

## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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### REPORTS OF THE GENERAL OFFICERS:

#### SECRETARY

It is my privilege to report that the duties of the secretary of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast have been fulfilled in the year 2019 in accordance with Canon 6 of the Canons of the Diocese. I am very grateful for the friendship and help of two assistant secretaries: the Rev. S. Albert Kennington and Dwight Babcock.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Deacon Edward T. Richards, Secretary

#### STANDING COMMITTEE

Report forthcoming

#### COMMISSION ON FINANCE

Report forthcoming

#### REGISTRAR – HISTORIOGRAPHER

Report forthcoming

#### COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Commission on Ministry has two primary responsibilities. The first is to assist individuals in their response to God's call to ministry. In particular, the Commission seeks to support those who are discerning a call to ordained ministry. The second responsibility is to advise the Bishop, when requested, in matters concerning discernment and formation.

#### **COM Mission Statement**

The COM seeks to prayerfully ascertain, discriminate, and discern a sense of God's call in a person's life and in the life of the church for his/her *lay or ordained vocation and ministry*.

*The Commission on Ministry will*

- *be a resource for aspirants for ordination*
- *be an advisor to the bishop concerning aspirants, postulants, and candidates*
- *be a shepherd and advocate for those being prepared for ordination, providing pastoral care and guidance on an individual basis*
- *assist the bishop in developing and furthering continuing education for the clergy of the Diocese.*

In this diocese, individuals called to ordained ministry may follow one of two separate paths. One path is for those who are called to the Priesthood. We had three (3) individuals accepted as Postulants to attend Seminary (Amanda Doshier, Craig Doshier, and Kenneth White-Spunner). At present, seminarians from this diocese are enrolled at Virginia Theological Seminary (Craig Doshier; Amanda Doshier); at Yale (Ansley Walker); and Seminary of the Southwest (Kenneth White-Spunner). Transitional Deacons Pete Burgess and Ryan Currie were ordained to the Priesthood in 2019.

Our Diocesan School for Ministry is now in its third and final year. We have eight (8) individuals that are Candidates enrolled in The School for Ministry (Mike Ballard, David Chatel, David Clothier, Bob Donnell, Rachael Iversen, Lydia Johnson, John Kendall, and John Talbert); two (2) following the Vocational Diaconate tract and six (6) the Priesthood tract.

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Discernment for those called to the Priesthood and for those called to the Diaconate requires participation by many from the community, as the individuals prayerfully seek God's direction for their lives. The Commission is grateful for the willingness of so many within this diocese to support and assist those who are examining their call to ordained ministry.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Al Pruitt, Chair/mrp

### **BECKWITH BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*A message from God's Front Yard!*

This has been a wonderful and profitable year at Beckwith. Much has been accomplished. Wilson Hall has been completed with new interior and new exterior paint job. And you want to make a reservation in Hardman to see the wonderful work done there. Dangerous trees have been removed and beautification to the campus is being done thanks to our guys! At the annual Clergy Conference in January, the pavilion was dedicated to and named the Massey Gentry Pavilion, to honor the Rev. Canon Massey Gentry for his service to Beckwith during a challenging time in its history. His support ensured Beckwith's future.

Summer camp was as wonderful as always thanks to the leadership of Rachel Gilliam and a very competent camp staff. Thanks to Priscilla Codon for serving as Camp Nurse. We welcomed 583 campers, 46 Special Ministries campers and 22 Special Ministry graduates for a total income of \$243, 735. If you have someone who wants to attend camp, get your registration complete because some sessions are going fast.

Mark your calendars for **Beckwith Sunday, April 25, 2020**. The Diocese will focus attention as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration on Agencies in the Diocese. This is a wonderful time to celebrate with camp liturgies, to pray for Beckwith, our Executive director and staff.

Another important date to save is for **Bay Lights 2020: September 25-27**. This is a wonderful time of coming together as a diocese and as friends to support our incredible camp.

Many thanks to the Cursillo Commission for their continued commitment to Beckwith, especially their continued financial support. If you have not attended Cursillo, you are really missing a wonderful experience. These spots go quickly, so join a Cursillo team if you have attended, or grab a Pilgrim slot on one of the up-coming Cursillos.

Your Beckwith board continues to meet regularly and work for the ongoing ministry of Beckwith in this Diocese. If you have not been to Beckwith, attended one of the several enjoyable experiences, or been to a retreat, you are really missing a life-changing experience. Make 2020 be the year you come to Beckwith!!

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Dr. Margaret Shepard, Board President

### **MURRAY HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Murray House, an assisted living residence, is a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. Murray House emphasizes personal dignity, autonomy, independence, privacy, and freedom of choice by providing a healthy menu, daily exercise, supportive social connections, a variety of religious services, chaplaincy services, and a comprehensive security system.

Under the direction of Connie Anderson, the executive director, and Sharon Phillips, the administrator, Murray House served between 37 and 40 adults in 2019. Thanks to the dedicated and passionate ministry of the staff and

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Board, Murray House is financially sound and continues to provide a loving, supportive, safe, and nurturing home to adults aging in place.

After an exhaustive study of deferred maintenance issues, the Board hired the services of Douglas Kearley, architect and James Hughes, general contractor, to assist the Board. I am pleased to announce that Murray House now has a new fortified roof, new windows, new doors, new paint, and all rotten wood replaced. The total cost of this project is approximately \$230,000.

Murray House is a significant, life enhancing ministry of the Diocese. We continue to ask for your prayers, your financial contributions, and your commitment to our mission and witness along the Gulf Coast.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Ken Cumbie, Board President

### WILMER HALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wilmer Hall, an agency of the Diocese located in Mobile, Alabama, has been serving young people in need since 1864. It was founded by Bishop Richard Hooker Wilmer, the second Bishop of Alabama. We currently have six programs: Residential, Transitional Living (TLP), Transitional Family (TFP), Education4Life, the Philippa Stirling Hamilton Education Center, and the Max Miller Education Program.

In 2019, we had a total of 50 residents in our three residential programs (Residential, TLP, TFP). In 2019, we have served 52 students in our on-site Education Program and 160 students in our two community based education programs (the Hamilton Education Center and the Max Miller Education Program). **Our total number of children and young adults served in 2019 was 262.**

We currently serve 45 students in our on campus education program (a 15% increase from last year), called Education4Life. In the 10 years since its inception, the students in the program have a 100% graduation rate. We expanded our successful education model into other areas of our community in 2018 and 2019. The Hamilton Education Center serves students in the Maysville Community at Williamson Prep Middle School and the Max Miller Education Program serves students at Pillans Middle School, Mobile County Training School, and Blount High School.

We were excited to expand our residential capacity from 30 to 36 in 2019, and we have provided a loving home to more residents than we have had in many years. We have opened our new Graduation Housing for our residents who have already entered the workforce and completed our Life Skills Training Program as they prepare to go out on their own.

We launched a delivery-based food pantry in 2019, in partnership with St. Paul's Church, Mobile. Since we began last spring, we have delivered groceries to over 325 individuals and families in need.

Our staff and board continue to be good stewards of our resources as we recently passed a balanced budget and as we care for our historic campus. We charge no fees for our services, of course, and receive funding from the Diocese, the United Way, and from many donations and grants. We greatly appreciate the support from the Diocese, its churches, and their congregants.

We currently have a full time staff of 18. The Rev. George Riggall, our longtime Chief Operating Officer and a priest in the diocese, retired in 2019 after many years of service. Many thanks to George and we wish him the best in his retirement. This past year, we also welcomed the Rev. Pete Burgess of St. Paul's Mobile as the Wilmer Hall Chaplain. This is an historic role that we are happy to have filled once again.

