“Two by Two, Let One Be You” is our new campaign for the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield Cursillo. It’s very fitting because most people come to Cursillo through an invitation from a sponsor who has already been through the weekend. Cursillo is something we want to share because it means so much to each of us. A sponsor and a candidate makes two, one of which, we hope, is you.

Cursillo comes from the Spanish word meaning ‘a short course’ because the program teaches us what being close to Christ can mean in your life. In just three days you can learn how to be a positive Christian influence in the world. Those of us who have completed our three-day Cursillo weekend have come to realize that the 4th Day equals the rest of our lives. It’s no secret club; we want you all to join our 4th Day Community.

Bishop Daniel Martins has endorsed Cursillo as part of our diocesan path to Christian Formation, and our mission is to make it available to all members of all the Eucharistic Communities in the Diocese of Springfield. As our presenter explained at Synod last October, we want to eliminate all the obstacles that might prevent you from coming to our next Cursillo weekend on June 18-21.

Your sponsor will help with getting an application filled out, transportation, maybe baby-sitting, pet-sitting, or a stand-in for coffee hour hostess. He or she will also help to see that your fees for room and board are paid.

The Secretariat is the guiding committee for Cursillo and we are raising money to pay for at least part of the fee. Sponsors also help pay, find donors, or maybe your church has funds available, but we are only asking $30 from each candidate for room, board, and materials for the entire weekend.
SPRINGFIELD CURRENT
A Newsletter of the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield

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Your contribution to this ministry of communication helps spread the word about what God is doing in our lives, in our congregations, in our diocese, and in the Episcopal Church at large. Please consider making a gift today.

We are committed to send our diocesan publication to all members and friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield. It is not necessary to contribute in order to receive The Springfield Current. Nevertheless, if you choose to support The Springfield Current, your contribution will be of great assistance in this ministry and is tax deductible.

Thank you for your support!
+ Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Bishop

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FROM THE BISHOP

Points of Light

We read a great deal in various media these days about a rising tide of atheism in our society—not just passive or quiet lack of belief in the existence of God, but an overt and increasingly passionate unbelief. Many times, Christians and other persons of faith, attack this atheism head-on, with counter-arguments of varying coherence and quality. (“Facebook Theology” is in interesting genre that probably deserves some closer study!)

But I wonder whether both atheists and counter-atheists are asking the wrong question. Some of you may have heard me quote Lutheran theologian Robert Jenson, who defines God this way: “God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead, having first raised Israel from Egypt.” Could it be that “Does God exist?” is not really the fundamental question? No historical event can be proven with test-tube-in-a-laboratory certainty. But an open-minded examination of the literary and historical data does support the conclusion that Jesus was not in his tomb on the third day after his crucifixion precisely because he had been raised from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus, not the existence of God, is the bedrock data point for Christian faith and Christian theology. If Jesus is risen from the dead, then the existence of God follows, because God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead.

The Christian hope is to experience resurrection writ large: To be conformed to Christ in a death like his so as to be conformed to Christ in a resurrection like his (Romans 6:5). This is the vision that beckons us throughout our journey in this world—a journey of gradually, inch by inch, step by step, one small decision or action compounded on tens of thousands of other small decisions and actions—toward being made holy, toward having the image of God in which we were created but which has been distorted by sin perfectly restored, toward looking completely like Jesus. This is why we pray and worship and work and give and share our lives with others who are on the same journey.

But we also experience resurrection writ small. If we are attentive, we can know our daily environments to be gleaming and resounding with nano-miracles: signs and tokens of order emerging out of chaos, of forgiveness healing guilt, of hope conquering despair, of light shining into darkness, and life overpowering death. It happens in nature (especially in springtime!), it happens in families and communities, and it happens in our hearts and minds. The same God who wonderfully created human nature and even more wonderfully restored it (Collect for Second Sunday after Christmas)—restored it by raising his Son Jesus from death to life—shows up when we’re looking for him and when we’re running from him, out in the open and in the nooks and crannies of our lives, with great power and with a gentle whisper.

Throughout the Diocese of Springfield there are scattered tokens of the power of Christ’s resurrection working among us more than we can ask or imagine: new vitality at the Church of the Redeemer in Cairo and at Trinity, Mattoon; the beginning of a new pastoral ministry at our Cathedral Church in Springfield; exciting new life and growth at St Andrew’s, Carbondale; ongoing vitality at our “anchor” parishes of St George’s, Belleville and Emmanuel, Champaign … the list could go on. Have I left out something important? I hope I have! Let us know, and we’ll sing praises where praises need to be sung. The challenges are great, but Grace is greater.

It is my joy to be among you serving the God who raised Jesus from the dead.

+Daniel

Spring 2015
Members of the 2014 Episcopal Diocese of Springfield Cursillo

We have reserved ToddHall in Columbia, IL for our next Cursillo weekend. It will be held on June 18-21, 2015. The accommodations are excellent, in beautiful tranquil surroundings.

NEW LOOK AT ST. MICHAEL’S

This year, the possibility of adding pews was discussed, measurements made, and verification with an architect regarding floor-loading if pews were added. The cost of pews, or cathedral chairs, was examined and cost estimates were very expensive.

The closing of St. Laurence Church-Effingham made available some very serviceable church furniture; pews, choir stalls, pew screens, etc. With the possibility of obtaining this furniture from St. Laurence-Effingham, considerable discussions were held, including a special meeting to talk about the pros-cons of ‘fixed seating’ vs. chairs. The vote was overwhelming to accept the pews.

