

Winter 2019



The North Carolina DISCIPLE



THE 203RD ANNUAL CONVENTION
THE ROOTS OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE
LENT FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW



The North Carolina
DISCIPLE

Diocesan House
200 West Morgan Street, Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27601-1338
PHONE: 919.834.7474
TOLL FREE: 800.448.8775
FAX: 919.834.8775
WEBSITE: www.episdionc.org

The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina

Bishop Diocesan

The Rt. Rev. Samuel Sewall Rodman, III
sam.rodman@episdionc.org
Diocesan House: 919.834.7474

Bishop Suffragan

The Rt. Rev. Anne E. Hodges-Copple
bishopanne@episdionc.org
Office of the Bishop Suffragan: 336.273.5770

PUBLISHER

Bishop Diocesan of North Carolina

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Christine McTaggart
christine.mctaggart@episdionc.org

MANAGING EDITOR / ART DIRECTOR

Summerlee Walter
summerlee.walter@episdionc.org

CONTRIBUTORS IN THIS ISSUE

The Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman
The Rev. Adrienne Koch
The Rev. Colette Bachand-Wood
Summerlee Walter
Christine McTaggart
The Rev. Canon David Sellery

SUBSCRIPTIONS / CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Erin Sweeney: erin.sweeney@episdionc.org

SUBMISSIONS

All submission ideas are welcome and considered for publication. Email submission ideas to communications@episdionc.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send letters to the editor to communications@episdionc.org.



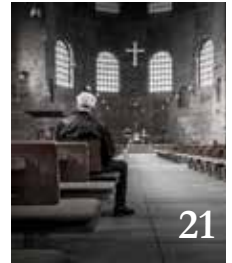
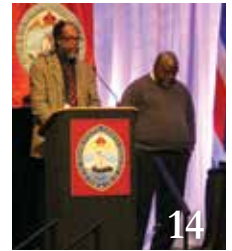
COVER & INSIDE COVER PHOTO
A sampling of the banners diocesan churches brought to Convention for the Opening Eucharist processional. *Photo by Christine McTaggart*

table of contents

WINTER 2019

features

- 4 Lent from a Different Point of View
- 14 The 203rd Annual Convention Wrap-up
- 18 The Roots of Spiritual Practice
- 21 God is Still There
- 24 A Biblical Model of Leadership
- 26 YEAH: Young Episcopal Adult Hub
- 28 A Feast of Epiphanies
- 30 Keeping it Simple



departments & more

- 6-7 Around the Diocese
- 8-13 New, Notable & Newsworthy



The North Carolina Disciple is the quarterly magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. Other diocesan communication vehicles, including Please Note, a weekly e-newsletter, and the diocesan website, www.episdionc.org, are used for more time-sensitive, day-to-day news.

Contact the communications staff at communications@episdionc.org with any questions or feedback regarding these communications, or to submit ideas, articles and photos.



At a Glance Facts: This Magazine...

- Is printed with soy inks, which are more environmentally friendly than traditional petroleum-based inks.
- Is printed on FSC® certified paper — paper certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council™, an independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.
- Is printed and mailed in Morrisville, North Carolina. The printer has been using an internal paper recycling system for paper production since 1995.

Delivery occurs during the following months:

October / Fall Issue
January / Winter Issue
April / Spring Issue
July / Summer Issue



By the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman

LENT FROM A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW



No importa de dónde eres,
estamos contentos que seas
nuestro vecino.

No matter where you are
from, we're glad you're
our neighbour.

لا يهم أين ولدتم، و لكننا
سعداء انكم جيراننا.

One of the great gifts of The Way of Love, the rule of life we have made a point of focus since its introduction by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry at the 79th General Convention, is that it is not just for individuals. Although that often tends to be our focus, as disciples of Jesus, a rule of life comes out of a community and has a collective dimension as well as individual application.

By the time you read this, we will be well into the season of Epiphany and beginning to anticipate Lent. Lent is a season of reflection, self-examination, repentance and amendment of life. We engage in the disciplines of Lent as individual disciples every year. What if, this year, we gave special attention to these principles for our congregations? How might The Way of Love help us in this intention?

This is a perfect opportunity to step back and look not just at our own individual journey of discipleship and faith, but to consider the community of which we are a part and, specifically, our own congregation. The season of Lent is a chance to ask the question: How might The Way of Love be an invitation to us, as a community, to open ourselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit, to go deeper in our collective journey, to engage with these steps of faithfulness as a congregational body?

BE LOVED

In asking this question, we remember our intention with The Way of Love is for this rule of life to help us in Becoming Beloved Community. At the heart of Becoming Beloved Community is the word “beloved.” If we break this word apart, it becomes two words: be loved.

Presiding Bishop Curry has often said, “love God, love your neighbor, and while you’re at it, love yourself.” Allowing ourselves to be loved, to receive the gift of God’s unconditional, grace-filled love for us, is the foundation of beloved community.

But God does not love us only as individuals; God loves us as a community, as a congregation and as the Body of Christ. That means God doesn’t love just you; he loves the Church of the Good Shepherd, he loves St. Matthew’s, he loves St. Ambrose, he loves St. Bartholomew’s and every other church in this diocese.

As a community of faith, as we receive this love, we can approach The Way of Love as an invitation for our congregations to observe a Holy Lent, to practice reflection, self-examination, repentance and change.

DON'T RESIST CHANGE

There is much conversation in the life of the Church, in general, and in Episcopal churches, in particular, about how much we resist change. We all know the old joke about the number of Episcopalians it takes to change a light bulb. Five: one to change the bulb and four to admire the old one. The reality is we are called to be people and communities of change.

Change is what amendment of life is all about. And though we may resist it or at

least want to resist it, change is part of the seasonal cycle the Church celebrates each year. We are a community committed to change and to the ongoing reform of our lives, both individually and as communities.

A NEW LIGHT

Using The Way of Love as guidance, familiar Lenten observances start to illuminate with a new light, showing us how the familiar, seen in a new way, starts to connect so much of what we're discussing. We can see how those observances support many of the mission priorities we've highlighted for the last year, and how those priorities—provided we all make them priorities and apply The Way of Love rules of life—bring us closer to Becoming Beloved Community.

Consider a few familiar observances, and as you do, think about how they connect—as The Way of Love, as areas of diocesan focus and as ways of Becoming Beloved Community:

- Giving something up for Lent is a common practice for many individuals. Looking at it as a community, it might take the shape of your congregation agreeing on some communal sacrifice to reduce your carbon footprint. It could also be an examination of how the building or signage welcomes and making a decision to remove any barriers you find.
- Conversely, you may decide as a congregation to take something on that would be a sign of your commitment to creation care or to the radical welcome of the beloved community.
- Together, you could take a deeper look at your congregation's history and ask the hard questions around racial tension and/or discrimination and determine to account for that history in some visible way. It could take the shape of a renewed or more consistent commitment to Christian formation or a re-examination of what the community is doing to support one another in the journey of discipleship.
- Lent is a time when we refocus our efforts on the power of prayer and worship to deepen our discipleship. A congregation might focus its prayer and worship this Lenten season on discerning together the next area of mission or community connection the Holy Spirit is prompting you to explore. How will this re-energize your apostolic call as a congregation and inspire you to live more fully into your vocation and identity? Is there a

new worship or prayer discipline you want to take on as a community that will help you in your discernment?

- In our apostolic call, we are often invited to move outside our comfort zone and reach out in a new way to the people and the community around us. Lent can also be an opportunity to take an existing relationship or program and reimagine the way God is calling you to engage. It can be a significant blessing, both to a congregation and its partner(s) to see the season of Lent as an occasion to reflect together on how the effort is working and what could be improved, either for the program or for the relationship the partners share.
- Rest is not often associated with the season of Lent, but this may be a time when God is calling your congregation to slow down a bit and give greater attention to the invitation of Sabbath. For your congregation, you may find Lent to be a time to recognize that less can be more, that the busyness of activity may be crowding out something of vital importance at this stage of your collective journey. This year the call to your congregation may be to rest in the loving arms of the one who made us and whose deep desire is that we find enjoyment and fulfillment in the work to which we are called. To receive that gift, sometimes we need to slow down.

These are obviously only a few, but hopefully you can see in them how The Way of Love (turn, learn, pray, worship, bless, go, rest) and our mission focus toward Becoming Beloved Community (engaging in deeper dialogue, support for vulnerable congregations, mission collaboratives, lifelong formation and creation care) are undeniably connected. Whether you use familiar paths or blaze new trails, I encourage you—as congregations—to see if there are ways that, during this holy season of repentance and preparation, God may be inviting and calling you to shift, to change, to grow in a direction that brings new energy, new life and renewed hope.

May this Lent be a time for you and your congregation to experience, in a profound way, the love that God has for you, as an individual and as part of a community of disciples. May the gift of The Way of Love be a catalyst that inspires you to move further along in your journey of discipleship and for your congregation to move further along the path to Becoming Beloved Community.

The Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman is the XII Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact him at sam.rodman@episdionc.org.

AROUND THE



During Greensboro's Las Posadas celebration on December 16, peregrinos sing as they seek shelter. Photo by the Rev. Audra Abt

GREENSBORO



CHARLOTTE

During the cold months, Holy Comforter, Charlotte, hosts neighbors experiencing homelessness through Room in the Inn. Photo by Beth Hardin



RALEIGH

A familiar face, who is himself a bishop, portrays Saint Nicholas during the celebration of his feast day at Good Shepherd, Raleigh. Photo by Kirk Royal



The children of Escuelita San Marcos at St. Mark's, Huntersville, enjoyed a special visitor at their Christmas party. Photo by Sarah Milholland

HUNTERSVILLE



Each Thanksgiving weekend, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew at St. Paul's, Smithfield, hosts its annual Christmas tree and greenery sale. This year several youngsters also joined the fun. Proceeds are used to fund outreach projects and unbudgeted needs in the parish. Photo by the Rev. Jim Melnyk

SMITHFIELD

THE DIOCESE



DURHAM

Neighborhood children attending a December community breakfast at St. Titus', Durham, select and wrap gifts for their parents. *Photo by Mary Hawkins*



ROCKY MOUNT

The Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman visited Good Shepherd, Rocky Mount, on the First Sunday of Advent 1 and baptized Chydan and Jojo, pictured here with the Rev. Matt Johnson, rector. *Photo by Barbara Resch Mullen*



LOUISBURG

Like much of the Diocese, St. Paul's, Louisburg, enjoyed a snow day this winter. *Photo by Al Wheless*



WILSON

An altar at Iglesia de la Guadalupe, Wilson, is decorated for All Saints' Day. *Photo by the Rev. Daniel Robayo*



HENDERSON

Church of The Holy Innocents, Henderson, holds its annual Lessons and Carols Service in the historic Old St. John's Church building located 10 miles from the church. Old St. John's current building was completed in 1773 and is the oldest surviving wood frame church in the Diocese. *Photo by Marsha Nelson*

NEW, NOTABLE & NEWSWORTHY

CHRIST'S BELOVED COMMUNITY/COMUNIDAD AMADA DE CRISTO WELCOMED AS NEWEST DIOCESAN MISSION

What began as a door-to-door ministry in 2014 has grown into the newest diocesan parish, as Christ's Beloved Community / Comunidad Amada de Cristo was officially received as a mission church in November 2018. It is the first admitted into union with Convention since Church of the Advocate, Chapel Hill, and San Jose Episcopal Mission, Smithfield, in 2004.

