

ALIVE!

NOVEMBER 2017

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN LOUISIANA

VOLUME XXXIX, NUMBER 10

WESTERN LOUISIANA HAS A NEW MISSION:



Iglesia Episcopal La Esperanza de Familia

It's been years — so many years casual observers can't recall just how many years it's been since a group petitioned the Diocese of Western Louisiana to admit them to the diocese as a mission church. But it did happen Friday, November 3, at the 38th annual Convention of the Diocese when Iglesia Episcopal la Esperanza Familia Unidas was accepted as a mission congregation of the diocese.

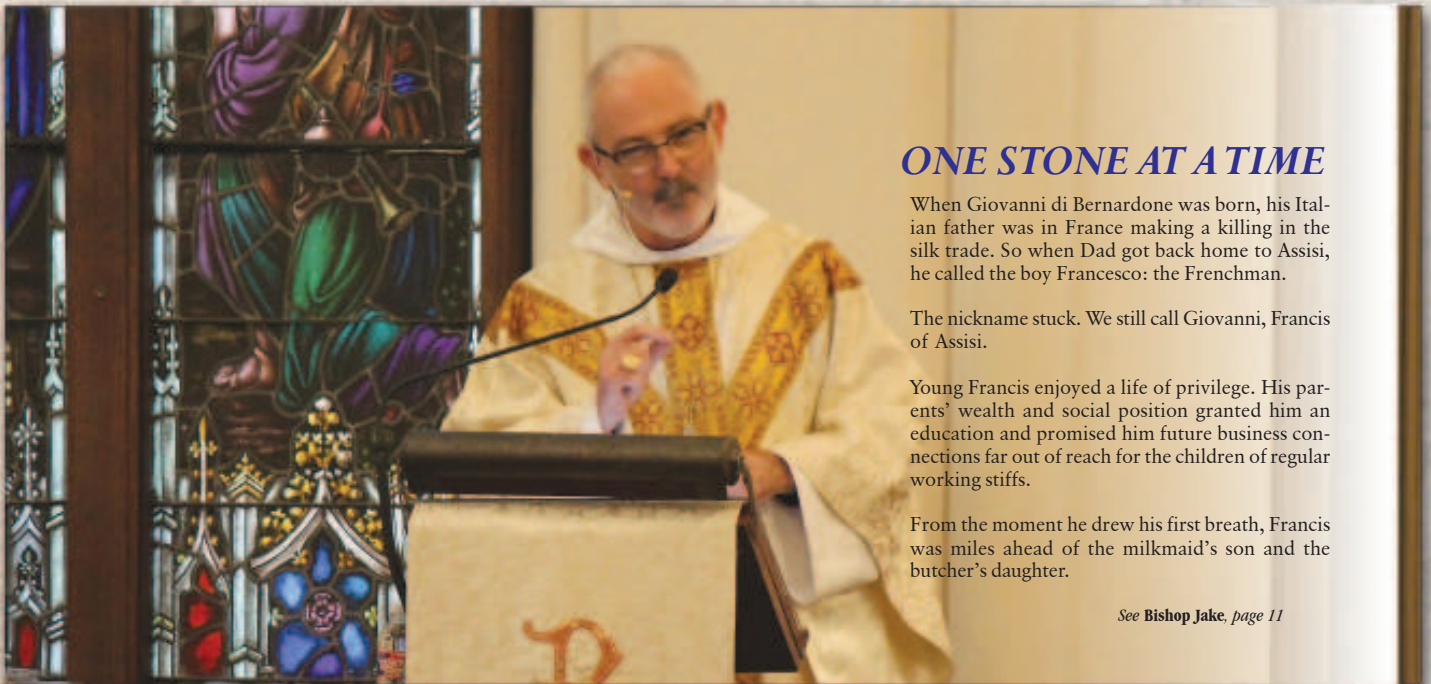
Located in Monroe, the congregation was organized by the Rev. Whitfield Stodghill and the Rev. Dawnell Stodghill and makes use of the facilities of St. Albans, Monroe.

Since its inception some two and a half years ago, the fledgling congregation has grown in numbers steadily and achieved an organizational status that persuaded diocesan leaders that official mission status was appropriate for the group.

With Spanish as their native tongue, the group has been engaged in a contest with their English-speaking mentors as to which would learn the other's language first. So far both groups have learned enough to foster warm, loving relationships.

The Rev. Whit Stodghill and the Rev. Dawnell Stodghill will serve as co-vicars of the newest congregation in the diocese.

Bishop Jake Owensby with wife Joy (back) with the Vallejo family (front, left to right) - Ivania, Maria, Zoe (and doll) and Ivan.



ONE STONE AT A TIME

When Giovanni di Bernardone was born, his Italian father was in France making a killing in the silk trade. So when Dad got back home to Assisi, he called the boy Francesco: the Frenchman.

The nickname stuck. We still call Giovanni, Francis of Assisi.

Young Francis enjoyed a life of privilege. His parents' wealth and social position granted him an education and promised him future business connections far out of reach for the children of regular working stiffs.

