

Highland

Episcopalian



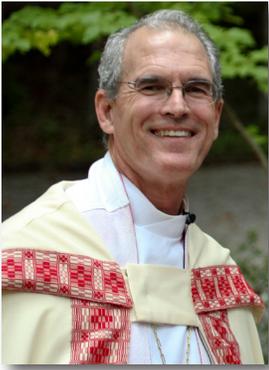
A Quarterly Publication of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina

**New directions,
new growth**



Walk in the Way • Widen the Walls • Wake Up the World

Winter 2015



As announced last March, the Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor will be stepping down from his position as bishop in fall of 2016; the Bishop Search and Transition Committees are helping the diocese find and install a new bishop.

Bishop Taylor's column will continue in the next issue.

Bishop Transition Committee

The Transition Committee is already at work planning events to take place in spring 2016. The Committee will introduce the candidates for bishop at a series of meetings, also called "walk-about," to be held throughout the diocese. Please plan to attend one near you. The Committee will then oversee the Electing Convention on June 25 in Asheville. Their work includes events to celebrate Bishop Taylor's ministry as well as planning for the Ordination and Consecration of the new bishop on October 1, 2016 in Asheville. Kathy Atkinson is serving as Chair with 30 others from across the diocese.

Key Dates to Know

Late April

Candidates for bishop announced

Walk-about

Mid-May

June 25, 2016

Electing Convention (new bishop is elected)

October 1, 2016

Ordination and Consecration of the Seventh Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina: October 1, 2016

Bishop Search / Nominating Committee

Your Search/Nominating Committee is faithfully journeying along in silent mode as we pray, open ourselves to the Spirit, review, interview, and reference check all of our wonderful nominees. We received 56 names in nomination and we received 47 packages of information. Our consultant tells us that this is the highest number that any diocese has received in recent memory. I believe this is a testament to who we are as a diocese; the professionalism, transparency and honesty of our profile; and our current bishop.

The diversity of the nominees is wide: approximately 40 percent are women; we have Latino and African-American nominees, as well as nominees from some of our sister Anglican Communion in this world-wide church we call home.

You will not hear much from us until mid to late April when the "slate" of candidates (3-5 persons) will be formally presented to the Standing Committee and then shortly thereafter released to everyone. In the meantime we continue to ask for your prayers as we dedicate ourselves to this Holy work!

Blessings & Peace,

The Rev. Dr. Gary Butterworth, Chair, Search/Nominating Committee

Are you getting *all* the news?

The Highland Episcopalian is a great way to keep up with some of the success stories from around our diocese, but to get all the latest news, events, policy updates and the bishop's weekly reflection, you need to be on our email list.

The Diocesan News & Reflection goes out every Wednesday, and our Parish News & Events e-newsletter goes out every other Thursday.

To sign up for our email list, see the form on the front page of our website. Send an email to Chris Goldman at cgoldman@diocesewnc.org to get the link directly.

As always, we welcome your news and events for publication in the e-newsletters and/or our magazine. Again, email Chris Goldman at cgoldman@diocesewnc.org to submit your information.

About the *Highland Episcopalian*

The *Highland Episcopalian* is a quarterly publication of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. The magazine is sent to anyone who wishes to receive it within the boundaries of the diocese. Those outside the area may subscribe to the magazine for \$5 per issue. Donations to support the cost of mailing the magazine are welcome, and may be made online or sent to our office.

If you would prefer to receive it electronically, please email Alice Keenan at akeenan@diocesewnc.org.

For questions, comments, or story ideas, contact the editor:

Chris Goldman | Episcopal Diocese of WNC
900B CentrePark Drive | Asheville, NC 28805
Phone: (404) 697-4191
Email: cgoldman@diocesewnc.org

Wardens, Treasurers, & Vestries Day

Attention wardens, treasurers, and other interested vestry members: The annual Wardens, Treasurers, & Vestries Day will be February 13 at Trinity, Asheville. (We've added "Vestries" to the name to reflect our practice of inviting all vestry members, especially new ones.) Registration is from 9:30-10:00 (a later start for those who travel). The program and lunch will be from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

We will discuss matters of common interest, divide into groups designed to match your experience, and share best practices in the service of our Lord. Come learn and share!

To register, go to our website at www.diocesewnc.org and click on the Wardens, Treasurers, & Vestries Day event.