Christ's Beloved Community is a fully partnered church plant between the



Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina and the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Created as a street ministry without walls, it has grown quickly in the Winston-Salem community as a bilingual, multicultural congregation. The church opened its doors for its official public launch as a diocesan congregation on November 4, 2018.

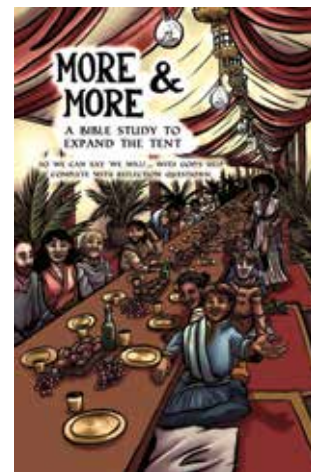
For more information about this innovative, collaborative and welcoming congregation, visit belovedws.org.

EXPANDING THE TENT...WITH A GRAPHIC NOVEL

A gift has been offered to the Diocese from the Swindell Committee (officially the Ella and Leicester Swindell Major Speakers Fund) in the form of a printable and downloadable graphic novel, "More and More: A Bible Study to Expand the Tent." It is a collection of nine stories depicted in beautiful art that illustrates how to call and welcome the stranger, accompanied by guiding text and questions for conversation. As a whole it was created and designed to serve as a guide on "what comes next" on our journey toward Becoming Beloved Community via The Way of Love, helping us to see how God—through our

stories of faith—is calling us to a greater understanding of each other, whether stranger or old friend.

Information on how to print or download the booklet, as well as instructions on creating digital slides and posters can be found at bit.ly/moreandmorecomic.



NEW RESOURCE ON IMMIGRATION AVAILABLE



Forward Movement invites individuals and congregations to explore the difficult but important issues of migration and immigration in a new, free resource, *No Longer Strangers: Exploring Immigration Issues*.

The downloadable booklet encourages discussion of migration

and immigration through the lens of scripture and shared Christian values, presents opposing viewpoints, and invites people to talk about the issues with civility and respect. The booklet includes biblical references on hospitality, examples of migrations as they appear in the scriptures, and thought-provoking questions that can be used for both personal study and group discussion.

No Longer Strangers was developed by Forward Movement in consultation with staff from Episcopal Migration Ministries and the Office of Government Relations of The Episcopal Church. The booklet can be downloaded in English or Spanish at episdionc.org.

SPRING 2018 MISSION ENDOWMENT GRANTS AWARDED

The Mission Endowment Grant board has announced six recipients in the fall 2018 grant cycle. The deadline to apply for the spring 2019 cycle of Mission Endowment Grants is April 16.

- **Calvary Episcopal Church, Wadesboro** – Supporting the work of Homes of Hope, which provides bridge housing for underserved and under-represented homeless families, this grant will help fund a case manager and operational office costs, as well as purchasing and upgrading a duplex for usage in Anson County.
- **Durham CAN (Congregations, Associates, and Neighborhoods)** – Both El Buen Pastor and St. Philip’s, Durham, are a part of this network which seeks to implement changes in affordable housing, employment with living wages and access to education for minorities in Durham.
- **St. Luke’s, Salisbury** – This grant will provide for work related to Becoming Beloved Community in a city with a history of racial tensions. The grant has three components: truth-telling related to the histories of St. Luke’s and the closed historically African-American congregation of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church; a video documentary series in partnership with members of an AME-Zion congregation to capture stories by those who grew up in the Jim Crow era in Salisbury; and a weekend workshop for the community headlined

by Bishop Will Willimon and Dr. Catherine Meeks of the Absalom Jones Center.

- **St. Mary’s, High Point** – This grant will support the creation of an intentional Christian community in High Point, a city impacted by the economic decline of the furniture and textile industries, which is manifest by high food insecurity. Four to six young adults will engage in justice work, leadership training, vocational discernment and intentional community living under a rule of life.

The Mission Endowment Grant is a permanent endowment created for the specific purpose of supporting the diocesan mission strategy of establishing “the Episcopal presence of Christ in communities in ways that bring the community to see Christ’s presence among them.” While grant projects must relate to missionary initiatives located within the 38 counties of the Diocese, the initiatives themselves do not have to be associated with diocesan entities. Only one participating member of the proposed project team is required to be associated with a diocesan entity.

To apply for a Mission Endowment Grant, complete the Common Application found at episdionc.org in “Grants and Scholarships” under the “Resources” tab. The Common Application will submit your grant request not only to the Mission Endowment review board but also to other grant review boards, including the Missionary Resource Support Team, the Episcopal Church Foundation and the Parish Grant Program.

NEW SUPPLY CLERGY RESOURCE AVAILABLE

In an effort to make the process for contacting supply clergy even easier, the Diocese now offers an online—and downloadable—supply clergy directory. With the addition of this directory, those seeking supply clergy now have two options:

- Use the existing online supply clergy request form. When the form is completed and submitted, it is sent to all registered supply clergy; available clergy then respond to the seeking church.

- Contact individual supply clergy with information from the directory. The directory is broken down by convocation, making it easy to find those in your area.

The supply clergy directory is password-protected; the password was sent to clergy via the deans in January. If you did not receive it or are a vestry member in a church without clergy, please contact the Rev. Canon David Sellery at david.sellery@episdionc.org to request it.

PAROCHIAL REPORTS DUE MARCH 1

A highlight of the 203rd Annual Convention was the announcement that 2018 marked the first time all churches

submitted parochial reports on time. Let’s do it again! The deadline to submit parochial reports is March 1.

THE VEN. BILL JOYNER, LONG-TIME ARCHDEACON, RETIRES



The Diocese give thanks for the ministry of the Ven. William H. Joyner, Jr., as he retires from his role as diocesan archdeacon.

Joyner has been archdeacon since 2006 and assisted the bishops with deacon relations and assignments. He also helped to publicize and educate the diocese about the ancient order of deacons

and to seek those called to this ministry.

“What a blessing Bill Joyner has been in his leadership and service as archdeacon of this diocese,” the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman said. “His wisdom and discerning heart, his gentle guidance, his firm stance on issues of justice and fairness and his deep love for his fellow deacons are all hallmarks of faithfulness and an authentic expression of his own gifts as a servant-leader. We are so thankful to Bill, as he retires, for his effective ministry and the lasting legacy of his loving leadership.”

Joyner was ordained deacon in the Diocese of New York and in 1998 came to North Carolina, where he served at the Chapel of the Cross. He later served as deacon at St. Cyprian’s/San Cipriano, Oxford. He is retired after more than 40 years with IBM and other technology companies, and he lives with his wife, Mary Brenda, in Chapel Hill. As he retires from his role as archdeacon, Joyner looks forward to spending even more time with his grandchildren, as well as bicycling more.

THE REV. GINNY INMAN JOINS DIOCESAN STAFF FOR ADULT FORMATION

The Rev. Ginny Inman has been named the acting diocesan officer for adult formation and lifelong learning. She began her role as of January 14, 2019, taking over for Ayliffe Mumford, who retired at the end of 2018.

Inman was most recently the associate rector at Holy Trinity, Greensboro, and is the current chair of the Chartered Committee on Lifelong Christian Formation. Experienced in all aspects of ministry, she has a deep commitment to Christian formation, community engagement and the development of intergenerational leadership.

Among her various tasks in her new role as officer for adult formation and lifelong learning, Inman will continue the work of curating formation resources and strengthening relationships with clergy and lay leaders throughout the Diocese. She will also assist in the assessment and discernment of what is needed to support lifelong Christian

formation at the diocesan level as the future of the position is developed.

“We are so excited and grateful that Ginny is taking on this crucial role, and building on the great work Ayliffe has done,” said the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman, bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina. “She brings tremendous expertise and passion for formation, as well as experience serving as the chair of our Christian Formation Committee. We look forward to her leadership as part of our staff.”



MRST AWARDS 2018 GRANTS

The Missionary Resource Support Team (MRST) awarded four seed grants in 2018. In the spring, they awarded \$3,000 to Laundry Love, a joint ministry of St. Anne’s, Winston-Salem, and Wake Forest Episcopal Campus Ministry. In the fall they awarded three grants: \$7,000 to San Jose, Smithfield, a reboot of a Spanish-speaking congregation based at St. Paul’s, Smithfield; \$8,000 for

St. Ambrose, Raleigh, for the adaptation of a historic Rite I sung Eucharistic setting in Rite II language and \$8,208 to Episcopal Campus Ministry Raleigh for the development and maintenance of an app to connect young adults (page 26).

Applications for MRST salary support grants and seed grants are due April 16. Apply with the Common Application found at episdionc.org under “Grants and Scholarships.”

DIOCESAN EVENTS

January

- 19 Diocesan Youth Civil Rights Day, International Civil Rights Center & Museum, Greensboro

February

- 6 Safe Church Training, Level II, Christ Church, Charlotte
- 8-10 Bishops' Ball 2019: Living the Way, Camp Walter Johnson, Denton. Register by Jan. 30
- 12 Safe Church Training, Level II, St. Paul's, Monroe
- 16 Safe Church Training, Level II, St. Timothy's, Raleigh
- 28-
- Mar. 2 Education for Ministry (EfM) Mentor Training, St. Francis Springs, Stoneville

March

- 5 New Clergy Orientation

Look for additional events and more detailed event information online at episdioc.org, or contact the Diocese at (919) 834-7474, toll-free at (800) 448-8775. Upcoming diocesan events and events from around the Diocese are also featured in *Please Note*, the weekly diocesan e-newsletter. Sign up on our homepage.

STAY IN TOUCH

Keep up with our diocese and bishops!



Episcopal Diocese NC
Sam Rodman
Anne Hodges-Copple



@EpiscopalNC
@samuelrodman
@bishoppannehc



@episdioc
@bishoproddman
@ahodgescopple



www.vimeo.com/episcopalnc

EPISCOPAL FARMWORKER MINISTRY SEEKS CONSTRUCTION VOLUNTEERS

The Episcopal Farmworker Ministry (EFwM) is seeking volunteers to help with repairing and rebuilding homes damaged during Hurricanes Florence and Michael. The needs include anyone with general construction experience to help at sites throughout Lenoir, Pender, Duplin and Sampson counties. The ministry is ready for volunteers at any time from now until the work is done and expects most of it will be coordinated for weekends.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the Rev. Louise Anderson (ltanderson1@gmail.com), diocesan liaison for Episcopal Relief and Development, as she is gathering information and helping to coordinate opportunities and responses in an effort to assist EFwM staff.

If you don't have construction experience, don't despair. There are many other ways you can help, both now and in the coming months. Keep your eyes on diocesan channels for news and updates!

