This past fall the parish of St. John’s in Decatur grabbed hold of an opportunity to participate in the Renewal Works program, which encourages congregations to focus on increasing and exercising their faith as individuals and as a whole and seeking specific ways to do so. Led by Father Richard Swan, James Keith, Megan Jordan, Tracy McMahon, Melissa Rhodes, and Betsy Curlin, the process started with a survey that was offered to all members of the parish before moving into the exercise period that consisted of four workshops and concluding with recommendations reported to the Vestry and the St. John’s community at the 2015 Annual Meeting. Open to the entire parish, over 25 St. John’s members helped with the process by attending at least one workshop with 50 people completing the survey.

The first session was entitled “Where Have We Been?” and asked participants to reflect on their own spiritual journey with a root task of inward introspection on what fuels each person to be Episcopalian, Christian, and a member specifically of St. John’s. Team members received a wealth of feedback and engaged in deep discussions within a small group setting, and a solid picture of St. John’s as a church emerged.

The second workshop was named “Where Are We Headed?” and was the first opportunity the participants had to hear some of the data collated from the survey taken early on in the process. The profile of St. John’s was highly interesting in the words of the Renewal Works staff that reported out the results of the ESLI, or Episcopal Spiritual Life Inventory, revealing the congregation to be a spiritually mature and advanced one with 50%
CONTRIBUTING

Communication serves a crucial function in every ministry. Sharing information among congregations, committees and individual members is no small task. Welcoming new members to our diocesan family also requires unique communication efforts at all levels.

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

NEW WINE, NEW WINESKINS
You may be aware that there is a working group, under the leadership of Diocesan Chancellor Kevin Babb, trying to rather thoroughly rewrite the canons of the Diocese of Springfield. This is in follow-up to their effort in the months prior to last October’s annual synod to revise our constitution. Their proposed draft, with some minor tweaks from the floor, was approved on first reading last year in Jacksonville last year and will be taken up again for a second reading, and definitive action, later this year when we gather in Edwardsville. So, less than a year from now, there is a good chance that we will be operating on an entirely new set of constitution and canons.

The working group, representing a broad cross-section of laity and clergy in the diocese, is laboring with great dedication. It is a demanding task. What I have asked them to do, with respect to both the constitution and the canons, is to not simply make piecemeal changes to what we already have, but to start–mentally, at least–from scratch, and use as a reference point the mission strategy vision that has resourced virtually all of our programmatic efforts for nearly the last five years:

The Diocese of Springfield in one church, organized for mission into geographic parishes, manifested in eucharistic communities and communities-in-formation, with a goal of being concretely incarnate in all of the 60 counties of central and southern Illinois.

This is an audacious vision, and from a purely human perspective, actually quite impossible. But I believe that God never calls his people to work for which he does not also provide the resources, so if this is really a “God thing,” it will happen. But it will not happen by our holding onto business-as-usual. The first, and possibly the biggest, challenge that we face is not financial or technical, but mental. We are accustomed to asking questions like, “What can we do to make St. Swithun’s more attractive to visitors and newcomers?” “How can we improve our facilities, or change our worship or other parish programs, or strengthen our publicity, so as to entice and persuade “them … out there” to come through our doors on Sunday morning and become part of “us … in here”?” That is a strategy that may have been appropriate in an era when not everybody went to church, but most everybody had a particular church that they didn’t go to, an era when most people in our culture had at least a fuzzy understanding of what Christianity is about.

We no longer live in that world. So we need to change our attitude to one of “us in here” going to “them out there,” alongside them in their world, on their turf, and earning the privilege of talking to them about Jesus, and inviting them to baptism and discipleship … and at the end of the process, including them in our eucharistic community (or, better yet, working with them to start a new one). This is a huge mental shift for Episcopalians. It is not something we have any idea how to do. There are no “best practices” to guide us.

We need to change a great many things about our behavior in order to engage this work. But I would suggest that the “one thing needful” as we are still pretty much at the beginning of this journey, is to change the way we talk, the language we use about our life together in the diocese. We can all probably cite experiences in our lives when a change in vocabulary has resulted in a change in thinking, which in turn results in a change in behavior. So, in my interactions with the constitution and canons working group, we have devoted a great deal of energy trying to come up with the sort of vocabulary and technical language that can become part of our
Familiar words like “parish” and “mission” may turn out to carry distinctly different meanings than they currently do. Some expressions like “Eucharistic Community” and “Mission Leadership Team” and “Annual Parish Mission Strategy Report,” which now feel strange and unfamiliar, may become everyday expressions. Some might argue that this is all too complicated and traumatic, and that we should hang on to the familiar terms that have served us in the past, and simply try to change our behavior with respect to the missional challenges that we confront. We could possibly follow that path, and maybe even enjoy some success. But, as Our Lord taught in a parable, new wine deserves new wineskins. Put new wine into old wineskins, and they will burst. Provide new wineskins for the new wine, and both the wine and its containers will mature together. The work in front of us certainly calls for new wine—thinking of ourselves as missionaries rather than guardians of an institution. Are the old wineskins—the technical vocabulary of our present constitution and canons—up to that task? I can’t say with certainty, but my strong suspicion is that we would be best served by selecting new wineskins that are best suited to the new wine. I invite you all to respond with faith and courage.

+Daniel

The last two workshops were “Where Do We Feel Called to Go?” and “How Do We Get There?” Taking what the workshop attendees knew about the church profile and their own experiences, a brainstorming session commenced to pinpoint areas for improvement that were important to the group and could encourage spiritual growth to everyone in the parish. Three key sectors were identified: Prayer Program and Bible Study, Adult Education, and a Volunteer Program. Further planning and discussion fleshed out each topic to create a basic list of items to be undertaken in the coming months and years.

