

ALIVE!

DECEMBER 2016

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

VOLUME XXXVIII, NUMBER 11



Finding the Message of the Nativity

THE RT. REV. JACOB W. OWENSBY, P.H.D., D.D.

On Christmas Eve many of us will hear again the story of Jesus' birth as told by Luke (2:1-20). The story is so familiar that we may have ceased to listen to it with care years ago.

And let's face it, as wonderful as the worship will be and as holy as this night is, we may be harried by excited children, by visits from family and friends, and by the flurry of holiday festivities. We might not be at our most attentive as the Deacon or the Priest reads the Gospel from the midst of the congregation.

So, I invite you to set some time aside to engage the power of Luke's story. By doing so, I think you may find a message from Jesus just for you. To help you do this, I'm going to share some questions from my book *Gospel Memories* to guide your reading of and reflection upon the birth narrative. This works best among family and friends.

This first set of questions takes you to the manger:

Imagine the manger, but don't be romantic about it. Picture the dirt floor, the animal smells, and the hay carelessly strewn about.

How do you feel about sitting on the floor? How would you feel about serving dinner to your children or your friends there? Now think about what it would be like to give birth there. Share your thoughts and feelings.

Does your life sometimes feel like a mess? If it doesn't seem so to you, how would you respond if someone told you that's how it looks to them? If your life does seem like this, can you be comfortable inviting someone in just the way it is? What would it take for you to become comfortable?

How do you respond to other people's messy homes, wardrobes, cars, families, lives? Do you want to show them how to clean up? Do you reveal your messiness to them and sympathize? Are you able to laugh?

Talk about a time when your life felt like a mess and you couldn't clean it up. Were you able to share your life's messiness and your feelings about it with others? What was that like? Did you sense God's presence?

Here is a second set of questions. They take you out into the fields with the shepherds:

Imagine that you are one of the shepherds on the outskirts of Bethlehem. God's presence becomes so real to you that it seems to make everything glow from the inside out. And God is speaking to you. Personally. What is he saying?

Tell a story about a time when God seemed very present to you in an unlikely place or in a very common place. How would you describe his presence? What message did God bring to you in that encounter?

If you have never had an experience like this, talk about what it is like to hear someone else relate their own story. Do you feel skeptical? Do you wish to have such an encounter yourself? Would you rather not? What do you make of such stories?

What do you want to hear God say to you today?

My hope is that these questions will lead you into a deeper, more intimate relationship with Jesus and with the people you love. And that is my hope for you always, but especially as we celebrate the day on which infinite, eternal God became vulnerable, fragile human flesh.

Joy and I wish you all a holy, joyful, awe-filled Christmas. You have all enriched my life beyond measure. I love the Christ I see in you.

Diocesan News

Don't delay, sign up today for this conference sponsored jointly by the two Episcopal dioceses !



Two-day Episcopal preaching conference

Tuesday, February 7 & Wednesday, February 8, 2017
Tuesday's session begins at 10:00 a.m. and Wednesday's at 12 noon.

St. Barnabas Episcopal Church
400 Camellia Blvd., Lafayette, Louisiana 70503

The Dioceses of Louisiana and Western Louisiana and the Episcopal Preaching Foundation will stage a two-day preaching conference featuring the Rev. Judy Fentress-Williams and the Rev. Micah Jackson at St. Barnabas Episcopal Church in Lafayette, LA.

For 28 years the mission of the Episcopal Preaching Foundation (EPF) has been to improve, support, and enhance preaching in the Episcopal Church. Considered today as the leading resource for lay and ordained preachers in the Episcopal Church, EPF through its workshops, resource library and diocesan conferences, continues to strive to achieve its mission of support for the church.

Conference featured speakers



The Rev. Judy Fentress-Williams is Professor of Old Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary, having received her Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible from Yale University. Her work reflects her interest in a literary approach that celebrates the multiple voices and intertextuality of Scripture.