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We welcome visitors from around the diocese for a visit to campus, and we are also happy to come talk to your parish or group about our mission and ministry. Please contact Pratt Paterson ([ppaterson@wilmerhall.org](mailto:ppaterson@wilmerhall.org)) or Mae Dennis ([mdennis@wilmerhall.org](mailto:mdennis@wilmerhall.org)) for more information.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pratt Paterson, Executive Director

Christian White, Board President

The mission of Wilmer Hall Children's Home is to provide a safe home and educational resources for children and young adults in need due to poverty, abuse, neglect, and homelessness. We serve all children and young adults without regard to race, ethnicity, or religion.

Wilmer Hall extends warm and nurturing care to every child and young adult in its care, ensuring they are surrounded by people who love and support them. Our goal is to help children succeed in four areas: physical health, emotional stability, academic achievement, and spiritual maturity.

Wilmer Hall serves children and young adults through five programs: the Residential Living Program, the Transitional Living Program, the Transitional Family Program, the on-campus Education Program, and the Community-Based Education Programs.

### **CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL**

#### **Cathedral Mission Statement**

*Christ Church Cathedral lovingly welcomes all people to traditional Episcopal worship, to deepen our relationships, serve our community, and grow closer to God.*

*The Cathedral is the spiritual center of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. The Cathedral is a dynamic and evolving church that serves as a liturgical, educational, and pastoral center for Diocesan life. It serves as a visible symbol of unity and promotes growth, hope, and a deepening trust in the Lord. The Cathedral is a place where the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be faithfully preached and responded to, and it will model new concepts and ideas for education, evangelism, and outreach to which the Gospel calls us.*

*Institution Statement for the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast*

During the past year the members of the Christ Church Cathedral Family have been engaged in two important undertakings. The most obvious of these was the work on Phase II of our capital restoration and construction project, which we pray will soon be complete enabling us to better serve our community and our diocese. The other and more deeply significant was the beginning of the Cathedral Family's participation, as one of three churches in our diocese, in Baptized for Life. As we shared a period of life together in a construction zone, we also turned our attention to the heart of our life together in God as we engaged in a "spiritual inventory" to help us discern where we are in our spiritual journey together and where we are being called to go.

The Baptized for Life (BFL) team met regularly to listen prayerfully to what they have heard from the congregation in the Renewal Works Spiritual Inventory and to discern where God seems to be calling us in our shared life of baptism. The good news emerging from the data received is that Cathedral parishioners are not at all complacent about their faith and church but are seeking to go deeper in their spiritual journey. We are interested in spiritual growth and open to more focus on spiritual movement. We are prepared to acquire the tools we need for this work and to accept the challenge to grow in this area, and to then share that learning with the diocese. Based on this discernment and on their work at the BFL residency program in May, the BFL team submitted a grant proposal for congregational spiritual growth that is grounded in Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's "Way of Love." We are happy to announce that that proposal has been approved. We are currently revising details and we look forward to implementing the vision.

The first official step in this journey was an invitation to Jerusalem Greer, the Presiding Bishop's staff officer for

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evangelism, to come and introduce the Way of Love at Christ Church Cathedral. She joined us in September for our Rally Day weekend. On Saturday of that weekend, Jerusalem conducted the Evangelism 201 Workshop at St. Jude's in Niceville. Jerusalem is a gifted lay minister, an energetic presence, and a dynamic speaker.

Because what is often called the "Heart of the Leader" is crucial to the overall spiritual health of the congregation, Dean Beverly Gibson is working on deepening her own spiritual life and for leading the Cathedral Family in spiritual growth. She is in the midst of an 18-month clergy spiritual life and leadership program through the Shalem Institute designed to help clergy live more deeply into the rich Christian tradition of contemplative spirituality. This work involves intentional deepening in prayer, reading and study, and meeting regularly with an ongoing clergy peer group as well as a lay listening group within the parish. Here, too, the focus is on prayer and listening, not on developing any new programs. By "going deeper" in her own spiritual journey, she hopes to help foster the spiritual growth of the congregation as a whole.

On April 28, the members of the Christ Church Cathedral family celebrated with Bishop Kendrick, marking the 14-year anniversary of being named the cathedral of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. Bishop Kendrick was in residence in his apartment and working at the Cathedral for 14 days during the year while making visits to local parishes and transacting business.

Throughout the year the Cathedral Family continued to grow into our role as cathedral church. We enjoyed a festive time with close to 100 diocesan youth at a Mardi Gras party held on Saturday, February 16. On the Tuesday in Holy Week, April 16, diocesan clergy were invited for a luncheon and service for Renewal of Ordination Vows. On Saturday, September 14 Christ Church Cathedral hosted over 100 choristers from across the diocese for the first diocesan choir festival. Presenters were Bruce Neswick, Canon for Cathedral Music, Trinity Cathedral, Portland, Oregon and Kathryn Hedlund, Professor of Voice, University of Mobile, Mobile, Alabama. It was an informative and music-filled day that culminated with a hymn sing.

Our Organist and Music Director, Christopher Powell continues to expand our musical program offerings—another year of concerts that were well attended by the people of our diocese. We have two donor-generated funds for support of our musical programs: 2019 was the sixth year for the Friends of Cathedral Music, while the need to care for our organ initiated the Cathedral Organ Fund in 2015. Christopher studied for the month of July in Paris at the Summer Institute of the European American Musical Alliance (EAMA). We are very proud of his composition, *Jubilee Hymn*, composed in honor of the 50th anniversary of the diocese.

In September Lydia Johnson and Mike Ballard, both students at the School for Ministry, were assigned to Christ Church Cathedral for their field work. Both Lydia and Mike have become important parts of the Cathedral Family. Lydia's work is concentrated on children's and youth programs and service ministry. Mike has worked on adult formation and pastoral care. We look forward to celebrating their ordination to the diaconate, along with other graduates of our diocesan School for Ministry, this spring, which is scheduled for Sunday, April 25 at 11:00 a.m. here at Christ Church Cathedral.

Cathedral lay leaders continue to serve in a number of capacities within the diocese. Dean Gibson and Christopher Powell both served on the 50th Anniversary Committee. Ron Snider serves as Treasurer of the Diocese. Meg McGovern serves on the Commission for Episcopal Church Women. Laura Rutherford and Clayton Ryan serve on the board at Murray House. Cart Blackwell, Stephen McNair and Bragg Van Antwerp serve on the Wilmer Hall board. Carl Cunningham and Jubal Hamil serve on the Beckwith board. Jill Chow serves on the Diocesan Youth Ministry Leadership Team and the Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation.

These are all important parts of the "how" of our life together. Our true focus in the year ahead will be on the "why" of our shared life that supports this "how"—the Love of God that dwells within us and moves among and around us and draws us into deeper and richer lives of prayer and service. As we continue to grow into our ministry as Cathedral, it remains a joy for us as we serve the diocese.

### Christ Church Cathedral Prayer

*Gracious God, today we give thanks for the ministry you have entrusted to us as the cathedral church of our diocese. Help us to be faithful in answering the sacred calling to be ministers of hospitality for your people and leaders of worship to your honor and glory. May this place be a beacon of your light and love for the world. All this we ask through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Beverly F. Gibson, Dean  
Carolyn S. Jeffers, Provost

### **CANON MISSIONER FOR DEVELOPMENT: EVANGELISM AND MISSION ENGAGEMENT**

The purpose of the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast's Missional Office of Development is to develop God's power and love through congregations as they more fully extend their mission beyond the status quo. We do this primarily through Evangelism and Mission Engagement as integral aspects of living our Baptismal Covenant and of our diocesan life and vision, recognizing that together, we are the body of Christ. The following describes just some of the signs of development in our life together for which I am immensely grateful.