Further institution of new programs that seek to fulfill the spiritual needs of the congregation will continue with periodic meetings of the Renewal Works Team to gauge success and improvement in each area, as well as the possibility of adding any new goals, and update will be provided to the parish additionally. The process of seeking to grow spiritually as an individual and as a church is a large task, but one that will only strengthen its members. St. John’s of Decatur has taken a big step in enhancing its church and assisting its parishioners in moving closer to God and their community.
ECC-IL-“I LOVE THIS FAMILY OF GOD.”

Join us for Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois 2016 from July 3-9!

It’s time to make plans for another summer session at the Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois from July 3 to July 9. We gather at East Bay Camp near beautiful Lake Bloomington. Our theme this year is “I Love This Family of God.” We want to welcome new campers to join our camp family of experienced campers and counselors for fun, worship, and growing our faith in God. Please consider sending your children to make friends and memories.

There are three different age groups with separate activities. However, they come together for worship and games at different times through the week. Fr. Shawn Doubet is Spiritual Director in our Seniors Session for kids in grades 9 through 12. Fr. John Henry is Spiritual Director in the Middler Session for kids in grades 5 through 8. Fr. Ben Hankinson is the Spiritual Director in Junior Session for kids in grades 1 through 4. They support a staff of more than 30 counselors who have been a part of ECC for many years. It’s very rewarding for counselors to see kids return year after year and watch how they grow and build relationships.

“I Love This Family of God” was chosen as our theme this year because ECC-IL is full of the importance of relationships. Campers get to meet other kids from all over Illinois and get to know each other in an environment of acceptance and love. They worship, learn, pray, and play together. Younger campers often watch the older ones, and older campers often reach out to guide and care for the younger. One camper’s question is on the mind of another, and one camper’s boldness encourages another. Living out their faith with friends and growing in that faith together is a transformational experience for everyone involved.

There’s no doubt that you’ll have fun if you join us. Swimming, crafts, music, games, nature trails, archery, campfire, and worship are all part of our program. However, church camp is more than fun and games. It is a chance for us to be the body of Christ living together close to God’s creation. At church camp we step out of our daily lives and homes to live out the truth that our young people are not merely the church of the future, they are part of the church here and now!
**ST. MICHAEL’S YOUTH CONFERENCE**

*June 12-17, 2016
Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville IL*

St. Michael’s Conference is not to be confused with Summer Camp and is not a replacement for a camp experience. St. Michael’s is designed for those who would like to go deeper in their faith after experiencing a camp or a renewal weekend. (Though participation in camps or renewal events are not prerequisites!).

Each “Michaelite” participates in four conferences during the week. These conferences are designed to engage the participant in strengthening their faith and forming them as vital disciples of Jesus.

Of course, the week would not be complete without caring for whole person. To this end there is daily Eucharist and prayer, physical activities, group games, excellent and large quantities of food, and special events each day.

St. Michael’s Conferences are best experienced rather than described, and we hope that you will join us! If you do, you will want to come back for more.

PS: Our dear Bishop has stated that attendance at St. Michael’s will count as confirmation class!

For more information visit: episcopalspringfield.org/youth/smyc/

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**TWO BY TWO, LET ONE BE YOU**

*Cursillo at ToddHall
June 23-26, 2016*

“Two by Two, Let One Be You” is our motto for Cursillo in the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield. We chose it because one person reaches out to another to share this weekend course in Christian formation. Three days of participation can lead you to strengthen your understanding of Christ. 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. This is not a secret club; we want you all to join our 4th Day Community.

You are invited to join us for our next Cursillo weekend from June 23 – 26, 2016 at ToddHall in Columbia, Illinois. Bishop Daniel Martins has recommended that Cursillo be made available to all members of all the Eucharistic Communities in the Diocese of Springfield. Anyone interested in more information should find materials and applications for Cursillo available at your church, on our diocesan website at www.episcopalspringfield.org, or by contacting the registrar, Carol McCrary (618-322-6296) at troub71@yahoo.com.

We are reaching out to all members of the Cursillo 4th Day Community to remember the impact Cursillo made on your life and share it. Please identify yourself in your church and make invitations. Make sure Margaret Brown at mkbpdr2@gmail.com has your current contact information.

Join the fourth day community of Cursillo
Over the course of my ordained life, I have found it helpful to utilize an examination of conscience to help me reflect upon my own sinfulness and turn toward Christ during the season of Lent. I commend it to you as we walk toward the Cross and Resurrection in this holy season.

Many blessings,

The Reverend Sean Ferrell, Rector
The Chapel of Saint John the Divine, Champaign

IN REGARD TO MYSELF:

Through mediocrity have I:

Excused myself from guilt because a sin is habitual, or caused by social pressure?

Acted because of whims and feeling?

Used time ineffectively?

Organized myself so intensely that I am no longer capable of spontaneous generosity?

Through disorder and lack of planning have I:

Used goods or a good improperly?

Been weak in making and holding to decisions?

Lacked perseverance and logic in carrying things out?

Left work half done without serious reason?

Been discouraged by difficulties or setbacks?

Failed to take time for being alone, for reflection, for recollection?

Through pride and vanity have I:

Been vain, praise-loving, proud, smug?

Indulged in allowing my feelings to be hurt?

Acted out of ambition or the desire to be noticed?

Failed to recognize my limits and accept them?

Made snap judgments and comments to give the impression that I know all about a subject?

IN REGARD TO OTHERS:

Against Charity have I:

Loved others selfishly; wanted to monopolize others’ affections, been jealous, considered no one but myself?

Never felt real anguish for the misery of others?

Passed by indifferent to others’ troubles?

Had habitual contempt for others: less educated people, people of different racial, national, or economic groups?

In any way stifled the development of another?

Sought to be respected with respecting others?
EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Often kept people waiting?
Not paid attention to a person speaking to me?
Talked to much of myself, and not given others a chance to express themselves?
Failed to try to understand others?
Out of selfishness or pride, expected to be served?
Failed to help a person in distress?
Seen only those whose friendship might prove profitable?
Abandoned my friends in their difficulties?