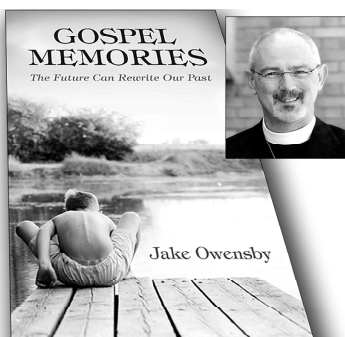
The Rev. Micah Jackson is Bishop John Elbridge Hines Associate Professor of Preaching & Director of Comprehensive Wellness at Seminary of the Southwest. His academic interests include the spiritual discipline of preaching, homiletic form, and postmodern construction of the relationship between preacher and congregation.

Each participant will need to register individually online at:
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07edgudpk90cca9fb&llr=myjrwflab>

Hotel accommodations are to be made individually. Registration closes January 31, 2017.

For assistance please contact:

The Rev. John Kellogg (Diocese of Louisiana) jkelllogg@edola.org
Holly Davis (Diocese of Western Louisiana) hdavis@diocesewla.org



Gospel Memories

The Future Can Rewrite Our Past

by the Rt. Rev. Jake Owensby

Gospel Memories *The Future Can Rewrite Our Past*, is available at Amazon.com, in Paperback or in the Kindle format.

Email ALIVE! at robertharwell39@att.net

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robertharwell39@att.net

WLA on the Web:

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



The season of Advent

The season of Advent is a season of preparation for the coming of Christ. Advent is also the beginning of the Christian year.

The background of Advent is the kingdom of God, and the rule of God over his creation, which is said to be "at hand."



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Robert Harwell Editor

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December 19, 2016

Mission to Cuba

"We are all pilgrims, strangers seeking God."

by the Rev. Richard H. Norman

Andrew Schelling, American poet and translator, has written:

"Only the walker who sets out toward ultimate things is a pilgrim. In this lies the difference between tourist and pilgrim. The tourist travels just as far, sometimes with great zeal and courage, gathering up acquisitions and returns the same person as the one who departed. The pilgrim resolves that the one who returns will not be the same person as the one who set out. The pilgrim must be prepared to shed the husk of personality or even the body like a wornout coat. For the pilgrim the road is home; reaching the destination seems nearly inconsequential."

Pilgrimages do not always entail mission work, but I cannot envision a mission trip that does not involve some element of pilgrimage for a mission trip participant. I say this with confidence having led five mission trips to Perú, one to Mexico and now one to Cuba. There is something waiting to be discovered in virtually every journey—especially, I think in a mission trip. A pilgrimage is a transformative journey. A mission trip is equally transformative. Pilgrimage and mission trips assist people in becoming participants in the world and in life's journey and not *just* observers. Rather than tourists who come with an interested eye, pilgrims and missionaries come with searching hearts.

Through pilgrimage and mission we can: place our individual spiritual journeys in a global frame; be receptive to a world beyond ourselves by fusing our horizons with others; discover what can nurture our true self, what transforms our souls; we can broaden our ability to be truly present to ourselves and to others; and, we can enrich our engagement of God's mission.

When we visit faith communities whether in other cultural local contexts and/or other cultural countries, we are reminded that the Body of Christ is a truly a global Church. Pilgrims, missionaries learn to be alone together, and to support one another on a journey. Pilgrims return to the needs of the world filled with clarity and commitment. Pilgrims meet and form relationships with fellow travelers who, but for the joining in pilgrimage and/or mission trip, we may have never known except as passing acquaintances. Pilgrimage and mission trips can help us understand that the more each of us is aware of God's presence, the richer and more meaningful daily life becomes.

More times than not, we return from a pilgrimage/mission trip with a deeper, renewed, and rededicated commitment to our Baptismal Covenant (*"proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ; to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself, to strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being"*).

Thanks to a generous MAP grant for a new missional initiative we were able to take a team from Grace Episcopal Church in Monroe on its first mission trip in many years (if not decades)—to Cuba! Thank you to the Diocese of Western Louisiana for your generosity and trust in that grant.

Our mission trip was in partnership with Experience Mission, a US-based mission ministry that facilitates mission trips locally and abroad—they were a great assistance to us in crafting our mission trip to Cuba.