From the moment he drew his first breath, Francis was miles ahead of the milkmaid's son and the butcher's daughter.

See *Bishop Jake*, page 11



In memoriam: The Rev. Edward M. "Ned" Head, Jr.

A memorial service celebrating the life of the Rev. Edward M. "Ned" Head, Jr. was held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, November 18, 2017, at Christ Episcopal Church in Bastrop, Louisiana. The celebrant was the Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Louisiana. Assisting was the Rev. Christie Fleming, rector of Christ Episcopal Church. Committal followed at Christ Church Cemetery. Following the service, the family received friends for a time of fellowship and remembrance in the Christ Church parish hall.

Father Head was born March 22, 1942 in Bastrop, educated in Morehouse Parish schools and received a BS in Pharmacy at Northeast Louisiana University (now ULL). He was the owner of Head's Drug Store in Bastrop when he experienced a call to the ordained ministry. He attended the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee) and received a MDiv in 1986. Returning to Louisiana, he was ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons by the Rt. Rev. Willis R. Henten, first bishop of the Diocese of Western Louisiana, in May 1986 and to the priesthood in November 1986.

In the Diocese Western Louisiana Father Head served as rector of St. Alban's, Monroe; as associate and rector of Church of the Ascension, Lafayette; and as rector of Church of the Redeemer in Ruston, before returning to Bastrop as priest-in-residence at Christ Church.

He was active in diocesan affairs serving on various boards and commissions. Father Head also served on the board of trustees of The University of the South.

Recently retiring as priest-in-residence at Christ Church, Bastrop, Father Head and his wife Mary Nell moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to be closer to their children and grandchildren.

Father Head is survived by his wife, Mary Nell; his daughter, Laura Curns and her husband Erik Curns; his son, Hugh Head and his wife Elizabeth Head; two grandchildren, Eleanor Head and Camille Head, all of Atlanta, Georgia. He is also survived by two brothers, Rick Head and his wife Lee of Canton, Georgia, and Terry Head of Bastrop, Louisiana.



The Season of Pentecost

Not actually a season with a single common focus, the weeks between the Day of Pentecost and the First Sunday of Advent, are often referred to as "the long growing season," when we nourish the seeds planted at Easter and put down the roots of our faith.



November 2017 Volume XXXIX Number 10

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

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

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!*," 4321 Youree Drive, Suite 400, Shreveport, LA 71105

Copy deadline, next issue:
December 6, 2017



Breaking Bread with Grace

Above: Grace, Monroe volunteers complete their Sunday afternoon Thanksgiving bag assembly.

In 2015 Father Richard Norman, rector of Grace, Monroe, approached parishioner, Debra Colvin with an idea for a new ministry. After discussion and exploration the new ministry was given life and named "Breaking Bread with Grace."

The idea was to aid families that barely make ends meet enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving dinner they have prepared in their own homes. These families are often classified as the working poor. Their hard work hardly covers the family's necessities, but their wages are too much for them to qualify for government assistance.

Working with United Way,

Breaking Bread with Grace identified families who would benefit from this "dinner gift" that Grace would assemble. Most of the families had come from United Way referral but some were included who had requested help through the church office. "We were not interested in preparing handouts that might embarrass, rather we were going to make a gift of a Thanksgiving meal for families to prepare and enjoy in their own homes," said Debra Colvin. "We provided a lovely bag with groceries to prepare a Thanksgiving meal to feed a family of six." The meal included beans, corn, sweet potatoes, stuffing mix, rolls, chicken broth, canned milk and a turkey roasting pan. Also included is a Walmart gift card for a turkey or a ham, dessert and any cold items needed.

Once again as Thanksgiving approaches, the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving will be a busy day with church

volunteers on site to assemble the final package encased in a lovely reusable gift bag that conveys the message, "here's a gift for you, not a handout."

"Wal-Mart is most helpful in our effort," said Colvin. "Feeding 40 families of six requires lots of groceries and Wal-Mart orders everything. On Sunday we arrive at Wal-Mart, all our items are wrapped, boxed and assembled on pallets ready for us to load and go."

Back at Grace an assembly line is formed and volunteers will fill the bags. This process goes smoothly with lots of joy visible on the faces of those involved in providing these gifts. As Monday dawns the assembled bags will

stand ready for pickup as the recipient families come for their Thanksgiving gift. "What a blessing we get when we see the smiles on the faces of those families," adds Colvin.

With the Breaking Bread project completed once again, the prospect of Thanksgiving is brighter not only for the recipients, but also for those who give of their time and efforts to make it a reality.

Around the Diocese

St. Barnabas partnership means a Community Garden expansion

For years St. Barnabas, Lafayette has taken pride in the Community Garden. From its inception it has been a magnet to both the avid gardener tending and tilling their own plots, and those who simply enjoy digging in the dirt.

