

Blake family member makes Camp Hardtner donation

A member of the Hardtner family is continuing a tradition of the family's generosity toward one of the most beloved institutions in our diocese—The Hardtner Camp & Conference Center. Henry Ernest Blake, son of Violet Hardtner Blake Howell, in December 2015 made a gift to the camp of \$75,000.00 through the H. Lyman Blake Scholarship Fund.

Lyman Blake, grandson of Violet, and son of Henry E. Blake and Caroline Lyman was born in 1963 with both physical and mental disabilities. Henry and his mother knew that because of this, he would never be able to attend Camp Hardtner. Because the camp and its programs have been special to both of them, they wanted to do something that would honor Lyman and assure that other children would be able to attend and benefit from all Camp Hardtner has to offer. So an account was set up, and yearly each

contributed the amount required to send a child to camp. Over the years, through steadfast giving, the fund has grown, and when Camp Able began, Henry knew he had found how best to use these funds to both honor Lyman and benefit others. He asked that his donation be added to the Lyman Blake Scholarship Fund to go for the endowment of Camp Able. The name of the fund has now been changed to the H. Lyman Blake Endowment Fund.

Camp Able is a program that was brought to Camp Hardtner under the leadership of its recent director, Jason Ezell. This program allows children and youth with various types of disabilities an opportunity to attend a camp session especially designed for them during the summer. Camp Able requires an enlarged staff as well as some specialized equipment. In addition to scholarships, the endowment will ensure quality care for the participants while at camp. The endowment also will ensure, as fully as possible, accessibility for any person with a

handicap who attends a function at the Hardtner Camp & Conference Center.



Henry Blake

Henry was one of the very earliest campers to attend Hardtner after its founding. His daughter, Caroline Blake Ferris and son,

William Blake, were both active in the camping program, as well as his grandchildren, Philip, Stephen, and Juliet Ferris, Ellen, Henry, Lee and Holly Morris, and Isabel and Catherine Ryland. In addition to being a Camp Hardtner fan, Henry was the first Treasurer of the Western Diocese of Louisiana, serving in that position for 20 years.

The Diocese of Western Louisiana and all who love and enjoy Camp Hardtner thank Henry for his vision toward the development of Camp Hardtner, and his faithful service to our diocese. Henry is a member of St. James Episcopal Church in Alexandria, Louisiana.

Anyone who wishes to add to the endowment fund for Camp Able is welcome to do so. Simply send a check made out to Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana and indicate it is "For Camp Able Endowment Fund".

My father Sam was the youngest of thirteen children. The Owensbys lived in a tiny house typical of their Depression-era mill village. Jammed into tight



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

quarters, the older sisters doted on their baby brother like a little prince.

“Hey, Sam!” they said, “We’re going down the river to go fishin’. You want to come along?”

Of course he did.

The three of them walked a few miles through the woods and down the riverbank. Once they were far enough from listening ears, the two older boys grabbed my dad, took off all his clothes, and tied him to a tree.

They tied him with weak enough knots for him to slip out after a little while. Their thought was that he would get loose in an hour or

NAKED

so. Then he’d make his way through the woods and, at the edge of the village, wait in the brush until he could slip back home under cover of darkness.

They obviously had no idea who they were dealing with.

It did take a while for my dad to free himself from the rope. But instead of walking back home through the woods, he walked toward town. Then, around high noon, my father strolled, head held high, right down the middle of Main Street.

I can still hear my elderly aunt Cornelia laughing about it decades later. She’d say, “There he was in all his glory!”

Jesus is God in all his glory. God in the flesh. My dad bared his naked body. In Jesus, God bares the divine heart for all to see.

My dad walked down that street to get my uncles in trouble with my grandfather. It worked like a charm.

Jesus walked the streets of Galilee and Jerusalem to reveal God’s transforming presence and to draw everyone to their Maker.

Commentators routinely call the first eleven chapters of John’s Gospel the Book of Signs. In those pages John recounts seven signs, all of which reveal God’s glory.

Diocesan News



A Safeguarding Update

Important Instructions Regarding *Safeguarding Online*

One of the benefits of *Safeguarding Online* is **password retrieval**. If you have forgotten your password, try to retrieve it yourself. Enter the e-mail used in your initial enrollment, and an option to find your account and change your password is offered.

If you need further assistance, contact our diocesan administrator (jowensby@diocesewla.org). **Please do not enroll in *Safeguarding* more than once.** Multiple enrollments for the same person can cause problems with the system.

Sewanee's Education for Ministry Mentor training to be offered March 7-9

Basic EfM Mentor training will be offered at the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center in Loranger, LA on March 7-9, 2016. The first session begins at 2:00 p.m., Monday, March 9 and will end at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 11. Space is available for six individuals with each having a private room.

The Rev. T. Whitfield Stodghill, III is the new EfM coordinator in the Diocese of Western Louisiana. "Participants in the Education for Ministry (EfM - based at the School of Theology at the University of the South, Sewanee) program study the entire sweep of the Christian tradition from the earliest period to the present. Participants learn the disciplines of biblical exegesis and interpretation, systematic theology, church history, ethics, liturgics, and ascetical theology," said Father Stodghill.

Each EfM group is facilitated by a mentor, who must receive approved training, such as that to be offered at the Solomon Center, and must be retrained regularly.

"As the new coordinator for the EfM program in the Diocese of Western Louisiana,

I highly recommend this program," said Father Stodghill. "Many people have had their ministry, faith and minds enriched by EfM." The instructors and the training are the same whether offered in the Diocese of



Western Louisiana or the Diocese of Louisiana.