On Friday night, 17th June 2016, fifteen of us returned from a weeklong pilgrimage and mission trip to Cuba: Debora, Todd & Clay Colvin; Kathy & Creighton Chandler; Clay & Amber Shemwell and Kalani Salas (Amber's son); Regina & Doug Wood; Cotton Bradford; Adrienne McKee (my wife), and Hudson and Olivia Norman (our two children) and me.

We were blessed to be with that exceptional group of individuals from Grace—they truly reflected Christ's love. Our mission team was grateful for the prayers of our faith community of Grace, in Monroe—



Top—The streets of Old Havana
Above—One of the famous Cuban Classics
Middle of page—Arrival at the Havana Airport

we felt them while we were so far away.

We were grateful for the very generous donations of acetaminophen (Tylenol), vitamins and milk thistle that we took to Cuba (they came from Grace Episcopal Church, from people out of town who heard about our trip, and others). These are items that we can run down to Walmart to buy, but in Cuba they are an almost unattainable luxury. They were much appreciated by the recipients.

We were a diverse group: one university student, two (2) rising 6th graders, one (1) rising 9th grader; 2 doctors, 1 priest—we ranged in age from 11 thru 70.

We learned a great deal about Cuban culture. Our learning curve began immediately with my interrogation by a Cuban security officer upon our arrival to exiting the airport and being struck by the sight of classic American cars, to horses pulling all kinds of buggies, to our neighborhood bread vendors singing at 5am to advertise their wares—we quickly realized we were, in many ways, truly in different time and place.

We stayed in a guesthouse in Matanzas, about 1½ hours to the east of Havana. The guesthouse was blessed to have a water purification system, which meant the showers and all tap water were "safe" and there was very little chance of gastro ghoulies—by weeks' end we had made friends in the neighborhood, visited some local homes, and had folk waving out to us as we walked in the neighborhood in the evenings. Two women who worked at the guesthouse became like family and worked with us on our Spanish and our understanding of Cuban culture.

Hudson (14) and Kalani (11) spent many a night playing soccer in the street with local boys—occasionally having to dodge motorcycles and classic American cars. The Cuban boys talked smack in Spanish and our two did their best to give it back. It was great to watch the boys, from very different "worlds" communicate through the international language of soccer.

Most evening's the kids (Kalani, Olivia, and Hudson) would enjoy playing in the small pool at the guesthouse—often joined by "Tio" Creighton Chandler (a big kid at heart).

On Sunday 12th June we worshipped with the good people of St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in Juvellanes; where I was honored to concelebrate at the altar with the parish priest. Padre Gilberto spoke about how God's language of love transcends all spoken languages. Worship was very different, in some ways. There were no prayer books or hymnals—everything was projected on screen via a laptop. The only prayer book I saw was the one we used on the altar (*El Libro de Oración Común*). We presented the congregation with a gift of \$300, which was

Continued on the next page.

Mission to Cuba



sent by a missionary's friends and family in Baton Rouge. The congregation treated us with a wonderful meal that they had spent a week preparing. A loving sacrifice on their part. During the service we saw no men—suddenly the men appeared at the time of Communion. It was then that we came to realize the men were in the *cocina* preparing the meal we would enjoy. Later that day we ventured to a local beach to soak up some sun and waves.

Our week in Cuba was very full and had many opportunities to learn and serve.

We visited the Episcopal-Presbyterian Seminary in Matanzas where we met faculty, the Episcopal Bishop of Cuba (Bishop Griselda, who I had met from my days at the Cathedral in Minneapolis when that faith community was sending teams to Cuba). The seminary community was incredibly warm and accepting of us. Later in the week we worshipped with the seminary—it was the Eucharist marking the close of the academic year. Again, *El Libro de Oración Común* worship, but no books or hymnals. Everything was projected. The singing was joyful and emotive, hands in the air by some, and the Peace—well, it lasted for a very long time.

We visited and worked on a local farm operated by Willie our Cuban missionary facilitator (whom should

be visiting Grace in February 2017)—the farm is an ecumenical project and provides fresh fruit for the local community. On one day some of our team peeled about 1500 mangoes (30 gallons worth) for preserving and turning into juice. This juice would be preserved and offered to the local community once mangoes were no longer in season. Others in our group worked on a construction project.