The Vicar and several members went to Effingham to look at the furniture, take inventory, check sizes, as well as see what might be used. This information was transferred to scaled drawings, allowing for a wider center aisle, side aisles, set-back from the communion rail, use of the choir stalls and several single pews.

With the decision to accept the St. Laurence furniture, a group of four went to Effingham to prepare everything for loading the following day. Hardware was removed, pews moved closer to the doors, etc. Early the following morning, a large U-Haul, a flatbed trailer and two cargo vans headed up Interstate I-70. Shortly after Noon, everything was loaded, a quick lunch break, then back to O’Fallon.

NEW LOOK AT ST. MICHAEL’S

When the initial plans were developed for St. Michael’s-O’Fallon, the present nave was intended for a parish hall, to which a formal worship building would be added later. With this in mind, chairs were used to allow for multi-uses and for church seating.

Carved Wooden Eagle Lectern

Continued from cover

weekend. We have reserved ToddHall in Columbia, IL for our next Cursillo weekend on June 18-21, 2015. The accommodations are excellent, in beautiful tranquil surroundings. All 4th Day members are asked to remember the impact Cursillo made to your life and share it. Please identify yourself in your church and make invitations. You should have received Palanca in the mail recently. If you didn’t receive Palanca, make sure Margaret Brown at mkbpdr2@gmail.com has your current contact information. Anyone interested in more information should find materials and applications for Cursillo available at your church or by contacting the registrar, Carol McCrery (618-322-6296) at troub71@yahoo.com.
NEW LOOK AT ST. MICHAEL’S

Several ladies were waiting to clean the furniture as it was brought in to the nave and set in place. The empty nave had been marked with a centerline, aisle pew lines and the location of the first pew. From that, a simple spacer was placed between each row to give an exact 36” between pews. Later that afternoon, all of the pews were in place, hymnals and prayer books distributed in the bookracks, and everyone took a deep breath.

The pews were not anchored at this time to allow everyone to get comfortable with this type of seating. The nave now has seating for 138, plus the flexibility to bring in 2 chairs on the end of each pew, for a total seating of 184 persons.

It was obvious that several of the pews did not have kneelers, however within a few days, wooden kneelers were made and installed by the vicar. The new kneelers were padded, covered and later stained to match the pews.

Suggestions were made regarding the spacing between the pews, even though 36” is an industry standard. If all of the pews were to be re-set to a wider dimension, one row of pews would be lost on each side. A compromise was to set two rows at 38”, and the remaining pews at 36”. We still had a problem that some of the pews had moisture damage at the base. We were able to match the pew stain and attach oak plywood panels, which were glued to the pew bases. The pews were finally anchored in place.

Another addition to the nave is a carved wooden eagle lectern, dating back to the dedication of the former St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in East St. Louis in 1906. The eagle had been used at the former Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Fairview Heights, then placed in storage. There had been some damage to the reading shelf, but the broken parts were rebuilt. At present, there is a wireless microphone and battery-operated LED lights. The next thing will be to run electricity and audio connections to the eagle.

Sincere thanks to the Diocese, to the people at St. Laurence, and to all who worked on this project.
DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN SOCIAL CONCERNS
The Rev. Sheryl L. Black, Chair

ANTI-RACISM COMMISSION
The Rev. Christine C. Hopkins, Chair

The chair of the Anti-Racism Commission will participate in a half-day workshop on racism in the current times. The presentation will be on February 26 in Bloomington for the leadership team of the Illinois Conference of Churches. It will have a Christian focus and the main speaker will be Marcus Lucas, a member of NOBLE which is the National Association of Black Law Enforcement. Also featured will be Jim Nolan discussing a new program in Fairview Heights called Holy, Sacred Conversations. The goal of the workshop is to prepare Christian leaders to be better prepared to help their congregations to address the topic of racism.

DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Bill Techau, Chair

Christian Education
Bill Techau, Chair

Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign, has been trying new ways to revitalize Christian education. We have not stopped doing traditional offerings like Sunday School. Rather we have added events that involve parents, grandparents, children, and all members of the parish regardless of age.

In the fourth quarter of 2014, the occasion of the intergenerational event was the Feast of St. Nicholas. In the first quarter of 2015, our focus was on “God’s Creative Project” as described in Genesis 1, the Psalms, science, and poetry. In preparation for the event, one grandmother made large papier-mâché planets that Sunday School kids and teachers painted. These planets were then hung from the rafters of the Great Hall, where the event occurred.

Parishioners of all ages have enjoyed the events that were designed to be interactive with hands-on activities. Attendance has been solid.

These intergenerational endeavors have provided an opportunity for clergy and laity to collaborate together in both planning and execution. Mother Beth Maynard has given her creative support, counsel, and personal participation. What a blessing!

If anyone is interested in receiving more details, please contact me at bill.techau@gmail.com. Thank you.

DEPARTMENT OF EVANGELISM AND SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT
The Very Rev. David J. A. Halt

The Department of Evangelism and Spiritual Enrichment hosted Fr. Jay Sidebotham of Forward Movement and RenewalWorks on January 10, 2015. The event was very well attended by members of the Diocese, and we would like to thank Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign for hospitality in hosting the event. We will continue to support the use of RenewalWorks in the Diocese.