Those interested in learning more about EfM, or if you think that mentor training (or retraining) might be right for you, contact Father Stodghill (wstodghill@aol.com, or 318-323-3139) for information, or for assistance in registering for the March training session.

St. James, Alexandria to present concert organist, Weston Jennings



As part of its 2015-16 Concert Series, St. James Episcopal Church, Alexandria will present "An Evening with Concert Organist Weston Jennings," Tuesday, February 16 at 8:00 p.m. at St. James, 1620 Murray Street.

A graduate of the University of Rochester Eastman School of Music, Weston Jennings earned the bachelor of music degree and the prestigious Performer's Certificate. Upon the completion of his undergraduate degree, he spent two years in England first assuming the post of Organ Scholar at Canterbury Cathedral and subsequently at Chelmsford Cathedral. During this time, he was also appointed the first Organ Scholar to the Royal Festival Hall in London.

Jennings returned to the United States in August 2015 and began his master's degree track in music at the Yale School of Music and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. He enjoys an active concert schedule. Weston will play works of Dietrich Buxtehude, Louis Lefebure-Wely, Jehan Alain, Claude Debussy and the pyrotechnic *Fantasy and Fugue on Ad nos ad salutarem undam* by Franz Liszt.

The St. James Concert Series is made possible by a grant from The McCormick-Smith Fund, Inc. with free admission to the public. Call the St. James Church office at 318.445.9845 for more information.



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.



February 2016, Volume XXXVIII, Number 02

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. 4321 Youree Drive, Suite 400, 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, 4321 Youree Drive, Suite 400, Shreveport, LA 71105. You may telephone 318-868-2303, or E-mail: robertharwell39@att.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

Email *ALIVE!* at robertharwell39@att.net

WLA
on the Web:
News and information on the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana
www.diocesewla.org

Copy deadline, next issue:
Thursday, February 18, 2016

ANCIENT FAITH, MODERN TOOLS

Being the Church in a Digital World

How can the church most effectively use technology?

Topics to be covered that will sharpen your focus and enhance your digital presence.

- How can the church most effectively use technology?
- What does it mean to be a digital evangelist?
- What are the best practices for utilizing Facebook in ministry?

These are only some of the topics that will be addressed at this March 5 conference co-sponsored by the Christian Formation Commission and the Congregational Vitality Institute (CVI).

Who should attend this conference?

Church leaders, youth ministers, VBS directors, clergy, parishioners—anyone interested in using contemporary electronic tools in the church should plan to participate. In fact, Bishop Jake would like for every congregation to send a team to the conference.

Registration is \$20 per person

Registration is \$20 per person and is available right now on the home page of the diocesan website: <http://www.diocesewla.org>. You can also sign up for childcare for children up through 5th grade.

For further information, contact Joy Owensby (jowensby@diocesewla.org) or the Rev'd Canon Bill Bryant (rectory@shreve.net).

If you are interested in congregational growth and development, you should be a part of this conference! Register now! at www.diocesewla.org.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6

ST. JAMES,
ALEXANDRIA

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CHRISTIAN
FORMATION COMMISSION AND THE
CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY INSTITUTE (CVI)

10:00 A.M.-
3:30 P.M.

OUR SPEAKER:
RANDALL
CURTISS



Our conference presenter:

Randall Curtiss

Randall Curtiss, who terms himself as “The Holy Geek,” works for the Episcopal Church in Arkansas where he is the Ministry Developer for Young Adults and Youth. He is also president of Forma, a network of Christian formation leaders in The Episcopal Church. The day will be lively and fact-filled and you will profit from Randall’s presentation.

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CHRISTIAN FORMATION COMMISSION AND THE CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY INSTITUTE

Diocesan News

JEYL

Friday, March 11 – 13

JEYL stands for Junior Episcopal Youth League. The weekend is a spiritual retreat for middle school youth that takes place in the relaxed, fun environment of the Hardtner Camp & Conference Center. Attendance is open to anyone in grades 6-8. The cost to participate is \$85 per person.

Register for JEYL on the diocesan website (www.diocesewla.org)

Participants must register by Friday, February 26 to receive a t-shirt.

The final day to register is Friday, March 4.



CVI 2016

January CVI session delves in the Missional Church

by Laurent De Prins

[In January, I had the opportunity to attend the Congregational Vitality Institute (CVI) workshop led by the Rev. Dennis Campbell. The workshop topic was “Initiating and Managing Change in the Missional Church.” Dennis+ engaged us in conversation on initiating such changes. He also showed us ways to manage the change. We dis-

cussed the different ways change could possibly be applied to our parishes in order to become missional churches heavily involved with our local communities. The workshop took us through the life cycle of a parish and how one might intervene to keep it alive and vital.

The parish life cycle we looked at looks like the following: birth, adolescence, stability, decline, and death. Obviously, we do not want to reach death within a parish. Dennis+ showed us different ways to prevent death from occurring such as: redefining a church’s purpose after the adolescent

phase or redeveloping its vision after the stability phase.

Of course, we believe in the resurrection. If death should occur, rebirth is not impossible but it’s not the best option.

We received good insight on how we might change things for the better rather than holding on to something because it’s “tradition.” Yes, I know; we are Episcopalian, and we love our traditions. However, stepping outside the comfort zone felt like the most important discussion I had with my table group.

Moving outside one’s comfort zone may seem like a minimal idea to take from the workshop, but in order to become a missional church, we need to come to terms with the thought of being uncomfortable outside the walls of our buildings.