We visited Old Havana—a truly beautiful city, which reminded many of us of the French Quarter in New Orleans. It was like walking through history, a history which had been well-maintained.

We took time out to visit the homes of two boys with disabilities. We visited Leo and Luis because we knew they would not be able to attend our Vacation Bible School activity for children with disabilities—their disabilities and limitations just would not allow them to travel and participate in our VBS for disabled young people.

One boy, Luis, and his mother lived in one room—his bed occupying half the room—Luis never leaves his bed. The other boy, Leo, is restricted to a wheel chair and lives with his mother and her husband in a simple house at the end of an old dirt road in a former slave community. Leo had a wheelchair, but there was no ramp from the house. Right away a couple of our team members started thinking and planning how we could make that ramp. We returned two days later and discovered that Leo's mother and her new husband had built a ramp—Leo was out in the yard in his wheel chair when we drove up.

On the day of our Vacation Bible School for the children and young adults with dis-



Left—Lunch is served at the farm. Top right—Passing the Peace at the seminary worship service. Bottom in the middle—Soccer in the street with local boys. Bottom right—The mission team in Havana.

abilities—many of the mothers and the children walked great distances or hitched rides to be with us. It was a simple lesson, but God was so very present. We found ourselves having to be very flexible—with the space and the electricity coming and going. Overall, the children and young adults really enjoyed themselves greatly. As well, the mothers were able to assemble in their space for some time of prayer and fellowship.

We visited home churches in small towns—no new churches are allowed to be built in Cuba, but home churches have sprung up in pastors' home. We got the feeling that the government just looked away when it came to the home churches. The home churches are growing—and they tend to be Pentecostal and charismatic.

We also visited the first and oldest non-Roman Catholic Church in Cuba—Fieles a Jesus Episcopal Church (The Faithful to Jesus).

As we drove around the Cuban countryside and towns, all around us were signs of decay in the old regime—once glorious signs, sculptures, and frescoes—all depicting the “victory” of the Revolution—were in disrepair.

We learned that physical and developmental disabilities carry social stigma in Cuba.

We learned that the average person makes about \$20 per month; that the populace is very well educated (university is free); that Cubans can make more laboring or work-

ing in the hotel industry than if they worked in their field of study and expertise.

There is a thriving parallel economy, under the table, black market, that provides goods, services, and income for most. Horses are a valued and regular mode of transportation and hauling of goods.

We learned that the people who live in Cuba, most were not alive when the Revolution occurred, yet they are bearing the economic consequences of that Revolution.

Beef is reserved for government officials, the military, ambassadors, and tourists—the average person can wind up spending 3 years in jail for being caught with illicit beef. We had no cell phone or internet while there—cell phones and internet are expensive and restricted.

The Cuban people are warm, loving, friendly, and resourceful (they throw away nothing, repair almost everything.) If they need something, they will figure out how to use resources at hand to make it or repair it.

The Cuban people are a very grateful people—like the man in Luke 8:26-39, who having been freed of demons and went away proclaiming how much Jesus had done for him.

On our second to last night together, following supper, we debriefed



Top left—It's Salsa night. Bottom left—Mango peeling on a grand scale. Middle—Construction moves forward on the farm. Top right—Music Ministry at the Disability Center. Bottom right—Leo with his mother.

Photographers whose work illustrates this article are: Regina Wood, Creighton Chandler, Cotton Bradford, and the Rev. Richard Norman.

(this was different, because each night we worshipped, with Kalani on the guitar and Clay Colvin on the ukelel. Mary, our American Experience Mission staff member, laid out three pieces of paper and asked us to circulate and respond to three questions:

"God has taught me . . ."

"I will take home with me . . ."

"Prayers for the Cuban community"

Our responses speak volumes.

"God has taught me . . ."

- that he loves every single person in this world;
- to look at other cultures through God's eyes;
- God has taught me the virtue of patience;
- that preconceived beliefs have no place in my life;
- God has taught me to let go of expectations;
- to remember that God respects the dignity of every human being and he expects the same from me. And when I do this, he allows his perfect light and glory to shine through me to his people
- God has taught me Humility. If these "Cubans" can manage on so little and expect so little, then I must gain from this; I only hope they got as

much from this mission trip as I did. I only hope!