IN REGARD TO MY FAMILY:

In family matters, have I:
Made my family and its affairs my sole occupation?
Made my life at school my sole occupation to the neglect of my family?
Failed to be a full partner and source of strength to my partner?
Taken for my own use an unfair share of what our family has: clothes, car, and free time?

Failed to respect the individuality of another, even a child?
Expected more of the children than I have courage to do myself?
Talked idly and indiscreetly about the faults of those close to me?

IN REGARD TO THE CHURCH:

By thought have I:
Thought of the Church as a sect or party rather than as the mystical Body of Christ?
Never read or reflected on the New Testament?
Not held myself responsible for my part in the inadequacy of Christians?

By words have I:
Spoken of the clergy as “them” instead of “us”?
Criticized irresponsibly the leadership of the Church, both Clergy and laypersons?
Ignored the teaching authority of the Church, replacing it with my own authority?

By acts have I:
Used Church organizations to justify my own personal hang-ups?
Run away from trying to solve the Church’s internal problems?
Acted to support the Church only when it met my approval?

By omission have I:
Not tried to make the Church more vital?
Failed to contribute sacrificially to the Church for its material needs?
Neglected to pray for those in authority?

Toward God have I:
Waited for God to manifest himself, instead of looking for him in the realities of life?
Not relied on God to do the rest after I have done all that I can?
Not seen and loved God in other persons?
Not loved others in God?
Not thought of Jesus Christ as my close blood-brother; given up trying to make him my model?
Not made an effort to bear with him the sins of the world, especially those of my own social group?
Centered the Cross on my walls, but not in my life?
Talked about Christ, without really trying to live the Gospels?
Not found time to pray?
Prayed only to ask, never to adore, never to thank, never to act as a member of the mystical body, never to love?
Thought of spiritual life as something to do only after everything else has been taken care of?
STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD
The Rev. David J. A. Halt, President

Since the Synod the Standing Committee met and conducted the following business.

1. Election of The Rev. David J. A. Halt as President.
2. Election of The Rev. Ian Wetmore as Secretary

TRUSTEES REPORT
Donald Monty, Chairman

Funds invested by the Diocesan Trustees experienced small gains in the fourth quarter of calendar year 2015. The Endowment Fund gained 2.1% for the quarter while showing a 8.5% investment loss for the calendar year 2015, and the managed portion of the Combined Fund gained 2.0% in the fourth quarter while showing an investment loss of 9.0% for calendar year 2015.

The Diocesan Endowment Fund is invested in a managed portfolio. The value of the Endowment Fund increased from $2,379,796 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2015 to a value of $2,403,916 on December 31, 2015. The investments gained $50,727 or 2.1%, for the quarter. There were withdrawals of $27,637 during the quarter. The Endowment Fund began 2015 with a balance of $2,743,761 and ended the year with a balance of $2,403,916. During the year, there were withdrawals of $116,960 and contributions of $4,941.

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 decreased in value from $2,598,499 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2015 to a value of $2,574,420 on December 31, 2015 despite investment gains of $52,217 or 2.0% for the fourth quarter. There were $76,296 in withdrawals of in the managed portion of the Combined Fund for the quarter. The managed portion of the Combined Fund began 2015 with a balance of $3,087,339 and ended the year with a balance of $2,574,420. The December 31, 2015 balance reflects contributions of $10,737 and withdrawals of $257,213 for the calendar year. The portion of the Combined Fund invested in short-term mutual funds decreased in value from $248,445 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2015 to $247,730 on December 31, 2015; however, the value of the short-term mutual funds increased from $244,962 at the beginning of the year to $247,730 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 flows as revenues are received and expenses incurred. Overall, the value of the Combined Fund decreased from $2,846,944 at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 2015 to $2,822,180 on December 31, 2015 and showed a decrease from $3,332,331 at the beginning of 2015.

The beginning of 2016 has seen further decline in financial markets. This is widely attributed to the drop in the price of crude oil. There was considerable volatility in financial markets during 2015, as was also the case in 2014. Calendar year 2014 was a good year overall for our investments, but 2015 resulted in a decrease in investment values. Volatility in financial markets is expected to continue in 2016.

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

The fall session of RenewalWorks was completed. Five Eucharistic Communities participated, and a request to share their experience has been sent.

Cursillo continues to be revived, with Fr. Swan as the liaison. Information on this year’s weekend in June will be sent out as available. Please start lining up candidates for participation.

Fr. Swan, Fr. Hankinson, Fr. Evans, and Fr. Halt have volunteered to begin a Diocesan Men’s Ministry. We are attempting to hold a weekend in late August or early September.

St. Michael’s Conference will be held from 12 June to 17 June at Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville. Conference information has been sent out, so
please inform your youth and spread the word. It will be an excellent time of Christian Formation and adventure. Confirmed faculty are, Mo. Beth Maynard, Fr. Dave Halt, Fr. David Baumann, Fr. Ian Wetmore, Fr. Ben Hankinson, and, of course, Bishop Martins.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL MISSION STRATEGY

Bruce DeGooyer+

The session conducted by Carrie Headington in September 2015, “Strategizing for Mission at the Parish Level: A Workshop for Clergy and Lay Leaders”, contained a great deal of useful information. Based on this session, as well as material from other sources, two prototype experiential workshops have been developed and are being tested.

The first was conducted as a 4 hour workshop for parish leadership for St. Luke’s, Springfield, designed to assist in reviewing mission strategy and laying the groundwork for future planning. The second, a 5 to 6 hour session to be tested with St. Paul’s, Pekin, and All Saints, Morton, in early March uses mission strategy planning to assist with developing a parish profile to be used in search for a new rector. This latter session is broader in scope than the former.

After the March session, we will review the results, refine the materials, and prepare facilitation materials. I anticipate that if these sessions achieve the desired outcome, one or two facilitators can be selected (qualifications will be determined at a later date) and trained to conduct sessions.