It's always been the intent of some to build more than just a garden, and to work toward a community effort dedicated to providing fresh produce to those in need. All members of the St. Barnabas congregation from the youngest to the oldest and everyone in between has been urged to join these efforts. Workdays in the garden are regularly announced in the church's bulletin and website.

The desire to provide fresh produce to all those in need has led

to a new operational scheme. St. Barnabas has partnered with TownFolk, a nonprofit that serves the LaPlace community which is adjacent to downtown Lafayette, to support their ongoing efforts to make access to healthy food easier for LaPlace residents through a program called "TownFolk Table."

On Saturday mornings, TownFolk members have been picking up a supply of donated foods from Whole Foods Market, bagging the items and then distributing those bags of food at their Victory Garden location in LaPlace. This posting, referencing a photo, on the TownFolk Facebook page gives a good indication of the need of such a program. "Take a look at the line of people patiently waiting at this morning's Town Folk Table. With the help of @wholefoods and @wholecities foundation and @ulamericorps we were able to give out 60 bags of fresh, healthy foods to our neighbors this morning."



Recognizing the addition of output from the St. Barnabas Community Garden can add greatly to TownFolk's established efforts. St. Barnabas garden workers welcomed TownFolk volunteers to join them in a clean up and revitalization of the plots in mid-October. Two weeks later the TownFolk gardeners were again on the scene for the planting of the fall crop.

What St. Barnabas harvests will be added to TownFolk's already successful program. St. Barnabas parishioners have been invited to take part in any aspect of the garden, tending, harvesting, the sharing of its output. Joining TownFolk's distribution efforts is also on the table. By these efforts St. Barnabas

hopes to show not only their support of TownFolk's mission, but their love, God's love, for their neighbors as well as their desire to connect with the larger Lafayette community.



St. Luke's Van dedication attendees, left-to-right: The Rev. Deacon Lois Maberry; Jimmy Deal of St. James, Shreveport; Bishop Jacob W. Owensby; Nanci Chance, St. Luke's Board Chair from St. Matthias in Shreveport; Betty Johnson, Executive Director of St. Luke's Medical Ministry.

St. Luke's Medical Ministry dedicates new van and honors volunteer

On October 19, St. Luke's Day, Bishop Owensby dedicated a new St. Luke's Mobile Ministry medical van. "This medical vehicle will assist our medical ministry in providing health service and referrals to the underserved in rural and urban Louisiana communities," said the Bishop as he dedicated the new vehicle for service.

Based in Shreveport the mobile clinic will serve communities in Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Desoto, and Claiborne parishes. In addition to the dedication, Jimmy Deal of St. James, Shreveport was honored as "The Rev. Ken and Martha Cooper Volunteer" to St. Luke's for 2017.

Dandridge *continued from page 5*

parish hall here at St. Patrick's to "DANDRIDGE HALL". Rob Harkness made the heartfelt presentation of DANDRIDGE HALL to the crowd and a lovely new sign hangs in the building.



Father Dandridge and Evelyn will be missed here at St. Patrick's, but the Parish will follow his encouragement and look forward to continuing in the interim with the leadership of the Rev. Whit Stodghill and the Rev. Dawnell Stodghill as supply priests.

Join St. Patrick's in fond farewells and best wishes to Father Robert Dandridge and his wife Evelyn.

—Johnette Mintz is a member of the congregation of St. Patrick's, West Monroe.

Camp Hardnter welcomes Daniel Chapman as new Director of Operations

by Bill Shearman

POLLOCK – Daniel Chapman will begin as director of operations onsite at Camp Hardnter effective Nov. 11, Chapman confirmed recently in an interview.

Chapman was interviewed at length Oct. 11 at Camp Hardnter by eight of the ten members of the camp’s board of trustees. He was unanimously recommended to the Rt. Rev. Jacob W. Owensby, bishop of the Diocese of Western Louisiana, following those interviews.

Chapman, 28, was confirmed as director Nov. 1 by Bishop Owensby. During his interviews with the board, Chapman said that a five-year obligation to Camp Hardnter “Would be more than fair.”

A native of New Iberia, Chapman attended the Church of the Epiphany there. He is a 2011 *summa cum laude* graduate of LSU with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications Studies.

He is a veteran Hardnter alumni. He served as a member of the permanent staff during the summers of 2008-2010 and as head counselor in 2011 and 2012.

During the summer of 2012, Camp Hardnter had no director so Chapman had to grow up in a hurry. “It was a challenge I was able to meet,” said Chapman.

Chapman comes to Camp Hardnter from St. Crispin’s Conference Center & Camp in Wewoka, OK, where he was also the camp director. Crispin’s, an Episcopal camp very similar to Hardnter, has a seven-week summer residential program attended by 420 campers.

He said that he thought the Crispin’s tenure was “An excellent opportunity to get more experience elsewhere.”

“I just stumbled across it; my goal was to make (summer) camp a year-round job,” added Chapman.

It has been a fall of windfalls for Chapman. On Sept. 9, he was married to Katie (now) Chapman who also has Hardnter experience as a head counselor and head driver. They were married in the Crispin’s chapel.