- God has taught me that everyone is exactly the same when you get back to what God sees;
- God has taught me to appreciate my future;
- God has taught me how to forgive others;
- To accept others and be kind to everyone;
- The hymn sings about God—God who sent rains and floods and snow and beauty—and people to lead. But still, the people disappoint and fail. *"Whom shall I send?" "It is I, Lord . . . if you lead me, I will follow."* I am learning to follow.

"I will take home with me . . ."

- Love for the people of Cuba and hope for the restoration of the relationship with the United States;
- The knowledge that you do not have to be able to physically speak to loudly proclaim the Gospel (as St. Francis of Assisi said: *"Preach the Gospel always, use words when necessary."*)
- I will take home with me the knowledge that we have much to learn about God's love and it is sometimes the lesson we learn and not what we came to Cuba to teach;
- *"I will never be the same again!"* No more self-pity, no angst regarding how this feels or that feels, etc. We have so

much to be thankful for—no more whining!!!

- I will take home with me an open heart to others, that blessings come in many forms and are perceived through individual and unique lenses.
- I will take home with me, hopefully, a better understanding of others and the cultures of others—far more than I came with... Thank you, almighty Father.
- I will take home with me new love and a mended heart; a renewed spirit in the Love of God; a better relationship;
- A spreading kindness from other people
- I will take home with me gratitude for what I have—to not take for granted things like clean water.

"Prayers for the Cuban community"

- I pray that house churches achieve the ultimate communion of the whole Cuban community, regardless of the denomination or the means by which this is accomplished;
- I pray that when the embargo ends that the Cuban people find ways to retain their integrity and culture without becoming an extension of the Western fast food and throwaway society.
- I pray that the US lifts the embargo and this will help the churches prosper;
- for Leo and his family and their difficulties; for Father Gilberto and his congrega-

tion; for Willie and his mission and the home churches;

- I pray for peace and hope;
- I pray that the Cuban people keep the beautiful spirits, love and support, they innately have. I pray that they will never be afraid to trust completely;
- I pray that the Cuban people can worship God with no fear . . . EVER!
- I pray the divine fire will continue to burn;
- I pray that the world will be opened up to the Cuban people in all aspects;
- I pray that God would use Cubans to ignite the fire in Cuba and then God will use Americans as facilitators so that the relationship between Cuba and the United States can be restored;
- I pray that people will continue to help those in need in Cuba.

Our lives, individually and corporately were changed forever (for the good) by our mission experience. Truly a blessing from God.

The Rev'd **Richard Norman** is rector of Grace, Monroe.

Around the Diocese

No young person should miss HAPPENING, THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME



Happening Youth Retreat, Camp Hardtner, January 13-17, 2017

Happening is an Experience.

It's a **Christian Experience** presented by teenagers for other teens in grades 9-12. During the weekend, the young people attending will participate in worship, play, sing frequently and engage in discussions about how God meets them in their lives. The Happening Weekend is a time to get away from it all and focus on your faith, focus on your life with God, and build some meaningful relationships with other High Schoolers.

Members of the Happening Staff, which stages the weekend, are young women and men whose attendance at a prior Happening weekend so moved them, they wanted other young people to share in and be moved by Happening.

Happening does not "just happen."

By the Happening weekend's start date of Friday, January 13, Happening Staffers, with assistance from Father Michael and Lauren Bordelon, and Lay persons, Mike and Haley Wiley, will have gathered to put in two full days plus an overnight session, planning and training for this weekend. A great experience is in-store for those that attend Happening.

Happening is a spiritual retreat open to young people in grades 9-12, regardless of their denomination.

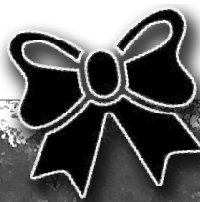


If you're a parent,
Don't let your young person miss out on Happening.

If you are "Happening Eligible,"
Go to the diocesan website (diocesewla.org) NOW and register for Happening!

