The Peace

A Newsletter from the
Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee

FALL 2022 | ISSUE 3

FALL 2022

The Peace

The official publication of the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee

Copyright 2022 The Bishop and
Diocese of West Tennessee

Office & Mailing Address:
692 Poplar Ave.
Memphis, TN 38105

901-937-4700
EDWTN.org

Submissions
We encourage the submission of articles and images. We reserve the right to edit materials offered for publication. Please submit content to Minister of Communication Emily Austin: eaustin@edwtn.org.

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 between the Mississippi and Tennessee Rivers

On the Cover

May the Lord bless you and keep you. After an event at the Barth House this summer, Gabbie Munn (center) is surrounded in prayer by (clockwise from left)Amzie Williams, Carter Webster, Miranda Cully, Zach Ferguson, Ollie Rencher, and Sharon Alexander. Munn, former Youth Director at Calvary Episcopal Church in Memphis, is a new seminarian at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas; her sending diocese is the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi.

A MESSAGE FROM Bishop Phoebe

Dear friends,

We find ourselves in a season of engagement through service. Episcopalians in our diocese are involved in ministry in the post-COVID context by sharing our time, talent and treasure with old acquaintances and new friends. We are embracing opportunities to bless others as we have been blessed. This edition of *The Peace* includes how West Tennessee supports college students and persons in recovery, as well as our willingness to stand in solidarity with victims of gun violence, sexual assault, and the war in Ukraine.

Increasingly, we are asking what it means to be God's church in God's world, which was the theme of the recent Lambeth Conference in Canterbury, England. We now have a team of Community Outreach volunteers to represent the diocese at various public events. If you are interested in joining this team, please contact Emily Austin, the Director of Communications (eaustin@episwtn.org). There is so much more we can accomplish when we combine our efforts.

As we begin another year of congregational and diocesan programming, please consider how God may be inviting you to share your faith in new ways.

Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.
1 Peter 3:15-16

Peace,

Bishop Phoebe

Bishop Phoebe A. 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

Clarence Davis
Sexton

Mark Henderson
Building Manager

Alisa Kelly
Canon for Finance & Administration

Danesha Murray
Accounting Assistant

Elise Patterson
Diocesan Administrator

Brad Thompson
Director of St. Columba Episcopal Camp & Retreat Center

Bishop & Council

The Reverend Dr. Jesse Abell
The Reverend Miranda Cully
Ms. Ann Duncan
The Reverend Deacon Gerri Endicott
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

June 27 marked an important milestone in the history of our diocese. Forty years ago on that date, the Rev. Anne Stone Carriere was ordained as priest in the newly forming Diocese of West Tennessee. Anne's trailblazing path toward ordained ministry began at a time when there were no women priests in Tennessee and very few in the Episcopal Church. Anne was ordained to the priesthood at Grace-St. Luke's on June 27, 1982 and served there for nine years before being called as the first female priest to serve as a rector in the Diocese of West Tennessee (Holy Apostles, Memphis).

On Sunday, April 27, parents, students, alumni, faculty, staff, trustees and friends gathered at St. George's Independent School - Memphis campus to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Memphis Campus.

Clergy Transitions

February - August 2022

The Reverend Miranda Cully, *previously Associate Rector at Saint John's Episcopal Church, now serves as Chaplain at St. Mary's Episcopal High School.*

The Reverend Sarah Cowan, *previously curate at the Barth House Episcopal Center and St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, is now Associate Rector at Church of the Holy Communion in Memphis.*

The Reverend Hester Mathes, *previously Senior Associate Rector at Church of the Holy Communion in Memphis, is now Priest-in-Charge at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Memphis and Chaplain at the Memphis campus of St. George's Independent School.*

The Reverend Tom Momberg, *previously Priest-in-Charge of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Memphis, is now Priest-in-Charge of All Saints' Episcopal Church in Memphis.*

Last Spring, people serving as vergers in a number of churches throughout the EDWTN joined for verger training and fellowship at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral (Memphis). The training was lead by the Reverend Jean Vargo (front left) and Mark Henderson (front right).


The Gospels

The Peace

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPPOSITE PAGE

Getting up early on Sunday morning doesn't have to be ruff. As a canine acolyte, Jake the black lab helps get visitors to St. James Episcopal Church in Bolivar ready for worship. St. Francis of Assisi would be proud! Photo courtesy of Sharon Alexander.

PERFECTLY & WHOLLY LOVE

West Tennessee Addiction and Recovery Commission offers hope, acceptance, and community

by Laura White, LPC-MHSP

Recovery Ministries of the Episcopal Church offer the Church a resource for the education, care, and support of people affected by the spiritual despair and disease of addiction as well as support and comfort to families and loved ones whose lives are impacted by another's addiction.

The West Tennessee Addiction and Recovery Commission is comprised of members from different churches who have a variety of experiences with recovery. Our goal is to offer the Church as place of solace and support.

We sponsor different events throughout the year, including recovery book studies, 12-step Eucharists, run/walk in recovery races, recovery educational events and an annual recovery retreat.

The Recovery Commission aims to normalize the conversation about recovery. I am proud to be part of a church that takes seriously the need to assist and support those in recovery. The Church is an ideal place to provide comfort to those who are suffering. Many churches offer 12-Step meetings.