NATIONAL AND WORLD MISSION REPORT

Sandy Moore

Activities and Goals:

A new vehicle has been donated to the Diocese of Tabora from a donor here in our diocese. The vestry of St John the Baptist Church voted to donate funds (up to $70,000USD) for a purchase of a new vehicle for use in the Diocese of Tabora.

Tabora would like to have Bp. Martins visit in 2017 to coincide with their Synod, which is held every three years.

The situation with formation of new dioceses in Peru is not yet finalized, but Bishop Martins has been in contact with Bishop Alejandro to offer ongoing support and encouragement.

We are hoping to arrange a visit by Bishop Alejandro to our diocese. Due to difficulty with visa arrangements for travelers from Peru, we are beginning the process now in hopes that it can be accomplished in time for a visit during our Synod in 2017.

Ideally, we would like to alternate years for visits to and from our companion dioceses. This is not always possible, but by setting aside the unused annual budgeted allotment some years, we can work it out.

Signing shirts while waiting for breakfast on the last day of ECC-IL
DARROW DEANERY

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ALTON
Diane Martin, Deanery Representative

Since our last report to the Diocesan Synod on October 19, 2015 the Episcopal Parish of Alton has been a busy place. Our biggest news is that our faithful, patient Search Committee has been disbanded as the Vestry has called our new Rector, The Rev. Cynthia Sever, from her parish in New York. She and her husband, Byron, are currently preparing to move to the house that is being purchased in Alton. As things now stand, our first Eucharist with Mother Sever will be celebrated on Easter Sunday.

Fr. Gary Goldacker, our Interim Priest, was forced to retire in November 2015 due to health problems. Fr. Arnold Hoffman and Fr. Gary Nowlin have faithfully helped us to continue with Sunday Eucharists at both Trinity Chapel and St. Paul’s as well as two masses at St. Paul’s on the Eve of the Nativity and at Trinity Chapel on Christmas day. Thanks to Mother Jane Flaherty, our Tuesday Eucharist and Bible Study as well as the Wednesday noon Eucharist and Healing Service have continued. Fr. Goldacker baptized two infants in November and Fr. Hoffman another one in November. Fr. Goldacker presided at a funeral in October. Fr. David Boase was celebrant at Burial Masses in December and January.

In December the choir and many youth readers, greeters, ushers and acolytes participated in an Advent Vespers service, which was followed by a supper provided by the ECW and ECM.

Projects and activities through the Evangelism and Outreach Commission, including “Coats for Kids”, resulted in a donation of winter coats as well as a $320 monetary donation to Riverbend Head Start and Family Services. Our ministry to Crisis Food Center via food donations and monetary contributions resulted in a $2,102.00 donation by the end of 2015. The EPA nursing home ministry to Rosewood Care Center has continued as well as our “open door policy” to provide meeting space to AA. Before Christmas, a large group caroled to parish shut-ins.

ECM co-hosted the supper after Advent Vespers along with the ECW. The men were involved in decorating the church for Christmas and sponsored a Christmas Party and dinner at Castelli’s Moonlight at 255 Restaurant. Also during December, the ECM supported several local charities.

The ECW worked on handmade blankets which were contributed as “Hug Blankets” for children in need in the schools as well as the newly baptized and the parish shut-ins. The ECW also organized brunches after the memorial masses and co-hosted the supper following Advent Vespers.

The Annual Halloween Chili Supper and basket raffle, held on October 31 by the Guild of Grace, was very well attended and $336.00 from the profit was donated to the parish. The Guild held their annual toy exchange party in December, with the toys being donated to Riverbender.com who distributed the toys. On December 12, the Guild sponsored a “Parent’s Afternoon Out” and supplied activities for children while giving their parents a break for Christmas shopping time. The Guild also provided brunch for our annual meeting in January.

The Church school, through proceeds from a Harvest Feast brunch held in November and from monetary donations from parishioners, was able to donate $600.00 to Heifer International at the end of 2015. The youth participated in a Christmas Pageant after Mass in December as well as in the Advent Vespers service.

Our United Thank Offering this year resulted in a grand total of $1,417.00.

Our January 24 annual meeting was well attended. The Annual Report was reviewed and received. Four new Vestry members were elected as well as five Synod delegates and two Deanery representatives. Much gratitude was expressed that we had made it through interim time and a large group picture was taken welcoming The Rev. Cynthia Sever, our new Rector!

ST. GEORGE’S, BELLEVILLE
Fr. Dale Coleman, Rector

Since the time of the Diocesan Synod, St. George’s has been active in a variety of ways, first and most important with our worship.

With the deaths of several of our oldest members, and a few not so old, we have seen our attendance decrease even while our households are increasing. Mary Reed, our oldest
DEANERY REPORTS

member at age 99, received last rites by Fr. Dale before she died. She had been very active at church and in life up to the last few days of her life. Frank Cattaneo, age 92 and a devout WWII veteran, died as well. Frank served as a supply truck driver in some of the fiercest fighting after the Anzio landing and fighting up through the Italian peninsula. On the way, he was able to visit his family, including his grandmother whom he hadn’t seen in many years. He was cheerful and always in Church at 8:00pm.

At the same time, we continue to attract young folks and families, primarily due to our Godly Play. On any given Sunday we will have twenty kids and parents and grandparents in the chapel led in opening music by Steve Skaff and Joe Hooten, and then Mae Scott leads prayer and “good news” from all the kids raising their hands. The community-building is occurring between households and individuals alike, with many friendships forming among young parents, couples, and single adults. Steve and Kelly Skaff have taken it upon themselves to host large gatherings of young folks, in their 20s through early 40s. This has occurred at their own initiative.

The Rector’s Bible Study has been working verse by verse through St. Mark’s Gospel, with the help of Robert Gundry’s Commentary. This study is attended by 15-30 folks on an average Sunday.