THE VEN. JAN LAMB NAMED ARCHDEACON OF DIOCESE

Among the happy announcements at the 203rd Annual Convention was the news the Ven. Jan Lamb has been named the next archdeacon for the Diocese of North Carolina. She succeeds the Ven. William Joyner, who served in the role for 12 years before retiring at the end of 2018. Lamb took on the mantle of archdeacon January 1.

"We are very excited to welcome the Ven. Jan Lamb as our new archdeacon," the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman said. "Jan brings a clarity about the importance of servant leadership, a passion for justice, a pastoral heart, and the respect and love of her fellow deacons to this work."

While serving as archdeacon, Lamb will continue in her role as chaplain to the bishop suffragan. She previously served at St. Andrew's, Haw River, where she helped to start an after-school tutoring program for neighborhood children. Lamb was ordained to the diaconate in 2006.



PRESIDING BISHOP CALLS FOR ABSALOM JONES OFFERING FOR HBCUS

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has called on Episcopalians to dedicate offerings collected during observances of the Feast of Absalom Jones to the two remaining Episcopal Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs): Voorhees College in Denmark, South Carolina, and our own Saint Augustine's University in Raleigh.

More than 40 percent of students at Saint Augustine's and Voorhees are the first in their families to attend a four-year college, and the vast majority come from low-income households. Donations to the HBCUs will provide much needed help to offer competitive scholarships and financial aid; attract and retain exceptional faculty; support cutting-edge faculty research; install new and upgraded technology campus-wide; and provide state-of-the-art classroom and athletic equipment.

"As we approach February, the remembrance of the Blessed Absalom Jones, the first African-American priest

in The Episcopal Church, we have a unique opportunity to celebrate his memory and to honor the witness of two schools that continue to form new leaders," Presiding Bishop Curry said. "In honor of Jones' commitment to advancing the education of African Americans and promoting the development of African American leaders in all areas of life, The Episcopal Church is delighted to designate Saint Augustine's University and Voorhees College as the beneficiaries of the 2019 Feast of Absalom Jones offerings."

Saint Augustine's was founded in 1867 by the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. Today, more than 1,000 students pursue Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees, while adult learners engage in advanced studies in Criminal Justice, Organizational Management and Religious Studies.

Donations are accepted at bit.ly/Absalomoffering.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH RELEASES WAY OF LOVE FORMATION MATERIALS

To assist congregations, dioceses and communities of faith to engage The Way of Love throughout the liturgical year, The Episcopal Church and partnering organizations offer resources for every time of the year:

Anytime—The Way of Love Small Group Facilitation Guide and Curriculum: Essential resource for forming a small group, shaping a Rule of Life and growing in relationship with God and each other.

Epiphany—LEARN/The Good Book Club: Along The Way of Love, we read and learn from scripture each day, with a special focus on the life and teachings of Jesus. This Epiphany join any of the Good Book Club efforts and spend a season with Paul's letter to the Romans. Learn more at goodbookclub.org.

Lent and Easter/Life Transformed—The Way of Love in Lent and Easter: The Episcopal Church provides this seasonal resource, complete with adult forums, a quiet day and an Easter season of action.

Ascension to Pentecost—PRAY/Thy Kingdom Come: Led by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Christians around the world will share in 12 days of intentional prayer for the spread of God's love. Learn more and get ready for this energizing global movement of prayer at thykingdomcome.global.

Way of Love resources from Church Publishing, Inc. include *Living the Way of Love* and their recently published *Little Books of Guidance*—one for each of the seven Way of Love practices. Buy at churchpublishing.org.wayoflove.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Ayliffe Mumford Retires from Diocese

Dr. Ayliffe Mumford, longtime diocesan staff member, director of the School of Ministry and most recently the officer for adult Christian formation and lifelong learning, retired from the Diocese of North Carolina at the end of 2018.

"It's hard to think of an area of adult formation where Ayliffe has not made a lasting impact on the diocese," said the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Cople, bishop suffragan of the Diocese of North Carolina. "She has produced materials in preparation of General Convention, studies on farmworkers and videos for local Christian formation classes. She creates fantastic questions for small group work. Her work around Becoming Beloved



Community has been particularly important and powerful over these last couple of years. She also helped usher in a new era for the ordination process for the diaconate.”

A lifelong Episcopalian, Mumford came to the Diocese in 2009 after a successful career in training and development at a Fortune 500 company and several years’ study in international development. Her knowledge of program development combined with her passion for the Church and ministry helped to create programs used by virtually everyone in the diocese, from leadership development programs for clergy to formation programs for all.

“We are so grateful to Ayliffe for her gifts and leadership in helping all of us go deeper in our work of discipleship throughout our Diocese,” said the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman, bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina. “In our diocesan conventions and Clergy Conferences, Ayliffe’s ability to take a vision or theme and help us weave it throughout the event in a way that is both accessible and inspiring has been an expression of her own deep commitment to the Jesus movement. As we celebrated in the Bishop’s award [at the 203rd Annual Convention], she has been a great gift to all of us.”

Long-term plans for Mumford’s succession are still in development, though the Rev. Ginny Inman has joined the diocesan staff in an interim role to help with that process.

Though she preferred to stay behind the scenes, Mumford leaves an indelible mark on the Diocese of North Carolina, and we are truly and profoundly grateful for her ministry and her generosity in sharing her gifts with all of us.

Children and Youth Ministry Department Restructures

Beginning January 1, diocesan youth missionary Lisa Aycock took over the lead diocesan youth missionary role previously filled by Beth Crow. Until her retirement during the summer, Crow remains on staff as a youth missionary with a special focus on social justice and racial reconciliation.

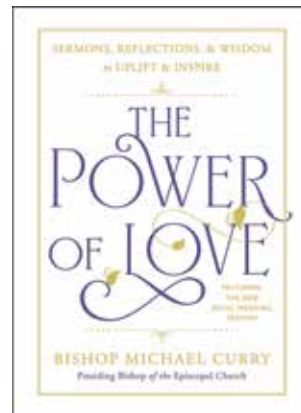


Lisa Aycock, lead youth missionary

Amy Campbell, children and family missionary, will continue in her role working with churches and facilitating the diocesan Safe Church training program.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry Releases New Book

If you’re looking for a great book to inspire you for the new year, the Most Rev. Michael Curry released his fourth book, *The Power of Love*, in October 2018. This collection of notable sermons from his first three years as Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church include his installation sermon at Washington National Cathedral, three sermons from the 79th General Convention, and of course, the royal wedding sermon.



Copies can be purchased wherever books are sold.

Episcopal Asset Map Is Now “Find a Church” Tool

Since its launch more than two years ago, the hope was the Episcopal Asset Map would become the “Find a Church” tool on both The Episcopal Church and Diocese of North Carolina websites.

As of October 31, 2018, the Asset Map is the “Find a Church” tool on the diocesan website, replacing the old Google Map and church directory.

Every church is already represented on the Asset Map as a pin on the map. It’s up to every church to update the information associated with that pin, adding all your church has to offer: service times, ministries and more. You can do it at any time and every time your information changes.

By utilizing this tool, the information associated with your church on the diocesan website (and in the near future, on the Episcopal Church website) is in your hands. If you have questions or need help, please contact communications@episdionc.org, and we’ll be happy to assist you.



DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA





Christ's Beloved Community / Comunidad Amada de Cristo was officially received as a mission church during the 203rd Annual Convention. It is the first admitted into union with Convention since 2004. Photo by Summerlee Walter

THE 203RD ANNUAL CONVENTION WRAP-UP

The 203rd Annual Convention officially convened on Friday, November 17, 2018 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Continuing the theme of “Becoming Beloved Community” set forth at the 202nd Annual Convention in 2017, this year the Diocese was challenged to go deeper, as we took up the mantle of truth telling and learning to live in The Way of Love as we continue our work toward Becoming Beloved Community.

Other highlights included a moving three-part program, “Truth Telling and Resilience in a Time of Injustice and Inequality,” that began at the Thursday Night Program, the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman’s Convention address, the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple’s opening Eucharist sermon, a keynote presentation by the Rev. Melanie Mullen to help us live in The Way of Love, a record number of exhibitors and more.

BISHOPS’ ADDRESSES

As always, worship was the foundation of Convention. Both the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman and the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple gave inspiring addresses, offering guidance on and challenges to all to live lives of deeper faith.

Bishop Hodges-Copple delivered her sermon at the Opening Eucharist on Friday. She spoke to our need to welcome all, including the stranger and those with less. “If it is not good news to the poor, it’s not God’s good news,” she said. “If it’s not news that opens our eyes to truth – even hard, painful truths - it’s not God’s good news. If it is not news that has the capacity to heal wounds and set people free, then it’s not God’s good news. This is God’s mission.”

She also addressed the human need to gather in groups of the familiar—our tribes—but that to fear those who may look, sound or be otherwise different is to hurt ourselves. But, “there’s a power greater than fear,” she said, and that love is “a call to divine arms that gathers people from all nations, tribes, peoples, languages, into one great, diverse, joy-filled, truth-telling and reconciling fellowship of love.”

On Saturday, Bishop Rodman followed Morning Prayer with his Convention address. In it, he spoke of our journey to become beloved community and how we need The Way of Love to do it. He reminded us of the priorities we committed to giving our attention in the last

year while addressing why so much focus at Convention was put first on the work of racial injustice and inequality. He likened it to the untangling of a knot—attention must be paid to the areas of greatest tension within the knot if it is to be untied, and so it is with the racial injustice. “Race, in this country, is the source of our greatest tension,” he said, “and if we are ever to find a way to resolve our other political differences and divisions, we are more likely to gain traction if we begin with racism and race.”

The work has to start with telling the truth, and hearing the truth even when it is painful. “This is hard work,” said Bishop Rodman. “Let’s be honest about that. When we speak the truth to each other, some of what we share may not always be easy to hear. This is especially true when we are in conversations where we bring different perspectives, different experiences and different expectations.”

That’s why *The Way of Love* is critical to the approach. “This simple rule of life, this accessible discipline gives us the opportunity to immerse this work in prayer and spiritual practice,” he said. “This is not only hard work, it is heart work. So we need these practices, these disciplines to help anchor us, to hold us close to God and close to one another as we peel back the layers of history, as we dig up the truth that we might have left buried, as we bring to light the part of our shared journey that may have been hidden.”

TRUTH TELLING IN A TIME OF RESILIENCE

The truth-telling work of which Bishop Rodman spoke was in abundance at Convention in a three-part storytelling program, “Truth Telling and Resilience in a Time of Injustice and Inequality.” The program featured the stories of three Historically Black Episcopal congregations in our diocese. The Rev. Melanie Mullen, director of reconciliation, justice and creation care for The Episcopal Church, set the tone at the Thursday Night Program, at which the first story was shared, with thoughts on the importance of stories, emphasizing that stories – and more importantly, the people within those stories – matter.

