

ALIVE!

JANUARY 2015

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

VOLUME XXXVII, NUMBER 1

Shepherd Center Christmas Event is good news for Saint Joseph children

by Sam Corson

Saint Joseph's Shepherd Center (an ecumenical outreach strongly supported by Christ Church of St. Joseph, the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, and the Servant Leadership Corps) held its annual Christmas Event the morning of Saturday, December 13.

Over 100 children received numerous toys while meeting with Santa Claus and aided by Santa elves. Santa distributed over 70 "The Christmas Story" Golden Books donated by Rev. Mitzi George.

In addition, over 300 food bags were distributed to local families.

The Shepherd Center Annual Christmas Event is a 4-hour presentation of Good News. Saturday afternoon Christ Church hosted "Free Pictures with Santa" for local children. About 20 children took advantage of the offer by well known photographer, the Rev. Deacon Bette J. Kaufmann, and her helper-in-charge, Garrett Boyte.



It was "all smiles for Santa" at the Shepherd Center Christmas Event in St. Joseph.

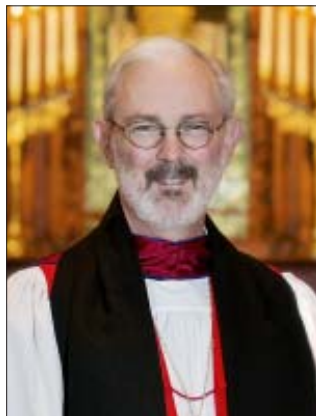
A New Year, A Renewing Church

We are entering a new year. Actually, the secular calendar marks 2015 this January. The Church started our new year with the first Sunday of Advent.

Maybe that's just the way it should be: the Church out in front of the world. After all, God gathered his children into the Church to engage his mission of restoring and renewing his creation.

In the coming year we are offering programs and workshops to support our congregations as we seek to join God in his work of reconciliation.

At the top of the list is the Congregational Vitality Institute. Each of its sessions will provide tools for increasing the vitality of our congregations. I urge each clergy person in charge of a congregation to attend and to bring along a team of at least three members of the laity. All are invited! Just register and come along!



The Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Ph.D., D.D.

In addition, the Christian Formation Commission will host another major training and learning event March 21 at St. James in Alexandria. It is entitled "Engaging God's Mission: Forming Disciples Lifelong AND Life-Wide." Our keynoter will be Dr. Lisa Kimball of Virginia Theological Seminary.

Keep in mind our new MAP (Ministry Application Program) grants. The 2015 Diocesan budget provides \$150,000 for new ministry initiatives and physical plant improvements to support ministry. Contact Kathy Richey for information about the application process.

This is just a brief peek at what's coming in 2015. It's going to be an exciting year!

Upcoming

Christian Unity Week Ecumenical Service

St. James, Alexandria, Noon on Tuesday, January 20, 2015

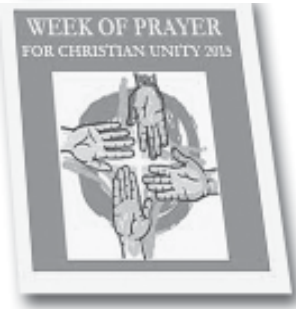
The Diocese will celebrate Christian Unity Week 2015 on January 20, 2015 with an ecumenical service hosted by St. James Episcopal Church, Alexandria at Noon.

The Rev. Dr. Frank Hughes will be the Preacher. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend this meaningful service.

More information may be obtained from Canon William R. Bryant, rectory@shreve.net.

Christian Unity Week

Christian Unity Week is the time that different Christian denominations agree to set aside time for intensive prayer and action to show that all feel the need for more unity among believers in Christ. Denominational differences are put aside to stress the reality of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.



Epiphany

Epiphany means “revealing” or “showing forth” and begins January 6. The season begins with the showing forth of Jesus to the Gentiles, specifically the wise men of Matthew’s Gospel, who are the first to know his divinity. Epiphany proclaims Jesus as Savior of the whole world and that God’s promise of salvation now applies to all the people of earth.

Cursillo Music Fest

Saturday, February 7, 2015 at Camp Hardtner

Make plans now to be a part of this great gathering. It’s a time to relax, enjoy music, good food and fellowship.

Music Fest is a major fundraiser for the Cursillo Movement in the Diocese of Western Louisiana. Funds raised from the silent auction and gift store will help cover the costs of future Cursillos in the Diocese.



January 2015, Volume XXXVII, Number 1

ALIVE! is published by the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, The Episcopal Church USA. The Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, Ph.D., D.D. is bishop of the diocese and publisher of ALIVE! Oversight of ALIVE! is the responsibility of the Diocesan Commission on Public Relations and Communications, chaired by the Rev. Whitfield Stodghill, III.

Robert Harwell Editor

Graphic production of ALIVE! is performed by Harwell Productions, Inc. of Shreveport, Louisiana.

New manuscripts and photographs are solicited. All materials should be sent to ALIVE!, c/o Harwell Productions, Inc. 3010 Knight Street, Suite 160, Shreveport, LA 71105

All materials are subject to editing and become the property of the diocese unless specified. If specified, a self-addressed, stamped envelope must be included. When this is done, a reasonable effort will be made to return the original materials to their source. All inquiries should be directed to: The Editor, 3010 Knight Street, Suite 160, Shreveport, LA 71105. You may telephone 318-868-2303 or FAX: 318-869-2071, E-mail: robertharwell@centurytel.net

ALIVE! (USPS 564-030)(ISSN 0273771X) is published monthly (except for July) by the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana, 335 Main Street, Pineville, LA 71360. Periodical postage paid at Dallas, Texas, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: send address changes to “ALIVE!,” P.O. Box 2031, Alexandria, LA 71309-2031

Copy deadline, next issue:
Friday, January 16, 2015



**TO SUBSCRIBE
TO ALIVE!
OR CHANGE
YOUR
SUBSCRIPTION**

Contact
Robert Harwell, ALIVE! editor
318-868-2303
or e-mail
robertharwell@centurytel.net

Daughters Care Taking Care



Receiving Care

Giving Care

DOK Spring Assembly
Saturday, March 7, 2015, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
St. Timothy’s, Alexandria

A day of reflection and learning about taking care of our hearts, being a care giver for loved ones and receiving care when our reserves are low. Focus on Walking in the Light; caring for the elderly and ill in our families, churches and communities and tending to the care givers among us.