I had a great time learning more about the different ways to mold our parishes into missional churches. In my opinion, CVI introduces great presenters, brings a fresh look on the missional church, and engages those attending through meaningful discussion.

I certainly look forward to attending the next one.

—Laurent De Prins is a member of St. Barnabas, Lafayette.

Around the Diocese

Explore this opportunity to expand your spiritual life and focus.



Walking Three Days with Jesus

March 24-26, 2016 at the Hardtner Camp & Conference Center

Retreat costs:

Single occupancy room: \$225 (all inclusive)
 Double occupancy room: \$185 (all inclusive)
Some scholarship aid may be available.

Please submit this completed form and your booking fee to: Hardtner Camp & Conference Center, 2393 Camp Hardtner Road, Pollock, LA 71467.

- Beginning with Maundy Thursday supper we will begin to walk the three days to the silence of the tomb.
- Included in the retreat will be the traditional Maundy Thursday liturgy, Good Friday Liturgy, Stations of the Cross, Holy Saturday Liturgy and a series of meditations. There will be time for silent meditation and reflection, walks and rest.

From Maundy Thursday to the Great Vigil of Easter, walk a sacred journey—Jesus sitting at table with his disciples, instituting the Eucharistic feast—the quiet time in the garden praying with Jesus—the journeys from garden to judgment to the cross and you'll see Jesus crucified.

This is a retreat for anyone who would like to take these three days for retreat and meditation before the great feast of Easter. Enjoy quiet times as well as time when we can talk together. There will be space for spiritual direction.



Our retreat leader: The Very Rev. Ronald Clingenpeel, a priest associate with the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana. Dean Clingenpeel has been a campus minister, diocesan administrator, dean of a cathedral and has led many retreats over the years. Dean Clingenpeel will lead retreatants in the Way of the Cross in living these three days with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Name:

Single: Double: (Roommate preference)

Contact: Email: Phone:

Booking fee due at registration \$40, balance due March 17, 2016.



DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

SPRING ASSEMBLY LIVING OUR STORY

"Be still and know that I am God..." Psalm 46:10

March 12, 2016, 9:30 a.m.– 3:00 p.m.

Registration: 9-9:30 a.m.

Registration, \$25 per person, \$30 at the door. Non-refundable.

Hosted by the Alexandria Convocation at St. Timothy's, Alexandria.

OUTREACH: Bring a new children's storybook (ages 5 to 10 years) to be donated.

OUTREACH: Bring a new children's storybook (ages 5 to 10 yrs) to be donated.

Our guest speaker is Paula Whitfield Jameson, who holds an M.A. in psychology and a B.A. in history. She is a trained oral historian, spiritual director and retreat leader, guest speaker, and past member of St. Timothy's, Alexandria.

Paula lives in Austin, Texas, with her husband, the Rev. Parker Jameson. An engaging speaker, Paula will leave a lasting impression as she explores with us "Living Our Story."

Make checks payable to DOK-Diocese of Western Louisiana (marked DOK Assembly)
 Sharon Vercher, DOK Diocesan Treasurer
 112 West Magnolia Street, Abbeville, LA 70510

Name: Contact:

Church: Amount enclosed:

DOK member: Non-DOK member:

Diocesan Notables



Happening weekend in Western Louisiana

Happening, long regarded in Western Louisiana as a “treasure of a youth program for high-schoolers,” was held at the Hardtner Camp & Conference Center the weekend of January 22-24.

Those who participated, (termed “Candidates” in the lingo of Happening) worshipped, enjoyed many a playful moment, sang and discussed at length, the place that God’s has in their lives.

Bishop Jake visits St. Paul’s, Shreveport

Sunday, January 17 was a red letter day for St. Paul’s, Shreveport when Bishop Jacob Owensby visited to confirm, reaffirm, receive, preach, and celebrate.

Confirmands included: Amanda Hope Player MacIntire, Regina Elizabeth Elkins Maxey, Robbie Kathleen Frey Wickham, Bailey Layne Williams, and John Patrick Wickham.

Those reaffirmation were: Dr. Stephen Douglas Baker, Jr., Emily Ann McElory Horne, and Ian Arthur MacIntire. Received as members of the St. Paul’s family were: Bonnie Lorette Hearn Barnes, Roy Robert Grazianno, Robert John Horne, Jr., and Lucy Baldwin Lloyd.



Congratulations Deacon Maberry

Congratulations were in order after Bishop Jacob Owensby ordained Lois Rayner Maberry to the Sacred Order of Deacons, Saturday, January 30, 2016 at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Shreveport.



A MIRACLE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF HAITI

St. Mathieu École Épiscopeale, located in the mountains of Haiti in the tiny village of Bégin, doesn't look like a miracle. It looks like a modest school; one made of cement blocks and corrugated metal, with no distinguishing architectural embellishments. "But it is definitely a miracle," says Glenda Williams, member of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in Lake Charles. "God is good."

Only a year ago, the school was declared unsafe for occupancy. The earthquake of 2010 destroyed it. The walls hadn't quite fallen down, but the concrete was crumbling and there were huge gaps where concrete blocks used to be. Teachers and students were afraid to go in.

But, unsafe or not, the students and their teachers kept coming to school. Makeshift shelters were built in the school's courtyard, books were shared, and they persevered. They wanted their school rebuilt. They just couldn't see a way. Then, a year ago, the miracle began.

On the first Friday in Lent, 2015, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church held a fish fry and auction for the sole purpose of raising funds to rebuild St. Mathieu École Épiscopeale. The congregation and the community responded. James Simpson, owner of The Lunchbox, fried fish for 300 people, and auction items poured in. Sufficient pledges were made that one night to turn the Haitian students' dreams into reality.