Registration deadlines: With a T-shirt, December 30, 2016; Final registration, January 6, 2017.

Give a year-end gift to Camp Hardtner
Contribute to the Joe Bordelon Scholarship Fund



A great gift idea for your camper!



2017 Summer Camp Dates

First Camp <i>Grades 2 and 3, with parent*</i>	June 2-4
Primary <i>Grades 4 and 5*</i>	June 8-13
Senior High <i>Grades 11, 12, and recent graduates*</i>	June 17-24
Junior High 1 <i>Grades 6 and 7*</i>	June 28-July 4
Junior High 2 <i>Grades 7 and 8*</i>	July 11-17
Middle High <i>Grades 9 and 10*</i>	July 21-27
Camp Able <i>Age 9 and up with special needs</i>	August 2-6

*Complete information and prices on the 2017 camps will soon be posted at www.camphardtner.org. * Grade based on 2017/18 school year.*

Give a year-end gift to Camp Hardtner
Contribute to the Joe Bordelon Scholarship Fund

Save these dates

**Telling God's Story
about You**



**COLLEGE STUDENTS
RETREAT**
led by Bishop Jake Owensby

Camp Hardtner • February 17-19, 2017

Watch future issue of ALIVE! and the Diocesan website (www.diocesewla.org) for further information.



Holyland Trip April 21-30, 2017

A small group from the Lake Charles convocation will be going to Israel just after Easter, 2017.

The all-Inclusive cost (including flight from Houston, 4 star hotels, all transportation and baggage handling, breakfast and dinners, services of a licensed guide and worship) is \$3627.

If you have an interest in joining this group, please contact the Rev. Ally Perry for details before Christmas. The deadline for registration is in early January.

Call Mother Perry on her cell 337-888-5007 or call Holy Trinity Episcopal Church at 337-625-4288. You may also Email her at perryally7777@gmail.com for a detailed itinerary.



The Altar Guild of St. Mark's Cathedral

Invites you to a Luncheon with
Guest Chef Melissa Stewart
Eating Healthier, Leaner and Cleaner in the New Year!

A Benefit for Churches in the Baton Rouge Area That Have
Suffered Losses during the Flooding in 2016

Thursday, January 12, 2017
11:30 a.m. til 1:00 p.m.

St. Mark's Cathedral Parlor
\$50 per person

Please send your check made payable to Altar Guild.
Your check is your reservation. Mail to:
Ellen Alley, 4726 Richmond Avenue, Shreveport, Louisiana 71106

Very limited seating available

On the Menu:
Mixed Greens with Roasted Winter Squash, Pickled Red Onions,
Toasted Pepita Quinoa & Lentil Salad with Kale, Dried Cherries,
Goat Cheese with Roasted Chicken Shaved Fennel,
Apple and Celery Salad with Smoked Trout

Email **ALIVE!** at robertharwell39@att.net

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

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

December 2016

- 3 — Happening #55 Staff Training, Camp Hardtner, starts at 10:00 a.m.
- 4 — Bishop's Visitation, Grace, Monroe
- 11 — Bishop's Visitation, Redeemer, Ruston
- 13 — Meeting of the Diocesan Council, St. James, Alexandria, starts at 10:00 a.m.
- 17 — Happening #55 Staff Training, Camp Hardtner, starts at 10:00 a.m.
- 18 — Bishop's Visitation, St. Thomas, Monroe
- 24 — Bishop's Visitation, Christmas Eve: Redeemer, Oak Ridge (early)
St. James, Alexandria (late)

January 2017

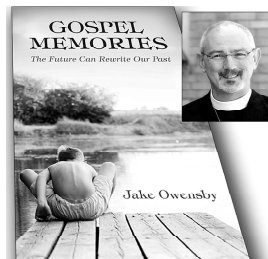
- 6-7 — Happening #55 Staff Overnight, Camp Hardtner, starts at 7:00 p.m.
- 8 — Bishop's Visitation, St. James, Alexandria
- 10 — Meeting of the Diocesan Council, St. James, Alexandria, starts at 10:00 a.m.
- 13-15 — Happening #55, Camp Hardtner, starts at 7:00 p.m.
- 15 — Bishop's Visitation, St. Luke's, Grambling
- 21 — ECW Board Meeting and Installation of Officers, St. Michael's, Pineville, starts at 11:30 a.m.
- 22 — Bishop's Visitation, St. Timothy's, Alexandria

