

CHURCHWORK

VOLUME 62, ISSUE 1

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA

SPRING 2012

**DID YOU NOT KNOW
THAT I MUST BE IN MY
FATHER'S HOUSE?**

LUKE 2:49

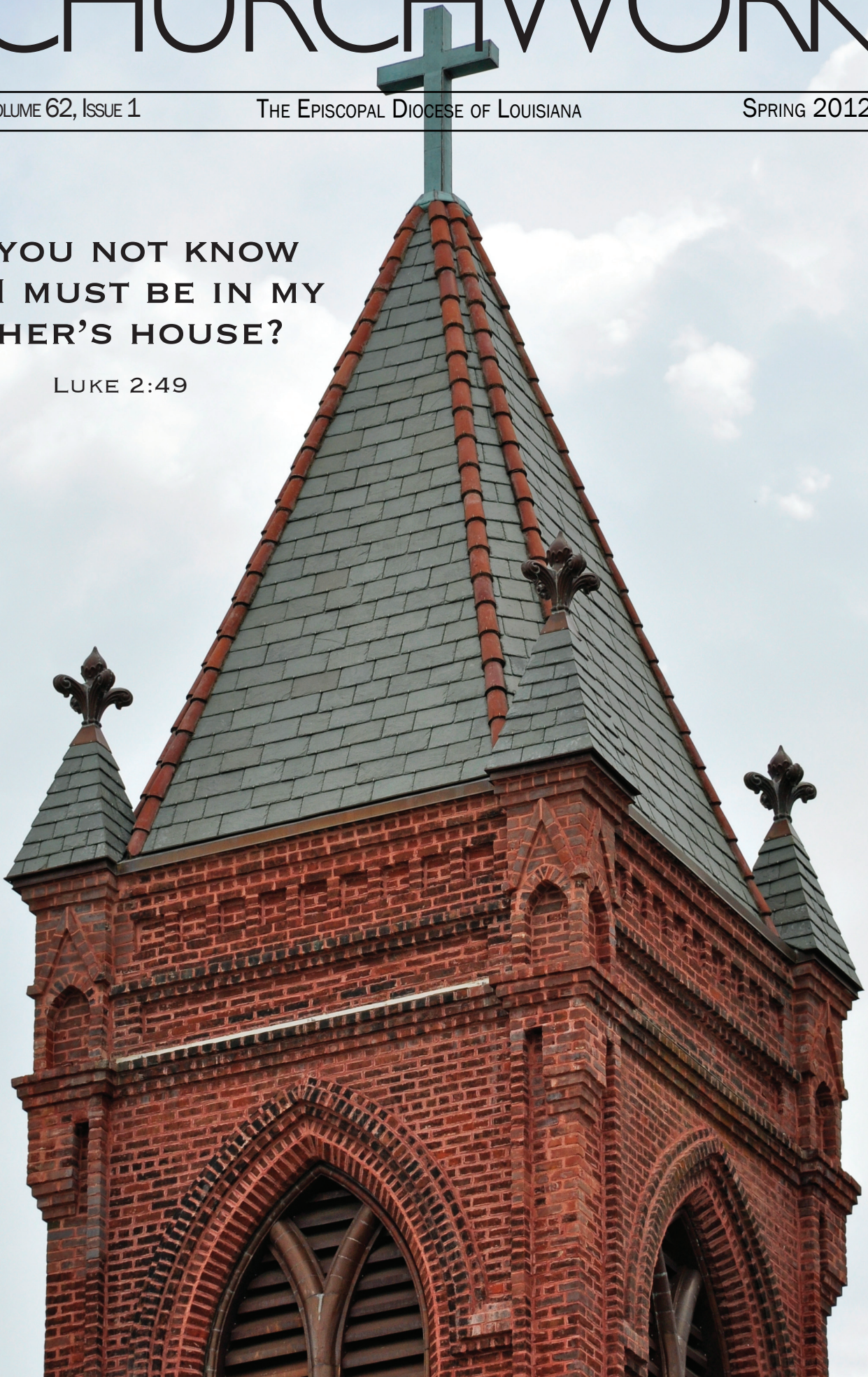


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Submissions

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On the cover:

The steeple of St. James, Baton Rouge
taken by Fred Frey

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

A few days before I was to arrive at St. Mary of the Pines retreat center I received a phone call from Sr. Ruth. She called to explain that the bridge leading to St. Mary's was closed due to large trucks weakening its structure. I would need to enter from another direction. Normally when I approach Chatawa I cross the river, drive about a mile and on my right is a peaceful lake. Immediately my eyes are drawn up the hillside to the gazebo and to the retreat house. This view has been a warm and calming welcome these past nineteen years. Now I will have to enter a different way. At first I didn't give it much thought but as I followed the new instructions I quickly became aware that it was very different. The road was narrow with farmland and pine forest. There was no lake. In fact, I came upon the entrance of the retreat center before I knew it. No gentle announcement, just an opening in the road.

Subtle shifts in our lives whether announced or not, can throw us off course in ways we are not always aware. Sr. Ruth must have noticed this because the first scripture she gave me to pray was Isaiah 41:13, "For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, "Do not fear, I will help you." I am a person of rhythm. Life for me is one of constant pattern and when that pattern is disrupted, my comfort zone can be challenged. However, hearing the Lord say to me that he is holding my right hand and that he will help me is a voice of gentleness and calm.

The theme for our upcoming convention is "For you were called to Freedom". It is taken from Galatians 5:13-14. The whole reading is: "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself."



Being called to freedom is to let go of what binds us from living in the presence of God. How often does our prejudice, ego, anger, stubbornness, or selfishness get in the way of being who God has created us to be? Paul is reminding the Galatians that they have been set free to live by the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God leads us to live a life of reconciling love, to pay attention to the needs that go beyond our own desires.

It is my hope that this convention will be a new beginning in exploring ways we can live beyond ourselves and for others. Imagine what it might look like if we focused on giving away our love, ourselves and our resources in love instead of being fearful of what we may or may not be getting. What would it look like if we were so focused on abundance rather than scarcity? What if we were able to see ourselves as one body with many parts rather than many bodies? If we could see our connections just maybe, just maybe we could see the need to live for the other for the common good.

I hope to see you all in March.

Brave journey, + *Mel's*

THE 175TH CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.

For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment,
'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

Galatians 5:13-14

ORDER OF BUSINESS (Proposed) 175TH CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA March 2 & 3, 2012

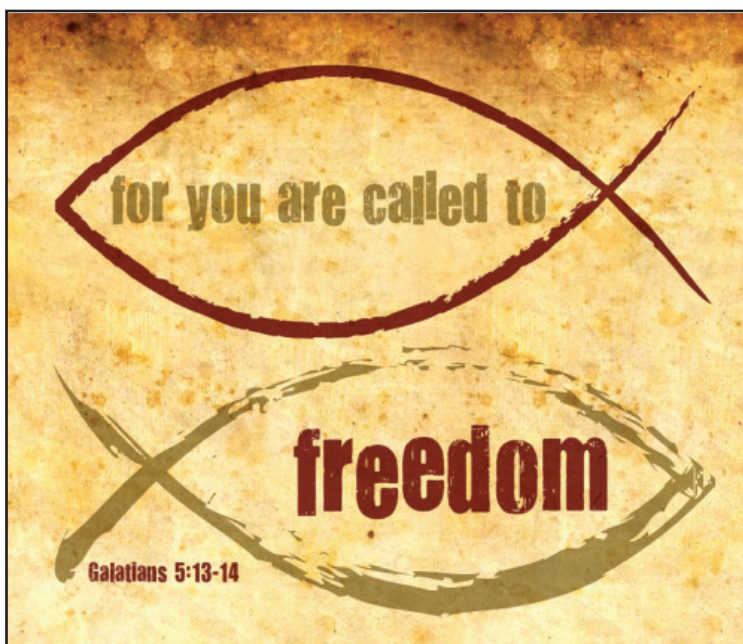
FRIDAY, MARCH 2

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 1 PM | Registration Begins |
| 3 PM | Plenary Session <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call to Order• Prayers• Welcome• Election of Secretary• Dispatch of Business Resolutions• Balloting for Offices• Presentation of Resolutions (Obtain Seconds)• Bishop's Address |
| 4:30 PM | Open Hearings & Committee Work |
| 6 PM | The Holy Eucharist |
| 7 PM | Social Time |