I joined the Recovery Commission in 2003, bringing my experience as a licensed professional counselor. I wanted to share my professional experience to help individuals and families struggling with **substance use disorder** (SUD) find recovery. I found sharing my personal journey with recovery to be a meaningful contribution. I have seen the miracle of recovery and the tragedy of the disease. And I have experienced the love and support of the Church when I needed it the most. This motivates me to continue to share my experience, strength, and hope in the effort to help others.

As a result of the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in alcohol and drug use and abuse. According to a study conducted by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), there was a 25% increase in alcohol-related deaths in 2020. This is a dramatic increase from 2019 when there was a 2% increase. The social isolation, increased stress and lack of support have dramatically

In Spring 2022, Laura White (left) and Shannon Tucker (right), co-chairs of the EDWTN Addiction and Recovery Commission, talked about the work of the Commission on Faithfully Memphis. To listen to the show, go to https://tinyurl.com/FM-Recovery.

impacted those suffering from SUDs. The isolation caused by the pandemic was fuel for abuse. For many people, the increase usage led to dependency.

SUD is a disease, and its progression can be subtle. It will depend on the substance used, the frequency of use and the method of ingestion. What may have started as social use to deal with the stress experienced during the pandemic could have progressed to heavier, more frequent use, eventually crossing the line to dependency. Once the SUD grabs hold, it is no longer a choice. Someone experiencing an active addiction has lost the ability to stop using. Many recognize there is an issue but are incapable of changing without support. A substance use disorder is different from other diseases in that shame and fear keep those suffering from seeking help. SUD affects thinking and behavior. The person with SUD is often not capable of thinking clearly and to pursue the help that would bring them relief. Their behavior is often objectionable and problematic. It alienates those with SUD from the help they desperately need.

And the person with SUD impacts those they love. The compulsive use is hard to understand. Relationships are strained when SUD is present. Often, those watching this behavior try to intervene to reduce the compulsive use. The intention is to help the person suffering from SUD. But rarely is this successful. The pain of watching a loved one compulsively use a substance is agonizing. This hopelessness and despair can trigger shame and secrecy. Many who live with a person suffering from SUD develop depression and anxiety disorders. Often, they are reluctant to seek support due to being embarrassed by their loved one's behavior. The vicious cycle of secrecy and isolation contribute to the pain of the disease.

The Recovery Commission meets those suffering with and those impacted by SUD with love and

(**Recovery** *continued on page 16)*

WRAPPED IN LOVE

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church creatively responds to Alabama church tragedy

The Reverend Hester Mathes, priest-in-charge of Holy Trinity and chaplain of the Memphis campus of St. George's Independent School, was traveling when news broke earlier this Summer that a gunman had opened fire on a parish potluck at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills, Alabama.

Like countless others in West Tennessee, her heart broke – for the people whose lives were taken, for those who would mourn them, and yes, for her friend from childhood and colleague, the Reverend John Burruss, the rector of Saint Stephen's.

"Having grown up down the street from John, I wondered what we could do. Each idea sparked another idea."

Mathes, a former art teacher and musician whose artistic and creative roots often inform her ordained pastoral ministry, devised a plan: the "garland of love" project. Holy Trinity invited people from across the diocese to cut out fabric hearts and decorate them with prayers or words of encouragement for Saint Stephen's. Once completed, parishioners at Holy Trinity would stitch the hearts together to create a bunting banner for the Saint Stephen's community, a tangible reminder of the prayers ascending from West Tennessee.

"I thought we might get 25 or so hearts," recalls Mathes, "and that we could hand-stitch them together during a Sunday coffee hour."

She did not expect the tremendous response that she received. Cloth hearts poured in from nearly every church in the diocese. Locally, Special Friends Fellowship Club, St. George's varsity soccer team, and Faith Baptist Church got involved, too, but word about the project traveled as far as Virgina, Colorado, and California. A parishioner at St. George's in Germantown even donated funds to cover supply costs that would inevitably arise.

"We used 408 feet of ribbon to bind the hearts together...more than 816 hearts, at last count."

Mathes credits the success of the project – at least partially – on a typo.

"The Holy Spirit moment was when I wrote *July 30* rather than *June 30* as the deadline for people to send us their hearts. With this longer lead time, other churches and groups could participate."

The longer lead time will also convey to Saint Stephen's that they haven't been forgotten.

"We will be sending the garland of love to Saint

(**Garland** *continued on page 16)*

The finished garland of love - estimated to contain 816 hearts and to be 408 feet long - was dedicated at Holy Trinity on August 14, 2022. Photo courtesy of Sharon Alexander

Holy Trinity parishioner Jeane Chapman and Reverend Hester assemble the more than 800 hearts that were collected. Photo courtesy of Sharon Alexander.

BEAD BY BEAD

St. Luke's Jackson parishioner grows faith, funds for Ukraine relief

Artistic expression has always been closely aligned to Casey Jordan's spiritual life. Earlier this year when the crisis in Ukraine was unfolding, Jordan, a parishioner at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Jackson, Tennessee, was compelled to exercise his creative muscles in a way that would be relief to Ukrainian refugees fleeing the violence.

Emily Austin, Minister of Communication, connected with Jordan over Zoom to learn about the spiritual journey that led him to St. Luke's and the unique ministry of creating Anglican rosaries.