Nevertheless, the promise of money wasn't enough in itself to guarantee that the school would be fixed. "Usually, nothing gets done quickly in Haiti," said Williams. "We anticipated all sorts of obstacles." Instead, what they saw was another miracle, and this time it was a miracle of trust.

The mission priest, Père Frédéric

Ménélas, knew he could trust the people of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church to keep their promise. Then Père Ménélas found a contractor who trusted him, and who was willing to take his word that the money would be forthcoming. Good Shepherd kept sending installments, but sometimes the contractor needed money before the installments arrived. "He kept on working," Williams said. "He never stopped. He had faith."

As each room was finished, the students moved in. Today, the school is almost completely repaired and almost all the rooms are in use. Père Ménélas expects it to be fully finished within a few weeks.

All this mutual trust didn't happen overnight. The relationship between Good Shepherd and St. Mathieu École Épiscopeale goes back almost a quarter of a century to 1992, the year Père Albert visited Lake Charles. That year the congregation took on the responsibility of building an Episcopal school in the remote location of Bégin, a little village high in the mountains of St. Mathew's Parish in southeastern Haiti.

Dr. Ben Williams was only 14 when Père Albert made that visit. The experience, he says, has marked him.

"He seemed to be so filled with the Holy Spirit and possessed a singular vision of what God had called him to do," he said. "He inspired me to search for that level of faith and obviously opened my eyes to the people of Haiti. He sowed seeds of faith in my life that continue to grow."

Ben made his first mission trip to Haiti when he was 24, and he's been back four times. "Père Albert inspired a generation of Haitians and Americans that continue to partner in God's work," he said. "We all want to educate and encourage the children of Haiti."

The relationship between Good Shepherd and the school became strained after the earthquake of 2010. "We lost contact and for a while we were very scared," said Glenda Williams, who is Ben Williams'

mother. "We were relieved to find out that no one had lost his or her life, but we were very sad to find out our school was destroyed. We really wanted to see for ourselves what was happening."

In March of 2014, Ben Williams led a team from Good Shepherd, including his mother, to see the school. They flew to Port-au-Prince from Miami, and then got on a van to follow the treacherous gravel and dirt roads up the mountain to Bégin. The

been the heart of their community before the earthquake. They wanted it to be that way again."

Today, even though the school is being rebuilt, the work is not over, Glenda stresses. The church is having another fish fry and silent auction on Feb. 12, which is the first Friday of Lent, to continue to raise funds for students and teachers. "We are thankful for our building," she said, "but we

Second Annual Fish Fry for Haiti, Friday, Feb. 12

The second annual Fish Fry for Haiti to support the St. Mathieu École Épiscopeale in Bégin, Haiti, will be held on Friday, Feb. 12, at the Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 715 Kirkman Street. Tickets for the catfish dinner and silent auction are \$15 and are available at the church. The event is dine-in and not take-out.

A short program will be given by Dr. Ben Williams on the progress of rebuilding the school, which was destroyed in the earthquake of 2010.

All funds raised will provide tuition for students attending the school and partial support of teachers' salaries.

For more information, contact Glenda Cormier Williams at 337-842-9265, or at glencor_w@yahoo.com

visit was a surprise to the school. The Americans and the Haitians got their first look at each other when the gate to the school were opened and the van edged its way into the ruined campus. "It was like an awkward first date," Ben recalled. "We both wondered, 'Who are these people?' and 'Will they like me?'"

"The answer," he said, was clearly "Yes!"

The Haitians talked and the Americans listened. The group went into the temporary classrooms and saw the ruined buildings. They talked to priests, students and teachers. And they heard the same thing over and over. "They wanted their school rebuilt," Glenda said. "They had other concerns – yes, they would like internet connection, more books, a lunch program, and so forth – but their primary wish was to have a safe school again. The school had

don't want an empty school; we want it filled with students and teachers."

But she also wants to share the news of the miracle that is St. Mathieu École Épiscopeale at the fish fry. "Incredibly, the work progresses," she said. "And it's because of a new found trust, a trust that has grown through the association of Père Frédéric, the contractor, and Good Shepherd."

"Not only were the walls repaired, but so was the faith of believing in one another," Glenda said. "We have much to celebrate."

Camp Hardtner



A Camp Hardtner Update

The acting executive director of Camp Hardtner, the Very Rev. Ronald Clingenpeel shares the following:

In our ministry at the Camp, we are working to develop very clear boundaries and care for the on-going use of this great resource of the Diocese.

On-going renovation of the “Holy Day” Inn

Six of the Inn’s rooms are currently under-going renovation, and we pray to have that work completed by March 1. Tasks underway include general repair work, painting, and the installation of new carpeting and sinks. New beds, furniture and headboards are on order. Once our efforts are complete, we’ll have some very attractive accommodations to offer.

That doesn’t mean there’s nothing left to do, far from it. Plenty of rooms are awaiting adoption, by a congregation or organization that wants to participate in our renovation efforts. We also welcome individual gifts. If you have an interest, let us know.

Our new Reservation Policies:

New reservation policies are in place at the camp. When a reservation is requested, the party wishing to use Hardtner must complete a “Use Agreement,” and a “Booking Fee,” must be deposited. (That fee will be deducted from the final bill.) No reservation is confirmed until the Agreement and Fee are in Hardtner’s possession.

