As we hurry to complete and submit our canonically-required Mission Strategy Reports, I wanted to share some thoughts about mission and mission strategy that I have learned from those blessed folks of the Eucharistic communities I have had the privilege of working with this year. Perhaps the most important part of mission is a realization that it reflects and responds to God and His creative activity. God is a God who sends: He sent His Spirit over the waters at creation; He sent His prophets, judges, and kings to the people of Israel; He sent a pillar of fire and cloud to guide the people of Israel; He sent His only Son to be born, serve, preach, and ultimately sacrifice Himself for His people; He sent the disciples out in twos to heal the sick and cast out demons in His Name; He sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and those gathered in the Upper Room after His Resurrection and Ascension; and He sends us out to preach the Gospel and “make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28: 19). God sends, and is sending us at this very moment. That is the heart and soul and core of mission. Mission is a response to God’s sending.

Mission and mission strategy is not about filling pews, or increasing plate revenue, or anything else associated with church maintenance and administration. In fact, it is far from it. Mission is about preaching the Gospel and making disciples. We no longer can throw open the red doors and suddenly we have an influx of able and willing bodies longing to be part of our Eucharistic communities. We can no longer just offer programming that will attract and bring in more bodies in the physical plant and...
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+ Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins, Bishop

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One of the privileges of being a diocesan bishop is that I get to “see the whole board.” The great majority of the clergy and baptized faithful in the “one church” of the Diocese of Springfield are understandably focused on the particular Eucharistic Community to which they are connected. Sometimes I miss the continuity of being grounded in a local parish, but that nostalgic yearning is more than amply compensated for by the joy of being in touch with what’s going on from Pekin to Cairo, from Carbondale to Rantoul.

At a recent visitation, I was asked what it is I’m seeing from my unique vantage point that I find encouraging. Here’s my list:

We’re slowly starting to “get it” with respect to the necessary cultural shift from an attractional model of mission to an incarnational model. Eucharistic Communities are seriously engaging the process of developing a local mission strategy. These are baby steps, but they are baby steps in the right direction.

• Everywhere I go, there seems to be a nucleus of adults and youth who are serious about Christian discipleship and spiritual growth. People are reading the Bible, learning to pray, and serving the world in the name of Jesus. This is exciting.

• Within the last year, four clergy households in the diocese have welcomed newborn children. There may once have been a time when that would not be remarkable, but it’s been a very long time since it’s happened in our midst, and it says something about the decreasing median age of our clergy families.

• We’re operating in the black financially. Yeah, this is kind of a mundane fact, but, alongside most dioceses of the Episcopal Church, it puts us in rather elite company. We’re not “in the money,” but neither are we in financial crisis, which is significant in an era when many dioceses are looking at consolidating with a neighbor.

• We are free of fractious conflict. This isn’t to say that we are in complete agreement about everything, but we are not at each other’s throats, or anywhere close. This is nothing to sneeze at.

• We are blessed with lay and clergy leaders at a diocesan level who serve in their various capacities with dedication, competence, humility, and humor. The Diocese of Springfield is a healthy community.

Do we have room for growth and improvement? Without a doubt. Do we face daunting challenges? Absolutely. Will God’s prodigal grace be more than sufficient for our needs? I am so persuaded.

Faithfully in Christ Jesus,

+Daniel Springfield
BEING SENT: MISSION AND MISSION STRATEGY

Continued from Cover

beautiful worship spaces. That model just isn’t effective anymore. What the diocesan vision strives for is an incarnational model rather than the attraction model, meaning that now we must be the hands and feet of Jesus to folks wherever there may be disciples to be made. We have to leave the comfort and security of our beautiful worship spaces and towering spires, and learn to be present and in relationship with those whom we feel called to connect with and disciple. Mission means building trusting relationships with folks wherever and however they may be. When we build relationships, and serve one another, only then can catechesis and formation occur. ‘Missionary’ is no longer an old and tired word, but now takes on a new dimension rich with the power of the Holy Spirit and fueled by our conviction that we are being sent by God to proclaim the Gospel and to be Christ for the world, and in particular, those who are in our geographic parishes.

Another part of mission and mission strategy is the change in nomenclature in the diocese. It is difficult for us to no longer call ourselves ‘parishes’ and ‘missions’ but rather Eucharistic Communities and Communities-in-Formation. Under the diocesan vision, we are called to be one church, united in love, and reaching out to serve those organized under our new geographic parishes. Changing our language changes and creates our reality. The diocesan vision poises us each for mission work and creates a reality where mission IS the point of being church! We no longer have vestries; we now have Mission Leadership Teams! That’s right....MISSION leadership teams. Our new vision of church extends out farther and more courageously than we could previously imagine. The ground for mission is fertile in the counties of central and southern Illinois. The time for mission is now! God is sending each of us as the one church of the diocese of Springfield out to labor in His fertile and desperate fields of broken, hurting, and lost human beings and beloved children of His. God sends, and we are sent! Do you hear His call? Do you feel the Spirit? Do you feel His love? Then GO...for He sends you!

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Spiritual Warfare
Ann Tofani

Our scriptures have many references to Satan, the devil, demons and unclean spirits. But today, people are too sophisticated to believe that the evil forces are still around and at war with God’s people. We believe in angels, God and eternity (or at least we claim that we do), but when it comes to those dark forces that bring about evil, death and destruction that’s another thing all together. We like to bury our heads in the sand and ignore the fact that actually many of the problems we face might just be the result of our enemy playing with us. However it definitely is not Godly play and it definitely is not playful and/or harmless.

Like it or not we are face to face with something we would just as soon not pay any attention to in today’s world. And quite frankly those dark forces would just as soon we would not pay any attention to them. However they are mentioned often in our scriptures and we see evidence everyday in the world of evil. Where does it come from and how can we protect ourselves from something we are not willing to address as a viable enemy?

Satan was once an angel in God’s kingdom, but he rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven along with his followers. Now they make their influence felt here on earth. When we realize that demons are fallen angels, we have some sense of what they can and cannot do.

Angels are like humans in that they have intellects and wills, but they have no physical bodies and are not subject to death or physical ailments. They are superior to us in strength, skill, intelligence, and knowledge. The word angel actually means messenger and God has sent many to reveal things to us. Abraham was visited by angels as was Mary, Joseph, and many others. But the angelic nature of demons, though in many ways superior to our own ways, has been
deformed by their sin. Their purpose is to see as many humans as possible join them in rebelling against God. They do have power to use against us, but that power is limited. The Satan is not an evil deity equal in power to the good God who is eternal, all powerful, and all knowing. Satan is doomed to fail, but in the meantime he disrupts things. He is a thief and has come to steal, kill and destroy those who would follow Jesus the Christ.

So we live our lives as God's children struggling with many things. We battle against our flesh, the world, and the Devil. Temptations come to us from all directions. We pray each day in the daily office to be delivered from evil and not to be led into temptation. Then often we proceed as if that takes care of it, when in actuality it is only a band-aid on a hemorrhaging wound.