A new family attending are the Harts: Gene, Debi and Finn. They have come from the Diocese of North West Pennsylvania. Gene is a colonel in the US Army and a postulant from his diocese. We also have the Parks as new members, originally South Koreans, with Dr. Helena a dentist at Scott AFB, her husband a medical doctor, and their daughter a twenty-year-old senior at the University of Chicago.

Our Chili Cook-Off team sold 260 gallons of white chili at the Belleville Arts Festival in October, with a great many folks young and old, new and longtime, assisting in the booth between Friday and 10 pm Saturday night in October. We raised over $8,000 clear for the Franklin Neighborhood Program in which St. George’s resides and ministers. Al Wunderlich, the head of the program, came to St. George’s to receive the gift during announcements on February 7th.

Our Christmas services were well attended, with over 230 in attendance. The Children’s Pageant was a huge success on Advent IV at 10:30, and the children attending the 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Eucharist took part in the sermon given by Deacon Jody Coleman. The music was joyfully played to God’s glory by Music Director and organist Nancy Ypma, the adult choir of 15-20, and our growing number of Choristers, assisted by Dawn Jung.

Both of our major ministries, Todd Hall and the Food Pantry, are flourishing. Many donations were received for the Food Pantry, including an anonymous $5,000 gift at Christmas. Todd Hall is undergoing much renovation and major maintenance and repairs. The bequest from the Charles Todd Estate provided the final disbursement of $73,500. The Board is working smoothly with Dan Duncan’s leadership.

Our hopes for a limited deficit budget were affected by a number of deaths and older generous stewards moving away. We ended with a $30,000 deficit. This was addressed at our Annual Meeting on January 31, 2016, as well as other subjects raised. We elected Tom Boshert, Lumley Bevineau, and Steve Skaff to three year terms, and Maryann Fernandez to a one year term on the Vestry. And we announced that Fr. Ralph McMichael would be our Lenten presenter on the meaning of the Eucharist.

We are grateful for God’s Blessings we receive at St. George’s.

ST. THOMAS’, GLEN CARBON

Jan Goossens

Fr. Tony Clavier’s 50th Anniversary Celebration on September 29 was a very joyous celebration.

The Child Care Center and Preschool is increasing in all classes. The school age children went on field trips and had a wonderful summer at the daycare. Bible Class on Thursdays for half an hour for the Twos, Pre K 1 & 2’s and School Age children was provided. The graduation celebration was held at St. Thomas’ on August 12th for the six children graduating to Kindergarten, complete with red caps and gowns. The Bible Class continues for the 2 – 5 year olds. The Christmas pageant done by the children was inspiring.

Fr. Tony Clavier is home from rehab and we look forward to when he can be in front of the altar on Sundays.
Thank you to Fr. David Boase and Fr. Gary Goldacker for being our Sunday celebrants.

The ECW is having a Soup and Salad Luncheon with Bake Sale on February 20, with the proceeds going to the Diocesan ECW Project Magdalene House in St. Louis and the capital campaign for the church roof.

EASTERN DEANERY
The Very Rev. Canon
David M. Baumann, Dean

CLERICUS
The clericus of the Eastern Deanery consists of the Revs. Ann Tofani, Brant Hazlett, Bill and Sylvia Howard, Ben Hankinson, Jim Fackler, and David Baumann. For over a year it has been our custom to meet about quarterly at the home of David and Elizabeth Baumann in Salem on a Monday evening. After Evening Prayer, dinner is served and good fellowship and discussion take place. The evening closes with any sharing of matters of concern that anyone wishes to present, and the support and counsel of the others is given, followed by group prayer.

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

Since our Synod report, the congregation at St. John's has been busy. At the first meeting after Synod, a thorough report was given to the congregation by our delegate David Works and by Fr. Bill. A work day has been held with cleaning, final painting of one area of the church, washing of windows, trimming and cleaning the outside, and a fun time of work and Fr. Bill recommended Advent and Christmas devotionals.

We held a joyful and thankful Thanksgiving meal following service on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. We are working on recommended minor corrections for electrical outlets near the kitchen sink, and during springtime we’ll work on our sidewalk to level it. With the assistance of our long-time Treasurer, we had budget planning resulting in another balanced budget and ended the year in the black.

Fr. Bill continues bi-monthly Sunday school discussions of 1st Corinthians. During coffee hour each week, he is available for “ask the priest” questions and lively discussion follows.

As usual at Christmas and Easter, we put together and delivered festive Christmas bags of candy for the residents of Rest Haven Nursing Home.

ST. MARY’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ROBINSON
The Rev. Ann Tofani

At our Annual Meeting which was held on Jan. 17, we reviewed our progress over the previous year and looked at plans for the coming year. A review of 2015 showed that we had grown in number, increased our stewardship, enhanced the worship area and finished the year without having to touch reserve funds. There had been many highlights. One was our Christmas Eve service where we packed the house; each pew was filled with families home for the holiday, worshiping and celebrating together the nativity of our Lord. The following day we again celebrated and many of those present on Christmas Eve returned for Sunday worship. It was a joyful time with fellowship following both services. The following two Sundays we were back to our normal twelve plus several visitors. On the tenth we had a snow storm
and attendance again was affected. However, spirits remained high. We have learned that as we are faithful so too will God be faithful with His blessings.

We have received a new organ (new for us) which was procured and donated by a parishioner. With the help of our Senior Warden it was installed and operational for our Christmas masses. It is a positive sign that things are moving ahead and growth is taking place. Plans for the coming year are being made that will enable us to become more visible in the community. We also are experiencing some growth and preparing to receive another person into our church family when the Bishop visits in June.

Seven parishioners took part in a reflective study on prayer from the Companions in Christ series which lasted for ten weeks. We will begin another series from this collection this month. The subject, Blessedness, will reflect on the Beatitudes. These studies are times of small group experiences in spiritual formation and we are learning much about how God speaks to each of us and calls us to discipleship.

We still face many challenges, but we are learning to face our fears and try new things. We are excited for the year that is before us. We are looking forward to Lent and the Easter season of promise with great expectation. God is good!