Permanent Summer Camping Staff:

The Summer Camping Committee is currently interviewing candidates for the Permanent Camp Staff for 2016. All applicants are being asked to provide a clergy reference. Please know that we will follow-up on each reference, so please don’t take this requirement lightly. We are looking for responsible applicants who can promote the Gospel, live in community, work well with others, keep boundaries, and respect the dignity of every human being. Please consider the qualities carefully if you intend to recommend someone for a post at Hardtner.

Hardtner Usage Fees

In an attempt to keep up with inflation, our usage fees have increased slightly for 2016, the first such increase in four years. Certainly the upgrade being made at the Holy Day Inn demonstrates such an adjustment was needed.

“Must-Do’s” this spring

Two large undertakings will be tackled this spring: the refurbishment of the camp swimming pool, and the restoration of Henton Hall. When completed, both will greatly enhance the ministry of Hardtner. The pool in particular, is greatly needed for the Summer Camping Program.

Summer Camping Program Registration is now underway.

Your positive comments on our camping program can help us with camping registration. See the camping schedule and information on this page. Registration is underway online (www.camphardtner.org) so encourage those considering our program to take the next step and register. For those that need financial assistance, we do have funds, which will be distributed by need. If you have questions, or comments, or would like to support our efforts financially, contact me at: rhclingenpeel@yahoo.com.

2016 CAMP HARDTNER SUMMER CAMPS

FIRST CAMP, Grades 1 & 2 w/parents*

June 3 – 5, \$200 per person

\$200 person – a \$50 discount for each registration beyond the first person in a family will be applied when registering.

SENIOR HIGH CAMP, Grades 11 & 12 & Graduates*

June 9 – 15, \$690

JUNIOR HIGH CAMP 1, Grades 5 & 6*

June 19 – 24, \$575

PRIMARY CAMP, Grades 3 & 4*

June 28 – July 2, \$460

JUNIOR HIGH CAMP 2, Grades 7 & 8 *

July 8 – 13, \$575

MID HIGH CAMP, Grades 9 & 10*

July 18 – 24, \$690

CAMP ABLE, Ages 9+ with special needs*

July 30 – August 4, \$460

*Discounts will be applied for siblings attending Camp Hardtner.

Task force on the Study of Marriage continues its work

The Task Force on the Study of Marriage has mapped out its work for the next triennium. At its first meeting Nov. 18-21, the task force addressed its charge from Resolution A037 from the 2015 General Convention.

"Once again, our charge is quite challenging, as we have been asked to look at a wide variety of relationships and households other than marriage that currently make up one-half of our society and church, using a broad range of disciplines, methodologies, and perspectives," said the Rev. Brian Taylor, the task force's chairman. "At the same time, we are charged with the exploration of particular issues regarding marriage: specifically, the impact of same-sex marriage on our church, and the relationship between church and state in performing weddings."

The task force's four working groups will: 1) consult with and listen to people living some of the "changing trends and norms" that Resolution A037 asked the task force to examine;

2) study and write short documents about marriage and other relationships using various disciplines, and solicit responses to them from a range of perspectives;

3) monitor the effect of same-sex marriage on congregations, the Episcopal Church, and Anglican and ecumenical partners;

4) promote the use of the Dearly Beloved

Toolkit (both text and PowerPoint slides) and essays for congregational and diocesan conversation and monitor the discussion about the relationship between the church and the state in regard to weddings.

An important aspect of this triennium's effort by the task force is "the breadth of perspective in our work that is so clearly mandated by General Convention," Taylor said. "This is much on our minds, in terms of our membership itself, and in terms of the points of view to be studied and written about, people to be consulted with, and feedback to be sought from individuals, ecumenical partners, and other parts of the Anglican Communion. We take this mandate very seriously, for it is within our diversity that we both find our strength and live out our unity in Christ."

Members of the task force include: The Rev. Brian C. Taylor, Diocese of the Rio Grande, chair; Joan Geiszler-Ludlum, Diocese of East Carolina, vice chair; The Rev. Philip Dinwiddie, Diocese of



Michigan, secretary; The Rev. Stannard Baker, Diocese of Vermont; James Ellis, Diocese of Montana; Bishop Thomas Ely, Diocese of Vermont; The Rev. Gianetta Hayes-Martin, Diocese of California; The Rev. Jordan Hylden, Diocese of Upper South Carolina; The Rev. Dr. Ruth Meyers, Diocese of California; Bishop Steven Miller, Diocese of Milwaukee;

The Rev. Humphrey Paulino, Diocese of Venezuela; The Rev. Susan Russell, Diocese of Los Angeles; Deborah Stokes, Diocese of Southern Ohio; Bishop Brian Thom, Diocese of Idaho, and Melodie Woerman, Diocese of Kansas.

Volunteer guidelines can keep churches and schools safe

Volunteers give their time to help organizations further their missions. They can be of great help to a church or school, and many organizations depend heavily on them. "Some small churches have no employees at all," says Paul Stephens, vice president of Marketing and Risk Management Services for The Church Insurance Agency Corporation. "They depend on volunteers to do practically everything."

Because there's a lot to be done, and not many people to do the work, churches or schools occasionally let new volunteers work for them prematurely, which can lead to trouble. Paul gives two examples:

Liability claim scams. "Sometimes a stranger will come to the door and volunteer to rake leaves [for example]. Ten minutes later, the rector looks out and sees the person lying on the ground outside," Paul says. The person says he fell and sues for a liability claim.

Property theft. A variation on the above example could happen when a stranger volunteers to come in and clean or do minor repairs. "They steal valuables, and you never see them again," he says.

Recommendations for initiating volunteers: Take it slow.



Churches should have guidelines in place for what volunteers can do after a certain length of time. Paul suggests that these guidelines are put in writing and shared with volunteers.