Do we actually believe all that the Bible teaches or do we pick and choose and ignore the parts that seem out of step with today's culture? We tend to like hard evidence for things.

Is there evidence that God exists? We see it every day in His creation as well in each act of kindness done in His name and we feel His presence as we go through the day. Is there evidence that Satan and demons exist? History shows us that people of vastly different cultures have affirmed the reality of evil spirits; our sacred scriptures speak to us of them; Christ refers to demons many times; Saints confirm their existence and evidence of demonic intervention in human affairs is around us daily. I can attest to their existence through my own experiences.

I have also spoken with persons who played around with things that they thought were harmless and thereby opened themselves up to demonic presence. Ouija Boards, Tarot Cards, sorcery, séances, palm reading can all open a portal for oppression by evil forces. It is not a given, but to play with these things is to play with fire, If you don't want to be on the devil's hook don't nibble at his bait.

Most demonic activity is subtle and occurs within our thought life. Demons plant ideas within our minds seeking to influence our reason, memory, and imagination and ultimately our will. They suggest ideas through what we read, what we see and hear and through our conversations as well as various social and communications media. Most often they influence us through temptations. They entice us to commit sin. Flip Wilson wasn't far wrong when he joked, “The devil made me do it.”

Because demons are real and at work in our world every human soul is at risk. As we are admonished by Paul in the 6th chapter of his letter to the Ephesians: “Finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

So what do we do to protect ourselves? To stand? What are our weapons and what is our armor? Briefly, we have many weapons. The most powerful one is prayer, both private prayer and corporate prayer. There is strength in numbers and worshiping God in community provides a hedge as do the sacraments. For all seven sacraments provide channels of grace and both protect us and rescue us from evil powers. The Devil’s first attack on the human race was focused on a married couple. Through the ruin of their family, he has extended his evil to every generation. The home is a sanctuary, a holy place, a fortress against Satan’s assaults. Families are strengthened as they worship and pray together.

Knowing scripture and God’s promises and word, is what Paul calls in Ephesians, the sword of the Spirit. Faith serves as our shield. It includes both a knowledge of God and a confident trust in Him. Hope, our hope of salvation, is our helmet and protection for our mind. If we lose hope for our salvation we open our minds to all the poisonous thoughts that cause us to despair. Finally there is love. Love is the breastplate of our spiritual armor. Love consists not merely in feeling, but in doing - in choosing what is right and good. When love is lost our heart is vulnerable and the enemy can take deadly aim.

We have been warned to keep alert for our enemy is like a roaring lion prowling around, looking for someone
to devour. The Satan has been defeated by the lion of Judah, but boy is he mad and out to get those who do not adequately seek God’s protection. As our Collect for Peace provides for us, we pray: “O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

numerous sides and desserts. Great food -- plenty of it! And fabulous fellowship!

We followed with a baptism the next morning on the Feast of Pentecost -- truly a weekend to celebrate!

ST. JOHN’S, ALBION: 175TH ANNIVERSARY

Judith Puckett

Episcopal services were first read in or near Albion in Edwards County by the first settlers, many of whom were from England. A missionary, the Reverend Amos Baldwin, organized a church in the 1820s but left after six weeks. That church faded.

A second missionary priest, Father Benjamin Hutchins, accepted the frontier call and arrived in Indiana and then Albion around 1838. He and his family returned home to Philadelphia, PA, for three years before returning to Albion in 1841 where they settled. The church was organized afresh in September, 1842 and construction promptly began following a formal cornerstone dedication ceremony.

St. Mark’s, West Frankfort celebrated the 95th anniversary of our admission to the diocese. While the actual date of admission was May 16th, we gathered for food and fellowship in Trotter Hall on Saturday, May 19th. Our plans were nearly put on hold due to a water main break at Rend Lake earlier that week that resulted in 9 counties in Southern Illinois having no or limited water available. But the water came back (with boil orders) just in time. We feasted on locally caught fish, fried on site by several of our members, plus

constructed of locally-produced bricks and through the talents of area craftsmen, the church retains much of its 1842 character. In 1889-90, Father Hutchins, then Rector Emeritus, and Rev. John Chestnutt supervised a significant remodeling project. A corner entrance with new bell tower was added, a low ceiling was removed to reveal the timber-beamed ceiling, and a wall removed to turn the original vestry room into an enlarged chancel.

The church’s walnut doors, first used in December, 1842, were reset in the new entrance. The double doors have been in continuous use for 175 years.

In the decades since, generations of St. John’s congregates have been stewards of the historic building and have maintained a steady Episcopal presence in Edwards County. St. John’s was placed on the National
Costs:
$255 – 1st Camper in family
$230 – 2nd Camper in family
$205 – Each additional Camper in family
$127.50 – 1st Time Cost for a new Camper from a church in the Diocese of Springfield

Junior Session: Kids finishing grades 1-4. We sleep in cabins with bathrooms and showers, but we are outdoors most of the time.

Middler Session: Kids finishing grades 5-7. We live in screened cabins and shower in bath houses.

Senior Session: Kids finishing grades 8-11. We live in a variety of cabins, some with showers and some using a bath house.

A Typical Day Includes:
-Holy Eucharist
-In session teaching by clergy
-Good food at every meal
-Water activities at the lake and pool
-Opportunities for crafts, sports, games, hikes, archery, fishing, and more
-Singing around the campfire

For more information: http://www.episcopalspringfield.org/summer-youth-ministries/

The Essence of the Gospel
The Rev. Dale Coleman

By now, I imagine most of you have heard or even seen our Presiding Bishop’s sermon at the Royal Wedding. In listening to Bishop Curry, when he spoke of the “power of love”, I wondered if he would quote the song by Huey Lewis and the News. When instead, the Bishop commended, “God’s gracious love to His entire world, and given supremely in the sacrificial, redemptive love of our Lord Jesus Christ”, I found my heart stirred. This was a superb proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus at the center of our lives. And this was being delivered to hundreds of millions of people around the world. Bishop Curry’s preaching was reaching in one fell swoop as many as who heard Billy Graham in his own lifetime.

The Word preached was about our Christian faith in Jesus. It was preached infectiously, joyfully, captivatingly. The Bishop quoted the Song of Solomon and the Gospel of St. Matthew. The latter concerned our Lord’s Summary of the Law:
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.
And you shall love your neighbor as your self.

Around the Diocese

Register of Historic places in 2014.

For further information, contact Father Bill Howard at 618-315-1671 or gwh@mvn.net.