Cost is \$25

To Register: Mail checks to Ruth Gayle at 1216 Georgia St., Sulphur, LA 77063

Make checks payable to DOK of Diocese of Western LA
For more information contact Debbie Fitzpatrick at 318-780-8088
or
Judy Bordelon at 318-664-7844

Upcoming

Mark your calendar NOW to attend the first CVI Event of 2015

MY CONGREGATION IN OUR COMMUNITY



With the Rev. Mac McCarter

January 16 & 17, 2015

Overnight session at the Hardtner Camp
and Conference Center in Pollock, LA

Bishop Jake Owensby will deliver the keynote address
at the Friday opening session.

The Rev. Mack McCarter

Mack McCarter is founder and coordinator of Community Renewal International. A native of Shreveport, La., Mack holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in religion from Texas Christian University and a Master of Divinity Degree from Brite Divinity School.

He served as a pastor for 18 years in Texas before returning to Shreveport in 1991 to begin implementing his vision for community renewal. CRI was formally organized in 1994 and under Mack's leadership has grown into an organization which has received national and international recognition for its life-changing impact.

CVI
CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY INSTITUTE

The Congregational Vitality Institute

CVI is a leadership training program focused on strengthening the spiritual community and organizational life of the congregations within the Diocese of Western Louisiana.

To equip lay leaders to serve in their congregations in mutual ministry is the mission of CVI. Specific training to enable these skills is provided by CVI. The desired result is stronger, healthier congregations that are visible in their communities, and fully responsive to God as missional churches.

CVI will present five programs in 2015. A one-time fee of \$25 entitles you to attend all five presentations. Friday's session begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Hardtner Chapel, and Saturday's times are 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

To register for this session, go to www.camphardtner.com/digital_faith/events?global=true.

Each person attending should register separately; lodging and meals are included.

NEXT CVI PRESENTATION: *The Elements of the Missional Church, February 28, 2014*

Canon Richard Norman, rector of Grace, Monroe is the presenter of this one-day session at the Hardtner Camp and Conference Center.



Monday, February 9, 2015

Registration Deadline for Happening Participants

Registration is online and closes at 5:00 p.m. February 9. After this time, call Camp Hardtner to see if space is still available. Registration is \$90.00 per participant. Late registration is \$100.00 per participant.

THERE IS NO GUARANTEE OF LATE REGISTRATION.

Friday, February 20, 2015

Happening at Camp Hardtner

Happening begins at 6:00 p.m., Friday, February 20 and ends at 5:00 p.m., Sunday, February 22, 2015. Happening is a spiritual retreat for high school youth

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Registration Deadline for JEYL Participants

Registration is online and closes at 5:00 p.m. February 26. After this time, call Camp Hardtner to see if space is still available. Registration is \$85.00 per participant. Late registration is \$95.00 per participant.

THERE IS NO GUARANTEE OF LATE REGISTRATION.

Friday, March 6, 2015

JEYL Retreat for Middle School Youth at Camp Hardtner

JEYL begins at 6:00 p.m., Friday, March 6 and ends at 12:00 noon, Sunday, March 8, 2015. JEYL stands for Junior Episcopal Youth League and is a middle school youth retreat.

Upcoming

SECOND ANNUAL DIOCESAN CHRISTIAN FORMATION CONFERENCE

Engaging God's Mission: Forming Disciples Lifelong AND Life-wide

**Saturday, March 21, 2015
10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

St. James, Alexandria (*check-in begins at 9:00 a.m.*)

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Lisa Kimball, Director of the Center for Ministry of Teaching and Professor of Christian Formation and Congregational Leadership at Virginia Theological Seminary



What concerns you in the area of Christian Formation?

Instead of a "one size fits all program," Dr. Kimball has asked for our input about ideas and questions of specific relevance to the Diocese of Western Louisiana. If you would like to suggest a topic for her to address at the conference, please email it to Joy Owensby (jowensby@diocesewla.org).

Online registration will be available beginning February 1.

Now Available at www.diocesewla.org

connecting the dots
a hope-inspired life



Your life matters, and it matters on an infinite and eternal scale.

Maybe you spend most of your day behind a desk or chauffeuring children or repeating one of a thousand ordinary routines. A life-crushing loss or a humiliating setback may leave you feeling that your world is irreparably broken. Chronic illness or a stalled career may have you wondering whether you have anything truly significant to offer. You may have reached the pinnacle of success, and now you find yourself wondering, "Is this all that there is?"

Nevertheless, your life matters. That is the core message of Christian hope. *Connecting the Dots*, written by the Rt. Rev. Jake Owensby, bishop of the Diocese of Western Louisiana is devoted to helping its readers not only to understand the concept of hope, but more importantly to draw upon hope as the powerful force that inspires our daily lives.



**Ministry Application Program (MAP)
details and applications available on Diocesan Website**

As stated by Bishop Jake in his Convention Address, "The 2015 budget puts our money where our mouth is."

In order to encourage missional thinking and risk-taking, the budget includes a grant program entitled the Ministry Application Program or MAP. This year a total of \$150,000 has been designated for this grant program.

