SOUP, SOULS, AND MISSION

"Mission in the Diocese"

Fr Mike Newago, Priest-in-Charge, St Barnabas, Havana
Mission Strategy Developer, Episcopal Diocese of Springfield

My first experience with mission strategy came with the call of the new priest-in-charge of my home parish, St Andrew’s in Ashland, Wisconsin. Fr Mark came to us from the Diocese of Central Florida and during his three years with us modeled pastoral care, becoming pastor to the entire city. Like many of us, Mark came to vocation later in life. As a part-time priest, Mark even bought a coffee shop that became a hub of welcome for many marginalized and seeking souls. We became and still remain close friends though Mark has retired and moved to Tennessee. The work of mission and ministry that Fr Mark lead us through at St Andrew’s guide and encourage me today in this new role in the Diocese of Springfield. It is my hope that sharing this story will encourage, inspire, and fan the flame for mission in our diocese.

“You’re gonna do what?!” was my response as Fr Mark told me his plans to leave the church campus and go over to a public housing complex known officially as “Bay Towers” but called the “high-rise” by the locals which is just across the main avenue from the church. “What’s the point of doing that?” I asked again somewhat suspiciously. “There are folks there who are broken and hurting and need to hear the good news that God loves each of them,” Fr Mark said determinedly. “Well, the Catholics already go over there every other week,” I said somewhat defiantly. “Why reinvent the wheel?” I thought. “This is crazy,” I was growing accustomed to Mark’s perhaps more liberal attempts at disciple making and just thought this was just one more of the crazy and off-the-wall ideas.
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+ Rt Rev. Daniel H. Martins

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Now in the middle of my 69th trip around the sun on this planet, I can’t think of a time when it was as difficult to speak with even plausible certainty about the short and mid-term future. As I write, I am in mid-March, and most of the world is gripped by a pandemic that, while not as deadly the the wave of plagues that swept Europe in the middle ages, or even the outbreak of Yellow Fever in the nineteenth century, to say nothing of the 1918 Spanish Flu, is nonetheless seriously scary, many times more-so than the usual seasonal influenza. I recently read an estimate that 1.5 million Americans will die from the COVID-19 coronavirus.

The general public has known about the virus for more than six weeks, at the time I write. But only in the last three days has it begun to have a wide impact on the lives of most Americans. Broadway is darkened. Concert venues are closed and museums are closed (the news of the closing of my favorite museum came literally as I was writing this piece). The NBA and NHL have suspended their seasons and MLB has pushed back opening day by two weeks—at least. And—something I would never imagined I would see—churches are canceling Sunday services, and all other public gatherings. I have so far resisted such a measure for our diocese, though I have encouraged people in the “vulnerable” category to exercise prudent caution about whether they should stay home on Sundays for a bit. [Ed. note: At the time of publication, the Bishop has indeed directed the cessation of public worship in the diocese.]

But here’s the mysterious element—I have no idea what conditions are like as you are reading this! My “present self” has never felt so distanced from my “future self.” Will Holy Week and Easter even be widely observed publicly in the diocese? Will the virus have infected some among us? Will some have died? (I am myself over 60 and diabetic. Will I be well—or even alive—when this article is read?) Or will the wave have crested and washed over us by mid-April? Will life be getting back to some semblance of normal, or will we still be on a crisis footing?

Our spiritual and liturgical tradition is full of resources for negotiating a season such as this. I think right away of the collect from Compline that speaks of the “changes and chances of this life” in the context of a petition that we may rest in God’s “eternal changelessness.” I woke up one recent morning with a line from the hymn Stand up, stand up, for Jesus practically on my lips: “Let courage rise with danger, and strength to strength oppose.” And in the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, the author is at pains to establish the confidence of his readers in the ministry of Jesus, our great High Priest who has gone behind the curtain of the heavenly Holy of Holies, to secure our relationship with God: “We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” (Hebrews 6:19-20, ESV).

I love that image: sure and steadfast anchor. I may not be able to predict what the shape of our Paschal celebrations will be/were like for the Eucharistic Communities of the Diocese of Springfield. I don’t know who will get sick and who will die during the next few weeks. But I know that “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and bestowing life on those who dwell in the tomb” (ancient Orthodox hymn). I know that our lives are “hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). I am reminded of a song I learned more that 60 years ago in my Baptist childhood. It was sung by George Beverly Shea, Billy Graham’s crusade soloist for some decades. It goes like this:

In times like these you need a Savior
In times like these you need an anchor
Be very sure, be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

This Rock is Jesus, Yes He’s the One
This Rock is Jesus, the only One
Be very sure, be very sure
Your anchor holds and grips the Solid Rock!

It was a song of a peculiar genre and of a particular era, and I’m not advocating its revival! But, from a spiritual perspective, it hits the mark. Jesus the Christ, risen from the dead, is our steadfast anchor, and we can be very sure that he grips the solid rock of God’s unchanging providential love, come whatever may.
“Well, what are you going to do there?” I asked. “We’re going to bring soup and share a passage of scripture in the community room with whoever wants to come. I’ve already made some flyers and have them posted.”

Mark stated with an affirmative and convincing smile. “You and Karen and Chloe are going to come, right?” he asked with a look of excitement on his face. “Yeah, I guess we’ll be there,” I said as I thought I surrendered to another one of his unusual schemes. “What time?” I said, rolling my eyes. “Be there at 4:30 but come over and help me carry the soup from the church kitchen first.” “Fine,” I said, and roused myself to some enthusiasm for what I thought would be another one of Mark’s crazy ideas.

We walked into the high-rise and were greeted at the doors by several smiling and welcoming faces and they pointed us to the kitchen in the community room. Some of the folks were disabled or wheelchair bound or needed some assistance in ambulation but the majority of the folks gathering were middle-aged folks who were already community and knew each other very well. “Hi! I’m Ron,” a middle-aged man greeted me as I put down the soup on the stove top in the kitchen. “I’m a greeter at Wal-Mart and my wife will be down later.” His ambitious greeting started me off on a good note and greeting was middle-aged and friendly and welcoming. “What ya doing with that soup?” another lady asked me. “When we gonna eat?” Being the oppressive introvert that I am, I immediately felt the anxiety build up, but I calmly responded that we’ll eat at 4:30. My family and I watched the community room fill up, and I was shocked at the number of folks who decided to join us. Many already knew Fr Mark, and were welcoming him enthusiastically. A few others of the church members had also arrived and were helping prepare the final things in the kitchen. “It’s good to be here.” Fr Mark began with a big smile and passed out a scripture passage from John that was the lesson for the day. I noticed the folks had quieted down and were sitting at the tables eagerly waiting. One lady exclaimed, “I love Jesus!” and others joined the mantra of letting us know that there were Christians. “I don’t go to church anymore,” one gentleman exclaimed, “the preacher doesn’t know what he’s talking about.” Mark responded with an affirming smile and stated that was o.k. and that Jesus was with us here right now. I winched as the gentleman spit a lug of tobacco from his mouth into a pop can at the table.