It is my hope to arrange a meeting this Spring of the Youth Department, Cursillo, and other interested parties for the purposes of expanding our opportunities for enrichment and retreat.

We are also actively involved in the organizing of the St. Michael’s Youth Conference June 7-12, 2015. Please be looking for registration forms in the next couple of weeks.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL MISSION STRATEGY (DGMS)
The Rev. Bruce DeGooyer

NATIONAL AND WORLD MISSIONS REPORT
Sandy Moore

Bishop Daniel and Brenda Martins, on behalf of the Diocese of Springfield, hosted Bishop Bill Godfrey of Peru over the weekend of Jan. 24-25, 2015. Mark (Evans) and I were privileged to join them for dinner on Saturday night. Bishop Godfrey joined Bishop Martins and Brenda in their previously-scheduled visit to Trinity in Lincoln that same weekend for the celebration of Eucharist. Bishop Godfrey described the challenges facing the ministries of the region, and laid out the plans for Peru to move
forward in forming several dioceses. Bishop Martins hopes make a trip to Peru for at least one of the installations of the new bishops.

I have been in email contact with the Rev. Lucas Ngassa of the Diocese of Tabora. Plans are in progress for Bishop Elias and his wife Lucy to visit Springfield on Oct. 9-19, 2015, which will include attendance at our Synod.

Father Earnest Nadeem of Pakistan, who visited our diocese last year, has a new email address earnestnadeem777@gmail.com.

Barbara Dugnolle, mother of Laurie Kellington, has shared with us her plans to go back into the mission field at age 83, on assignment to Southeast Asia. She writes:

“... I am a retread missionary from the 80’s and 90’s and as such I am now 83 years old. I feel that I have an almost dual responsibility to people supporting me in missions and also to encourage older men and women to reach out to the Lord and see what He might have in His plans for them. I know that personally when I started investigating about a future use and plan in my life things became exciting and each new day brings me in closer relationship with the Lord. It is very exciting. Please let me know about any questions you might have and I will try to answer them for you. Thank you for your interest.”

Barbara’s email is cbdugnolle@gmail.com. More information may be found at www.global-teams.net, or by contacting Brian or Laurie Kellington.

**MINISTRIES AND COMMITTEE NEWS**

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

_The Very Rev. David J. A. Halt, President_

The Standing Committee met on November 15, 2014 immediately following the meeting of the Diocesan Council. The only public business item was the testimonial for the ordination of Cameron Nations to the Diaconate. This business was concluded unanimously. The Standing Committee then met as a council of advice for The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins. Business concluded the meeting adjourned.

**DIOCESAN TRUSTEES REPORT,**

**THIRD QUARTER 2014**

_Donald Monty, Chairman_

Funds invested by the Diocesan Trustees experienced significant gains in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2014. The Endowment Fund gained 7.9% for the quarter while showing a 11.5% investment gain for the calendar year 2014, and the managed portion of the Combined Fund gained 7.8% in the fourth quarter while showing an investment gain of 11.2% for calendar year 2014.

The Diocesan Endowment Fund is invested in a managed portfolio. The value of the Endowment Fund decreased from $2,570,232 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2014 to a value of $2,743,761 on December 31, 2014. The investments gained $203,267 or 7.9%, for the quarter. There were withdrawals of $29,738 during the quarter. The Endowment Fund began 2014 with a balance of $2,570,321 and ended the year with a balance of $2,743,761. During the year, there were withdrawals of $117,342 and contributions of $2,791.

Most of the Combined Fund is also invested in a managed portfolio, but a portion of the Combined Fund is also invested in a short-term mutual fund. The managed portion of the Combined Fund increased in value from $2,978,196 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2014 to a value of $3,087,339 on December 31, 2014. These investments gained $232,319, or 7.8% for the fourth quarter. There were contributions of $83,683 and withdrawals of $206,859 in the managed portion of the Combined Fund for the quarter. The managed portion of the Combined Fund began 2014 with a balance of $2,775,300 and ended the year with a balance of $3,087,339. The December 31, 2014 balance reflects contributions of $396,876 and withdrawals of $405,492 for the calendar year. The portion of the Combined Fund invested in short-term mutual funds increased in value from $244,431 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2014 to $244,962 on December 31, 2014; however, the value of the short-term mutual funds decreased from $648,692 at the beginning of the year to $244,962 at the end of the year. The Diocesan Treasurer uses the short-term mutual fund as a place to invest money on a short term basis, and that amount will vary from time-to-time during the year depending on cash flow as revenues are received and expenses incurred. Overall, the value
The Combined Fund increased from $3,222,658 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2014 to $3,332,331 on December 31, 2014; however this was a decrease from $3,423,992 at the beginning of 2014.

The beginning of 2015 has seen some decline in financial markets. This is widely attributed to the sharp drop in the price of crude oil. The year 2014 also began with declines in financial markets, and there was considerable volatility in financial markets during 2014. However, in the end, 2014 was a good year overall for our investments. Hopefully, this will continue in 2015.

UNITED THANK OFFERING
Mrs. Jan Goossens, Outgoing Diocesan United Thank Offering Coordinator

The Mission of the United Thank Offering is to expand the circle of thankful people. To achieve this mission, we encourage daily prayers, offerings and awareness of the abundance of God’s blessings.