It's a good idea to start slowly with new volunteers, Paul says. "Someone can volunteer right away, but it should

be a group project, such as preparing a meal with many other people present."

After volunteers have proven their dedication and trustworthiness, they can take on greater responsibility, such as working with money or children. Often, these more sensitive

positions require additional training, such as taking *Safeguarding Online*, and background checks.

Paul recommends that churches and schools keep records of volunteers: who was at an event, doing what jobs, on what date.

Stay within FLSA guidelines

Organizations also have to be careful not to expect volunteerism from paid employees. Often, employees freely volunteer their time at special events. For example, a parish secretary might agree to work in a booth at a festival. Because she is performing a job outside of her normal work duties, and because she offered to perform the services without expectation of compensation, this is an acceptable scenario.

However, if the organization told the parish secretary that she would need to volunteer her services by answering phones and email during hours outside her regular work week, that would go against the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Churches and schools need volunteers. Following these guidelines reduces risk and allows the volunteers to contribute their time and skills in an appropriate way.

Majority of primates call for temporary Episcopal Church sanctions

by Matthew Davies

[*Episcopal News Service — Canterbury, England*] A majority of Anglican primates Jan. 14 asked that the Episcopal Church, for a period of three years, “no longer represent us on ecumenical and interfaith bodies, should not be appointed or elected to an internal standing committee and that while participating in the internal bodies of the Anglican Communion, they will not take part in decision making on any issues pertaining to doctrine or polity.”

Expressing their unanimous desire to walk together, the primates said that their call comes in response to the decision by the Episcopal Church’s General Convention last July to change canonical language that defines marriage as being between a man and a woman (Resolution A036) and authorize two new marriage rites with language allowing them to be used by same-sex or opposite-sex couples (Resolution A054).

An announcement posted on the Primates 2016 meeting website said that “the Primates agreed how they would walk together in the grace and love of Christ.”

“This agreement acknowledges the significant distance that remains but confirms their unanimous commitment to walk together,” the announcement, which includes the full text of the primates’ call, said. The announcement also said the agreement “demonstrates the commitment of all the Primates to continue the life of the Communion with neither victor nor vanquished.”

Before the Jan. 14 vote, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry told the primates gathering Jan. 11-15 in Canterbury, England, that the statement calling for the sanctions would be painful for many in the Episcopal Church to receive.

“Many of us have committed ourselves and our church to being ‘a house of prayer for all people,’ as the Bible says, when all are truly welcome,” Curry said in remarks he later made available to Episcopal News Service. “Our commitment to be an inclusive church is not based on a social theory or capitulation to the ways of the culture, but on our belief that the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are a sign of the very love of God reaching out to us all. While I understand that many disagree with us, our decision regarding marriage is based on the belief that the words of the Apostle Paul to the Galatians are true for the church today: All who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, for all are one in Christ.

“For so many who are committed to following Jesus in the way of love and being a church that lives that love, this decision will



The primates of the Anglican Communion pray during Evensong in Canterbury Cathedral on Jan. 11, the first day of their five-day meeting. Photo: Canterbury Cathedral

bring real pain,” he added. “For fellow disciples of Jesus in our church who are gay or lesbian, this will bring more pain. For many who have felt and been rejected by the church because of who they are, for many who have felt and been rejected by families and communities, our church opening itself in love was a sign of hope. And this will add pain on top of pain.”

Curry told the primates that he was in no sense comparing his own pain to theirs, but “I stand before you as your brother. I stand before you as a descendant of African slaves, stolen from their native land, enslaved in a bitter bondage, and then even after emancipation, segregated and excluded in church and society. And this conjures that up again, and brings pain.

“The pain for many will be real. But God is greater than anything. I love Jesus and I love the church. I am a Christian in the Anglican way. And like you, as we have said in this meeting, I am committed to ‘walking together’ with you as fellow primates in the Anglican family.”

The primates’ statement also asks Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby to appoint a task group “to maintain conversation among ourselves with the intention of restoration of relationship, the rebuilding of mutual trust, healing the legacy of hurt, recognizing the extent of our commonality, and exploring our deep differences, ensuring they are held between us in the love and grace of Christ.”

The first two days of the gathering were given solely to setting the agenda for the week and focusing on whether the primates could reach an agreement on how to move forward despite their differences of opinion concerning theological interpretation and human sexuality issues.

A widely anticipated exodus of some conservative African archbishops has not come to pass and all but one primate remain at

the table during the Jan. 11-15 meeting, committed to ongoing dialogue and discerning various options towards reconciliation. Archbishop Stanley Ntagali of the Anglican Church of Uganda quietly left the meeting on Jan. 12. He had said in a statement prior to the gathering that he would leave unless “discipline and godly order” were restored in the Anglican Communion. In a Jan. 13 letter to his church, Ntagali said he left because the Ugandan provincial assembly had resolved not to participate in any official communion meetings until that order was restored.

Archbishop Foley Beach, the leader of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), gathered with the primates for conversation throughout the week but did not participate in any of the votes. Beach was invited by Welby in an effort to avert a boycott from conservative African archbishops such as the one that occurred at the last Primates Meeting in 2011. ACNA is composed largely of former Episcopalians who chose to break away from the Episcopal Church. Some African primates have declared their affiliation to ACNA.

By Wednesday afternoon, the agenda had moved onto other pressing issues affecting the Anglican Communion, such as relief and development work, and its response to war and conflict.

Curry, who was installed as the Episcopal Church’s presiding bishop and primate last November, was attending his first gathering of primates.