They will be joined at Hardnter by their dog Boo and cat Louie.

“We’re so excited. I look forward to meeting with the staff and taking stock of what we have



and where we need to go,” said Chapman.

(The board of trustees again thanks Susan Walpole who served as interim camp director during the summer, 2017. We are grateful to her for her ministry and commitment).



A fond farewell to the Rev. Robert Dandridge

by Johnette Mintz

St. Patrick’s Episcopal Church said farewell to Fr. Robert Dandridge and his beloved wife Evelyn. Sunday, November 5 was Fr. Robert’s last Holy Eucharist here at St. Patrick’s. This was marked by a packed house in Worship and a Retirement Reception later in the day.

Area Episcopalians joined the parishioners here at St. Patrick’s for a celebration of Father Dandridge’s ministry. The hallmark of the occasion was the renaming of the

See **Dandridge**, page 4

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY



Women of the Bible: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Saturday, February 24, 2018 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

St. James Episcopal Church, Shreveport — Hosted by the DOK Chapters of the Shreveport Convocation

Cost: \$25

Contact: Debbie Fitzpatrick -- fitzpatrickdbr@bellouth.net

Registration form and additional information in January

By Word & Example

ENGAGING GOD'S MISSION



CONVENTION FAST FACTS

Elections at Convention:

Standing Committee, Shreveport Convocation:

The Very Rev. Mary Richard

Standing Committee, Monroe Convocation:

Jeffrey Thompson

Disciplinary Board, Fred King

Disciplinary Board, Jennifer Milligan

Lay member, Board of the University of the South,
Phillip Earhardt

Future Diocesan Conventions

2018 - One-day convention to be held in the month of November

2019 - Two-day convention to be held March 8-9th

Clergy new to the diocese, or in new cures since last convention

Left-to-right: The Rev. John Campbell, Chaplain at ESA; The Rev. Deacon Andrew Christianson, St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport; The Rev. Christopher Heying, vicar of St. Matthias, Shreveport; The Rev. George Gennuso, Central Louisiana Mission for Addiction and Recovery; The Rev. Deacon Christie Fleming, rector of Christ Church, Bastrop; The Rev. Deacon Sean Duncan, St. Paul's, Shreveport.



Thumbs Up from the Cathedral!

It's all smiles from Sub-Dean, Father Thomas Nsubuga and Cathedral Dean, the Very Rev. Alston Johnson.



Camp Hardtner's new Director of Operations

Making a stop by convention to deliver greetings, Daniel Chapman and his wife Katie assumed enormous responsibility and the title "Director of Operations" of the camp on November 1. (See page five of this issue of ALIVE!)



A time for renewal of old acquaintances and earnest discussion

Every break and recess was filled with mini reunions and conversation...lots of conversation.



Emphasis: College Ministry
New work underway at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette
 Lay chaplain Katy Campbell spoke to convention about the exciting occurrences being experienced by the ministry. A new Lay Chaplain is in place. New quarters have been leased, and new contacts are being initiated. Katy was accompanied to convention by ULL student Lucas Koch.



Emphasis: College Ministry
New work underway at the University of Louisiana-Monroe
 The Rev. Deacon Bette Jo Kaufman, the archdeacon of the diocese, is also the Chaplain of the ministry under expansion on the Monroe campus. Left-to-right: Archdeacon Kaufman and ministry participants, Maryu Khymes, Countess Authement, Ivania Vallejo, and St. Thomas, Monroe volunteer, Karen Haywood.



Convention table groups: “what’s right and what’s wrong”
 Convention table groups spent extended time exploring “what their congregations do well, and what could be improved.” Giving no names, table spokespersons reported their findings to convention as a whole.

Disaster Relief: prepare in advance!
 The Rev. Deacon Lois Maberry made a presentation on how to lessen the impact of the next natural disaster by planning your actions in advance.

By Word & Example



Editor's Note: The following is the address to the 38th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Western Louisiana delivered by Bishop Owensby Saturday, November 4, 2017.

Researchers tell us that people today are just as hungry and just as spiritually engaged as ever. Comparing each generation from the Greatest Generation to the Millennials, some studies have found that this youngest generation is actually more likely to report a spiritual longing and more likely to report profound spiritual experiences than the previous ones.

So, the strength and the prevalence of our spiritual yearnings has remained relatively constant. Reports of encounters with the holy have remained steady or have even risen. Nevertheless, the pews in our churches continue to grow emptier year after year.

All mainline denominations are undergoing this decline in attendance and membership. It's not just the Episcopal Church.

Let's summarize the situation this way. We understand ourselves as being in the God business, and we conduct our business inside the walls of our church buildings. However, people are finding God somewhere else. Or, more to the point, God is finding people somewhere else. Outside the

walls of our church buildings.

Something is going on here. For us to be the Church, we need to identify what's happening and respond effectively.