Details of the program and applications for grants are on the diocesan website (www.diocesewla.org).

In short, annual grants for missional initiatives for up to \$7,500 are available. Grants for capitol improvements in support of mission cap at \$5,000. Both kinds of grants will be awarded to new initiatives. They will not be used to supplement operating budgets. These grants are in addition to our longstanding grant program for Formation in Small Congregations.

Looking Back

Hand-washing stations improve sanitation in West African schools

by Kelsey Couvillon

Last Spring, I was visiting the local middle school in the village of Saclo in Benin, West Africa, where I serve as a Peace Corps volunteer, when I ran into a problem. It was noon and I was ready to eat. There were women selling food next to the school, but after a morning of running around my hands were visibly dirty.

Sanitation is an ongoing problem

I looked for a spigot, water container, anything, but there was no water (and definitely no soap) anywhere nearby. I was at the school that day to discuss some of the hygiene issues the school faces. There are no latrines and the community wanted to do something to prevent the rampant diarrheal diseases that forced students out of school for days or weeks at a time.

Before the meeting I had looked into the possibility of building latrines for the school, and my meeting that day was to tell the director that I did not think it would be feasible. The cost of a single latrine is exorbitant and to satisfy Peace Corps grant regulations we would have to build enough latrines to be proportional to the number of students at the school, as well as separate latrines for girls and boys, and still more for the faculty and staff to have their own.

Finding a way to get the project done

Furthermore, all Peace Corps projects require a contribution from the community equal to 25% of the total project. The school was in the middle of building more classrooms to alleviate severe overcrowding. The ambitious project had been completely funded by the community and there was no money to spare.

The day after the dirty-hand debacle I called a volunteer in the northern part of the country who had had great success building hand-washing stations. I asked him to send me his grant proposal and some photos the next time he had an Internet connection. I showed the photos to the director, the mayor, and the president of the PTA and we all agreed that hand-washing stations would be an affordable way to break the germ cycle and a catalyst to teaching the children about good hygiene and health.

At the end of the meeting the president of the PTA told me that he had two younger children at the elementary school nearby and he wanted to know if it would be possible to expand the project. I began meeting with the other



school directors to discuss their interest in joining the project and all were excited to have their schools participate. In the end ten schools asked to be included—the middle school, 5 elementary schools, 2 preschools and 2 private schools.

St. Paul's, Shreveport enters the fray

I called my mom (Beverly Casso, a member of St. Paul's in Shreveport) and excitedly told her all the details. The schools were to provide the soap, students would haul the necessary water from local water pumps each morning, and the mayor agreed to pay for transportation of materials to the blacksmith and the cost of transporting the stations to the schools.

I told mom that I planned to write a grant that would allow family and friends back in the United States to fund the rest of the project. I needed about \$2,000, and I had already made plans to scale down the project if the money proved too difficult to raise.

Instead, the Family of St. Paul's in Shreveport stepped in to help. They made the project the focus of their annual Lenten mite box collection. Children saved their spare coins and allowances and with their generosity they raised over \$3,000 before the grant had even been officially approved.

It took several months to make it through the grant process, but when it was finally approved over the summer we were able to jump in and have the stations done before the school year restarted in October.

2,000 children now have improved sanitation

Due to the generosity of St. Paul's we were able to build 50 hand-washing stations for 10 schools giving improved sanitation to over 2,000 children. In addition to the stations, I and a local work partner went to each classroom to give lessons about germs, illness, and the importance of hand washing. The kids were able to test their new stations and we talked about strategies to keep them clean and well maintained.

The project has been so successful that government officials in the nearby city of

Top: Kelsey instructs on hand washing in the classroom.

Left: First, you soap your hands.

Above: Soaping is followed by rinsing.

Bohicon have asked me to expand the project to the entire commune in the 2015.

The additional money raised has not gone to waste either. So far it has been used to send boys and girls to summer camps to learn about leadership and gender equality, pay for Internet time to teach local teenagers how to use computers, and to buy additional supplies to make the health lessons more dynamic for the children.

It is with my sincerest gratitude that I would like to say Thank you, Merci, and A Wa Nu Kaka to the wonderful people at St. Paul's!

—Kelsey Couvillon is a Rural Community Health Volunteer with the Peace Corps in the West African country of Benin, 2013-2015.

Looking Back



St. Matthias ECW Christmas brunch is "fun for all" (below)

The St. Matthias, Shreveport ECW gathered at the home of Shirley Kelley for their Christmas Brunch and exchange of gifts and holiday fellowship. It was a "Christmas Pot Luck" with lots of laughs and holiday cheer. As one wag characterized the gathering: "I guess we were all feeling good will and peace towards each other because there wasn't much stealing of gifts." Just kidding Santa!

Confirmation at Redeemer, Ruston (above)

On December 14, the Rt. Rev. Jake Owensby, preached and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as greeting those who received their First Communion at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer.

Pictured, left to right, back row are Thomas Tomlin (Confirmed), Mary Tomlin (Received), John Price (Re-affirmed), Bishop Owensby, Debbie Hightower (Verger), Fr. Bill Easterling (Rector), and Art Lackey (Re-affirmed). Front row, left to right are Morgan Price (Confirmed), Pam Price (Confirmed), Nate Moller (1st Communion), and Kahless Carnahan (1st Communion). Not pictured is Elizabeth Hill (Confirmed).