Following his election in June 2015, Curry said the Anglican Communion is as much about relationships and partnerships as it is about structure and organization. “We’ve got some work to do; we’ve got some Jesus work to do,” he said. “This world is crying out for us and it needs us, and the Anglican Communion is one way

that God uses us together to really make this a better world.”

Primates are the senior archbishops and presiding bishops elected or appointed to lead each of the 38 autonomous provinces of the Anglican Communion. They are invited to the Primates Meetings by the Archbishop of Canterbury to consult on theological, social and international issues.

The Anglican Communion Primates Meeting is one of the three instruments of communion, the other two being the Lambeth Conference of bishops and the Anglican Consultative Council, the Communion’s main policy-making body. The Archbishop of Canterbury, as *primus inter pares*, or “first among equals,” is recognized as the focus of unity for the Anglican Communion.

Each province relates to other provinces within the Anglican Communion by being in full communion with the See of Canterbury. The Archbishop of Canterbury calls the Lambeth Conference, chairs the meeting of primates and is president of the ACC.

In some Anglican provinces the primate is called archbishop and/or metropolitan, while in others the term presiding bishop – or as in Scotland, *primus* – is used.

—Matthew Davies is an Editor/reporter for the Episcopal News Service.

Way of the Cross on US Mexico border

[ACNS] Anglicans from Mexico and the United States will gather for a cross-border Eucharist service on the day before Palm Sunday. On their way to Friendship Park, which straddles Tijuana in Mexico and San Diego in the US, the congregations will pray the stations of the cross with the last station at the border. The event is organized to draw attention to the plight of immigrants.

The Via Crucis 2016 (Way of the Cross) will be led by Bishop Lino Rodriguez of Western Mexico in *la Iglesia Anglicana de Mexico* (the Anglican Church of Mexico) and Bishops James Mathes of San Diego and Diane Bruce of Los Angeles in the Episcopal Church of America.

The event, which was first held in 2012, is being held to “draw attention to the plight of immigrants in the Via Crucis,” the Anglican Church of Mexico said on its website. “The pilgrims will stop on the way to the border to pray the Stations of the Cross, which ends at the border with the last station. There also will remember that Jesus Christ was received as an unwelcome immigrant.

**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! This central calendar is designed to help avoid overlapping events.

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

February 2016

- 7 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. John's, Minden*
- 10 — Bishop's Ash Wednesday Visitation, *St. James, Alexandria*
- 21 — Bishop's Visitation, *Epiphany, New Iberia*
- 23 — Meeting of the Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House, starts at 10:00 a.m.*
- 26 — JEYL Registration Deadline for t-shirt, *Register online at the diocesan website.*
- 26-28 — Hardtner Alumni Retreat, *Camp Hardtner, starts at 5:00 p.m.*
- 28 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Matthias, Shreveport*

March 2016

- 4 — Last Day for JEYL Registration, *Register online at the diocesan website.*
- 5 — "Ancient Faith, Modern Tools" Seminar, *Camp Hardtner*
- 6 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christ Church, Bastrop*
- 11-13 — JEYL Retreat for Middle High Youth, *Camp Hardtner, starts at 6:00 p.m.*
- 12 — DOK Spring Assembly, *St. Timothy's, Alexandria, starts at 9:30 a.m.*
- 20 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. James, Alexandria*
- 24-26 — Walking Three Days with Jesus: A Silent Retreat, *Camp Hardtner, starts at 5:00 p.m.*
- 27 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*

April 2016

- 3 — Bishop's Visitation, *Trinity, Cheneyville; Holy Comforter, Lecompte*
- 10 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Patrick's, West Monroe*
- 15-17 — Time for Joy Women's Retreat, *Camp Hardtner, starts at 6:00 p.m.*
- 17 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Andrew's, Moss Bluff*
- 19 — Meeting of the Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House, starts at 10:00 a.m.*
- 20 — Bishop's Midweek Visitation, *Trinity, DeRidder*
- 21-24 — Cursillo #150, *Camp Hardtner, starts at 6:00 p.m.*
- 24 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. George's, Bossier City*

May 2016

- 1 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*
- 8 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. James, Shreveport*
- 15 — Bishop's Visitation, *Good Shepherd, Lake Charles*
- 17 — Meeting of the Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House, starts at 10:00 a.m.*
- 22 — Bishop's Visitation, *Good Shepherd, Vidalia*

June 2016

- 3-5 — First Camp (Grades 1 & 2 with parents)
- 5 — Bishop's Visitation, *Ascension, Lafayette*
- 9-15 — Senior High Camp (Grades 11 & 12 & graduates)
- 12 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Barnabas, Lafayette*
- 19 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Alban's, Monroe*
- 19-24 — Junior High Camp 1 (Grades 5 & 6)
- 26 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Paul's, Abbeville*
- 28-July 2 — Primary Camp (Grades 3 & 4)

July 2016

- 8-13 — Junior High Camp 2 (Grades 7 & 8)
- 18-24 — Mid High Camp (Grades 9 & 10)
- 30-August 4 — Camp Able (Ages 9+ with special needs)

Bishop Jake

continued from page 1

Jesus heals a royal official's son and gets a paralytic to his feet. Five thousand people feast on a few loaves and fish, Jesus strolls across the sea, and a blind man's eyes are opened. Finally, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

The first sign famously happens at a Wedding in Cana. Jesus turns water into wine. His purpose was neither to obey his mother's urging to do something about a wine shortage nor to save the hosts the embarrassment of running out of drink. Jesus was revealing the glory of God.