Our decline in size is making many of us anxious. When we're anxious, many of us seek something or someone to blame. I bet you've heard stuff like this. Those liberals have watered down the faith. Those judgmental conservatives have crushed souls and run people off. Those parents don't make their kids come to church like they should. Those atheists are threatening the faith.

We've been playing the blame game since the 1970's. Honestly, how's that been working for us?

Instead of looking for a dragon to slay, let's try another strategy. Let's take seriously what people are saying to us about their spirituality. And let's look especially at the Millennials.

There's good reason to look at this generation. There are almost as many Millennials as there are Boomers. In other words, they comprise a huge segment of the American population. And unless life expectancies shrink precipitously, they will continue to do so for decades to come.

So where is God connecting with the Millennials? A goodly number still show up at worship services. But religion plays a significant role in considerably less than half of them.

They are not giving up on the holy. And God has by no means abandoned them. Many of these non-religious Millennials report a profound experience of the divine

beyond the walls of our churches. In nature. In community. In works of mercy. In art and music.

You could say that Millennials are abandoning church in order to find God. And that should be a wake-up call for the followers of Jesus. Because God is meeting them out there in the world.

So, at the risk of being a six-year-long broken record, I say that we have to stop single-mindedly focusing on bringing people inside the walls of the church. We have to be the church outside the walls. Be the Church. Bring the Church to the people. Connect with the real people who live around you.

I'm in the sixth year of my episcopate. For at least five of those years I've been saying this. I'm heartened by the fact that this missional notion of church has gotten traction in many places. And I'm going to talk about that in a moment.

But before I tell those missional stories, I want to share with you some reports I get each year:



Let's summarize the situation this way. We understand ourselves as being in the God business, and we conduct our business inside the walls of our church buildings. However, people are finding God somewhere else. Or, more to the point, God is finding people somewhere else. Outside the walls of our church buildings.

Some of you have shown me the list of places to which you write checks or tell me about the boxes you send to distant lands. This is very generous. Don't stop. But take the next step: real engagement with real people in your surrounding community.

Consider this comparison. You may send checks or gifts to family members. But if you never meet face-to-face, never offer a listening ear, and never share projects or meals or celebrations together, you won't

have much of a relationship.

Bringing the Church to people means bringing yourself to people. And importantly, it means bringing your ears to people. All kinds of people. Not just people like you.

If the people in your pews do not resemble the people who live around you, you should take some time for reflection. Are you engaging the people that God has put on your path, or are you looking for people with whom you are comfortable?

Spreading the Good News involves listening to all sorts of people. Hear from others how they understand the real day-to-day bad news that they confront. Then, and only then, can you together become the Good News in the world you share.

As promised, I'll turn now to some of the missional initiatives breaking out across the Diocese.

We have established two new Canterbury Centers on college campuses. At ULL, we have rented a space and called a Lay Chaplain. At ULM, St. Thomas is donating space and we have appointed a Chaplain. In accordance with the canon we passed at the last Convention, these are independent ministry centers under the direction of the Bishop. They offer students, faculty, and staff a spiritual community. They are devoted to worship and action. And I have charged my chaplains with seeking out nominees for the diaconate.

For the first time since I have been in this Diocese, we have welcomed a new congregation into the Convention of Western Louisiana. Iglesia Episcopal La Esperanza de Familia Unidas is now a mission of our Diocese, sharing space with St. Alban's in Monroe. In addition to this, a new commission has been appointed to explore ways to nurture similar missions in other locations.

St. Michael, Pineville, and St. Matthias, Shreveport, are boldly and intentionally pursuing revitalization. Transitioning from parish status to mission status made them eligible for financial support from the Diocese. The Trustees and the Diocesan Council released funds from the endowment to invest in revitalization efforts in these congregations. Each has called a new vicar and has committed to redefining themselves along missional lines.

To confront the growing addiction crisis in our state, we have instituted the Central Louisiana Mission for Addiction and Recovery. It occupies no building. This ministry is church beyond the walls. Focusing on addiction and recovery among those with inadequate insurance coverage, this

Continued on the next page.

By Word & Example



ministry is coordinated by Fr. George Gennuso. He has connected with our public rehab center and is building partnerships among local churches to provide after-care resources.

Through Open Table, the Diocese joins churches of many denominations in a partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services. This partnership focuses on providing a transition to self-reliant adulthood for children who are aging out of the foster care system.

Several of our congregations are now partnering with the organization called Interfaith. In north and Central Louisiana, Interfaith brings together community members, faith leaders, and elected officials to discuss local challenges and to arrive at solutions together.



If the people in your pews do not resemble the people who live around you, you should take some time for reflection. Are you engaging the people that God has put on your path, or are you looking for people with whom you are comfortable?

The Beloved Community Commission—formerly called the Dismantling Racism Commission—has redefined its charge and refocused its work on reconciliation. Beginning in 2018 they will host a series of gatherings designed to help all of us scale what one writer has called the empathy wall dividing our culture. These gatherings will

take place in different convocations in order to facilitate attendance. Clergy and elected leaders in our congregations have been directed by General Convention and by Canon to receive the training offered at these gatherings.