That awkward beginning lead to much relaxed joy and happiness as Mark read aloud the words of John’s Gospel of that evening from John 3:16: “God SO loved the world that He SENT his only-begotten Son…..” There was almost a defining silence as somehow from those thirty or so gathered folks and parishioners imbibed those Gospel words and drank deeply from them for a minute. “I’m part of the world,” asked one lady who seemed very broken and depressed. “Does God love even ME?” she emphatically asked. “God loves YOU as if only YOU mattered in the whole wide world,” Mark responded. “And nothing you can every do will take his love away from you.” The lady gasped a bit and tears began to flow. Soon the room was tearful as Mark remained in silent solidarity, tears flowing from his eyes as well. We began a discussion of what this favored passage from John meant for each person gathered and the joy that was present in that room was nearly intolerable. Many folks began to bear witness to God’s love in their lives in spite of the many disabilities, life events, disappointments, poverty, and abandonments that had broken their hearts and lives. Truly, God was present and loved every soul there with an insurmountable, unfathomable love, and I could see it on every one of their faces. God had not forgotten these folks. This is where He dwelled intimately, joyfully, and determinedly!

“Let’s eat already!” a tiny voice creaked out from the end of one of the tables. A tiny lady in a wheelchair who was slouched over and covered with a blanket had started to move her wheelchair towards the serving line. “It better be good!” she exclaimed as that chair zipped across the room. By then, our parishioners had taken their station at the soup line. We had chicken noodle soup, some cornbread, and some brownies for dessert. As we ladled soup, and served bread, and joked with the residents, somehow we began to form community. I felt, and there was the beginning of a trust that had taken hold. I watched intentionally as the residents mingled with our parishioners and enjoyed the very simple but hot and filling meal. Residents and parishioners laughed, helped each other, and enjoyed each other’s company. One gentleman who was slovenly dressed...
and was wearing most of the soup he was served came over by Fr. Mark and asked him some very candid questions about Jesus. Other residents tuned into the question with a vivid curiosity while others jostled the parishioners about soup recipes and whose grandmothers made the best noodles.

Fr. Mark surprised me, perhaps deliberately, and some worn songbooks appeared and he asked if everyone would like to sing a few songs about Jesus. “Can we sing ‘The Old Rugged Cross?’” one resident asked. “I always liked that one from when I was a kid in Sunday school.” “Ok,” Fr. Mark replied. He looked at me and told the room that I could play the piano if they would like to sing. I gulped, and sat down quietly at the piano and began to look for the chosen hymn. Something about that moment told me that this was no longer a room of strangers but now it seemed oddly enough like a family. A family gathered who shared God’s word, broken bread, and now wanted to praise him through music. The group sang out as best they could, nearly as capable as a group of dying inharmonic cats, but there was power in that singing, almost a longing that was nearly indescribable. After a couple of more hymns, a lady approached me and said she could lead the singing if I would play next week. I smiled and agreed to be there. “We know these,” she said a bit crossed. “Now if Roy in the back would stop trying to steal the melody from me we’ll be alright!”

The lady resumed her station at the front table and I got up to help with the dishes in the kitchen where my wife and daughter were conversing with another parishioner. Peppy jostled in the kitchen as she dried the dishes and admonished me to put the bowls back up in the cupboard. “Ya know this might just work!” she stated emphatically. For Peppy, that was as good an admission of success we could expect. “I think you’re right,” I responded. “Wow!” she said. “We got some big soup eaters here!” Peppy announced to Fr. Mark that she would be making the chicken noodle soup for next week and he could pick it up just before the event.

As we finished the dishes, and wished the residents a good night as they filed out of the room slowly, I pondered what had happened that evening. My thoughts were interrupted by “See you next week Mike…we’re so glad you came. That daughter of yours is a peach!” was loudly exclaimed by one lady who I had known from my days in the Roman Catholic Church. I barely recognized her as she had aged and her husband passed during my elementary school days. I returned to my thoughts as my family and I exited the community room and made our way to the parking lot. “See,” Mark said. “God is faithful!” “Yep, he is,” I replied. “What happened in there tonight?” I thought to myself. “We shared God’s word and met the needs of his people,” Mark replied, almost reading my thoughts. I smiled acknowledging. We had formed community, in God’s name, shared His word, broken bread together, and shared praise through music and singing. We had shared our hearts and souls, perhaps unaware. We had become church! That evening my thoughts continued to struggle with understanding how God moved among us that night. People were changed that night, including myself, and I wanted to understand that.

“Soup and Scripture” continued nearly three more years during Fr. Mark’s tenure with us. By then, I was in seminary at Nashotah House but attended when able. Some of these folks came to St. Andrew’s, some didn’t, some we only saw on these evenings. Some folks came to our Friday night community meals, and some didn’t. And that was okay. A couple sought baptism, a couple were received by the bishop, but by-and-large most folks just continued to live out their lives where and as they were. But something was changed, in their lives and ours as a parish family. We had formed community, we read and heard God’s word proclaimed, we broke bread together, and we sang together. We shared and received the love of God outside of the building that stood as our gathering place, our sacred home, and our port in the night. We had met God in the faces of folks who we didn’t know, wouldn’t have looked for, and would probably never sought out save for the love of God who drew us to Him with and through these folks. It is God who brought us together, made us family, and shared His amazing love among us. We didn’t fill the pews, or double the weekly offering, or show any other demonstrable form of making disciples. It didn’t expand our parochial report or even glean any attention to the church. Our family at Bay Towers perhaps had made disciples in us. Amen! Praise be Jesus Christ!
The public health situation has illustrated that we live in a world where, at times, information needs to move faster than a quarterly print publication allows. And so I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage you to sign up for our monthly email newsletter, which will launch in the coming weeks. You can sign up online at episcopalspringfield.org/diocesanpublications. If you received the letters that Bishop Martins issued to the Diocese in response to the public health situation, you are already on the list and need not take any action.

Hannah Dallman

The deadline for this issue was mid-March, and as articles came in, our State and Federal governments began issuing calls for distancing measures, leading up to the Shelter in Place order here in Illinois, which at the time of this writing is still in effect. For that reason, please note that any articles that look forward to summer activities in the Diocese may not be accurate by the time that this issue reaches your mailbox. For the most up to date information about individual ministries, as well as digital resources during COVID-19 distancing, please visit our website.

OUR CHURCH SCHOOL TAKES CARE OF THE WORLD

By the Rev. Cindy Sever

Our Church school turned on the love by cooking a fabulous brunch for parishioners during the Harvest Feast this Fall. It was delicious! They only asked for a donation in return for the bounty. The students are small in number (4), but didn’t let that stop them from dreaming big about helping others! They collected the money with a lofty goal in mind. They wanted to purchase a cow for a needy family overseas through Heifer International. Our four small missionaries enlisted the help of their teacher, Church school director April Drennan (aka Mom) and good friends and fellow parishioners the Wrausmann family to help them with the hard work of cooking and serving all of the delicious food.

When the Harvest Feast was over, our students had raised several hundred dollars, but were just a little more than a hundred dollars short of their goal of $500 for the cow they truly wanted to gift to a family.

When word of their sincere desire to help others through Heifer got around the parish, donations began pouring in via our guilds and parish organizations. We are all so proud of Marie, Destiny, Brenden, and Charlie, their Mom, April, and father, Chuck Drennan, plus Dorothy, Veronica, Valerie and Tom Wrausmann! All together they raised $620.

These gifts will completely change the lives of the families that receive them. It’s hard for us to imagine, but the gift of a cow, goat, hive of bees, rabbits, or flock of chickens to a third world family can mean the difference between life and death, sickness or health of all of its members.

Please let our Sunday school know that they have done a good job in following Jesus’ command to love our neighbors as we love ourselves!

I wish you all a very happy, peaceful and blessed New Year!

To see more photos, visit episcopalspringfield.org/harvest-feast-at-st-pauls-alton

AROUND THE DIOCESE
SABBATICAL IN TABORA

By the Very Rev. David Halt

This summer, providing that we get through the current challenges of COVID-19, I will be spending nine weeks of sabbatical time with our partner diocese in Tabora, Tanzania.

