the shooting as I listened to the people of El Paso share their pain, and their courage and their commitment not to let the terror and fear keep El Paso from being what it has always been—a beautiful place full of beautiful people who welcome and love one another.