In the past I have challenged you to get outside the walls of your buildings and into the surrounding community. These are examples of how you have taken up that challenge. And you have exceeded my wildest imaginings.

Now I have a few more challenges to go along with my continued challenge to get outside your walls.

Studies have shown that missional church collapses without the support of formation. Going into the community is not enough. Who we are when we go is crucial.

Christian Formation is more than what we have frequently referred to as Christian Education.

Many associate Christian Education with Sunday School. We organize people—especially children—into grade levels in order to facilitate an information transfer. It focuses on what content students should learn.

By contrast, Christian Formation is devoted to shaping who we are becoming. In the past, people used the word “discipling” to refer to this process. While formation involves engagement with information, its primary focus is shaping enduring habits of mind, body, and soul.

Education fills us with information. Formation cooperates with the Holy Spirit to mold us into disciples.

Formation is life-wide and lifelong. From childhood to advanced age we remain works in progress. Every corner of our lives belongs to Christ and can be molded by the Spirit. Formation shapes Christian character. It doesn’t just pass along doctrines and Bible facts.

The Christian life centers on imitating Christ. Formation is how the Christian community helps each of us all along this infinite, eternal journey.

As many of you know, St. Francis provides one of my primary exemplars for the Christian life. He, his brother friars, and the sisters of St. Clare went into the world to meet Christ in the needy as the needy.

They were wounded healers. The poor in solidarity with the poor. They embodied Christ’s own humble hunger for justice. They were servants, not benefactors.

So I challenge each of our congregations—regardless of your size—to form not only children and youth to go into the world as the image of Christ. Along the way, each Christian community should shape in each of its members the following habits:

- Corporate Worship
- Personal Devotions
- Generosity
- Stewardship of the earth
- Evangelism
- Works of mercy
- Pursuit of justice

I recognize that this is all shorthand. The Christian Formation Commission and the Congregational Vitality Commission have now joined in partnership to guide you in understanding and facing this challenge. Mark their events on your calendars and attend as a group, not just one or two individuals.

As our Presiding Bishop often says, if we will focus on being the Church, average Sunday attendance and membership will take care of themselves.

Let me close by drawing on a baseball metaphor. After all, we’re just finishing up the World Series.

When the count is three and two, you know the pitcher is going to throw a strike. If you just stand there, he’s going to strike you out. You might as well take a cut at the ball. It’s better to go down swinging than to just stand there and strike out by doing nothing.

In a way, many of our congregations are at three and two. What you’ve been doing up to this point has not stemmed the tide of declining attendance and membership. If you keep doing what you’re doing—what you’ve always done—it’s like just standing there as the pitch flies by. You’ll strike out.



So, at the risk of being a six-year-long broken record, I say that we have to stop single-mindedly focusing on bringing people inside the walls of the church. We have to be the church outside the walls. Be the Church. Bring the Church to the people. Connect with the real people who live around you.

Trying something new is like taking a cut. There is no guarantee that you’ll knock it out of the park. No guarantee that you’ll even make it to first base. But it’s better to go down swinging than to just stand there and give up.

Now here’s where that analogy doesn’t quite work. Right now, even if you swing and miss, you’re learning how to take a better cut next time. You’re not really striking out. You’re becoming a better batter.

But you only become a better batter by swinging. So I’m challenging you. Step up to the plate. You’ll never get on base if you don’t take a cut at the ball.

The Ordination of The Reverend Deacon Christie Fleming to the Priesthood

Saturday, December 16, 2017, Christ Church, Bastrop, starts at 11:00 p.m.

Around the Diocese

Bastrop's MAP grant success story: renovation of a landmark institution at Christ Church

After a former home was donated to Christ Church in Bastrop, the Thrift Shop was opened in the house by the Episcopal Church Women (ECW). On October 5 of this year, after 61 years of operation and recent renovations, the Christ Church Thrift Shop celebrated a grand reopening, a blessing, and a ribbon cutting with a supportive church family and community in attendance.



What a joyful occasion it was!

This spring Christ Church was awarded a Ministries Application Program (MAP) grant by the Western Diocese of Louisiana.

The purpose of the grant project was to renovate the Thrift Shop which has provided ridiculously low priced merchandise to an economically depressed area of northeast



Louisiana since the shop was opened in 1956. The primary purpose of the Thrift Shop is to serve the community. The funds received from the sale of the donated merchandise have always been secondary.

Included in the audience at the grand reopening was Bastrop Mayor Henry Cotton who shared a story about how his mother used to take him and his siblings to the shop on Saturdays when they were young. His story is just one of many stories that are told in the community con-



cerning the positive impact the Thrift Shop has had on those less fortunate.

The program for the celebration included Christ Church Senior Warden Larry James, Bastrop Morehouse Chamber of Commerce Dorothy Ford, Project Chairperson Amie Foose, Vestry Member Robert Foose and the Reverend Deacon Christie Fleming of Christ Church.