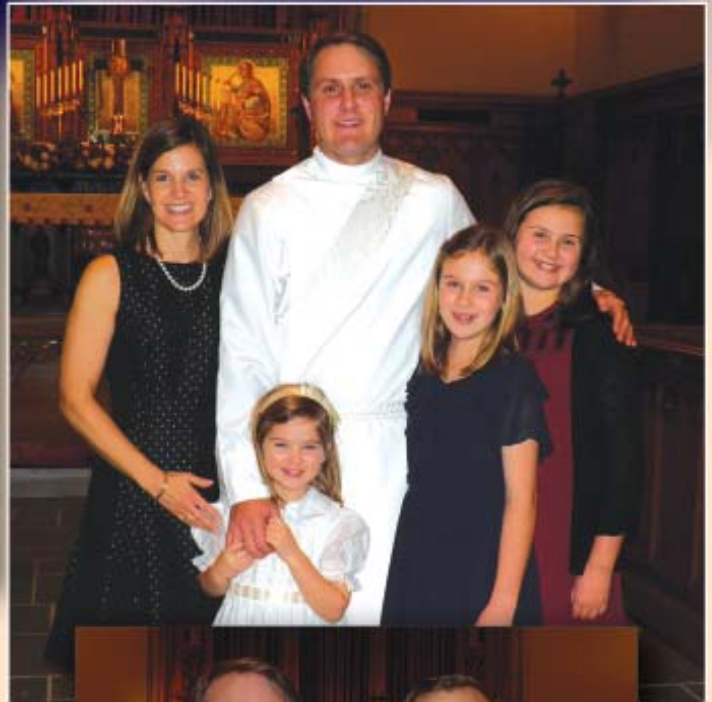
The Angel Statue was blessed and given in memory of Robbie Norris by Mr. and Mrs. Butch Hightower & family. Bishop Owensby, Fr. Easterling, and a group from Redeemer then traveled to West Monroe to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to Donald Welch, who is recovering from heart surgery.



Women of St. George's enjoy Christmas Brunch

St. George's yearly ECW Christmas Brunch was held on Saturday, December 13 in the parish hall. Each attendee brought a dish to share, an unwrapped toy for the Benton & Plain Dealing Head Start schools, and a wrapped gift to exchange. St. George's rector, Father Jaime Flowers, was the "gift announcer," giving very vivid descriptions of each gift as they were opened. Father Flowers kept the crowd smiling and anticipating who would get to choose and open a gift next.





Deacons NOW!

Seth Donald and Michael Bordelon, both third-year seminarians at The University of the South, (Sevance) were ordained to the Transitional Deaconate by Bishop Owensby Saturday, December 27, 2014 at St. Mark's Cathedral. Delighted family and friends surrounded the pair and their families at the reception following the service of Ordination.

Top left: Michael Bordelon and his wife Lauren.

Top right: Deacon Donald at the reception with his wife Amy, and daughters Eliza, Mary Brooks and Mae.

Right: Deacons Donald and Bordelon



“Have antlers, will travel!”

Church of the Redeemer in Ruston's “Reindeer Gang” gathered this past Advent season to renew acquaintances, visit with shut-ins and to bring holiday cheer to whomever crossed their paths. No roll calls, no rules or regs needed, just a sincere need to greet others in the name of Jesus Christ.

Looking Back

Singing with the Symphony provides a unique Christmas experience

by The Rev. Jaime Flowers

St. George's, Bossier City organist, Maestro Kermit Poling, is the Associate Conductor of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra. This year he was given the responsibility of staging the Symphony's Annual Holiday Pops Concert. He made the decision to break tradition and go with an adult chorus, rather than a children's choir.

The Maestro persuaded the St. George's choir to participate, along with several other local choirs, back in September. We were all pretty nervous, but we hung in there. We had to learn nine songs just for the concert, including a Hanukkah piece which was in Hebrew. We sang on risers behind the Orchestra, while two Broadway stars were featured singers. It was an amazing "bucket list" kind of experience.

Two shows were done: the first on Saturday December 20 at the Riverview Theatre to a



packed audience, and then on the following Sunday evening at the Cypress Baptist Church in Benton. Kermit told us that the word was that it was the best Holiday Pops Concert in years! What a Blessing!

Back row, far left: Keith Poling, John McDonald, The Rev. Guido Verbeck, Fred Currie. Front row: The Rev. Jaime Flowers, Linda Shamblin, Trelvis Dunford, Sandy Simpson, Lillian Poling. Not pictured: Bob Aiello and Rita Poling.

—Father Flowers is rector of St. George's, Bossier City.

Solomon House is focus of ESA Christmas Drive

Episcopal School of Acadiana (ESA) held a whole-school Christmas Drive, coordinated by the fifth graders, the Middle School Student Council, and the Upper School Community Service Leaders, to serve the elderly of Solomon House.

Some items that used in our everyday lives are not covered by food stamps, and this makes life harder for many low-income families and individuals to pay for such necessities. This was a great opportunity for ESA to give back to the community during this Christmas season.

The lower school brought items that keep you warm, while the middle school brought items that keep your house clean. Members of the upper school concentrated on items that keep you personally clean. Working from a list of items compiled and made



available by the sponsoring groups, students brought and deposited their items in boxes provided in several places at the chapel in

Cade, and the Movement room in Cade. During an ESA family event held Saturday, December 13, on the Cade cam-

pus, attendees packaged the items and provided letters for the recipients.

Christmas Concert 2014

"Come Home for Christmas" at Grace Episcopal Church, Lake Providence, LA

On December 5 and 7, 2014, the TTC Community Choir presented "Come Home for Christmas" as it celebrates 31 years of bringing sacred and traditional Christmas music to the community. Two performances, one Friday evening and one Sunday afternoon, were held at Grace Episcopal Church in Lake Providence. A reception followed the Friday performance at Byerley House Visitor and Community Center. Admission to the concert was free

and all visitors were invited to attend the reception.

The TTC Choir is a talented group of men and women from Lake Providence and the surrounding areas of North Louisiana, who volunteer their time and shared their love of music, enjoyment of singing, and good fellowship for the past thirty years. The Choir had its beginning in 1983.