The Diocese of Springfield’s thankfulness in 2014 was represented by $10,005.82 with 58% of the churches participating.

I plan to send out letters about the spring Ingathering in March.

You may contact me at: utospil@sbcglobal.net or 618-655-0326.

MINISTRIES AND COMMITTEE NEWS

DEANERY REPORTS

DARROW DEANERY

St. Paul’s Church and Trinity Chapel, Alton
The Rev. Gary Goldacker

Episcopal Parish of Alton is beginning its search for a new rector. The Lenten program for this year will be an examination of Biblical Transitions and Our Transitions: The Continuing Journey. Bishop’s visitation is February 22.

St. George’s, Belleville
The Revd. canon Dale Coleman, Rector

Since the last time we submitted a report for the life at St. George’s in mid-October, several of our ministries have been strengthened.

When dealing with parish matters in a pastoral-sized church and yet acting as though we are a program-sized church, the Vestry can find ourselves on total overload as we work hard to meet our many challenges and opportunities in a busy church, which we share with another busy church.

The Toddhall Retreat and Conference Center belongs to St. George’s, and therefore the rector and Vestry are responsible for the oversight of this large valuable retreat center. Toddhall has grown significantly since we employed Jim Moeller as executive director a few years ago, and they received a bequest of $700,000 to provide for capital repairs and major maintenance. While the Vestry elects all Board members, we had neglected to keep up with the responsibilities of this growing retreat center, and the Toddhall Board had lost touch with the fact that they act in accord with the Vestry’s wishes. When an incident occurred in which an Episcopal priest came from outside the Diocese to lead a retreat at Toddhall without the Bishop’s permission, I realized how off-track we had gotten and resolved to gain control of the spiritual oversight of Toddhall, which is the responsibility of St. George’s rector. Following an excellent retreat led by Bishop Ed Salmon, our Vestry moved in a step-by-step way to restore oversight of the Toddhall Board. At this date, and after a thorough revision of the Todd Hall By-laws, the Vestry and Board are working well together and have established a plan to meet jointly on a quarterly basis. St. George’s wishes to invite any and all churches and groups from within the Diocese especially to come and see this beautiful retreat center!

A second major ministry of St. George’s which we came close to losing was our Food Pantry. St. George’s and St. Mark’s Lutheran have set up a Steering Committee to keep the pantry in top operation. It is one of only two pantries in the downtown of Belleville.

We have lost several stalwarts at the church, especially Ann Dunn and Marilyn Belleville. Both women had been essential leaders in the parish for decades, and we miss them. The loss of these women and the moving away of two other longtime members has also affected our hope for a balanced budget. The Vestry found themselves needing to report to the Annual Meeting in January that we had a $22,000 deficit in 2014. We have budgeted for a deficit for 2015, and looking at ways to make up for these lost revenues.
Our Christmas was glorious, thanks to the joyful congregation here, as well as the many folks involved in various aspects of the worship. Deacon Jody, our choir, choristers, and excellent Director of Music Nancy Ypma, along with Nolan Haefner, Tom Boschert, Duffy Walters, and many others assist with our worship. The children’s Christmas pageant on Advent IV and children’s Christmas Eve service were great delights for us. Since our Godly Play director Mae Scott has arrived on the scene, Sunday School has grown amazingly well. The front page of our Facebook page shows some of the children having a blast during the Christmas pageant!

We are grateful to the Diocese and our Bishop for prayers and encouragement. Personally, I am grateful to serve such a fine church.

**SAINT ANDREW’S, EDWARDSVILLE**
*Henry Evans, Parish Administrator*

In the name of Christ, greetings to Fr. Coleman and our Deanery Reps.

Since the Deanery last met, many happenings have occurred in the life of Saint Andrew’s Parish. The following is a list of those events:

- As usual, the sacraments were celebrated and the word preached at the 8:00 and 10 am Eucharists.
- Adult Formation and Church School met regularly on Sunday mornings.
- Fr. Ralph N. McMichael was officially called as Priest in Charge.
- Extra or special observances included: Lessons and Carols, Eve of the Nativity, 4 pm Holy Eucharist with Children’s Homily, 10 pm Solemn High Mass of Christmas Eve, Eucharists for the Feast of Saint Andrew, Feast of the Epiphany, and Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. Extra services included organ music, frequently supplemented by the choir.
- Baptisms of Anthony Abernathy and Madelyn Murphy on November 2
- Bishop’s Visit/Confirmation & Reception on November 30. Rowena McClinton, Nichole De Wall and Anthony Abernathy were confirmed; Timothy Abernathy and David Woelfel were received.
- Children’s Christmas Pageant on December 21. Thirteen children participated and the event was very popular.
- Saint Andrew’s Book Group, Episcopal Church Women, Julian of Norwich Prayer Group and Parish Life Committee held regular meetings.
- Saint Andrew’s held the first of our quarterly 2015 book sales.
- A rousing annual meeting and potluck brunch was held on January 18.
- The Wednesday Morning Bible Study met regularly at 10:00 am.
- Contemplative Prayer Group (SIUE Student Ministry) commenced in January of 2015.
- 11 New members have joined our parish since November.
- A Boy Scout troop is now meeting regularly in our Parish Hall.

In conclusion, Saint Andrew’s Parish is in a state of exciting transition, parish life is vibrant and bubbling with activities, our people are very enthusiastic and new and wonderful things are happening. It’s truly an exciting time to be at Saint Andrew’s.