Bastrop's Christ Church Thrift Shop is open the first three Thursdays of the month from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and is operated by ECW volunteers. The Thrift Shop is located at 510 West Hickory in Bastrop, LA.

Far left: Back in business at the Thrift Shop. Top Center: Ribbon cutting attendees. Bottom left: Christ Church rector The Rev. Christie Scales. Bottom right: Bastrop mayor Henry Cotton. top right: Taking in the festivities



Good Shepherd's "Connecting Our Roots" explores Aging Is it normal Aging or is it Dementia?

"Is it Normal Aging or Dementia?" was the topic of the "Connecting Our Roots" program held on October 31 at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Lake Charles. "Connecting Our Roots," or COR, is a program for older adults at Good Shepherd.

Annette Tritico, RN and BSN, and Dr. Kashinath Yadalam were the speakers. Ms. Tritico has been a registered nurse for 33 years and is now a Clinical Liaison at Evangeline Home Health in Lake Charles. Dr. Yadalam, a psychiatrist affiliated with Lake Charles Memorial Hospital, established Lake Charles Clinical Trials, which

is the only research clinic specializing in psychiatric clinical trials in southwest LA.

Dr. Yadalam and Ms. Tritico discussed the many types of dementia and helped people understand when troublesome behavior is caused by "normal" aging, and when it may be caused by a type of dementia.

They listed these signs as characteristics of normal aging:

- Making bad decisions once in a while.
- Missing a monthly payment once in a while.
- Forgetting which day it is but remembering later.

- Forgetting which word to use sometimes.
- Losing things from time to time, but being able to retrace steps to find it.

In contrast, they said that the following actions may be signs of dementia:

- Using poor judgment and making bad decisions on a regular basis.
- Not being able to manage a budget.
- Losing track of the date or the season.
- Having difficulty making conversation.
- Misplacing things and not being able to find them by retracing steps.

Both speakers and many members of the audience were dressed in costume to celebrate Halloween, which may have served

to lighten any depression caused by the topic! The material elicited much discussion and many questions. COR is planning a follow-up program on Alzheimer's Disease next year.

Good Shepherd's COR group meets from September through May. Events are open to the public free of charge.

Karen Miller, who heads the COR program in Lake Charles, is available to help other churches who wish to start a ministry to older adults.

Top left, A large crowd took in the presentation. Top right, Annette Tritico, RN and Dr. Kashinath Yadalam.



Initially, he took these advantages for granted. He was unaware that almost everyone else began life with far less to work with.

Still, he was moved by compassion for the poor. The connection between his privilege and the poverty around him had not yet dawned on him. But Jesus was about to give him a series of difficult lessons on the subject.

Francis was selling silk for his father. A beggar approached and then wandered away. Francis finished with his customer, chased down the beggar, and gave him everything in his pockets. When his father heard what Francis had done, he hit the roof. Dad perhaps sensed in Francis an impulse that could erode the privilege the family felt entitled to.

Some time later, Francis was praying in the ruined country chapel of San Damiano. In a vision Francis saw Jesus and heard him say, "Go and repair my house."

Assuming that Jesus wanted him to renovate the little chapel, Francis took some silk from his father's storehouse. After selling the cloth, Francis offered the profits to the chapel's priest. The priest refused to accept the money.

The priest may have rejected the donation because Francis had come by it dishonestly. But it seems that Francis learned a deeper lesson. Jesus was calling him to do more than give money from a position of privilege.

The rest of the story drives the point home. Francis' father discovered the theft, locked his son in a closet, and demanded restitution. After a time, Francis renounced his inheritance and assumed the life of a beggar. Stone by stone, he begged the building materials needed to renovate the chapel. With his own hands, he helped rebuild the dilapidated structure.

In the process, Francis came to realize that Jesus was urging him to model how the followers of Jesus heal the world. We begin by recognizing and renouncing our own privilege. The privilege of wealth. The privilege of race. The privilege of gender. Every form of privilege.

Jesus once said, "Whoever wishes to be-

come great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all." (Mark 10:43b) We've frequently interpreted Jesus' words in a minimally challenging way. Do nice things for other people. Give your extra money or your extra stuff to the needy. In other words, we're assuming that Jesus is telling us to be generous with what we have. There's no question that Jesus encourages generosity. But that's not what he's getting at here.

When Jesus tells us to be servants, he's challenging us to join him in changing how the world works. The context for Jesus' words is crucial.

His disciples James and John have just asked Jesus to sit on his right hand and on his left. They believe that Jesus is climbing to the top. So, they elbow for a spot in his inner circle. They're angling for privilege in an Empire with Jesus instead of Caesar sitting in the corner office.

But Jesus isn't interested in becoming a more benevolent Caesar. His mission is to dismantle all Empires and to inaugurate a new kind of Kingdom right here on planet earth: The Kingdom of Heaven.

In an Empire, an elite few accumulate power and possessions by exploiting most everybody else. The elite pass laws and establish economic practices that help them keep the power, the stuff, and the status they've accumulated. Empires are social pyramids with a narrow top and a broad bottom.