ST. JOHN’S IN CENTRALIA
St. John’s in Centralia continues to focus on raising its profile in the community. After one baptism in October, St. John’s looks forward to another at Easter. A wonderful relationship with the church across the street, the Bible Based Community Church, has been established to the benefit of both churches. Their entire congregation has been invited to join St. John’s for the celebration of the Easter Vigil. Plans are being made for an Easter egg hunt for the neighborhood children, and an Eastertide lecture series will be offered to the wider community based on the confirmation curriculum. St. John’s quarterly Evensong for the community, begun in March 2015, continues to be successful. In the past year, even with losing two members, St. John’s has gained six, increasing its overall membership from 21 to 25. The entire membership has a very high rate of attendance and participation, and a new energy is bringing St. John’s into an exciting place in its life.

A successful teaching mission with Dr. Kevin Pittle took place in January, sponsored by both churches. Dr. Pittle is a Messianic Jew licensed to preach in the Episcopal Church and a noted scholar of Biblical languages, as well as a gifted teacher and preacher. He was well received by the people of both churches, and his lectures were well attended by members of the wider community as well.

TRINITY, MT. VERNON
Fr. Ben Hankinson, Priest in Charge

Trinity has been busy since the beginning of the school year. Prior to Synod we were proud to host a deanery gathering welcoming Bishop Elias Chakupewa and his wife Lucy among us along with Bishop and Mrs. Martins. The event was a great opportunity for learning about the ministry of one of our companion dioceses while sharing in a time of food and fellowship, appetizers and Evening Prayer.

This fall, we initiated a joint youth ministry with two other churches in the Mt. Vernon area. We’ve begun small, meeting once a month to serve dinner at the local homeless shelter. In the coming months we are hoping to add a time of worship and study to our regular gatherings, and to find occasions to get together outside of the present schedule.

November saw two ventures, one new and one old. The new event saw us go out to one of the area nursing homes for a communal time of worship with the residents there, including one of our own. We have been back every month since and have now been invited to do the same at another facility in town. It is a great joy to worship with these folks each month and we are glad of the chance to share in fellowship with even more in the days to come. The old venture, a perennial favorite among many in the community, was the annual chili luncheon fundraiser. This year...
saw several hundred come through our doors to eat in or carry out chili, Italian beef, sweets and more. It was a resounding success (but we’re glad it only comes once a year)!

Advent saw us engage in another ecumenical endeavor. On December 13, we had a service of Lessons and Carols based on the popular service at King’s College. Five churches were represented in one way or another including a seventy-member combined choir. In addition to the nearly two hundred in attendance we also raised almost $800 for the community’s homeless shelter. We capped the night off with coffee and desserts. God willing this will be the first of many more to come as we already have a sixth church interested in joining the festivities in 2016.

Sunday School meets regularly as we continue to pursue a topical approach this year. So far we’ve touched on topics such as the Daily Office and various areas and types of symbolism (liturgy, architecture, etc.). For Lent we will take time to break down the general confession and look at Scriptural underpinnings as well as personal and practical applications. And speaking of Lent, we will continue our now regular practice of observing the Stations of the Cross on Fridays in conjunction with the local Roman Catholic parish.

All in all, Trinity is staying busy these days. We have engaged in a number of new ventures and are excited to continue discerning where and how we are being called to live for Christ.

DEANERY REPORTS

HALE DEANERY
Kathryn Jeffrey, Dean

The Hale Deanery Clericus gathered in January to pray and catch up with each other. Plans are underway for each parish to offer annually an event to which other parishes in the deanery will be encouraged to attend. So far, St. Stephen’s already has its Italian and chicken dinners, and St. Andrew’s its feast day evensong. Redeemer is planning a summer Quiet Day, and St. Mark’s and St. James will round out the calendar. Stay tuned.

Father James Muriuki reports from Church of the Redeemer in Cairo that they “had the first city-wide clean up in November. It brought a lot of excitement from the congregation as well as the city community. The Mayor was heard saying that so many people have gone to him and promised to do so many things in the community, but Redeemer has been a big example in the community. We picked up over thirty big bags of trash and tons of garbage. As the weather gets warmer, we shall revive this exercise. We look forward to being more active and visible in the community.” The parish notes with sadness the death in January of long-time member Lucille Ogg.

St. Andrew’s in Carbondale marked their annual feast day with a special service of Evensong featuring Taize music. Singers from other churches bolstered the choir under Joyce Hesketh’s able direction. Many from the community joined the congregation to launch the season of Advent, and CD recordings of the liturgy remain a hot item. A new tradition has been launched. A lovely reception hosted by Trish Guyon followed the Christmas Eve liturgy. The parish participated in the “Spirit of Christmas” gift program and also the Epiphany baby clothing collection for Pregnancy Matters.

St. James in Marion has been blessed to acquire a sophisticated digital piano. Music lover Bonnie Lindquist is planning a concert to introduce the instrument to the community. The chapel erected a beautiful new sign on the front lawn. New St. Andrew’s parishioners living in Carterville are among those finding the Saturday evening services to be a convenient option, so weekly services have been resumed. Father Bob Harmon has been filling in one Saturday per month while Mother Kathryn Jeffrey attends Catechesis of the Good Shepherd training.

Mother Sherry Black reports that one of the best things about St. Mark’s, West Frankfort, is its children’s program under the direction of Nancy Summers. She creatively has appropriate lessons for all ages -- a one room Sunday School. During the last quarter Nancy had the inspiration to have the children work with our talented organist, Claudia Byrne, for a brief Christmas program. They performed for us on the Sunday before Christmas, and when children perform families show up. We had as many in the pews that Sunday as we did the following Christmas Eve. It was a great success!