**ST. THOMAS’, GLEN CARBON**
*Jan Goosens*

St. Thomas Episcopal Church Child Care and Preschool had their Christmas program on December 16 at St. Thomas’. The children portrayed the birth of Jesus. The infants and toddlers were angels, the 2-year olds were lambs, the 3-year-olds were shepherds, and the 4-year-olds were kings, Mary and Joseph. The church was packed with many parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Refreshments were provided by the church.

St. Thomas’ choir has seven members and they performed a wonderful anthem at our Christmas Eve service.

The Episcopal Church Women are preparing for their Soup and Salad Luncheon on February 21.

A generous parishioner paid to replace our 40+-year-old furnace in the fall, now our 18-year-old furnace had to be replaced in January.

We are joining St. Bartholomew’s, Granite City for Wednesday Lenten “Stations of the Cross” with a soup supper following.

**ST. BARTHOLOMEW’S, GRANITE CITY**
*Bob Butler*

In the last few months we have had three new people attend our service on Sunday.

Bob Butler has ended his six-year term as president of Community Care Center here in Granite City but will continue on the Board of Directors. Four other members continue to
help Community Care Center in their mission to help the needy with food and clothing in Granite City, Madison, Venice, Mitchell and Pontoon Beach area.

Our ECW has been busy planning our annual Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner in preparation for Lent. Ash Wednesday service will be at St. Thomas and Stations of the Cross will be at St. Bartholomew’s on Wednesdays this year. Our ECW again filled eight shoe boxes for the Samaritans Purse Ministry.

Life Tide Church continues to have their service at 11 am on Sundays following our service.

Grow continues to use our parish hall on Wednesdays for their meetings.

We have finished cleaning and painting our Rectory. It is now leased and they moved in sometime in November.

EASTERN DEANERY
The Very Rev. Ann H. Tofani, Dean

The clergy of the Eastern Deanery meets quarterly in clericus. Our next meeting will be on Monday March 9th, at the home of Fr. and Elizabeth Baumann in Salem. We will share a meal, fellowship and participate in a house blessing. Fr. Tom Davis was unable to attend our last meeting and is hospitalized at this time. We lift him and Sue up in prayer and ask your prayers also.

ST. JOHN’S, ALBION
The Rev. Bill Howard, Vicar

Since our November Report to Council, St. John’s has had a full set of services beginning with Advent. St. John’s received a beautiful “greening” of the historic church, followed by Christmas Eve service and a light meal following. The season after Christmas then moved into Epiphany as we remembered the manifestation of our Lord.

Our stewardship resulted in a balanced budget with an increase in the diocesan pledge in the requested amount.

As this Report is prepared, we are engaged in making ready for Lent, with Ash Wednesday falling on February 18. It is our plan to offer Stations of the Cross on Wednesdays following Ash Wednesday and before Holy Week. We will have a full range of services during Holy Week.

The pastoral needs for hospitalizations have had good results and those members have returned to health.

Dan Scherer and Judith Puckett will continue working on our duties as Diocesan Historiographer.

ST. MARY’S, ROBINSON
The Very Reverend Ann Tofani, Vicar

The greens were hung following the Sunday service on the last Sunday in Advent and the church was ready for the ten days of Christmas. We had a wonderful celebration with 21 present following our Christmas Eve Service. The service ended at 7 pm and persons were still visiting and singing at 9 pm. It was a joyful celebration.

Our Annual Meeting was held on January 18. It was well received as our treasurer reported that we had finished the year in the black. We were also excited by the prospects of a Canon Missioner for Church Development and voted to increase our pledge to help support this position.

We made plans for services and notifications to parishioners in case of severe winter weather. Fortunately we have not had to implement those plans.

Our first Sunday breakfasts continue as does our monthly adult education class and a theological moment each Sunday. Our Wednesday Evening Prayer and Holy Eucharist continue as well. During Lent we will replace the Wednesday Evening Prayer with Stations of the Cross. We will continue to celebrate Holy Communion (low mass) on Wednesdays following the Stations of the Cross.

We are preparing several persons for reception during the annual visit of our bishop. We also are excited for R.J. and Brenda Rains as they await the birth of their first grandchild, a boy, in March. We anticipate a baptism sometime in the spring. Blessings abound.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, MT. CARMEL
Brant Hazlett+ Rector

St. John the Baptist members continue to participate in outreach ministry to the community through their involvement in the Operation Share Program that is organized by the Ministerial Alliance. Food was gathered on Sundays during November and December to be used to help provide meals for needy families. 426 families were provided meals for Thanksgiving and Christmas and close to 417 children were given presents for Christmas this year.
through this program. Also, St. John’s donated $5,000 to the Operation Share program to help defray costs and to help maintain the Benevolent Fund that helps to provide aid during the year through the Ministerial Alliance. Along with this St. John’s adopted a family that we bought presents for this year. A wrapping party was held to prepare the presents for the family and then they were delivered in time for all to enjoy for Christmas. An Epiphany party was held at one of the parishioners’ houses in which we raised funds to be used to purchase gifts for next year’s family we will adopt for Christmas. We raised $285 through auctions and purchases of items that were made and donated for that purpose. We are also involved with the local ELCA congregation through their Pastor’s Closet. We have a group of our members who on a monthly basis prepare packages of needed items to help needy people in the community. Last month it was scarfs, gloves, and hats for those who needed them to deal with the winter.