Episcopal Church Camp
Better together: God + You + Me

July 1-7, 2018
East Bay Camp, Hudson IL

The purpose of Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois is to provide both youth and adult participants with the extraordinary opportunity to live in a Christian community within the environment of the cabins, lakes, and woods of East Bay Camp near Hudson, IL. It is our goal that all participants will experience this life in Christ, the particular expressions of which may be somewhat different from what they experience in their home parishes; and that their growth in Christ may be enriched by these experiences. But don’t take it from me, hear what those involved have said:

“I learned a valuable lesson at camp. We are not building our relationship with God for this one week. Rather, we are building our relationship with God every day or our lives and choosing this week to strengthen it.” – Former Camper

“The first year I went I was expecting to make new friends but instead I left with a whole family of Christians.” – Counselor

“My kids come home with renewed excitement about Jesus and memories they will have for a lifetime. They look forward to it every year.” – Parent
How refreshing! And all this on television!!
In quoting Dr. King and Fr. Teilhard de Chardin, Bishop Curry held before us the essence of the Gospel. He effectively quoted from the Negro Spiritual “There is a Balm in Gilead”, with its words “to make the wounded whole... To heal the sin-sick soul”. This is a message we can take to our hearts. These are words about the Great Physician.

This sermon touched our world as I have rarely seen it occur, and newscasters around the world discussed it. It also obviously moved the Royal couple, Harry and Meghan. You can be sure the Queen loved it behind her stoic face. She speaks about her faith in Christ fervently.

The Gospel is not that we have to love harder to save the world, but receive the love God gives to us centrally in His Son, who died that we might live, and now continually in the Holy Spirit. Jesus alone died for us, was raised from the dead for us, ascended for us, and through Him we receive the Holy Spirit from God the Father.

The day after the Royal Wedding was the Feast of Pentecost, the giving of the Holy Spirit. How serendipitous! Or was it? The first clear gift of the Holy Spirit is proclaiming Jesus is Lord. We witnessed the gift of the Holy Spirit at the wedding. It was a Pentecost moment.

One of my duties this year will be as a member of the Credentials Committee. Our first two days (July 3rd and 4th) will be very long days starting at 6:30 am (Tues.) till 5 pm and 8:30 am (Wed.) till 5 pm. That should get us started!!

I am very grateful for the daily Eucharists with the deputies and Bishops and Triennial Meeting delegates. It is a terrific experience. I am sorry that we do not start every day with Eucharist. At this General Convention, the Eucharist is set at a different time each day.

My fear is that we will not be able to come to a consensus on important issues without it becoming personal – with unkind words.

My hope is that we will be selfless and meet the challenge of Bp. Curry’s Jesus Movement.

Fr. Dick Swan.

This will be my sixth General Convention over the past 21 years. The first I attended as a lay volunteer, the second as an Exhibitor with the Office of Federal Chaplaincy, and this will be my fourth as a Deputy. Each has had a slightly different personality. As with the last three there is a bit of excitement as well as a bit of trepidation moving up to this triennial event.

Many feel that the size of our General convention needs to be pared back, our Church is about 1.7 million members, yet the only conventions larger than the Episcopal Church General Convention are the Republican and Democratic
AROUND THE DIOCESE

National Conventions! Many resolutions will flow through the House of Deputies as “Mind of the Convention” resolutions, many will urge Dioceses and Congregations to this action, or that, or to refrain from such. Resolutions are seldom binding! Many conventions since 1998 have urged the leadership at the Central Church Office to move from New York City to a more central location in order to be better stewards of funding (a single staff person salary in NYC can rival the annual budget of many local Episcopal Churches)

What often makes me nervous about the General Convention is that the News Media doesn’t really understand us and what we do, so an action, or a speech from the floor can make headlines that are far from reality. Over the past 14 years I have had to go into a “damage control” mode to explain General Convention actions to Parishioners, either positive, or (more often) negative.

As with many Dioceses our membership is made up of both “traditionalists” and “progressives” yet our Diocese is still mainly traditional in regards to issues of the Central Church Operation. We used to be in the middle of a larger group of Traditionalists attending the General Convention, however beginning with G.C. #77 six years ago we have found ourselves as the extreme right minority in attendance.

With the exception that we are not having the election of a Presiding Bishop, this year will be much like three years ago in Salt Lake City. There is talk of revising the Book of Common prayer but the amount of energy behind that waits to be seen. Please keep us in prayer as we seek to serve the larger church and represent our Diocese in July.

The Rev. David J. A. Halt

“What am I looking forward to at General Convention?” It is difficult to answer as I have no experience of a General Convention. I have read the reports of previous General Conventions, and I followed them closely during their debates in the past, but all of that has been filtered through various reporting lenses. So, I come to General Convention with curiosity and questions.

I am looking forward to seeing how my presuppositions of this gathering are supported, challenged, or changed. I have often heard of General Convention being the largest bicameral legislation in the world while it is in session, so I am intrigued to discover if this is an accurate statement. I want to see if we live up to our billing and how the organizing of the legislative work is carried out. As a parliamentary geek it will be an interesting experience, and experiment, in the minutiae and mundane of procedure and machinations. How do Christians, gathered in a large body, use the nuances and possibilities of the rules of orders to pursue their goals and objectives? How does substantive debate on the merit of the issues take place, and resolve itself, within the limits of time imposed by necessity? Does the procedure itself represent the movement of the Holy Spirit? With the plethora of reports and proposed resolutions do we give ourselves enough time to be adequately informed on all the hoped-for positives, and potential unintentional negatives, to any question that is laid before this body? Besides these questions, I really do not have many expectations of the General Convention from a legislative perspective.

I have tried to become well-informed as to the reports and proposals and to give each due consideration. As for any specific controversy or proposal and its consequences, I would prefer to remain mute until the time to consider each on its merits, and faithfulness to the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed to the Church. On any particular issue, as a Deputy my task is to discern the mind of the Church, the mind of Christ, and not my own mind or even the mind of our Diocese. For me, preparing for, and participating in this General Convention will be a time of intense prayer.

Beyond the importance of this work and discernment, I am looking forward to reconnecting with colleagues from other Dioceses as we pursue our common work. So, while I am expecting the work to be difficult and long, the shared fellowship of brothers and sisters from across the spectrum of Dioceses will be refreshing.

I will say that I am not looking forward to Austin in July, especially as I have been reliably informed that it is not a dry heat.

Please keep all of our Deputies and our Bishop in your prayers in the days ahead.
DIOCESE HIGHLIGHTS

St. Matthew’s, Bloomington

Habitat Build for Kia and Georgia’s new home. Bishop Elias Chakupewa, his wife Lucy, Fr Dave Halt, his wife Amy, and Deacon Tim Leighton, at St Matthew’s, Bloomington yesterday, where Bishop Elias was celebrant and preacher.

Cathedral church of St. Paul, Carlinville

Cathedral Church St. Paul was blessed with a delegation from the Home Office (Church of England). Her majesty made an appearance at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul. Celebration of Her Majesty’s Birthday. God Save the Queen!

St. Thomas, Salem

The parishioners of St. Thomas have spent three Saturday mornings refreshing our prayer garden for the summer.

St. Andrew’s, Carbondale

Eleven mats for the homeless dropped off today, representing over 330 hours of labor from our volunteer folders, cutters, loopers, and hookers!

Trinity, Mattoon

Trinity Sunday at Trinity Church in Mattoon.
DIOCESE HIGHLIGHTS

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ALTON

Bucket Brigade crew from The Episcopal Parish of Alton, coordinated by Vestry member Thom Harris.

Paws service in Alton.