**Evangelism:** Our purpose is to organize the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast to engage spiritual practices that seek, name, and celebrate Jesus' loving presence in the stories of all people and then invite everyone to more of God's goodness. We do this by offering formation opportunities for each congregation to designate an Evangelism Catalyst who will lead them in implementing some new resource activity or action each year, developing a team of Diocesan Evangelism Catalysts in each Convocation who are available to develop leadership and growth in each region's ministry of evangelism, as well as providing support and encouragement to ongoing implementation of Sharing Faith Dinners, Invite-Welcome-Connect, and the Episcopal Church's Evangelism 101 & 201 tools and resources. We are prepared to lead workshops, trainings, coach, consult and support you in the spiritual practice of evangelism.

- Catalysts developed through six events = 202 people
  - 2018-2019 Evangelism Task force (7)
  - 2019 Epiphany Power of Love congregational catalysts recruited and trained (30) and hosted 15 story sharing gatherings for people outside of the church
  - August 17, 2019 Convocational catalysts trained in "by the beach" (20) workshop
  - May 4, 2019 Way of Love: Evangelism 101 workshop sponsored by the Congregational Enrichment venture (100)
  - September 7, 2019 Way of Love: Evangelism 201 workshop (45)
  - October 26, 2019 Invite-Welcome-Connect training (55)
  - Sharing Faith Dinners in several congregations
- Resources developed = \$6,000
  - Invite Welcome Connect facilitator fee covered by a Beecken Center Lilly Endowment grant (\$2,000)
  - Episcopal Evangelism Grants to Justine Kmieciak for Church of the Epiphany for *Spiritually Homeless* program and to Lydia Johnson for Christ Church Cathedral *Government Plaza Outreach* (\$4,000)

**Mission Engagement:** Our purpose is to organize the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast to engage spiritual practices that continue to move us beyond the walls of our church buildings and more fully recognize and join God's work among the communities in which our congregations live and move and have their being. We do this by supporting congregations to move beyond existing structures and programs and sharing resources such as DataStory for Faith Communities, U.S. Congregational Vitality Survey: Discover Your Strengths, Baptized for Life, missional engagement project models such as the Central Gulf Coast Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program and J.U.S.T. Pensacola, and other new missional initiatives, such as the Freeport Way of Love and the Panama City Beach Between the Bridges project. We are available for leadership development and peer coaching for congregational or regional missional engagement projects, developing strategic missional plans, and to facilitate other opportunities for congregational enrichment.

- Leadership developed for expanding mission engagement = 79 people

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- DataStory for Faith Communities leadership team (12)
- Church of the Epiphany, Crestview redevelopment team (9)
- Freeport Way of Love mission enterprise zone teamwork from Christ the King, Santa Rosa Beach, St. Jude's, Niceville, and St. Agatha's, De Funiak Springs (7)
- Between the Bridges Panama City shared ministry team and missional enterprise zone teamwork (7)
- Baptized for Life teamwork at Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Christ Church Cathedral and Good Shepherd Episcopal Church (21)
- Central Gulf Coast Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program leadership team (20)
- New Episcopal Community Leadership training through the Office for Church Planting Infrastructure (3)
- Resources developed = \$181,726
  - Province IV DataStory for Faith Communities grant (\$5,250)
  - New Episcopal Communities/Mission Enterprise Zone discernment grants for *Between the Bridges & Freeport Way of Love* (\$10,000)
  - U.S. Congregational Vitality Survey: Discover Your Strengths (\$10,000)
  - Baptized for Life Congregational Ministry Plan grants (\$75,000)
  - Central Gulf Coast Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® program (\$51,476)
  - Justice United Seeking Transformation in Pensacola (J.U.S.T. Pensacola) United Thank Offering grant (\$30,000)

Each one of those numbers represents people whose lives and stories with whom I am humbled and honored to bear witness to the love of God we've come to know in Jesus and am looking forward to the adventures ahead in our 50<sup>th</sup> year of Jubilee.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Kammy Young, Canon Missioner for Development

### **CANON MISSIONER FOR DISCIPLESHIP**

Given the newness of this position, I see it as one that is evolving with the needs of our diocese. Certainly we have a framework and goal that has guided our actions and vision over the past few months. That framework includes specific items inherent to this ministry in general:

1. Coordination with the Bishop to develop a long-term plan for the school for ministry to continue the current curriculum for the formation of deacons and priests. The plan addresses ways to expand educational offerings to equip and inspire lay leaders in the diocese. Such classes and curriculum will provide the necessary framework to identify and support lay leaders in a variety of settings.
2. Oversight of diocesan formation events: oversee the annual Discipleship Day and other formation events sponsored by the Bishop's office. Redesign and implement a new version of Fresh Start, provide support to EFM, and arrange for clergy continuing education opportunities.
3. Consultation: be available to work directly with congregations and convocations to develop local formation programs for adults and young people as needed.
4. Curriculum & Resource Development: discover, develop, and communicate curriculum ideas and resources with the congregations of the diocese. This will include specifically the development of a catechetical framework for Confirmation. This may include the production of online learning and video-based classes.
5. Commission on Ministry: work with the Commission on Ministry to develop resources and opportunities for those nominees who are recommended for further studies locally or in lay ministries.

Central to this work, as indicated, is a vision of expanding lay ministries in our diocese and providing a quality formation process whereby interested persons may discern, grow, and be nurtured in such development. Integral to this effort is identifying the real needs of congregations and coordinating with the existing leadership to see what areas need growth and further cultivation.

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I look forward to the fruits gleaned in our Diocesan Jubilee Year and the ways in which we might all remember, reorient and renew our commitment to our mutual bonds of discipleship and growth in following Jesus. I am deeply grateful to be a part of this journey and look forward to the opportunities and challenges before us.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Joy H. Blaylock, Ph.D, Canon Missioner for Discipleship

## REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONS

### AFFIRMATIVE AGING

The mission of the Commission on Affirmative Aging is to enrich the lives of aging individuals and the caregivers of elderly persons who may be vulnerable, at risk, or who require assistance in one or more spheres of life. Our vision is an ideal aging experience for all.

The Commission met five times throughout 2019, including a day-long workshop on dementia entitled the “Silver Tsunami” presented at St. James Episcopal Church in Fairhope, Alabama. The workshop was well attended and well received. Members of the Commission said they felt invigorated and renewed in their ministries to the aging and appreciated the positive evaluations of the workshop participants. We also gained a deeper understanding of the importance of educating parishioners on the legal and moral issues facing caregivers.

The Commission is planning a second **dementia workshop for March 7, 2020** at St. Agatha’s Episcopal Church in DeFuniak Springs, Florida.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Sara D. Phillips, Chair

### CURSILLO

The Cursillo ministry is alive and well in the Dioceses of the Central Gulf Coast. Below are some of the yearly highlights:

1. There were three Cursillo weekends held this year with a total of 89 pilgrims in attendance. We have a contract in place with Beckwith with dates established for three weekends in 2020. We have established September, January and the late April/May time frame as consistent months for weekends. We have moved away from Mother’s Day weekend in an effort to not have the Mother’s Day conflict.
2. Three Ultreyas were held throughout the diocese that were all combined with the weekend R&R’s. We are finding that if we can combine the R&R with the Ultreya we get better participation.
3. This year Cursillo sponsored the Saturday night diner and party at BayLights and have committed to hosting this event at BayLights for 2020.
4. Awarded the Mark Wilson Scholarship for a first-year seminarian to Craig and Amanda Doshier as a couple. We are proud of them and their commitment and contributions to Cursillo movement and we look forward to their return to our diocese.
5. A one-day training was offered with folks who are excited about being on a future staff.
6. The commission has concentrated on updating the major role staff notebooks to aid the staff in consistency and clarity of process.