Why Tabora?

I remember, from my childhood, the heart-warming stories of the missionaries who would visit our congregation on their furloughs, and my not so heart-warming response of “please don’t send me to Africa”! At that time, I made a strong bargain with God that I would do anything for Jesus, and I do mean anything, except go to Africa. It was to my childish mind a continent where to set foot upon the soil meant disease, starvation, and death by exotic animals. Now, I was willing to die for the faith, as long as I could do so in comfort and surrounded by modern conveniences.

As I aged, and arguably matured, the sense of dread dissipated as it became clear that I was not called to be a missionary in Africa. Then, in 2012, I was asked to be a part of a short-term mission to Burundi to study feasibility of introducing rabbit husbandry as a solution to a lack of protein. Without hesitation, I agreed, and in short form fell in love with Africa, not for its flora and fauna, but for the faithfulness of the people with whom I worked. I found the light of faith shining strong in our brothers and sisters.

So, of course, when Bishop Daniel was looking for someone to accompany him on his first visit to our new Partner Diocese, I readily volunteered. And over the past years have fallen in love with our brothers and sisters in Christ—there, and have actively supported our partnership in mission. St Matthew’s has also become quite connected to Tabora and Bishop Elias, supporting various projects and donating generously towards Advent Chakupeva’s medical education. This will be our third year of such support. Bishop Elias and I have not only deepened our connection in Christ, but have become friends, as well.

So, why choose to do a sabbatical in Tabora? Shouldn’t a priest do something more “spiritual” or “academic”? The answer to that question revolves around what is to be gained in a sabbatical. It is not simply a time of rest, but also a time of learning. The goal is to bring something back in the life of the clergy that will have an impact on the life of the local congregation and the Diocese. I believe that Tabora has something to teach us as a Diocese. The Diocese of Tabora is approximately the geographic size of Ireland, and is one of the fastest growing Dioceses in the Anglican Communion. Despite a struggling economic situation, the Diocesan clergy, led by Bishop Elias, are faithful and energetic in their evangelism and church planting efforts. Lack of resources do not stop them! They are driven by the

continued on next page
gospel in this work. Additionally, like our Diocese, the population is settled in a couple urban areas and dispersed throughout a large rural population separated by distance into villages. If it helps, think of our own Diocese with the major population centers and small towns. The goal of the Diocese is to plant churches in each of the “small towns” or villages. This is why I am spending time with them, to learn from our brothers and sisters the “how” and “what” and “whom” of doing evangelism, a lesson that, unfortunately, I did not learn in an Episcopal Seminary. Additionally, I want to study their method of leadership development and discern if it is applicable in our context.

In addition to my time studying these questions, I will be attending the triennial Diocesan Synod, and teaching a Bible Course to those being trained as Catechists and Evangelists. I bid your prayers in this endeavor, as well as, prayers that it will be possible to make this trip. On a more practical level, as the Diocese grows there is continuing need for liturgical items. If you, or your Eucharistic Community, has vestments and vessels for Holy Communion that you are not making use of, and are willing to donate them to a new growing congregation, please contact me and I will make certain they are delivered.

SKCM MASS

On Feb. 1, Bishop Martins hosted and celebrated the annual mass for the Society of King Charles the Martyr at the Cathedral Church of St Paul the Apostle in Springfield, which commemorates the martyrdom of King Charles I on January 30, 1649. The homily was given by the Fr David Halt, rector of St Matthew’s, Bloomington. Music was coordinated by the organist of St Paul’s, Carlinville, Diane Akin, featuring a mass setting by composer Richard Shepherd, and featured singers from Blackburn College. For more photographs and to read Fr Halt’s sermon, visit: episcopalspringfield.org/society-of-king-charles
On Saturday, March 7, with friends, family, clergy, and the community of Trinity, Lincoln present, Bishop Martins ordained Christopher Ben Simpson to the Holy Order of Deacons.

The Rev Canon Mark Evans, currently rector at Trinity, preached on the occasion. Bishop Martins found his sermon to be a helpful analogy about the ordination process. The text for Fr Evans' sermon can be found on the diocesan website here: episcopalspringfield.org/our-new-deacon-christopher/
HAPPENINGS AT SAINT STEPHEN’S
By Cheri King

Since Spring 2019, things have been busy around St. Stephen’s. In addition to on-going building maintenance projects both inside and out (the joys of a historic building!), we are slowly beautifying our grounds with new plants, a project that will continue this spring.

Our generous parishioners supported numerous activities this year. Our spring Italian Feast was well attended, and the proceeds were donated to two important local groups: Shop with a Cop in Harrisburg and the Southern Illinois chapter of Team RWB veterans support organization.

This fall we initiated two new, unique in-gatherings. On “Undies” Sunday and “Sock it to them” Sunday, we gathered the respective items to contribute to the local school system, where teachers can identify youth in need and provide these simple necessities. Before Christmas we participated in the Shoebox for Kids program. In addition to our monthly non-perishable collection, we are currently in the midst of the Souper Bowl Sunday drive for canned soups to be provided to local food banks.

We held our Annual Meeting (and potluck) on Sunday, Jan. 13, to make plans for the upcoming year. All our officers are hanging in there for another 12 months. The only big change we are anticipating is that we will forego Italian Feast this spring due to the workload involved and limited capacity because of parishioner travel schedules. Instead, we are working on plans for a chicken barbecue dinner when the weather cools in the fall.

We are blessed to have Father Tim back with us following health issues that sidelined him for a couple of months in the fall. But he was determined to be out of the hospital and back in the pulpit for Christmas Eve. And he made it!
AROUND THE DIOCESE

GOINGS-ON AT SAINT ANDREW’S

By Marian Smithson

St Andrew’s is delighted to have Fr Ben Hankinson called as our new Rector. The challenges waiting for his arrival in February, combined with those related to the coronavirus spread, have us all, but particularly Fr Ben, scurrying! His initial weeks required trips back and forth between Edwardsville and Mount Vernon and the sale of one house and the purchase of another. As of last weekend, he took up residence in a home on four acres of pretty land just outside of Edwardsville proper.

Before the issues of the coronavirus infection drew most of our attention, we held our Annual Meeting in January in conjunction with a Sunday brunch and elected three new vestry members, as well as Synod delegates and Deanery representatives. Kevin Babb is our new Senior Warden.

Also in January, Fr John Thorpe, who had been with us for Sunday services since October 2019, returned to his graduate studies at St Louis University. We were very fortunate to have him in the pulpit each Sunday for several months and showed our appreciation by showering him with thank you cards from parishioners at a special coffee hour.

Bishop Martins installed Fr Ben as Rector of St Andrew’s on February 15 with Fr Ben’s mother, a deacon, assisting with the service. Clergy of the Springfield Diocese, as well as members of Fr. Ben’s family, attended the installation and subsequent reception. A happy occasion!

Parish life moved at a fast pace following the Annual Meeting as preparations for the February book sale, March Quilt Show, and Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper rolled out. All these parish events were successful. The winter book sale raised $5,163, the Quilt Show drew nearly 300 visitors, and the Pancake Supper was well attended. Our parish enjoys hosting these events which draw many from the community to our church. On Saturday, March 7, nearly 100 attended the Quilts of Valor presentation at the Quilt Show to see three local veterans honored for their service by the St. Andrew’s Quilt Guild. Each veteran received a special quilt created by the Guild.