Emily: Tell me a little bit about your backstory and what lead you to St. Luke's.
Casey: I was born and raised a Southern Baptist [in Jackson, Tennessee]. I decided to become an actor when I was about 15, so I got myself into a musical theater program in Dayton, Ohio, and that's where I went to college. During that time, I fell out of going to church for a plethora of reasons. One of them was coming out of the closet as gay. Going back into the Southern Baptist church didn't make sense, but I still yearned to be part of a Christian faith community. After college, I lived in New York for six years where I worked off Broadway as an actor. I got exhausted, though, and decided to come back home [to Jackson]. At that point, I started working on visual art.

"There is something direct about praying with the saints through a strand of beads."
–Casey Jordan

Emily: But you were still searching for a spiritual home?
Casey: Yes, and in 2020, I found it. That spring, when the pandemic was in its early stages and people all over the country were outraged over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmad Aubrey, I remember seeing a video on the news of an Episcopal clergywoman decrying the then-president's use of the Bible for a photo opp in front of her church. That genuinely was a shout for me to go back into the church in the greatest possible way, which to me is as an Episcopalian.

Emily: And that's what led you to St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Jackson?
Casey: I started attending St. Luke's more because it is my local Episcopal church, but I was also led to it because I have always appreciated elements of the Catholic faith, and in my mind, there were some commonalities between the Episcopal and Catholic Churches. One was a love of the rosary and the Catholic canon of saints.

For St. Luke's Jackon parishioner Casey Jordan (pictured above) spirituality, creativity, and giving are inextricably linked. In addition to creating Anglican rosaries, he creates meditative flat surface pieces like the ones on the opposite page, which employ gold leaf, tanzanite pigment, silver leaf, watercolor, and fountain ink on mixed media papers. Images courtesy of Casey Jordan.

So praying the rosary, for me, was a way of praising the saints and praising Mary, the Queen of Saints. I was doing a little Google research on the rosary when I learned that there is a special type of rosary – the Anglican rosary – which I had never heard about.

Around this time, Jackson was gearing up for its annual Pride Festival. I decided to make as many rosaries as I could to hand out at St. Luke's table. I made 144 that day, and they all were distributed during the event. But it was such a learning experience for me because there was so much hesitation on the part of people there to take a cross, even when it was being given to them for free. There's a really strange, dangerous stigma attached to the symbol of the cross, and there's work for us to do on transforming that.

Emily: And kind of reclaiming it as a symbol of love, not of hate.
Casey: Yes. As a source of generosity, as a giving center.

Emily: Earlier this year when the news of the crisis in Ukraine was making headlines, a number of people

from our local Episcopal faith community reached out to see if there were any initiatives to help the people in Ukraine and the refugees leaving their homeland. Around this same time, I remember seeing a post-it note on my desk from Elise Patterson, our diocesan administrator, saying that a parishioner in Jackson had made some Anglican rosaries that he would like to donate to the diocese.And that was you! We were already encouraging people to pray for Ukraine, so when we hatched the idea to set up a Ukraine Relief Fund where people could make a donation and receive a rosary as a thank-you gift, it was so powerful because you had already expressed that refugee relief was something very special to you.
Casey: In the history of the world, refugees – especially mothers with children – to me represent the Holy Family. I mean, they are genuinely who we are called to take care of right now in the same way that God cared for the Holy Family, especially there in the early days of the life of Christ. Thinking about all of the major moments in history – in Nazi Germany, on the border of our own country with Mexico – the refugees are where the real mortification of human beings takes place. We've become increasingly desensitized to how refugees are treated. But there will always be refugees, and we are called to care for them until Christ returns.

I've never been a refugee, and I've been very blessed with a mother and father who have been accommodating to my sexual orientation. But I think that anyone who belongs to a minority in any degree sympathizes almost immediately with any other downtrodden individual or group who feels displaced or out of place or taking up space where they aren't welcome.

Emily: Has your prayer life changed or become enhanced by using rosaries?
Casey: There is something about prayer beads that is delightfully international. They are very interfaith. I mean, the Buddhists have prayer beads, the Catholics have prayer beads, we have our version of those. There is something direct about praying with the saints through a strand of beads. The Jesus Prayer is the one that's used most often with our rosary or associated with it, but you can also name a person who needs your prayer on one or more of each of those beads. It's a tangible opportunity to do something spiritual.

Emily: It's tactile. Sometimes we have the inclination to think exclusively about all the beautiful spiritual things, but God gave us the physical world, too. As a creative person, I love that we seem to be collectively shifting into a space where we're a lot more willing to engage in tactile prayerful activities – whether that's coloring, sketching, knitting, or creating rosary.
Casey: Exactly. There have been times while making the rosaries when I am hyper-focused on the tiny objects that are in front of me. I remain mindful and in a state of prayer because my hands are already praying while I'm working away. Engaging the spirit and the body at the same time is an exciting balance as an artist.

Emily: I'm inspired by the way you have explored ways of tying all of these different parts of your life together and exploring ways we can be the Body of Christ in the world. To me, it shows that the God that we worship is still speaking and is still alive. God wants to engage with us, wherever we are.
Casey: And from that state of openness to the Divinity that surrounds us...well, that's the healthiest state from which we can serve everyone else.