The focus for 2020 is to maintain the excitement of the Cursillo Movement while spreading the love of Christ while we raise up leaders in our parishes.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lori Bates, Chair  
Rev. 1/29/20



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### DIOCESAN MISSIONS

The Commission on Diocesan Missions held the fourteenth First Timers Meeting at the beginning of the 2019 Diocesan Convention at St James Episcopal Church, Fairhope, Alabama. Thirty-two attendees from nineteen Congregations were at the meeting. The main idea of the meeting is to have a time when delegates from small congregations and first-time delegates can together to meet and to learn a little about the workings of the Convention and the Diocese. Bishop Russell Kendrick and The Rev. De Freeman, Rector of St. James, welcomed the attendees. The Rev. Dr. Margaret Shephard, St. Andrew's, Panama City, President of the Standing Committee, The Rev. Deacon Ed Richards, St. Thomas, Laguna Beach, Secretary of the Diocese, Mrs. Sally Crenshaw, Holy Trinity, Pensacola, Secretary of the Standing Committee, and The Rev. Mary Alice Mathison, Grace Church and St. Thomas, presented very interesting information about the Convention and the Diocese and answered questions. The members of the Commission thank all who helped to make this meeting a success,

The Commission did not have formal meetings during 2019. Many of the members are working on other committees and attending many of the Diocesan workshops. The members continue to support the work of the Diocese. I wish to thank the Commission members for all their work in the Diocese.

Thank you to Bishop Russell and the entire Diocesan Staff for all that they do to support the work of the Diocese.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lynn Ferren, Chair

### GLOBAL MISSION ENGAGEMENT

In 2019-20 the Commission made strides in carrying out its commitment to change its philosophical approach to mission ministry. Instead of sponsoring mission trips that are singular in nature the Commission's focus was aimed at mission engagement that will aid local citizenry become self-sustaining in providing their own medical care, potable water, church support, education programs, salaries for teachers and training in vocational skills.

To this end the Commission has been quite active in its global mission ministry. Since our last Diocesan convention in February 2019 the Commission has lent support to, sponsored in total, or partnered with others to sponsor the following:

#### **I. Baluba, Zambia, Africa:**

1. April 2019 – Zambia, Africa: Supported an exploratory trip for Commission member the Rev. Deacon Clelia Garrity to visit the Baluba (translated “Lost Community”), in Zambia, Africa, with a view to determine if that community met our criterion for participation in the support and development of a primary health care program.
2. May 2019 – Report on Trip to Zambia: Heard the report on the fact-finding trip to Baluba, Zambia and learned that Baluba is remote with no electricity, no potable water, no sanitation facilities, no access to basic medical needs, but the local people had an eagerness to learn.

Learned that the community of Baluba and surrounding area consisted of 70 tribes who spoke 18 dialects, and that there are multiple resources, including the Ministry of Health, with which we can partner on this project.

Decided it would be feasible to work with the Baluba community and existing resources to partner in the development of a project that includes sex education, primary health care, health education, midwifery, sanitation facilities, a small pharmacy to dispense “over-the-counter” medications, a source of potable water, and to raise up local leaders.

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3. Ongoing Ministry Established in Zambia: To date we have undertaken the following in furtherance of our commitment to accept the community of Baluba and its' surrounding area as a mission project:
  - a. Helped in the establishment of a medication formulary for Baluba and its' surrounding area and the establishment of a pharmacy to dispense medications.
  - b. Committed funds from our Diocesan budget to provide non-prescription over-the-counter medication for the community of Baluba and surrounding area for two months.
  - c. Worked with others to raise funds necessary to provide medication for a year to the area of Baluba and surrounding area.
  - d. Made a commitment to help raise a team of medical professionals with a dermatologist, an OBGYN MD and nurses to travel to Baluba and hold medical clinics in late June 2020.
  - e. Worked toward having a trained nurse go to Baluba one day each month once the pharmacy is operational.
  - f. Explored the possibility of having a seminary student from Yale take his/her 2-week internship in Baluba.
  - g. Committed funds from our Diocesan budget to provide a full tuition scholarship to a Zambian woman, Raechel Chimfwembe, the wife of the Baluba's pastor, to attend a local accredited nursing school to obtain a bachelor of science degree in nursing including midwifery. In return she has made the commitment that upon graduation she will provide nursing and midwife services to the Baluba and surrounding area free of charge. She will also be responsible for all incidental costs of attending school and obtaining her education.
  - h. From our Diocesan budget we agreed to contribute toward the expenses to make it possible for Victor Chimfwembe, the Baluba's pastor, to travel from Zambia to our Diocese with a view to his speaking at various churches to explain the conditions in Baluba, our involvement there and generate interest for support of our ministry there. (Victor is our local contact in Zambia and is committed to this ministry.)
4. Our Expectations for Mission Ministry in Zambia for 2020: Assuming the Convention approves our budget request the Commission expects to fulfill its commitment to the 70 tribes in the Baluba and surrounding area to do the following:
  - a. Continue to provide the nursing/midwife tuition scholarship so long as Raechel fulfills her commitment to maintain a good academic standing and personally obtain other sources for all expenses incidental to her schooling.
  - b. In addition to our financial support for the pharmacy we will work to obtain funding to continue to supply medications for the pharmacy established in Zambia for the entire year.
  - c. Work with local government officials to identify and help implement available government programs to help the people in this impoverished area.
  - d. Continue to support all aspects of our ministry outlined above and seek ways to aid the Baluba community to become self-sufficient in these matters.

### **II. Education Mission Ministry to the Dominican Republic –College Scholarships, Professional Workshops, Four Year Episcopal College:**

Since 2017 we have sponsored a team of Doctorate level educators from Mobile and our partners from the University of Monterey, Mexico where this team organized, wrote the curriculum for and then lead a program of professional workshops and retreats for the teachers, clergy and administrators in the Episcopal parochial schools throughout the Dominican Republic.

The Episcopal parochial school system in the Dominican Republic consist of 26 schools and approximately 6,400 students. These workshops and retreats were prepared based on the express needs of the teachers and administrators and are aimed at helping them become better teachers and educators.

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Dominican Bishop Moises has stated that in his travels around the diocese he is convinced that “improvement is happening in a major way (in the school system)” and our team “has made considerable contributions to these changes”.

During 2019 we continued to support this Education Ministry. Following are highlights of this past year’s activities:

1. Supported two additional workshops/retreats for teachers, administrators and clergy in the Dominican Republic Episcopal School system. These workshops being our 5<sup>th</sup> (in May) and 6<sup>th</sup> (in December).
2. Saw staffing of these workshops expand to include representatives from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.
3. Our discussions with Dominican Bishop Moises to establish a vocational school in the DR evolved into Bishop Moises desiring to establish an Episcopal four-year college. We are working with the Dominican Diocese and other professional educators in an effort to make this become a reality.
4. Brought to a reality an official and formal relationship between the Episcopal schools in the Dominican Republic and the University of South Alabama whereby the University will offer scholarships to graduates of the Dominican Episcopal schools. The memorandum of agreement was officially signed in a ceremony during our December 2019 mission visit.
5. Approved a grant of \$1200 from our Diocesan budget to purchase 2 computers (out of a need for 4) for use in “pilot” programs for the Dominican Episcopal schools to explore (with our team’s guidance) the use of today’s technology in the classroom.
6. We challenged Missionary Tom McGowan and the University of Nebraska team members to match our grant of two computers and they accepted the challenge so that the need for 4 computers for this pilot program was met.
7. Made a commitment that, depending upon the Convention approving our budget request, we would continue to support this ministry throughout 2020.