We are pleased that Fredna Scroggins of our parish is serving on the Diocese’s Bishop Election Committee and understand that the Committee’s work is underway. Also, we wish to thank the Diocese for a $500 grant we recently received that will support our outreach to the needy in the community through our Scarf Project at the city library – a seasonal distribution point for hats, scarves, and gloves in the winter months.

In the face of the pandemic, we are adjusting public worship and Lenten classes to conform to the guidelines
provided by Bishop Martins. To meet the needs of those sheltering at home, Fr Ben is daily livestreaming Morning and Evening Prayer—via Facebook now and through our website in the future—with plans to provide other online services and resources soon, including Sunday and Holy Day liturgies. Class materials will be distributed electronically for those who would like to continue our study of Holy Week, and work is under way to make Stations of the Cross available on Fridays.

Our Pastoral Care Ministry, in addition some of its usual assistance to shut ins, formed a group who will shop and do errands for quarantined parishioners and has provided information on local delivery services (e.g. Shipt.com) and restaurants that offer curbside pickup. In addition to our weekly newsletter, soon we will launch a new weekly email publication, called “In Touch” that will share stories of parishioners’ daily life during the pandemic.

We intercede daily for the physical and spiritual health of our parishioners and for all who are affected by this virus and the surrounding circumstances.

We pray for God’s love to dwell richly in us that it may overflow on those around us, for the Holy Spirit to grant us wisdom and guide us as we face the challenges ahead, and for the grace of Christ to sustain us now and always by the faith we have in the Cross and the Resurrection.

For more photographs of the installation, visit episcopalspringfield.org/fr-benjamin-hankinson-installed
The following reflects actions of the Standing Committee taken since the last meeting of Council:

Meeting at Trinity Mount Vernon on January 8th 2020:
Having received the resignation of Fr Mark Evans as President, elected the Rev. Beth Maynard as President, the Rev. Ben Hankinson as Secretary, and the Rev. Kip Ashmore as clergy member filling Fr Evans’ unexpired term until the next Synod. Held a discussion with the Rev. Ron Clingenpeel (a Transitions Consultant from the Office of Pastoral Development) about the OPD’s interest in observing and being able to recommend the Springfield Bishop search method of holding 2 open Synods (Nominating and Electing), as well as about concrete resources the OPD can make available to assist with searches. Following Fr Clingenpeel’s departure from the meeting, the Standing Committee agreed to ask the President to negotiate a cost-effective arrangement that suits our purposes with the Office of Pastoral Development. Constructed a timeline for the Bishop search process working backwards from the consecration date of June 12, 2021, and discussed matters regarding the search and transition process.

Meeting at Emmanuel Memorial Champaign on February 5, 2020:
Reviewed all applications for the Election Committee for the Twelfth Bishop of Springfield and selected 20 persons to serve from among the group of applicants. Consented to the consecration of the Rev. Poulsin Reed as Bishop of Oklahoma and of the Rev. Canon Frank Logue as Bishop of Georgia.

By electronic meeting:

Respectfully Submitted
The Rev. Beth Maynard, President

Spring is approaching so is UTO Semiannual United Thank Offering Ingathering. Parishes will be receiving more information on the Ingathering by the end of March. The Spring Ingathering is the Sunday following Ascension, however parishes can set their own dates if they wish too.

Contact Joyce Wright, UTO Diocesan Coordinator, if you have questions or need additional blue boxes or envelopes etc., email me at jwright117@gmail.com

Thanks to all who participate in this great ministry of the Episcopal Church. Happy Spring and happy Easter!

Joyce C. Wright
What does it mean to be a person of worship? Is it really possible for our entire lives to be acts of worship and thanksgiving to Jesus? How can I worship God in my day-to-day activities? This year at camp we will gather at East Bay Camp in Hudson, Illinois to dive deep into learning how to Amplify the name of Jesus through a life of worship and praise.

For more than 60 years, our camp has provided children and adults alike a week-long retreat experience and opportunity to live in a Christian community dedicated to growing in knowing who they are and whose they are. We hope 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. We welcome all students entering 2nd-12th grade to join us for a week of fun and fellowship, at East Bay Camp in Hudson, IL. For more, visit the diocesan website.

SUMMER CURSILLO—“LETTERS OF CHRIST”

By Vicki Hall

“You show that you are a letter of Christ, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.” (2 Cor. 3:3) Such will be the theme for the upcoming Cursillo weekend to be held on June 18-21 at Toddhall Retreat and Conference Center in Belleville, Illinois. As the rectora of this weekend, it was my task to discern the theme for the weekend. This verse from 2 Corinthians has been a favorite of mine for a long time, as the image of Jesus writing on my heart is a beautiful one. It embodies the intention of a Cursillo. We are to be letters of Christ sent out into the world to all of God’s people. The “ink,” being the Holy Spirit, is bold and inspires us to go with a sense of urgency and a strength that can only come from God. “Tablets of stone” makes me think of the stones upon which God wrote the Ten Commandments—a gift to his people. Jesus Christ writes on our hearts—his love starts there and through the power of the Holy Spirit spreads throughout.

Whether a new Christian or an 84-year-old cradle Episcopalian, Cursillo can change the trajectory of your walk with Jesus. The word “Cursillo” means “short course in Christianity” and the purpose of a Cursillo weekend is to build leaders for Christ, to show you how to take your faith into the world, and to give you a community that will support and lift you up. My Cursillo weekend happened in 1986 and while there, I was introduced to the true love of Jesus as I had not known it before. He was resident in each person on the team. He directed the weekend and I had never felt so much love and joy. After the weekend, my husband and I moved to Belleville. I found that Jesus lived here, too—in the people at my church and in the Cursillo community in this diocese. I found myself becoming truly involved in the life of the church and in Cursillo. It sounds trite, but Cursillo really did change my life. My life in Christ has been strengthened and enhanced by being a part of Cursillo.

If you are at all interested in attending the Cursillo weekend coming up or want further information, please speak to your priest, a friend in your church who has been to Cursillo, or feel free to email me at hall.vicki51@gmail.com.
The Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Springfield Lenten Retreat was held from Feb. 28-March 1, 2020, and what an amazing and fun weekend it was! We were blessed with beautiful weather and with wonderful participation of the twenty-eight women who attended. Women traveled from many distances to be with us (Florissant, MO, Pontiac, IL, Cairo, IL and Southern Illinois, Edwardsville, Bloomingdale, IL) and the list goes on and on. Not to mention we were happy that Jan Goossens, the Province V Representative and MaryFran Crist the Province V CPC Representative found time from their busy schedule to join us. The focus and desire of this retreat was to help all who attended reconnect and strengthen our love for Jesus Christ our Lord.

The retreat opened with a beautiful prayer by Mtr Sherry Black and continued with a creative Psalms activity presented by Carol Marshall. We learned that different types of psalms were written to communicate different feelings and thoughts. Psalms provide instruction, inspiration, motivation and consolation. Carol stressed that the psalms are personal and they portray such genuine human emotion, that they remain as powerful as ever today.

We started Saturday morning with a workshop presented by Cheri King on the importance of gratitude in our lives and in the lives of others. Followed with attendees creating ribbon gratitude bookmarks. The highlight event on Saturday afternoon was the presentation of Fanny Crosby portrayed by Barbara L. Kay. Fanny Crosby was an incredible and truly unique lady. She not only wrote published poetry, she also wrote over 8,000 hymns. Some of which are very famous. She accomplished all of this while being blind. Everyone agreed that through Barbara Kay’s amazing performance, Fanny Crosby come to life for us that afternoon.