St. Michael’s, O’fallon

This is the amazing group from St Michael’s Episcopal Church who packed up Richard’s home - during a heat advisory!

The bishops of Tabora and Springfield, with their wives.

St. Michael’s Youth Conference. Assembling lunches for a service project—the Feed My Lambs program, a cooperative effort among St Clair County churches.

Holy Trinity, Danville

The Church of Holy Trinity in Danville celebrated 150 years in their Consecrated Church Building!

St. Mark’s, West Frankfort

Fish fry at St. Mark’s to celebrate 95 yrs that our church was admitted to the diocese.

St. George’s, Belleville

Parishioners of St. George’s celebrating St. George’s Day.
DARROW DEANERY

On the feast of the Ascension, people from all our EC’s and beyond gathered with our Bishop at St Thomas’, Glen Carbon, to keep the feast. This was the second time we’ve done this, the first being in 2016 at St Andrew’s, Edwardsville. Hopefully we can make it an annual deanery event, and perhaps add Epiphany and Transfiguration in years when those feasts don’t fall on Sunday, in order to raise their profile.

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ALTON
Alton, IL

We have continued our weekly schedule of the celebration of the Holy Eucharist: Sundays at Trinity Chapel and St. Paul’s Church; Tuesday mornings just before Bible study; and on Wednesdays at noon. The noon service is moving from Trinity to St. Paul’s beginning May 2nd.

Our intergenerational Family Fun Nights have continued. In January, thirty adults and children of all ages honored our Veterans with a sock-hop to hip-hop dance and a “mess hall dinner” served by the wonderful Grandma Gang. During Lent, we learned about hunger in our own area and around the world. We asked our local Crisis Food Center for their dream list of foods needed for family food baskets for an Easter meal. We collected money from parishioners to purchase these food items, put them in beautiful sea-grass baskets, and made a specially decorated bag for candies to tuck inside each basket. We had a total of 6 baskets, plus food and money left over for Crisis Food Center.

Our PAWS (Pets Are Welcome Service) continues as a non-Eucharistic service on the first Sunday of the month. Each month has a theme so, along with our furry friends, we’ve celebrated An Expectant PAWS in Advent; A PAWS to Remember for All Saint’s Day; A PAWS for Love in February, and … you get the idea!

After a brief, ecumenical worship service, we enjoy a fellowship time (sometimes like a support group) for the humans, a playgroup for the pets, and treats for everyone.

During the Lenten season, we met for the Eucharist, a simple soup, bread, and cheese supper, and an educational program. Our program was Max Lucado’s Anxious for Nothing: finding calm in a chaotic world. After the pomp and heartbreak of the Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday services, we were treated to a chancel drama called The Vigil by Ladislas Fodor. Our outstanding, award-winning Director, Diana Enloe, guided the cast of sixteen. In The Vigil, the Gardener is put on trial for rolling the stone away from the tomb so Jesus’ followers could hide his body in order to mislead the public into believing in the Resurrection. The congregation of 100 or so people had to deliver the verdict: Had Jesus risen from the dead, or was the Gardener guilty of perpetrating a hoax? It was a very moving experience for all.

The Maundy Thursday service consisted of the foot-washing, the Eucharist, the stripping of the altar, and the procession to and overnight vigil at the Altar of Repose. We were all jolted every time we heard the nails being pounded into Jesus’ body during the Reproaches. The Great Vigil of Easter began in darkness with the lighting of the first fire, and rang our bells just before we celebrated the Resurrection of Jesus with the first Mass of Easter.

The ECW is collecting food for Crisis Food Center. They are also re-instituting a former program called “Ladies Night Out,” which involves a catered meal, time to get to know other women of the parish, and a fun program. The Guild of Grace is collecting personal-sized toiletries and cosmetic bags for the Oasis Women’s Center, a local shelter. Oasis hopes to be able to give a cosmetic bag filled with toiletries to each woman in their care for Mother’s Day. Many other outreach programs are ongoing.

In the quiet “back-to-normal” time after Easter, we’ve been working on upcoming programming. We look forward to Bishop Daniel’s official visit on June third!

Diane Martin

St. Andrew’s
Edwardsville, IL

Sharon Hoffman reports that St Andrew’s is “knee-deep” in the rector/priest-in-charge search process. Meanwhile, Fr George Pence and Arnold Hoffman are supplying for at least the next two months.

Via email to IW+
Second, we prayed for Ariana Irby, and then the difficult premature birth of infant Everett Louis Irby, who was ill and in an incubator at St. Luke’s Hospital, Chesterfield, Missouri. Everett’s father is Dave, and grandparents are George and Maryann. We had a private Baptism a few days later, with my baptizing the infant in the incubator. Everett has grown, and is now with his parents at home.

Third, our Lenten presentations continued, with Bishop Martins returning for the second part of his series on the Baptism questions, this time the affirmations of accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior, promising to put our whole trust in His Grace and Love. In between, we heard from two young priests in the Diocese, Fr. Ben Hankinson, and Fr. Caleb Roberts, and they were very impressive with their talks. Fr. Ben talked about his journey to the priesthood, and Fr. Caleb spoke with depth on the sociology of the Mainline and Catholic Churches since the 1950s, and why so many changes have been occurring, with the decrease in folks attending affecting nearly every church. It was well thought out, and a fine historical perspective.

Fourth, The Todd Hall Board is meeting regularly, and the leadership of Chair, Dan Duncan and Executive Director, Kevin Korte, is effective. On June 3 we will celebrate the Sunday Eucharist at 11:00 am in the Chapel, to be followed by our Parish Picnic. Plan to come!

Fifth, The Mission Leadership Team met in March and April. We noticed we are in much better shape with Church offerings, so far in the year, compared to the last two years. Various Team members announced specific ministries: Brian Maves will begin teaching six young people to prepare them for Confirmation, with help from Donna Rea, and the Rector. The Parish is praying for them all by name. (I was present last Thursday, April 26, at 6:00 pm, and the quality of the Young people’s faith in Christ was obvious. Confirmation will be May 13th, Easter 7.)

Beth Graboritz started teaching an adult Bible Class on Sunday evenings; Tom Boshert proposed a St. George’s Day on April 22nd, with Parish lunch, and games and FUN! The Vestry was enthusiastic. Maryann Fernandez began arranging for a dinner with the Bishop on Saturday night before his Sunday Visitation. Steve Skaff and Brian Maves are looking into enabling church giving electronically. The younger members of the MLT are fine with this, and say it’s about time. (The older members and priest are scared.) Margaret Brown is leading the next Cursillo at Todd Hall in June. Three students received scholarships from the church for next year’s College, Kiri Evans, Ellie Treadwell, and Stevie Jarvis. And I announced I would once again be chaplain for the regional Royal School of Church Music camp at Todd Hall, July 16-22.