Privilege comes with occupying the top of the pyramid. When we exercise power from a position of privilege, we will descend at best. At worst, we will exploit and oppress. Privilege, you see, tends to preserve itself.

So Jesus tells us to be servants. Servants exercise power at the bottom.

The Caesars of the world exercise power from top to bottom, from powerful to powerless. By contrast, servants are equal in their lack of political influence, material wealth, and social standing. They serve their equals as equals.

Servant power is the power of healing instead of exploitation. The power of compassion instead of oppression. This is the power that will establish peace and justice. It's what the Kingdom of Heaven looks like. The world we inhabit is not yet the Kingdom of Heaven. But when Jesus called Francis to rebuild his house, he was calling all of us to rebuild our world on the foundation of compassion, humility, and equality.

Francis surrendered his privilege in order to exercise power from below. Jesus urges us to unlearn and to relinquish the practices that come with privilege.

Unlearning and relinquishing privilege involves listening to and partnering with those most affected by the advantages we have received simply by the accidents of our family's economic and social status, our race, and our gender.

This is the Gospel work of reconciliation. The work of repairing Jesus' house. One stone at a time.

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

November 2017

21 — Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House*, starts at 10:00 a.m.

December 2017

3 — Bishop's Visitation, *Grace, Monroe*

16 — Ordination of Deacon **Christie Fleming** to the priesthood, *Christ Church, Bastrop*, starts at 11:00 a.m.

24 — Bishop's Visitation, *Christmas Eve: St. Mark's, Shreveport (early); St. James, Alexandria (late)*

January 2018

6 — Camp Hardtner Permanent Staff Interviews, *Camp Hardtner*

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

12-14 — Happening #56, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 7:00 p.m.

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

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

February 2018

4 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Thomas, Monroe*

14 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. James, Alexandria (noonday)*

18 — Bishop's Visitation, *Trinity, Natchitoches*

23-24 — Clergy Spouses Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*

24 — Daughters of the King Diocesan Assembly, *St. James, Shreveport* starts at 9:00 a.m.

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

27 — Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House*, starts at 10:00 a.m.

March 2018

2-4 — Hardtner Permanent Staff Reunion, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 3:00 p.m.

4 — Bishop's Visitation, *Redeemer, Oak Ridge*

9-11 — CLEY Youth Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*, starts at 7:00 p.m.

17 — St. Patrick's Day 5K Run sponsored by St. Patrick's, *West Monroe*

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

Holy Week: Holy Cross and Cathedral in Shreveport

(specifies to be announced)

April 2018

1 — Bishop's Visitation, *(Easter) St. Mark's Cathedral, Shreveport*

15 — Bishop's Visitation, *St. Barnabas, Lafayette*

20-22 — Time for Joy, *Camp Hardtner*

22 — Bishop's Visitation, *Good Shepherd, Lake Charles*

May 2018

4-6 — Cursillo, *Camp Hardtner*

6 — Bishop's Visitation, *Holy Spirit, Big Lake*

13 — Bishop's Visitation, *Ascension, Lafayette*

15-18 — Spring Clergy Retreat, *Camp Hardtner*

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

22 — Commission on Ministry, *Diocesan House*, starts at 10:00 a.m.

27 — Bishop's Visitation, *Polk Memorial, Leesville*

Last Look!



Bishop Owensby blesses the McRae Youth Lodge at St. Paul's, Shreveport

Already in use but not yet complete without a blessing, St. Paul's, Shreveport's sparkling new Youth Lodge received that blessing when Bishop Jacob Owensby and an enthusiastic crowd of young and old made use of a prepared liturgy and went room to room blessing each part of the structure and its contents.

Benefactor Duncan McRae and Project Manager Gene Young were in attendance and especially gratified to witness the Bishop's blessing of the structure that was under construction several years.

The final blessing took place in the auditorium a rea where spirited music broke out.

It was a fitting end to a "Blessed Night."



Over the Edge for Fuller Center

Saturday, October 6th, over 50 people went Over the Edge of the 22-story Beck Building in downtown Shreveport in a move to raise funds for the Fuller Center. Fuller Center for Housing of NWLA works to provide affordable housing for veterans and low-income working families. Proceeds of the Over the Edge event will be used to support their mission.

Participating from St. Mark's were Deacon Lois Maberry, Curate Drew Christianson, Joanne Sigler, and Oliver Jenkins.



ESA welcomes Dr. John Campbell

Episcopal School of Acadiana (ESA) is pleased to welcome Dr. John Campbell as the Lafayette campus' new chaplain. "Doc", as he is known to the students, was interviewed in chapel recently by 2nd grade teacher, Kate Fisher. We learned that he is married with three children, has a motorcycle named "Roxanne," and he loves sunsets.

Doc is heading up the service team, that will develop a procedure for the origination and implementation of the Lower School's service projects. He has also been busy getting to know all of the students at lunch and during recess on the playground.