Mark's Place marches to a different beat

By Chris Goldman, Diocesan Staff

Turn in past the auto parts store into the Belmont Village Shopping Center in Belmont, North Carolina on a Saturday evening and head towards the Bi-Lo grocery and the Papa John's pizza place. Where there's normally a Tae-Kwan-Do studio nestled between them, a few folks in casual clothes will be stepping inside. You might hear the sound of drums and guitar wafting out into the parking lot. Congratulations! You've found Mark's Place, a unique worship community that is part of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Gastonia.

Mark's Place provides a casual, contemporary worship service. As they say on their website, "Our pews are lawn chairs. Our altar is a folding table. Our pulpit is a stool. And our organ is a guitar." And when the music stops, the priest gets up from his drum kit to serve Eucharist.



The Rev. Shawn Griffith on drums

The Rev. Shawn Griffith, rector of St. Mark's, has a friend from seminary who started a church in California that incorporated local musicians playing contemporary music, followed by a homily and a group discussion. "I had been praying about doing something like this for a couple of years. I saw what my friend had done, but I wanted it to be an extension of St. Mark's and the Episcopal Church, not a new church. Those kinds of things were percolating in my mind."

The Rev. Griffith found a Tae-Kwan-Do place that was closed on Saturday night, and negotiated to rent it out for \$60 a week.

"We don't have a presence except on Saturday night," says the Rev. Griffith. "The rest of the week it's Tae-Kwan-Do. There's no signs, no visibility. But what's happening is people are coming in and getting excited and going out to tell others about it."

The service at Mark's Place starts with music for a half hour or so, moves on to a 10-minute homily or Bible study session, and then as a community the worshipers talk and ask questions about the reading. Then they pray together and have Communion.

"Probably the most attractive thing to people is having a dialogue around the Scripture," says Griffith. "Most people have not experienced that and they enjoy giving their thoughts."

In addition, many of the people who attend St. Mark's are attracted to the contemporary Christian music that they play, and they enjoy the casual atmosphere. The Saturday evening time slot also helps for families who have children involved in sports and other activities during the weekend.

At first, Mark's Place had attendance of 40 people or more. Many of these were from St. Mark's and wanted to support the new effort, but after a while the numbers dwindled down to 10 or 12 people per week. Now the number is building up again to around 20. "At the two-year point, we're starting to get word-of-mouth out, and I would predict in two more years we'll double that and be up to 40 again, which is what some of our smaller churches average," says Griffith.

There are multiple reasons Griffith wanted to start Mark's Place.

One is the location: it's between Gastonia and Charlotte in an area where no Episcopal Church currently exists. Mark's Place is an easy and low-cost way to connect people on the west side of Charlotte to the Episcopal Church.

Another is getting people to go to church: Griffith sees Mark's Place as a way to attract people who

normally wouldn't want to attend church and connect them to God and Episcopal traditions.

Griffith says, "One couple came and said, 'This isn't what we're looking for, but it's brought us back to church for the first time in a long time.' Hopefully, we're leading people back to God." And for many people, it has become their preferred form of worship.

In addition, Mark's Place serves as a way to introduce people to St. Mark's and The Episcopal Church. Often, those who attend Mark's Place wind up wanting to know more about St. Mark's and its ministries. While they may enjoy the service at Mark's Place, the connection to St. Mark's means there is access to more resources, opportunities to serve, and to be part of a larger worshipping community. And some who wind up at Mark's Place find out about The Episcopal Church in the process. One woman who attended told Father Griffith, "I've never heard so much love and grace. I didn't know that about The Episcopal Church."



While the atmosphere is casual, Mark's Place maintains the important traditions

Mark's Place has made it a little easier for people to access this "love and grace." They even invite people waiting for a pizza next door to stop by for five minutes until their pie is ready. This is the true meaning of "All Are Welcome."

Meanwhile, the congregation at St. Mark's has been supportive of the new service. Griffith says, "St. Mark's is unique in that we are constantly looking



St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Gastonia

for new ways to worship and create Christian formation."

As an example, Griffith mentions their special summer service. Since there's no Sunday school during the summer, St. Mark's was losing families with children. So St. Mark's started a family service in the parish hall at 9:30 a.m. "They can bring kids in swim trunks!" laughs Griffith. They play kid-friendly songs and have a six or seven minute children's sermon. "We have 30 or 40 people attend who would otherwise not be at St. Mark's in the summer," says Griffith. "And we've even brought new people to church. It's also a way to keep families connected to St. Mark's so when fall comes they'll be here."

St. Mark's also participates in mission trips, which provides a sense of excitement for the congregation. This year, they had an adult mission trip to Belize and a youth trip to West Virginia. But they also had a local mission trip for children in the third grade and older. In the morning, they would volunteer at a food bank or community garden or work with abused children. In the afternoons, they would hit the pool and have fun.