Sixth, we had joyful worship during Holy Week, with our joint Good Friday Stations of the Cross walk from St. George’s/St. Mark ELCA, to St. Luke’s Roman Catholic, with clergy and laity from those churches involved, along with Fr. Ian Wetmore and members of St. Michael’s, O’Fallon. We joined St. Michael’s with
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a joint Easter Vigil, baptisms, and First Eucharist of Easter. The next day we celebrated the Resurrection of our Lord with festivity and lovely music directed by Nancy Ypma, with the Choir and Choristers. We had nearly 200 folks in attendance.

Seventh, our St. George’s Day celebration was wonderful! We had a large happy Requiem Mass, April 28th for longtime member Lore Cook, who died a week before her 90th birthday. Her Irish husband Ted Cook, known for his fine Irish tenor Danny Boy, played it for us at the lunch reception. Many members of the Choir attended and sang. (Ted and Lore met in Wiesbaden, Germany when Ted was in the Air Force. They married in 1950.)

Finally, the choristers put on a splendid musical “The Three Trees”, as the sermon for Easter V, April 29th. Six of our choristers sang out having memorized their lines, and they even smiled and gestured, and had fun! It was (said Abby Skaff) the best sermon she’s heard in a while! She sang, as well as Eliza Kamann, Lizzie Mannix, Noa Grace Wellborn, Walker Skaff, and Katy Kamann.

Fr. Dale Coleman, Rector

St. Thomas’ is hosting the Darrow Deanery Ascension service at 6:30 p.m. on May 10th.

Jan Goossens

ST. MICHAEL’S
O’Fallon, IL

This year for the Lenten Soup, Salad & Study offering, we did the basic course from Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University. It really is for everybody, not just for those struggling to make ends meet, or with how to pay for kids’ higher education, or planning for retirement. Dave’s mantra is “Live like no one else [i.e. like a responsible steward] so you can live and give like no one else.” It definitely comes under the heading of Christian formation, and “is commended to be honorable among all men” (cf BCP 1928). Thanks to parishioners, and Dave’s disciples, Jayne Touchstone Starwalt and Clay Starwalt for facilitating.

Also in the way of Christian formation, our Theology 101, begun in September, continues (Sunday mornings at 8:30) through Trinity Sunday, having covered the Nicene Creed in some detail, Scripture, and sacramental theology. We expect to present some of the participants to the Bishop for the laying on of hands on June 10th.

Our annual Pancake Day, on Shrove Tuesday, under new management with a new way of doing things, was a success despite protests of “we’ve never done it that way before.” We also held a fundraiser for outreach projects at Culver’s, O’Fallon, on May 1st. Unlike previous such events, we weren’t allowed to serve tables, clean up, etc, but just hand out flyer’s to all and sundry. When customers handed those over upon ordering, 15% of their purchase price was allocated to St Michael’s! The annual ladies brunch, at which the men prepare and serve the meal, is coming up on the feast of Pentecost, May 20th. Red wines, ales, juices and rooibos (= red bush) tea may be the featured bevvies.

The 3rd annual St Michael’s Youth Conference IL, hosted at St Michael’s for the first time, was a big success, albeit with a small enrollment. So we’re hosting it again June 10-16, anticipating a larger enrollment. Please urge all your Yoots to consider it! That is all.

Fr Ian Wetmore, Dean of Darrow

EASTERN DEANERY

St. John’s
Albion, IL

Following the February meeting of the Diocesan Council, we at St. John’s have had full services during Lent. During Holy Week we celebrated Palm/Passion Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the Great Vigil of Easter, and Easter Morning. Also during Holy Week, we joined with the Edwards County Ministerial Alliance in the community celebration of Good Friday with the “Cross Walk”, during which the cross was carried from downtown church to downtown church, including St. John’s, with readings and prayers at each location.
Much of our efforts during this late winter and early spring have been in preparation for the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the consecration of the building in which we worship. I have been told that St. John’s Albion the oldest Episcopal Church in Illinois still in regular use for services. We have been working diligently to repair, paint, freshen the inside and outside of the Church and will be working on the grounds.

Judith Puckett, one of our resident historians, has worked very diligently to prepare a booklet describing who we are as Episcopalians and more particularly as Episcopalians in the community of Edwards County, a county which does not have a Roman Catholic or a Lutheran church. The booklet also describes the history of the building in which we worship, in which worship services with Eucharist have been held all these 175 years.

David Works, our skilled craftsman, will be working with the printer. Each of us has contributed to all of these efforts as we will help make St. John’s better known in the community and continue to carry the message of Jesus Christ. There will be a concert on June 23 beginning at 2:00 p.m. Bishop Martins will be with us on June 24 for our 175th Eucharist in that building.

Father Bill continues to attend Edwards County Ministerial Alliance meetings and participated in the National Day of Prayer at the square.

St. John’s
Centralia, IL

St. John’s continues to work with dedication and eagerness toward an imminent joining with Redeemer Lutheran Church as a single linked congregation. All questions and concerns have been dealt with amazing ease; financial, liturgical, pastoral, operational, outreach, and theological matters are being worked so that both congregations will be blessed and expanded with as little “loss of comfort” on both sides as possible. The “joining together” is expected to occur in July in a move that will effectively double the size of both communities.

As a corollary to this, St. John’s Mission Strategy Plan is being drawn up with both ease and excitement as the Eucharistic Community anticipates its future. The people of St. John’s are willing and eager to make their own local neighborhood their first area of concern for inviting the unchurched to come to know and follow Christ at St. John’s. A door-to-door visitation and leafleting ministry is anticipated along with special activities at the church to make a visit to St. John’s both attractive and understandable to those who may have little to no church background.

The Rev. Can. David Baumann

St. John the Baptist
Mt. Carmel, IL

Since our last report there has been a lot of activity as far as maintenance of our Church facilities. We have had the entire interior of our church building repainted and areas that were in need re-plastered. Our narthex has also been re-plastered and painted giving it an extremely bright and welcoming appearance. New doors were installed to the entrance since the old ones were weathered and cracked. All of this activity brings the building pretty much up to where it needs to be.

We held our Annual Meeting at the end of January as we usually do. New Leadership Team Members were elected. Old Members were thanked for their service. Budgets were reviewed and discussed, and reports were provided. Following the meeting we moved to the Rector’s house for our annual luncheon where we enjoyed good food and wonderful fellowship.

The people of St. John the Baptist continue to provide a caring outreach ministry to the local community and beyond. One of the ways we do this is to have a Mardi Gras party on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday where items are donated to be raffled off. The money raised by this effort go to support the local Women’s and Children’s homeless shelter. We raised over $350 this year towards this effort. Along with this the parish has a monthly in-gathering for supplies and needs for the shelter plus we provide $800 a month to the financial support of the shelter. One of our parishioners is volunteers as a regular intake.
counselor for the shelter helping the women who seek help to set goals for themselves and their families in order to be able to reestablish themselves over time. Other parishioners volunteer their time at the shelter with odd jobs and errands.

Another outreach project for us is the WADI food shelter. WADI is the local governmental aid program that provides food and financial aid to those in need in the Wabash County area of which Mt. Carmel is a part. The people of St. John the Baptist also have a monthly in-gathering for food for the pantry on the first Sunday of the month. WADI also comes to us when their funds run short to help families and individuals with their rent, utility and prescription needs. Through our Discretionary Fund we have been able to provide temporary housing for those families in need of shelter. We have help pay overdue utility bills and we have help get people to work by providing vouchers to the RIDES group that provides low cost transportation.