From 1983 to 1993, the community choir, later known as "The TTC Choir"

performed two concerts yearly, one during the summer featuring popular Broadway music and the other concert held at Christmas featuring sacred and secular music. Since 1993 only an annual Christmas Concert has been held to celebrate the Christmas season.

The name, TTC, reflects the origin of the choir when several church choirs in the community joined one another to travel from one church to another to present special

music for religious occasions. The choir also traveled to towns in the surrounding areas. Throughout the years the organization grew to include members from the surrounding parishes. This has been an example of a cooperative effort between the small rural parishes to pool their resources and talents to present musical programs to the citizens of the Louisiana Delta.

Looking Back

New Year's greetings from Camp Hardtner!

by Jason Ezell

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year! We rang in the New Year at Camp Hardtner with the second installment of WinterFest. We had just under 30 youth grades 7-12 who with a few willing chaperones spend December 29 – January 1 working and living in community at Hardtner. The inside of the Camper's Lounge received a fresh coat of paint, the new pier got a few finishing



touches, and the Holy Day Inn rooms received a bit of freshening. Not only did these young folks come to work and give back to the place that has given them so many positive experiences, they also helped in the kitchen with food preparation and everyone washed their own dishes. So parents, don't let your kids fool you when they say they don't know how to clean, paint, or do dishes.

The willingness of all participants was greatly rewarded with a movie night, a dance that Bishop Jake and his lovely wife Joy attended, a fireworks show and S'mores by the bonfire. The whole event was topped off with a Eucharist at midnight on New Year's Eve. While a retreat of mostly hard, physical work was a new camp experience

for many, it is our hope that we can continue to grow this ministry. The example our young people set this week is the true telling that they are the church today and not the church of tomorrow. These young people should be continually encouraged to participate in leadership roles in their own congregations. We have proved that our youth are a real asset to our ministries now, right now.

I would like to personally thank everyone that participated in WinterFest, and I



feel sure we will all gather again in the near future. Stay tuned in for more updates, and be on the lookout for registration for Happening and JEYL. Summer Camp registration is still open and camp sessions are filling quite rapidly. Register today to reserve your spot!

Jason Ezell is the executive director of the Hardtner Camp and Conference Center.

How Ebola took a toll on one American church

By Anders Kelto

On a typical Sunday, the pews in Trinity Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. are almost full. But a few months ago, the large stone church with stained glass windows in northwest Washington, D.C. began looking rather empty. Roughly a quarter of the congregation — 50 people — had stopped showing up.

At first, Rev. John Harmon, the head of the church, wasn't sure what was going on. Then he started getting phone calls from parishioners. "Some folks called to say, I'm not coming to church because I don't know who's traveling [to West Africa]," Harmon said.

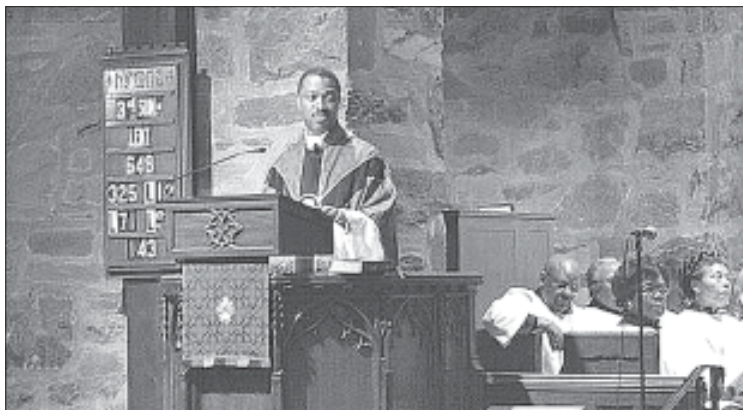
The congregation at Trinity is an international crowd. More than 20 countries are represented, including several in West Africa. Reverend Harmon himself was born in Liberia before moving to the U.S. in 1982, when he was 18.

It turns out the fears of congregation members were unfounded — no one from the church was traveling to West Africa during the Ebola outbreak. But some still worried the disease might somehow creep into the church.

At the same time, the church was doing its part to help fight Ebola. Members had raised more than \$5,000 and donated medical supplies and protective equipment to West Africa.

But that altruistic spirit didn't bring the missing congregants back to church. At a service in October, Harmon finally addressed the elephant in the cathedral. "In the middle of the service, we just had this honest conversation," Harmon said.

At the time when he would normally deliver a sermon, he instead asked parishioners to voice their concerns. Then sev-



The Rev. John Harmon preaches at Trinity Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C.

eral doctors from the congregation talked about Ebola, including how it spreads.

Cora Dixon, a member of Trinity who describes herself as "very concerned about Ebola," says the doctors were reassuring. "They relaxed our minds," she said. Harmon asked anyone traveling abroad to skip church for three weeks — the incubation period of Ebola — even if they weren't traveling to West Africa. He told everyone it was okay to nod or bow rather than shake hands during the passing of the peace — the part of the service where parishioners greet one another.

Harmon also asked the ushers to put out two big bottles of hand sanitizer. "I use them when I get back to the altar, [as a] visible sign that we are expressing care for each other," he says.

Since Harmon and other church leaders addressed these concerns, attendance at Trinity has picked back up, almost to pre-

Ebola levels. More people are showing up for community service events, too, like a pre-Christmas dinner for homeless people.

Adolphus Ukaegbu, a church usher who is originally from Nigeria, says some members are still avoiding church events because they're scared of Ebola — including an elderly woman he used to bring to Sunday morning services.

"She told me she was advised not to come to church, because there are so many West Africans in the congregation. And since then, I haven't seen her," he said.

But for the most part, things at Trinity are back to normal. And congregants have even started shaking hands and hugging again at the passing of the peace.

—Anders Kelto is a writer/producer for National Public Radio.