How much they matter was evident in the first of the stories: that of All Saints’, Warrenton, the first black congregation in that area. The Rev. Al Moore provided a brief history of All Saints’, which was then brought to life by All Saints’ members Mrs. Robin Williams and Miss Wilhelmina Radcliff, as they told the heart-wrenching story of a once-flourishing congregation and community cornerstone that held its last service in 2015. They spoke with pride of the contributions made by the church to the community, including service as the only domestic abuse shelter in the county, and the beauty of watching

the children of All Saints’ and nearby Emmanuel study, play and grow into adults in label-free relationships nurtured by both churches. With searing honesty they shared the experience of closing their beloved church, ending with a clear call for the need to improve a process that follows less a protocol set for all and instead develops new approaches that address and recognize the needs of individual congregations. The session ended on a note of hope, as it was made clear that while All Saints’ chapter as a mission may have ended, its story is not yet done. Members hope to write the next chapter in the form of the All Saints’ Project, a collaborative effort in development that will once again see All Saints’ contributing to its local community.

The second of the truth-telling sessions was presented by the Chapel of Christ the King, Charlotte. A congregation with a long history of being an integral part of its surrounding community, it has also dealt with the fact the community has always been drastically impacted by the economics of the region, going from working-class neighborhood to transient community to, finally, an area plagued by drugs. The area is now one of regeneration, as new life is arriving in the form of the city of Charlotte continuing to grow, with new housing in development only blocks away. But whether in good times or bad, the Chapel of Christ the King has served its community with open doors, open hearts and whatever they had to offer to those around them.

Yet despite being an unwavering presence of God in all they did, the Chapel of Christ the King never attained the numbers to be recognized as a parish within the diocese. When he took the podium, the Rev. Reggie Payne-Wiens asked the question of why the focus is always on what a parish doesn’t have rather than what it does. It was a question listeners took with them into the groups they formed for conversation after the presentation.

The last installment of the truth-telling program came from St. Titus’, Durham. St. Titus’ has been a steady presence in Durham since it first opened its doors. Through the years it has had to deal with the changes in the community around them, years without a full-time priest and the challenges of integration. Yet through it all, its congregation remained a tight-knit core of determination, compassion and support, welcoming new members into a strong, intergenerational community dedicated to each other and the neighborhood around them. The presentation ended with the happy news that the Rev. Stephanie Yancy, who started at St. Titus’ as a part-time priest and then moved to three-quarter time, as of fall 2018 assumed full-time status. She accepted the applause with grace before turning the credit and gratitude right back to the parishioners who have



From left: Retiring deacon the Ven. Bill Joyner (second from right) is joined by his fellow deacons as he receives a Bishops' Award. Retiring Officer for Adult Christian Formation and Lifelong Resilience in a Time of Injustice and Inequality," a series of presentations by Historically Black Congregations. A focus of Convention was The Way of Love. The people of St. Titus', Durham,

worked so hard for so many years to keep the vision of St. Titus' alive and well and remain the strength of the congregation.

Conversations followed all three segments of the program, giving those who heard the stories time to absorb and discuss them. The impact of the stories was evident throughout Convention, as conversations were heard to continue on breaks, and chaplains remained available to anyone who needed pastoral care.

THE WAY OF LOVE

The keynote address was delivered by the Rev. Melanie Mullens, who guided listeners in living The Way of Love in our work of Becoming Beloved Community. She expanded on the message she began Thursday night about the importance of stories. We live in times with a great flow of toxic information and toxic stories that infect to the point that children go hungry because our narrative of "poor equals lazy" shames parents from seeking help. Consequences like these make it all the more important to share our stories – to hear the stories of others – to expand our understanding of ourselves and each other and truly open our hearts to live in The Way of Love. Those who listened were then encouraged to turn to a neighbor and commit to a step on The Way of Love as a starting point: Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest, Turn. It was yet another moment when those watching – either in person or at home - were asked not just to listen to what was presented, but to take a moment to reflect on and absorb it. The 203rd Annual Convention was not a passive gathering but one that very much invited the participation of all involved.

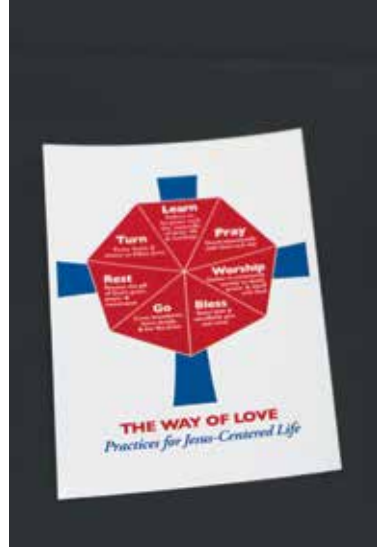
MEMORABLE MOMENTS

Among the business and presentations of Convention, there were several memorable moments:

- For the first time (or at least the first time in a

very long time), every church in the Diocese filed their parochial report and paid their fair share in full on time. (Congratulations to all for a job well done!)

- During the Opening Eucharist, the Rev. Canon David Sellery was commissioned as the new diocesan canon for congregational mission (*Disciple*, Fall 2018), and the Rev. Daniel Robayo was also commissioned as the new diocesan missionary for Latino/Hispanic ministries (*Disciple*, Summer 2018).
- Also commissioned at the Opening Eucharist were those serving in the coming year in the Johnson Service Corps and the Vergers Guild of North Carolina. Eighteen vergers stood for the commissioning.
- The offering for the Eucharist was dedicated to Episcopal Relief and Development to assist in the organization's continuing work in helping those affected by Hurricanes Florence and Michael.
- The Rev. Sarah Hollar and the Rev. Lisa Fischbeck of the Swindell Committee introduced a gift from the committee: "More and More: A Bible Study to Expand the Tent," a graphic novel designed as a collection of nine stories to help us with the "what comes next" when welcoming the stranger. Every delegate and guest received a copy (learn more at bit.ly/moreandmorecom).
- Christ's Beloved Community, Winston-Salem, was admitted to Convention as the newest mission of the Diocese; delegates were led amidst resounding applause from their seats in the visitors section to their seats on the convention floor.
- Bishop Rodman, surrounded by all attending deacons, presented the Ven. Bill Joyner with the first of the Bishops' Awards. Joyner retired as



Learning Ayliffe Mumford approaches the dais to receive her Bishop's Award. Members of Chapel of Christ the King, Charlotte, shared their congregation's story as part of "Truth Telling and Resilience in a Time of Injustice and Inequality." Photos by Christine McTaggart and Summerlee Walter

archdeacon of the Diocese after 12 years of service; the Ven. Jan Lamb now serves in the role.

- Bishop Hodges-Copple bestowed the second Bishops' Award to Dr. Ayliffe Mumford, then-officer for adult Christian formation and lifelong learning, honoring her tireless work for the Diocese. Mumford also retired at the end of 2018.

THE BUSINESS OF CONVENTION

In the business of Convention, the 2019 budget passed as submitted.

Voting on resolutions went as follows. Certified copies of all resolutions are available on the diocesan website.

- Resolution 203.1: On Clergy of Churches in Full Communion with The Episcopal Church; passed
- Resolution 203.2: On Voting by Clergy Without Canonical Residence; passed (first reading)
- Resolution 203.3: On the Official Clergy Roll of the Annual Convention; passed
- Resolution 203.4: On Technical Corrections to Constitutions and Canons; passed
- Resolution 203.5: On Publication of the Journal of Convention; passed
- Resolution 203.6: On the Election of Deputies and Alternates to General Convention; passed
- Resolution 203.7: On Failure to Achieve Timely Compliance with Canon 30 or 17; passed
- Resolution 203.8: On Departments of Diocesan Council; passed
- Resolution 203.9: On Convention Voting Procedures; passed
- Resolution 203.10: On Commending January 30 as the Feast of King Charles the Martyr; rejected
- Resolution 203.11: On Commending December 18 as the Commemoration of William West Skiles; passed
- Substitute Resolution 203.12: On Examining the

Need for Bail Reform within the Criminal Justice System; passed

- Resolution 203.13: On the Ordination and Consecration of Obispo Orlando Gomez Segura, 4th Bishop of Iglesia Episcopal Costarricense; passed

Voting on elected positions went as follows:

- Standing Committee – Clergy Order (2)
The Rev. Jemonde Taylor, *St. Ambrose, Raleigh*
The Rev. Sallie Simpson, *Saint Augustine's University Chapel, Raleigh*
- Standing Committee – Lay Order (1)
Kim Dockery, *Trinity, Statesville*
- Diocesan Council – Clergy Order (2)
The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, *St. Mark's, Raleigh*
The Rev. Miriam Saxon, *St. Andrew's, Haw River*
- Diocesan Council – Lay Order (3)
Alice Freeman, *St. Mark's, Wilson*
Garland Homes, *St. Timothy's, Wilson*
Gilbert Small, *All Saints', Concord*
- Board of Trustees, University of the South – Lay Order (1)
Emerson Bell, *St. Martin's, Charlotte*

If you want to enjoy even more, a full recap of the 203rd Annual Convention, including videos of the truth-telling presentations, both bishops' addresses and the keynote address are available at episdionc.org.

• THE 204TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

The 204th Annual Convention will be held November 22-23, 2019 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem. We'll see you there!

THE ROOTS OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Editor's note: As we practice living in The Way of Love in the coming year, it will quickly become clear it is not a path to be traveled and conquered or something that will come and go. Rather, it is a way of life that cannot be undertaken all at once. For The Way of Love truly to become a way of life, we must introduce the elements of it in ways that allow them to become a part of our daily lives and habits until they feel as natural and needed as anything else we do.

Among our New Year's resolutions around health and new starts must be the time and space to tend to our spiritual side. Practices—especially prayer—that strengthen and nurture that side of us are as critical as any new food or exercise plan. They are no fad, and their necessity and value has been proven over millennia.

If you have ever heard a preacher begin her sermon with the prayer “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer,” she is quoting Psalm 19:14, a Jewish prayer, and a Psalm still prayed today at the end of Jewish Sabbath prayers like the one below:

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war; for we know that You have made the world in a way that we must find our own path to peace, within ourselves and with our neighbors.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end starvation; for You have already given us the resources with which to feed the entire world, if we would use them wisely.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to root out prejudice and hatred; for You have already given us eyes with which to see the good in all people, if we would only care to look for it.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end despair; for You have already given us the power to end poverty and homelessness, and to build hope, if we would only use our resources justly.

Therefore, we pray to You instead, O God, for strength and determination; for wisdom and will power; to do and not just to pray, to become instead of to wish; that our land may be safe, and that our lives may be blessed.

May the words that we pray, and the deeds that we do, be acceptable before You, O God, our Rock and our Redeemer. (Adapted from Rabbi Jack Riemer's *New Prayers for the High Holy Days*.)

The form and cadence of this prayer felt Episcopal to me. I once met a woman who converted from Judaism

to Christianity and chose The Episcopal Church because the prayers were so similar to the Jewish prayers from her youth.

Many of our Episcopal liturgical practices and prayers are rooted in the traditions of Judaism—our prayers are the connective tissue that grafts us on to Abraham's tree (Romans 11:19).