Another area of recent concern to the parish has been the Meals on Wheels program provided by the local Senior Citizens group in town. The State of Illinois has been slow to fund this local program and has withheld over $100,000 from their operational fund for the Senior Citizens program. This has meant such programs as Meals on Wheels has had to been cut to the bone. We along with some of the other churches in the area fearing our elderly might not have the proper food they need decided to provide funds to Meals on Wheels on a temporary basis until the State got it’s funding issues straightened out. We have been providing about $3000 a month for the past few months to help keep these people fed. It seems to be helping and now the State seems to be stepping up.

Worship has been seeing a growth in attendance and opportunity for us lately. A while back we began to have a mid-week Eucharist celebration on Wednesdays at 12:05 p.m. The time was chosen to allow people time to come from jobs or wherever. We have had around 8 regular attendees for this service since its beginning and are greatly encouraged. During Lent we began to have Stations of the Cross at 12:00 noon. This was a switch for us as we use to have this service at 6:00 p.m. It seems that people are more able to get to the service at the noon time so we have had more attendance and more interest from outside our regular parishioners. We will continue to stay with this time in the future. Over all Sunday attendance is up a bit and we are seeing new faces in the crowd. We may even have a few to be confirmed at the next visit by Bishop Martins in June.

All in all, God is good and loving. We are blessed to be called His friends and to serve Him in whatever way He asks us to serve.

The Rev. Brant Hazlett

ST. MARY’S
Robinson, IL

St. Mary’s continues to be faithful in their worship, service and love for God and neighbor as we search to find what more we may do to share our faith and serve Gods people. We come on Sunday to give thanks and worship and we go out renewed by the gifts God provides to serve.

The Rev. Ann Tofani

ST. THOMAS’
Salem, IL

The annual used book sale put on by St. Thomas’ ECW took place in April with a measure of success that was a little less than last year’s. Other community social outreach ministries continue a long and fruitful pattern of service to local residents of senior housing and to high school students with particular financial needs.

As St. Thomas’ prepares its Mission Strategy Plan, it is taking a serious look as a congregation at its noteworthy strengths and unsuspected weak points so as to move forward with a strong foundation.

The Rev. Can. David Baumann

TRINITY
Mt. Vernon, IL

Trinity welcomed two new members into the body of Christ at the Great Vigil of Easter with the Baptism of Madi, a high school junior, and Trixie, a newborn to the congregation. Additional celebrations accompanied the Confirmation of Abby at the bishop’s visitation at the end of April. We’ve received a bit of a face lift with the installation of a brand new front door, replacing an old solid core door with an arched entry with glass
inserts adding warmth and light to the narthex. We also painted and repaired plaster throughout the nave and sanctuary brightening up the space there as well.

Studies continue strong as we welcomed both the bishop and a guest presenter for Sunday School classes this spring on the Baptismal Covenant. We are still making our way through Mere Christianity in our midweek classes. Children’s Sunday School is a source of great joy for both the children and teachers alike. We hope to expand our ongoing formation and catechesis in both breadth and depth in the fall as we look ahead and take stock this summer.

We continue to coordinate with various food ministries including Meals on Wheels, local food pantries, and serving dinner at the local homeless shelter. We hope to continue our outward look in the season ahead as we consider our mission to Mt. Vernon and the wider community of Jefferson County.

Trinity is also returning to an old summer custom. We are moving our service time up to 9:30 am from Trinity Sunday through Labor Day.

The Rev. Ben Hankinson

HALE DEANERY

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER
Cairo, IL

Father James Muriuki writes that the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, in Cairo “started Lent on a low note, because I had to leave for Kenya for two weeks to attend to my sister’s funeral, which was on Ash Wednesday. Back in Cairo, it was snowing so that Fr. Bob Towner from Cape Girardeau could not get out of his driveway to come to Redeemer and celebrate the imposition of ashes. It was an equally challenging time with our famous Lenten Series that we celebrate during the communion and teaching sessions on Wednesdays: they never picked up very well. Unlike past years when other community churches joined us, this year only people from Redeemer attended.

“Father James continues to preach on Wednesdays at the Cairo Happy Hour, the senior citizens place, where they meet for lunch every day. He has also been doing pastoral visitation at the nursing home in Cairo. Fr. James also participated at the Kairos Weekend at Menard Maximum Prison in Chester, IL.

“The Church of the Redeemer sent six women to the ECW conference at Todd Hall in March. In April, four women attended the ECW meeting also at Todd Hall. We anticipate sending about three people to Cursillo in June. We are asking the Diocesan family to keep us in your prayers as we pray for them to be prepared for this journey.

“Martial Arts continues to gain momentum with Len Harris, who doubles as our Bishop’s Warden, and also the Police Chief here in Cairo. We’re in the process of cleaning the new building next door to the church to be used for activities like this. It’s still a pipe dream, since a substantial amount of money is needed to get it ready for dedication. As you have always prayed for us and supported in the past, we are calling upon our Diocesan family and friends, to come and help us finish this worthwhile mission with the young and old who are part of this Martial Arts group. No amount of money is too little to help and God will continue to bless you as he has always done; and even extend those blessings.

“During this past winter season, the Church also acted as a host home to someone who didn't have utilities connected in the home. Baptism and Confirmation classes are going on every week in preparation for the Bishop’s visit on July 1, 2018.”

Father James Miriuki

ST. STEPHEN’S
Harrisburg, IL

Father Tim Goodman reports from St. Stephen’s in Harrisburg: “We had a quiet beginning this last quarter.
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We saw a smaller group for our Easter mass this year, a lot of folks were out of town. One of our long time parishioners died this quarter; he will be missed. Saint Stephens was given a new pall in memory of our recently departed friend. Another stellar year for our Italian dinner; we sold out again, thanks to all that helped with this event this year. We will once again donate all profits from the diner to two of our local organizations, namely Shop with a Cop and new one for us, a local group that supports the needs of our local vets.

Mother Sherry Black reports on behalf of St. Marks’, West Frankfurt, that “the church had a quiet first quarter of 2018 but has a number of projects coming up. We just recently installed a new sound system with cordless microphone, so we can better hear our children in their presentations, and for my use when we have a full house.

“While ‘church’ was more or less uneventful, I can’t say the same about my own life/health. I missed 5 weeks of work at my hospital chaplaincy position with several issues, including three hospitalizations. I am most grateful that Fr. Jon Griffin returned from Florida in time to supply during the worst couple weeks. Thank you, Jon!
Even so, Lent was duly observed, and I returned to ‘health’ in time for the Holy Week marathon. We had a wonderful celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection, including 13 children in our Sunday School. They made Empty Tomb Rolls for us to enjoy.

