

# CHURCHWORK



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*Responding to Human  
Need by Loving Service*



# CHURCHWORK

The Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

## IN THIS ISSUE:

### Responding to human need by loving service

#### On the Cover

[Photograph from St. Andrew's, New Orleans]

Counselor and camper bond at the 2017 Camp Able NOLA summer session at St. Andrew's.

#### Reflections

- 03 Preparing for the 79th General Convention
- 05 St. Andrew's Camp Able
- 08 St. Michael's Family Promise
- 10 Diaconal Ministry in the Diocese
- 11 ECW Honored Women

#### Out and About in the Diocese

- 12 Clergy Transitions
- 13 Photographs
- 24 Bishop's Journal
- 32 Calendar

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#### Our Vision

The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana is one church, faithful to our Lord Jesus, united in mission, reaching out through service and proclamation to all for whom Christ died. We live in joyous expectation of God's transforming power, compassion, and mercy in our lives.

#### Publisher

The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr.  
([mthompson@edola.org](mailto:mthompson@edola.org))

#### Editor and Art Designer

Karen Mackey ([kmackey@edola.org](mailto:kmackey@edola.org))

#### Copy Editors

The Rev. Canon John Kellogg

#### Contributors in This Issue

Deacon Jay Albert  
Ann Ball  
The Rev. Robert Beazley  
Thomas Branton  
Deacon Elaine Clements  
The ECW Honored Women's Committee  
The Rev. Jim Morrison  
The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Jr.

#### Subscriptions

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#### Submissions

*Churchwork* provides news and information about the diocese and wider church; and is a medium of theological reflection. Please submit articles in Microsoft Word; photographs should have a resolution of 300. Letters to the editor will not be printed. Submissions should be sent by email to Karen Mackey at [kmackey@edola.org](mailto:kmackey@edola.org). We reserve the right to edit all material, and cannot guarantee that every submission will be published.

# Preparing for the 79th General Convention



*[Photograph by the Rev. Tommy Dillon] General Convention deputies met at Kanuga in early June for the Province IV Synod.*

Dear friends,

I am writing to you from Kanuga where the deputation from the Diocese of Louisiana is gathered to prepare for General Convention that will be held in July 4-14 in Austin, TX. Below is a summary of information compiled by Ann Ball who is serving as one of our deputies and also as a representative at the national ECW gathering.

I hope that you will take some time to familiarize yourself with some of the legislation that will come before us for consideration. General Convention is also an exciting time of worship and community-building as we look forward, in hope, as a gathered church.

Please keep us all in your prayers.

Faithfully,

+Morris

## Louisiana Deputies Attend Province IV Synod in preparation for General Convention

The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana was well represented by a full slate of deputies and representatives at the Province IV Synod, held at the Kanuga Conference Center in early June.

### Events Prior to Synod

Province IV is made up of twenty dioceses located in the southeastern United States. Of the nine provinces in the Episcopal Church, Province IV is the largest.

Delegates at our Synod love to claim that Province IV is also the “best” province.

Bishop Thompson attended the gathering of Province IV bishops, which began on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Province IV Diocesan Altar Guild Directors convened during this time, as well. Carol Cook (St. George’s, New Orleans) was appointed by Bishop Thompson to serve as our diocesan Altar Guild Director for the next three years.

Our diocese was well represented at the Province IV Episcopal Church Women Retreat (June 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>) by ECW President Ann Ball (All Saints, River Ridge) and ECW Interim Vice President Reba Mackey (St. George’s, New Orleans). The retreat focused on building bridges of peace and reconciliation and included a presentation by the national ECW President Lisa Towle, who shared information about the triennial meeting that will take place in Austin during General Convention. The keynote speaker, the Rev. Canon Sandra McCann, M.D., gave an inspiring presentation about her mission work in Tanzania. She offered a wealth of resources regarding mission work and spoke at length about how to create “healthy” mission ventures.

### Provincial Synod Gathers

Our eight deputies to General Convention attended the Synod. They elected officers, listened to reports about the work of Province IV and offered resolutions to be presented at General Convention. Alice Freeman (Diocese of North Carolina) was elected to serve as Province IV’s representative on the Executive Council.

The Louisiana deputation is made up of four clergy deputies and four lay deputies. The clergy deputies are: the Rev. Sharon Alexander (Trinity, Baton Rouge), the Very Rev. Richard Easterling (St. George’s, New Orleans), the Very Rev. A. J. Heine (St. Augustine’s, Metairie) and the Rev. Anne Maxwell (Christ Church, Covington). The Rev. Tommy Dillon (St. Margaret’s, Baton Rouge) was in attendance as our clergy alternate. The lay deputies include: Lindsey Ardrey (St. George’s, New Orleans), Ann Ball (All Saints, River Ridge), Carolyn Harris (St. Luke’s, New Orleans) and John Musser (Trinity, New Orleans). Our lay alternate, David Warrington (St. James, Baton Rouge), was not able to attend.

The Most Rev. Michael Curry, our Presiding Bishop, and the Rev. Gay Jennings, President of the House of



Deputies, both gave stirring addresses. Presiding Bishop Curry referred to the prophet Joel by saying that at General Convention, "We will gather as a holy congregation." He continued: "We gather for inspiration. We gather for education. We gather for formation. We gather for transformation. We gather because Jesus Christ is calling us. We will gather in his Name. He will be there."

"We are about Jesus," Presiding Bishop Curry concluded. "KFC is about chicken. McDonald's is about burgers. We are the Church of Jesus of Nazareth. That's what we are about!"

The Rev. Gay Jennings applauded Presiding Bishop Curry's remarks and also noted that this will be the first General Convention of the Episcopal Church in which women will make up a majority of the House of Deputies.

Several General Convention committee chairs presented overviews of their work. The Rev. Sharon Alexander will serve as Vice Chair of the Committee on Churchwide Leadership and on the Resolution Review Committee. Lindsey Ardrey is the Assistant Secretary of the Racial Justice and Reconciliation Committee, John Musser will serve on the Social Justice and United States Policy Committee and the Very Rev. AJ Heine will serve on the Church Pension Fund Committee.

More information about General Convention can be found here:

<https://www.generalconvention.org/home>.

A video concerning the church's draft budget for 2018-2021 is available here: <https://www.generalconvention.org/budgetvideo2018>

A copy of the draft budget is available here: <https://extranet.generalconvention.org/staff/files/download/20857>.

The budget being presented is balanced and is based on dioceses contributing a fifteen percent assessment. At the present time, eighty percent of dioceses are contributing their full assessment.

The Synod also heard presentations from: the Church Pension Fund, Province IV Youth Ministry, Campus and Young Adult Ministry, and Province IV representatives on the Executive Council.



*[Photograph by Ann Ball] Carolyn Harris and Ann Ball take a selfie with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry during the Province IV Synod at Kanuga.*

The Synod passed two resolutions that will be presented to General Convention for approval. One proposes *per diem* compensation for the President of the House of Deputies. A second resolution proposes to add the Official Youth Presence at General Convention to the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, ensuring their seat and voice. Lastly, new Province IV officers were elected and installed. Kathryn McCormick (Diocese of Mississippi) will serve as President. The next provincial meeting will be held in June 2019 in North Carolina.

-Ann Ball, Lay Delegate



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Andrew's, New Orleans] Camp Able 2017 at St. Andrew's, New Orleans*

### **Camp Able NOLA: Simple Acts of Compassion, Laughter, and Hugs**

*by the Rev. Jim Morrison and the Rev. Robert Beazley, St. Andrew's, New Orleans*

For over 14 years, Camp Able has reached out to children, teens, and young adults with disabilities throughout the Southeast. Inspired by Special Session, a summer camp for disabled adults in the Diocese of Mississippi, the Rev. Kyle Bennett founded Camp Able while serving in the Diocese of Southwest Florida in 2006. Since then, it has grown like wildfire into six summer camps across four states. This life-changing ministry came as a blessing to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in New Orleans through the leadership of John McCandless three years ago in 2016. McCandless, a young adult whose own life was shaped by countless summers volunteering at Camp Able in South Florida, spoke passionately about how this camp provides hope to an underserved community. He described how it is life changing for the campers, their families, camp staff, church members, and the greater community far beyond the church's walls. Soon, McCandless won over the whole parish. The priest, vestry, and church community were in solid support to begin this new ministry.

In 2016, McCandless quickly gathered a leadership team and soon all the pieces were falling into place. Families throughout the greater New Orleans area

heard about Camp Able and registered their campers who have a variety of disabilities from autism and Down syndrome to hearing and vision impairments. Parents, grandparents, and other guardians brought their beloved children to camp as we pledged to focus on their abilities, not their disabilities. At the core of Camp Able was, is, and will always be the desire to provide a loving place to allow every child of God to enjoy a summer camp experience like any other kid in our city.

The first year was clearly a blessing from God. It seemed as if everyone and his cousin came out of the woodwork to lend a hand. Volunteer counselors from local middle and high schools, college students, and even others from out of state took time out of their summer to help out. Parishioners stepped up to sponsor campers, cook, clean, and provide rides. St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lakeview and Trinity Episcopal Church enthusiastically partnered with us and provided lunch for our campers and countless counselors. Local businesses, non-profits, and government agencies offered their services. Everyone involved was awed by the generosity and enthusiastic participation of the community. Clearly, God blessed

## Reflections

this program and the Holy Spirit empowered this ministry.

In our first year, Camp Able NOLA welcomed 10 campers with 26 counselors. The week began with campers joyfully rushing into the parish hall ready for their turn at summer camp. Their families were amazed and grateful that the church offered this loving program for their children who are so often overlooked by society. Soon, the parish's school buildings, who were quietly taking their summer break, came to life with the constant buzz of laughter and cheerful singing. The interaction of friendship broke through the divisions of "abilities vs. disabilities" and we all loved and learned from each other.

A big yellow school bus whisked us around to the Audubon Aquarium, City Park, and NORD swimming pool. The long summer days passed in a flash and we soon gathered for our talent show! Campers took center stage alongside their counselors to perform their talent to the delight of parents, church members, and friends. The camp concluded within our Sunday Liturgy as we rejoiced in wonder at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit within this blessed ministry. It was unanimous. Everyone agreed that Camp Able was here to stay at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

Word spread quickly and in our second year, we doubled the number of campers to 26 with 58 counselors. It did not take us 40 years of wandering to realize we were clearly on the right path. In a desire to reach underserved children in our community, we sought children without many resources. We were determined to secure transportation and support to



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Andrew's, New Orleans] Having fun in the water at the 2017 Camp Able Summer Camp.*



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Andrew's, New Orleans] The Rev. Jim Morrison celebrates Holy Eucharist with assistance from the Camp Able campers.*

include those who would most likely be in isolation throughout the summer. Reducing barriers and creating greater diversity is a key principle of Camp Able.

Almost as soon as camp finished that second summer, campers and families were asking about it for the following year. It became evident that Camp Able NOLA needed year round planning. A group of leaders formed a board to promote and raise funds to keep camp free for all participants. Families with children with special needs often accrue far greater expenses – the summer camp experience should be available to all children, no matter their circumstance.

Along with an increased effort to cover the cost of every camper, it became evident that Camp Able NOLA should not turn its back on these campers the other 51 weeks of the year. Taylor Cheek, another young adult shaped by Camp Able in South Florida, stepped forward to host a weekly youth group for the camp's older teens. During its inaugural year, Cheek provided these teens with a safe environment outside their schools or homes each week at the St. Andrew's parish house, commonly known as the Chalstrom House. She also took them to a private concert at the Preservation Jazz Hall, the Music Box Village, Jazz Fest, the church's Lenten fires, and faithfully brings teens to Sunday services and other parish events. While our liturgies may have the occasional interruptions, all agree we are a more Christ-like congregation learning how to live up to our denomination's slogan, "All are welcome."



## Reflections

At the last convention of the Diocese of Louisiana, we learned that Camp Able NOLA was the recipient of a \$5,000 Community Mission Grant! Through this gift and a grant from the Down Syndrome Association of Greater New Orleans Foundation, the doors of Camp Able NOLA have never been opened wider to lovingly welcome all of God's children.

It is hard to believe that we have nearly doubled in size over the last three summers. Camp Able NOLA will be held on July 25 – 29 at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. We are completely full with 45 registered campers and expect 80 volunteer counselors. There will be four yellow school buses shuffling us around the Crescent City! Without a doubt, our camp is growing quickly. It can be overwhelming at times to witness the great need for such a ministry in our own backyard. One of the most powerful parts of Camp Able is to witness the social barrier between disabled and able-bodied youth dissolve through the simple acts of compassion, laughter, or a hug. The large number of counselors not only provides proper support to our campers, but their own lives are transformed by the humility of caring for another. These transformed lives will shape not only the church but also our city of tomorrow.

On June 24 from 2-5 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, you are invited to participate in a fundraiser to support this life-changing and ever-expanding ministry. The gathering will feature a silent auction with food, drinks, and music provided by the Preservation Hall Foundation Band. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

We also invite individuals to sponsor a camper for \$200. Checks can be made to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Churches or other civic organizations interested in supporting Camp Able are encouraged to provide breakfast or lunch for our camp or dinner for



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Andrew's, New Orleans] The Camp Able NOLA youth group selling flowers they grew in the St. Andrew's garden.*

the out of town counselors. Enquires should be made to the Rev. Robert Beazley, [rbeazley@standrewsnola.com](mailto:rbeazley@standrewsnola.com)

Any middle school through college-aged student interested in volunteering can register through [www.standrewsnola.com/resources](http://www.standrewsnola.com/resources). To stay up to date with everything Camp Able is doing, like our Facebook page, Camp Able NOLA.

And last but not never least, please keep Camp Able in your prayers. If you would like to visit us this summer, come to our talent show on Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. or gather with us for Holy Eucharist on Sunday the 30<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.



*The Rev. Jim Morrison (left) is rector of St. Andrew's Church and the Rev. Robert Beazley (right) is the associate rector.*

*St. Andrew's has served the Carrollton neighborhood of New Orleans since 1903.*

## St. Michael's Lifts Up Families Just Like Yours

by W. Thomas Branton, St. Michael's, Mandeville

When you were a kid, you'd probably be excited if you were invited to a week-long stay with other families with a bounce house, snacks, and other kids to play with. One little girl who stayed at St. Michael's Episcopal Church in June had just such an experience, but she was most excited about something that you might not expect. She was overjoyed just to have a bed to sleep in.

When you hear the term "homeless," what do you think of? Chances are that it calls to mind a certain harsh stereotype of some kind. But what about the mother or father of three that you work with, or the child who sits next to your son or daughter at school? Would those people ever come to mind? There are a large number of homeless families in our area who choose to be "invisible" in order to maintain their dignity and, moreover, to keep their families together. And, who could blame them? With over a thousand children in the St. Tammany school system identified as "homeless," St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Mandeville has stepped up to participate in the Family Promise program for the fourth year in a row to welcome some of these families into their community like one of their own.

Family Promise isn't a shelter, but a support network of services, from transportation to temporary living spaces, and individual case-workers. Host churches open their doors to families in need to give them a sense of stability and community support, not just as charity, but to build new foundations and help them get back on their feet. In June, St. Michael's hosted three such families for a week and saw again what a huge difference just a little community support can make. Although each hosting event is slightly different, each one begins with an almost tangible sigh of relief from families in the midst of hardships as they're welcomed into a truly safe space, and continues with the congregation making them feel at home with comforts that most of them haven't felt anywhere else and most of us take for granted every day.

In the St. Michael's parish hall, the families, which are all pre-screened and interviewed by the Family Promise program, were given a partitioned space with beds and privacy to live and sleep in during their stay. The



*[Photograph courtesy of Family Promise of St. Tammany and with permission of the family] Volunteers of Family Promise of St. Tammany help families just like this mother and son who recently graduated from the program.*

volunteer parishioners all pitched in a little something of their own to make their stay special. Bob brought puppies for the kids to play with, introducing the perfect four-legged icebreakers for the little ones as well as the adults. Tilly, Shirley, and Bobby prepared wonderful meals and Melanie cooked her famous potatoes that everyone always loves. Others offered labor, setting up the partitions and furniture, and cleaning up afterward. Isabelle acted as the overnight host during the week, seeing to the families' needs as well as showing up some of the teenage boys with her skills on the ping pong table. Stacy, the head of the preschool, prepared painting and beading craft projects for the younger kids, and Alfonso was the go-to tech guy, setting up the media entertainment.

Some of the parishioners simply offered their time and company during the families' stay, giving them what even the best social services facilities can't, which is a feeling of community, inclusiveness, non-judgmental interaction, and some simple pleasant conversation.



Those of us who have been in low spots can probably remember that sometimes the best thing someone can do for us is to just sit and talk, offering the one thing that costs them nothing, but means the world to someone in need—a little of their time, understanding, and attention. These are regular folks just like you and me and could be you or me someday, for that matter.

You might think the little bit of time or effort you have to offer won't accomplish much, or that it might not mean a lot to families like these. But, Pat Jenson, St. Michael's host coordinator, and her husband Erik can tell you that it only takes a few days of sharing your basic comforts to see what a huge difference the smallest efforts can make. Just like you, all they really want is to keep their families together. Sometimes all it takes is helping to fill the basic needs for a short time to help get someone back on their feet, to build the bridge from the depth of poverty to the horizon of success. With the Family Promise program actively engaging and following up with their families to ensure their progress, hosting an event like St. Michael's and other churches in St. Tammany Parish is less of what you might think of as charity and more active progress that really makes a difference for families just like ours by getting them back on their feet again.

St. Michael's Episcopal Church continues to open its doors to families in need as long as there are able bodies and warm hearts to fill out the community environment. Anybody can volunteer their time to be there with the families during their stay. Children and teenagers can help just by showing up to interact with others their own age. Parents and all adults can make a difference by simply offering their attention, conversation, friendship, and through sharing a meal. Instead of sharing a good story on social media, we can all consider sharing that time with someone just like ourselves who could use a friend and a helping hand, or a little girl or boy just like yours who would love more than anything to have a bed to sleep in tonight.



*Thomas Branton is a parishioner and volunteer communicator for St. Michael's, Mandeville. He is also an author and artist.*

*St. Michael's has served the Mandeville community since the mid-1980's.*



### **Family Promise at Christ Church, Slidell**

Christ Church, Slidell, is also a partner church of Family Promise of St. Tammany Parish. Not only do they host families four times a year but they have donated the use of their Wheeler House, adjacent to the church, to serve as the Family Promise Day Center. The Day Center provides a place for families to receive case management services, care for pre-school aged children, a place to shower, and to do laundry. The Day Center provides guests with a mailing address and a base for housing and employment searches.

If your church is interested in learning more about becoming a church partner with Family Promise of St. Tammany Parish, go to [www.fpstp.org](http://www.fpstp.org).

## Diaconal Ministry in the Diocese of Louisiana



### Witnessing the Church Being the Church

by Deacon Elaine Clements

I have the best job in the world! It's not the usual diaconal ministry, for sure, but it fits perfectly with the idea that the role of a deacon is to enable congregational ministry to our vulnerable neighbors. I'm lucky enough that I get to do that

both here in Louisiana, as the Diocesan Disaster Coordinator on Bishop Thompson's staff and nationally as a Partner in Disaster Recovery and Response for Episcopal Relief and Development. In January, I was in Florida on behalf of ERD. Approximately 240,000 Puerto Ricans have evacuated to Florida in the past several months in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. The Episcopal Church in Florida has been working with ERD to help these newly arrived people obtain FEMA benefits, housing and jobs, all in short supply. On January 6, I was able to participate in a very special celebration of Epiphany. In our van that day were three "kings", Fr. Jose Ramirez from Iglesia Episcopal de Jesus Nazaret in Orlando, a therapy pig named Mack (under a sweater and snuggled up to me as closely as he could – he was cold) and a former famous Puerto Rican soap opera star, Glynda Ramirez, now a retired Episcopal priest. We were going to a motel that was housing nearly 100 Puerto Rican families, living with three to seven people per room in desperate circumstances, so that we could give each child a toy from the Three Kings, a traditional Puerto Rican celebration. It was a glorious day with lots of happy children in what has been for them a very sad and bewildering year. It was wonderful to witness the church being The Church, all thanks to donations to Episcopal Relief and Development.

*The Rev. Elaine Clements is a deacon in the Diocese of Louisiana. She is assigned to Bishop Morris Thompson's staff as the disaster coordinator for the diocese. She also works with Episcopal Relief & Development on the Partners in Response team.*



### Sharing God's Love With Those Who Feel Left Out of Life

by Deacon Jay Albert

Katrina was the Eli/Samuel time for me. I was busy making my life the way I thought it should be and wasn't paying much attention to God beyond Sunday. God loves a good plan but God had a much better one

in mind for me. I found a place that gave me the tools and opportunities to make a difference. I get to help others in a way that is so fulfilling. I am involved in several ministries but the one that happens each week is my movie ministry at Bridge House in New Orleans. I have been there over eight years and have met hundreds of men who struggle with addiction. They have taught me so much. They have opened my eyes to see the face of God and shared stories that tear your heart in two. They come from all walks of life and they want to change their lives to just be normal again. We watch movies about addiction and about spirituality. We look for the 12 steps and what God is saying in them. Our time together is on our hopes. They are grateful that someone cares enough to just spend some time and be with them. Sometimes I get to go to the Lantern Light feeding ministry behind St. Joseph's church on Tulane Ave. I get there early so I can walk around the courtyard and just talk and pray with the clients who are there for a meal, perhaps the only one for that day. Amazingly, almost without exception, those who approach me and ask for a prayer, ask for me to pray that they can get a job so they can get off the streets and support themselves and their families. These are the best times for me. I can make a small difference by sharing God's love with those who feel left out of life. Think about your life. Like Samuel, do you hear God calling you to something more?

*The Rev. Jay Albert is a deacon in the Diocese of Louisiana. He is assigned to Trinity Church, New Orleans. He also is the chair of the Addiction Recovery Ministry of the Diocese of Louisiana.*

### 2018 ECW Honored Women

*The 22nd Presentation of Honored Women by the Episcopal Church Women in the Diocese of Louisiana on May 19, 2018 at Christ Episcopal Church, Covington, Louisiana.*



#### **Delores Walker Jenkins**

Delores Walker Jenkins has been a faithful and active communicant in the Episcopal Church for approximately thirty years. As a communicant of St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, she served faithfully and actively as a vestry member including serving as secretary, Junior Warden, and Senior Warden, Altar Guild, Eucharistic Minister, ECW member, co-chairing the Baton Rouge Deanery for two terms, a teacher at St. Michael's Episcopal Day School, going on to becoming the Director of St. Michael's Episcopal Day School. Delores is guided by prayers and her relationship with God which lead her to St. Patrick's Episcopal Church, Zachary, where she continues to be faithfully active as she serves on the vestry, Altar Guild, Sunday School, Bible Study and the women's group, "The Colleens". Delores is the proud mother of three sons, all confirmed Episcopalians and ten grandchildren.

#### **Beth Kimmell**

Beth Kimmell, raised Roman Catholic, had been looking for a faith that would allow her and husband, Glenn and their family to grow as Christians. In 1981 they found St. Patrick's Episcopal church, where both of their children were baptized, and the family was confirmed. Beth, a very proud grandmother of four grandchildren, serves on the vestry and Altar Guild, as a LEM, youth group leader, and as a Christian educator. She has also organized many fundraisers. In 1987, she founded St. Patrick's preschool for three and four-year-old children. Working as a volunteer, administrator, and interim director, she led the school to grow from an enrollment of seven toddlers to one-hundred seventy-five children ranging in age from six

months to twelve years. Beth has been a very active member of ECW having served on the ECW Diocesan Board, attended the Diocesan Convention as a delegate/alternate, and represented the Diocese of Louisiana at General Convention. She was instrumental in organizing a ladies group, the Colleens, which assists in needed church improvements and meets for fellowship quarterly. Beth's devotion and faithfulness are shown as she continues to serve in church ministries.



#### **Judy DeBlieux Knecht**

A member of St. Francis Episcopal Church, Denham Springs, Louisiana since 2009. Judy Knecht has served as president, secretary, and treasurer of the ECW and is currently co-chair of the Baton Rouge Deanery. She is active in St. Francis knitting and beading group, "Hannah's Hands", the Altar Guild, and Hospitality Team. She represents St. Francis Church volunteering at the Community Hands Food Pantry which feeds the needy of Livingston parish. Judy and her husband were instrumental in saving the church items which could be saved after the August 2016 floods waters receded from St. Francis. They took the items still usable to their home for storage and safekeeping. Their home served as the church office until Cameron Hall was refurbished. Judy and Gene share a marriage of forty-three years, a son and daughter, and five grandsons. Judy's devotion to God's work is shown in her actions, not just in her words. She walks the walk!



## **The Clericus (January-May 2018)**



*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana] The clergy of the diocese gather outside Christ Church Cathedral after the Chrism Mass on March 26.*

### **Transitions in the Diocese**

*The Rev. Jerry Phillips* accepted the position of chaplain at St. James Place, Baton Rouge, effective January 1. He continues to serve as priest-in-charge of Church of the Nativity, Rosedale.

*The Rev. Doug Lasiter* has resigned as rector of Trinity, Morgan City, and St. John's, Thibodaux, effective January 26, 2018.

*The Rev. John Pitzer* was called as the associate rector of Trinity Church, New Orleans, effective March 25, 2018. He was serving as associate rector of St. James, Baton Rouge.

*The Rev. Jane-Allison Wiggin-Nettles* accepted a call to serve as the youth coordinator at Trinity Church, New Orleans effective May 13, 2018. She was serving as chaplain of Christ Episcopal School, Covington.

*The Rev. Margaret Austin* resigned as priest-in-charge of St. Timothy's, LaPlace, effective May 20.

*The Rev. Joe Reynolds* concluded his time as interim rector of St. James, Baton Rouge, effective June 3.

*The Rev. Gina Jenkins* has been called as the chaplain of St. Paul's Episcopal School, New Orleans, effective July 1. She will graduate from the School of Theology at the University of the South in May.

*The Rev. Stephen Shortess* was called as the priest-in-charge of St. John's, Thibodaux, and Trinity Church, Morgan City, effective June 24. He graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in May.

### **New Clergy in the Diocese**

*The Rev. John "Brad" St. Romain* is a newly licensed priest in the Diocese of Louisiana. He is a retired priest from the Diocese of Texas.

*The Rev. Chris Duncan* has been called as the 24th rector of St. James, Baton Rouge. He has been serving as the rector of St. Paul's in Katy, Texas. His first Sunday at St. James will be July 16.



### **Epiphany Bonfire (left)**

*[Photograph from the Grace Church, St. Francisville, Facebook Page]* Grace Church, St. Francisville, celebrated Epiphany with a Festival of Light. Parishioners gathered for s'mores and hot dogs and burning of Christmas trees.



### **John Pavlovitz at College of Presbyters (right)**

*[Photograph by Cassandra Reiger, Diocese of Louisiana]* John Pavlovitz, a pastor and writer, was the keynote speaker at the annual College of Presbyters. The College of Presbyters is a yearly retreat for the priests of the diocese.



### **Jazz in January (left)**

*[Photograph by Bill McHugh, Christ Church, Covington]* Christ Church, Covington, held their third annual Jazz in January from January 19-21. The jazz festival brought in musicians from Cuba, France, New Orleans, and New York. Pictured above is Cuban pianist, Aldo López-Gavilán. The weekend concluded with a jazz service paying tribute to the music of Mary Lou Williams.



### **Stewardship Summit with the Rev. Ed Bacon (right)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* The Rev. Ed Bacon was the keynote speaker at the diocesan Stewardship Summit held at St. Paul's, New Orleans, on January 20. Clergy, vestry members, and parishioners from across the diocese gathered to learn more about best practices in stewardship and planned giving.





### **Feast of St. Frances Joseph Gaudet (left)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* Michaela Harrison and Dr. Courtney Bryan perform during the annual service to celebrate the life and legacy of Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet. The service was held on January 13 at St. Luke's, New Orleans.



### **English Tea at St. John's (right)**

*[Photograph from the Trinity, Morgan City, February 2018 newsletter]* The Rev. Travers Koerner and parishioners of Trinity, Morgan City, attended the 30th annual English Tea at St. John's, Thibodaux, on January 27.



### **Ashes to Go in Slidell (left)**

*[Photograph by Kristen Wheeler, Christ Church, Slidell]* Christ Church, Slidell, offered Ashes to Go, on Ash Wednesday, February 14. Clergy and parishioners also distributed Lenten prayer bags as people (and dogs) received their ashes.



### **Ashes to Go on Tulane Campus (right)**

*[Photograph from the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* The Rev. Watson Lamb, chaplain of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans, found a central spot on the Tulane University campus on Ash Wednesday to offer prayers and ashes to students as they hurried between classes.





### **Mardi Gras Spirits (left)**

*[Photograph from the St. George's, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* The John Parker Trio entertained parade goers attending the St. George's Mardi Gras Spirits. Every year during Mardi Gras, St. George's opens their undercroft to sell food and beverages to raise money for church ministries.



### **Gumbo to Go in Plaquemine, LA (right)**

*[Photograph from the Church of the Holy Communion, Plaquemine, Facebook Page]* Parishioners of the Church of the Holy Communion, Plaquemine, prepare gumbo to sell during their Lenten Friday fundraiser.



### **Celebration of Absalom Jones and Richard Allen (left)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* Bishop Thompson gives the final blessing during the service to celebrate the life and ministry of Absalom Jones, the first black priest of the Episcopal Church, and Richard Allen, founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. The service was sponsored by the Curtis Sisco Chapter of The Union of Black Episcopalians with support from the Racial Reconciliation Commission of EDOLA, Historic St. James A.M.E. Church, Louisiana Conference of A.M.E. Church, St John's A.M.E. Church and Trinity Episcopal Church, New Orleans.



### **Planting Trees to Save the Louisiana Wetlands (right)**

*[Photograph from the St. John's, Kenner, Facebook Group]* On February 17, members of All Saints', River Ridge; St. Augustine's, Metairie; St. John's, Kenner; and St. Martin's, Metairie, volunteered with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to plant 600 trees in Manchac, Louisiana, in an effort to restore the Louisiana wetlands and protect homes and businesses from flooding and storm surge. Pictured is the Rev. Seamus Doyle, priest-in-charge of St. John's.



### Love Heals (left)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana] Becca Stevens and the women of Thistle Farms visited Christ Church, Covington on February 24 to share their message about the healing power of love. Thistle Farms' mission is to heal, power, and employ women survivors of trafficking, prostitution, and addiction. They do this by providing safe and supportive housing, the opportunity for economic independence, and a strong community of advocates and partners.



### St. Patrick Parade Party (right)

[Photograph from the St. Martin's, Metairie, Facebook Page] St. Martin's, Metairie, held their annual St. Patrick's Parade Fundraiser on March 11. The parade rolls in front of the church. The church sells food and beverages to raise money for church ministries.



### New Van for St. Anna's (left)

[Photograph from the St. Anna's Facebook Page] Darryl Durham of St. Anna's, New Orleans, shows off the new van St. Anna's acquired in March thanks to generous donations. The van was desperately needed to replace a broken van. The children of St. Anna's can now be safely transported to the Anna's Place NOLA afterschool program.



### March for Our Lives (right)

[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana] We are proud of the youth, clergy, and parishioners who added their voice to the March for Our Lives Movement. Over 80 Episcopalians in the Diocese of Louisiana participated in rallies held on March 24 in Baton Rouge and New Orleans to demand the passing of common sense gun legislation and to put an end to the senseless deaths of children in school shootings.





### **Fish Fry at All Saints' (left)**

*[Photograph from the All Saints', River Ridge, Facebook Page]* All Saints' held their annual Lenten Fish Fry on March 16.



### **Back Around the Clock (left)**

*[Photograph from the Trinity Church, New Orleans Facebook Page]* Trinity Church, New Orleans, held the 20th Annual Bach Around the Clock from March 23-24. Bach Around the Clock is a 29-hour music marathon to celebrate the birthday of Johann Sebastian Bach.



### **ECW Tea in Slidell (left)**

*[Photograph by Kristen Wheeler, Christ Church, Slidell]* Christ Church, Slidell, held a tea for the ECW on March 24. Fancy hats were required.



### **Diocesan Men's Retreat (right)**

*[Photograph by Mark Berry, Christ Church, Covington]* From March 2-4, men from across the diocese gathered at the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center for an annual retreat. The weekend was organized by Christ Church, Covington, and featured the Rt. Rev. Jake Owensby, Bishop of Western Louisiana, as the keynote speaker.





### **Rogation Day Cross (left)**

*[Photograph from the St. George's, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* On Rogation Sunday, May 6, St. George's rector, the Very Rev. Richard Easterling, blessed the seeds and gardening tools of parishioners. They also handed out these crosses for parishioners to place in their gardens.



### **Stepping Stones Young Adult Retreats (right)**

*[Photograph from the Stepping Stones Facebook Page]* The Rev. Liz Embler-Beazley (St. Paul's, New Orleans) and the Rev. Watson Lamb (Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans) are leading a series of retreats for young adults. The Stepping Stones Retreat is meant to give young adults some tools and a means of discernment which is not specifically about discerning a call to ordination. In the photo above, young adults gathered at St. James, Baton Rouge, on April 28 to discuss prayer.



### **Parish Picnic in Ponchatoula (left)**

*[Photograph from the All Saints, Ponchatoula, Facebook Page]* On April 29, All Saints, Ponchatoula, held an outdoor service and parish picnic.



### **New Community Garden at St. Mark's, Harvey (right)**

*[Photograph from the St. Mark's, Harvey, Facebook Page]* St. Mark's has installed a community garden for all people of the neighborhood to enjoy.





### **Mission Trip to Costa Rica (left)**

*[Photograph from the St. Andrew's, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* The Rev. Robert Beazley, left, and the Rev. Jim Morrison, right, travelled with the 8th grade class of St. Andrew's School on a mission trip to Costa Rica from April 3-9. In this photograph, they were travelling through the Panama City airport.



### **Out of this World at Youth Rally (right)**

*[Photograph by the Rev. Jane-Allison Wiggan-Nettles]* The youth of the Diocese of Louisiana held their annual Youth Rally from April 21-22 at the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center. The theme was Out of This World. Youth Rally is an opportunity for the youth to gather for fellowship, fun, and retreat time.



### **Blessing of the Fleet on Bayou Dularge (left)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* Bishop Thompson blesses the shrimp boats along Bayou Dularge during the annual Blessing of the Fleet. St. Andrew's has hosted this event for over 60 years.



### **Molokai Pilgrimage with Christ Church (right)**

*[Photograph from the Christ Church, Covington Facebook Page]* The Rev. Bill Miller led the annual pilgrimage to Molokai, Hawaii, in April with parishioners of Christ Church, Covington.



## Out and About in the Diocese



### Holy Week in the Diocese of Louisiana

*[Photographs from the Facebook Pages of the churches mentioned in the caption]* Top row from left to right: Palm Sunday at St. Michael's, Mandeville; Good Friday in the park at Trinity, Morgan City; Maundy Thursday Altar of Repose at St. Martin's, Metairie; Maundy Thursday at St. Paul's, New Orleans; Good Friday at St. Luke's, Baton Rouge; Good Friday at Christ Church, Slidell.



### Easter in the Diocese of Louisiana

*[Photographs from the Facebook Pages of the churches mentioned in the caption]* Top row from left to right: Trinity Church, Baton Rouge; St. Paul's, New Orleans; St. Patrick's, Zachary; Bottom row from left to right: Easter Vigil at St. Andrew's, New Orleans; St. John's, Thibodaux; Church of the Annunciation, New Orleans.





### **Crawfish Boil at Mount Olivet, New Orleans (left)**

*[Photograph from the Mount Olivet, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* Parishioners and Algiers Point neighbors enjoyed the annual Mount Olivet Crawfish Boil on May 6.



### **Breaking Ground on a New Field House (right)**

*[Photograph provided by Episcopal School of Baton Rouge]* Construction is officially underway on the new Episcopal Athletic Field House! Students, donors and school leadership gathered on May 17 to celebrate the groundbreaking of the first new athletic building on campus since 1982.



### **An Evening With Father Robert Haase (left)**

*[Photograph from the St. Luke's Baton Rouge, Facebook Page]* Franciscan Fr. Albert Haase visited St. Luke's on May 4 to present, "Becoming the Eucharist We Receive."



### **New Yoga Class at St. Margaret's (right)**

*[Photograph from the St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge, Facebook Page]* St. Margaret's kicked off their Holy Yoga Under the Stained Glass class in May.



### **Breaking Ground in Denham Springs (left)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* On April 22, St. Francis, Denham Springs, held a groundbreaking ceremony for their new sanctuary. After the Great Flood of 2016 damaged their property, the congregation began to plan for a new sanctuary.



### **New Sanctuary in Process for St. Francis (right)**

*[Photograph from the St. Francis, Denham Spring, Facebook Page]* The foundation for the new sanctuary was complete by the end of May 2018.



### **Is That a Thing? (left)**

*[Photograph from the St. Paul's, New Orleans, Facebook Page]* St. Paul's, New Orleans, held a weekly class called Is That a Thing, Conversation With Community Leaders on the Frontline of Societal Issues. On this night, the class was joined by Archdeacon Cindy Obier and Kerry Meyers to discuss prison ministry.



### **Feast of the Corpus Christi (right)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament held their annual service to celebrate the Feast of Corpus Christi on May 31 at St. George's, New Orleans. The traditional procession of the sacrament down St. Charles Avenue was included.





### **131st Annual Gathering of the ECW of the Diocese of Louisiana**

*[Photographs by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* On Friday, May and Saturday, May 19, the ECW of the Episcopal Church met at Christ Church, Covington, for their annual gathering. Friday evening opened with a presentation on Christ Church's CEEP program, followed by evensong led by the Christ Church choir. On Saturday morning, the annual business meeting was conducted to elect officers and pass a budget. The keynote speaker was Christ Church rector, the Rev. Bill Miller. The afternoon wrapped up with workshops led by several Christ Church parishioners and members of the ECW from other churches.



### **The Province IV ECW Conference (left)**

*[Photograph from Ann Ball, All Saints', River Ridge]* Diocese of Louisiana ECW President Ann Ball (right) and Vice President-elect Reba Mackey with National ECW President Liz Towle at the Province IV ECW Conference at Kanuga on June 6.

### **Showing the Episcopal Love at the New Orleans Pride Parade (right)**

*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]* Clergy and parishioners from across the Diocese of Louisiana marched in the New Orleans Pride Parade to show that God loves all and the Episcopal Church welcomes you. Our participation in the parade was organized by Inclusive Louisiana, the diocesan ministry to the LGBTQ community.



## **Bishop's Journal: January 1, 2018—May 2018**

January 1: Spent the day watching football. Great games for the SEC.

January 2: Had to have the plumber over for a drip in the sink. Turned out my disposal was rusted through and through.

January 3: Office work and trying to catch up with the staff with several events coming down the pike quickly.

January 4: In the office before the staff arrives. I have several items to take care of before the busy weekend. I have a morning meeting with the two canons followed by a meeting with a priest.

January 5: I spent the morning working on my sermon and then in the afternoon I had a wedding rehearsal. Our grandchildren came for the weekend, which is always a blessing.

January 6: I officiated at Bobby and Julie Hadzor's wedding then home to play with the grandchildren.

January 7: My visitation is in Trinity, Morgan City. I preached and celebrated. Afterwards we had a very nice lunch and then drove back to New Orleans.

January 8: Rebecca is up all night with a violent stomach bug. I stayed home nursing her while the Presbyters Conference at the Solomon Center got underway.

January 9: I spend the day taking care of Rebecca who seems to be heading for recovery.

January 10: Rebecca went to work today and I head to Baton Rouge to meet with the Sr. Warden of one of our churches. Following my meeting I drove back to New Orleans.



*[Photograph courtesy of Church of the Holy Communion, Plaquemine] Bishop Thompson's visitation to Church of the Holy Communion.*

January 11: Canon's Kellogg and Manning meet with me all day planning and going over material for the new year. It was a very productive day.

January 12: I spent time working on my sermon and then in the afternoon I had a walkthrough with Fr. Ed Thompson's family, who have been living at the rectory on Canal St.

January 13: I drove to the Solomon Center for an Executive Board meeting. We finished in record time! In the afternoon I officiated the Frances Gaudet service at St. Luke's New Orleans. She was a remarkable woman.

January 14: My visitation was at St. George's, New Orleans, where I officiate, preach and confirm one. We had a very nice lunch following.

January 15: The office is closed for MLK day.

January 16: Cold weather caused us to close the office.

January 17: Spent much of the day in the office making phone calls. The staff was still off due to ice on roads and no water.

January 18: The staff is still off. I had lunch with Fr. Mark Holland and Liz.

January 19: The staff is back in the office and the water situation in New Orleans is beginning to gain ground. In the evening Rebecca and I take our speaker for the weekend, Ed Bacon and his wife Hope, out to dinner.

January 20: Canon John Kellogg put on a wonderful teaching for stewardship and planned giving. Many of our churches were present. Unfortunately several of the ones who are struggling with stewardship matters did not show up. The day was very informative.

January 21: My official visit was at the Cathedral. Fr. Ed Bacon preached and I officiated. After the service Rebecca and I take Ed and Hope out for brunch.

January 22: I was in the office a bit today but took the afternoon off.

January 23: We had staff meeting in the morning and that was followed by a meeting with Deacon Debbie Scalia for her annual consultation. In the afternoon, I had a meeting with another deacon to talk about miscommunication. We all need to be reminded about the advantages and disadvantages of Facebook. I drove to Baton Rouge for the evening.

January 24: I had three heavy meetings in Baton Rouge then headed back to New Orleans for a meeting

with neighbors who live around the property on Canal St. I was happy to hear their concerns.

January 25: In the morning I had two meetings with Mr. Davis Jahncke who was the architect for the Solomon Center. That was followed by lunch with Fr. Harry Jenkins. That afternoon Canon Manning and I drove down to Houma to meet with the vestries of Trinity Morgan City and St. John's Thibodaux. It was a hard meeting but productive. We returned back to New Orleans late that evening.

January 26: I was in the office in the morning and then drove to the Solomon Center for a Commission on Ministry meeting with all who are going through the discernment process. I really enjoyed the evening.

January 27: The discernment process continued and I return to New Orleans later in the afternoon. We gave three individuals permission to begin seminary next fall.

January 28: My visitation was at the Church of the Incarnation in Amite. We had a wonderful service followed by a nice lunch.

January 29: I discovered today that my car had been vandalized over the night. Both windows on the driver's side had been smashed. Nothing was taken in the car just an expensive mess to clean up. The New Orleans Police were very attentive as they conducted a fingerprinting and DNA test.

January 30: We had our weekly staff meeting then more meetings following. In the afternoon I spent time with the insurance company and glass company to have my car fixed. At the end of the day, the Disciplinary Board met to organize in the event they are ever needed.

January 31: Canon Manning and I had a phone conference with the church attorney in the morning followed by my annual consultation with Fr. Bill Miller, rector of Christ Church Covington. Following I had to drive to a notary to have some papers signed for the Diocese.

February 1: I have an early dentist appointment and then back to the office. It's a quiet day, working on Bible study questions and returning phone calls.

February 2: I spend the day writing and the office is quiet. You can tell Mardi Gras is in the air.

February 3: I drive to the Solomon Conference Center for a board meeting. So much is going on out there this weekend. It's great seeing youth in meetings.

February 4: Rebecca and I leave early for the airport. We fly to Sewanee for a Regents meeting. Tonight the



*[Photograph by Karen Mackey] Bishop Thompson leads a workshop at the Stewardship Conference at St. Paul's, New Orleans on January 20.*

Vice Chancellor will have us over for a Super Bowl party. It's a wonderful evening and the game is very exciting.

February 5: The day begins with a 7:30 a.m. Eucharist service for the Regents and then we return for breakfast and the start of our meeting. It was a long day but the evening was fantastic. Rebecca and I sat down for dinner and at our table was a freshman. When I introduced myself, she told me she was Rebecca French from New Orleans. We had a wonderful time listening to Rebecca and learning about her life at Sewanee.

February 6: We begin the day with meetings and at noon head for Nashville to fly back to New Orleans. We finally arrive home around 9:00 p.m.

February 7: I drove to Baton Rouge for a lunch meeting with Fr. Chris Capaldo. It turns out he has discovered a cemetery once owned by St. Mary's Episcopal Church that was deconsecrated somewhere in the 1930's. We need to clean it up. That afternoon I had a board meeting at St. James' Place and then drive home late. The traffic is horrible plus there is a parade outside my house when I arrive. I was too tired to go out and yell for beads.

February 8: I had a very difficult meeting in the morning. In the afternoon a catering company brought by food for us to taste as we plan for the chrism mass to take place in Holy Week. I walked home only to discover that our grandchildren had arrived for Mardi Gras. Our daughter in law was brave to bring them without our son, who had church meetings and couldn't come with them. Our grandson Mack was so excited watching the parades. He kept repeating, "Throw me some beads, mister!" Boy did they!



February 9: I spend the morning working at the office and then go home to get ready for the parades with Mack and Liza. What a treat they are.

February 10: More parades and I can tell that Mack is slowing down a bit. It's a lot to take in and he hasn't learned to pace his energy. They leave after the first parade and fall asleep before they leave New Orleans. Our guest, Bishop Benhase and his wife Kelly from Georgia were not able to visit for the weekend due to the death of his father. Rebecca and I enjoy a nice meal together in the evening.

February 11: We were supposed to host the clergy during the Sunday afternoon parades, but we cancelled it due to the weather. As it turned out we could have. We rescheduled our party for Mardi Gras Day hoping for better weather.

February 12: I take my day off but work on material for the Bible study and Ash Wednesday services.

February 13: The office is closed due to Mardi Gras.

February 14: I celebrate and preach for the Ash Wednesday service at the Cathedral. In the afternoon I travel to Baton Rouge to preach and celebrate the Ash Wednesday service for St. Michael's and All Angels. I return to New Orleans late that evening.

February 15: I went to the office early and then to the doctor's office later that morning. In the afternoon I have a phone conference with Bishops Against Gun Violence. The conversation is spirited due to the recent senseless shooting in Florida. I spend the afternoon writing down some of my thoughts regarding the state of our nation and our obsession with guns.



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Matthew's, Houma] Bishop Thompson was welcomed with a special sign at St. Matthew's for his annual visitation.*

February 16: I took my car in for an oil change and tire rotation. I enjoy working in the waiting room, overhearing people talk about their lives, and current events. Everyone is an expert today. I finished my letter to the diocese as well as my sermon for Sunday.

February 17: I officiate the service at Trinity, New Orleans for Absalom Jones and Richard Allen. The service was wonderful. The Rev. Corey Buttee preached.

February 18: My visitation was with St. Timothy's, LaPlace. After the service, we had a nice brunch. I made it home in time to have a quick visit with our daughter Virginia before she flew back to Kansas City.

February 19: I took my day off to work on my tax returns.

February 20: The day began with our weekly staff meeting followed by a meeting with Canon Kellogg. At noon I celebrated the Eucharist at the Cathedral and then we had a tasting from a local chef to see if we might hire them for the clergy's luncheon. Later in the afternoon, I met with Laurel McCartney to choose our UTO Grant to submit.

February 21: In the morning I had a long coaching conference call and then worked on some projects. I followed that with lunch with Fr. Jim Morrison. The day ended with an Environmental meeting at the office. Joey Clavijo has agreed to chair this important committee.

February 22: I had two annual consultations in the morning, Mother Jane-Allison Wiggin-Nettles and Fr. Winston Rice. I ran home for lunch and then went to St. Martin's for the monthly board meeting.

February 23: I substituted for Fr. Andy Thayer at Trinity, New Orleans for their 7:30 am Eucharist. I was called the "new guy" by someone who had me confused but they didn't know they were confused. After a while it occurred to this person that maybe I wasn't the new guy, so he asked, "Who are you?" I was a bit embarrassed and then said, "I'm the bishop of Louisiana." "Oh," he said. There is nothing like being reminded that in the grand scheme of things, we are just, "oh". Later I drove to Chatawa to see Sr. Ruth, my spiritual director. Sr. Ruth has been my director for over 25 years and she still has work to do with me.

February 24: I have no meetings this Saturday, so I go for a long walk and then drive to Baton Rouge to spend the night.

February 25: My visitation is with Holy Communion in Plaquemine. The church was full and I received two and confirmed one and one child made her first

communion. The day was wonderful and Fr. Chris Capaldo was a gracious host. After the service, I was treated to two types of gumbo. They were both delicious.

February 26: I take the day off but not before I have lunch with Kellan Lyman who is a missionary in the Philippines. She will leave the following week. Later I have a phone conference.

February 27: The day begins with our staff meeting and that is followed by my consultation with Fr. Duane Wiggin-Nettles. Duane has two missions, Annunciation and Mt. Olivet. This meeting is followed by another tasting for the clergy luncheon. I have a phone conference and then drive to Baton Rouge to spend the night.

February 28: I have two morning meetings. One is with Fr. Roman Roldan, rector of Grace St. Francisville. Roman has been a strong leader in the upper diocese and I am grateful for his work. The next meeting was with Fr. Joe Reynolds, the interim at St. James. Joe has done an outstanding job leading this congregation during these past two years. On my way home I made several phone calls while slowly making my way through New Orleans.

March 1: I have my annual visitation to Christ Episcopal School lower and upper school. This is one of the highlights of my year. The eleventh graders submit questions for me and it is fantastic. They keep me on my toes. I spend time in a class and then drive over to Christwood to meet with Mother Peggy Scott regarding prison ministry. We are treated to lunch by Fr. Steve Holzhalf. I drive back to New Orleans for an early evening phone conference with two of our parishes.

March 2: I work on my sermon in the morning and then drive to the Solomon Center for the annual men's retreat. Bishop Jake Owensby is our leader. I really enjoy this event. Even though it is put on by the men of Christ Church Covington it is open to all the men of the diocese.

March 3: Men's retreat in the morning and then I drive back to New Orleans.

March 4: My visitation is with St. Matthews, Houma. What a day! I arrive to find big, bold letters, WELCOME BISHOP MORRIS THOMPSON! I preach and celebrate the service to a very nice crowd. Following the service, the church put on a spread that is unbelievable. It is a great day.

March 5: I get up early to drive to Camp Allen, Texas for the House of Bishops' meeting. Driving through



*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana] Bishop Thompson blesses the ground that will soon be the location of the new sanctuary of St. Francis, Denham Springs.*

Houston is worse than driving in New Orleans and Baton Rouge if you can believe that!