Later Saturday evening we all gathered in the chapel for hymn singing led by Claudia Byrne playing on the majestic pipe organ. Claudia provided handouts of printed hymns not found in the Episcopal hymnal and we enjoyed singing them as well as hymns in the hymnal. It was such a joy to listen to the beautiful music and singing. What a fantastic and serene way to end the night.

Sunday morning began with very informative presentations about the Church Periodical Club- MaryFran Crist, United Thank Offering- Joyce Wright, and Daughters of the King- MaryFran Crist. As MaryFran told us “Episcopalians like alphabet soup (CPC, UTO, DOK, etc).” Questions and answers followed and everything you wanted to know about these wonderful missions was answered.

Finally, we closed the retreat with a beautiful mass given by Mother Sherry Black. Her sermon touched everyone’s heart and we felt God’s love.

We then took up a collection for the ECW DoS Outreach project- The Gitimaini Anglican Church, Kenya who is in desperate need of furniture. Through the blessings of the Lord, $708.00 was collected. Not bad for 28 women! I wonder if anyone can match that?

So much love and pray went into the planning of this retreat but it was the work of God’s Spirit that transformed the women. These women came with open hearts and minds and the Lord did not disappoint them.
To the Faithful of the Diocese of Springfield,

Our diocesan Election Committee was working hard in March on profile and nomination materials for the search for the 12th Bishop of Springfield, including a survey to be disseminated both online and in person at weekend liturgies, as well as materials for deanery-wide or congregation-wide listening groups from which feedback on hopes and needs for the next episcopate would be collected. Then COVID-19 hit, making it impossible for any of these gatherings to take place in person or for the Election Committee and its subcommittees to meet for discernment. The Standing Committee believes that attempting to carry out this crucial stage of profile preparation and nominations entirely virtually is not in the best interests of the Diocese of Springfield.

For this reason, the Standing Committee feels constrained to place this work on hold until we can ensure the effective accomplishment of all the tasks necessary for a high-quality nomination process. Like so many things around us now, the time when meetings can resume as normal is unclear, but needless to say, the announced dates that depended on the publication of a profile of the Diocese of Springfield by May 1, 2020, will all have to shift in ways we do not yet know.

At the same time, Election Committee chair Charlie Rice has decided that he needs to step down from his leadership role. The Standing Committee expresses its deep gratitude for Charlie Rice’s willingness to begin this critical process, and is pleased to announce that going forward the Rev. Sherry Black and Mr Rod Matthews have agreed to accept the roles of chair and co-chair, respectively, of the Election Committee. Please hold them, the Members of the Standing and Election Committees, and the whole Diocese in your prayers as we seek together to discern next steps.

Your servants in Christ,
The Standing Committee

DEANERY REPORTS

NORTHWESTERN DEANERY

St John’s
Decatur
We have gone through many changes in the past few months. Fr. Dick Swan after serving eight years as our priest retired at the end of Nov. 2019 and moved North Carolina with his wife, Marv. Fr Ashmore covered the Sundays of Dec. and Christmas. On Jan. 5 Fr Eugene Stormer became the interim rector to help St. John’s call a new rector.

On Dec. 15 our choir presented Lessons and Carols to large crowd and everyone enjoyed this preparation for Christmas. On Jan. 5 the Children of St. John’s presented their Epiphany pageant. They reenacted the three kings coming to pay homage to the newborn Jesus.

At our Jan. annual meeting we elected the next class of the Mission Leadership Team. They also instituted a search committee to begin the search for a new priest. Two parishioners volunteered to be on the Diocesan Search Committee for a new bishop and were accepted.

The Cathedral of St Paul Springfield
A group of our people went on a trip to the UK in September. Everyone had a good time. One of the highlights of this tour was when Fr Andy celebrated Mass at Canterbury Cathedral in the Jesus Chapel. Also we all very much enjoyed having a traditional British tea time.

In Oct., Fr Andy conducted the annual pet blessing. Candles were lit to remember those pets had passed. In particular our group was pleased to welcome the newly arrived Oliver (not Cromwell).

Our Veteran’s Day Breakfast was well attended. Veterans were recognized with a special breakfast and St Paul’s was pleased to be able to recognize those who have served from our community. Fun and laughter were had by all at our very successful Trivia Night on November 16. Our proceeds exceeded $3,000.

We love our new an Adagio II Carillon. It has a 7-in. bright touch screen with 3 voices included, traditional Cast Bronze Bells, Bell with Harp Accompaniment and American Bells. Musical package included Liturgical Bell Rigs, Peals and Tolls, Westminster Chime and clock strikes along with Adagio II carillon’s appropriate music package. It has instant play, full function wireless remote control and four speaker horns with multi-tap compression.

On Dec. 15 we had the Hanging of the Greens event. Later in the afternoon we hosted Nine Lessons and Carrols. Also we partnered with the Dana Thomas House for a luminary event. The Carillon played different Christmas Carols on the hour. We were blessed with a beautiful sanctuary, Christmas music, hot chocolate and Springfield was visited by a wonderful snow that evening, adding to the feeling of the Christmas Season.

The Very Rev. Andy Hook

Trinity
Jacksonville
We began the year by reviving our traditional Children’s Epiphany Pageant on Jan. 5. The young people presented a joyful and rowdy account of the Incarnation of the Son of God. Since Jan.,
we have welcomed two new babies who will hopefully participate in future pageants. We have been active in outreach ministries both inside and outside our parish. We collected nearly 70 cans of soup for “Souper Bowl Sunday.” We collected $425 for the Church World Services Blanket Sunday. We are collecting school supplies for the Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches Teacher Appreciation Supply Collection. We delivered meals to homebound members of our community through Doorbell Dinners. Our youth are preparing for their annual Heifer Project appeal, with a bake sale, a games day, and collection for mite boxes.

When Bishop Martins visited our parish on Jan. 26, he confirmed three of our youth, one of whom had been baptized the day before. Our liturgical ministry is expanding with new acolytes, and we now have two choral interns who are being formed by our veteran choristers for careers as professional singers. We will lead a community Ash Wednesday service at Cedarhurst, a local retirement community, and will pray the stations of the Cross during Lent.

_The Very Rev. Zachary Brooks_

**St Luke’s**  
_Springfield_

We have begun our 130th year of ministry on the east side of Springfield. We continue with a full round of activities in worship, education and outreach. Mission is our focus in every respect.

We have continued with the process of making improvements, which is an ongoing process in a building that is almost as old as the church itself. Following the installation of new flooring in the kitchen and parish hall areas last year, we had that entire area repainted, leaving everything in a bright and attractive state.

In addition to being used for the preparation of our regular meals on Sunday, the kitchen is also used by Episcopal Food Ministries to prepare meals for community outreach. We are pleased to have again received a Diocesan Outreach Fund grant for this ministry, which is supported by our congregation and which includes volunteers from all three Episcopal churches in Springfield.

Our adult Bible study group has moved its meetings from the Diocesan Center to St. Luke’s. We are currently engaged in a study of the Apocrypha, using an excellent guide from the Immersion Bible Studies series, and meet every Tuesday. On Thursdays, we have an African Bible Study on the lessons for the coming Sunday.

We look forward with joy to the Baptism of two young children on the last Sunday after the Epiphany, and continue to explore effective avenues for Christian education for the children who are a part of our ministry.