Libby Lane named as Church of England's first female bishop

Downing Street has announced that the new bishop of Stockport — and the first female bishop in the Church of England — will be the Rev. Libby Lane, currently vicar of St. Peter's, Hale, and St. Elizabeth's, Ashley.

As bishop of Stockport she will serve as a suffragan (assistant) bishop in the Diocese of Chester.

Lane was ordained as a priest in 1994 and has served a number of parish and chaplaincy roles in the north of England in the dioceses of Blackburn, York and Chester. For the past eight years she has served as vicar of St. Peter's and St. Elizabeth's.

She is one of eight clergy women from the Church of England elected as Participant Observers in the House of Bishops, as the representative from the dioceses of the north west.

Speaking at Stockport Town Hall, where she was announced as the new bishop of Stockport, Lane said: "I am grateful for, though somewhat daunted by, the confidence placed in me by the Diocese of Chester. This is unexpected and very exciting. On this historic day as the Church of England announces the first woman nominated to be bishop, I am very conscious of all those who have gone before me, women and men, who for decades have looked forward to this moment. But most of all I am thankful to God.

Responding to news of the announcement, Archbishop of York John Sentamu, said: "It is with great joy that on January 26, 2015 — the feast of Timothy and Titus, companions of Paul — I will be in York Minster, presiding over the consecration of the Rev. Libby Lane as bishop suffragan of Stockport.

The search for the five-tool priest

by Daniel H. Martins

Among baseball scouts and executives, the classic metric by which the value of a player is judged is what has become known as the “five tools”: hit, hit for power, run, throw, field. A player who excels in all five is exceptionally rare, and is highly sought-after. These abilities may not be displayed fully in a young player on the cusp of his professional career. But experienced scouts have at least spotted their potential, and coaches are working hard on creating the conditions under which they can develop and flourish.

Analogies are never perfect, but, as I look back at more a quarter-century of experience in ordained ministry, nearly four of those years as a bishop, I’ve had ample opportunity to evaluate the gifts and skills of priests, and something akin to the five-tool baseball player suggests itself. As I consider the raw gifts of those in discernment for potential ordination to the priesthood, and as I look at the demonstrated skills of priests while engaging in deployment, there are five core abilities that I hope to spot, whether in the rough, or in a more developed form.

Preside. A priest is a public person, and needs to have a public presence in liturgy that inspires confidence, that enables a worshiper to relax and let go of any anxiety about whether the event is in capable hands. A priest who is uncomfortable at the altar is like a fish that is uncomfortable in water. This does not mean that the priest attracts attention; quite the contrary, actually — a presiding priest should move and speak in and around the sanctuary with such fluidity and grace that everything about the

event becomes a conduit for attention to the One who alone is appropriately the object of such attention. A priest can learn how to be a better presider, but it helps if the innate gift is there to begin with.

Preach. It is telling that, in the culture around us, “preacher” is often a generic moniker for any member of the clergy. In churches that adhere to ancient liturgical patterns, the sermon is not so much the main event as it is in worshiping communities that have lost touch with that inheritance.



Still, even in the context of a Eucharist celebrated according to traditional norms, the sermon is critically important. Preaching, at its best, is very much both a craft and an art. The craft can be taught, practiced, and honed. The art is more mysterious and elusive. Some priests have a homiletical fire in them fully ablaze the day they are ordained. The church does well to recognize the spark that leads to such a fire when it first shows itself, and encourage the one who possesses it to nurture the gift.

Teach. The charism for teaching is related to the one for preaching, but they are distinct. I have known superb teachers who

were mediocre preachers, and excellent preachers who were inadequate teachers. There are moments when it feels to me as though the ministry of teaching is the most underdeveloped of the five tools of priestcraft, but if that is the case, it may well be because it is also the least appreciated. The catechesis gap among Episcopalians (and many other Christians as well) is massive. We desperately need more disciples of Jesus who patiently hunger to be taught, and priest-teachers who are able to articulate the tradition of Scripture, theology, and spirituality in ways that are readily understood.

Lead. Leadership, like preaching and teaching, can be taught and learned, though innate talent is certainly an occasion of gratitude. A leader need not have exceptional charisma, and need not be particularly outgoing. What is truly critical is that a leader have an extraordinary degree of self-awareness that supports an ability to accurately read people and situations. But leadership instincts are rarely, in themselves, sufficient. Leadership is a science and a craft, and there is an abundance of both theoretical and practical material available to help turn ordinary leaders into exceptional leaders. A priest needs to be able and willing to apply self-awareness to the craft of leadership.

Care. The priest and author Neal Michell reminds us that people will not “care how much you know until they know how much you care.” A priest is — by definition, if not by actual circumstance — a pastor, and the heart of pastoral care is bringing the power and the glory of the paschal mystery to bear in the lives of real people who both

suffer and sin, sometime simultaneously. And most members of the flock of Christ will not be of a mind to make space for a priest to do this sort of work until they have gotten a sense that the priest authentically cares about them and is concerned for their best interests. This is not to say that a priest will never offer words of challenge or admonition, but the leave to do so will probably have already been earned by an established pattern of personal connection. Not everybody who has a big heart will make a good priest. But a likely candidate for becoming a good priest will have shown some evidence of having a big heart.

Even at the Major League level, very few people are true five-tool players. But any who achieve sustained success are probably outstanding in three of the five, and at least marginally adept in the others. Similarly, very few priests excel in all five of presiding, preaching, teaching, leading, and caring. But those who serve the Church by engaging in consistently fruitful ministries are probably exemplary in at least three of the five, and basically competent, if not outstanding, in the others. Those involved in the processes of discernment and deployment will want to be alert for signs of raw giftedness in these areas, that those in positions of authority and influence might help cultivate these gifts — these *tools* — for the benefit of the whole body of Christ.