Setting the pattern for all the signs that follow, this first sign reveals God's person by showing what God does. God saves by transforming. God's redeeming love makes a new

creation.

Forgiving sins is one dimension of God's saving work in Jesus. But if we think that redemption is only forgiveness we won't really ever fully understand the power of God's forgiveness.

Let me explain what I mean by providing a parallel example. All whales are mammals. But if we defined mammal only by studying whales, we would fail to recognize lots of mammals and miss some important features of whales themselves. We might say, "All mammals are aquatic," for instance. And we would never realize that a few mammals lay eggs.

Similarly, narrowing our understanding of salvation to forgiveness might lead us to think of God's redeeming work as a block-and-delete operation. As if Jesus merely highlights our sins and hits the delete button.

And while God does forgive our misdeeds, this involves much more than erasing them from the divine memory. Think about it. If God merely expunged the record of our sins but left us in the same state we were in when we hurt others and debased ourselves, we would simply repeat the pattern.

God's forgiveness is more like a transformation button. In Jesus, God makes us more than we could have made ourselves. God does not just blot out what we did. God changes who we are.

Moreover, God does more than make bad things into good things. After all, water is a good thing. Jesus did not obliterate it or toss it aside. He enhanced it. Jesus took something good and made it more.

God saves us not only by opening blind

eyes, but also by helping us to look more deeply into things and by broadening our vision.

God saves us not only by restoring fractured relationships, but by weaving us into deeper bonds of affection, by granting us ever more compassionate understanding, and by surprising us with new depths in old friends.

God saves us by replacing our fear of strangers with the courage to seek friendship among people who are not like us.

Jesus's first sign—like all the others—prefigures what Jesus calls his hour. All the signs culminate in the Passion and the Resurrection. In his death and resurrection, Jesus shows us God in all his glory.

As St. Paul would put it, the risen Jesus is a new creation. The risen Jesus does not replace the man who walked the streets of Galilee. He is the same and infinitely and eternally more. Just as we will be in him.

The Passion shows us an important element of Jesus's work not revealed in Cana. God's self-revelation is risky and even painful.

When my father walked naked down Main Street, he was probably embarrassed. In retrospect he always told that story with bravado and humor. As a little boy, he probably endured shame. Being naked before others makes us vulnerable and brings us into an intimacy to which we are unaccustomed. This is not something he chose.

I've never walked down a street naked, but I know what it's like to bare my soul. To share my heart. Opening myself to others makes me vulnerable. It's risky business. It takes courage, and sometimes it brings pain and betrayal.

In Jesus, God chose to stand spiritually naked before us. God revealed the very heart of perfect love. Jesus is God's love and God's vulnerability. God's openness to us.

—The Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, Ph.D., DD, is bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana.

**MANAGE YOUR
ALIVE! SUBSCRIPTION**

Contact
Robert Harwell, *ALIVE!* editor
318-868-2303
or e-mail
robertharwell39@att.net

Last look,



Michael Rachal in a scene from the full length movie, "Yellow Day." The Producers of "Yellow Day": *In real life, Michael Rachal is a living example of heroism. In the movie, we took his story and brought it to life, showing how soul's like his shine forth for those with eyes to see.*

Michael Rachal inspires others in "Yellow Day"

ALEXANDRIA, La. (KALB) – Michael Rachal is Central Louisiana's newest movie star, and recently, Michael had the chance to see the film he stars in at the Grand Theater in Alexandria.

The movie is a story of inspiration and overcoming obstacles, and in reality this young man has been doing that his whole life.

"(Michael) said don't let your obstacles get in the way of chasing after your dreams. He has never, that's just how he lives," said Linda Rachal, Michael's mother.

Michael viewed "Yellow Day" with friends, family and fans. It's hard work and determination to make it to the silver screen; however, Michael does that in everyday life, as he overcomes physical limitations due to cerebral palsy.

"I'm not surprised that he's been able to accomplish this because he's never let anything stop him," said Linda.

"Yellow Day" is a story of inspiration and overcoming obstacles, a story perfect for Michael. He's seen in several scenes including one where he zip lined in his wheelchair. Beating the odds, something he's accustomed to doing.

"He said it's funny because that's how he really lives his life," said Linda.

"His disability is not a disability to him, it's just an obstacle he has to get over."

It was a big night for Michael. "Yellow Day" bought out the cinema for him and 150 others to see the movie, and let's just say he has some fans.

"Pretty exciting, it's cool to see his excitement," said Patrick Owensby, Michael's friend. "Really just watching him get pumped up about being in a movie that's probably one of the coolest parts about it."

Michael's dad is excited too. Especially if his son's story touches people's lives.

"He always felt like his disability was something that God gave him to use to inspire others and that's how he lives his life," said Mickey Rachal. "For him to be in this movie to where he could touch more people with that, I think it's a great thing for him."

A life lived so well someone should probably put it in a movie.

—From the website KALB.com

Michael Rachal has been a camper at Western Louisiana's "Camp Able"

Since 2014, the Diocese of Western Louisiana, has hosted Camp Able, a special summer camping session for the disabled. The first-ever session in 2014 hosted 33 special-needs campers who ran the gamut from mildly retarded to wheelchair-bound, non-verbal and tube-fed. To host this special audience Camp Able staffs are supplemented with volunteers who aid the permanent camp staff. A regular camp will have

one counselor for ten campers. The Camp Able's ratio is one to two.

Campers can canoe, swim, practice arts and crafts, fish and take hikes. All activities are closely monitored.

The 2016 Camp Able is set for July 30–August 4 at Camp Hardtner. Volunteers are needed and financial gifts are always appropriate.