_The Rev. Shawn W. Denney_

**St Paul’s and St Peter’s**  
_Carlinville and Chesterfield_

At our Annual Meeting, we adopted a new budget, and elected new lay leaders. 2020 is off to a good start. Unless, of course, you consider a recent Saturday at St. Peter’s: the inside temperature of the church being just 31 degrees!

Our local mission has expanded to work with Federated Church to provide a community dinner on the 4th Thursday of each month. We are providing workers as well as financial assistance. Our grant from the diocese has been thankfully received and put to use.

In Lent we will be without our rector (in the UK for a month) with morning prayer led by lay members and youth.

_The Rev. John R. Henry_

**HALE DEANERY**

**The Church of the Redeemer**  
_Cairo_

We have busy doing the Ministries that God has called to do. We have been intentional in finding ways to minister to the people in the community, not only in the city of Cairo, but also the neighboring communities of such as Olive Branch, Pulaski County, and Cape Girardeau. Fr James continues to minister at the Senior Citizens at the Happy Day where they meet for lunch daily. He ministers to them on Wednesdays by sharing the word of God, encouraging them to continue trusting in God through the power of Jesus Christ.

Martial Arts program continues to gain momentum with our warden Len Harris. He has been very active and has been trying to create room for all who come to this program. But due to the limited space, he now holds two classes every Tuesday and Thursday; not forgetting that he works 8 hours every day as the local Police Chief: but he still finds it worthy to put another two hours each Tuesday and Thursday to accommodate the growing number of students.

In Dec., just before we went on Christmas break, the Martial Arts and the Church hosted the Annual Christmas party so that the Church members and the Martial Arts participants can get to meet and fellowship together. It was a great moment us to participate and to see what goes on at the program. Again, we could not fit in our small fellowship hall and go through some forms and presentations. We were so moved that we decided that it is time to do something about the spacious Martial Arts building which we purchased almost two years ago next to the church. We have been putting up a special collection plate for the purpose of renovating this building for about a year now and we have raised over 20,000 dollars. We decided
that although, this money is not enough, we will put it to work. We are now appealing to our brothers and sisters in the Diocese, if they feel so called to assist us with whatever amount; we will be able to finish this needed space for outreach in this community and the entire diocese of Springfield.

The Martial Arts participants have been competing in various tournament. They have won medals. We thank God who has enabled this group to move into greater heights. The program has become the single tool of evangelism. It has attracted people to church and some have made up their minds to become members of our church. It is always my pleasure to see people walking the talk doing everything possible to move forward doing what God want them to do. I hope that as a Diocese of Springfield, you will continue to pray for us.

_The Rev. James K. Muriuki_

**St Andrew’s**

_Carbondale_

Since Nov., we have been enjoying God’s Peace. Folks are coming back to the Parish, as the Vestry and Rector have implemented our Parish plan. This included setting a joyful style at the Holy Eucharist, celebrating our faith in our Lord, studying St. Mark’s Gospel, and encouraging the Interim Rector to become engaged in community and SIU events. We are truly engaged in ministry.

We celebrated Bishop Daniel and Brenda Martins’ visit in late Nov. Laurel Petrich was received into the Church. Music by the rejuvenated choir sang four part harmony during the Offertory. And we wore out the Martins. They came to the Holy Eucharist at St. James’, Marion. Christmas I saw a very good number of folks come, and even to the Adult Class which meets every Sunday at 9:00 am. We are grateful to Matthew and Tammy Keefer, and Trish Guyon for providing a new large screen television, for DVDs and network programs. We plan to use this for our Wednesday early evening Soup/Suppers in Lent, to watch Diarmaid MacCulloch’s fine History of Christianity Programs.

Our Annual Meeting was splendid and happy. It took place in the Nave, as an extended announcement before the closing hymn and Dismissal. Treasurer Don Monty announced we closed out 2019 with a surplus; before cautioning us not to get too elated because we didn't pay a full-time priest for several months. Revenues did exceed estimates. We re-elected Ryan Horn, who had been filling an unexpired term, and Tony Goodin. We elected Don Monty and Tammy Keefer to the next Synod. Ryan was re-elected Parish Warden, Don Monty Treasurer, and Terri Goodin clerk.

In Advent we worshiped using Rite I, and a new Creche was blessed. The Choir and readers led Advent Lessons and Carols, directed by Roger Petrich.

Younger, newer folks are attending the Sunday Eucharist at 10:00 am, the Rite I quiet Eucharist averaging 8 (four of these folks make this their weekly attendance, including two former members coming after an absence of 16 years.)

Many folks are engaged in various outreach ministries, with gathering food for the pantries at University Baptist, and Good Samaritan charities.

The Greening of the Church took place on Advent IV, with many involved, and a chili supper prepared by Lorri and Tom Schmider. We celebrated Christmas Eve at St. Andrew’s, at which a new creche (provided by Trish Guyon, and Terri and Tony Goodin, given in memory of Sue Casebeer) was blessed. We celebrated Christmas Day at St. James’, Marion. Christmas I saw a very good number of folks come, and even to the Adult Class which meets every Sunday at 9:00 am. We are grateful to Matthew and Tammy Keefer, and Trish Guyon for providing a new large screen television, for DVDs and network programs. We plan to use this for our Wednesday early evening Soup/Suppers in Lent, to watch Diarmaid MacCulloch’s fine History of Christianity Programs.

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Our best news was the return from various serious surgeries of members Erica North, Kent Werner, and Maria Hafford. We praise God for healings! We are continually grateful for the solar panels, which are saving us money. And on Jan. 30, 2020, the Search Committee recommended and the Vestry approved calling Fr. Coleman as our next Rector. Both votes were unanimous. The Bishop gave his approval. Fr. Coleman appointed Trish Guyon to be Rector’s Warden. Finally, let me say: I am so pleased to serve this church. And I am personally happy to be in the Deanery under Mother Sherry’s leadership. Thank you, God.

_The Rev. Dale Coleman_
Nancy Summers, our children’s Sunday School mailed Advent ornaments to area shut-ins. After decorating for Christmas on the 4th Sunday in Advent, we had a beautiful Christmas Eve service, with many of our favorite Christmas hymns.

At our annual meeting, good discussions were part of our time together. We re-elected Carol Marshall, Rachel Stewart, and Claudia Byrne to our Mission Leadership Team, with Carol and Claudia elected to serve as our delegates to synod, and Cathy Wilson as alternate.

For Super Bowl Sunday—or SOUPer Bowl Sunday (aka Presentation, Candlesmas, Groundhog’s Day, as well as the 12th anniversary of my ordination to the transitional deaconate)—we asked members to bring cans of soup to add to our blessing box. Sadly, early in 2020, we had two funerals for long-time members. We keenly feel their absence, and hold them in our hearts even as we wrap their families in love and prayer.

The Very Rev. Sherry Black

St Stephen’s
Harrisburg
Our vestry voted not to have an Italian dinner this year; the vestry did talk about doing something later in the year, we will see if this comes to be. Our latest outreach project was to collect cans of soup for our local pantry. I am sad to say I missed a lot of Sundays this quarter due to some health issues. I would like to thank the leadership of Saint Stephen’s church for providing Morning Prayer for the Sundays I could not be with them. Looking forward to a better year with my church family and life in general.

The Rev. Tim Goodman

NORTHERN DEANERY

Christ the King
Normal
In Dec., we provided many dozens of cookies, along with stockings and dolls, to patients of Advocate Medical Center’s Hospice unit. This project involved the Crafts Ministry and several expert bakers. Hospice will continue to be Christ the King’s partner in prayer and ministry in 2020. The church continues to cook and serve a monthly meal to 20–30 students at the Regional Alternative School (R.A.S.); this is a treat for students who have achieved certain goals established by the school. The kids are delighted, and those who cook and serve are quite aware of what they receive, in giving to the students. Two parishioners are exploring the possibility of starting a woodworking class at the R.A.S.