At the end of February, our Adult Study group reconvened, and we are reading and discussing our way through Rob Bell’s What is the Bible: How an Ancient Library of Poems, Letters, and Stories Can Transform the Way You Think and Feel About Everything. We have found the book to be thought provoking, and our conversations wide ranging -- and our group has grown. We are already considering what we will do next.”

Father Tim Goodman

ST. ANDREW’S
Carbondale, IL

Our Lenten program at St. Andrew’s Parish this year consisted of soup suppers followed by viewings and discussions of six of the newest Alpha videos with members of First Methodist Church. We were blessed with exceptionally beautiful Easter liturgies, and a sweet spirit during both the Vigil at St. James Chapel in Marion and the morning liturgy in Carbondale. The vigil was followed by a champagne reception. Sunday morning’s Mass was followed by an equally festive brunch featuring such wonderful items as homemade baklava, freshly roasted asparagus, lots and lots of deviled eggs, and, of course, delicious roast lamb and ham. The preceding Holy Week was highlighted by our Maundy Thursday service focusing on the institution of the Eucharist, and quiet, meditative times between the Good Friday services with the making of pisanki (“written things”) according to Eastern European tradition. The plants that decorated our altar of repose have all since found homes on our church grounds, both in Carbondale and Marion.

Our book club continues to savor its way slowly through Abigail Pogrebin’s book, My Jewish Year. We enjoy noting the similarities between Jewish feasts and fasts and Christian ones, and are inspired to delve more deeply into our own traditions.

Meanwhile, the Carbondale Mat-makers accelerated their production of beautiful mats for the homeless. They continue to meet each Tuesday morning, and have completed 91 mats as of this writing, most of which are distributed to the homeless or marginally-housed. The St. James group, although small, has produced three mats to date, which represents over 90 hours of work and over 2,400 plastic bags recycled instead of discarded. Among our Canterbury mat makers, 38 college students participated in two sessions of mat-making as part of Southern Illinois University’s second annual “Big Event” on April 7. We are happy to attract students through our doors this way, and one has since joined our parish.

The Mission Leadership Team is investigating the possibility of installing solar panels on the church
roof. This would reduce our carbon footprint and reduce or even eliminate (depending on how many panels were to be installed) our utilities expense. Tax credits and state incentives make this a uniquely opportune time for parishioners to give the gift of solar energy, a gift that is guaranteed to keep on giving for twenty-five years.

We are looking forward to participating in the third annual “Wave of Prayer” beginning on Ascension Day and continuing through Pentecost. We are asking that each parishioner pray privately for five specific people to come to know Christ for the first time, or to let Him more deeply into their lives. We trust that the Holy Spirit will amplify our prayers for the building up of Christ’s body here and around the world.

Kathryn G. Jeffrey, Rector of St. Andrew’s Parish and Regional Dean

NORTHEASTERN DEANERY

THE CHAPEL OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE
Champaign, IL

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 addition to the normal catalogue of services and parish life, the Chapel has been busy with the following items:

At the annual parish meeting this past January, the Chapel’s Building Committee reported that Chapel parishioner and Architecture Professor, Paul Kapp, would be conducting a design competition among his graduate class this semester to design a new Canterbury House, according to the program developed by parishioner input for needs in a new Canterbury House. It was reported that the submissions would be highly detailed and professionally developed “down to the brick,” and would include physical modeling. Since the Annual Meeting, 15 design submissions by Professor Paul Kapp’s graduate class in architecture have been presented.

Two large Site Models and complete drawings of all 15 submissions are on display for the parish. Of those 15 student submissions, The Building Committee will recommend a few designs to the vestry to be priced so that we have this critical information. The designs are not in final for, and can be further refined and developed with our licensed architects, based upon the space priorities and needs articulated by the parish. Soon, we will determine costs, compare value, and excellence of architecture to make further decisions about how best to proceed.

Helping Voluntario Global: A Kindergarten in Buenos Aries, AR
Members of the Chapel raised funds for a Kindergarten affiliated with Voluntario Global in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The school needed to raise $30,000 to save the property and enable their good work to continue.

Chapel parishioner, Jackson Vaughan, spent several months volunteering with this organization. The Chapel sent a total gift of $5025.00 to support the Kindergarten. Thank you for your generosity!

The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Great Strides Walk – Strolling for Sarah
For the past several years, members of the Chapel have walked in the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation’s Great Strides Walk to support one of our own: a parishioner named Sarah. This important walk helps support research for therapies that will help Sarah (and others with CF) live a longer and healthier life. Because

Four of the fifteen models presented to the Chapel by Professor Paul Kapp's Architecture Graduate Students
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of this important research, average life expectancy for one with Cystic Fibrosis has risen from three years to over thirty years of age! Twenty parishioners walked on Sarah’s behalf on May 12th $7875 was raised on Sarah’s behalf.

Confirmation classes were held in March and April in preparation for the bishop’s annual visit. Five persons were confirmed or received.

It has been quite a joyous spring at the Chapel. We invite you to stop by any time you find yourself in the area and experience the Episcopal Church’s presence on the University of Illinois campus.

The Very Reverend Sean Ferrell, Rector and Chaplain

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY
Danville, IL

The following information reflects activities at the Church of the Holy Trinity:
• Observed Ash Wednesday with two Masses and Imposition
• Bishop Martins visited on the First Sunday of Lent and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to two parishioners
• Observed Lent with daily Mass, Rosary on each Monday, Benediction each Tuesday, and Stations of the Cross each Wednesday
• Observed Holy Week with Palm Sunday Mass and Procession, Low Masses on Monday,
  • Tuesday, and Wednesday, Maundy Thursday Mass and Watch at the Altar of Repose,
  • Good Friday Veneration of the Cross, Easter Vigil, and Mass of the Resurrection
• Observed Rogation Sunday with Mass, procession and blessing of crosses
• Celebrated two Funeral Masses and one Burial of the Dead
• Had nave and Sanctuary of the church painted, new flooring installed, and all pews stained and refinished
• Continue to develop Mission Strategy
• Seeking to develop relationship with Veterans’ Administration Hospital and Her House, a nonprofit ministry serving

ST. CHRISTOPHER
Rantoul, IL

Greetings from St. Christopher! It’s true that we don’t always (ever?) have a fat report filled with activities and outreach that we’ve been doing. We are small, but we are very much alive. Every Sunday we arrive a ready for whatever joy the Lord has for us. We’ve been using a CD player to play the hymns that we sing along to for the last couple of years. The news is that I (Ann) switched to my iPhone and a Bose speaker to get the music louder! One Sunday, right when Fr. Steve mentioned something about “deacon” my phone rang out a perfect little “ding” notification! (I had forgotten to turn the sound off). We all cracked up and I was feeling rather special. One Sunday, during Lent, we played Lent Bingo during fellowship time. The prize for a Bingo was a hug that the winner had to give to someone! The kids were not particularly thrilled with this, but it turned out to be a blast and they got into it! Yea to Heather VanMeter who, as a Scout Leader, brings activities to us. The boys cooked us a pancake breakfast in April.