What struck me about the prayer above is that, for both Jew and Christian, an acceptable prayer is one with skin in it—a prayer meant to incite physical action. For Christians, we act out our prayers because we are striving to be shaped and formed more and more into the likeness of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). For Jews, the invitation is *mitzvah*, to follow the commands of God to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18).

Jesus' golden rule for his followers combines a Levitical command with the *Shema*, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength,” and “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12:30-31). Both Jew and Christian recognize that love is known in our doing, and our doing is shaped by our praying. But what isn't always immediately clear is that our shared doing and praying grows from the roots of the Jewish sacrificial system.

THE SACRIFICE OF PRAYER

The ancient practice of Jewish sacrifice is known as *korbanot*; a Hebrew word etymologically related to a word meaning “to draw close.”

Before the destruction of the temple in 70 CE, Jewish priests went there to offer *korbanot* on behalf of the people, and individual Jews could offer *korbanot* for themselves and for others. But after the destruction of the temple, *korbanot* was not liturgically possible. So rabbis began to teach that nearness to God also comes through a sacrifice of words. They created a series of prayers inspired by the prophet Daniel's rhythm of prayer while in exile. Daniel would “get down on his knees three times a day to pray to his God and praise him” (Daniel 6:10). Eventually, Jewish prayers were crafted for morning, midday and evening—sound familiar?

For the Episcopal branch of Abraham's tree, a daily rhythm of prayer is our *korbanot*, our sacrifice of praise that draws us near to God.

During my ordination process, I asked the Commission on Ministry if they had any advice for a new priest. With an immediacy

that surprised me, the chair of the committee said “Don’t stop praying the Daily Office.” Her words were met with nods around the table. The conversation that followed focused on the first signs of spiritual burnout for priests—they lost the rhythm of prayer.

I imagine what is true for priests is also true for all of us because our praying shapes who we are and who we become. No one knew this better than St. Benedict, who founded a rule of life for monastic communities on the two principles of prayer and work. In the *Rule of St. Benedict* there are set times of corporate prayer that maintain the rhythm of the community. In Episcopal churches, this rhythm may be likened to our weekly Eucharists and Daily Office. But Benedict also taught his monks to pray during the “little hours:” offices known as *Terce*, *Sext* and *None*, which could be prayed with others or alone. For many monks, these hours became the small activities of the day that allowed for personal reflection and devotion.

EXAMPLES OF PRAYER AND WORK

For Episcopalians, the practices that nourish our spirits are likely to be found in the “little hours” of our individual lives.

One of my favorite books as a young adult was written by the 17th-century Carmelite monk Brother Lawrence. Brother Lawrence was known for his spiritual practice of dishwashing. In his writings, he describes the awe with which



he cleans a wooden bowl, recognizing God's nearness in the small activities of the day. For Brother Lawrence, a wooden bowl is the gift of a tree, and a tree is a gift of God. Upon reflection of this, the monk writes of Christ,

He does not ask much of us, merely a thought of Him from time to time, a little act of adoration, sometimes to ask for His grace, sometimes to offer Him your sufferings, at other times to thank Him for the graces, past and present, He has bestowed on you, in the midst of your troubles to take solace in Him as often as you can. Lift up your heart to Him during your meals and in company; the least

little remembrance will always be the most pleasing to Him. One need not cry out very loudly; He is nearer to us than we think. (*The Practice of the Presence of God*)

Brother Lawrence makes it possible for our spiritual practices to be as varied as our persons, and reminds us that the work of drawing near is God's work. All we have to do, in whatever we do, is lift up our hearts to Christ.

The Rev. Adrienne Koch is the campus minister for Episcopal Campus Ministry-Raleigh. Contact her at adrienne.m.koch@gmail.com.

STAFF SPIRITUAL CARE PRACTICES

Diocesan staff share the small activities – the spiritual practices - that occur in the little hours of their days and weeks. As you read them, consider what your spiritual practice is or could be. Are there simple ways you can pray and work throughout the little hours of the day? Are there small but regular sacrifices you are ready and willing to make to draw yourself and others nearer to God?

My practice is getting ready and being present. I like to get ready, and there is really no secret to my spiritual practice. It has always been a part of who I am, and that is what makes my practice sustainable. In my opinion that is the first step to choosing a spiritual practice: find something you are good at and use it to bring glory and honor to God. I am reminded of how powerful getting ready and stepping in with preparedness are every time I enter a Godly Play worship space. Grounding yourself in the present moment can be freeing and allows for whatever follows to become the present.
- Amy Campbell,
Children's and Family Missioner

When my day feels compressed, as though time has disappeared, I will often turn to the "Daily Devotions for Individuals and Families" in the Book of Common Prayer (page 136). These are one-page "mini-offices" constructed for convenience. As a new parent, with a child who wakes up in the wee hours of the morning, I have had little time for Morning Prayer at home. But I prayed the prayers labeled "In the Morning" so frequently that I now have them memorized and can recall them throughout the day for encouragement and thanksgiving whenever my soul feels depleted.
- The Rev. Adrienne Koch,
Campus Minister, Episcopal Campus Ministry-Raleigh

I enjoy incorporating Morning and Evening Prayer into my spiritual practice. It's very grounding, but because I am often on the road early in the morning and late in the evening to meet with clergy and Vestry/Search Committees around the diocese, I sometimes find I do not make time for them as I should, so I enjoy using the app Pray as you Go, an Ignatian-based practice that allows me to deepen my relationship and conversation with God.
- Canon Catherine Massey,
Canon for Transition and Pastoral Ministries

It is my practice to keep sabbath on Fridays unless some emergency prevents it. Everyone I work with knows that, in part due to my e-mail signature block. On that day, I don't typically do housework or shop. I do write, as that is a form of recreation and expression for me; and almost every Friday I walk and talk for about an hour with a friend who is also a priest. She and I have been walking and talking together on our sabbath for over a decade, and it's been a wonderful time of fellowship and mutual support for both of us.
- The Rev. Canon Rhonda Lee,
Regional Canon

I'm not a very routine-oriented person. One thing I have to do every day is walk my dog. Andy's a husky who needs a good 30-45 minute walk. So off we go with treats, poop bags, cellphone and earplugs. I'm not listening to my playlist, but Evensong from Nashotah House. Or I'm reading EP from Mission St. Clare with music interspersed. Or *Common Prayer for Ordinary Radicals*. There are no cars because I am in the park, and most people don't bother you if they think you can't hear them. Begin with your life and see where prayer fits.
- The Rev. Kevin Matthews,
Campus Minister, St. Mary's House



By the Rev. Colette Bachand-Wood

GOD IS STILL THERE

Being a spiritual-care visitor for those with dementia

“I have created you and cared for you since you were born. I will be your God through all your lifetime, yes, even when your hair is white with age. I made you and I will care for you.” Isaiah 46:3

It’s Monday morning at the dementia care community of our campus, and I arrive for our weekly worship service. Our residents are gathered in chairs and wheelchairs in a semicircle where they can see the table I have set with candles, a chalice, picture of the Holy Trinity, a Bible and a colorful painted cross from El Salvador.

As the service progresses, some sing along to familiar hymns like “Amazing Grace” and “How Great Thou Art.” Some sleep the entire time. Others seem to be somewhere else until their favorite prayer is read: “*Lord make me an instrument of your peace,*” and then suddenly they are mouthing the words with me.

And just when I thought someone wasn’t going to participate, I notice that although her eyes are closed and head tilted forward, her foot is tapping on time with the beat of “This Little Light of Mine.”

God is still there for those living with dementia. It was the earliest lesson I learned when I began researching what it meant to provide spiritual care for them.

TENDING THE SPIRIT

God is still there and, as people of faith, we do well to ask how we are doing caring for their spiritual needs. People

living with dementia have a great deal of helpers tending to their physical needs, medical needs, making decisions about the best places to live and making plans for end of life. But what about their spiritual needs? Who’s tending to their spirit? Dementia stills many things, but it does not still God.

Often as churches and people of faith, we talk about Jesus’ imperative to care for the “least of these.” We ask who are the least of these for our time, and it can certainly feel like a long list as we consider immigrants and refugees, homeless people and those addicted to opioids, but I believe one group often overlooked in our day are the aging and, more specifically, those living with dementia. In a culture that overvalues youth, beauty and productivity, those with dementia can easily be brushed aside, and this is particularly true in our parish life where so much focus is on the youth.

Ask any parish mission team what they are doing to grow their church and you will likely hear echoes of “attracting young families.” Many dioceses have a full-time staff member dedicated to youth ministry, but we are hard pressed to find such a position for the aging.

And yet, according to The Episcopal Church website, one in three Episcopalians right now are over the age of 65. Among those over 65, the number of people living with dementia increases daily, with an estimated 50 million people worldwide living with some form of dementia, with

TIPS FOR SPIRITUAL-CARE VISITS WITH THOSE WITH DEMENTIA

1. First, acknowledge your own fears, worries and discomforts, and despite it all, show up anyway. Just showing up is what will matter most.
2. Call ahead to see when is the best time of day to visit. Some people with dementia don't get going until late morning so afternoons are best. Others experience "sun downing" in the afternoon and become more restless, so mornings are better.
3. If you don't know the person you are visiting, find out a little about them before you go—what they did for a living, what things they like, etc. These will be good things to reflect on if the person is able.
4. Pack a bag with religious items like a Bible, battery operated candles, colorful crosses, statues, chalice, linen, music device, etc. These will be "cues" of faith. Sense words don't work as well as they used to; these visual cues will help you more.
5. If the person is able to have conversation, consider what kind of topics you might bring up (like things from their childhood), but drop the word "remember." Asking the person who has dementia to "remember" is like asking someone with a broken leg to run a marathon. They can't do it.
6. Dress the part: if you are clergy, clerical collars or even a stole helps to cue what you are there to do.
7. Music! Music! Music! If you can't sing, bring a device on which to play church music. The person with dementia can easily access songs and prayers.

another 10 million diagnosed each year. Those numbers are expected to skyrocket in the next 20 years. As Baby Boomers enter their older years, experts tell us we need to be prepared for what's being called "The Silver Tsunami."

DEMENTIA 101

When considering spiritual care for those living with dementia, it's helpful to have a basic understanding of what is happening. Dementia and Alzheimer's are terms often used interchangeably, but dementia is actually an umbrella term that encompasses between 80 and 90 different forms of cognitive disease, of which Alzheimer's is one.

While the particulars of the different forms of dementia are too extensive and varied to discuss here, what is important to know is that dementia often affects the left side of the brain first, which is home to our cognitive function and language. This is why confusion and difficulty in communicating are common symptoms.

It is in the right side of the brain where music, poetry, emotions and our spiritual foundations are stored. And as that is often affected more slowly, it is why spiritual care—and the traditions of our faith—can be so effective in connecting with those who can't connect in other ways.

REMOVING THE BARRIERS

So are our congregations prepared for the silver tsunami? How can we be in ministry with those who filled our Sunday school classrooms 60 years ago but now struggle to remember their loved ones or what they ate for breakfast?