St. Stephen’s in Harrisburg is very grateful for Father Tim Goodman’s recovery. He writes, “We are slowly getting back to normal. I have added
a weekday mass to our schedule. Our big project for last quarter was the design of a parish members list adding phone numbers and email addresses. A big note of thanks to Brent & Laura Lecher for taking on this project. Once again we will be holding our Italian dinner. The date is February 20 starting at 6:30 pm. The profit from the dinner will be shared with our local charities. The Christmas mass was well attended this year. Hats off for our treasurer Martin Rowe for getting in our 2015 audit early.”

NORTHEASTERN DEANERY

ST. CHRISTOPHER, RANTOUL
The Rev. Ann Alley

On November 1, St. Christopher celebrated their 50th anniversary with a luncheon and open house. It was well attended with 37 folks in church…and quite a few more at the party afterward. Of course there was an abundance of wonderful food! We saw some wonderful faces from the past who were there to share memories. Also, we were able to get in touch with the Vicar who served at St. Christopher from December 1972 through November 1975, Fr. Ed Tourangeau. He sent a very nice note with his memories.

St. Christopher held a very successful “Holiday Bazaar” in November, 2015.

On January 10, 2016, we held our annual Epiphany Party, with a potluck, a King’s cake, a game of pass the parcel, and the breaking of a piñata.

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, DANVILLE
Richard Lewis

The following information reflects activities at the Church of the Holy Trinity:

Continue outreach relationship with Downtown Neighborhood Association and The Vermilion County War Museum

Vestry continues to develop long term strategic plan; addresses strengths and weaknesses; presented and explained at annual parish meeting

Honored Father Geoffrey Scanlon, retired priest of parish, with title of Priest Emeritus

Held spiritual pilgrimage to Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham with four local Roman Catholic parishes

Invited neighboring apartment complexes to parish Thanksgiving dinner

Observed Advent with weekly devotions, Morning Prayer, and Evening Prayer

In December, Father Halt of St. Matthew’s, Bloomington visited to say monthly Saturday Vigil Mass

Christmas Eve celebrated with Father Scanlon saying Mass

Increased emphasis on Sacramental Life and understanding the Communion of Saints

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MATTOON
Fr. Jeff Kozuszek

It’s been a busy year at Trinity Episcopal Church in Mattoon. This year Trinity received an award from the Coles County Historical Preservation Advisory Council. This is in recognition for the ongoing efforts to maintain our building in its original historical condition. Currently, Trinity is about to start painting the inside of the church.

The Mattoon Jewish Community Center, which also uses Trinity Episcopal Church for their worship space, has joined us for a couple of services and Agape meals. The members of Trinity have also attended a few of their services and enjoyed discovering and comparing our beautiful liturgies. Both communities are currently looking forward to holding a joint Seder Meal during Passover in April.

In October we held our Annual Animal Blessing in Friendship Park, Mattoon, in conjunction with the United Methodist Church of Mattoon. Attendance seems to grow every year. In November, Trinity held a joint service with The Church of Mattoon and enjoyed the musical talent of their praise band, The Surrender Praise Band. Another Agape meal followed this service; boy, we sure like to break bread with our neighbors!

We gave thanks for Jenny Carter-Avis for her past year of service as Trinity’s Sunday school, and we welcomed Andy Parrish as her replacement. We were also saddened by the loss of several members this fall. Trinity held eight burials in three months; a large number for a small church. Understandably, this has resulted in a sense of grief and mourning for the church as a whole. But Trinity continues to have new members join us, such as Dr. David Knox and Trevor, Dani and Isaiah Barth.
DEANERY REPORTS

Book discussion is offered every second and fourth Tuesday night, immediately following the midweek service. We are currently discussing The Provocative Church by Graham Tomlin.

EMMANUEL MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CHAMPAIGN
The Very Rev. Beth Maynard, Rector

Emmanuel’s fall was a mix of regular events, transitions, and surprises from God. A group of vestry members and others attended the September diocesan workshop with Carrie Headington, which we found directly relevant to our current situation. In October we enjoyed our annual Blessing of the Pets, which we held this year in partnership with Vet on Wheels who provided pet health evaluations and treats. In November, we had our second iteration of a Thanksgiving Eve Mass, something that we expect to become a permanent part of the schedule given the response, and our choir put on a concert including the Schubert Mass in G with orchestra to a packed house. In December, we hosted boarding for the Holiday Trolley, a downtown Champaign tour program for all ages; we also had our traditional Greening of the Church event with chili lunch, and three Christmas Masses (with total attendance of 367, up from 275 last year) with a beautiful reception after Midnight Mass.

A highlight of the fall was concluding our year-long discernment process, which Deacon Chris Hopkins had shepherded, about where God might be calling Emmanuel to do more hands-on outreach. Both the discernment group and the vestry came to consensus that we want to focus our work through the local organization empty tomb, and we took initial steps toward deepening our existing relationship with them. We also pursued our focus on improving formation and discipleship. Our children’s formation group is working all year on a model they are calling Lectionary with Legos, and our adult formation offerings included two different sessions of a video course on Discerning God’s Will, as well as a very popular Sunday morning course on Ephesians.

We had a number of goodbyes over the fall, from both volunteers and paid staff. Our longtime acolyte master Larry Bouton retired, and our faithful Parish Administrator Lori Dobrik did as well. Our choirmaster Filippo Ciabatti was offered a position at Dartmouth College and concluded his time with us at Christmas. Along with thanking and honoring these ministries that were transitioning, we concluded searches for the two staff positions and now benefit from the presence of Mary Sievers in the office and Geoffrey Williams at the podium.

We also had a number of hellos over the fall, with new faces at Mass every Sunday from late August through early December, some of whom have settled at the parish and are getting involved in various ways. We’ve identified the idea of helping everyone who is here notice everyone else who is here, and helping build community as part of the Body of Christ, as a key need in months to come.

While it is easy to talk about programs and events, the real life of Emmanuel happens as the Spirit of God moves among the people of God through the sacraments, prayer, generosity, outreach, listening, and too many other ways to name. May God be glorified in our parish life.