### **III. Construction of Church Furniture for the Episcopal Churches in the Dominican Republic:**

Since 2006 we have sponsored annual construction missions to the Dominican Republic. Our mission is to build all of the church furniture necessary for an empty room to become a comfortable, attractive and functional house of worship. Our team typically builds 20 to 26 pews along with clergy chairs, a bishop’s chair, acolyte benches, an altar, pulpit, lectern, baptismal font, credence table and book cases.

During this time our team has earned the reputation of building durable and attractive church furniture and our furniture is in high demand.

In March 2019 we sponsored our 16<sup>th</sup> such Construction Mission and built furniture for Iglesia Santisma Trinidad (church of the Holy Trinity) in Santo Domingo.

We also donated a sun tarp to the Episcopal school Colegio San Andres in Santo Domingo and built a conference table for the office of Dominican Bishop Moises.

The team worked very hard at fundraising and was able to cover the cost of this mission without requesting assistance from our Diocesan budget.

We have our 17<sup>th</sup> mission planned for March 2020 when we have been asked to build the furniture necessary to convert a room in the Dominican office into a chapel.

### **IV. Haiti: Potable Water, Nursing, Medical Care, Education:**

We concluded our 3-year commitment to help the village of Martel, Haiti become self-sufficient in providing medical care, education in areas of community health and personal hygiene, and maintaining a sustainable source of potable water.

Unfortunately, the discord of Haiti's national government has made it impossible for us to safely return to Haiti but our local contacts have reported that programs we helped put in place are still serving the community.

### **V. Mission to Meaningfully Minister to Refugees At Our Boarder**

1. In a series of discussions, the Commission considered the challenges faced by those seeking asylum in the United States and the backlog of individuals and families at our Mexican border as a result of the newly enacted Migration Protection Policy (MPP), also known as the Remain in Mexico program.
2. We participated in sponsoring a "fact finding" trip to the border in early August in order to see firsthand what was happening there and to be better informed as to how we could become meaningfully involved in a Christian way.
3. Upon receiving a report from the "fact finding" group we met with Bishop Russell and accepted his suggestion that the Diocese form a Coalition Task Force to Address the Border Crisis and that such Task Force be organized under the umbrella of the Commission on Global Mission Engagement.
4. In September 2019 an organizational meeting was held for this Task Force and was attended by fifteen individuals representing nine congregations from throughout the Diocese.
5. Following this organizational meeting the Task Force has sponsored a second team of 13 individuals to the US-Mexican Border. (A third team of 16 individuals will travel to the border in mid-February 2020.) While there they were engaged in the following:
  - a. Preparation and serving of approximately two thousand meals to those awaiting their Immigration Court Dates.
  - b. Distribution of several hundred Spanish language New Testament Bibles.

At present a fourth mission is for June 2020 is being planned. This team will be comprised of both youth and adults.

6. This ministry has rapidly gained widespread support throughout the Diocese and we are prayerfully optimistic that it will continue to grow and help ease the difficult lives of so many in need.

### **VI. February 2019 –Bate Palave, Dominican Republic – Medical Care, Potable Water:**

In 2018 we concluded our commitment to help this village and surrounding area become self-sufficient with a sustainable source of potable water, year-round health care in the form of regularly scheduled visits by a qualified nurse, regular classes in personal hygiene and community health and raising up local leaders to sustain these projects.

In 2019 we considered a request by local leaders in Bate Palave to have a medical team hold a week of clinics. After consideration we concluded that we had accomplished our objectives and fulfilled our commitment to Bate Palave, that the community had local leaders and was self-sufficient in our targeted areas, and that our resources would be best spent on other projects with more pressing needs. We will continue to maintain contact with the local leaders in Bate Palave and offer assistance consistent with our original objectives of helping them be self-sufficient in the areas of health care and potable water.

### **VII. Summer of 2019 – Youth Mission Trip – Hurricane Recovery:**

We worked jointly with our Diocesan Youth Commission in sponsoring a youth mission to Texas to participate in a program titled "Episcopal Strong" in which youth from our diocese would help with recovery from Hurricane Harvey. Unfortunately, due to competing time demands on today's teenagers we were not successful in finding teenagers willing to participate in this ministry.

The Commission will continue to work with the Diocesan Youth Commission with the hope of having missions that involve our young churchmen.

**VIII. July 2019 – Potable Water for Iglesia San Marcos, Haina, Dominican Republic:**

Maintained contact with the church and school system at San Marcos de Haina, Dominican Republic, to confirm the fresh water well and osmosis water purification system we previously installed were still functioning and providing the church and school of approximately 900 students with potable water.

**IX. “Cross Roads” Medical Clinic in Ft Walton Beach, FL:**

We had previously made a commitment to support the project known as “Cross Roads” with an aim of establishing an indigent medical clinic in Ft. Walton Beach. In pursuit of this commitment we had discussions with the “Bridgeway” mental health clinic in a neighboring community to seek the benefit of their experience. As a result of the ensuing discussions Bridgeway became interested in Ft. Walton Beach as a site and agreed to open a satellite clinic of their own there. With our blessing they took over the project and invited two members of our exploration group to become members of the Bridgeway board.

**X. Guatemala Family Food, Housing and Schooling Program:**

In 2019 we further considered the possibility of becoming sponsors of a program of aiding Guatemalan families by providing assistance with food, schooling and housing. We ultimately decided to table participation in this ministry for the present time.

**XI. Global Episcopal Mission Network:**

We explored the feasibility and benefits of becoming a member of the Global Episcopal Mission Network. We ultimately decided that there were more pressing demands on our limited budget at this time and deferred this for future consideration.

**XII. Dental Mission to Haiti:**

We agreed to support a dental clinic mission trip to Haiti to be held in January 2020. Before the trip, however, the team’s local contact in Haiti notified them that the Government was unstable and that it would not be safe for them to go to Haiti at this time. The team hopes things will stabilize and that they will be able to follow-up and have this clinic later this year. We have assured this mission group that, assuming the Convention approves our budget request, they will have our financial support.

**XIII. 2019 – Dental Mission to Dominican Republic:**

We worked with a group of Alabama dentists to assist them in starting a dental ministry to the Dominican Republic. The group ultimately decided to not undertake this project at this time.

**XIV. Throughout 2019 – “Home Team and Go Team”:**

Continued with our program of having a “Home Team” and a “Go Team” for our mission ministries. The “Go Team” being the individual missionaries actually going on the trips. The “Home Team” being the people at home who pray for the mission and help with financial support. Home Team support is essential for our mission ministries to be successful.

**XV. Throughout 2019 – Within Our Diocese:**

Continued with ongoing efforts to learn of mission work being done by congregations throughout the Diocese and to offer the Commission’s help and support.

**XVI. Looking Forward to 2020:**

Many of the above ministries are ongoing and will continue into 2020.

The Commission has a commitment to not only continue with these ministries to conclusion but also to actively seek out new opportunities in the ministry of Global mission engagement.

## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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The Commission stresses that the mission ministries sponsored by the Commission are open to all adult communicants of the Diocese and that an ability to speak a foreign language is not necessary in order to be a contributing member to this ministry or a member of a particular mission team.

**In summary** the Commission on Global Mission Engagement is an active, involved, passionate, dedicated and hard-working Commission with a commitment to continue the expansion of our global mission ministry to the extent that prayer, manpower and finances will permit. We pray that we shall continue to be led by the Holy Spirit as this exciting ministry continues to unfold.

However, mission ministry can not exist without the prayerful and financial support from the Diocese and the “Home Team”. We ask for your prayers as this exciting and rewarding ministry continues to grow and affect the lives of so many in need.

Respectfully submitted,  
Geary Gaston, Chair

### **PRISON MINISTRY**

The Commission on Prison Ministry continued its efforts to reach out to those who are incarcerated, support their families, increase awareness of reentry programs, and address the challenges in the prison systems of Alabama and Florida.