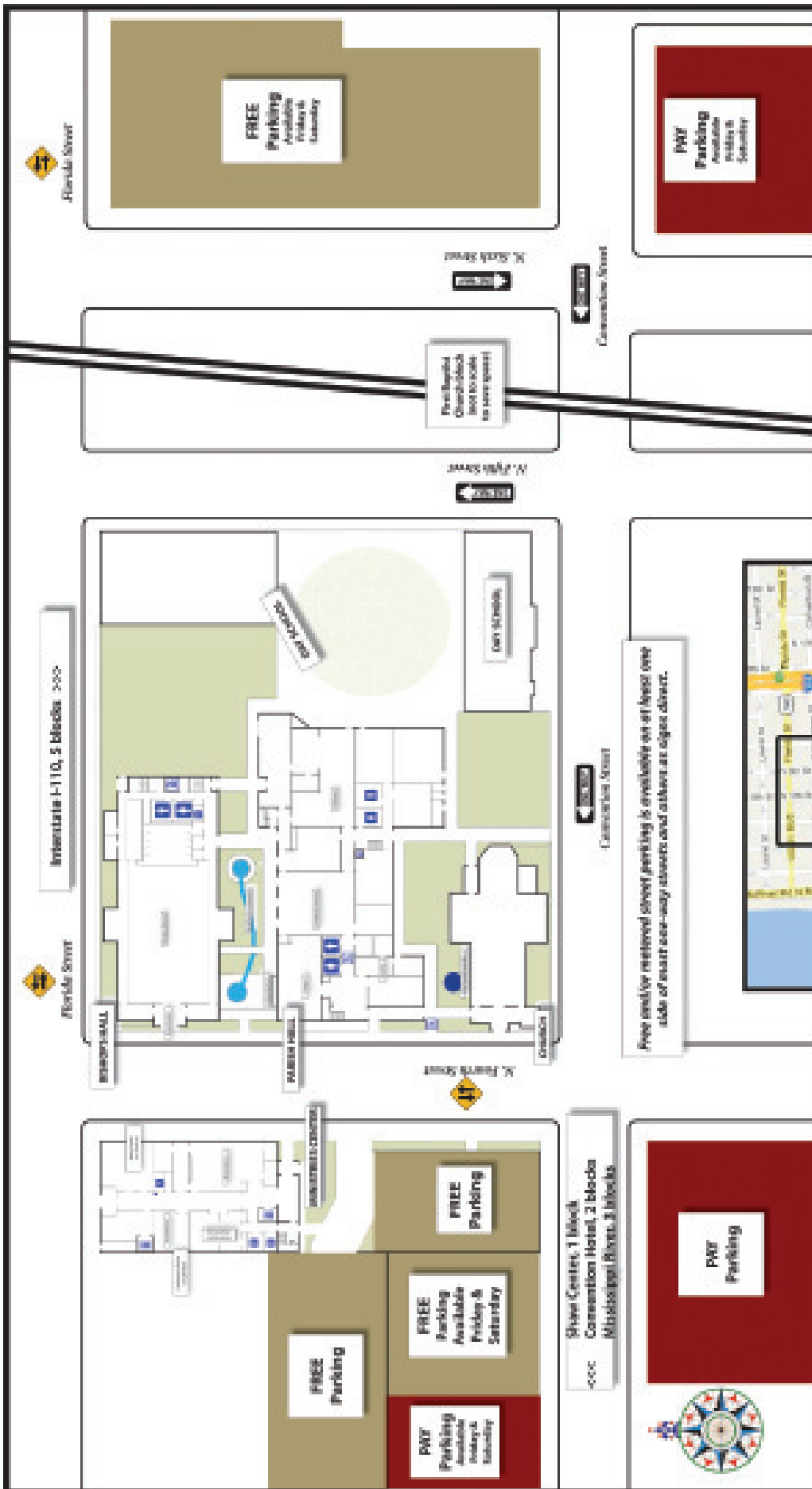
SATURDAY, MARCH 3

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 7:30 AM | Registration Begins |
| 7:45 AM | Open Hearings |
| 9 AM | The Holy Eucharist |
| 10:20 AM | Reconvene <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prayers• Runoff Balloting for Offices• Committee Reports• Treasurer's Report to move 2012 budget• Nominations for Approval by Convention• Noonday Prayers |
| 12:10 PM | Lunch |
| 1:15 PM | Reconvene <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee Reports (with voting as appropriate)• Invitation to the 176th Convention of the Diocese• Courtesy Resolutions• Adjourn |

This Order of Business is subject to change in the weeks before Convention.



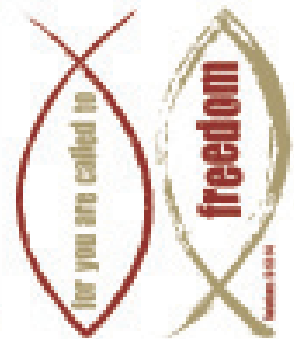
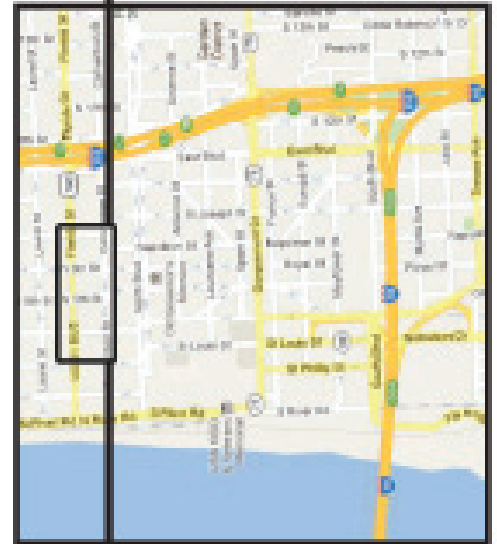
THE 175TH CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA



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EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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FOR THE RECORD



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Bishop's Journal: December through February 12th

December 1 - 2: Rebecca and I attended the Province IV Bishops and Administrators Conference in Memphis, TN. We discussed the new health and pension plan for clergy and church employees due to go into effect in 2013.

December 3: We drove to St. James Place in Baton Rouge from Memphis and stayed overnight.

December 4: Met with the adult Sunday School class at Church of the Holy Spirit, Baton Rouge for a Q & A session. Celebrated and preached at the 11 a.m. Holy Eucharist followed by a nice reception. We returned to New Orleans in the afternoon.

December 5: Enjoyed a day off.

December 6: Met with Billie Barbier, Manager of Financial Resources, for an update. Annual consultations with the Rev'd Michael Kuhn and afterwards with the Rev'd John Inerra. Met with Nell Bolton, Executive Director of ECSLA to discuss reconfiguration of the 2nd floor offices of the Noland Center. Annual Consultation with the Venerable Priscilla Maumus, Archdeacon. Drove to Slidell and officiated at the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev'd Harry Jenkins.

December 7: Met with Amelia Arthur for updates and guidance for Youth and Young Adult ministry. Weekly staff meeting. Afterwards, I fell ill on the drive to Baton Rouge and had to reschedule afternoon appointments. Rested and stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

December 8: Diocesan Convention planning meeting, followed by an interview with the Baton Rouge Advocate about CCDP. Working lunch with Canon Mark Stevenson. Afternoon discussion with Deacon Mark Hudson and Mr. Bob Lobos about Stephen Ministry. Met with Partners in Mission about future mission work in Honduras. Officiated at the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev'd Patrick Edwards at Trinity Baton Rouge.

December 9: Writing day — worked on a sermon and got a haircut.

December 10: Drove to Loranger for the Solomon

Episcopal Conference Center's Board meeting in the morning. Drove to Baton Rouge and attended the Kids Orchestra in DuPlantier Auditorium at St. James Place. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

December 11: Met with confirmands, then celebrated, preached, received and confirmed at Trinity, Baton Rouge. Gracious hospitality and very nice reception. Drove back to New Orleans for a beautiful Lessons and Carols at Christ Church Cathedral.

December 12: Enjoyed a day off. Telephone conversation with Bruce Nolan of the Times Picayune about the suspension of services at Grace Church, New Orleans.

December 13: Met with the leadership of Christ Church, Covington, followed by a conference call with Cove Geary, Chancellor, and Canon Mark Stevenson about the closing of Grace Church, New Orleans. Treated my staff to a Christmas luncheon at Galatoire's. Later, traveled to Franklin and officiated at the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev'd Dr. Cal Lane.

December 14: Weekly update meeting with Amelia Arthur. Met with the Revd's Tom Blackmon, A. J. Heine, Fred Devall and lay leaders to plan the diocesan Vestry training to be held on January 21, 2012 at St. Martin's in Metairie. Pastoral meeting with the Rev'd Susan Gaudmer. Met with a former Roman Catholic priest to discuss reception as a priest in the Episcopal Church. In the evening, met with the diocesan Executive Committee.

December 15: Worked on sermons in the morning. Met with Archdeacon Priscilla Maumus on Deacons Council matters. Met with ECSLA leaders and members of my staff to discuss financial matters. Followup meeting with Deacon Charmaine Kathmann.

December 16: Writing day.

December 17: Ordained Joseph Wallace and Alina Williams to the transitional diaconate at Christ Church Cathedral, followed by a fine reception. Joined Amelia Arthur and diocesan youth for Bishop's Bowl event at Rock N Bowl in New Orleans. We had a great time!

December 18: Celebrated Holy Eucharist in honor of the Rev'd Dan Krutz's 40th Anniversary to the Priesthood, renewed a couple's 40th wedding anniversary vows, baptized and confirmed at St. Francis Church, Denham Springs.

December 19: Drove to Jackson, MS for the funeral of Mrs. Ruthie Gray, wife of resigned Bishop Duncan Gray, Jr., mother of Bishop Duncan Gray III, and grandmother of the Rev'd Peter Gray of our diocese.

December 20: Drove to Baton Rouge and met with the Rev'd Robyn McCulloch-Bade, a Lutheran pastor, to discuss a partnership with our diocese. Returned to New Orleans in the afternoon and met with transitional deacon, Joe Wallace, over coffee.

December 21: Pastoral meetings with the Rev'ds Ed Robertson and Mary Koppel in the morning. Worked on a sermon for Christmas.

December 22: Breakfast at Loyola with community leaders. Officiated at funeral service for the Rev'd Frank Faust at All Saint's River Ridge. The diocesan office closed at noon for Christmas holidays.

December 23: Diocesan offices closed.

December 24: Preached at the Cathedral at 5 pm and preached and celebrated again at 9 pm.

December 25: Christmas Day – No visitation today. Spent the day with my family.

December 26: Diocesan offices closed.

December 27-29: Vacation time with my family.

December 30: Diocesan offices closed.

December 31: New Year's Eve. No meetings.

January 1: No visitation. Witnessed the baptism of Joseph Gray, son of the Rev'ds Giulianna and Peter Gray, baptized by the Rt. Rev'd Duncan Gray, III at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. A wonderful luncheon followed.

January 2: Office closed. Watched too much football.

January 3: Early morning breakfast with Fr. Tom Black-

mon in Covington. Drove to Hammond where I met with seminarian Kit Sharp. Later had lunch with the Rev'd Paul Bailey. Drove to Baton Rouge and stopped by the office for a brief moment and then traveled on to Angola Prison where I confirmed six people. Angola is one of the highlights of my ministry.

January 4: First staff meeting of the new year in the morning followed by a meeting with Mrs. Fay Atkinson and ECW regarding UTO Grant. Lunch with Bishop Stacy Sauls who was in town to meet with our deputation for General Convention. Fr. Ernie Saik's annual visit later that day followed by a meeting with an aspirant to the priesthood. The day ended with a lovely evening at the home of Canon Mark and Joy Stevenson. They provided wonderful hospitality to the deputation and Bishop Sauls.

January 5: Met with the Rev'd Jerry Phillips for his annual meeting then drove home to New Orleans for several meetings. That evening held the service of suspension at Grace Church. Many tender stories were told during the service.

January 6 - 7: Rebecca and I drove to Birmingham, Alabama for the Investiture service of their new diocesan bishop, the Rt. Rev'd Kee Slone. He is a fine person.

January 8: Preached, celebrated, baptized, and received at St. George's Church in New Orleans followed by a lively reception. Children were running all over the place. Nice to see such joy.

January 9: Vestry Retreat planning lunch followed by a disappointing BCS bowl game.

January 10: Began the day with a meeting with Amelia Arthur regarding Sr. Rally followed by the annual meeting with Deacon Dick Almos. Lunch with a group of clergy at Advent House followed by a meeting with a chaplain intern at East Jefferson Hospital. Drove to Baton Rouge.

January 11: Took my car into the shop. Something about a cam shaft? Staff meeting and then lunch with Canon Stevenson to go over some items. Annual meeting with Canon Chad Jones, then Deacon Cindy Obier. Later that evening had nice dinner with the new rector at Trinity, Baton Rouge, Fr. Kevin Kelly.

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

January 12: Early breakfast meeting with Fr. Chuck Wood and then assisted at the funeral of Bishop Pope. Lunch with Deacon Mark Hudson and then drove back to New Orleans for the Deacons Council meeting.

January 13: Caught up on paper work and sermon preparation.

January 14: Executive Board meeting in the morning. Drove to Baton Rouge that afternoon. Watched the heartbreaking loss of the Saints.

January 15: Drove to Grace, St. Francisville where I preached, celebrated and confirmed 12. A wonderful luncheon followed where I got to catch up with Bishop Jenkins. Had an afternoon meeting with those who are interested in traveling to the Holy Land with Rebecca and me in October 2012. The trip is being planned by the Dean of the Cathedral.

January 16: Day off to remember the life and gift of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

January 17: Early breakfast with community leaders at Loyola University.

January 18: Breakfast meeting at Still Perkin' then on to the office for weekly staff meeting. Met with Harriet Murrell to discuss restructuring plans for School for Ministry. Later, met with Deacon Lydia Hopkins for her annual consultation. Archbishop Gregory Aymond and I co-officiated for the annual Prayer for Christian Unity Service at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. The Very Rev'd Susan Gaumer delivered a wonderful sermon.

January 19: Caught up on correspondence and met with Agatha for scheduling work. Met by video conference with leaders of the Clergy and Congregational Development Program (CCDP) for a review. Later, Sister Jane Remson of Loyola University and I met to discuss a project about climate change for which she is seeking my endorsement. Pastoral meeting in late afternoon, followed by a meeting with the Racial Reconciliation committee.

January 20: Caught up on paperwork and sermon preparation.

January 21: Fantastic and unanticipated turnout of two

hundred participants for the diocesan Vestry Training at St. Martin's School. Drove to Baton Rouge later and stayed overnight.

January 22: St. Michael and All Angels Church invited St. Augustine's Church for a joint celebration where I was the preacher and celebrant. A special blessing for Adolf Byrd's 90th birthday that day. Enjoyed a fine reception. Later, drove to Chatawa, MS to visit Sister Ruth, my spiritual director.

January 23-25: Personal retreat in Chatawa, MS. Drove home on Wednesday afternoon. Celebrated at Trinity Church, New Orleans, followed by community supper and conversation.

January 26: Met with the Rev'd Dr. Cal Lane for his annual consultation. Brief updates from Amelia Arthur about Youth and Young Adult Ministries. Annual consultation with Deacon Alyce Jefferson. Afternoon meeting with ECSLA staff to discuss Asset Mapping.

January 27: Early morning drive across the lake to Chapel at Christ Episcopal School in Covington. Breakfast with CES Board of Trustees at Christwood Retirement Center, followed by a brief interview with the school news team and a chat with the students.

January 28: No meetings today. Spent quality time with Rebecca.

January 29: Led adult Bible study, then celebrated, preached and confirmed at Mount Olivet Church, New Orleans. Lovely reception.

January 30: Enjoyed a day off.

January 31: Met with Duane Nettles to discuss his journey toward ordination. Enjoyed a Jamaican lunch with Bishop Joe Doss, his son, and Sophie Cull, a visitor from Australia, who is working on a project against the death penalty in Louisiana. Afternoon meeting with Canon Stevenson and Harriet Murrell about the proper care and archival storage of items from Grace Church, New Orleans. Met the Rev'd Jim Burns at Armstrong airport and we drove to the conference center to begin Clergy Silent Retreat.

February 1 - 2: Clergy Silent Retreat at Solomon Epis-

copal Conference Center, facilitated by the Rev'd Jim Burns. Rebecca and I hosted and dined with Fr. Burns on his final evening in New Orleans.

February 3: Laurie Bailey, Director of Christian Formation, Christ Church Cathedral, invited me to join with the NAECED Conference of Christian Educators for lunch at Hilton Doubletree Hotel in New Orleans. Later, I worked on sermon preparation. Rebecca and I had dinner with Deacon and Mrs. Daniel "Mark" Hudson and two participants of NAECED.

February 4: Drove to the conference center and spoke at Happening. Quiet evening at home with Rebecca.

February 5: Celebrated, preached, baptized, confirmed and received at St. Andrew's Church, New Orleans. There were also two confirmands from Grace, St. Francisville. Very nice reception in Chalstrom House. Met for coffee with the Rev'd Angela Ifill, Missioner for the Office of Black Ministries, Episcopal Church Center. Later, watched the Super Bowl.

February 6: Enjoyed a day off.

February 7-10: Canon Stevenson and I traveled to Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC, and to Nashota House, Nashotah, Wisconsin, to meet with graduating seniors for prospective placement in our diocese.

February 11: Drove to the conference center for a meeting of the SECC Board. Drove to Baton Rouge and stayed overnight.

February 12: Celebrated, preached, confirmed and received at Church of the Holy Communion, Plaquemine. Delicious lunch with John and Karen Gay and members of the vestry.



The Bishop's Visitation Schedule



- **3/11:** St. Patrick's, Zachary
- **3/25:** All Souls, New Orleans
- **3/25:** All Souls, New Orleans
- **4/1:** Church of the Holy Spirit, Baton Rouge
- **4/2:** Chrism Mass & Renewal of Vows, Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans
- **4/7:** St. Martin's School, Metairie
- **4/8:** Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans
- **4/15, AM:** St. Alban's, Baton Rouge
- **4/15, PM:** Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans
- **4/27:** Trinity School, New Orleans
- **4/29:** St. Luke's, Baton Rouge
- **5/6:** St. James, Baton Rouge
- **5/13:** Trinity Church, New Orleans
- **5/16:** St. Luke's School, Baton Rouge
- **5/20:** St. Martin's Church, Metairie
- **6/3:** Community of Deacons, SECC
- **6/10:** St. Paul's, New Orleans

It Is Time for Change, Starting at the Top



By Harriet Murrell, Director of School for Ministry and Diocesan Archivist

The Religious News Service, in a recent article about reforms being sought by several mainline Protestant Churches quoted the Rt. Rev'd Stacey Sauls, the new chief operating officer of The Episcopal Church, as saying that the model for the structure for the Episcopal headquarters does not serve the times in which we live. His

primary argument for the urgency of examining structures is the declining numbers in Episcopal Church membership. Episcopal membership in the United States is below two million people for the first time in decades with a concurrent decline in financial support. A majority of churches nationally have 200 or fewer members. This figure describes the Diocese of Louisiana as well. Sauls is proposing that a special commission be appointed at the General Convention meeting in Indianapolis in July, 2012 to study restructuring the denomination's 75 committees, agencies and boards that are responsible for the financial and program management of the church.

On January third of this year, Bishop Sauls met with the complete Louisiana deputation to General Convention to present his concerns about the way the church leaders has created a "Byzantine hierarchy" distancing itself from the members in

the congregation, many of whom want to give of themselves and their financial resources to serve a vibrant, relevant church centered in Christ. In a message to members of the House of Bishops, Bishop Sauls stressed God's mission and our participation in it. He stated that "churches that turn outward will not only live but thrive". It was his hope that dioceses meeting in the winter and spring would become familiar with his proposal so that they could send their deputations to Indianapolis prepared for well informed discussion and a vote on the proposal. Bishop Sauls knows that his proposal does not have unanimous support at the Church Center.

Bishop Sauls' schedule will not permit him to attend the diocesan convention but Dr. Dwight Zscheile, has accepted Bishop Thompson's invitation to be our special guest at the Baton Rouge meeting in March when the Sauls resolution will be discussed and acted upon. Because of the scope of the plan, Bishop Thompson is recommending that congregational delegations to the Baton Rouge convention allow time in their pre-convention meetings to talk about the details of the proposal that has been filed for consideration. The Very Rev'd. Ken Ritter and Mr. John Musser have filed the resolution on behalf of the Louisiana Deputation to the General Convention.

St. Andrew's Boasts Rich History

By Carol Ann Blitzer, reprinted with permission of The Advocate

After a journey of five years, Camille Carpenter Wood, a recently ordained Episcopal deacon, is settled in as the pastoral presence at the 160-year-old congregation of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Wood, who was ordained Dec. 4, 2010, has been serving St. Andrew's since the first Sunday in September.

"I feel at home now. Everyone was so welcoming and gracious," she said. "I love to be the first person here in the quiet of the morning. It's so peaceful here."

Clinton has a history with the Episcopal church that dates to 1842 when services were first held under the leadership of the Rev'd William B. Lacey, president of the College of Louisiana at Jackson. After he founded the Southern Institute for Young Ladies in 1844, he continued his ministry in Jackson and occasionally in Clinton.

The parish was officially organized in 1852. That same year, the Rev'd Frederick Dean, the church's first resident priest, began holding services in the East Feliciana Parish Courthouse in Clinton.

After Dean's death in 1854, services were held infrequently depending on whether or not the church had a rector.

An *Advocate* article for June 25, 1967, commemorating the 125th anniversary of the Episcopal presence in Clinton, describes "one of the most active weekends" in the church's history beginning Jan. 15, 1868. The article describes a two-day visit by the Right Rev'd Joseph Pere Bell Wilmer.

The first day began with the baptism of five adults and continued with services to a "large and appreciative congregation."

The following day, the bishop met with a confirmation class, baptized several infants, read morning prayer, preached a sermon, baptized several adults, confirmed 15 people, celebrated communion, presided at a vestry meeting, instructed a second confirmation class, read an evening prayer, baptized more adults, preached and confirmed 10 more people, solemnized a wedding, performed another baptism, held a confirmation service and delivered a parting address to the congregation.



[photo courtesy of
R.D. Vernon]

**Episcopal church
services were held
in Clinton starting in
1842.**

**St. Andrew's was
officially started in
1852.**

In the farewell, the bishop said, "It almost breaks one's heart to turn away from a people so eager for instruction, and feel yourself powerless to send them relief."

In 1870, the rector, the Rev'd A.G. Bakewell, began holding regular services in the Presbyterian church. The following year, the present church building, was constructed with money and on land bequeathed by Eliza Rhea Hardesty, a Baptist, in memory of her husband, Lee, an Episcopalian.

The building is in the style of architecture known as American Carpenter Gothic, a popular form for rural churches throughout the country during the middle decades of the 19th century.

A Presbyterian donated the church organ, which accompanied a choir made up of lead singers who were Jewish.

Mildred P. Worrell, in a history of the church presented at services Nov. 29, 1992, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first Episcopal services in Clinton, said that Bill Hobgood donated the altar and stained glass in the early part of the 20th century to replace windows that were blown out in a hurricane.

"Some of the original windows were likely donated by Jewish members of the congregation," Worrell said.

In recent years, deacons such as Wood have served the church to provide a pastoral presence when no rector has been available.

"The bishop did not send me here to take on the role of a priest," Wood said.

Two retired priests, the Rev'd Maggie Dennis, who is originally from Liberia, and the Rev'd Don Brown, conduct services at St. Andrew's three Sundays a month.

One Sunday a month, Wood leads morning prayer the way services were done at Trinity Episcopal Church, in Natchez, Miss., where Wood grew up.

"I grew up having morning prayer three times a month and Eucharist once a month," she said. "We have morning prayer with hymns and sing canticles (songs taken from Biblical passages), and I give a homily. There is just no Eucharist because a deacon cannot consecrate the bread and wine.

The priests are the celebrants because the Eucharist is the celebration."

In her presentation, Worrell recalled some of the early members of the St. Andrew's. She spoke of the "ordinary people of ordinary means and talents, (who) gave extraordinarily of those means and talents in the worship of God in this place."

She spoke of how "they got up early and came to stoke the stove or taught squirming children how to behave in church and what the words in the prayer book mean. . . . They polished and cleaned, and they knelt and prayed," said Worrell, who praised the congregation because it has "held on" unlike some similar churches in small communities.

As Christ Loved Us

by H. Peter Kang

People often are surprised when I tell them that some of the best Christians I know are serving life sentences in a maximum security prison. The idea doesn't fit well with the way we typically imagine the so-called "worst of the worst." I say "we" because, like most people, before I actually met them, my basic assumptions about inmates and prison life were shaped by what I saw in the media. One of the things I love about Christianity is the way God flips popular assumptions on their head. Our king of kings is a suffering servant, our good shepherd is the lamb that is slain, and through the cross, a once shameful means of execution, we are given new and unending life. After participating in the worship and ministry at the Louisiana State Penitentiary for nearly two years, I can attest that a dark place of weeping and gnashing of teeth can be a sanctified space of thanksgiving and praise, and with God's help society's worst can become the church's best.

The facts about life in "Angola" (the colloquial name for the penitentiary left over from its former days as a slave plantation) can be staggering. Roughly 85% of the 5,200 men kept there are either serving life sentences or the practical equivalent in numerical years. That means, barring any unforeseeable changes, they will die in prison and they will never see home again. The vast majority of these men do not receive regular visits, many never use the phone, and an increasingly large percentage of them have lost all contact with their family and former friends. Often in these latter cases, when they die, there is no one to notify and no one who can be found outside the prison who might care. I know this because I've arranged their funerals.

Some may point to the fact that many of these men have committed horrible acts which can never be undone and thus conclude that they do not deserve compassion - and those people would be right. I would never claim that these men deserve our love. I actually think everyone at Angola deserves to die. The Bible clearly tells us that "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Of course, the "good news" of the gospel is that God has not given us what we deserve. Indeed, the message Christians proclaim is that while we still were sinners and his enemies, God showed his love for us by reconciling us to himself through the death of his Son (Romans 5: 8 and 10). We also say that we should "be imitators of God" and "walk in love, as Christ loved us" (Ephesians 5:1-2) and that, put simply, is the mission of the

Episcopal Church at Angola.

It is amazing what love can do. As my friend Charles put it, "love is the most powerful force in the universe. You know how I know? Because 'God is love.'" Another of my friends at Angola, Carolina, readily admits that he has never deserved to be loved. He is also proud to be a living testimony to the power of God's freely given love to change lives. "I had never felt love before. The only two emotions I had ever experienced were hate and indifference. I was introverted and anti-social." Things changed for Carolina during a Kairos retreat at Angola when, as he told me, he met Jesus for the first time. "Jesus introduced me to love and the Episcopal Church has helped sustain that."



When asked what they see in the Episcopal Church or what its ministry means to them, "love" was the constant refrain in the responses of Episcopalians at Angola. "I was drawn by the closeness of the fellowship," said my friend Steve, "it had a family oriented feeling. I met people like Charlie, Miller, Mary Ann, Audis, Jenny, Carolyn, Cindy...there are so many, and I could see the love of Christ in them." Likewise, my friend Oliver told me, "I see that the Episcopalians actually care." He then shared a story with me about how Deacon Mike Hackett visited his mother in the hospital. "That act of kindness changed my life," he said, "I got close to God because God got close to me."

As the authors of the book *Listening Hearts* explain, genuine

ministry is never unilateral. It is “something Christ does in us and through us and that we do in and through Christ” and “involves both giving and receiving.” Indeed, as the prayer attributed to St. Francis in our prayer book suggests, “it is in giving that we receive.” Like many others, now long-time volunteer Audis Thornton recalled that he was initially very hesitant to come to Angola, but “my reluctance soon changed to enthusiasm for the ministry and inmates at Angola.” “I have gone there to minister to these guys who are incarcerated,” he said, “but it is I who have been, without fail, ministered to on every visit.” Similarly, Father Miller Armstrong, who is fondly remembered by Episcopal community at Angola, wrote: “I have known the truth of Jesus’ words ‘When you have fed the hungry, given drink to the thirsty...visited the sick and the prisoner, you have done it to me.’ But in actually going into Angola, I have experienced a reality of that saying. For I have encountered Jesus again and again in the men that I have met and continue to meet there.” Beautifully illustrating the reciprocal nature of genuine ministry, Steve shared a story about a time when he was moved to a different prison camp, losing his job in the process along with his enrollment in the college courses had been taking. “I was in a bad place at that point in my life. I had become really depressed. Miller and Audis came to see me. They cared about me as a person — that is what got me out of it.”

The aptly named Church of the Transfiguration at Angola is comprised of more than 80 confirmed Episcopalians who are regularly joined by 20-30 “outmate” volunteers from around the Diocese of Louisiana. Most of these volunteers have no seminary training or formal theological education. They are lay church members who come to participate in our monthly services much like they would in their home parishes. This aspect of lay participation is what drew my friend Kerry to the Episcopal Church. As he explained, “it is not just one minister or priest coming in to conduct a service. These are normal people. They talk about normal things. They are not here to preach at you. They are here to worship with you. They care about you as a person. They want to know who you are and they listen to what you say.” We may not see why this would be so meaningful and important to the men at Angola unless we remember the facts about prison life I mentioned above. As Kerry explained, “just their sheer presence” shows the men that “the world has not disposed of them completely.” People like Lou and Stella Sanson, he said, make the difference. “Despite Lou’s health issues, they keep coming. Why? You look at Lou’s face light up when he sees you and you know it’s your friend — it matters when they see you.”

In addition to our monthly services, the Episcopal Church sponsors a Disciples of Christ in Community program at Angola. When it began in 2002, it was the first DOCC program ever conducted in a prison. The program is now facilitated by Deacon Cindy Obier, Audis Thornton, and most recently Father William Barnwell (who wrote the materials they are us-

ing). Many participants in the DOCC program, like my friend Kyle, echo the sentiments expressed by the men who regularly attend our worship services. Though he self-identifies as Baptist, Kyle has been attending the DOCC classes for nearly 2 years. “Denomination has never been an issue,” he said, “Despite our theological differences they accepted me with open arms and an open heart.” Paraphrasing John 13:35, Kyle told me “‘you shall know them by their love for one another’ and I’ve never met more loving people in my life.” Then he reflected, “I’ve never felt more comfortable in a group setting, even with other Christians.”

With the generous assistance of Grace Church in Saint Francisville, David and Deborah Ford came from England to lead an intensive seminar with a small group of men at Angola. David is the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, director of the Cambridge Interfaith Program, and author of several highly praised works of theology. Deborah, a priest in the Church of England, has an accomplished background in clinical chaplaincy and spiritual direction. During four full days of discussion at Angola, they led seminar participants through a broad field of issues. Drawing on theological reflections by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, both of the Fords, Peter Ochs, and Dan Hardy, the poetry of Michael O’Siadhail and selected passages of scripture, the group discussed an array of topics ranging from death and dying, basic human existence, life in community, personal vocation, Christian wisdom, the concept of belonging, the “cries” of the world, and even the nature of time.

After the seminar, both of the Fords later reported that they were deeply affected by the experience. “Profound is the word I’ve been using to describe it,” Deborah told me. Comparing this seminar to ones found at Cambridge, David said that it had “the same sense of being able to have really good discussion of texts with people really sharing their thoughts about them.” What most surprised him, however, was “the maturity of faith with the group.” “They were very different, they had differences among themselves, but each of them, I felt, had a tested faith, a faith that had been through things. They got to different places, but it was a mature faith.” Deborah was similarly impressed by the faith of the men she met at Angola. “What I feel has happened these last few days,” she said, “is that I’ve been given the real thing. It will go away with me as a standard to measure my own life by. I feel as if I’ve been given a much more intimate way, a personal way, a standard for living a life that’s to be tested, with a sense of ‘if you can do this, I can live my life without so much lamenting.’”

continued on next page



In our society, there seems to be a common tendency to view people in prison from the perspective of presumed superiority. The labels we use to identify them don't help: "convict," "inmate," and the newest politically correct term — "offender" all reinforce the assumption that there is something perpetually wrong with the person it identifies. And because they are in prison and we are not, it is easy to think that "prisoners" must be worse than us in some way. They must be less moral, or less spiritual, or less intelligent, or at least less well educated. Why else would they be in prison? Even well-meaning Christians who visit prison can easily slip into a patronizing perspective of those they have come to "minister to." I think that is why, almost unanimously, all the men who are part of the Episcopal Church at Angola say that one of the things they value most about our ministry is that the volunteers "care about me as a person." As Kerry put it, when you create a relationship like that, "you become another brother or sister in the body of Christ instead of just another prisoner and a free person." That is the transformation that occurs at the Church of the Transfiguration. People from inside and outside of prison come together as one body in Christ and find that "in his flesh he has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (Ephesians 2:14). As I said before, God has a way of turning popular assumptions upside down. Now, when I see these men deemed offensive by society, I don't see an inmate, prisoner, or offender, I see "my friend."

My friends are not perfect. Many of them need a lot of help. Of course, this is true of those living outside and inside of prison. What friends do is help each other. And members of the body of Christ work for mutual up building and exist for the benefit of one another. "The members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this" (1 Corinthians 12:22-24). The reason "God has so arranged the body," Saint Paul tells us, is so that "members may have the same care for one another" (1 Corinthians 12:25). Neither the men at Angola nor the volunteers who visit them are angels. They are human beings with human flaws who simply care for one another as persons. Yet, when we show care for the "least of these" by not viewing and treating them as "the least," but as a human being and an indispensable member of the body of Christ, Christ does something in us and through us, such that the members of his body mutually report seeing his love in each other.

If this sounds like something you need to see for yourself, please contact one of our ministry coordinators or visit www.peli-transfiguration.org for more information. We need more volunteers and support from the wider body of Christ to continue what we're doing. Please prayerfully consider if God is calling you to be a part of this ministry. Love can do amazing things; and with God's help, when we treat "the worst" the best, that is what we both become.

Parish Hall Honors the Rev'd Meade

By Valeria Emmett, Senior Warden of Mt. Olivet

At their annual meeting on January 22nd, the vestry and congregation of Mount Olivet Church voted to name their new parish hall Meade Hall. This is in honor of their rector of eight and a half years, the Very Rev'd Dr. Jean McCurdy Meade, in recognition of her tireless efforts and support to get the new hall built, along with her continuing leadership of the parish and their community outreach programs. On Sunday, January 29th, during his annual visitation, the Rt. Rev'd Morris Thompson was honored in the newly named hall.

Outgoing Senior Warden Marty Stroble, in making the proposal, said, "Pastor Jean has done SO much work for our little congregation, especially regarding this hall, that it is only right it be named after her." Dr. Meade, in thanking the congregation for this honor, observed, tongue in cheek, that, "One concern I have is not wanting to attract Grendel by saying we have a mead hall." We trust all the prayers offered there for more than 150 years will suffice.

The beautiful hall, which was completed a year ago, was designed as a twin to the 1854 original church building and incorporates seventeen stained glass windows from the demolished 1894 Mount Olivet church which stood on the site until 1962. It also uses the solid oak doors from that building and thus is an excellent example of adaptive re-use of historic materials in new construction. The church and the parish hall are joined by an enclosed garden between them.

Meade Hall is available for rent to community groups and/or private parties when it is not in use for the parish. Anyone wishing to find out rental rates and availability should call John Picou (interim contact person) at 225.226.5899 or by email at hectorion@yahoo.com.



Men's Retreat with the Bishop

A men's retreat, organized by the Men's Group of Christ Church, Covington will be held at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center April 20th through 22nd. Bishop Thompson will serve as spiritual director and speaker of the retreat. The theme of the weekend is Living the Promise of Abundant Life.

The retreat is open to all adult men ages 18 and above. Early registration is encouraged. The retreat will start with dinner on Friday evening and conclude with a Eucharist service on Sunday morning. Saturday night will feature a Louisiana cookout sponsored by the Men of Christ Church Covington. Bishop Thompson will deliver a series of teachings and meditations and will provide significant free time to pray, study and enjoy the surroundings.

"Our goal is to include men from every Deanery in the Diocese, to reach over parish lines, strengthen relationships, make new friends in Christ, and broaden our common vision for advancing our mission", organizers said.

The cost is \$190 per person (single occupancy) or \$150 for a shared room. The cost covers 2 nights and 4 meals. There is a \$60 minimum deposit required with each registration. Visit solomoncenter.org to register.



WHERE THERE IS NO GUIDANCE, THE PEOPLE FALL,
BUT IN AN ABUNDANCE OF COUNSELORS
THERE IS VICTORY.

Proverbs 11:14

Church of the Holy Spirit, Baton Rouge To Celebrate 26th Anniversary

By the Rev'd Ernie Saik, Rector of Holy Spirit

On Palm Sunday, April 1, Church of the Holy Spirit will host an old fashioned homecoming to celebrate its 26th year in the Diocese of Louisiana.

We wish to invite the Diocesan family and the many people who helped to form the Church of the Holy Spirit from 1986 to now, to the celebration at Our Father's Garden located at 14344 South Harrell's Ferry Road in Baton Rouge. Bishop Morris K. Thompson will be the celebrant and preacher.

A major emphasis at Church of the Holy Spirit has been and continues to be the call to ministry to the community. Our Father's Garden, where the church office is located, sits on 4 acres of beautiful property that has 10 raised beds for growing vegetables that are given to Southeast Ministry, an interdenominational coalition of local churches that provides food and financial assistance to people in crisis. The garden also serves as the site of community service projects for schools, the scouting program, and the Youth Challenge Program.

Our Father's Garden is also a place for prayer and solitude. The Meditation Garden, with its outdoor Stations of the Cross, has many varieties of azaleas, camellias, and other flowers. The Chapel of the Cross, a small chapel with seating for about 15, is located on the back part of the property. The Mary Magdalene Garden provides another meditation area with many different blooming flowers.

Another major ministry is outreach to Louisiana prisons through Kairos. The first Kairos team to work at the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women was led by a member of Church of the Holy Spirit. We are also dedicated to work in the Kairos ministry at Angola.

We worship at the Chapel on the campus of Episcopal High School offering a 9 am Traditional Eucharist, 10 am Christian Education for children and adults, and an 11 am Contemporary Eucharist.

Please feel free to come to Our Father's Garden anytime and enjoy the beauty and holiness of this very special place.



The Rev'd Crafton Speaks at St. Martin's

By Susan Bergeron, St. Martin's, Metairie



Saturday, January 14, the Rev'd Barbara Crafton held a seminar at St. Martin's, Metairie. The day was immensely successful with 82 people in attendance. They came from parishes all over the Diocese of Louisiana,

some from Mississippi and some from other local churches.

In Rev'd Crafton's seminar she offered encouragement for the long haul in life. She gave us the tools we need to get through the bad times and how to strengthen our spiritual-

ity in the good times. The biggest tool she offered me was "building a strong spiritual life while we are healthy, strong, and happy, so that we have it when times are bad."

She also said that we are "created to be a part of God and made of energy that is God."

Other people took away different things from the seminar. One person felt Rev'd Crafton was talking to only her and loved the "intimate way she spoke while sitting in the chair — as if she was in my living room."

Someone else said, "Everything she said rang true and when it was over you couldn't help but have a smile on your face." Others took away that "Prayer is a gift. Ask God for it."

Fr. Fred Devall, St. Martin's Rector, said that those in attendance left with "that look of deep contentment, a peace, even, that indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit."

Gifts Given To Us

Mary Anne Reidy, Christ Church Covington

Over 750 gifts were distributed in our community this year thanks to the joint effort of Christ Episcopal School and Christ Church, Covington. In addition to our established connection with the Caritas program in Covington, we spoke with school guidance counselors and principals who proved to be a valuable resource for connecting with homeless children in Covington. Many people from the church, from area schools, and from the business community came together to create this special gift giving process.

As the need grew, so did the grace. One Christ Episcopal School parent called to say he couldn't think of so many children without gifts for Christmas and sent a large donation. Another parent, Kristin, asked her friends to bring children's pajamas to her Christmas party and donated over 50 PJs! Mary Kay, Amy, and I negotiated with local businesses who provided wrapped gifts at an amazing discount. Even in the last hours money was donated for shopping, gift bags seemed to arrive out of thin air, and our 4th graders, Alainah Grace, Paul, and Emery stayed after school to sort gifts. As another name was added to the list, so was another gift. We found a book for a child we knew loved to read; it happened to address loss. After the purchase, we discovered this was his first Christmas without his mother who had died of cancer. God continued to open doors and lead us in miraculous ways.

This process was gift for us as much as for the homeless children of Covington. Several volunteers had recently gone through difficult events in their own lives. A ministry like this can begin the process of tremendous healing for people in their journey. Our children got a glimpse of how different some schools in our community are and how other children live. This project has also opened many doors for future outreach projects, particularly for Kid-on-a-Mission (KOM) at Christ Church. Several community leaders and Guidance Counselors would like to join with us through KOM in future efforts.

Kids-on-a-Mission is to teach 1st through 5th graders how they can bring about change for a child in need. We also created the Sharing Gifts program for children ages 4 to 6. KOM has tripled in size practically overnight! Our hope is that we can develop children to reach out beyond their world, so that



they learn how to help others in need. As Janice Cohn states in her book *Raising Compassionate Children in a Violent World*, "Children who have the capacity to be empathic and caring towards others, and have the motivation and courage to stand up for what they believe is right, perform better socially, academically, and in their adult careers."

God has blessed us in opening doors for relationship. Our first KOM event of 2012 was led by a woman from the community, who had been a homeless child here, many years ago. She shared her story, and her gift of sewing, so that our children could create T-shirt pillows, drawstring bags, and blankets

for other children. With a lot of paint and joyous activity, they also created a work of art to be auctioned in our upcoming outreach fundraiser, Hands that Touch Hearts: Party with a Purpose.

We give our thanks to all that shared their time and their many blessings!



ECW Get Away Retreat

By Nancy Wolford

The retreat was originally conceived as one in which those interested in handwork could get together for a few days. As the planning evolved, however, the concept changed to one in which any of our church women and their friends were encouraged to attend to just “get away” for whatever reason.

The purpose of the retreat became a time for the participants to treat themselves-to do whatever they wanted with as little structure as possible. That is what thirty-two Episcopal Church Women and their friends did January 23 and 24 at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center.

The only scheduled events were the Eucharist, other chapel services and meal times. The Eucharist was celebrated on Monday morning by the Rev’d Paul Bailey of Grace Memorial. Special thanks to Fr. Bailey for his homily that reflected what was trying to be accomplished and set the tone for the retreat.

Over the course of the two days, there were spinning and weaving demonstrations, a beginner knitting class, a “Bane and Blessing” table (where projects and hand work items that were unfinished or not used could be picked up anyone), finished projects on display, instructions to share and door prizes to win. Needles, yarn, kits, scented soap and more were available. Ladies had time to read, journal, play bridge, knit, crochet, work on other projects, take a nap, take a walk or just sit and enjoy nature.

The real treat Monday evening was to sit by the fire in the Main Lodge and enjoy special refreshments, visit, work on projects and just plain relax. Tuesday morning was again free time. In the afternoon gathering to close the retreat, “The Women’s Prayer” was sung and cries of “so long until we meet again” were heard.

The response was so positive to this first Get Away Retreat that a second optional night is being added to the 2013 retreat which will be held January 13, 14 and 15 at the beautiful SECC.



Episcopal Cursillo Leader’s Workshop

by John King

On March 9th through the 11th, Cursillistas, Episcopalian and Lutheran, from both Louisiana dioceses and neighboring dioceses will gather at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center to worship, fellowship, and participate in the Episcopal Cursillo Leaders’ Workshop.

An ECLW is a regional Cursillo event conducted by the national team that focuses on deepening the commitment to Christ and living a life in Christ among the Cursillo leaders in the country. The staff will facilitate talks and discussions on the topics of worship, study, action and fellowship.

The purpose of the ECLW is fourfold:

- To deepen the commitment to Christ and the living of a life in Christ among the Cursillo leaders in the country.

- To clarify the purpose and method of the Cursillo movement as it seeks to work within the Episcopal Church to fulfill the Great Commandment — “love one another” — and the Great Commission — “Go. Make disciples of all nations”.

- To help grow new leaders for the Cursillo movement so that it may continue to be an effective instrument in the work of the Episcopal Church and the restoration of all things in Christ.

- To help diocesan Cursillo communities assess how they live out the Cursillo method and encourage them to explore how to do it more effectively.

If you or members of your parish have already attended a Cursillo three day weekend or a Lutheran Via De Cristo weekend and you feel called to develop and grow Cursillo ministry in your church this weekend is for you. All clergy and lay people from the Episcopal and Lutheran Church that have attended Cursillo are welcome to attend. The cost to attend this event is \$160 for double occupancy and \$205 for single occupancy.

To register for this event please visit solomoncenter.org.



Canon Mark Stevenson Named to ERD Board of Directors

By Faith Rowold, Episcopal Relief & Development

Episcopal Relief & Development is pleased to welcome five new members to its Board of Directors. The Rev'd Canon E. Mark Stevenson (Louisiana), Meredith A. Brown (Long Island), Lindsay Coates (Washington) and Judith Morrison (Washington) begin their terms effective January 1, 2012. The Rt. Rev. Stacy Sauls (Ex Officio) began his Board term in September 2011, upon the retirement of the former Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the Episcopal Church, Linda Watt.

"I am very pleased to welcome our new board members," said the Rt. Rev'd Robert J. O'Neill, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado and Chair of the Board of Episcopal Relief & Development. "They bring a variety of new perspectives and invaluable experience, which I believe will help shape Episcopal Relief & Development's strategic goals and key initiatives as we move forward into the next triennium."

The Rt. Rev'd Stacy Sauls is the COO of the Episcopal Church. His first career was in law, but he later attended and graduated from General Theological Seminary in New York and was ordained in 1989. He served three parishes in Georgia before being elected the Sixth Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington in 2000. Bishop Sauls is a past member of the Episcopal Church Executive Council and currently serves on a number of committees including the Standing Commission on World Mission and the Budgetary Funding Task Force.

The Rev'd Canon E. Mark Stevenson is the Canon to the Ordinary in the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. Since receiving his MDiv from Nashotah House Seminary, Wisconsin, in 2000, Stevenson has served two parishes – one in New Orleans and one in Florida. After Hurricane Katrina in 2006, Stevenson worked closely with the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana and other groups to establish effective relief ministries. He was instrumental in the creation of the organization that is now Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana.

Meredith A. Brown is a PhD candidate in Art History at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, where she has also been a Visiting Lecturer and Associate Scholar. She has experience in strategic planning and media relations, having worked as a consultant for art museums and cultural institutions across the United States. Brown is also engaged with next generation philanthropy and has been involved in



youth and young adult leadership in the Episcopal Church at the local, national and international levels.

Lindsay Coates is the Executive Vice President of InterAction, a Washington-based coalition of 192 non-governmental organizations (NGOs). She has led the coalition's work on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and she heads the Policy and Communications Team. Prior to her NGO work, Coates practiced civil rights law in various capacities. She earned her JD at the University of Mississippi School of Law after receiving her BA in Political Science with a focus on International Relations from Sewanee, the University of the South.

Judith Morrison is the Senior Advisor for the Gender and Diversity Unit at Inter-American Development Bank. Previously she had been a Regional Director at the Inter-American Foundation and Executive Director of the Inter-Agency Consultation on Race on Latin America (IAC). Morrison is a frequent presenter at international conferences and has published a number of articles and book chapters on equity and development. She holds an MCP degree in poverty alleviation and income distribution from MIT.

The four newly-elected Board members are invited to serve three-year terms, which may be renewed once.

"It will be a privilege to work with such a talented and diverse group of new board members," said Rob Radtke, President of Episcopal Relief & Development. "My excitement about the future is tempered with gratitude to our departing members, Steven Duff and Jill Oettinger, both of whom have made important contributions to the organization and those we seek to serve."