THE CHAPEL OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE, CHAMPAIGN
The Reverend Sean Ferrell, Rector

The Chapel of Saint John the Divine continues to share God’s love on the campus of the University of Illinois, and in the Champaign-Urbana community.

In November, we completed our “Eat In To Help Out” meals which collected $3,712, which was sent to Episcopal Relief and Development in support of the Millennium Development Goals. This made up one component of our total social outreach for the year which expanded to over $17,000 in 2015. I am happy to report that our stewardship campaign was quite a success, and concluded in late November. Pledge totals have been steadily increasing over the past three years and we are now $56,000 ahead of total pledges for 2013, a fact we have celebrated heartily.

In December, our annual Lessons and Carols service was quite well attended by 127 persons. Shortly thereafter, in mid-December, the academic term ended and campus began to slow down to its normal holiday pace. In spite of this, 161 people attended our Christmas Eve services. In January, we held our annual parish meeting on January 17. A couple of
the highlights of the meeting were as follows:

Our average Sunday attendance was up for 2015 to 124 from 117 in 2014. This total does not count our regular Wednesday services that serve the university community. That service averages an additional 12 for a total average weekly attendance of 136. Four new babies were born in our parish in the last year, and the parish continues to be age diverse with persons from five months to over 90.

The Chapel continues to be alive and well. Our liturgy, programs, and outreach are quite healthy, and we are growing. Come and join us when you’re in the neighborhood.

NORTHWESTERN DEANERY

ST. JOHN’S, DECATUR  
The Rev. Richard A. Swan

In November, 2015, we had close to 20 members assist the Decatur “Judy Mason” Thanksgiving basket project on two occasions. 4,000 Thanksgiving baskets were put together on Nov. 22 for the needy in Macon County. We were pleased to be a stop on the Heritage and Holly tour Thanksgiving Weekend, 360 visitors came to see St. John’s on the Friday and Saturday of that weekend. Our annual Advent Service of Lessons and Carols was held on December 13, with a reception following. We had good attendance at our two Christmas Eve Masses, with a children’s Choir singing at the early service. On December 27 we celebrated our Patronal Feast with a Pot-luck following the 10:00 am Mass.

On January 9, we had our first bi-monthly Cursillo Ultreya of the year. On January 22 we celebrated the life of Richard Pharis, who died unexpectedly the week prior. We held our Annual Meeting following a combined 9:00 am Holy Eucharist on Sunday the 24th of January.

We celebrated the life of long-time member, Jayne Evey-Hicks, on February 1. On February 6, the Vestry gathered for our annual Vestry Retreat. The men prepared pancakes for the Annual Pancake supper on February 9; this year there was also the option of having Jambalaya to spice things up. We began our weekly Stations of the Cross on February 12 at 6:00 pm.

We are looking forward to Bishop Martins’ visit on the 14th with the Confirmation of Megan Jordan.

ST. PAUL’S, CARLINVILLE / ST. PETER’S, CHESTERFIELD  
The Very Rev. John R. Henry

It’s been a busy Fall in the Episcopal Parish of Macoupin County. The members of the parish have totally renovated the kitchen at St. Paul’s and they did nearly all the work themselves. In addition, the vestry approved a new roof on the church (work accomplished) and the painting of the interior (accomplished) and exterior (to be completed) of the church.

Bishop Martins made his annual visitation on November 8. He confirmed one adult---Bryan William Tobias Zimmerman.

An insurance inspector decided that the foundation at St. Peter’s is settling (and has been doing so for the past 150 years. A structural engineer determined that the building is not going to fall down anytime soon but he recommended improvements in the foundation.

Our volunteer work crew manned the Carlinville Food Pantry on Wednesday, December 30. We serve in this ministry the fifth Wednesday of the month. In other mission work, we donated $1000 for seminary support, $500 to the Carlinville Food Pantry, $500 to the MCDD, $500 to the Saturday Snack Program,$250 for Episcopal Church Camp, and $250 to the Carlinville Christmas Shopping Spree for needy children in our community.

53 persons attended our Christmas Eve service, besting any attendance in the last ten years. (And many have continued to come back with our average attendance at weekend worship jumping from 25 to 30 last year!)
### DIOCESAN CALENDAR

#### MARCH 2016
- **03-04** ECW Annual Lenten Retreat, Toddhall, Columbia
- **06** Bishop w/ Trinity, Mt. Vernon
- **19** Mass of Chrism w/ lunch, Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield (11 a.m.)
- **20** PALM SUNDAY, Bishop w/ Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Springfield
- **25** GOOD FRIDAY
- **27** EASTERN DAY, Bishop w/ Trinity, Jacksonville

#### APRIL 2016
- **10** Bishop w/ Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign
- **17** Bishop w/ Chapel of St. John the Divine, Champaign
- **23** ECW Annual Meeting, BroMenn Hospital
- **24** Bishop w/ Trinity, Yazoo City, MS (DEPO)

#### MAY 2016
- **01** Bishop w/ Church of the Redeemer, Cairo
- **05** ASCENSION
- **08** Bishop w/ St. Stephen’s, Harrisburg
- **08** Bishop w/ St. Mark’s, West Frankfort
- **15** PENTECOST, Bishop w/ St. George’s, Belleville
- **20** Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
- **22** TRINITY, Bishop w/ St. Andrew’s, Carbondale

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### CONTRIBUTIONS

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.**

**This calendar was correct at the time of printing, but is subject to change without notice.**

**For the most recent Diocesan Calendar and the full prayer cycle calendar, please visit www.episcopalspringfield.org.**

**JUNE 2016**
- **02** Trustees Meeting, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
- **04** Bishop w/ St. Mary’s, Robinson
- **05** Bishop w/ St. John’s, Albion
- **05** Bishop w/ St. John the Baptist, Mt. Carmel
- **12-17** St. Michael’s Conference, Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville
- **23-26** Cursillo Weekend #34, Toddhall, Columbia

**JULY 2016**
- **03-09** Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson