

The Peace

A Quarterly Newsletter from the
Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee

WINTER 2022 | ISSUE 2



WINTER 2022





The Peace

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Diocese of West Tennessee

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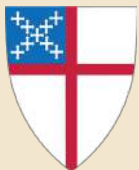


The Anglican Communion

The Most Reverend Justin Welby,

Archbishop of Canterbury

A global community of churches with more than
85 million Christians in more than 165 countries
worldwide



The Episcopal Church

The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry,

Presiding Bishop

An international community of 1.8 million
Christians in North and South America, Europe,
and Taiwan



The Diocese of West Tennessee

The Right Reverend Phoebe A. Roaf, Bishop

Serving 21 counties through 29 churches be-
tween the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers

On the Cover

Morning has broken, like the first morning. St. Colum-
ba is a hidden gem in our Diocese. Learn more on page
14. Photo courtesy of Cindy McMillion.

A MESSAGE FROM Bishop Phoebe



Dear friends,

Welcome to the second issue of *The Peace*, the Episcopal
Diocese of West Tennessee's quarterly publication. In
the midst of the challenges of the COVID pandemic,
our diocese continues to spread the Good News of
Jesus Christ in this part of God's mission field. This
issue highlights recent initiatives by congregations and
ministries.

Stories include how St. John's Episcopal Church in
Memphis found safe ways to celebrate Advent with
children and adults; the efforts of Grace Episcopal
Church in Paris, TN, to support community members
impacted by deadly tornados in December 2021; a
conversation with the Rt. Rev. Mark Edington, Bishop
of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe;
a preview of the 80th General Convention which will
be held this summer in Baltimore, MD; a reflection on
COVID from the Rev. Deacon Randy McCloy, a retired
physician; and updates on diocesan EYC gatherings,
the Barth House college ministry and St. Columba
Conference and Retreat Center.

We hope that you will be inspired by the efforts of our
lay leaders and clergy. We continue to offer hospitality
in the 21 counties which comprise our diocese. In this
season of Epiphany, I am grateful that our light shines
brightly wherever Episcopalians may be found.

Peace,

Bishop Phoebe

The Right Reverend Phoebe Roaf

Bishop & Staff

The Right Reverend Phoebe A. Roaf

Bishop of West Tennessee

The Reverend Canon Sharon Alexander

Canon to the Ordinary

Emily Austin

Minister of Communication

The Reverend Dr. Noah Campbell

College Missioner, Barth House

The Reverend Sarah Cowan

Ministry Associate, Barth House

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The Reverend Deacon Richard Fletcher

Ms. Susan Kenny

The Reverend Gary Meade

Mr. Mike Miller

The Honorable Elijah Noel, Jr.

Mr. Steve Smith

Ms. Kate Trammell

Welcome (back!) to West Tennessee, Reverend Lisa! After serving as Rector of St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Mountain View, California, the Reverend Lisa McIndoo now serves as Rector of Church of the Holy Apostles in Collierville. She has roots in Memphis, though, including prior leadership of youth programming at St. Mary's Cathedral and service on the Board of Directors of St. Columba.

In her own words, she "has a call to serve Christ for all of God's creations. I have a heart for missional engagement, and I am enthusiastic about preaching, teaching, and inclusion – bringing Good News to people that need it."

Lisa lives in Memphis with her husband, Bill, and the youngest of their three sons.



Clergy Transitions

June 2021-January 2022

The Reverend Dr. Jesse Abell, previously Priest-in-Charge at All Saints Episcopal Church in Memphis, now serves as Associate Rector at Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Memphis.

The Reverend Deacon Jessica Abell was ordained to the diaconate in May 2021 and serves as the Chaplain for St. George's Independent School and as Deacon at Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Memphis.

The Reverend Don Brooks has retired from St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Covington.

The Reverend Katherine Bush, previously Head Chaplain at St. Mary's Episcopal School in Memphis, now serves as Associate Rector at Calvary Episcopal Church in Memphis.

The Reverend Sarah Cowan was ordained to the diaconate in June 2021 and is serving as part-time Curate at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Memphis and as part-time Ministry Associate at the Barth House Episcopal Center at

the University of Memphis; she is scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in February 2022.

The Reverend Deacon Richard Fletcher is now serving as regular supply clergy at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Memphis.

The Reverend Deacon Debbie McCanless was ordained to the diaconate in May 2021 and, in addition to her work at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, serves as Deacon at St. John's Episcopal Church in Memphis.

The Reverend Deacon Gayle McCarty is serving in the Diocese of Mississippi as Interim Rector at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Southaven and Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Olive Branch.

The Reverend Amanda McGriff was ordained to the diaconate in June 2021 and is serving a residency as chaplain at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis and also serves as part-time Curate at St. George's Episcopal Church in Germantown; she is scheduled to be ordained to the priesthood in February 2022.

The Rev. Lisa McIndoo, previously Rector at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Mountain View, California, now serves as Rector at Church of the Holy Apostles in Collierville.





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OPPOSITE PAGE

The way of the pilgrim. During Advent 2021, Church of the Holy Communion set aside a Sunday formation hour for contemplative meditation, prayer, and service. Walking the prayer labyrinth was among several activities offered to parishioners to practice quiet and stillness. Photo courtesy of Cindy McMillion.

THE JOURNEY OF LIGHT

Saint John's uncovers new Advent discoveries

by Allison Pace, Director of Parish Family at Saint John's Episcopal Church, Memphis

If you asked me to tell you the story behind this year's family offering, The Journey to Bethlehem on December 23, 2021, I would tell you that the story did not take place in just one night. It took place, as we are taught it does in the making and preparing and anticipating a mystery so big that it is sometimes hard to understand. For me, it took all four weeks of Advent to make that journey, not just traveling towards the light of the world as a final destination, but also traveling with the light, allowing it to guide us and grow us and carry us forward to that moment which grants the unexpected grace of childlike wonder and awe.

Weeks before Advent began, our core team of clergy and program staff sat down to discuss the plans for Christmas at Saint John's, and we knew that it would be the return of something special: gathering in person for worship, which was abruptly cancelled last Christmas amidst nation-wide concerns of the ongoing spread of Covid-19. This was also the year we decided to phase out the children's nativity pageant, which traditionally took place during the sermon of the 4:30PM Christmas Eve Liturgy: a ten-year tradition that needed to end and take shape in a new way.

From the beginning of Advent, the children in our Godly Play circle had been talking about the light: how it grows in the dark and the darkness does not overcome it. The children were mesmerized at the flame of the candles they were allowed to light, hold, and blow out, watching the light change but not go away. "Just because we cannot see it doesn't mean it's not there. It spreads out and fills up the entire room so that wherever we go, we can feel it!" The Godly Play stories came to life in our small circle Sunday after Sunday, as we shared in the journey of the prophets, holy family, shepherds, and magi who were all on the way to Bethlehem. For the journey was not only then, it is also now. This journey took time to unfold within us and around us, and so throughout Advent we made room for it to do just that.

On the third Sunday of Advent, the lights went out.



“

This journey took time to unfold within us and around us, and so throughout Advent we made room for it to do just that.”

-Allison Pace



Photo, opposite page, top: Children were invited to come forward and present their gifts to the newborn King: "Only you know what that gift will be."

Photo, opposite page, middle: Allison Pace, Director of Parish Family at Saint John's

Photo, opposite page, bottom: The spacious courtyard at the corner of Central & Greer provided the ideal setting for an outdoor worship experience, and welcomed families of all sizes and ages to walk their own journey towards Bethlehem.

Tornados ripped through Arkansas, Tennessee, and Kentucky that weekend leaving destruction, massive oak trees and power lines down all around us. Our staff showed up in the quiet, dark nave and knew exactly what to do. After 18+ months of pivoting, kick-ball-changing, twisting and turning through a global pandemic, the clergy and program staff at Saint John's Episcopal Church had learned how to dance with God. And there we were that Sunday in a dark church building holding our candles; out of power but full of so much love and joy. It was a great pause in the middle of December to remember again that the light shines in the darkness. Worship by candlelight that Sunday carried us forward and showed us the way to Bethlehem.

As we drew nearer to Christmas and prepared for a new offering, it was no surprise that we received multiple questions and calls to clarify exactly what the new children's offering on Thursday, December 23rd from 4:30-5:30pm would be like. I knew this offering needed to be unlike anything we had ever done before, and beyond anything that was expected. It needed to press the pause button—like the power outage that we never saw coming in the middle of December. It needed to make room for the light of the world to shine in the darkness—that unexpected gift we are never prepared to receive. So we organized, communicated and delegated roles among our core staff and volunteers; all of us having faith that the presence of the Holy Spirit would take shape and move in ways that we could not plan on or control. I knew God would show up among us in unexpected ways, but I didn't know how.

With hundreds of candles and faithful volunteers, the "Journey to Bethlehem" began. The worship bulletin of the night was written from the curriculum of Godly Play and broken down into candle stations. As families traveled to Bethlehem, which means house of bread, they made many stops along the way. Children and their families were invited to become travelers on the way toward the newborn King. They were greeted in the spacious courtyard with lanterns, candles, maps and burlap sacks of coins to pay their taxes and sign the citizen's registry, a mandate ordered by Emperor Caesar Augustus. The village bread baker enticed them with fresh loaves of individually packaged rolls, and the tax collector gave a short and sweet explanation of the tax laws in those days.

After taking care of business it was time to find a place to stay, and as we know, all of the inns were full. The Happy Olive Inn, the Fig Tree House, and the Holey Sandal Lodge hung signs on their door in Greek letters announcing "No vacancy." As families of travelers held their candles and walked through the courtyard, passing by the grazing sheep and donkey companions, prophets greeted them with candle torches to rekindle their light and explain which way to go. These prophets pointed to a manger behind the courtyard gates where sheep, a donkey and cow were eating fresh hay before settling in for the night. You are invited to stay with them, the prophets said. Something amazing is about to happen tonight. As if they agreed with that very statement, the friendly sheep nearby were extra-vocal this night.

Now, let me add a sidebar that during our Godly Play wondering time on the great mystery of Christmas, it was unanimously agreed upon by the children that when it comes to mysteries, animals know things that we humans do not.

As it was time for little and tall travelers alike to enter in the dark nave, they were greeted by statuary of angels, pointing the way towards the Christ child. Each of the four candle stations ahead included a narration of the Journey to Bethlehem story. The line of sight was a direct path towards the newborn king, which was illuminated by candles and accompanied by shadow images of the shepherds, magi and holy family. At each station, travelers lit a candle, enjoyed the light, and remembered the stories of those who also made the journey with us.

Before reaching the Christ child, families were invited to pick up an empty gift box tied with

(Light continued on page 16)

THE CALM AFTER THE STORM

Grace Episcopal Church leads ecumenical storm relief effort

On the night and early-morning hours of December 10-11, 2021, the deadliest late-season tornado outbreak in U.S. history occurred in the Southern United States and Ohio Valley. The path of the storms traced through Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee, and Kentucky, leaving devastation in its wake. The death toll from the storm system was 90, and at least 1,000 families were left homeless or had their property severely damaged.

But where there is need, there you will often find the helpers.

Minister of Communication Emily Austin spoke with Dr. Pam Evans, Senior Warden at Grace Episcopal Church in Paris, Tennessee, about how this small but mighty faith community is bringing relief to a region in recovery. As of January 3, 2022, Grace Church has raised \$4,875 towards local disaster recovery.

EMILY: Of all the churches in our Diocese, Grace Episcopal Church was situated closest to the path of the storm. Tell me about the night of December 10 for you.

PAM: The afternoon before the storms, we were receiving all the warnings of the storms that were on their way. Of course, it being a Saturday night in December, lots of people were also preparing for Christmas and holiday gatherings. My husband's office Christmas party was happening that night, but everyone left and headed home early because of the storms.

The following morning, we started the process of making phone calls to check in with people to see if they were OK. Some of those aerial photographs of the devastation were stunning. It's just really remarkable that there was not more loss of life. The Reverend Bill Burks, who was serving as supply clergy for our church then, was only three miles away from the path of intense destruction.



Food for the soul. Part of Grace Episcopal Church's outreach includes providing financial support for the Poot's BBQ mobile food truck, a family-owned business. Poot's volunteers their time to cook and distribute free onsite hot meals, funded by the local faith community, to families affected by the storm and those helping with the recovery. They arrive onsite and can cook and serve without any utilities. They also deliver uncooked food. Photo provided by Pam Evans.

Gratefully, he and his wife, Janice, did well.

That Sunday morning, people just came to church ready to make monetary donations to be allocated to storm relief. Not too long before these storms, in August, the town of Waverly, Tennessee experienced severe floods. Our church had already collected some physical items that we were prepared to donate to that relief effort, but pretty quickly, we realized that people could get overwhelmed with donated items. We knew that financial support would be a lot more useful for specific needs.

EMILY: Right. You don't really need extra canned goods when you don't even have running water.

PAM: And, you can't do much with canned food if you don't even have a microwave or a stove. I mean, you're just completely displaced.

EMILY: I'm sure it was overwhelming for you at Grace Church, too.

PAM: As we moved forward in disaster recovery, we knew we'd need to partner together with other churches. Grace Church is part of a downtown church association – Paris First United Methodist Church, First Christian Church, and Quinn Chapel – and our churches often partner in ecumenical ways during Lent and Advent. We also did online services together at the start of COVID, and we banded together to support and encourage COVID vaccination later on in

(Storm Relief continued on page 17)



A CONVERSATION WITH BISHOP MARK EDINGTON

On Sunday, November 21, 2021, Church of the Holy Communion welcomed the Right Reverend Mark Edington, Bishop in Charge of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, to the Adult Forum, where he discussed how the Episcopal Church has adapted and thrived within a more secularized context. Minister of Communication Emily Austin recently connected with Bishop Edington over video chat to discuss what Episcopal congregations stateside can learn from our European siblings.

EMILY: What is the makeup of Episcopal congregations in Europe?

BISHOP EDINGTON: Episcopal churches in Europe were planted with the very clear mission to serve American Episcopalians in Europe, just as the Church of England serves Anglican Christians in England. So, historically, our congregations were made up of American expatriates who found their way to us because of the literal American presence here – for example, the 380,000 American troops who were stationed in Germany in the early 1980's. But as those numbers have decreased down to only 30,000, we are attracting more people drawn to what the Episcopal Church stands for. There are no shortages of churches in Europe – Europe is kind of what gave us the Church – right? People now come to us because we're inclusive and because of the way the Episcopal Church is governed democratically. We are welcoming to the LGBTQ+ community, and our democratic governance is appealing.

EMILY: I imagine that one of the liberating things about being an Episcopalian in Europe is that you don't have to look a certain way or be a certain way.

BISHOP EDINGTON: That's interesting. The oversimplified – but generally true – assumption about the Episcopal Church in America is that it is a church of the elite, of the establishment, of power. This was especially true during the 19th century: If you were aspirational, then you joined

the Episcopal Church because it meant that you wanted to be a part of the elite. And literally none of that has any meaning here.

Interestingly, though, it was those elite Americans who gave us the gift of these incredible churches here in Europe. Right now, I'm speaking to you from a church in Paris, France that was built and financed by J.P. Morgan, who also built Episcopal churches in Rome and Florence, Italy.

EMILY: What does that look like when you coexist with Anglican churches every day?

BISHOP EDINGTON: Just down the street from many of our Episcopal churches in Europe, you will often find Anglican congregations. We have to be very clear on why it's legitimate for us to be here. For a long time, we could justify our church's presence by the presence of Americans in Europe, but now, we know that we are here to serve our local communities in an Episcopal way. To borrow Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's phrase, we're the European

(Edington continued on page 16)



The Right Reverend Mark Edington, Bishop of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, lectures at Church of the Holy Communion on November 21, 2021. He also preached during the morning services. To listen to his lecture, go to tinyurl.com/CHCEdington.

"WHAT KEEPS US WANTING MORE"

Diocesan EYC gatherings inspire
togetherness, stability

by Carter Webster, Minister to Youth at Holy Communion, Memphis

I spend a lot of time in my role as a youth minister thinking back to my time as a youth - thinking about things I enjoyed doing, thinking about activities that were fun and engaging. What I always come back to, though, is that it was never about the super fun game we played or the cute t-shirts, or the endless pizza, it was the people and the way they made me feel. The sense of safety and stability was a gift I didn't recognize until later in my life.

Now that I am in charge with the responsibility of creating these experiences for current youth, I think about these factors often. Last summer, when we started being able to have more large in-person events, the youth ministers in the diocese started talking about what we wanted to do with this time. I remember a conversation in particular with Gabbie Munn (Calvary) and Amzie Williams (Grace St. Luke's) that we had last spring in Calvary's youth room over tacos and a looming to-do list.

We started talking about what kept us coming back as youth ourselves. What was the draw that kept us wanting more? We each agreed that it was the large fellowship events; camp, retreats, diocesan gatherings, and so on. We discussed how seeing the wider Church and meeting youth from other churches gave us encouragement and excitement to be a part of the smaller moments/events in our own churches. We made it a goal to have regular opportunities for youth in West Tennessee to gather together for prayer and fellowship. Our conversation quickly became a planning session and before we knew it, we were hosting monthly Diocesan EYC Events. We have had a wonderful first semester of our monthly youth gatherings filled with some new and some familiar faces. We are excited to continue this program and see where it goes. We hope that you will join us!



A group of young people from across the EDWTN gather in Fall 2021 at St. Mary's Cathedral during a Diocesan Youth event.



Left to Right: Gabbie Munn (Calvary), Amzie Williams (Grace-St. Luke's), and Carter Webster (Holy Communion) are just three of the many adult leaders in the EDWTN helping shepherd our youth.



Back in August of 2021, on the first day of fall semester at the University of Memphis, the Barth House team set up a donut stand on our front lawn. We handed out about 225 donuts, along with flyers and best wishes and blessings. Of the hundreds of donuts given out, only one was dropped... and that by a member of the Memphis basketball team! He dropped the donut. Turnovers continue to plague this team! However, I'm writing this article in the wake of an important come-from-behind road win for the Tigers, so there's hope. And there's plenty of hope at the Barth House, too.

The highlight of our time on the front lawn on the first day of class? We were able to help many students find buildings, classrooms, and parking spots. A few of these brand new college students were near tears, anxious and worried. We were able to help, to offer a prayer, to lend a hand (and a donut). These sweet moments of ministry reminded us of our reason to be.

Like new college students, we learned in our first semester. We've honed a nice routine of liturgical offerings. Wednesday noon Eucharist. Thursday Evening Prayer and (free) yoga. Sunday Compline, after the (free) meal we offer students and volunteers. Speaking of ... pulling off the semester of Sunday evening meals, we couldn't have done it without our team of volunteers: those who prepared home-cooked meals and ordered-in pizzas and salads, and of course those who week-in, week-out led the setup, service, and cleanup. *We're looking at you, Bobbie!*

We're pleased with the first steps of our arts programming, too. We hosted multiple recitals in the Great Hall. We welcomed two authors for readings. We watched and discussed three outstanding films with a local filmmaker, and screened the meaningful documentary *Mission: Joy*. Many of you were able to use the space for retreats, meetings, and prayer. We're also grateful to have become the home for a Thursday morning men's Bible study and a local youth chorale, which rehearses at the Barth on Tuesday evenings. And did you make it to the inaugural Advent Arts Market in December?

During our first semester of programming, we dropped the donut a few times. Some ideas, tried and failed. We learned a lot. This spring, we're aiming for a stronger in-person ministry presence on the many higher-ed campuses in our

DROPPED DONUTS & OTHER LESSONS LEARNED FROM A SEMESTER AT THE BARTH HOUSE

by The Reverend Dr. Noah Campbell, Barth House College Missioner

diocese. We're solidifying our regular programming of liturgy and the arts. We're hoping to continue to be a good gathering place for groups in the diocese and the community. We're looking at opportunities for young adult ministry and inter-faith events. To keep up with all the Barth House happenings, we encourage you to sign up for our regular e-newsletter. We are grateful for your prayers and support.



SUBSCRIBE TO EMAIL UPDATES FROM THE BARTH HOUSE AT
[EDWTN.ORG/MINISTRIES/COLLEGE-MINISTRIES.](https://edwtn.org/ministries/college-ministries)



Children and youth are more resilient than we can imagine, but as we move into the third year of pandemic life, how can we as adults help our children blossom and thrive in an ever-changing landscape that looks very different from that of our own childhoods?

This Spring on Faithfully Memphis, the weekly radio show and podcast from the EDWTN, leaders from across our diocesan community will take part in a series of conversations around creating a Beloved Community that values our children and youth. This series is for everyone, even those who are not actively parenting.

SERIES LINEUP

February 17: Mindfulness Matters | Bishop Phoebe talks with Noah Glenn, creator and host of the family mindfulness podcast Like You, about how the lessons of mindfulness and meditation are for everyone - including children and families.

February 24: This Little Light of Mine | Emily Austin interviews retired educator Sandra Turner about the impact early childhood education can have on families and communities, and how we can live our faith in secular settings.

March 3: Praying Off Script | Drew Massengale, Minister to Children at Holy Communion, sits down with Mary Henry Thompson, Lower School Chaplain at St. Mary's Episcopal School, for what is sure to be an animated conversation about creatively unlocking children's desire for God.

March 10: You've Got a Friend in Me | Allison Pace, Minister of Parish Family at Saint John's, facilitates an intergenerational conversation with Katherine Pace and Betty Peyton, whose special friendship shows how children and seniors can have rich, meaningful relationships.

March 17: Invest in Youth | Cynthia McCarty, Director of Children and Youth Ministry at Holy Apostles, brings together leaders from the Center for Youth Ministry Training for a robust discussion around cultivating impactful youth ministers.

March 24: Teaming Up | Carter Webster and Gabbie Munn, both youth ministers in the EDWTN, return to Faithfully Memphis to talk about all things youth ministry.

March 31: Love Thy Neighbor | Bishop Phoebe interviews Iletha Washington, Director of the Miriam Child Development Center at the United Methodist Neighborhood Center (UMNC-M), and the Reverend Mark Matheny. Founded in 1907, the UMNC-M is a partnership of churches and neighbors serving one another in Christian love, ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of families who need a helping hand.

April 7: Love Heals | Maggie Schaumleffel, Family & Communications Coordinator at St. George's Episcopal Church, sits down with leaders from Episcopal Recovery for a discussion about issues facing children of parents in recovery.

NEW EPISODES OF FAITHFULLY MEMPHIS DEBUT EACH THURSDAY. TUNE IN LIVE ON WYXR 91.7 FM AT 8 A.M., OR FIND US ON APPLE PODCASTS, SPOTIFY, OR WHEREVER YOU LISTEN TO PODCASTS.





The 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church will be held this summer, July 7-14, 2022 in Baltimore, Maryland. It meets every three years and is the governing body of The Episcopal Church, composed of the House of Deputies (four clergy and four lay deputies from each diocese) and the House of Bishops.

The deputies and alternate deputies from the Diocese of West Tennessee began working several months ago to prepare for General Convention during Summer 2021. While General Convention normally meets every three years, the meeting scheduled for July 2021 was postponed because of COVID to July 7-14, 2022. The pandemic slowed the work of the commissions and task forces that convene between meetings of the General Convention, which has resulted in several adaptations that will likely continue for future meetings. Normally, the bulk of the work of General Convention's Legislative Committees, which review and hold hearings on resolutions that have been submitted, is done just before and during Convention. This year, much of that work is being done virtually, which has expanded opportunities for people who will not be attending in Baltimore. Anyone who would like to observe or testify at a hearing can sign up to participate. To view the entire schedule of General Convention open hearings and submit a request to join, please go to tinyurl.com/TECHearings and click on "House of Deputies" or "House of Bishops" for a link to the legislative committee hearings.

Having the virtual meetings and hearings well ahead of this summer is giving our deputies and alternates a new, and much easier, way to become familiar with the resolutions they will be voting on at General Convention. Several of our deputies, as well as Bishop Phoe-

WEST TENNESSEE REPRESENTATION AT 80TH GENERAL CONVENTION

by the Reverend Canon Sharon Alexander,
Canon to the Ordinary



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry addresses the joint opening session of the 79th General Convention in Austin, Texas, on July 4, 2018. Photo: Sharon Tillman/Episcopal News Service

be, are serving on Legislative Committees and have been attending virtual meetings since early January. It is estimated that 500 or more resolutions will be submitted by the deadline of July 8, which means that the deputies and alternates have to divide the resolutions among themselves for review and discussion.

While most of the time in Baltimore will be spent in legislative committee meetings and legislative sessions, participants also participate in worship, events sponsored by a variety of groups ranging from the Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes (CEEP) to the Union of Black Episcopalians to our seminaries, a large exhibit hall, and many opportunities for fellowship. Some of our deputies will be making posts on social media and we will share the hashtags to follow as they are developed.

(General Convention *continued on page 18)*

ST. COLUMBA: *THE HIDDEN GEM OF OUR DIOCESE*

by Brad Thompson,
Executive Director of St. Columba

Find a 40-year old letter from Lewis McKee, original member of St. Columba's Board of Directors, and you will find written, "A magnificent gift given by the Scheibler family to the Diocese of Tennessee is 54 acres of beautiful country property in northeast Shelby County. Since it has been rough country heretofore many of us are not familiar with its potentiality...We believe your spirits will be lifted and you will fully recognize the great asset that St. Columba has in the life of our church."

Find St. Columba 40 years later and you'll see a center living in to its full "potentiality." Camps and adventure excursion programs for young people of all ages, Camp Able for children with diverse abilities, and a retreat center 40% larger and ready to serve well past its 40th birthday – all in all the initial investment and recent investments have secured this potentiality.

Now, St. Columba is splitting its attention between the future we want to see, and the community we serve deeply affected by COVID-19.

DEDICATED TO SERVE

St. Columba's team took a dramatic staffing loss in the early period of COVID-19. Re-staffed during the summer of 2021, St. Columba's leadership team is: Brad Thompson, Executive Director; Matthew Arehart, Director of Camps and Experience; Shelby Noustens, Operations Manager; Stacy Vanderpool, Food Service Manager; Jerry Davidson, Director of Facilities and Grounds; and Hilary Chipley, Reservations and Administration Associate.

Our team practices what I call "anticipatory hospitality" - that is predicting the needs of the group before they have needs, and constructing our entire hospitality experience through that lens. Throughout the pandemic we all have had time wearing every hat: grounds keeping, food service, and housekeeping. With the rise in Omicron, we're all dedicated to the ministry of St. Columba so working sacrificially to ensure the property and its guests are always well cared for.

RECENT FACILITY WORK

Built in 1982, Scheibler Lodge still resembled the building that was first built when St. Columba entered the pandemic.

"We leveraged the time in 2020 we spent closed to outside groups to get a lot of work done," said Jerry Davidson, Facilities Director. "We finally replaced the burgundy carpets in the bedrooms, upgraded the vanities, added full-size beds, and painted the entire building. Everyone joined in to take on the big project and now Scheibler Lodge is refreshed – all without disturbing one guest."

In addition to Scheibler Lodge, St. Columba's team also refurnished the hermitages, made upgrades at Sander's Lodge, and partnered with Thistle & Bee to screen-in Vander Horst Pavilion.

Noting the recent developments in constantly seeking improvement of our facilities, we even restructured Matthew Arehart's position to include these updates and upgrades. All aimed at making sure guests visiting the center always see how we are investing in the spaces, Matthew's title was changed to Director of Camps and Experience recently. He will take his creative approach to program planning and apply it to St. Columba's facilities, making smart and creative changes that shape guest experiences as better and better each time.

COLEMAN AND JOHNSON LODGES

Named by the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee in memory of the Rt. Rev. James Coleman, recently deceased second Bishop of West Tennessee, and in honor the Rt. Rev. Don and Jeannie Johnson for their dedication to the Diocese, St. Columba's brand new camp and retreat spaces are complete. Genuinely inspired by Camp Able, St. Columba's camp for young people with special needs, St. Columba's new lodges are fully accessible with full-size beds, roll-in showers, and wide hallways. To truly be a place of hospitality for God's people, St. Columba had to face the reality that its existing buildings were built before the Americans with Disabilities Act was in place. Now all guests and campers, including those with physical disabilities, will be provided "anticipatory hospitality."

St. Columba is open to Episcopal churches, other denominations, nonprofits, community organizations, guilds, families, children and adults. Fully owned by the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee, each and every Episcopalian in West Tennessee owns St. Columba. We would be glad to have you book your event, attend a camp, and watch your "spirits be lifted."

TO MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTABLE GIFT TO ST. COLUMBA, GO TO
SAINTCOLUMBAMEMPHIS.ORG/DONATE

Safeguarding Trainings



In 2018, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church passed a complete overhaul of its Safeguarding programs, resulting in two new model Safe Church policies, one for children/youth and the other for vulnerable adults, and now new training curricula.

Recently, Bishop & Council revised our safeguarding policy to bring us into closer alignment with the model policies. You can find the new Safe Church Policy for Children and Youth at EDWTN.org.

Safe Church "Universal Training" is required for all ministry volunteers, clergy, and paid staff members. Additional specialized training is also required for clergy, staff members, and school workers. Training should be completed every three years. Anyone who has not attended training since Spring 2019 is in need of re-training.

In-person training is strongly recommended whenever possible, and it is especially important for clergy and paid staff due to the nature of their work and their role in keeping our churches safe for children, youth, vulnerable adults, workers, and all who enter our doors.



Each summer, young people from all over the Memphis region descend on St. Columba to get a full camp experience. Camp Able is a nationally-known camp serving children and adults with disabilities, or "diverse-abilities," and Mud Camp is Memphis' ultimate day camp that offers many outdoor activities as well as daily chapel talks. Photo courtesy of Cindy McMillion.



The new accommodations provided in Johnson and Sanders lodges are in-line with St. Columba's philosophy of anticipatory hospitality: all rooms are fully accessible with full-size beds, roll-in showers, and wide hallways.

Opportunities for Lay Ministry Volunteers | No Fee

- Feb. 12, 9-11am at Grace-St. Luke's, Memphis.
Register: tinyurl.com/GSLSafeGuarding
- Feb. 21, 10am-12pm at Grace-St. Luke's, Memphis.
Register: tinyurl.com/GSLSafeGuarding2
- May 14, 10am – Noon at St. Luke's, Jackson.
Register: tinyurl.com/SafeguardingMay2022

Opportunities for Clergy & Paid Church Staff Members | \$15/person with lunch provided

- Feb. 21, 10am-2pm at Grace-St. Luke's, Memphis.
Register: tinyurl.com/GSLSafeGuarding3
- April 30, 10am-2pm at St. Luke's, Jackson.
Register: tinyurl.com/SafeguardingApril

Questions? The Rev. Jesse Abell: jesse.abell@gracestlukes.org or 901-272-7425.

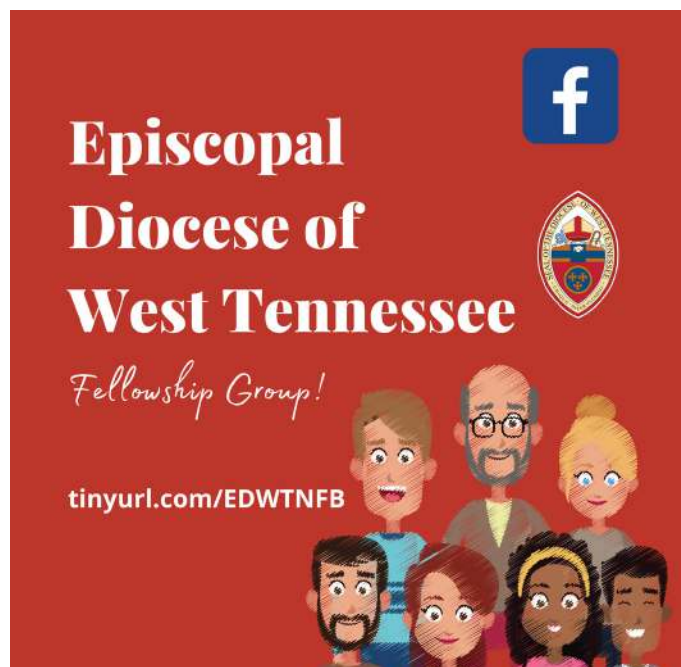
(Light continued from page 6)

a red ribbon and bring to the newborn King while contemplating: What will you give him? Only you know what is inside. Resting below the baptismal font the cradle of the newborn King awaited, surrounded by light and gifts. The gentle piano keys softly summoned the question stirring in all of hearts:

“What child is this, who, laid to rest on Mary’s lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the King whom shepherds guard and angels sing. Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe the son of Mary.”

At 5:30 p.m., after the last traveler presented his gifts and left, the adult volunteers, staff and clergy stood watch as the journey concluded and the final hymns echoed throughout the candlelit nave. Upon exiting the church, a red sky saturated the heavens outside and announced the setting sun. That was my surprise; the most magnificent sunset that I could not order from Amazon or manually position with a spotlight for ambiance or dramatic effect. That red sky, a gift by our Creator, was a reminder of the greater gift of light: Emmanuel, God with us. And He was. Once again, the childlike wonder of the night planted itself and stirred the mystery of Christmas inside of each of us, in its own way.

That journey which was not only then, but is also now. 🏰



**Episcopal
Diocese of
West Tennessee**

Fellowship Group!

tinyurl.com/EDWTNFB

(Edington continued from page 9)

vine of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement.

EMILY: As the leader of the Episcopal Church in Europe, what is giving you hope? What is something that you can point to and say, “This is God at work”?

BISHOP EDINGTON: What a good question! There are two things, really. First, it’s the resiliency of the people, especially the clergy and their relentless determination to keep their communities together and connected, even when they couldn’t be physically present. Just to see how the community endures, no matter what the circumstances are, has given me so much hope.

The second thing I derive a lot of hope from is seeing that our church has an awful lot to offer, and that we can, in fact, thrive. You know, maybe twice a month, I have another community that approaches me wanting to join the Episcopal Church because they know what we stand for, what sets us apart. We stand out, and we stand for something. And that gives me a heck of a lot of hope. 🏰



**Milestones of Faith
Prayer**

**Sunday, Feb. 27
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm**

Elementary-aged children and their grown-ups are all invited to participate in this event. With different stations set up in Martyrs' Hall, children are invited to craft their own tactile methods for prayer (including paper chains, wooden cubes, a pocket rosary, etc.) and assemble them into their very own prayer box to take home.

Registration fee of \$10 to help cover costs, payable at the door.

Please call (901) 527-3361 or email parish administrator Emily Draffen at edraffen@stmarysmemphis.org to register!

 **St. MARY'S**
Episcopal Cathedral

700 Poplar Ave.
Memphis, TN 38117

(Storm Relief continued from page 8)

the pandemic. We just know how to band together and do outreach in situations this.

It may seem like what you have is small, but it can seem very big to a specific family. When you pull your resources together, you can make a big impact.

EMILY: How have the funds that have been donated been used?

PAM: The initial \$1,000 that was donated went directly to a family of four in our area that experienced a total loss of their home, their vehicles, and the husband's place of employment during the storm.

EMILY: Many times when we hear about natural disasters, they are front-and-center in our minds for a period of time, and that's when the lion's share of community relief comes in. But then, as some other need arises, relief wanes. Even though these storms happened months ago, the need remains. What are you in need of right now?

PAM: Our long-term efforts are focused on rebuilding and keeping areas safe. It's unfortunate, but in the process of rebuilding, some people have been living out of campers, which can be difficult to secure. There's been some theft onsite where people will just pull up and hook up those campers that people are using as their temporary shelter and just leave with them. So, a big part of the relief efforts right now have been focused on securing the safety of those areas.

Additionally, due to COVID, the costs of building materials have gone up. That's been a big challenge to rebuilding and re-establishing local economies and homes.

EMILY: What does this kind of outreach and involvement at Grace Church mean to you, personally?

PAM: I grew up in this area. After some time away, my husband and I moved back to the area in 1999. We became active at Grace Church since the early-2000's. We have three boys – ages 24, 20, and 16. I am an OB-GYN. My husband and I have wonderful work lives. Our church life probably sustains us on the other side of things.

EMILY: I'm noticing that everything good that happens tends to have a team behind it. Tell me about the Grace team that has been powering this December storm relief effort.

“

It may seem like what you have is small, but it can seem very big to a specific family. When you pull your resources together, you can make a big impact.

**-Dr. Pam Evans,
Grace Episcopal Church**

PAM: First, there are Jeff and Tracy Smith. Jeff is our treasurer, and he and his wife Tracy own a shop just off our square. They have a lot of connections with the community, so they're helpful at determining who is vulnerable in times of need, and they're also really active with the Henry County Chamber of Commerce.

Additionally, Susan Hawley was part of the effort to raise money at our church, and Susan Woods was our creative force. Susan is a retired art teacher, and she is really good at group motivation for whatever outreach we're spearheading. Before tornado relief, it was the Waverley floods, and before then, we took up a collection for the schools. She creates beautiful signs that are hung in the parish.