St. Luke's Grows Community Garden

by Laurie Adams



The Baton Rouge Garden Club donated two satsuma trees to the recently built community garden at St. Luke's Episcopal Day School. Arbor Day Chair, Merle Shannon, spoke with the Pre-K and 8th grade students about the significance of Arbor Day. Then members of the club assisted the students in planting the trees.

The St. Luke's Community Garden is the brain child of Pre-K teacher, Kathy Stenhouse. Mrs. Stenhouse and Pre-k teacher, Ann Giles, use Junior Master Gardener Curricula in their classrooms. St. Luke's students learn about growing plants from seeds and even tend their own playground gardens.

Mrs. Stenhouse wanted to enhance the opportunities her students had further. She envisioned a community garden where more students could participate in gardening, as could their parents, church members and anyone else in the community.

Mrs. Stenhouse's vision became reality last fall when donations paid for construction of 12 raised beds along the backside of the St. Luke's Middle School campus. Anyone can use a bed for only \$65 per year. Gardeners avoid chemicals and use organic dirt and compost. Some gardeners plant flowers while others grow fruits and vegetables.

"This is a joint venture between the school, church and community that will forge relationships between these groups and increase interest in organic gardening," Stenhouse said. And that is good for everyone.

Research shows that shared gardens stimulate social interaction and create opportunities for recreation, exercise and education, while providing nutritious food, reducing family food budgets and conserving resources.

Stenhouse says one of the most unique and valuable lessons we can give children is to teach them how to grow their own food.



Students at St. Luke's Episcopal Day School in Baton Rouge collected over 2,000 non-perishable food items as part of a "Soup"er Bowl Food Drive.

The drive was held for the week before the Super Bowl Game. Donated items were given to the Baton Rouge Area Food Bank and Southeast Ministries.

Vestry Training A Huge Success

by the Rev'd Fred Devall, Rector of St. Martin's

The inaugural Vestry Training Session took place on Saturday, January 21 at St. Martin's Episcopal School in Metairie. What started as a conversation and hopes for a gathering of fifty people turned into a full-blown event with two hundred in attendance!

After Fr. Tom Blackmon led us in opening prayers, Bishop Morris Thompson, Canon Mark Stevenson and I gave addresses that built on themes of Vestry as a spiritual body, building relationships, and varieties of ways to be a Vestry.

After a lunch break, there were six break-out sessions of 25 minutes each. The schedule allowed for each person to attend two of the six sessions, with hopes that each Vestry would be able to bring enough folks to cover all the bases and report back to the others of one's Vestry.

Breakout sessions included:

- "Beyond Breaking Even: The Spiritual Side of Church Finances", by Adelaide Diaz, a lay person from St. Martin's
- "Mom, Dad, Where Did I Come From? A Brief History of Our Church's Polity", by Fr. Tom Blackmon, Rector of Christ Church, Covington
- "Who's Running This Show?: A Brief Overview of Canon Law and Episcopal Polity", By Canon Mark Stevenson
- "Thy Will Be Done: Shifting from Business to Mission Model of Being a Vestry", by Choose Taurman, a lay person from Christ Church, Covington
- "A Vestry Person Does that Too?: Other Duties of Being on the Vestry" by Fr. A.J. Heine, Rector of St. Augustine's, Metairie.
- "Beware of Groupthink!: The Psychology of Group Decision Making", by Raul Esquivel, a lay person from St. Augustine's, Metairie.

The day concluded with closing remarks and prayers and each person took home a brief list of resources for Vestry Training, questions to be answered as a Vestry, and contact information to offer feedback on the day.

In summary, people were glad the topic had been raised, were appreciative of the content, and excited to hear that Vestry service is more than just balancing the books. In reality, the Vestry is the chief leadership body of the local church, and as such, its responsibilities include temporal and spiritual duties.

A steering committee will receive feedback and make plans for the Second Annual Vestry Training in 2013.



Reflections from Living With Purpose

By Cara Mills, Living With Purpose Fellow "11-"12, Patient Care Coordinator for St. Thomas Community Health Clinic

As a Living With Purpose (LWP) Fellow, I am spending the year working for St. Thomas Community Health Center. I was attracted to St Thomas as my site placement because I am interested in a future working in healthcare. I spent the last year with the ESC (Episcopal Service Corps, the national network of service programs that includes LWP) in Boston where I interned with a homeless ministry that offered day programs and services to individuals who were chronically without housing and resources. During my time in Boston I discovered a deep passion for working with people and a gift of patience and understanding. Many of my experiences and relationships in Boston led to me to pursue a master's degree in Nursing so that I could intertwine my passion for interpersonal relationships and healthcare with those in need. What St. Thomas stands for in the face of healthcare in this country inspired me to be a part of their mission. When I first spoke to Dr. Erwin, founder and CEO of St Thomas, he said to me, "People in this country are not dying from hypertension and diabetes; they are dying of racism and poverty." After my experiences Boston and here in New Orleans, I could not agree more.

I want to be a part of a movement in this country that offers healthcare, a basic human right, to each and every one of its citizens. I want to be a part of a movement that sets a high standard of healthcare for each and every one of those who need it regardless of economic status or race. St. Thomas, one of the first facilities in New Orleans to offer healthcare to residents post-Katrina, does not turn away anyone even if they have Medicaid or no health insurance at all. In the face of the tough economic climate, St. Thomas not only offers quality healthcare to its patients, but is expanding to a beautiful building staffed with the finest healthcare professionals. The staff at St. Thomas believes everyone deserves all that is beautiful in the world and will not stop until each individual who walks through the clinic's front door is taken care of.

Since I started at St Thomas my experience has been dynamic and diverse. The staff and I balance between where I am most needed in the clinic and where I hope to gain the most experience. Slowly I settled in to the position of "Patient Care Coordinator" for the clinic's breast screening services. I face many challenges in my work and am always expected to step-up to them. The staff at St Thomas welcomed me into a family-like setting while demanding great respect of the work that is done here. I continually find myself in roles I would have never thought I could do, but because Dr. Erwin and the rest of the staff have always had faith in me I am able to grow.

In my position I interact with patients, utilize my organizational skills, and participate in a very important project coordinating the care of patients who are at risk for breast cancer. I am always very busy and enjoy the constant liveliness of the clinic. I appreciate the exposure to registered nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians doing their daily tasks. This experience helps me understand what it technically means to be a nurse practitioner and all that is required. I am getting the chance to learn about the different specialties a nurse practitioner can have and possibility what I would like to do in the future.

God is very much in the work being done at St. Thomas and the way to justice that Jesus preached is lived out every day. I am very happy to be a part of it.



Frances Gaudet Scholarship Applications Now Available



Episcopal Community Services awards scholarships for the purpose of advancing the education of African American students through need-based partial scholarships to attend primary and secondary schools that offer rigorous curricula in preparation for entry to and completion of college. To learn more about the life and legacy of Blessed Frances Joseph-Gaudet or to download a scholarship application, go to ecsla.org/gaudet-fund. The deadline for submission of applications for the 2012/13 academic year is March 30, 2012.

Scholarship Guidelines:

- The Frances Gaudet funds are to be used solely for the education of Black African Americans.
- Gaudet Scholarships will be awarded to provide need-based partial scholarships to Black African American students. Priority will be given to students living within the Diocese of Louisiana attending Episcopal Schools.
- The Report of Family Contribution (School Report) from School and Student Service for Financial Aid or a report by ISM FAST and a contribution from the student's school, provided that said school awards need-based financial aid, are required for consideration of a Gaudet Scholarship award.
- Scholarships will be awarded to individual students. Funds will be disbursed to the school on behalf of the student.
- A student who is awarded a scholarship in a given year is eligible for awards in future years, provided that student fulfills the normal application guidelines each year.

“Spirit of Hope” in the Bayou Communities

For over half a century, St. Andrew's, Bayou du Large, has hosted an annual “Blessing of the Boats” to bid a safe season to the fishermen working in the waters off the Louisiana Gulf Coast. Just to the west in Franklin lies St. Mary's, another church with deep roots in the Louisiana fishing community.

When the BP oil spill occurred in 2010, the people of the fishing industry surrounding these churches were devastated and are still struggling today with the effects the oil spill had on Louisiana. This struggle will continue without any sort of direct assistance programs in place.

This past January, both churches opened their doors to ECSLA case managers to provide assistance to the people working in the fishing industry. The major focus is to help clients gain financial literacy. Other areas of focus include helping clients find ways to supplement their income in the off-season, obtain additional schooling, or even change their industry.

ECSLA would like to thank St. Andrew's and St. Mary's for partnering with us to bring needed relief to the people of the Bayou Communities. Funding is provided through a grant from the Baton Rouge Area Foundation to Catholic Charities “Spirit of Hope Program.”

[Chuck Cook/AP Photo]

In 2010, the Rev'd Jervis Burns blessed fishing boats docked in Bayou Delarge during the Blessing of the Boats.



ECSLA Volunteer Program is Still Open and Accepting Volunteers

Though our Rebuild Program has come to a close after gutting over 900 houses and rebuilding over 75 homes, our Volunteer Program is still open and accepting volunteers.

The ECS Volunteer Program houses groups, coordinates work projects, and provides programming for short-term mission groups all across the country. We house groups in our own housing bases or coordinate alternative housing arrangements. We now work with many partners to provide excellent work projects for all our groups.

We are proud to introduce a mission trip companion guide of social justice and spiritual readings and reflections, designed to facilitate discussion and enable true transformation, which begins when we move from charity to solidarity, or right relationship, recognizing Christ in those we serve and in each other. To learn more about the volunteer program, go to ecsla.org.