After four years without a resident priest—but with the faithful presence of supply priests (Frs Stormer, Cravens, Wells, and Richmond) during those years, on Jan. 1, we welcomed Fr John Richmond as Priest-in-Charge. He retired after 18-plus years as Director of the Alpha Park Public Library District, Bartonville, near Peoria, and accepted the appointment at Christ the King. To use Bishop Martins’s expression, this is a kind of “encore performance” for him, as he served us from 1987–1993.

Bishop Martins was with us to celebrate the Eucharist and preach on Jan. 12. Our Annual Meeting was on Jan. 26. Candlemas brought the blessing and distribution of candles to all present at the Eucharist; people also brought candles from home to be blessed. Soon the Richmonds will relocate to Bloomington-Normal. Meanwhile, 2020 is off to a fine start.

Trinity
Lincoln
Trinity sent two delegates to Synod and Sandy Moore, Fr Mark’s wife, also attended. At Synod, Fr Mark was elected President of the Standing Committee and was named Spiritual Director for Cursillo. In Dec., Fr Mark was guest lecturer for an intensive class at Lincoln Christian University on Worship, where the students are quite interested in liturgical worship. Sadly, we lost one of our most active members to cancer that month. Not only was he active at Trinity but his philanthropic activities stretched far and in the community of Lincoln. Attendance at his funeral was 150% of our seating capacity which was a testimony to his stature in our town.

In Jan., Fr Mark was named Canon to the Ordinary. As such, he stepped down from Standing Committee and is currently spending two days per week in the diocesan office while continuing to serve as the Rector of Trinity. Later that month, Bishop Martins made his Visitation where 5 young people were confirmed. The Cursillo Retreat was in early February and in March we are looking forward to the ordination to the diaconate of Dr Chris Simpson.

The Rev. Canon Mark Evans

St Matthew’s
Bloomington
We have continued to be blessed by having Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. It is exciting to see young children in worship, and to hear them enthusiastically proclaim their part of the liturgy. This fall we opened our building to the Bloomington-Normal Co-Op for science and music classes, with several dozen young people and their families making it energetic on Monday mornings. The music class enriched our liturgy with an offertory during Bishop Daniel's celebration of the Eucharist, and the families stayed to enjoy the fellowship of coffee hour. We are hopeful that this cooperation continues in the next year. We also welcomed Heidi Brooks to the bench of the McEver’s organ this fall. She continues to add a richness of musical expression to our services.

Since the first of the year we have had the requisite meetings and filed reports,
and are grateful for the continued excellence in stewardship that we experience. The faithfulness of the Eucharistic Community is exemplary. We held our second annual Chili/Soup Cookoff and Trivia Night. We played Episcopal Wheel of Fortune, and the winning team had a seminary trained ringer (not the Rector). We had a lot of fun, and look forward to next year. Congratulations to DiAnne Wunderle who won the coveted wooden spoon for best chili!

Finally, we were glad to unveil a new electronic sign that has enhanced our public presence.

The Very Rev. David Halt

NORTHEASTERN DEANERY

Emmanuel Memorial
Champaign
Dec. 2019 was a very full month for us. Our rector was invited to preach and teach at Nashotah House, and upon her return we hosted two live performances of a period radio play based on Charles Dickens’ “The Goblins and the Gravedigger,” with a cameo by Champaign’s former mayor and a live broadcast of the matinee by Stevie Jay Radio. Our library committee began work on a refreshing of the Keck Library with involvement from members of the Keck family who now live out of town, and our junior warden was hard at work on issues involving our aging security system and continued construction on our rectory space. We hosted staff from C-U at Home in mid-Advent for a sermon-interview about ministry with the homeless; this is an organization Emmanuel has actively supported both financially and with volunteers. We also collected over 40 athletic balls (and financial donations to purchase more) for Christmas gifts to needy children through our partnership with the organization Empty Tomb.

The days before Christmas brought a choral concert by the ECCO vocal ensemble as well as our annual Greening of the Church with Chili brunch, ably headed up by Anne Wilson and Nancy Suchomski. Christmas Eve and Day were especially fulfilling this year, with total attendance for the Feast at 355; the late Christmas Eve liturgy has turned into a very significant evangelistic opportunity for us with well over half the congregation made up of visitors.

In Jan., we observed the Baptism of Maggie Tuegel as well as holding our Annual Meeting with one Mass; we increasingly find, however, that moving the service time makes for unusually poor attendance at this event. We observed our Feast of Title, the Feast of the Presentation, on a Sunday (with attendance well more than double that of Annual Meeting the previous week.) Our spring 1662 Choral Evensong with the Emmanuel Choir and Schola commemorated both our Name Day and the February founding of our church’s current location at the corner of State and University (in a previous building.)

At Annual Meeting, our curate Fr Caleb Roberts announced that as his three-year term at Emmanuel was coming to an end, he has accepted the position of Rector at Grace Church, Ponca City, Oklahoma. We have been glad to have him with us, and wish him well as he returns to his home diocese; the search for his successor is well underway.

Emmanuel is a busy place, but at the heart of the activity is Jesus Christ, God made flesh for us. We invite you to worship with us any Sunday or weekday you are in Champaign-Urbana. May all that we do glorify God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Rev. Beth Maynard

The Church of the Holy Trinity
Danville
The following information reflect activities at the church:

• Held annual parish Thanksgiving Dinner and prepared food baskets for distribution
• Observed Advent with weekly Rosary and Benediction in addition to daily Masses
• Prayed traditional Christmas Novena
• Celebrated Christmas with Children’s Crib Devotions, Midnight Mass, and Christmas Day Mass
• Children prepared for Epiphany with activities focused on the history of the Magi
DEANERY REPORTS

• Blessing of Water and Chalk prior to Mass and party on Epiphany
• Held Annual Meeting on Jan. 26
• Blessing of Candles and Mass on Feast of the Purification
• Sack Lunch distribution to start in March
• Two new Altar Servers began preparation process

The Very Rev. Richard Lewis

DARROW DEANERY

The Darrow Deanery would like to welcome Fr. Robert (Rob) Eaton and Fr. Ben Hankinson.

St Andrew’s

Edwardsville

St Andrew’s has had a busy season over the last few months. Dec. saw Lessons and Carols, the Christmas Pageant, and the joyful celebration of Christmas services. It also brought the announcement of Fr Ben Hankinson as the next rector.

In Jan., we bid farewell to Fr John Thorpe and his family after several months of ministry among us as our supply priest. We wish them well and thank Fr John for his service. Later in the month, the Annual Meeting celebrated the year that is past and the work that God had done in our various ministries. We thanked our outgoing leaders and representatives and elected new ones for the terms ahead.

Feb. welcomed Fr Ben as he celebrated his first Sunday at St. Andrew’s on the Feast of the Presentation. Later that week, we had a record-breaking book sale bringing in over $5,000.

On Feb. 15th, Bishop Martins joined us for a Celebration of a New Ministry and the Installation of Fr Ben as the Rector. Later in the month we’ll celebrate Shrove Tuesday with a pancake supper and then enter the Lenten season with services for Ash Wednesday.

March will see the start of a Lenten study series on Holy Week as we look ahead to the journey from Palm Sunday to Easter. March 5-7 will bring with it the Quilt and Fabric Art Show including the giving of Quilts of Valor to local service members and veterans. Then on March 14, the ECW will host a Lenten Retreat. To God be the glory!