—The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins is Bishop of Springfield and a board member of the Living Church Foundation. Reprinted from the Website of The Living Church.

A year of Anglican service

by G. Jeffrey MacDonald

When adults in their 20s grow hungry for adventure, sometimes the only things holding them back are practical questions: can I afford to travel abroad? Will it be safe? Could I have a meaningful experience and learn some useful skills?

Those with ties to the Episcopal Church are increasingly answering yes to those questions as they discover what’s possible through the Young Adult Service Corps. Now in its 14th year, YASC sends young men and women abroad for a year of mission work in a province of the Anglican Communion. The application deadline for 2015 is January 2.

Six years ago, YASC had just seven missionaries in the field. But in the past three years the yearly average has climbed to 20. This year, they’re serving in 13 countries, including three provinces that often host

several missionaries at a time: the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, and the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

Applicants are drawn in part to YASC’s pragmatic assurances: they’ll receive housing, a stipend, and health insurance. But they’re attracted just as much to the prospect of making a difference through Anglican Communion partnerships.

“Young adults help create a vision and are intimately involved in the impact that the ministry has on their host communities and themselves,” said Elizabeth Boe, officer for global networking at the Episcopal Church, via email. “They are able to see that they are making a difference in themselves and the world around them.”

Most YASC missionaries work in one of four areas: education, communication/

See *Youth missionaries*, page 11



Becky Gleason of the Young Adult Service Corps interprets during her year in Honduras. Photo courtesy of Becky Gleason.

DIOCESAN DATES OF NOTE

Planning an event in the diocese? CONTACT JOY FIRST!

After a great deal of planning and hard work, the Diocese has established and will maintain a central diocesan calendar of events to be held in the diocese.

The creation and maintenance of that calendar is the responsibility of Missioner for Children, Youth, and Young Adults, Joy Owensby. (JOwensby@diocesewla.org)

SO, if you are planning an event to be held in the diocese, your first move is to CONTACT JOY! Still in its infancy, this central calendar has already helped avoid overlapping events.

Remember, your first move is to CONTACT JOY! JOwensby@diocesewla.org

January 2015

9-10 — Cursillo Secretariat Board Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.

9-10 — ECW Retreat and Installation of Officers, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 5:00 p.m.

10 — Commission on Youth and Young Adults Meeting at Mt. Olivet

11 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. James, Alexandria*

13 — Meeting of the Diocesan Council, *St. James, Alexandria*, 10:00 a.m.

16 — ALIVE! copy deadline for the February issue

16-17 — Convocational Vitality Institute Presentation: "What We Are," *Camp Hardtner*, Friday's presentation: 6:00 p.m. in the *Hardtner Chapel*, Saturday: 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

18 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Shreveport*

20 — Christian Unity Week Ecumenical Service, *St. James, Alexandria at Noon*

24 — JEYL Staff applications due

25 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*

31 — Happening Staff Training, *St. James, Alexandria*, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

February 2015

1 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. John's, Minden*

7 — Kairos Outside Inventory, *Camp Hardtner*, 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

7 — Cursillo MusicFest, *Camp Hardtner*, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

8 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christ Church, Bastrop*

9 — Registration deadline for Happening participants

15 — Bishop's Visitation, *Epiphany, New Iberia*

18 — Ash Wednesday

19 — ALIVE! copy deadline for the March issue

20 — Happening at Camp Hardtner, 6:00 p.m. 2/20/15- 5:00 p.m. 2/22/15

22 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Matthias, Shreveport*

26 — Registration deadline for JEYL participants

28 — Convocational Vitality Institute Presentation: "The Elements of the Missional Church," *Hardtner Camp and Conference Center*, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

March 2015

1 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christ Memorial, Mansfield*

6-8 — JEYL Retreat at Camp Hardtner, 6:00 p.m. 3/6/15- Noon 3/8/15

7 — Daughters of the King Spring Assembly, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria*

8 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Patrick's, West Monroe*

19 — ALIVE! copy deadline for the April issue

21 — Christian Formation Conference, *St. James, Alexandria*,

22 — Bishop's Visitation, *Holy Comforter, LeCompte*

27-28 — Kairos Outside Staff Training, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.

28 — Commission on Youth and Young Adults Meeting, *Online via GoToMeeting* 10 a.m. to Noon

29 — Bishop's Visitation, (*Palm Sunday*) *St. James, Alexandria*

April 2015

5 — Easter Sunday

5 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*

7-9 — Eastertide Clergy Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 5:00 p.m.

8-12 — Cursillo #148, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.

12 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Winnfield*

17-19 — Time for Joy Women's Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.

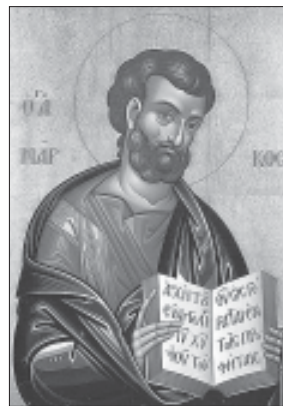
19 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Abbeville*

21 — Meeting of the Diocesan Council, *St. James, Alexandria*, 10:00 a.m.

24-26 — Kairos Outside, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 6:00 p.m.

25 — Discernment Conference, *St. James, Alexandria*

26 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. George's, Bossier City*



The Gospel According to **MARK**

An adult Christian Education Class presented by The Rev. Dr. Frank Hughes, rector of St. John's, Minden.

Thursday Evenings February 19 – March 26, 2015, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church in Minden, 1107 Broadway

Youth missionaries

continued from page 10

administration, development, or agriculture. In their applications, they are invited to list skills, interests, and geographic preferences, which are then considered at a multi-day discernment gathering.