March 6: Yesterday was the beginning of the HOB. It is always good to see sister and brother bishops. We begin with Eucharist and the Presiding Bishop preaching. The theme of this gathering is evangelism.

March 7: More discussion regarding evangelism and how we connect to the broader community. We end the day with class dinners, my class being 2010.

March 8: More work at the HOB meeting.

March 9: I stay for the first half of the HOB meeting and leave after lunch with Provence IV bishops. I had a long drive home. Executive Board meeting tomorrow. When I reach Lake Charles the traffic comes to a complete halt. It takes me three hours to get through Lake Charles due to construction. I make it as far as the Solomon Center.

March 10: The Executive Board meeting goes well. Back in the car to New Orleans. I've been away from Rebecca too long.

March 11: My visitation is in Bogalusa at St. Matthews. It is a very nice beginning but right in the middle of my sermon, a clap of thunder shakes the church. In spite of the rain, it is a great day of receiving and confirming new members into the church. A very nice luncheon follows and then we head back to New Orleans. Because it is day-light-savings Rebecca and I are able to go for a long walk.



March 12: I spend the day out of the car! Too much driving lately. It is nice to relax and not have anywhere to go.

March 13: The day begins with our weekly staff meeting. Following that, I have two annual consultations. The first with Fr. Bill Terry of St. Anna's. The church is doing amazing work on a shoestring budget. Later I meet with Canon Kellogg for his annual consultation. He is doing fine work for the Diocese and St. Mark's, Harvey. The church has shown steady growth since his arrival. In the afternoon I spend time catching up on things from last week.

March 14: I only have two meetings today and then I spend time working on my weekly Lenten series. I am enjoying this work very much.

March 15: Rebecca and I drive to Jackson for some quick downtime.

March 16: I spend time on two phone conferences and in between do a little yard work.

March 17: No meetings this Saturday.

March 18: I don't have a visitation so I visit a church of a friend. It is nice to sit in the pews for a change.

March 19: It's my day off but I have to attend to some office matters. Rebecca and I get in a long walk.

March 20: The day begins with our weekly staff meeting and then I have a two-hour phone conference with the Regents of the University of the South, Sewanee. In the afternoon I have one meeting and the rest of the time is spent going over the calendar and other office work.



*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana]  
Episcopalians marching in March for Our Lives.*

March 21: In the morning I have a very difficult meeting with a priest. If I dislike anything about my job it is the disciplinary actions I must make. Later I have a listening lunch with three priests. I want to know how the diocese can better care for all our clergy, especially the women clergy. The conversation is very fruitful.

March 22: Dean David DuPlantier visits for his annual consultation. The cathedral is looking good with all the work that has been going on. I left for a couple of hours to have my car worked on.

March 23: I have appliance workers at my home so I work from the house on sermons. Later I have lunch with ECW president, Ann Ball. We laughed a lot about our experiences in the Diocesan office.

March 24: I travel to Baton Rouge to walk with our youth in the March for Our Lives rally. Seeing teenagers voicing their position, standing in front of large crowds and speaking meaningful words makes me very proud. I have said before, this generation amazes me. They are fighting a war that should have been over long ago and paying a high cost at my generation's expense. They are returning home with dreams to make a difference. Their children are now coming to the forefront, voicing their desire to see change in the communities in which we live. It is a day to remember.

March 25: Palm Sunday! It is a great day. My visitation is at Annunciation in New Orleans. We began with the traditional blessing of the palms then walk down Napoleon Ave. following two donkeys. After several blocks, we return to the church to continue the worship. I preside, preach, baptize one adult and received and confirm several parishioners. As if that wasn't enough we have a wonderful buffet in the parish hall.

March 26: Monday is my usual day off but today is the Chrism Mass and renewal of vows for the clergy at the Cathedral. Just about every clergy person is present. I preach and officiate the service then host the clergy to a nice lunch in the parish hall. I am grateful for the ministry I share with our deacons and priest.

March 27: We have our staff meeting in the morning and then I have a phone appointment. Later I attend a meeting at City Hall regarding the property we own on Canal Street.

March 28: I have a relatively easy day with only one appointment with a parishioner. This leaves the day open for me to work on sermons.

## Out and About in the Diocese

March 29: Today I spend Maundy Thursday at the Cathedral. I always enjoy this moving liturgy, the music, sermon, and stripping of the altar.

March 30: Good Friday. Rebecca and I worship at Trinity, New Orleans. The choir is very good, as is Fr. Andrew Thayer's sermon.

March 31: Holy Saturday. Rebecca and I go for a very long walk. The weather is gorgeous.

April 1: What an Easter Sunday, April Fool's day. I preach to a packed house at the Cathedral. The music is absolutely wonderful. After a home cooked meal, Rebecca and I sit outside to watch the people walk by or ride by on the streetcars. The weather is still beautiful.

April 2: I have some work to do today but not much. Our block has been blocked off for a movie being shot across the street.

April 3: Canon Kellogg and I travel to Baton Rouge to learn more about coastal erosion and what the legislature is doing to rebuild. We hear the governor speak and are impressed. That being said, you couldn't pay me to be a legislator. All the fighting they do is disheartening.

April 4: I'm spending the day working on the Acts teaching we are involved with along with other Episcopalians across the country.

April 5: Study Day. I spend a few hours on the phone.

April 6: I spend the day working on my sermon and Bible study. Go fishing and catch about 20 bass. Not bad!

April 7: I spend the day doing house chores.

April 8: My visitation is at St. Paul's, New Orleans, where I preach, celebrate, baptize, confirm and receive eight people. It is a full house and following the service they serve Muffins with Morris. Pretty clever!

April 9: I spend the day down at City Hall working on issues concerning the Canal St. Property.

April 10: We begin the day with our staff meeting. We celebrate Deacon Elaine Clements birthday and afterward, I take her to lunch for her annual consultation. Elaine has put the Diocese of Louisiana on the map as a leader in disaster preparedness and recovery. In the afternoon I meet with Carol Cook, the new Altar Guild chair.

April 11: The morning is busy with individuals who are either looking at seminaries or who want to enter the process for seminary. In both cases, it is exciting to see their enthusiasm for serving the Lord.



*[Photograph courtesy of St. Luke's, Baton Rouge] Bishop Thompson's visitation to St. Luke's*

April 12: I drive to the Solomon Center to spend time with St. Martin's School Board retreat. Before we meet I spend time with the Director of SECC. All is well.

April 13: The retreat ends around 1:30 and I head back to New Orleans.

April 14: The weather is so horrible that French Quarter Fest has been cancelled today. So much rain.

April 15: My visitation is with St. Andrew's, Paradis. We have a nice service and I am served at the altar by a second grader that knows her altar placement. How wonderful it is to see the joy of young people wanting to serve.

April 16: I take my day off and do some things around the condo.

April 17: The day begins with a staff meeting and then a quick meeting with the canons. Later I call Fr. Drew Rollins to talk about their capital funds campaign. It is all pretty exciting. Later I meet with Chris Speed to make some financial decisions and then off to chapel where Canon Manning is presiding. It is nice to sit in the congregation. In the afternoon I meet with some folks about Kairos and the need for more volunteers. The day ends with an Interfaith Service for the Tricentennial of New Orleans at St. Louis Cathedral. The service is well attended by clergy and laity alike. I drive to Baton Rouge for the evening.

April 18: I celebrate and confirm one student at Episcopal High this morning. What a great experience to celebrate this event with the school. I drive back to New Orleans to have lunch with Chancellor Cove Geary and Canon Manning. Later in the afternoon, I meet with representatives from UBE and the Racial Reconciliation Commission.



April 19: In the morning I meet with Fr's Angerer and Capaldo who attended an evangelism conference. I want to hear about their experiences. Later I have lunch with Fr. St. Romain who is back in our diocese. Later I drive to Violet, LA to meet a friend. Interesting drive!

April 20: I spend the morning working on my sermon and then Rebecca and I drive to Baton Rouge to attend a gathering and spend the night.

April 21: I wrap up my sermon and ran some errands and then have dinner with some parishioners.

April 22: My visitation is with St. Paul's/Holy Trinity, New Roads, where I preach and celebrate. Afterwards, we have a very nice lunch. Rebecca and I then drive to Denham Springs where St. Francis holds a groundbreaking ceremony for their new nave. The community really turns out for this event. We are all very excited about this new endeavor for St. Francis.

April 23: I spend the day on the phone. Not what I expected.

April 24: We begin the day with a staff meeting and then the canons and I meet with Chris Speed. Later on, I have a meeting with a parishioner. In the afternoon I am able to do some office work before I drive to LaPlace to meet with the vestry and then on to Baton Rouge for the evening.