There are quite a few barriers



to providing spiritual care to people with dementia, but there are ways to work around them or remove them altogether.

To start with, gain at least a basic understanding of dementia so you know some of the challenges those with it face. Don't be afraid to talk about it or ask questions; being around people with dementia can make a caregiver feel uncomfortable, fearful and perhaps helpless, not knowing what to do. But asking questions can help you know what to do, and that knowledge can ease the discomfort.

It's an effort worth making. All too often in my travels, I have heard about people who don't receive visits anymore, simply because those who would visit are uncomfortable. The spouse of a person with dementia will say something like, "Nobody comes anymore." People who have been friends for decades at church together—serving on the altar guild, running the youth ministry—now stop visiting because it is hard to watch a friend suffer with dementia. It is scary to see and creates worry it will happen to them. Families in our congregations living with dementia can become very isolated.

Even clergy aren't trained to be in ministry with people with dementia. In our pastoral care classes, we talk about caring for people with cancer or depression, or dealing with grief, but no one ever teaches us what to do with dementia. Unless a clergy person did their field education in an institutional setting, experiences with dementia may be limited to a grandparent or loved one. The words, "Will you go see my mother in the nursing home? She has Alzheimer's," can be very frightening to a new rector.

As a church, though, there are things we can do to become more comfortable being in ministry with those with dementia. We can equip our congregations to be comfortable talking about dementia and create parishes that are dementia friendly. Many parishes I have worked with have put together a dementia care team and received special training for that purpose. Parishes will often plan an educational speaker series and invite professionals to come and talk about dementia.

When we visit someone with dementia, we can pray with them, share Holy Communion or sing a favorite hymn with them. Providing spiritual care can help the person with dementia feel connected to others, improve well-being and help create spaces of calm in what is otherwise a very chaotic world created by the disease.

DON'T FORGET

As we think about Jesus' call for us to care for the least of these, let us not overlook those with dementia. Years ago when I worked as a hospice chaplain, I was invited

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Do This Remembering Me: Spiritual Care for those with Alzheimer's and Dementia, by the Rev. Colette Bachand-Wood; available through Amazon and Church Publishing

Ageing Life Care Association (ALCA): Formerly the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers, aginglifecare.org

Dementia Friendly America: dfamerica.org

Alzheimer's Association: alz.org

The Conversation Starter Kit: A helpful booklet for talking to your loved one about end-of-life care wishes. There is a specific version for those with Alzheimer's and dementia. theconversationproject.org or call 617-301-4800

"The Genius of Marian": A moving story and video of one family's experiences with Alzheimer's. geniusofmarian.com

Memory and Music: Organization that provides resources and training for their program that uses iPods to enhance the lives of those living with dementia. musicandmemory.org

Positive Approach: Teepa Snow travels throughout the country, and her training programs are offered regularly for professionals and family. Videos available online at teepasnow.com

to speak to the support group at the agency of spouses and caregivers of people with dementia. As I was showing them what I did on my visits and the tools I used for them, I noticed one woman at the end of the table was gently crying.

I paused and said, "May I ask what your tears are about?"

To which she answered, "Thank you for doing this, everyone else has given up on them." As spiritual care providers, let us not forget them. And Lord, help us to remind them you have not forgotten them either.

The Rev. Colette Bachand-Wood is the chaplain and priest-in-charge at Penick Village and the author of Do This Remembering Me: Spiritual Care of those with Alzheimer's and Dementia. Contact her at colettewood@comcast.net.



By Summerlee Walter

A BIBLICAL MODEL OF LEADERSHIP

In 2016, the Diocese of North Carolina embarked on an 18-month journey to select a new leader, the bishop who would succeed then-Bishop Michael Curry as the next leader of 120 Episcopal worshipping communities. We solicited resumes from dozens of candidates before asking for even more information in the form of in-person interviews, biblical reflections and introductory videos from a handful more. All of this before we even introduced the slate of candidates to the public in a series of 10 whistle stops and walkabouts. Our diocese can claim, without hyperbole, our electing convention was the best informed in an Episcopal Church that has seen dozens of transitions during the past three years.

Nevertheless, there's nothing like seeing a new bishop in action to understand what his leadership style is like in practice. And the Rt. Rev. Sam Rodman is ready to share his overarching vision of leadership in our piece of God's kingdom with the people of our diocese—and, ultimately, the institutional Church.

"If there's anything I could do in the leadership of the Church that could have a really life-giving, lasting impact, this is it," Rodman said. "This really matters to me. I believe in shared leadership and shared power. Especially in a hierarchical structure, if you're not sharing power, the Gospel is being inhibited."

And so, Rodman and others are embarking on a mission to share leadership widely and deeply using a model of team leadership.

WHAT IS TEAM LEADERSHIP?

"We (as a culture) train people to excel individually but not to function well as a member or leader of a team. It's largely absent from our framework," Rodman said, citing an attitude running throughout high schools, colleges and universities, and on into seminaries. Whether it's a business pinning its hopes on an external turnaround agent instead of its own leadership to increase sales or a congregation praying for a superstar rector to bring young families to worship instead of inviting their own neighbors to church, our society believes in the rock star who can fix an institution's problems through charisma and savvy.

From Rodman's perspective, however, this approach has set the church on collision course with modern challenges.

"It's like a food desert in our education system," he explained. "Meeting the needs of the church in the 21st century is going to be dependent on a much more sophisticated team leadership approach in order to survive. And we have very little in the pipeline."

Rodman's vision for leadership is influenced by the

Leadership Development Initiative, part of Episcopal City Mission in the Diocese of Massachusetts, where he previously served as chief of staff. Primarily, though, it's informed by a biblical model of discipleship.

"Theologically, there is a good biblical precedent in Jesus sending people out in teams, or at least two-by-two," he said. "The model for who we are called to be as disciples is the Body of Christ, that is a corporal model. Team is in our DNA if we are the body of Christ."

Three major implementations of team leadership are developing already in the Diocese: Reimagining Curacies, teams to work with vulnerable congregations and discernment for laypeople.

REIMAGINING CURACIES

In October, the Diocese received nearly \$1 million from Lilly Endowment, Inc.'s Thriving in Ministry initiative to fund Reimagining Curacies, a program designed to form newly ordained clergy into community-conscious leaders dedicated to the values of Becoming Beloved Community through authentic community and racial reconciliation. In response to the individualistic education offered by seminaries, Reimagining Curacies disrupts the traditional model of newly ordained clergy serving in one cure for two or three years by placing cohorts of three deacons or priests in three vibrant, neighboring congregations for three years, with each serving one year in each congregation. The placements will be geographically proximate to one another but differ in size, liturgical preference, racial and ethnic composition, community context and specialized ministries, and clergy and lay leaders will support each other in addition to receiving support from all three congregations.

While the Rev. Nathan Kirkpatrick wrote the grant proposal and serves as the point person for developing the program content, the leadership of Reimagining Curacies reflects the initiative's goal of fostering team leadership. Three different teams of people are working on programming; designing the application process for congregations and curates; and handling administration, oversight and reporting. The first cohort of newly ordained clergy will enter their cures in spring 2020.

SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CONGREGATIONS

"Historically with vulnerable congregations, we've sent consultants," Rodman explained. "There's nothing wrong with consultants, but what congregations need is a variety of perspectives."

To meet this need and encourage congregations to do the difficult work of reflection and discernment, the Rev. Canon David Sellery, canon for congregational mission, will develop a team-based model of congregational support for vulnerable congregations. (It is worth noting in the context of distributed leadership Rodman's insistence

that the diocesan priority of support for vulnerable congregations references only congregations that self-identify as vulnerable. Instead of a top-down declaration from the Diocese, congregations are invited to ask for help if they need it, regardless of size, location or available resources.)

Teams will include a convening regional canon, deacons, retired clergy, area deans and lay people from the wider Diocese who will walk with congregations during a period of discernment and resource identification. Rodman's vision is to apply the principles and practices of individual spiritual direction to congregations, so support teams will not resource congregations but will instead act as conversation partners and walk with congregations throughout their discernment.

"A good spiritual director, like a good therapist, holds you accountable to the movement of God and the call of the Spirit," Rodman explained. Clergy and churches, however, aren't the only group getting their own focused discernment process.

LAY LEADERSHIP

In January 2019, discussions began regarding a system of discernment for lay leaders in the church. While those exploring a call to ordination as a priest or deacon each have their own COM, no similar body or process exists for lay people seeking to explore their own calls as disciples of Christ without an eye toward ordination. Rodman emphasizes the 21st-century church's need for a robust system of lay leaders and points out the Holy Spirit is already stirring up lay leaders in congregations and on the diocesan level. The need for lay discernment and leadership development is especially stark considering the composition of our Diocese. While approximately 350 parochial, active and retired clergy live within our Diocese, the number of active, baptized lay people recorded on the 2016 parochial report—49,873—is more than 140 times that.

The impact of team leadership that includes lay people is also apparent within the diocesan staff, where a staff brainstorming task force formed last year has worked to implement new staff care and development programs and is now turning its attention toward improving the onboarding process for new staff members.

Diocesan accountant Maria Gillespie, a key leader on the task force, explains the need for bringing as many voices—lay and ordained—to the table as possible.

"Team leadership is more well-rounded. It's not doing things just because it's been done that way before. There's new approaches that other people can contribute in order to make decisions that benefit more people."

Summerlee Walter is the communications coordinator for the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact her at summerlee.walter@episdionc.org.