The Rev. Ben Hankinson

St George’s

Belleville

Supply: From Sept. through Jan., Fr Clive Samson served as our supply priest. His dedication to pastoring St George’s led us through Advent and a joyous celebration of Christ’s birth. He was truly a blessing to our parish.


Spirituality: Our Spirituality Committee organized and published a book of Advent Reflections by parishioners.

Outreach: Our Community Service Commission worked with Lutheran Family Services to provide over 60 at risk youth, in the Belleville community, with Christmas presents. They also held our annual Super Bowl White Chili Sale. This event drew over 40 of our loyal chili fans and raised funds for Franklin Elementary School. Both our food pantry and Meals on Wheels, supported by members of our joint St. George’s and St. Mark’s Lutheran church family, continues to serve the Belleville area,

Reception: On Feb. 2, we celebrated a reception to thank Fr Clive Samson for his time with us, and to welcome our Interim Rector, Fr Robert (Rob) Eaton. Fr Rob began his ministry on Feb. 1.

Brian Maves, warden

St Michael’s

O’Fallon

We continue to utilize supply clergy from within the diocese to cover Sunday services and other holy days. An updated Parish Profile has been under review by the MLT and will be posted on the St Michael’s website for perusal by prospective candidates for vicar. The annual meeting was held on January 19 with the election of several new MLT members to fill vacancies left primarily by members who have moved away. Parish reports and Ministry information forms are being submitted on schedule by members of the MLT. St Michael’s is planning to celebrate the 20 year anniversary of the completion of the church building in March. From an Outreach and community involvement standpoint, our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was a great fellowship opportunity and successful fundraiser, and our Prayer Shawl and Mat Makers group continue to meet to support the needs of our members and community. This summer we will once again participate with other community churches to support Feed My Lambs, which distributes lunches to participants of the school lunch program.

Amy Konieczny, warden

St Thomas’

Glen Carbon

Our Daycare had their Christmas Pageant on December 13th at 6:30 p.m. The church was very full and the children told the story of Jesus’ birth very well.

We will host the joint Ash Wednesday service at 6:30 p.m. with St Bartholomew’s, Granite City. St Bartholomew’s will host the Lent Wednesdays starting at 6:30 p.m. on March 4 and continue to April 1, 2020.

Jan Goossens, mission administrator

Parish of Alton

Since the Council’s last meeting in November, the EPA has continued many offerings of worship, study, service, and
play. Our two Sunday Eucharists continue: 8:15 am at Trinity Chapel, and 10:30 am at St Paul’s. Following Adult Education, Tuesday morning Eucharist is celebrated at Trinity Chapel, followed by a long-standing Bible Study group. The weekly group has spent over a year with N. T. Wright and St. Mark’s Gospel.

The first two masses of Christmas were celebrated at St Paul’s, and Christmas III on Christmas Day at Trinity Chapel. PAWS (Pets Are Welcome Service) has continued to provide opportunities for worship and fellowship with our animal families on the first Sunday monthly. The humans have bonded and take great pleasure in watching the relationships that have developed between our animal companions.

A new opportunity for weekly worship, Mondays@7 (pm) based partially on the 12 steps of AA and other “anonymous” groups, began late last year. This quiet, meditative service consists of inspirational and thought-provoking readings, soft music or chant, and quiet times for private prayer and meditation. All participants have the opportunity to give up their burdens to God, and to literally watch them go up in smoke via a burning bowl. Worshippers from within and also from outside the parish have bonded into a close yet open group for discussion of the readings and sharing after the service.

The EPA took on another challenge to feed the hungry through Empty Bowls, an project to fight hunger, personalized by artists and art organizations on a community level. Our target was to help the Crisis Food Center in Alton. Under the direction of our very own Mimi Almonroeder, and with the assistance of Mississippi Mud Pottery, we got messy to fight hunger! We gathered in Heneghan Hall on what we dubbed “casual dress Sunday” to mold clay into one-of-a-kind soup bowls, which at a later date were fired by Mississippi Mud Pottery. We then glazed our bowls, which were again fired by Mississippi Mud. On our Souper Bowl Sunday, for a donation of $10 or more, diners will be able to choose the bowl of their choice and then enjoy homemade soup in the colorful ceramic bowls. A silent auction at the event will also raise money to combat hunger. All proceeds will be donated to Crisis Food Center.

Other activities have included:
• The annual Guild of Grace Halloween Chili Supper
• The annual ECM Christmas Dinner for the parish, held at Castelli’s Restaurant
• The ECW sales of spiced pecans and aprons that read, “Jesus is coming… look busy!” The ECW also donated homemade blankets to local schools for students experiencing difficulties.
• Our annual Coats for Kids collection for Riverbend Head Start and Family Services
• On-going support for Crisis Food Center, Oasis Women’s Shelter, Riverbend Head Start and Family Services, and 5 A’s Animal Shelter
• Preparation of emergency supply kits for those in need who come to our doors
• A fieldtrip to Christ Church Cathedral in St Louis for an organ recital by our Organist and Choirmaster, Gay Anderson
• Bookstore & Gift Shop
• Parish Library
• Use of our facilities for 6 AA and one OA group meetings.
• Unfortunately, Christmas caroling was cancelled due to bad weather conditions.

In the days and weeks to come:
• The annual ECM Pancake & Sausage dinner on Shrove Tuesday
• Ash Wednesday masses with the imposition of ashes at Trinity Chapel and St. Paul’s
• Ashes to Go in front of St. Paul’s garden during the breakfast rush at our neighboring restaurant
• Wed. evening masses during Lent, followed by a light dinner and a program. Our Lenten program will be studying Adam Hamilton’s DVD and book, The Walk
• An intergenerational activity involving learning about and coloring posters of the Stations of the Cross during a coffee hour. The posters will be hung in the nave of St. Paul’s. On the next Sunday, we will all walk on the pilgrimage of the Stations of the cross.
• Our kids will study, “What We Do in Lent: an Anglican Child’s Activity Book,” by Anne Kitch. They will later study, “What We Do in Church: an Anglican Child’s Activity Book,” by Anne Kitch.

The Rev. Cindy Sever
### MAY 2020

- **03** Bishop w/ Emmanuel Memorial, Champaign
- **08** Trustees Meeting, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
- **10** Bishop w/ Church of the Redeemer, Cairo
- **15** Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
- **17** Bishop w/ St Andrew’s, Edwardsville
- **21** ASCENSION
- **24** Bishop w/ St Michael’s, O’Fallon
- **31** PENTECOST, Bishop w/ The Parish of Alton

### JUNE 2020

- **07** TRINITY SUNDAY, Bishop w/ Trinity, Mattoon
- **14** Bishop w/ St Barnabas’, Havana
- **18-21** Cursillo Weekend #38, Todhall, Columbia
- **21** Bishop w/ St John the Baptist, Mt. Carmel
- **26** Finance Department, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)
- **28** Bishop w/ St John’s, Albion
- **28-30** Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson

### JULY 2020

- **07** TRINITY SUNDAY, Bishop w/ Trinity, Mattoon
- **01-04** Episcopal Church Camp, East Bay Camp, Hudson
- **05** Bishop w/ St John’s, Decatur
- **12** Bishop w/ Trinity, Yazoo City (DEPO)
- **15** Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)

### AUGUST 2020

- **15** Diocesan Council, Diocesan Center, Springfield (10 a.m.)

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