We held our annual Hanging of the Greens on December 21 after the main service. Everyone stayed to help decorate the Church for Christmas. Following that effort we gathered in the undercroft for a pizza party to thank all for their effort. The Church was beautiful. As stated earlier, we gathered at the Kensell’s house on January 11 for an Epiphany party. Everyone brought a dish to share, while soup was provided. We had a wonderful time in fellowship along with being able to raise money for the needy of our community. Finally, we had our Annual Meeting on January 25. After all the regular business was held we gathered in the undercroft for lunch and had a great time filling our stomachs with good food and enjoying each other’s company. We are looking forward to pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. All in all, there is a good spirit of gratitude and joy in the people of St. John the Baptist. The past year has been a blessing and we are looking forward to what God has in store for us this year.

ST JOHN’S, CENTRALIA AND ST. THOMAS, SALEM
The Rev. Canon David M. Baumann, SSC, Priest-in-Charge

St. John’s, Centralia and St. Thomas’, Salem are holding steady with active memberships. Our fall stewardship campaigns were very encouraging and both churches are in good financial condition. In the past year St. John’s lost one member through death and St. Thomas’ lost three, but St. Thomas’ has gained new members, including Father Jim and Joan Fackler. Attendance at both churches is holding steady, and weekday Masses are well attended.

We are beginning to plan our Lenten programs. St. John’s is planning a couple of events to raise its profile in the community, namely organizing and hosting a healing service for the community, and offering “Cathedral style” Evensong once a quarter to which other churches, Episcopal and otherwise, will be invited. In the past few months, St. John’s has done some good repair and renovation of its facility as part of its 90th anniversary of the construction of its beautiful building.

Both churches are in the early stages of inviting a Missioner to come to our area next January for a three-day event that will also involve other churches. After our annual meetings, both churches are in good shape with new leadership and energy to enter the new year.

HALE DEANERY
The Very Rev. Kathryn G. Jeffrey, Dean

Attendance at Church of the Redeemer, Cairo, continues to grow, topping out with 31 people one special Sunday. Father Muriuki continues to lead worship at a local nursing home most weeks, and has begun meeting with other local pastors to pray with each other at the high school each week. His daughter, Shalom, is recuperating well, with attention mostly centered now on her finger, which had been broken. Church members are looking forward to welcoming the Diocese to their Celebration of New Ministry on May 16.

Saint Andrew’s, Carbondale, proudly presented two teenagers and four adults for confirmation, as well as four children for baptism, during Bishop Martin’s annual visitation in December. The beautiful new baptismal font lovingly crafted by parishioner John Stull enjoyed its “maiden voyage” holding the baptismal waters for Katie and Annie Emery, Geoffrey Searcey, and Kylie DeHoet. A near-capacity crowd celebrated the joyous occasion with the confirmands, baptismal candidates, and their families.

On November 30, the parish revived their former tradition of a Saint Andrew’s Day concert. Acclaimed Belleville organist Nancy Ypma performed a program of Advent music, and all proceeds were added to the Marianne Webb Scholarship Fund.
The parish enjoyed its first Christmas pageant in at least fifteen years, directed by Miranda Searcey. The Sunday School program continues each week, with a second new teacher beginning Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training in O’Fallon.

The Canterbury Club ministry resumed their semi-monthly dinners, adding a movie to the evening’s program. Movies are also featured on three Fridays in Lent with a series entitled “Body and Spirit”, including Chariots of Fire and Pasolini’s Gospel According to Saint Matthew.

After a one-month hiatus, services at Saint James Chapel, Marion resumed on first and third Saturdays at 5pm. It is hoped that this Saturday worship option will enable deanery parishioners to still attend Mass on the occasional weekends that they have work or family commitments on Sunday mornings.

The Rev. Sheryl Black reports from West Frankfort: “Greetings from St. Mark’s! We’ve had a blessed Advent, Christmas and Epiphany! In December, many of us attended the Hale Deanery ECW Family Christmas Party at a local pizza restaurant, and following dinner we had a white elephant gift exchange. Fun was had by all.

Of course, the church was beautifully decorated for our well-attended 9:00 pm Christmas Eve service--thanks to all who donated their time to decorate. We had the most lush and long-lasting poinsettias I’ve ever seen, most of which lasted well into February!

Following a potluck brunch on Sunday, January 18, we had a productive, congenial annual meeting where we adopted a balanced budget meeting the diocese’s requested increase. We also duly elected two members to the Bishop’s Committee and of course our synod delegate and alternate.”

All of Hale Deanery joins St. Stephen’s, Harrisburg in rejoicing over the continued recuperation of Father Tim Goodman after his heart attack in early February. His family wishes to thank everyone for their prayers. Father Jon Griffin continues to cover Sunday services at the church. The popular tradition of a fabulous Italian dinner continued on February 21, with a strong and jovial attendance. All proceeds from the dinner are donated to charities.

My emphasis in this report is Christian discipleship through Worship. On Sunday, January 18, 2015, our Bishop visited us for his annual episcopal visit. The same Sunday, we also celebrated our Annual Parish Meeting where we shared with our parish community our parish theme for 2015 which is, More Jesus, More Sacrifice. At our annual parish meeting, we also shared our Bishop’s/Diocesan Vision of how to have a strong, viable Episcopal, and Eucharistic presence in McLean County by working with St. Matthews Episcopal parish in missional, discipleship and education opportunities for the greater glory of God.