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee, we are delighted to announce two special in-person, diocesan-wide events that will take place this fall in advance of Diocesan Convention.

We are grateful to the members of the 40th Anniversary Committee for forming the shape and substance of these events. Convened by Bishop Phoebe Roaf, the 40th Anniversary Committee includes Emily Austin, the Rev. Sarah Cowan, Juan Fuentes, the Ven. Mimsy Jones, Susan Kenny, Elise Patterson, the Rev. Jeff Marx, Candice Walsh, Amzie Williams, and Clay Woemmel. Many thanks also to Bishop Don Johnson for serving as Advisor to the Committee.

Intergenerational Fun Day
Saturday, September 10 | 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
St. Columba Episcopal Camp & Retreat Center (Memphis)

You are invited to a day full of fun, food, and fellowship at St. Columba with your diocesan family! This all-ages event will have something for everyone – everything from small group walks through the lush grounds of St. Columba, to high-adventure zipline, ropes course, or waterfront activities. The cost of this event is $10/person for ages 6 and up; children under age 6 are free. Family cost maximum is $40.

Register: tinyurl.com/FamFun2022

Annual Harvest Eucharist & Luncheon
Saturday, October 22 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Immanuel Episcopal Church (LaGrange)

Together with Bishop Phoebe, the people of Immanuel Episcopal Church in LaGrange invite you to a special outdoor harvest Eucharist on Saturday, October 22. The Mother Church of the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee, Immanuel was founded in 1832 and was the first Episcopal church west of the Tennessee River. A luncheon will be served after worship.

Space is limited for this event, and registration is required. The cost of this event is $10/person, with a family cost maximum of $40.

Register: tinyurl.com/HarvestEucharist2022

REFLECTING ON A SECOND HOME: THE BARTH HOUSE

by Molly Graham

As I finish up my undergraduate days at Rhodes College, I just said my first goodbye to a second home of mine – the Barth House.

When I first arrived in Memphis in 2018 as a young and naive freshman, I could not find a community of faith that felt just right. I missed Sundays at church with my dad preaching the sermon, and I longed for an Episcopal college community that did not exist here.

I feel like no one talked about how hard college could be, and sometimes it felt like I was so homesick I did not know what to do.

Flash forward four years later and I am saying goodbye to not only a physical place of a beautiful Episcopal community, but a group of incredible individuals that mean so much to me. The Barth House has become a second home of warm, home-cooked meals, open-armed friends, and meaningful conversations every Sunday night. I will never forget the generosity of the Diocese of West Tennessee for supporting our vision and giving us the space and opportunity to eat, learn, and grow in faith and community with each other. I am constantly in awe at the generosity of Rev. Noah Campbell and Rev. Sarah Cowan, who have been with us through the good times and bad, as well as Bobbie W-M. who goes above and beyond in this ministry. I am also thankful for the generosity of the dozens of Episcopal parishioners who donated food every single Sunday night. The Barth House has meant so much to me during my time at Rhodes and here in Memphis.

As I leave, I am personally grateful for the Barth House, but I am equally excited for the college students in the future to get to experience its love and warmth.

In Spring 2022, college students gather outside the Barth House during the weekly Sunday evening prayer and dinner gathering.

If you're reading this edition of *The Peace* in sequential order, you may have detected a theme: creativity in spirituality.

Whether we're wrapping those experiencing grief in a banner of love like the folks of Holy Trinity (page 7), threading beads together for the people of Ukraine like Casey Jordan (pgs. 8-9), or performing any number of other creative acts, God's presence often feels especially close when we engage in creative activities.

This Fall on Faithfully Memphis, join us for a new series - *Behold it Unveiled* - that explores the intersection of creativity and spirituality through conversations with artists, musicians, and makers whose faith informs their work. New episodes of Faithfully Memphis are released each Thursday at 8 a.m. on WYXR 91.7 FM and later in the morning on the podcast, available on Apple and Spotify.

Series Lineup

August 25: God's Gift | Emily Austin talks with Clarence Davis, who is creating the art for the 2022 EDWTN Christmas card, about his lifelong love of creative expression.

Sept. 1: Threading Love | In her first time hosting Faithfully Memphis, the Reverend Lisa McIndoo (Church of the Holy Apostles) chats with Casey Jordan, parishioner at St. Luke's Jackson, about the role creativity plays in his spirituality.

Sept. 22: Making Art Work | Josh Horton is a creative entrepreneur focused on the social and economic impact of design and creativity. In this episode, the Reverend Jonathan Chesney (Holy Communion) will talk with him about the upcoming Creative Works conference in Memphis.

Oct. 6: Awakening the Senses | For Darrell Willis, founder of Chinesha's Closet, creativity is a big part of self-care – both for himself and for the customers who shop his small batch candles and aromatherapy products. Join the Rev. Jesse Abell (Grace-St. Luke's)as he talks with Darrell about how his creative business kept him buoyed during his cancer journey.

Oct. 13: A Joyful Noise | Join the Reverend Hester Mathes (Holy Trinity) in conversation with Jeanne Simmons. A musician recognized for her involvement in a broad array of classical music activities in Memphis, Jeanne has performed with the Germantown Symphony, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, and numerous productions at

Theatre Memphis and The Orpheum Theatre.

Oct. 20: Cosmic Reset | In her bio on her website, artist Maggie Russell says that she has "lost count of the blessings" that have materialized in her life since she made artwork her full-time job. In this episode hosted by another Faithfully Memphis newcomer, Rev. Katherine Bush (Calvary Episcopal Church), learn about what inspires Russell to pursue beauty.

Oct. 27: Preserving, Celebrating, Advancing | Lar'juanette Williams is an award-winning singer, dancer, actress, writer and arts administrator whose credits include *E.R, Chicago Hope, Seinfeld, NYPD Blue, Spy Hard, Ghost of Mississippi,* and *Night Stand.* She is also the Executive Director of Memphis Black Arts Alliance. In this not-to-be-missed episode, learn how throughout the changes in her life, faith has always remained central.

Look forward to these standalone episodes of Faithfully Memphis this Fall.

Sept. 8: All About Spiritual Direction | Emily Austin, **the Rev. Dr. Jesse Abell**, and **Denise Hensley**

Sept. 15: Bishop Phoebe in conversation with **Robert Tobin**, author of *Privilege and Prophecy*

Sept. 29: Bishop Phoebe in conversation with **Pat Morgan**, author of *We Hardly Knew Them*

Nov. 3: Bishop Phoebe in conversation with **Scott Morris, M.D., M.Div.**, founder and CEO of Church Health. They will discuss his new book, *Care: How People of Faith Can Respond to Our Broken Health System*

"ANYTHING BUT NORMAL"

Delegation Report from the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church

by the Reverend Canon Sharon Alexander, Canon to the Ordinary

The meeting of the 80th General Convention in Baltimore, Maryland (July 7-11, 2022) was anything but normal. A "normal" meeting would last approximately two weeks, with several thousand people attending, including the women attending the triennial meeting of the Episcopal Church Women, hundreds of vendors and others in the Exhibit Hall, an Episcopal Youth presence, and numerous visitors.

None of these people were able to attend, so this meeting had fewer than 2,000 attending, all wearing facemasks and taking COVID precautions.

Meetings and hearings of Legislative Committees were held online beginning several months before the start of the Convention on July 7. Instead of one huge in-person worship service each day, the House of Bishops and House of Deputies each held their own worship services to start the day. There were no gatherings in the evenings, in part because of COVID precautions and in part because instead of two legislative sessions each day (one in the morning and one in the afternoon), each evening also had a legislative session.

One of the things that was not different was the number of resolutions. This time, General Convention considered 431, which averages out to slightly more than 100 per day, in addition to elections and consideration of the 2023-24 budget for the Episcopal Church. Normally there would be eight days of legislation considering closer to 50 resolutions per day. Despite the amount of work done each day, the members of the deputations from each diocese remained in relatively good spirits and good humor.

Our Delegation

West Tennessee was well-served in the House of Deputies by Gary Meade – Chair of the Deputation (St. Mary's, Dyersburg), Scott Walters (Calvary, Memphis), Chuck McMillen (St. James, Union City), Sharon Alexander (Diocesan Office), Gerri Endicott (Holy Apostles, Collierville), Scott Haight (Saint Mary's, Dyersburg), Lavonnie Perry Claybon (St. Paul's, Mason), Terecille Basa-Ong (Grace-St. Luke's, Memphis), and

The West Tennessee delegation to GC80 included (L to R) the Rev. Gary Meade (Chair), the Rev. Chuck McMillen, Scott Haight, the Rev. Canon Sharon Alexander, Steve Smith, Lavonnie Perry Claybon, Terecille Basa-Ong, the Rev. Gerri Endicott, Bishop Phoebe Roof, and the Rev. Scott Walters.

Steve Smith (Immanuel, LaGrange). Scott Haight was elected to the Executive Council and Bishop Phoebe was elected to the Court of Review.

Historic Elections to the House of Deputies

There were two historic elections in the House of Deputies. Julia Ayala Harris is the youngest person and the first Latina to be elected President of the House of Deputies. Rachel Taber-Hamilton is the first Indigenous person and the first ordained woman to be elected Vice President of the House of Deputies.

Major Decisions

A number of important matters were decided by this General Convention, some of which are set forth below. The text of all resolutions can be found in the Virtual Binder of the General Convention Office.

Ecumenical Actions

The Episcopal Church is now in full communion with the Church of Sweden and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada by amendment to Canon I.20.

(**General Convention** *continued on page 17)*

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS:
EDWTN PRIORITIZES COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Have you ever noticed how the Episcopal Church is sometimes called a "well-kept secret"? What is it about our denomination that contributes to our reputation for keeping our amazing faith community to ourselves? In an interview that aired this summer on Faithfully Memphis, the Reverend Stephanie Spellers, who serves as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Canon for Evangelism and Reconciliation, Canon Spellers remarked,

> *"One of the signature calls from this presiding bishop was to help the Church to move on evangelism. We knew it was going to be an uphill climb. Episcopalians are often so busy saying, we're not like those other Christians. And some of those other Christians are Christians who are really excited about evangelism."*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

A renewed push for community engagement at the diocesan level came in 2021, right around the same time that the availability of covid vaccines was making in-person gatherings safer and opportunities more plentiful. In June 2021, the EDWTN was among several sponsors of LeMoyne-Owen College's inaugural Juneteenth celebration, and volunteers representing the diocese set up a table at the outdoor festival to hand out information about our diocese. Later in the summer of 2021, the diocese had a presence at the annual Pride Day event hosted by Benjamin L. Hooks Public Library in Memphis. Both of these events were fruitful opportunities for us to introduce ourselves to people who were not familiar with the Episcopal Church's presence in our region. The EDWTN again had a presence at the Juneteenth celebration in 2022, and plans are set for us to again participate in the Pride event on Saturday, September 3.