YEAH: YOUNG EPISCOPAL ADULT HUBS

A new take on building a network of young adults

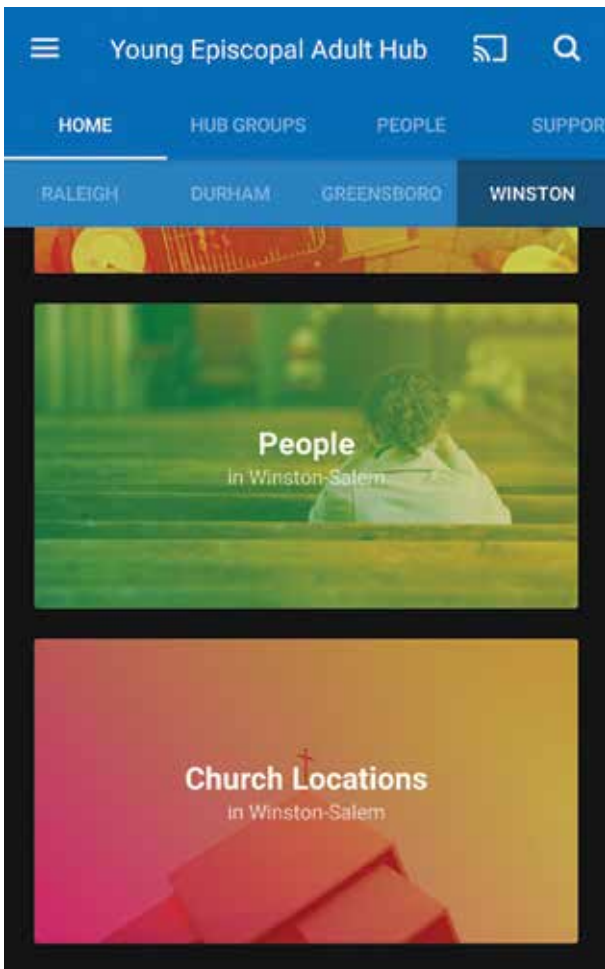
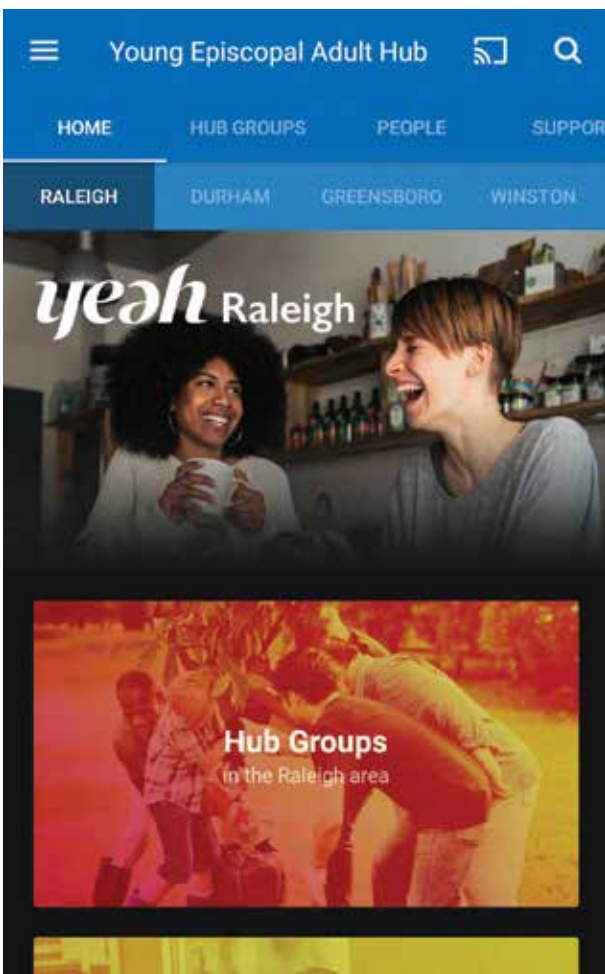
For at least the past decade, the common wisdom surrounding young adults and the local church has been to go where they are, discover what ignites their spiritual selves and offer something to meet their needs instead of waiting for young adults to appear at 10 a.m. on Sunday morning and bemoaning their absence when they don't. Many churches in the Diocese have taken this approach seriously, and we've seen as a result a variety of pub theology and beer and hymns programs succeed, including in Raleigh, Tarboro, Durham and Asheboro ("It's Not a Gimmick. It's Church," *Disciple*, Winter 2018). A Movable Feast, the mobile food and prayer ministry that debuted at Convention in 2014, led to a successful Sunday evening program of the same name at Davidson College and to ongoing engagement by St. Titus', Durham, on the campus of Durham Tech Community College. (The trailer is currently reaching out to a different population at Galilee Ministries of East Charlotte.)

While there are successful—albeit often small—young adult ministries and peer groups throughout the Diocese, it can still be a challenge for under-40 Episcopalians to find a peer group if they are not fortunate enough to attend a church with an active young adult ministry. Others know where to find such a group but feel they don't fit the "young couples with kids" vibe—or, alternately, the "single folks who can stay out late without hiring a babysitter" vibe. In the end, the question remains: How do young adults find a group of peers in The Episcopal Church?

SOME 3 A.M. INSPIRATION

The Rev. Adrienne Koch was hired—she thought—as the campus minister for North Carolina State University in 2017. It was only after she came on board that Koch learned she would not have any affiliation with NC State, which no longer sanctions chaplains, but would instead serve as a young adult missionary located near the college campus. This arrangement is in line with the vision of the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple, who in her role as bishop suffragan guides young adult and campus ministry within the Diocese. She's working to shift the model for campus ministry away from the traditional chaplain role and toward a local missionary or community organizer model in which a young adult missionary does what the churches have been learning to do for the past decade: go out and meet people. This doesn't mean the need for a chaplain and a campus-based gathering place disappeared, however.

"It really was a dual role, and I found myself thinking about how the young adult missionary piece really expands the focus of the ministry to, for me, the Raleigh area, basically Wake County, which is a large area," Koch explained.



In order to grasp the new focus of her traditional role, Koch visited the 10 Wake County churches to inventory the young adult ministries already happening. She also reached out to other Raleigh colleges, like Shaw University, where the Episcopal Church does not have a presence, but she could not gain meaningful access.

“I thought, if I’m not going to sort of start anything—or even get connected with people who are doing the work—how can I give voice to the people who are doing something who I can’t seem to meet or find?” Koch said.

Koch was praying during a 3 a.m. night feeding with her son last February, trying to imagine what her role might look like and feeling overwhelmed by the scope of her mission field, when she started to think differently about the challenge.

“What if instead of seeing it as a big problem, I saw it as a big network,” she said. “What if I saw all of [the churches and ministries] as resource points for me and myself as a resource point for all of these ministries that don’t really have a hub. I can only call it inspiration.”

The idea came with an acronym: YEAH, or young Episcopal adult hub. Koch was inspired in part by her background in the evangelical and Pentecostal world, where small groups of close connection are a major focus. She was also excited by the vast network of connections already built into the Episcopal ethos through convocations, dioceses, provinces and the Episcopal Church. The social media focus that would arise out of Koch’s early vision grew naturally from the idea of networks and close connections.

A NEW WAY TO FIND A PLACE

The young adult missionaries have decided to rebrand the work of young adult and campus ministry around Koch’s late night inspiration, adopting the concept of YEAH in Raleigh, Durham, Greensboro and Winston-Salem to start. They’re still discerning exactly what their focus will be going forward, but they already have an important tool in place: the YEAH app, where young adults can both find and form hub groups in their geographic locations.

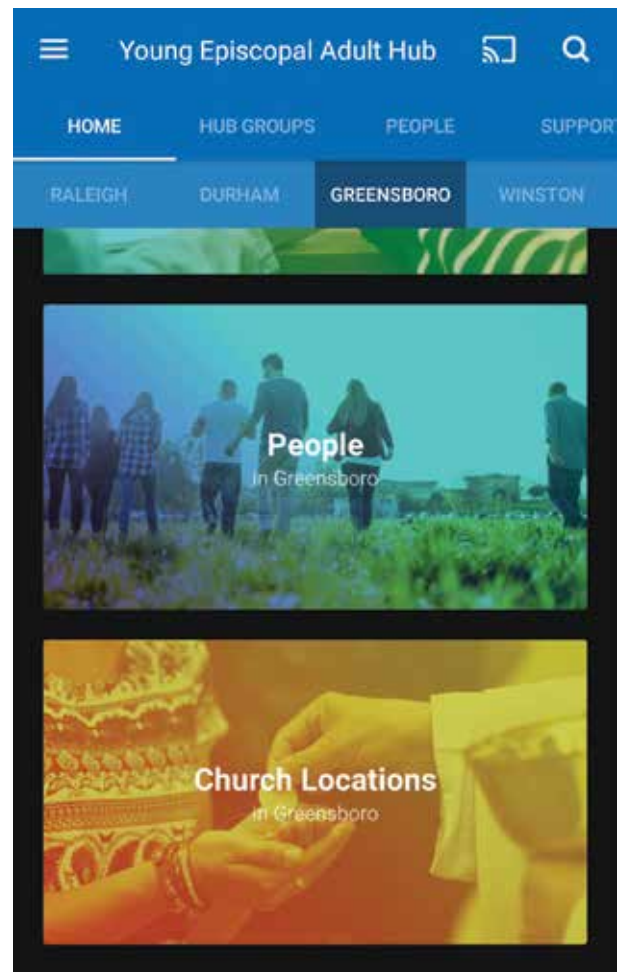
Hub groups already on the app—which was released in early January—include campus ministry worship, an educational program for low-income youth, church-based 20s and 30s groups, and a Taco Tuesday meet-up. Other content, including entries from the A Movable Feast website and blog will be repurposed on the YEAH app as resources for seekers.

The ultimate goal of YEAH is to make ministry more accessible for young adults, regardless of work schedules or family life. Koch thinks the YEAH app might be just the thing to make that happen.

“Ultimately, I want someone who’s having a conversation about faith to be able to pull out their phone and direct someone to a place they can go, even if it’s not the same place [that person] goes.”

The YEAH app is available in the App Store and on Google Play by searching “YEAH NC.”

Summerlee Walter is the communications coordinator for the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact her at summerlee.walter@episdionc.org.





By the Rev. Canon David Sellery

A FEAST OF EPIPHANIES

Where is the child who was born king of the Jews? For we have observed his star at its rising, . . . when they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy (Matthew 2:2, 10).

These first verses from the second chapter of Matthew are among the most action-packed accounts found in the 66 books of the Bible. A Hollywood script writer would be hard pressed to match the intrigue, the triumph and the tragedy. As a preacher, I'm swamped with the symbolic richness of this gospel. A single sermon hardly does it justice. But let's try.

Dictionaries define an epiphany as a sudden intuitive insight into the essential meaning of something. This gospel for the Feast of the Epiphany is literally a feast of epiphanies. It is chock full of insights into the meaning of the coming of Christ and the transformation it promises.

Start with the vision of the Magi. They devoted

their lives to studying the heavens. Suddenly there was a brilliant light they had never seen before. For all their astronomical knowledge, they were baffled. They dropped everything and set out to follow wherever this strange star would lead them. For mile after mile, over mountains and across deserts, they fixed faithfully on this single, celestial signpost which led them to the newborn Jesus.

The journey of the Magi raises some challenging questions for us: What star do you follow? Does it lead to Jesus? Or is it all about getting and keeping more stuff, filling the hole in your soul with things: a bigger paycheck, a bigger house, season tickets, the best table, an iPhone X, the hippest sneakers? Sure, these are nice to have. But go to as many funerals as I do, and they shrink to insignificance. The Magi got it right the first time. Follow your star to Jesus; his love, his way—they are all that endures.

OUR GIFTS TO GOD

All four gospels have examples of the Messiah of the Chosen People gathering in all the people of God's creation. Significantly, right from the birth of Jesus, God mobilized the heavens to reach out all the way to Persia. Today, we walk in the footsteps of the Magi. Our home is further from Bethlehem than was the Magi's home in Persia. But his call is just as strong. His star is just as bright.

We follow Christ from across cultures and across millennia. The gates of heaven have been thrown open to us. No matter how humble our condition, we stand before the throne of God no less noble than the kings, no less beloved than the prophets, no less entitled than Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The Magi did not come empty handed. And neither should we. Jesus, the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, does not need our gold, frankincense and myrrh. All creation does his bidding. But he does want us to give back for our own sake, to demonstrably express our gratitude, to get some skin in the game.