This Lenten Season and in keeping with our parish vision/mission and 2015 theme, our challenge is whether to continue in a lame, tame, ‘in-the-box,’ routine, regular, normal Lenten by giving up our small ambitions [like eating chocolate, or abstaining from eating meat or watching less T.V., or sharing pennies with the homeless and the hungry, etc..] or move towards a more robust, missional, big, bold audacious Lent for Jesus and for His Kingdom in at least three of our primary relationships.

First, in our relationship with God [Loving God with all our hearts] may we move towards these possibilities like (a) Get up an hour earlier in the morning and spend that time in Worship - reading the Scriptures, prayers, singing the great hymns of the Church. (b) Memorize larger and larger portions of the Scriptures like the 40th chapter of Isaiah, the Beatitudes of Jesus, the 17th chapter of the Gospel of John, the prayers of Paul in the prison letters, the 8th
chapter of Romans and the 1st and the last chapter of the book of Revelation.
(c) Be generous by giving a special and sacrificial financial gift to the church or mission organization where the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly preached and disciples are formed.

Second, in our relationship with others [Love your neighbor as you love yourself] may we move towards these possibilities like (a) Receive and practice forgiveness in all our filial relationships and in all our human relationship. Living the forgiven lifestyle. (b) Host a neighborhood bible study. (c) Speak to at least one person each week during Lent and share the love of God with them intentionally. (d) Participate in Kairos and Cursillo if we have not done so.

Third, in our relationships with ourselves [Love yourself] may we move towards these possibilities like (a) Dethrone ‘self,’ intentionally and enthrone “Jesus Christ.” Our prayer and practice ought to be, “I want to decrease and I want Jesus Christ to increase in my life. (b) Eat healthy, exercise regularly and sleep satisfactorily. (c) Speak less and listen more. (d) Quit all forms of gossip. (e) Practice the discipline of gratitude and thanksgiving - what does the Great Thanksgiving mean in our daily lives?

And, the point of moving from a wimpy Lent to a more robust and big, bold, audacious Lent is simply this which is based on the gospel of Luke 9: 51-62 is, Jesus Christ was intentionally and deliberately passionate about his passion and for us to be missional and like Jesus we too must affirm and practice red hot passion this Lent and for the rest of our lives. Remember, the theme in 2015 is, More Jesus, More Sacrifice!

Pray with us in season and out of season that we will be faithful to God’s call and mission in our parish life.

ST. MATTHEW’S, BLOOMINGTON
Fr. Dave Halt

While 2014 was a trying year in some respects, much good was accomplished at St. Matthew’s. Setting aside the planned expenditures from our reserves to accomplish the final stages of our building program and the expansion of our columbarium, we finished the year with a balanced budget. The Vestry also passed a balanced budget for 2015, the first in many years. In all, the stewardship of St. Matthew’s members is to be commended.

There was good energy around mission at our annual meeting, and we are pleased with the slate of officers who were elected/appointed at that time.

This year we are gearing up for our first ever international parish mission, and continuing our partnership with Tabora and Holy Trinity Parish in St. Vincent. Our recent Pancake Supper raised almost $300 for the ECW project in Tabora.

In the past two months we have also had three adult baptisms and one infant baptism, and seen our attendance increase (except for snow days). We do believe that God is in our midst and blessing this congregation.

Fr. Halt and Fr. Francis (Christ the King), have begun conversations around the idea of implementing the one geographical parish model. We are pleased that the first efforts in this direction will be joint celebrations of Holy Week, including a Taize service, Good Friday liturgies, and Easter Vigil. We look forward to seeing where the Holy Spirit leads us in the new year.

NORTHEASTERN DEANERY

EPISCOPAL PARISHES OF MACOUPIN COUNTY
John R. Henry+, Rector

St. Paul’s, Carlinville and St. Peter’s, Chesterfield began Year B (and ended 2014) with scheduled services for Christmas Eve at Carlinville and Christmas Day at Chesterfield with total attendance of 47 persons. We have began 2015 with slightly increased attendance---it warms an old rector’s heart to have to turn to the tabernacle for more hosts on Sunday morning.

We celebrated our patron saints’ days in January and held our annual meeting with the adoption of the church budget for 2015 (which included an increased pledge to the Diocese in support of a canon missioner) and the election of 3 new vestry members---one an experienced pro, one new to our parish, and one new to the Episcopal Church.

We enjoyed a visit from our seminarian Jacob Bottom and his wife, Gena in early November. It was great to establish faces with our prayers and donated financial support.
Our adult Sunday School class continues to work its way through John Ortberg’s If You Want to Walk on Water, You’ve Got to Get out of the Boat. Hopefully we are all somewhat closer to dangling our feet over the edge!

Cementing once again the relationship between St. Paul’s and St. John’s, Decatur, this morning I have helped unload torches and aisle candlesticks, a gift from St. John’s Parish. St. John’s, Decatur is the parish that raised me up and sent me off to seminary. The lights on the walls of St. Paul’s were a gift from St. John’s many years ago when Fr. Shipley was the rector of St. Paul’s. Fr. Shipley had served as a curate at St. John’s.