ECUMENICAL COLLABORATION

The Diocese of West Tennessee has always valued the larger interdenominational and interfaith landscape in which we operate. The great variety of God's Kingdom prompts us to look at the values we hold in common with others, and as we pray in the prayer For the Unity of the Church (BCP pg. 818), that God will "take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord." In that spirit, we have sought to partner with other organizations and agencies with which we have much in common.

During Lent, the Diocese partnered with Voices for Justice Mid-South to present Cathedral to City Hall, a documentary film that highlights the Memphis faith community's historical fight for equal rights for Black citizens. The screening and post-film panel was held at St. Mary's Cathedral, and attendees representing a variety of faith traditions in Shelby County participated.

The diocese seeks to partner with other interfaith groups in our region for initiatives like the documentary screening.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Earlier in the year, the Church Home Board boldly awarded a grant of $145,000 to Literacy Mid-South, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to expand literacy in the region. This was the first time in its history that Church Home, which has historically awarded grants to youth-centric Episcopal ministries, had awarded the funds a community entity. The more than $145,000 grant will allow Literacy Mid-South to implement their innovative educational programs for community partners, parents and students in the most vulnerable communities in Memphis, including Raleigh. This includes community-facing literacy resources and a focus on food insecurity.

"Education and access are so important for the success of students and families in our communities especially given the challenges faced by students during the COVID pandemic," said Bishop Phoebe.

In July, in partnership with the Shelby County Crime Victims and Rape Crisis Center and Splash Creative, the EDWTN participated in a Faith + Forgiveness event at the Barth House Episcopal Center in Memphis. The program included a discussion of At Road's End *with Saint Andrew's parishioner Bob Lee and author David Lee Brown, and an interfaith panel discussion. L to R: David Wayne Brown, Dr. Steevon Hunter (Georgia Avenue Baptist Church); Jamie Fish (Bellevue Baptist Church); Sandy Bromley (Shelby County Crime Victims and Rape Crisis Center); the Reverend Dr. Rosalyn R. Nichols (Freedom's Chapel Christian Church, Sabbath Girl, and MICAH); Bishop Phoebe Roaf (EDWTN); a representative from the SCCVRCC; Erika Kelley (Lighthouse of Prayer Outreach Ministries); and Robert Lee.*

Swords to plowshares. In the aftermath of the deadly shooting at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills, Alabama, the EDWTN engaged the Memphis chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense In America for Prayer in Action event at All Saints' Episcopal Church in Memphis. Representatives from the organization presented ways that people of faith can help reduce gun violence in their communities. Following the workshop, the Reverend Noah Campbell presided over a prayer service lifting up all victims of gun violence.

Bishop Phoebe (right) chats with Rabbi Harry Danziger, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Israel in Memphis (left), at a reception in St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral Martyr's Hall. The reception followed the premiere screening of Cathedral to City Hall: A Documentary for Justice. *Produced by Voices For Justice Mid-South, the film highlights the April 7, 2018 commemoration of the Memphis clergy march to City Hall in 1968 to confront Mayor Henry Loeb on the morning after the assassination of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Rabbi Danziger was part of the march in 1968, and during a panel discussion that followed the screening, he reflected on the experience to the ecumenical group assembled.*

"I can't wait to see how this grant will shape and serve some of our most underserved areas in Memphis."

Join the EDWTN Community Outreach Team!

Would you like to represent the EDWTN at local events such as community festivals and public outreach events? Join the newly-forming EDWTN community outreach volunteer corps! Upcoming Memphis-area events where the Diocese will have a presence include Taste of Memphis at the Liberty Bowl on September 1 and the Memphis Public Library's LGBT+ Pride Day event on Sept. 3 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Community Outreach volunteers will be supported onsite at all events by EDWTN staff.

If you would like to volunteer your time to share about our local Episcopal faith communities and ministries at either of these events, or if you would like us to add your name to the call list for other events, please contact Emily Austin: eaustin@episwtn.org.

CHAPMAN APPOINTED EDWTN SMALL CHURCH CONSULTANT

Jeane Chapman has been appointed Small Church Consultant for the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee. This fall, Jeane will visit each of our small congregations to meet with lay leaders and clergy to learn about their vision for the future and to collect data that will determine how the Diocese can best support them.

Chapman is uniquely qualified for the responsibilities that she will encounter through her new role. Throughout her decades-long career in healthcare administration, she excelled in organizational assessment and analysis, consultation and program development, and communication and collaborative problem solving. Since 1976, Jeane has been an active communicant at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Memphis, where she currently serves as Senior Warden. She also currently serves on the EDWTN's Commission on Ministry and the Disciplinary Board.

"Working with Jeane has been a wonderful experience of authentic ministry: both challenge and support. I'm excited about the real progress she will help us make in the health and growth of our small churches," said the Reverend Tom Momberg, who currently serves as priest-in-charge at All Saints in Memphis.