April 25: I begin the day at St. Luke's, Baton Rouge where I preach and celebrate for their school, something I always enjoy. Following the service, I meet with Deacon Reese Wiggins for his annual consultation. My later appointment doesn't show up so

I am able to drive back to New Orleans earlier than expected. The day ends with a conference call regarding property.

April 26: I officiate a funeral for a friend who lived in our condo group and then have lunch with the family. In the evening I preach and celebrate at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Following the service, we have a very nice dinner. I arrive home to find our daughter having dinner with Rebecca. It is great having Virginia home.

April 27: I spend the day working on my sermon and then Rebecca, Virginia and I enjoy a very nice meal at Galatoire's.

April 28: I have no meetings this Saturday.

April 29: My visitation is at St. Andrew's, Bayou Dularge. It is a great day of preaching, celebrating, eating crawfish and blessing the boats. This is always a highlight of the year.

April 30: I take my day off.

May 1: I have an 8:00 am meeting followed by our staff meeting. After several phone calls, I drive to St. Francisville for a pre-Angola meeting. In the evening I preach and celebrate and confirm one in the prison. I am always moved by the men who are incarcerated yet work hard to make the best of their situation. I drive back to New Orleans late that evening.

May 2: I drive to Jackson to prepare for a group of people who will fish with me on Thursday.

May 3: Today we catch over fifty fish but throw back everything over 15 inches. We keep a little over 10 to eat in the evening.

May 4: I spend the day working on my sermon and then drive back to New Orleans later in the afternoon.

May 5: I participate in an ecumenical service for the new mayor in the morning.

May 6: My visitation for today is at St. James in Baton Rouge where I officiate, preach and confirm 19 youth and three adults. It is a good day and following the service, the Very Rev. Joe Reynolds and his wife Elizabeth take me to lunch. Joe has worked hard as the interim and it shows. Much healing has taken place.

May 7: I have an unscheduled emergency meeting at the office. One of our churches had a theft. It sickens me to hear the details. I now know what a wolf in sheep clothing looks like.

May 8: I have an early service at St. Paul's School in New Orleans where I celebrate the mass for their Baccalaureate ceremony. Then I drive back to the



*[Photograph by Karen Mackey, Diocese of Louisiana] Bishop Thompson's giving the State of the Church Address to the Diocesan ECW.*

office for a pastoral meeting followed by lunch with Canon Manning. In the afternoon I have another pastoral meeting with a parishioner. Then I drive to Baton Rouge to spend the night.

May 9: I have a full day in Baton Rouge. The first five hours are meetings with five individuals. In the afternoon I attend the board meeting of St. James' Place but have to leave early to meet the pastor of Bethany Church. I thoroughly enjoy meeting the Rev Jonathan Stockstill and his wife Angie. The traffic is painfully slow and I don't arrive home until 8:30 pm.

May 10: I have an early morning meeting with the Rev Bobby Hadzor for his first annual consultation followed by a team approach consultation with the Very Rev. Richard Easterling and the Very Rev. AJ Heine. The day ends with Rebecca and I having dinner with Canon John Kellogg and his wife Tait.

May 11: I spend the day working on my sermon.

May 12: The Executive Board meets at the Solomon Center. The meeting is good and covers a lot of ground.

May 13: My visitation is at Trinity, New Orleans. I confirm, receive and reaffirm over 20 individuals. I also preach and celebrate. It is a good Mother's Day.

May 14: I go fishing with a long time friend of mine and Fr. Craig Dalferes. We are successful. I catch the largest fish I've ever caught. It is a bull red!

May 15: The day begins with our staff meeting and then one meeting after that. I celebrate the noon mass for the staff at the cathedral and then lunch with Canon Kellogg. Fr. Fred Devall visits in the afternoon for his annual consultation and then the day ends with the Commission on Ministries meeting at our house. May 16: We can't meet at the office due to resurfacing of the parking lot. After the meeting, I drive to Baton Rouge for meetings the next day.

May 17: I take my car in for an oil change and then meet with Fr. Ralph Howe for his annual consultation. I have lunch with David Warrington. In the afternoon I drive to Episcopal High for their Baccalaureate. From Episcopal, I drive to the Solomon Center to spend the night.

May 18: I get up early and drive to Christ School in Covington to celebrate their Baccalaureate. Following the service, we have a very nice lunch to celebrate with all the graduates. I drive to New Orleans and spend some time in the office.

May 19: I spend the morning working on sermon material and ECW address and then drive to the Solomon Center for the Deacon's retreat. It is nice being with the deacons who serve so well.



*[Photograph courtesy of St. James, Baton Rouge] Bishop Thompson's visitation to St. James.*

May 20: I have breakfast with the deacons and then drive to Baton Rouge where I participate in Episcopal High's graduation. I stay the night.

May 21: I preach, celebrate and confirm at St. Luke's in Baton Rouge. Following the service, I return to New Orleans for a long walk with Rebecca.

May 22: I take my day off.

May 23: Canon's Manning and Kellogg and I spend the day together to work on material that I plan to put into action this fall. It is a long day but good work is created.

May 24: Early in the morning Chris and I work with our investors and then I meet with Fr. Jim Morrison for his annual consultation. At noon our office has a baby shower for Canon Kellogg and his wife Tait. They are expecting their first child in June. We are all very excited.

May 25: I take a few days off for vacation before the summer kicks in and General Convention starts.

May 26: Vacation

May 27: Spending time with our grandchildren.

May 28: I drive to Meridian, MS to hear my son preach. I think he is better than I am!

May 29: Memorial Day. We drive back to New Orleans.

May 30: Sermon work and other matters.



# Calendar of Upcoming Diocesan Events

## June 23 at 10 a.m.

Ordination of the Rev. Stephen Shortess to the Sacred Order of Priests  
St. John's, 718 Jackson St, Thibodaux  
Clergy: Red stoles; Reception following

## June 25 at 6:30 p.m.

Ordination of the Rev. Regina Brewster-Jenkins to the Sacred Order of Priests  
St. Paul's, 6249 Canal Blvd, New Orleans  
Clergy: White stoles; Reception following

## June 30 at 10 a.m.

Ordination of John Boyd and Joey Clavijo to the Sacred Order of Deacons  
Christ Church Cathedral, 2919 St. Charles Ave, New Orleans  
Clergy: Red stoles; Reception following

## July 5-13

79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Austin

## July 18 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Clergy Day (Topic: General Convention)  
All Saints', 100 Rex Dr., River Ridge

## July 21 from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Stepping Stones Young Adult Retreat: Spirituality in Relationships  
All Saints', 100 Rex Dr., River Ridge

## July 24 at 11 a.m.

Safe Church Ministers Training  
St. Martin's, 2216 Metairie Rd, Metairie

## July 24 at 6 p.m.

Safe Church Ministers Training  
St. George's, 4600 St. Charles Ave, New Orleans

## July 26-27

EfM Mentor Training  
Solomon Episcopal Conference Center

## July 30 at 6 p.m.

Safe Church Ministers Training  
St. Margaret's, 12663 Perkins Rd, Baton Rouge

## August 3-5

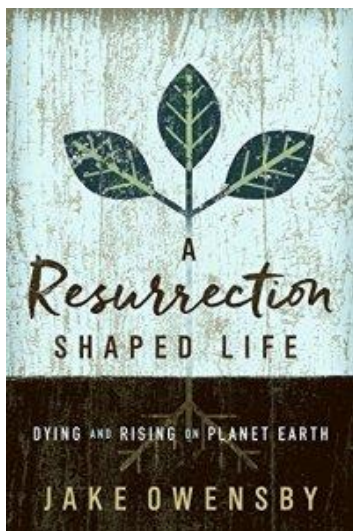
Addiction Ministry Retreat for Men & Women  
Solomon Episcopal Conference Center

## August 5

CMA Giving Sunday

## August 29 from 11 a.m.—2 p.m.

Parish Administrator's Luncheon  
Christ Church Cathedral, 2919 St. Charles Ave, New Orleans



## Recommended Reading from Bishop Thompson

### *A Resurrection Shaped Life*

by the Rt. Rev. Jake Owensby

Can we begin to experience the resurrection in our ordinary life on earth? Bishop Jake Owensby says yes as he re-examines the biblical concept of resurrection and how Jesus' resurrection influences his followers every day.

*A Resurrection Shaped Life* explains how we begin to experience resurrection in Christian practices such as repentance and forgiveness and discusses how new life emerges from our small deaths: suffering, shame, regret, and loss.

Owensby is the bishop of Western Louisiana, an author and blogger.

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