Last, there's Leigh Watkins. Leigh is the Junior Warden at Grace, but she works as the business manager for the First United Methodist Church in our neighborhood, so she helps us maintain that interconnectedness with the downtown churches.

EMILY: Thank you so much for doing this good work and for being a shining example of how small faith communities can make an impact. You show us how loaves-and-fishes miracles are still happening.

PAM: We really are appreciative of everyone in the EDWTN who have contributed. You feel empowered in your own efforts when you see others support you. You know, we just started with \$600, and now that's become so much more that will make an impact on folks in a big way. 🙏

(General Convention continued from page 13)

Diocese of West Tennessee Deputies & Alternates to the 2022 General Convention

House of Bishops

THE RT. REV. PHOEBE A. ROAF

Serving until 2024 on the Joint Standing Committee for the Nomination of the Presiding Bishop. Serving at General Convention on the Legislative Committee on Governance and Structure and the House of Bishops Committee on Privilege and Courtesy. Serving on the Joint Audit Committee of the Executive Council and the DFMS until July, 2022.

House of Deputies, Clerical Order

THE REV. CANON SHARON ALEXANDER

DIOCESE OF WEST TENNESSEE

Chair of the Standing Commission on Structure, Governance, Constitution and Canons until July 2022. Serving on the Task Force to Coordinate Ecumenical and Interreligious Work until July 2022. Serving on the House of Deputies Resolution Review Committee.

THE REV. GARY MEADE

SAINT MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, DYERSBURG

Serving on the Legislative Committee on Ministry at General Convention.

THE REV. CHUCK MCMILLEN

ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH, UNION CITY

THE REV. SCOTT WALTERS

CALVARY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MEMPHIS

THE REV. DEACON GERRI ENDICOTT, *alternate*

CHURCH OF THE HOLY APOSTLES, COLLIERVILLE

House of Deputies, Lay Order

MR. SCOTT HAIGHT

SAINT MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, DYERSBURG

Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Nominations until July 2022. Serving as Chair of the House of Deputies Rules of Order Committee.

MR. ANDY COBB

CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMMUNION, MEMPHIS

Chair of the West Tennessee Deputation.

MS. TERCILLE BASA-ONG

GRACE-ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MEMPHIS

DR. LAVONNIE CLAYBON

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MASON

Serving on the Legislative Committee on Christian Formation and Discipleship.

MR. STEVE SMITH, *alternate*

IMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH, LA GRANGE



Row 1: Bishop Phoebe Roaf, Canon Sharon Alexander; Row 2: The Rev. Gary Meade, the Rev. Chuck McMillen; Row 3: The Rev. Scott Walters, the Rev. Gerri Endicott; Row 4: Scott Haight, Andy Cobb; Row 5: Tercille Basa-Ong, Dr. Lavonnie Claybon; Row 7: Steve Smith



COVID, THE CHURCH, AND THE HOSPITAL

By the Reverend Deacon Randy McCloy, MD

The Episcopal News Service recently reported that certain churches in large cities (New York, San Francisco, and Atlanta) are requiring proof of vaccination for attendance. The rector of one of the New York churches was quoted as saying, “The rights of individuals to choose not to get vaccinated ends where the responsibility to safeguard the worshipping community begins”, not an unreasonable statement, considering that at least one goal of the church leader is the safety and protection of all who attend church.

This issue reminded me of a question posed to me recently, and during a time when there was significant antagonism toward those who remain unvaccinated. Knowing of my status as a retired physician, a friend asked if I agreed that hospital emergency rooms should treat vaccinated persons ahead of those who choose not to be vaccinated, his idea being that the latter group brought illness upon themselves, and should not receive resources ahead of those more responsible, if at all. My answer was clear and simple; physicians have taken an oath, and dedicated their lives to treating fairly, and without partiality, all who present themselves in need of care. They are accustomed to exposure to all kinds of diseases, and know how to take necessary precautions for their own protection. Medicine is blind to race, social status, gender, religious affiliation or political views, or even COVID vaccination status. So the code of ethics for medical teams is to treat all persons appropriately and efficiently without regard to their status in society.

Clergy find themselves in similar positions, welcoming all to their churches, regardless of who they are, or how they look, or how much is in their pocketbook. Just as Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners, and touched and healed lepers, church leaders may be expected to do likewise. The church is, or should be, a haven and a place of solace for all who cross its threshold. At the same time, the rector is responsible for insuring that all who come to worship can do so safely. Unlike the physician, clergy are not accustomed to dealing extensively with diseases or being exposed to them. Furthermore, he or she is working in an indoor space where there often are large crowds where the vaccination status is likely unknown, and where the CDC says viral spread is definitely possible. So Rev. John Doe is faced with the dilemma of how to welcome all but also how to protect all. Some have required proof of vaccination as the safest measure, but how would God have them treat those who have been turned away, and would God agree with their decision?

The striking parallel between the roles of physician and clergy has both practical as well as ethical and theological implications, but each has as his or her responsibility the unbiased care of all who presented themselves in need. God has blessed each of them in their vocations, and expects them to carry on their work as Jesus did, touching and healing the lame and the sick.

So, what are we to do? I personally feel that we are currently taking the most reasonable approach, abiding by the recommendations of healthcare experts, and realizing that such an approach may always be subject to change. It is the way our Episcopal heritage has often acted with regard to important decisions, taking the “Via Media”, the “middle way”.

May God bless and protect our churches and our hospitals.



Transformation & Hope

The 2022 Bishop's Missionary Appeal | The Diocese of West Tennessee

EDWTN.org/give