We were pleased to welcome Mr. Britt Landrum as our Commission’s Liaison to the Diocesan Standing Committee. We completed the Study Guide for *The Sun Does Shine*, the autobiography of an innocent man who spent 30 years on Alabama’s Death Row. Four church families completed the Study during the year, and we encourage others to examine how God’s Love can change lives in the most inhumane circumstances.

We provided financial, spiritual, and physical support for KAIROS Outside South Alabama Weekends in April and October. KAIROS Outside Northwest Florida also conducted a weekend retreat in Milton FL in October. These retreats provide a powerful message of God’s Love and our personal support for women who have been impacted by incarceration.

The 2018 General Convention passed Resolution D077, which calls for the repeal of the Death Penalty in the United States. Bishop Russell tasked the Commission on Prison Ministry with the responsibility of assisting our church families to prayerfully consider this Resolution.

The Mobile Area Interfaith Council (MAIC) is a multi-agency/faith-based reentry effort for Mobile and beyond, and our Diocesan church families are invited to join in their endeavors. Commission Member Mary Ann White (All Saints, Mobile) serves as our liaison with MAIC.

Commission Member Libby Fisher (Christ the King, Santa Rosa Beach) completed a program called *Outrageous Justice*, developed by the Prison Fellowship Organization, a national prison-ministry endeavor. The curriculum is meant to inform Christian communities on how God is calling us to action regarding the problems in our justice system. The Commission has ordered copies of the *Outrageous Justice* Study Guide, and will be offering them to our church families.

We are in the process of developing an expanded Prison Commission webpage, which will provide resources and service opportunities in support of prison ministry.

We continue to publish the “Prison Cycle of Prayer” and encourage all congregations to use it as part of their “Prayers of the People”. (Look for a copy in your Convention Bag of Goodies.)

## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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As we celebrate our Diocese's 50<sup>th</sup> Year in 2020, we look ahead to our December Jubilee Celebration, when we will be joined by Bryan Stevenson, author of *Just Mercy* and founder of the Equal Justice Initiative. The Commission on Prison Ministry will continue to invite and support our church families to help provide those in prison with amendment of life and hope for the future.

Prayerfully submitted,  
Wayne E. Verry, Chair

### **RACIAL JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION**

As a direct result of your prayerful, physical and fiscal support—and with God's help—the holy work of racial reconciliation and healing is showing signs of engagement and progress in our Diocese.

Our members conducted five (5) workshops at key places around our Diocese (St. Jude's, Niceville; St. Christopher's, Pensacola; St. Andrews Panama City; Trinity, Mobile; and St. Mark's Troy). To increase our capacity and assure sustainable progress we have been training additional facilitators along the way. We have eight (8) workshops planned in 2020 if we have the funding and if we have host parishes. Our workshops have also been visited by members of AME congregations, Missionary Baptists, Southern Baptists, United Methodists, and Roman Catholics in communities served by our Episcopal parishes. Some folks who visit aren't sure they even believe in God, but who realize our current relationship with people of color in general, is not sustainable. We introduce them to God's vision of a Just World in His Just Future.

We began a Speaker Series which also includes a gathering the next morning for "Holy Grounds & Rounds" (coffee & donuts) for a more intimate session with the guest speaker and locals about how we move forward together. For 2020 and going forward, we have at least 15 persons volunteering to be in our speaker series.

Our "Resources" list on our website is updated frequently with choices any Episcopalian and any parish may use to foster conversation, gatherings, study groups, and deep dives into the issues. [www.diocgc.org/racial-justice-resources](http://www.diocgc.org/racial-justice-resources).

Recognizing that racial discrimination is not a limiting binary black/white issue, we reached out to St. Anna's (Poarch) and spent the day with the Native American Creek Museum in Atmore and held a Commission meeting at the church. Our members were exposed to a rich and mostly untold history, which included the importance of Episcopalian efforts there years ago. We plan to continue dialogue and personal visits for the Green Corn Festival (renewal, forgiveness) and the Thanksgiving POW-WOW.

Moreover, we have held in-service training sessions for Commission members and invited guests. Our class on Implicit Bias and Prejudice was presented by Dr. Elizabeth Schlosser from Good Shepherd, Mobile was conducted at Christ Church Cathedral. In 2020, we have an in-service training on Internalized Oppression planned.

For the first time in many years, our Diocese was a full partner in organizing and managing the annual Jonathan Myrick Daniels and Alabama Martyrs Pilgrimage to Hayneville, AL. This effort will grow to include post-pilgrimage programs to strengthen and enlarge the message. We received many compliments for the work there.

We led four (4) pilgrimages from different originations in our Diocese to Montgomery, AL to visit various sites including the Equal Justice Initiative's Museum and Memorial. We close each day with meditation and discussion at historic Good Shepherd Episcopal church in Montgomery. Commission members created a pilgrimage booklet that has been used hundreds of times and borrowed by other groups.

## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

Members of our Commission were invited to lead a pilgrimage for the Presiding Bishop and TEC's Executive Council in Montgomery based on the experience and expertise we have developed. In 2020 we plan three (3) such pilgrimages and a new three (3) day pilgrimage to connect with places in Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham (open to anyone interested, but space is limited). We also plan a one-day pilgrimage to the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana which instead of glorifying the owners' life it explores the challenges of the people who were enslaved there. Many of our times on these holy highways are spent with partners such as Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Daphne, AL, an historic African American church. Several United Methodists congregations traveled with us and are now leading their own pilgrimages.

We have created a study guide for a Diocesan book-read in anticipation of our visit by Bryan Stevenson who authored the highly acclaimed book *Just Mercy*. This will be shared early 2020.

Our members write articles for the *Coastline* and our Facebook feed reaches hundreds of thousands.

Also in 2020 we will share and promote a small-groups initiative called ***"Soup with a Group—Easy Meals, Engaging Conversations"*** which is similar in format to Sharing Faith Dinners, but with no sunset timeline. Safe, intimate conversations allow us to examine our past and consider going forward promoting healing relationships.

In addition to the support mentioned above, we especially thank the parishes, clergy and lay leadership who have supported and hosted our efforts in 2019. We also thank in advance all those supporting this holy work in 2020 – You are our indispensable partners! Many blessings, All.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Moore & Joe McDaniel, Jr., Co-Chairs of the Commission on Racial Justice & Reconciliation

## REPORTS OF THE DIOCESAN COORDINATORS

### BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW

Report forthcoming

### CHAPLAINS TO RETIRED CLERGY & CLERGY SPOUSES

A total of 128 households of retired clergy and clergy widows are associated with the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast in some way. Of this total, 81 are canonically resident in the Diocese and 99 are actually living within the Diocese. Some who are canonically resident live elsewhere and some live in the Central Gulf Coast while retaining canonical residence where they served. Several retired clergy who have left the Episcopal Church are also included in that number because they continue to draw a pension from the Church Pension Fund.

At the forty-eighth annual convention of the Diocese, held at St. James, Fairhope, on February 14-16, 2019, Bishop Kendrick appointed six persons to serve as chaplains to clergy retirees and widows. Chaplains are the Rev. John and Ann Phillips of Pensacola, The Rev. Joe Hagberg of Panama City Beach, Sheila Campbell of Fort Walton Beach, and the Rev. Richard and Pam Schmidt of Fairhope, who serve as coordinators of the chaplains.

The bishop is primary pastor to retired clergy and their families, with the parochial clergy in the localities where they live providing day-to-day pastoral care. The chaplains provide additional support for retirees as necessary and when asked by the bishop. The chaplains provide this support in several ways:

- Regular contact. The chaplains meet once a year to review the names of all 128 retirees, paying special attention to new arrivals. They divide up the names of those residing within the boundaries of the Diocese and make at least one annual visit or other contact with each household to verify information and inquire as to their general wellbeing.



## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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- Personal visits. When a chaplain becomes aware of a hospitalization or other situation calling for more attention than the bishop and parochial clergy can give, they seek out the retiree or widow in question and, if desired, visit the retiree or widow to assist as needed.
- Annual luncheon. The chaplains coordinate an annual luncheon for retirees, hosted by the bishop and including time for renewing old friendships and a program designed by the chaplains. The 2019 luncheon took place in October at St. Paul's, Daphne, and included presentations by four of the chaplains on dealing with loneliness and loss of identity after retirement. Thirty-four persons attended the luncheon.
- Geezer Gazette. A newsletter for retirees of the Diocese called the Geezer Gazette is produced and mailed periodically, with articles by retirees on the joys and challenges of retirement and related issues.
- Five of the Central Gulf Coast's chaplains attended a three-day conference for chaplains to the retired from throughout the Episcopal Church in Denver, Colo., in May. Workshops focused on finances, health issues, spiritual needs, widows' concerns, and other matters.

An informal group of a dozen or more retirees meet six times a year for lunch and fellowship at Baldwin House, an assisted living facility in Baldwin County, the luncheon scheduled and arranged by the chaplains. Several clergy spouses take lunch together at a nearby restaurant at the same time.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Richard H. and Pamela Schmidt, Coordinators

### **CONGREGATIONAL ENRICHMENT VENTURE**

The Congregational Enrichment Venture (CEV) for the past two years, has offered a two year training program for churches to explore new and creative ways to further the Kingdom of God, not merely to survive but to be a vital and viable congregation.

The theme of the first year was ***Hopeful Leadership***. During our sessions, we explored answers to questions such as: What kind of qualities, interactions and relationships create and sustain healthy churches? What type of leadership advances, rather than impedes, the mission of the church in the local congregation? How do we address change and conflict? What are the hidden dynamics that might frustrate the life of a church?

The second year's theme was ***Purposeful Apostleship***. We explored ways by which congregations can more fully engage in mission within and beyond our walls. With the input of the participating churches, we discussed the practical aspects of mission including stewardship, evangelism, outreach and discipleship.

Due to Hurricane Michael, the early workshops in 2019 had to be cancelled and were moved to March and May. The work on Stewardship was led by the Rev. Reid McCormick on March 23. He presented exciting ways to reconstruct stewardship.

In the afternoon we focused on Outreach and Engagement with your Community, led by the Rev. Hendree Harrison. The focus was: What does Outreach look like? How can we reach out to and be more fully in the community?

The final offering in May ended with a bang featuring The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, Canon for Evangelism to the Presiding Bishop. She talked about ways to deal with the fear of evangelism. It was a riveting day! Many thanks to the CEV Commission and all its hard work, and to the Rev. Greg Hien and the folks at St. Jude's, Niceville for hosting CEV.

## **REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

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The year ended with the commission taking a look back over the two years, and discussed where we might go from here.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Dr. Margaret Shepard, Coordinator

### **DAUGHTERS OF THE KING**

The Central Gulf Coast Diocesan Assembly of The Order of the Daughters of the King® currently has 224 members in 23 parish chapters and 19 members called Daughters at Large who are in parishes without chapters. Two chapters were instituted in 2019, both In Mobile: Elizabeth Ferard Chapter at Trinity on September 8 and the Good Shepherd Disciples Chapter at Church of the Good Shepherd on September 15. Early in 2020 an informational meeting about the Order will take place at St. Paul's in Daphne, AL.

Members of The Order undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating two Rules:

1. Rule of Prayer: praying daily for the extension of Christ's Kingdom, their clergy, the spiritual growth of their parish, needs brought to their attention, and for members of the Order;
2. Rule of Service: participating regularly in the worship, study and work of the Church, assisting their priests in the ministry of the Church, and bringing others to a knowledge and love of Christ.

The Central Gulf Coast Assembly meets twice a year in the spring and fall. Last spring's assembly took place at St. Simon's on the Sound, Ft. Walton Beach, FL in March. The keynote speaker was Province IV President, Dr. Jane Searcy who spoke on "Be Still and Know," based on Psalm 46, the scripture chosen as a theme for the Province this triennium. Bishop Russell was the celebrant and homilist at the Eucharist.

Last fall the Assembly took place at Christ Church, Pensacola in September. The keynote speaker was the Rev. Katie Gillett, Associate Priest and member of the Daughters of the King chapter at Christ Church. Her focus was on prayer as experienced through music.

Each year in October, delegates from the diocese attend the Province IV DOK Fall Assembly at Kanuga Episcopal Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC. Last October two diocesan Daughters attended.

Diocesan Daughters organized and attended a prayer chapel during the Diocesan Annual Church Convention at St. James in Fairhope, providing prayer support throughout the proceedings. This is traditionally an annual event.

Respectfully submitted,  
Beth Moore, Diocesan Assembly President

### **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE COORDINATOR**

This committee has spent a great deal of time assisting congregations in the preparation of written disaster plans. In 2019, there were two workshops for plan writing. Much time was devoted to creating a list of Disaster Preparedness Coordinators for every parish and mission. It is important for plans to exist so that no detail might be omitted if the time comes to prepare a church for a catastrophic weather event. Coordinators should be lay people so that the clergy is free for pastoral concerns within the congregation.

In 2020, the diocesan coordinator will be reaching out to update the list of coordinators. She will also be working with any parish that does not presently have a written plan. She will assist new coordinators as they determine the particular needs of their church and will plan a workshop or a series of more informal meetings if it determined that there is a need.

## **REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

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Since most education will be done between the diocesan coordinator and the parish coordinators, there are no deadlines. With the possible exception of a small amount of money to cover document duplication and possibly a small amount for travel within the diocese, there is no budget request for this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Tricia Spencer, Deacon and Coordinator

### **ECUMENICAL OFFICER FOR ALABAMA**

This year, I have continued to work with Mobile Christian Jewish Dialogue (MCJD), Trialogue, Christus Institute, and Center for Interreligious Understanding (CIU) as a board member or member of the steering committee. Most of the events produced by these groups tend to be held on the campus of Spring Hill College. We have ventured to other locales, such as University of South Alabama and local religious organization facilities. For the second year, Trialogue The Christus Institute has brought speakers who have provided opportunities to expand our thinking beyond our local environ. For the second year, Trialogue has used its summer event as a service project. This year, it was a community dinner at Central Presbyterian.

I was fortunate to attend the National Workshop on Christian Unity (NWCU) this year. This gathering also provides the annual meeting of the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers (EDEIO). For the most part, each denomination has opportunities to gather separately to get to know each other and share activities in the respective judicatories.