Becky Gleason of Oceanside, California, was 25 when she left her youth ministry job last year and traveled to Tela, Honduras. The small, oceanfront town was a fit for her personality and interests. She did not want to be in a big city, but hoped instead for a small setting where she could work with youth and practice her Spanish.

"I felt there was something else out there that I hadn't experienced yet," Gleason said. "When you travel to other parts of the world, you see the body of Christ in a whole different way. You see how big the body of Christ really is."

Her life in Honduras had a steady, relaxed rhythm. She lived in an apartment, taught English at Holy Spirit Episcopal Bilingual School, attended an afternoon Bible study, and traveled by bicycle and bus. At night she would play guitar, read, grade papers, call her family in the U.S., and maintain her weblog, *la alegría compartida ~ shared joy*. On weekends, she would attend church and take part in the congregation's mission outreach efforts.

Gleason's Honduran experience has opened doors back in the Diocese of San Diego. She's returned to St. Michael's by-the-Sea in Carlsbad, where she had been a youth minister and now has a broader job description that includes children's ministry. Having become fluent in Spanish during her year abroad, she now helps interpret for the Rt. Rev. James Mathes, Bishop of San Diego. She also works as a diocesan staff intern in Latino and young adult ministries, which has led to guest preaching opportunities.

"I'm always kind of praying about how I should be living my life," Gleason said. "I don't necessarily think that I know what I'll be doing for the rest of my life, but I at least know where I'm supposed to be now."

As the program evolves, YASC is helping strengthen relationships between the Episcopal Church and each of the dioceses where missionaries serve, Boe said.

More applicants are signing up in their late 20s and using the experience as part of their discernment. Nurse Keri Geiger of the Diocese of Virginia spent a year doing hospice work in South Africa. Upon return, she earned certification in caring for HIV/AIDS patients.

"Much of the missionary experience — regardless of your age — is about listening, learning, sharing yourself, and just being present," Boe said. "Being open to the mutual transformation that will take place is essential to getting the most out of the YASC year."

WLA
on the Web:

News and information on the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana

www.diocesewla.org



TO SUBSCRIBE TO ALIVE! OR CHANGE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

Contact
Robert Harwell, ALIVE! editor
318-868-2303
or e-mail
robertharwell@centurytel.net

Holy Cross, Shreveport is awarded Jubilee Ministry grant for Mobile Medical Ministry work

Samuel McDonald, Director of Mission and Deputy Chief Operating Officer of the Episcopal Church, has announced 14 recipients of the Episcopal Church Jubilee Grants totaling \$49,965 to support mission and ministry in 11 dioceses.

Jubilee Ministries are congregations or agencies with connections to the Episcopal Church, designated by diocesan bishops and affirmed by Executive Council, whose mission work affects the lives of those in need, addressing basic human needs and justice issues.

Grants were awarded in two categories: *Impact and Development*.

Thirteen *Impact Grants* ranging from \$855 – \$1,500 each were awarded to initiatives of Jubilee Centers that make a positive and measurable impact in the lives of those in need.

Holy Cross Episcopal Church of The Diocese of Western Louisiana was awarded a \$1,200 grant to provide health education and healthcare, via the parish's mobile medical van, to those in the community lacking access to services.

A seven-member committee with representatives from throughout the church reviewed 67 applications for grants.

Holy Cross, Shreveport, has been a Jubilee Ministries Center since 1984. The Rev. Mary Richard is the Jubilee Officer for the diocese and may be contacted by email mbrichard47@yahoo.com.

St. Luke's Mobile Episcopal Medical Ministry is the mobile medical ministry of the eight Episcopal churches of Northwest Louisiana. Using the medical RV, free preventive health screenings, basic health services, health education, and medical referrals on a regular basis are provided to the underserved in the rural and urban Louisiana communities of Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Desoto and Claiborne parishes.

The mission goal is to break down the barriers that keep people from accessing health care believing that all individuals have the right to health care. There is no charge for the services which is especially helpful for the uninsured or



underinsured. Care is offered to everyone who comes to the medical van site.

St. Luke's chose to be mobile so that health services can be offered to communities in the settings where people live and work. In doing so, both accessible and quick health care can be offered to those who lack transportation or do not have the ability to take time off from work. Regular return visits to each community provide follow-up care to individuals and the development of long-term relationship with the community based on trust.

The volunteers at St. Luke's look at the whole person — their physical, emotional, spiritual, and social needs — working closely with other community organizations to refer individuals to the appropriate services so that their needs can be met. While health screenings are quick, care is taken to spend as much time as needed with each individual.

Educating all who come into the van about their health and ways to take care of themselves helps to empower them in making healthy choices.

After an assessment of the needs of each

Louisiana community visited and tailoring services to best meet those needs, free, basic, non-emergency health services and preventive health screenings are offered.

Screenings provide an early warning of an impending condition that if gone untreated could have much higher costs to the individual and community. The offering of preventive services and the discovery of chronic illnesses early on, saves the greater health care system money by avoidance of costly emergency room visits and costly treatment of the complications that occur when these chronic illnesses are not caught and treated in the early stages. To learn more about this, check out the "return on investment" calculator at www.mobilehealthmap.org

Screenings offered include Hypertension screenings, Diabetes, Nutrition and Breast health.

Health education is always a high priority
Time spent helping clients to better understand their disease process and how to best manage it can bring about healthy lifestyle changes. Providing instruction in

ways for individuals to take care of their health and the health of their family members gives both information and tools which then empower them to make healthier choices.

Health Promotion and Education subjects include: Nutrition and exercise, Specific disease process and management, tobacco and alcohol cessation, medication management, and breast health education.

— This article compiled with information from the Episcopal Church Office of Public Affairs, The Church of the Holy Cross, Shreveport and the St. Luke's Mobile Episcopal Medical Ministry website.