St. John’s, Decatur
Richard A. Swan+, Rector

St. John’s hosted the Decatur Community Thanksgiving Service, with a reception following, on November 23. Our annual Advent Service of Lessons and Carols was on December 14, with a reception following. It was well-attended. St. John’s members continued the annual drive for gifts for the children of women incarcerated at Decatur Correctional Center. On Sunday, December 21, we had a Chili Cook-off after the 10 am service to choose a representative for the Annual Forsyth Village Chili Cook-off in January. The three services for the Feast of the Nativity were well-attended.

We began the new calendar year with a Baptism. Eliott Pilger was baptized on January 4. We hosted the Cursillo Ultreya on January 10. On January 17, members of St. John’s presented “St. John’s Heavenly Chili” at the Community Cook-off in Forsyth, which is a local fundraiser with three Rotary Clubs. Our Annual meeting was on January 18.

Confirmation Classes began on January 31, with two students and two sponsors attending. Our Vestry gathered at the Diocesan Center on February 7 for a retreat led by (the recently retired) Fr. David Boase. Our annual Pancake Supper was held on (Shrove) Tuesday, February 17. Funds raised were donated to the Good Samaritan Inn soup kitchen.

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, SPRINGFIELD
Gene R. Tucker+, Interim Provost

The Cathedral Church of St. Paul celebrated the end of calendar year 2014 with a budget that ended in the black. This is the second consecutive year with such a result. The Cathedral’s Chapter has presented a balanced budget for calendar year 2015, reflecting the improvements in the Cathedral’s fiscal management practices which have been put into place in recent years. The Cathedral’s congregation has continued its faithful support, making these results possible.

A time of transition now lies ahead, as Fr. Gene Tucker prepares to leave the Cathedral as Interim Provost at the end of February. Fr. David Boase, the recently retired Rector of the Episcopal Parish of Alton, will begin work as Supply Priest, effective March 1. We are excited that Bishop Martins will be present with us for all of Holy Week and Easter. Looking forward into May, the Cathedral is expecting that a new Provost will assume the leadership of the congregation.

A significant part of the Cathedral’s rich history is connected to the Lincoln and Todd families. Our first Rector, the Rev. Charles Dresser, officiated at the Lincoln’s wedding, and it was Fr. Dresser who later sold his home to the Lincolns. Several members of the Todd family were among our early members. The Cathedral will take an active role in the recreation of Lincoln’s funeral in early May. We are planning to have a commemorative service, and we will host a series of lectures and presentations on the Lincoln and Todd families and their enduring legacy. In addition, the bell which is mounted in our tower is the oldest bell in the city of Springfield. It was rung on the occasion of Lincoln’s funeral in May, 1865, ringing out from the tower of St. Paul’s second building, which was then located at Third and Adams Streets. As a part of our observance of the 150th anniversary of the president’s funeral, the Cathedral’s bell will be tolled again, this time by a team of twenty Honor Society students from the Cathedral’s congregation and from three high schools in Springfield.

Work to restore the exterior of the 100-year-old Canterbury House is now complete. However, work on the interior continues. Part of the current efforts is aimed at creating a museum space on the first floor of the building, in order to be able to display some of the Cathedral’s memorabilia which is connected to the Lincoln and Todd history as it relates to our congregation. The goal is to have this new museum space ready to receive visitors this coming May when the Lincoln funeral recreation takes place.
MARCH 2015
1  Bishop w/ St. Bartholomew’s, Granite City - Cancelled
6-8  ECW Annual Lenten Retreat, Toddhall, Columbia
8  Bishop w/ St. Barnabas’, Havana
28  Mass of Chrism w/ lunch, Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield (11 a.m.)
29  PALM SUNDAY, Bishop w/ Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield

APRIL 2015
3  GOOD FRIDAY
5  EASTER DAY, Bishop w/ Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield
19  Bishop w/ Chapel of St. John the Divine, Champaign
26  Bishop w/ Trinity, Yazoo City, MS (DEPO)

MAY 2015
1  Ordination of David L. Wells to the Diaconate, St. Luke’s, Springfield (7 p.m.)
3  Bishop w/ St. George’s, Belleville
9  Bishop w/ St. James’ Chapel, Marion
10  Bishop w/ St. Andrew’s, Carbondale
12  Trustees Meeting, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
14  ASCENSION
15  Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
17  Bishop w/ Church of the Redeemer, Cairo
24  TRINITY
29  PALM SUNDAY, Bishop w/ Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield

JUNE 2015
3  Bishop w/ St. John the Divine, Danville
6  Clergy Day, Diocesan Center, Springfield - Cancelled
7  Bishop w/ Trinity, Jacksonville
07-12  St. Michael’s Conference, Lake Williamson, Carlinville
14  Bishop w/ The Church of the Holy Trinity, Danville
18-21  Cursillo Weekend #33, Toddhall, Columbia
21  Bishop w/ St. Christopher’s, Rantoul
24  TRINITY
25-30  General Convention, Salt Lake City, UT
28-30  Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson

JULY 2015
1-3  General Convention, Salt Lake City, UT
1-4  Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson
5  Bishop w/ St. John the Baptist, Mt. Carmel
7  Finance Department, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
12  Bishop w/ St. Stephen’s, Harrisburg
19  Bishop w/ St. Mark’s, West Frankfort

For more information about contributing to The Springfield Current, please see the message from Bishop Daniels inside the front cover.

Contributors will be acknowledged in a future issue.

Thank you.