February 2017

- 5 — Bishop's Visitation, St. John's, Minden
- 7-8 — Joint Preaching Conference (Dioceses of LA & WLA),
St. Barnabas, Lafayette, hosted by The Episcopal Preaching Foundation
- 17-19 — College Student Retreat, Camp Hardtner, starts at 7:00 p.m.
- 19 — Bishop's Visitation, Epiphany, New Iberia
- 21 — Commission on Ministry, Diocesan House, starts at 10:00 a.m.

March 2017

- 1 — Bishop's Visitation, Ash Wednesday, St. James, Alexandria (noonday)
- 2-5 — dailyoffice.org retreat, Camp Hardtner
- 5 — Bishop's Visitation, Christ Church, Bastrop
- 12 — Bishop's Visitation, House of Bishops
- 18 — CVI/DYC Joint Conference on Youth Ministry, Camp Hardtner
- 19 — Bishop's Visitation, St. Paul's, Shreveport
- 24 — CLEY Retreat for High School Youth, Camp Hardtner, starts at 7:00 p.m.
- 26 — Bishop's Visitation, St. Paul's, Winnfield
- 30-April 2 — Cursillo #151, Camp Hardtner



**Gospel
Memories**
*The Future Can
Rewrite Our Past*

Gospel Memories *The Future Can Rewrite Our Past*,
is available at Amazon.com, in Paperback or in the Kindle format.

Last look



Red Mass celebrated at Trinity, Natchitoches

A Red Mass was celebrated at Trinity, Natchitoches, October 28. "We were delighted to host The Red Mass, which was sponsored by the Natchitoches Parish Bar Association," said the Rev. Suzanne Wolfenbarger, rector of Trinity. "The turnout was good and Trinity always tries to support the community."

The Red Mass is a service celebrated annually for judges, prosecutors, attorneys, law school professors and students, and government officials. The Mass seeks the guidance from the Holy Spirit for all who seek justice, and offers the opportunity to reflect on the God-given responsibility of all in the legal profession.

It's name, the Red Mass, is derived from the color of the vestments worn by the celebrants of the service and traditional scarlet robes of the attending judges.

The Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby was celebrant and preacher at the service. Pictured at the left are members of the legal profession, and the judiciary in attendance at the Red Mass, along with Bishop Jake and Trinity rector, the Rev. Suzanne Wolfenbarger.

6th, 7th, and 8th graders take a break for JEYL

Diocesan middle-schoolers gathered at Camp Hardtner the weekend of November 18-20 the JEYL retreat weekend. It was a fun time, away from the routine and a time when their place in God's world could be explored. A teen staff led by Corey Harrington made the event fun, relaxing, and memorable.



Over-medication of seniors is explored in Good Shepherd presentation

More than 50 people met at Good Shepherd, Lake Charles in October to hear Dr. Mukaila Raji, Professor and Director of the Division of Geriatric Medicine at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston TX, speak on the over-medication of seniors. Dr. Raji said that seniors were regularly over-tested, over-diagnosed, and over-medicated, and that the results of this "polypharmacy" were severe and life threatening. According to Dr. Raji, Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs), are the fourth leading cause of death in the United States. And Adverse Drug Events (harm caused from use of medication) account for 30 percent of all hospital admissions.

The talk was presented by the church's organization entitled "Connecting Our Roots," which has the goal of ministering to the elderly (and almost elderly) at Good Shepherd.



The Celebration of New Ministry at St. James, Shreveport

Bishop Jacob W. Owensby will preside at the Celebration of New Ministry and Installation of The Rev. Margaret S. Ayers rector of St. James Episcopal Church in Shreveport at 6:00 p.m., Thursday, December 15. A reception will follow.

St. James Episcopal Church is located at 2050 Bert Kouns in Shreveport.