Our gifts, our tithes, our charity, our service - all our good works - they don't buy God's love. We have had that from before Creation. They don't buy redemption. They are gifts outright. The Magi did not bribe the star to lead them to Jesus. They did not pay Mary and Joseph to see their child. Without claim or condition, they humbly laid their gifts at the feet of the newborn king in awe, in adoration, in gratitude, and so should we.

And then there's Herod. The world has seen his like so many times. In his self-centered soul, the Epiphany is all about him. It is his opportunity to eliminate a potential rival, no matter the cost. Deceit, deception, mass murder: these things afflict other people. To him, they are just an average tyrant's way of doing business.

Today bullies and tyrants, both foreign and domestic, are not in danger of extinction. We are appalled by their antics. But if we're honest, haven't we all got the tiniest touch of Herod in us? How often do we tell ourselves we are the arbiters of good and evil? What we see as good for us must be the obvious good. We do not operate on Herod's scale, but we do let our egos lead us around by the nose.

Epiphany is a good time to alter that course. It is time to remember that only Jesus is the way, the truth and the light. It is time to recognize our star is the grace of God and it still leads to Jesus.

OUR SPIRITUAL GPS

Here in the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina we have the aid of a spiritual GPS that was first installed by the Most Rev. Michael Curry to help us find our way to Jesus. It is The Way of Love, and it lays out a sequence of

practices that put us in step with Christ and leads us in his liberating, life-giving way.

Like present day Magi, we **Turn** toward the star of Christ's love in the world. We recognize it, for it burns brighter than any other. Then we summon the faith to follow where the star of his love takes us.

But we do not journey blindly in faith. We continually **Learn** all we can of Jesus and his teachings, devoting each day to reading and reflecting on Scripture, learning to see him and greet him in everyone we encounter during the day.

Committed and informed, we **Pray** to stay the course, offering our daily routines, our accomplishments and our disappointments to him. Sometimes our prayer is formal. Other times it is a brief, silent moment of petition, of dedication, of gratitude. And so, we pray always, sometimes with words, more times with action, always with love.

The Magi did not fly solo. They journeyed to Jesus together. And so should we as we gather together weekly in community to **Worship**, thanking, praising and drawing nearer to God, drawing strength from each other for the journey.

We don't come bearing the treasures of the East. But we have been blessed with the God-given gifts of time, talent and treasure, knowing they are ours to share. And so, as the Father has blessed us, we **Bless** others by the gifts of our service, our support, our generosity, our kindness and consideration.

The Way of Love is what we call the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. Motion, action, progress, dynamism: These are common attributes that describe this approach to our faith. We are disciples, not spectators. Every day we answer Christ's call to **Go** and witness his love to the world.

Our journey with Jesus is not a sprint. It is a lifelong marathon. We meet obstacles. We stumble and lose our way. That's why, just as important as every other step, we need to **Rest**, to restore our strength and to get reoriented. It's all part of God's plan for us.

And for each of us that plan is unfolding with each new day: another joy, another sorrow, another accomplishment, another disappointment, another discovery, another Epiphany as we seek love and freedom and abundant life in Christ.

Jesus is waiting. In joyful praise and adoration, let's follow his star together. Let's celebrate this Epiphany on The Way of Love, another year closer to Christ.

The Rev. Canon David Sellery is the canon for congregational mission for the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact him at david.sellery@episcopionc.org.

By Christine McTaggart

KEEPING IT SIMPLE

If you believe in “meant to be,” it’s hard to find a better example of it in action than Lyn’s Medical Loan Closet, a ministry of Trinity, Mt. Airy. Named for the former rector instrumental in green-lighting the project, the loan closet has, in less than one year, gone from a small ministry with modest hopes to a valued and key resource within the community it serves.

AN OLD FRIEND RETURNS

It began in September 2017, when former rector the Rev. Bob Cathers returned to Trinity to share his work with the medical loan closet founded by St. James Episcopal Church in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Cathers was the rector at Trinity 30 years ago and has been involved in the Hendersonville medical closet for the last 20 years. Though long since departed from Trinity, the church stayed with Cathers, and hearing it was thinking about its next steps in ministry, he returned to Trinity to visit with and speak to the congregation about starting a medical loan closet in Mt. Airy for Surry County.

“He was just so excited to share it with us,” said Brenda Goings, ministry volunteer and senior warden at Trinity.

He was not the only one. Then-rector the Rev. Lyn Stabler-Tippett was excited to hear about it and recognized immediately a medical loan closet could be the answer to Trinity’s search for a ministry that would serve and be adaptable to the surrounding community. The proposal even came with a roadmap in the form of a notebook that “had everything we needed,” said Goings. “Pictures, directions and point-by-point instructions on paperwork,

set up, how to work with customers—just everything.”

Stabler-Tippett tasked vestry member Bill Noble to go through the notebook and explore the possibility of pursuing the ministry. Within weeks, a group had been put together, four of whom drove to Hendersonville to see their medical closet in action.

“We were overwhelmed,” said Noble. “They’ve been in business more than 50 years in Henderson County, and it’s such a simple idea that works to an extravagant degree. This ministry really grabs you.”

It didn’t let go, and by October, Trinity was actively working toward opening the doors of the ministry in early 2018. “We recognized the potential right from the beginning,” said Noble. “We had such an introduction to the ministry through our patron, the medical closet in Hendersonville, and the notebook they gave us to guide us. It was a startup catalog, with everything we needed, and Hendersonville even provided us with the first 118 pieces of equipment. They absolutely primed the pump.”

Trinity spent the remaining months of 2017 setting up the ministry: completing paperwork, finding a location, organizing volunteers and bringing in the initial inventory. By January, the core volunteers were receiving internal training in the running of the ministry and the details of dealing with customers and fitting medical equipment. On January 30, 2018, a little more than four months after first hearing about the ministry, the doors to Lyn’s Medical Closet opened.

A COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE

“It works just like a library,” said Noble, “only we loan medical equipment.” The loan closet does not, under any circumstances, offer medical advice, though they will assist with the fitting of crutches or wheelchairs. Equipment is loaned for 90 days (hospital beds are loaned for 180 days) with the option to renew, and the process is as simple as the client (or their representative) filling out an agreement promising to bring it back on time and naming a responsible party if the equipment is not returned. There is no charge for the equipment, and the closet is open to all residents of Surry County, regardless of income.

It might be supposed that with such generosity on the part of the loan closet, disappearing inventory could be a problem. The reality is exactly the opposite. “So far, we haven’t had a problem with someone not returning equipment,” said Noble. But even if equipment did disappear on a regular basis, the ministry would go on.

“We worried about [disappearing equipment] when we were thinking about starting the ministry,” said Noble, “but we came to realize that this is about putting medical



The Rev. Lyn Stabler-Tippett cuts the ribbon during the opening ceremony at the Medical Loan Closet run by Trinity, Mt. Airy. Photo by Rebecca Derrick

equipment into the hands of those who need it. That's the ministry. If we loan a piece of medical equipment and never see it again, we have still fulfilled our ministry by providing medical equipment where it is needed. But we haven't experienced any loss."

The care with which the equipment is treated coupled with the response of the Mt. Airy community clearly illustrates just how much the ministry is needed and valued. It was evident the day the ministry opened its doors for an open house; it was hoped a dozen people might come by. More than 65 attended.

It hasn't stopped, and the energy around the medical closet both through Trinity and the surrounding community continues to grow. So has the closet, and it's mostly been through word of mouth. A poster was created by a Trinity parishioner, and, said Noble, "just about every member has picked up a poster and taken it to their favorite store or restaurant and asked to put it up." A doctor in the congregation took posters to the local hospital, and the image also hangs proudly in a local orthopedist's office.

"We're very proud that at least a third of our patients come to us from health care providers," said Noble. "Home health aides, nurses and hospice all recognize the value of this service and ministry, and they're spreading the word."

They're also bringing medical equipment. Because equipment purchased through Medicare cannot be used again, health care professionals are guiding used equipment to the medical closet. The local hospice brings equipment from their facilities when patients are done with it, and another local health care provider now brings a monthly donation of equipment that before was taken to the dump or destroyed because Medicare regulations prevented its reuse. A relationship with Surry Medical Ministries, the area's free clinic, has become another valued partnership. Professionals are not the only donors, though.

"Donations come from everybody who has ever had a problem that required a cane or crutches or a wheelchair," said Noble. "They're bringing it all from attics and garages—it comes from all over the place!" He chuckles as he describes it, but sounds only grateful when he adds, "Starting out, we thought this ministry was about letting merchandise out the door. And it is, but it's only half of

VISIT THE MEDICAL CLOSET

Lyn's Medical Closet is located at the Jones Family Resource Center (215 Jones School Road, Mount Airy, NC) and is open from 9a.m. to 1p.m. every Tuesday. No appointment is necessary. For more information, please call (336) 786-6067.



Supporters gather in prayer before the opening ceremony. Photo by Rebecca Derrick

it. The other half is the people who give to the ministry. [Everyone donating] merchandise is partaking in the ministry, and that's how they see it."

The result is undeniable. Lyn's Medical Closet opened its doors with 118 pieces of medical equipment valued at \$11,000. In only seven months, it grew to more than 340 pieces of equipment valued at \$41,000. It was projected by the end of 2018 that the loan closet would serve more than 200 patients in its first 11 months.

"We serve everybody," said Noble. "The automatic thought is that we serve the poor or the people without means, and we do. But we also serve the person who just broke their leg and needs a pair of crutches. It's all people—we serve the entire community."

DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL

As the ministry looks ahead to 2019, it hopes to expand its volunteer base to allow the closet to be open additional hours during the week. Currently served by a core group of eight Trinity members, volunteers serve in teams of two, one day per week, essentially serving one shift per month to ensure consistency and prevent burnout. Trinity is reaching out to invite volunteers from other sources, and as soon as another team of eight is assembled, the loan closet will be able to open additional days of the week.

When asked of lessons learned that might teach others interested in starting a ministry, Noble said, "keep it simple. And talk to others who have done something similar to what you want to do. Learn from their mistakes and experience. You don't have to reinvent the wheel."

Most importantly, he said, know that God is with you. "God has been a part of this ministry since day one," said Noble. "No one could possibly have put this together in four months like we did without getting a single 'no.' We never got a no! Whatever we needed or were requesting, we got. He guided us, and we followed that direction. He was—and is—right with us."

Christine McTaggart is the communications director for the Diocese of North Carolina. Contact her at christine.mctaggart@episdionc.org.



The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina
200 West Morgan Street, Suite 300
Raleigh, NC 27601-1338
919.834.7474 | 800.448.8775

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
RALEIGH, NC
PERMIT NO. 992

Until we read again...

APPLY for a grant. The deadline to apply for the spring cycle of both the Mission Endowment and Missionary Resource Support Team (MRST) spring cycle grants is April 16. Apply to both using the Common Application (pages 9-10) .

SUBMIT your parochial report by March 1.

EXPLORE new formation resources for 2019 (pages 8, 12).

DEVELOP or deepen your spiritual practice in the new year (page 18).