(**Recovery** *continued from page 6)*

understanding. We remind them they are perfectly and wholly loved. We recognize the pain caused by the disease is best met with compassion and care. We know the Church is the ideal setting to provide the spiritual care needed. We address the stigma by providing education on the disease. We promote available resources for recovery. We pray, listen and show up. We do what God has called us to do, to rely on him and take care of each other.

(**Garland** *continued from page 7)*

Stephen's several months after the deadly incident – right around the time when condolences and remembrances are petering off," said Mathes. "Being intentional about sending love and care to those experiencing loss around the time when the rest of the world has 'moved on' is, I hope, a reminder to the Saint Stephen's community that we haven't forgotten what has happened."

With the success of the project, a "sew-a-thon" at the Barth House took place early in August to prepare the garland to be sent to Alabama.

"As I looked around the room at the Barth House and watched as we were putting the garland together," said Mathes, "it really felt like prayer in action. We read the prayers as we sewed them and noticed the differences between the the hearts that people selected and the things that people writing. The very act of creating was a prayer."

During a "sew-a-thon" at the Barth House, parishioners came together to assemble the heart garland for Saint Stephen's. (L to R: Tricia Horton, Holy Trinity parishioner; Emily Austin, Holy Communion parishioner; Shari Moore, Good Shepherd parishioner; the Rev. Hester Mathes)

(**General Convention** *continued from page 13)*

Amend Article X of the Constituion - Book of Common Prayer | RESOLUTION 2022-A059, FIRST READING.
This resolution maintains the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and allows for alternative and additional liturgies to supplement the Book of Common Prayer as provided by Canon. This resolution will need to be approved again in 2024 to become effective.

Official Liturgical Website
RESOLUTION 2022-A058
This resolution declares www.episcopalcommonprayer.org to be the official liturgical website of The Episcopal Church, containing all authorized liturgies and explanatory materials.

Book of Occasional Services 2021 Authorized
RESOLUTION 2022-A006
This resolution adds new occasional liturgies to the Book of Occasional Services 2018. This will eventually be on the official website.

Lesser Feasts and Fasts
RESOLUTION 2022-A007
This authorizes the commemorations that were approved for trial use in 2018. This will eventually be on the official website.

Extending and Furthering Beloved Community | RESOLUTION 2022-A125.
This establishes the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice as a voluntary association of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the work of becoming the Beloved Community to be funded by an annual draw on the trusts and endowments available for general use in The Episcopal Church's budget.

Telling the Truth about The Episcopal Church's History with Indigenous Boarding Schools
RESOLUTION 2022-A127.
This creates a fact-finding commission to research the history of residential boarding schools for the Indigenous that were operated by The Episcopal Church and to gather information from survivors of abuse at these schools.

Forensic Audit of the Funds of The Episcopal Church | RESOLUTION 2022-A129.
This directs the officers of The Episcopal Church to ensure that the Church conduct historical research on the origins and sources of its financial and other assets that are directly tied to the enslavement of humans, the slave trade, and historical and current racial injustices, in order to tell the story of our history. It also urges each diocese to conduct this research on the origins and sources of its financial and other assets.

Defining Equal Place in the Life of the Church | RESOLUTION 2022-D091.
The passage of this resolution directs dioceses to review lay ministry within the diocese and make sure there is adequate support and opportunity for the laity, including people from underrepresented groups.

Church Grounded in Social Justice as Christian Ministry | RESOLUTION 2022-A078. This requests that all dioceses offer, at least once a year, a diocesan-wide event or program and liturgy to engage our congregations and members in listening to and understanding the history and current context of our diverse local communities, with attention to those who have historically been dispossessed or disadvantaged.

Revise Denominational Health Plan | RESOLUTION 2022-A078. This reviews the structure and offerings of the Denominational Health Plan, in consultation with the Church Pension Group staff, with special attention to the cost of premiums, and report back to the 81st General Convention a list of options to reduce health insurance costs across the Church.

Uniform Paid Family Leave Policy
RESOLUTION 2022-A003. This urges all dioceses to adopt a paid family leave policy for both clergy and lay persons, based upon bronze, silver, and platinum plans to be developed by The Episcopal Church.

Best Practices Guide and Policy to Prevent Harassment | RESOLUTION 2022-A067.
This provides for adaptation of a Model Policy to Prevent Harassment and a Best Practices Guide by the dioceses, with these items and other information relevant to prevention of harassment to be included on The Episcopal Church's website.

Development of Best Practices in Hiring and Developing Organizational Cultural Competencies | RESOLUTION 2022-A130. Executive Council is directed to develop model hiring, workplace and committee/board practices, including a focus on deepening cultural competency.

Updated New Revised Standard Edition and New Jerusalem Bible
RESOLUTION 2022-A144. This authorizes the use of the Updated Edition of the New Revised Standard Version and the New Jerusalem Bible for liturgical use.

Break the Silence Sunday
RESOLUTION 2022-C064. This designates the Sunday closest to November 25 as Break the Silence Sunday in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Suicide Prevention | RESOLUTION 2022-C068. This expands suicide prevention training.

Gender and Sexuality Training
RESOLUTION 2022-D072
This utilizes the Safe Zone Project to provide gender and sexuality training.