Members of the Mobile area community gathered at Mobile Masjid al Islam on 24 March in response to the attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand. We came together as Christians, Jews, and Muslims to remember those killed and wounded, and to pray for broader interreligious understanding. We also remembered the several attacks on Jews and Christians in our own country, asking for God's guidance and wisdom to effectively work toward the eradication of hate and disenfranchisement. We had a great representation of Mobile Episcopalians; for that I am truly grateful.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Thomas K. Heard, Ecumenical & Interfaith Officer for Alabama

### **ECUMENICAL OFFICER FOR FLORIDA**

Bishop Kendrick meets occasionally with his Roman Catholic counterpart in Florida, the Most Rev. William Wack, C.S.C., bishop of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast also provided a place at St. Christopher's for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Pensacola to worship, after the departure of a portion of that congregation from St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Ecumenical efforts and opportunities on the grass-roots level are abundant and fruitful in Northwest Florida. Examples include but are not limited to: An annual ecumenical service on the Sunday afternoon before Thanksgiving for the downtown Episcopal, Protestant, and Roman Catholic congregations, including the neighboring Jewish synagogue; this year's service was held at First Baptist Church of Pensacola. A weekly dinner for the hungry at Grace Church, Panama City Beach that is served by several Episcopalian and Roman Catholic faith communities. At Saint Andrew's-by-the-Sea in Destin, both the Blue Door and Bicycle ministries for the needy and homeless enjoy the volunteer support of those from many denominations. The Ecumenical Choir of Walton County includes the voices from several local congregations, including Christ the King and Saint Agatha's Episcopal Churches. In Santa Rosa Beach, Communities of Transformation (COT) meets most Tuesday evenings throughout the year for dinner, a program, and discussion in the fellowship hall of Good News United Methodist Church: volunteers for this program are from several area churches including many from Christ the King in Santa Rosa Beach. COT empowers individuals and families who dream of having more income, emotional support, education—even hope – to realize those dreams. In Panama City, following upon a one year hiatus due to Hurricane Michael, December's annual ecumenical and interfaith World Aids Day Commemoration resumed at

## **REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

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Saint Andrew's Church on December 1st, 2019, a service that involved various parishes, pastors, and political leaders. The keynote speaker was the Rev. Dr. Malcom Marler, the Chief of Chaplain Services at the University of Alabama Medical Center in Birmingham. Dr. Marler is an Episcopal priest who came to the Episcopal Church after a long ministry as a Baptist chaplain, and for a decade was the chaplain of the AIDS unit at UAB; he drew upon those experiences in a presentation which focused upon choosing love, no matter the fear and public stigma surrounding AIDS. This observance also included a multicultural service with local African American parishes providing music and also involved pastors from evangelical and liturgical backgrounds. Each year, this observance partners with BASIC, an HIV/AIDS agency serving the needs of Florida's Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, and Washington Counties.

The words of the late Bishop Robert Terwilliger bear repeating: ecumenism should not be mistaken for substituting smaller church headquarters for larger ones! Instead, the preceding examples are but only a few of the many other ecumenical endeavors in our diocese that enable us to move forward with one another in a unity of shared faith and experience.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Rev. Joseph A. Hagberg, Ecumenical & Interfaith Officer for Florida

### **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EfM)**

Developed and administrated by the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, Education for Ministry is an adult-learning program available throughout the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. The four-year program offers Bible study, church history, theological reflection and related activities designed to help laypersons discern and apply their calls to ministry, as we are all called to do in our Baptismal vows.

As of November 2019, there were seven EfM groups meeting in the diocese; three in Pensacola and one each in Apalachicola, Daphne, Magnolia Springs and Panama City. There are 11 active mentors leading these groups. (Some groups have two co-mentors.) There are also an additional two trained and certified mentors who are not currently leading groups. In all, there 63 active participants. During 2019, 15 graduated the program after completing the four-year program.

A mentor-training event was scheduled for January 16-18, 2020, at Beckwith Camp and Convention Center, with 14 scheduled to attend and led by two trainers assigned by Sewanee. Of these 14, nine are active mentors in the diocese and one is a non-active mentor, each seeking re-certification. (Mentors must be re-certified every 18 months.) There was one participant from the diocese seeking certification as a mentor for the first time. The remaining four participants were from the diocese of Mississippi, Delaware and Kentucky (two). At least three mentors from the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast were re-certified at training events in other dioceses.

Respectively submitted,  
David M. Clothier, Coordinator

### **THE EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY**

Report forthcoming

### **EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT**

In the past few years natural disaster have become more numerous and more destructive. A large part of Episcopal Relief & Development's mission is to help the Episcopal Church respond pre and post natural disaster. In our diocese natural disaster is a way of life with hurricane season taking up half the year. That in no means makes us immune from other disasters as well.

## **REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

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In October 2018, Hurricane Michael roared ashore in the eastern part of our diocese. It destroyed homes, shattered lives and demolished the area infrastructure. Members from Episcopal Relief & Development's US Disaster Program immediately began to assist the diocese in its recovery efforts. From offers expert advice to the gift of a grant of \$250,000 the organization has been with the diocese every step of the way.

Episcopal Relief & Development has people throughout the diocese that work to educate each congregation on what the organization does in addition to disaster relief. Recently three areas have been identified:

1. Woman: Lower barriers to a woman's growth and development, and stop the ongoing violence against women that takes place in many parts of the world.
2. Children: Research shows that the first 1,000 days are foundational affecting a child's capacity to grow, learn and thrive over his or her entire life.
3. Climate: Our work with local Church and ecumenical partners is designed to help communities prepare for these disasters and recover as quickly as possible.

These congregation educators were called parish representatives, then network representatives and now are called ministry partners. Episcopal Relief & Development is a ministry and these people in each congregation are extremely helpful.

Thank you to Bishop Russell, the clergy and each ministry partner for the assisting Episcopal Relief & Development's continued growth in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eugene Johnston, Coordinator

### **MEN'S CONFERENCE**

Report forthcoming

### **UNITED THANK OFFERING REPORT**

This past year UTO chose Go: Crossing boundaries created by race, culture and economics to create communities that listen deeply and learn to live like Jesus as the grants focus. Our diocese received a grant for \$30,000 for a new ministry called JUST, Justice United Seeking Transformation in Pensacola. This social justice ministry seeks to transform Pensacola by creating a network of teams to address societal issues. This important project has volunteers from 17 congregations spanning 12 denominations and is a shining example of Christians reaching across boundaries for the greater good. In 2020 the focus is Bless: Share faith, practice generosity and compassion, and proclaim the good news of God in Christ with hope and humility. The focus for 2021 will be Act: Turn love into action by caring for God's creation to protect the most vulnerable who will bear the largest burden of pollution and climate change. The UTO Staff Officer, The Rev. Canon Heather Melton, and I are both available to assist anyone interested in writing a grant application.

Over the 50 years since our diocese was formed, we have received 25 grants totaling \$474,226. These grants have made it possible for so many new ministries to begin and existing ministries to grow. Each project has brought many blessings to our communities and congregations.

The people of our diocese continue to express their gratitude to God through The United Thank Offering. Every penny we contribute, makes new ministries possible throughout the world. Your good parking spot has helped support a Hispanic youth ministry in Marfa, Texas. The birth of a healthy child helped create a women's birthing center in South Sudan. It is vitally important that we all continue to practice thankfulness in our daily lives and those prayers make a difference both within ourselves and across the planet.

Our 2019 ingathering totaled approximately \$12,861.12. This is down from last year but I am hopeful that our good and generous diocese will increase our 2020 ingathering. I am thankful for the support and participation of each person and congregation.

Rev. 1/29/20

## REPORTS TO THE DIOCESAN CONVENTION

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The individual congregation amounts are as follows:

St. Monicas	Cantonment, Fl	\$113.65
St. Matthews	Chipley, Fl	\$278.00
St. Pauls	Daphne, Al	\$1990.00
Church of the Nativity	Dothan, Al	\$2844.55
St. James	Fairhope, Al	\$151.12
St. Pauls	Foley, Al	\$2014.16
St. Thomas	Greenville, Al	\$372.80
St. Francis of Assisi	Gulf Breeze, Fl	\$1120.96
Church of the Advent	Lillian, Al	\$377.00
St. Marys	Milton, Fl	\$780.66
St. Johns	Mobile, Al	\$254.98
St. Pauls	Mobile, Al	\$100.00
St. Thomas By-The-Sea	Panama City Beach, Fl	\$243.00
Christ Church	Pensacola, Fl	\$951.00
Holy Trinity	Pensacola, Fl	\$69.32
St. Marks	Troy, Al	\$1200.00

Respectfully submitted,  
Joyce Landers Diocesan UTO Coordinator, UTO Vice President

### **YOUTH MINISTRY**

Report forthcoming