To get our act together on the Mission Strategy Report we all met together after church and went through the questions. We had a lively conversation! The next day when our Team met with Fr. Mike from St. Barnabas, Fr. Steve was ready with all our info written out, and with Fr. Mike’s guidance, we feel that we are ready to take our love out into the community of Rantoul. Hallelujah!

The Rev. Deacon Ann Alley

EMMANUEL MEMORIAL
Champaign, IL

It is a great blessing that after our rectory attic fire in late January Emmanuel has been able to carry on all our ministries to the community and to each other virtually unchanged. We continue to be grateful for the support from others, as well as for the foresight of those who made sure we were well insured for events like this! Construction has not yet begun because of some structural issues that need to be addressed first, but we still feel that we are being given an opportunity to enhance the classic space to promote mission in the way our vestry has already endorsed. A highlight for us was a Sunday Mass when we welcomed and thanked the team of firefighters who were on duty the night of the fire; they brought a truck and our children enjoyed climbing all over it in plastic fire hats! Lent at Emmanuel saw us continuing to experiment with formation that is more practice-oriented than instruction-oriented. We created a
shared parish Lenten discipline, with a spiritual practice for each week (e.g., fasting, the Daily Office, anonymous servant-hood), held a coaching session to review the week’s experience, and offered a chance to read through the Gospel of Mark both with the daily lectionary, and out loud in a group “Binge Read” over supper to begin Lent. It was great to see several people inspired by this experience to invest in participation in all the nights of the Triduum, a central Christian commitment that we have struggled to inculcate in our parish. Parents and children have been gathering for a monthly “Young Family Feast” looking at seasonally-appropriate ways to form children in the faith at home. Our young adults have a weekly conversation at a local brewery, and our youth group is meeting twice a month – all of this under the guidance of our curate. We continue to struggle a little to integrate the diverse generations and life stages who call this place home!

As the celebration of the Centennial of our building began to wind down, there were still a number of related special events. The parish did an all-church Centennial mission project, painting, cleaning and rehabbing inside and outside at our local outreach partner empty tomb. We also partnered with the Champaign County History Museum for a special exhibition of 50 years of Emmanuel Altar Guild Easter Eggs from the collection of Page Parkhill. Frs Bradley Pace and Cameron Nations returned as guest preachers, representatives of the long list of those whom Emmanuel has sent forward to Holy Orders. Finally, a Centennial show called “Creative Artistry at Emmanuel” was on display for two weeks with parishioners’ music, visual arts, quilts, CDs, books, and more to highlight the creative gifts God has given members of his body in this Eucharistic Community.

One more Easter season event was that the paid clergy team all attended the “Missional Voices” conference in Indianapolis, seeking timely input as Emmanuel finds new ways to be present in, with, and for our community and downtown neighborhood. We are grateful for the mission God has given us, the location where he has planted us, and the resources he has given us to follow him.

The Rev. Beth Maynard, Rector

NORTHWESTERN DEANERY

St. Paul’s
Carlinville, IL

It has been a busy Spring at St. Paul’s and St. Peter’s! We set record attendance marks for Fr. John’s ministry with us during the Holy Week and Easter Day services. Easter Day services did not differ much from the past but attendance during the week were greatly improved.

We continue working on our Mission Strategy plan and paperwork. We might be a bit late getting it completed but we are putting more emphasis on submitting a “meaningful” plan rather than deadline-inspired paperwork. It has generated more discussion in our parish about our future than anything else we have dealt with during the past eight years.

We blessed and placed into service on Sunday, May 6, new altar linen given in memory of Sandy Henry. On Sunday, May 7, all mother’s were welcomed, recognized, and given a small token of our love for them. Father John continues to serve as Secretary-Treasurer of the Carlinville Clergy Fellowship. We have
welcomed 2 new pastors and have designated the first Thursday morning of each month as a time we gather together to pray for each other, our churches, our schools, our city, our country, and our world.

Father John is on the Cursillo team for June. We recently discovered that over 75% of our members have attended Cursillo in the past.

John R. Henry+, Rector

ST. JOHN’S
Decatur, IL

Our Annual Pancake and Jambalaya Supper was well attended on the 13th of February. Weekly Lenten Stations of the Cross began on Friday the 16th. Our Wednesday Lenten series was concerning “Final Things” with a perspective of Eternity, and then presentations concerning Advanced Directives, Funeral arrangement issues, Elements for the Funeral Mass, and Organ and Tissue Donation. On the 24th of February we celebrated the life of Bob Ellison.

On the 3rd of March Mission Leadership met with Fr. Michael Newago to begin the Mission Strategy Survey work. On the 10th of March we hosted the Cursillo #36 Team meeting. On March 17th we had our second annual St. Patrick’s day Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner. Palm Sunday and Holy Week services were well attended. We ended March with the Great Vigil of Easter.

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection was well attended; the children enjoyed an Easter Egg hunt behind St. Mary’s House and then we had snow! From the 16th to the 20th of April we assisted Meals on Wheels of Macon County with meal deliveries. On April 28th we celebrated the life of Sue Kramer. On Sunday the 13th each mother present at both services received a long stem carnation.

Our Friday Bible Study has completed the Book of Exodus and moved to Joshua. Our adult Sunday School has finished Habakkuk and has moved to Zephaniah. The 4-H Robotics Club that we host has finished their year of projects, learning and competition, our new Yoga Class is drawing about 15 people twice each week (Monday and Thursday) to our Parish Hall with plans to add a Tuesday “Chair Yoga” Class.

We look forward to submitting our Strategic Planning Survey this coming month.

Richard A. Swan+, Rector

ST. LUKE’S
Springfield, IL

Lent was duly observed at St. Luke’s with the regular round of services and the addition of Stations of the Cross on all Fridays. Holy Week again included mass on Wednesday morning, Tenebrae of Wednesday evening, Maundy Thursday mass followed by the stripping of the Altar and the Good Friday Liturgy. Attendance at all services was improved.

For the second year in a row, we celebrated the Great Vigil of Easter in Jacksonville at Trinity. Fr. Brooks blessed the new fire, led the renewal of baptismal vows and preached, and Fr. Denney sang the Exsultet and celebrated the mass. Again, we had a good attendance. We really enjoy joining together in this way, and will probably gather again for All Saints’ Day -- location to be determined.

On Easter morning we had five baptisms, one baby and four young children from the neighborhood. It is exciting to have children who keep coming to me and asking to be baptized.

Our adult class changed course and decided to undertake a study of Ezra and Nehemiah. We are taking a break for a few weeks and will resume in July. Again, the study materials are from the Knowing the Bible series edited by J. I. Packer.

The Mission Leadership Team and met and completed its Mission Strategy Report for submission to the Department of Mission. We found the exercise a helpful one.

(from St. George’s, Taormina, Sicily),
Shawn W. Denney+, Vicar
DIOCESAN CALENDAR

JULY 2018

01 Bishop w/ Church of the Redeemer, Cairo

01-07 Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson

18 Finance Department, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)

AUGUST 2018

25 Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)

26 Bishop w/ St. Andrew’s, Carbondale

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Other

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