The Rev'd AJ Heine blesses one of the final houses completed in the Rebuild Program.

Thank you to everyone who donated to the ECS 500 Campaign in 2011!

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2011 SECC SUNDAY CONTRIBUTIONS

As of January 23, 2012

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 Douglass R. Lore
 Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans
 Robert S. and Gennieve Stoops
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In Memory of Ann Howe

Celeste R. Spann
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 Judge Frank F. and Judith J. Foil
 Sheila Smith Kimbro
 Anne and Paul Marks
 Southwestern Association of
 Episcopal Schools, Canyon, TX
 Peter and Aphra Claverie

In Honor of Betty Fowler's Birthday

Leila Schumacher

Donation of Wurlitzer Piano for Chapel

Louisiana Episcopal Clergy
 Association,
 The Rev'd William C. Morris, Jr.

THANK YOU

The Diocese of Louisiana - Budget SUMMARY Analysis FISCAL 2011 (Assessment and Program) Unaudited			OVER/ UNDER BUDGET
	2011 BUDGET	ACTUAL	
REVENUE			
Revenues from Congregations	\$1,269,905	\$1,257,581	-\$12,324
Other Revenues	195,979	157,672	-\$38,307
Targeted Donations	\$90,000	\$88,418	-\$1,582
TOTAL REVENUE	\$1,555,884	\$1,503,671	-\$52,213
EXPENSES			
Total Diocesan Center	\$852,050	\$818,273	-\$33,777
Diocesan Property Reserve	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0
Episcopal Transition Reserve	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0
Solomon Episcopal Conference Subsidy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Academic Chaplaincies	\$315,243	\$297,188	-\$18,055
Total Christian Education	\$2,000	\$593	-\$1,408
Total Commissions	\$13,900	\$2,900	-\$11,000
Total Communications	\$45,700	\$51,071	\$5,371
Total Conferences	\$20,300	\$18,949	-\$1,351
Total Church Mission Ministry & Grants	\$69,754	\$52,783	-\$16,971
Total Seminarians	\$7,000	\$5,240	-\$1,760
Total School for Ministry	\$14,904	\$12,876	-\$2,028
Total Specialized Ministries	\$3,550	\$3,550	\$0
Total Stewardship	\$2,700	\$450	-\$2,250
Total Work Outside the Diocese	\$146,535	\$146,535	\$0
Total Youth	\$104,865	\$97,661	-\$7,204
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,613,501	\$1,523,069	-\$90,432
NET INCOME / LOSS	-\$57,617	-\$19,398	\$38,219

Church	City	2011 ASSESSMENT			2011 PROGRAM		
		2011 Total Assessment	Rec'd YTD	YTD Variance	2011 Total Pledge	Rec'd YTD	YTD Variance
Church of the Incarnation	Anita	\$1,558	\$1,358.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Church of the Holy Spirit	Baton Rouge	\$8,099	\$8,099.04	\$0.04	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
St. Alban's Chapel	Baton Rouge	\$10,324	\$10,324.00	\$0.00	\$17,550	\$17,550.00	\$0.00
St. Augustine's Episcopal Church	Baton Rouge	\$1,833	\$1,833.00	\$0.00	\$420	\$420.00	\$0.00
St. James' Episcopal Church	Baton Rouge	\$82,403	\$82,403.00	\$0.00	\$88,180	\$100,180.00	\$12,000.00
St. Luke's Episcopal Church	Baton Rouge	\$41,389	\$41,388.52	\$0.52	\$43,601	\$43,600.95	-\$0.05
St. Margaret's Episcopal Church	Baton Rouge	\$10,330	\$10,330.00	\$0.00	\$1,200	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
St. Michael's & All Angels' Episcopal	Baton Rouge	\$3,485	\$3,485.00	\$0.00	\$3,138	\$3,138.00	\$0.00
Trinity Episcopal Church	Baton Rouge	\$30,900	\$30,900.00	\$0.00	\$36,771	\$36,771.00	\$0.00
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church	Bogalusa	\$4,251	\$4,251.00	\$0.00	\$550	\$550.00	\$0.00
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church	Clinton	\$1,341	\$1,341.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Christ Episcopal Church	Covington	\$32,087	\$32,087.00	\$0.00	\$54,547	\$35,520.45	-\$18,826.54
St. Francis' Episcopal Church	Darham Springs	\$5,554	\$5,554.00	\$0.00	\$7,220	\$7,220.00	\$0.00
St. Mary's Episcopal Church	Franklin	\$5,374	\$5,374.00	\$0.00	\$8,435	\$8,435.00	\$0.00
Grace Memorial Church	Hammond	\$13,368	\$13,368.00	\$0.00	\$16,500	\$16,500.00	\$0.00
St. Mark's Episcopal Church	Harvey	\$3,590	\$3,742.00	\$152.00	\$3,201	\$3,201.00	\$0.00
St. Matthew's Episcopal Church	Houma	\$13,700	\$13,700.00	\$0.00	\$10,300	\$10,300.00	\$0.00
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church	Innis	\$2,418	\$2,418.00	\$0.00	\$2,175	\$2,175.00	\$0.00
St. John's Episcopal Church	Kenner	\$1,155	\$1,155.00	\$0.00	\$519	\$519.00	\$0.00
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church	Lafayette	\$1,948	\$1,948.00	\$0.00	\$1,753	\$1,753.04	\$0.04
St. Michael's Episcopal Church	Mandeville	\$10,076	\$10,078.04	\$0.04	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
St. Augustine's Episcopal Church	Metairie	\$15,708	\$15,708.00	\$0.00	\$15,708	\$15,708.00	\$0.00
St. Martin's Episcopal Church	Metairie	\$20,908	\$20,908.00	\$0.00	\$5,000	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Trinity Episcopal Church	Morgan City	\$7,878	\$7,878.00	\$0.00	\$9,978	\$9,978.00	\$0.00
St. Mary's Episcopal Church	Morganza	\$680	\$680.00	\$0.00	\$612	\$612.00	\$0.00
All Souls	New Orleans	\$1,000	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Church of the Annunciation	New Orleans	\$9,129	\$4,084.00	-\$5,045.00	\$500	\$0.00	-\$500.00
Chapel of the Holy Comforter	New Orleans	\$2,874	\$2,874.00	\$0.00	\$2,586	\$2,586.00	\$0.00
Chapel of the Holy Spirit	New Orleans	\$2,648	\$2,648.00	\$0.00	\$2,383	\$2,383.00	\$0.00
Christ Church Cathedral	New Orleans	\$24,437	\$24,437.00	\$0.00	\$41,543	\$41,543.00	\$0.00
Grace Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$5,034	\$5,034.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
St. Oliver Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$2,653	\$2,653.07	\$0.07	\$400	\$400.01	\$0.01
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$15,285	\$15,285.00	\$0.00	\$12,988	\$12,988.00	\$0.00
St. Anna's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$14,143	\$4,714.32	-\$9,428.68	\$8,000	\$1,250.00	-\$4,750.00
St. George's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$14,701	\$14,701.08	\$0.08	\$12,456	\$14,954.60	\$2,498.60
St. Luke's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$11,013	\$11,013.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$28,823	\$28,823.00	\$0.00	\$22,800	\$22,800.00	\$0.00
St. Philip's Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$9,437	\$9,437.00	\$0.00	\$9,814	\$9,814.00	\$0.00
Trinity Episcopal Church	New Orleans	\$110,599	\$110,599.00	\$0.00	\$134,490.96	\$134,490.96	\$49.96
St. Paul's-Holy Trinity Church	New Roads	\$5,482	\$5,482.00	\$0.00	\$5,300	\$5,300.00	\$0.00
Church of the Holy Communion	Plaquemine	\$5,637	\$5,637.00	\$0.00	\$2,500	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
All Saints' Episcopal Church	Ponchartraine	\$1,825	\$1,825.00	\$0.00	\$1,642	\$1,642.00	\$0.00
All Saints' Episcopal Church	River Ridge	\$8,987	\$8,987.00	\$0.00	\$1,200	\$1,245.65	\$545.65
Church of the Nativity	Rosedale	\$2,159	\$2,159.00	\$0.00	\$1,943	\$1,943.00	\$0.00
Christ Episcopal Church	Sidell	\$10,795	\$10,795.00	\$0.00	\$0	\$0.00	\$0.00
Grace Episcopal Church	St. Francisville	\$22,675	\$22,675.00	\$0.00	\$22,675	\$22,674.92	-\$0.08
St. John's Episcopal Church	Thibodaux	\$7,155	\$7,155.00	\$0.00	\$1,200	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
St. Patrick's Episcopal Church	Zachary	\$6,796	\$6,796.00	\$0.00	\$9,232	\$9,232.00	\$0.00
Totals		\$631,088.00	\$636,747.07	-\$5,658.92	\$618,820.90	\$669,737.77	-\$50,916.87

What did you spend \$10 on this week?

Fast food? Coffee? A sushi lunch?



You could also spend \$10 on:

- Creating opportunities for the poor
- Educating children
- Strengthening response to disasters
- Engaging young adults and volunteers in transformative service learning

Your support will create a stable base upon which ECSLA can grow and strengthen outreach ministries throughout the Diocese of Louisiana.

Giving is easy!

Go to www.ecsla.org/donate/ecsla-500 to give online or to download a pledge form.

$\$500/\text{year} = \$42/\text{month} = \$10/\text{week}$

Will you commit \$10 a week for outreach in the Diocese of Louisiana?

Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana
Serving people, changing lives