Developing Curriculum and Required Training for Clergy in Mental Health Pastoral Care | RESOLUTION 2022-A109.
This authorizes the creation of a curriculum for clergy and those in the ordination process in mental health and mental illness awareness.

Reunification of Dioceses of North Texas and Texas | RESOLUTION 2022-D050.
This approved the reunification (merger) of the former Diocese of Fort Worth and the Diocese of Texas.

GRACE-ST. LUKE'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY

by Marci Woodmansee,
Associate Director of Communications at GSL Episcopal School

Founded in 1947 as an outreach of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal School recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding in Memphis.

The coed Midtown school got its start in Central Gardens in 1947 as an outreach of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal Church, which itself had just been created upon the merger of the Grace Church and St. Luke's Church parishes in 1940. The school's founder, Lorena Webber Walker, had previously run a kindergarten at St. Mary's Episcopal School. In 1947 she approached the Rev. Dr. Charles Stuart Hale, the second rector of the newly-merged Grace-St. Luke's, to ask if she could rent space at the church to begin operating a kindergarten there. A scholarly man himself and firm believer in the importance of a Christian education, he agreed, and Mrs. Walker set to work.

Historic GSL memorabilia was displayed during the 75th anniversary event on August 20, 2022. Image courtesy of Grace-St. Luke's Episcopal School.

Her efforts paid off. From humble beginnings in the church's Parish Hall, a thriving day school was formed, which gradually added grades each year, eventually graduating several high school classes in the mid-1970s. Space constraints led the school to right-size into a prekindergarten through ninth grade configuration in the late '70s, ultimately evolving into the two-year-old to eighth grade model the school enjoys today.

In the Spring, Episcopalians from across the EDWTN joined together for a lunchhour get-together at the Brooks Museum of Art in Memphis. It was a fun event that brought together fellow art-lovers from across our diocese! More events like these are on the horizon. Connect with Emily Austin to learn more: eaustin@episwtn.org.

Happy Anniversary, St. Anne's Millington! On July 24, 2022, St. Anne's celebrated its 125th anniversary. Thanks be to God! Photo courtesy of St. Anne's.

ON DOING GOD'S WORK: HERE I AM, LORD!

By Janie Morris, Founder and Coordinator of Special Friends Fellowship Club

I hear so many conflicting messages nowadays. On the one hand, a vicious fight is being waged to disenfranchise people who don't look like the majority...white, mostly male, powerful...part of our citizenry in America. On the other hand, once in a while, I see a "feel-good article" in the media that reminds me that there are still people out there that don't just go to church on Sunday; they listen to the lessons and try to do what God calls them to do.

Earlier this year, I saw such a story on the nightly news. A woman in a community outlying Memphis led an effort in her church to provide a warming shelter to help out during freezes like the ones we experienced earlier this year. The film footage showed a purpose-built building with doors open and welcoming anyone who needed shelter from the ice and wind. This wasn't just a cot in a gym, it was fully outfitted with brand new, still in the plastic, mattresses and frames to accommodate what looked like several dozen people. It happened to be operated by a Baptist church, and was titled after a Bible verse that I, an Episcopalian, am embarrassed to say I can't remember, but the message attributed to Jesus was that you who have welcomed the stranger have also welcomed me.

One of my own Episcopal parishes – I have an affiliation with several here in Memphis – recently started a refugee-welcoming ministry to make the transition into Memphis an easier one for refugees from a variety of countries who have been displaced from their homes for one reason or another. During one of the cold snaps that came to Memphis earlier this year and left many without power, my husband and I were sheltering good friends who had lost power at their home. It was during this visit that the doorbell rang and a gentleman we befriended, and who befriended us when we needed help clearing the lot we live on over twenty years ago, drove in from Brownsville, Tennessee where he now lives, to check on us in the midst of the bad weather.

Our connection with Mr. Freeman began because our family had been part of a program through Catholic Charities a few years before when our parish participated in Polish resettlements in the US through that same Episcopal church. When we were having trouble hiring labor, I contacted Catholic Charities and we hired Mr. Freeman and another gentleman for several months and we became true friends.

That same Polish family we once helped, and who had arrived with all their possessions in one duffel bag, went on to move to New England, and become American citizens. When we visited them some eight or nine years after they left Memphis, they had bought their own home, and were temporarily housing a Polish man, newly arrived in the United States, paying forward the hospitality we had shown them. Mr. Freeman's visit reminded me of how important it is to welcome the stranger to our shores, and even into our homes if needed, because by doing so we are serving as God's hands.

David Outz, Minister of Music and Liturgy at Church of the Holy Communion, had quite a thread going on Facebook recently about a hymn, beloved by some, snubbed by others, "Here I am Lord." Well, David, that hymn has nudged many a complacent bottom out of the pew and into the community... including yours truly.

May we all listen for the call...and heed it.

Save the date!

The 41st Annual Convention of the Diocese of West Tennessee

November 18-19, 2022
Church of the Holy Communion
4645 Walnut Grove Road
Memphis, Tennessee 38119

Nomination and Registration Information Forthcoming

Virtual Budget Hearing

October 20, 2022 at Noon

Registration Required:
https://tinyurl.com/2022BudgetHear

Virtual Resolution Committee Hearing

October 25, 2022 at Noon

Registration Required:
https://tinyurl.com/2022ResComHear