"Any church can do a local mission trip," says Griffith. "They don't cost much money, but they do require commitment."

So it's no surprise that an innovative parish like St. Mark's came up with an idea like Mark's Place. Because the worship space is low-cost and requires no long-term investment, the only resource needed is — again — commitment. And that's something they have plenty of.

St. George's Connects

Art to Spirit

By Chris Goldman, Diocesan Staff

Here in Western North Carolina, we're blessed with many creative, artistic people. We have a heritage of arts and crafts dating back to the first settlers, one that continues to this day.

The Rev. Beth Darling, the rector of St. George's Episcopal Church in Asheville, saw this resource in her community and wanted to find a way to connect it to the spirit.

"What was missing in Asheville was not a class that teaches a skill, but to connect the spiritual with the artistic and to use art as a doorway into spiritual growth," says Darling.



Choosing pictures for Spirit Collage

With a plan to use arts to foster spiritual growth and ministry development, the Center for Art & Spirit at St. George was born.

With the help of a grant from the Congregational Vitality Ministry of the diocese, the center began in 2013 by hiring a staff member and looking to see what kind of artistic and spiritual activities they could accomplish.

And St. George's has accommodated the venture. "We use the entire church," says Darling. "We've taken the pews out to give us a big space. We use the parish hall and Sunday school rooms."

Barbara Peterson, who was hired as the director on a volunteer basis, says that St. George's is not just another Asheville venue for the arts. "The sanctuary has been prayed in for 65-some years," she says. "People who are not Episcopalians come there and tell me they feel the Spirit."

The first year was a learning process, with its share of programs that didn't pan out. But over time, a few successful programs have evolved. A sampling of offerings at St. George's:

- Spirit Collage uses the art of collage as a form of prayer card and prayer inspiration.
- The Aramaic Toning group meets once a month, chanting the words of prayer in Aramaic.
- Sound healer workshops use everything from dance to meditation to tai-chi, all incorporating sound to open the spirit.

In addition, the congregation at St. George's has opened its doors to spiritually based groups that are not connected to traditional liturgy, like the NA and AA recovery groups and the Circle of Mercy congregation (which focuses on social activism and social justice).

"The idea for the Center is that there are many doorways to the spirit," says Darling, "not just the traditional liturgical setting. We want to invite people to share in an experience of spirituality. We're all on a similar spiritual journey together."

As a result, St. George's has attracted many people who are not members of the congregation, but who attend activities and events. Some of those have gone on to be regular worshipers at St. George's. "We are getting people who might not normally enter into a church setting at all to come into our church space," says Darling.

Peterson agrees. "We get a lot of people who may not find spiritual enrichment through going to an Episcopal Right II form of service. But they come to something like our labyrinth walk and have a chance to experience the sacred." Peterson says that can open up an avenue for people to associate positive feelings with the church. "We talk to people who say they have been 'burned' by the church in the past, and I hope we're doing something to alleviate that."



Children in the Creative Peacemakers program

Another example that Peterson gives is the Kirtan service. Kirtan is a call-and-response form of worship that allows one to commune with God by chanting the names of the Divine “We have people who don’t normally sing, but they will chant,” she says. “It’s about naming God in ways we typically don’t do on Sunday mornings. Our liturgy is rich in many ways, but in the variety and richness of how to name the Holy, the Kirtan has given people a new experience.”

The Rev. Darling believes that by inviting people to share in the community at St. George’s, there’s more opportunity to build relationships. “I have really enjoyed the process of opening our faith and Baptismal Covenant in new ways,” she says. “It’s helped me reach further into the community and make connections without saying, ‘This is how it has to be.’”

One of the most exciting programs at the Center is Creative Peacemakers, which seeks to bring peace to our community by helping children practice peacemaking through cooperative play and creative expression. It started with two or three children but has expanded to include 12 children attending regularly.

So what does it take to start something like the Center? First, it takes commitment and support from the parish. “I’m inspired by the courage of our older members, some who’ve been in this church 50 or 60 years,” says Darling. “I found that they’re willing to step out and feel that Jesus is continuing to call them into new ways of faith and serving.”

Of course, it also takes money. The Congregational Vitality grant was a good start, and a \$5,000 grant from the Human Hurt & Hope Fund helped support the Creative Peacemakers program as well. With Peterson on board, the Center is making a concerted effort to be self-sustaining. Towards that end, the Center is working with the vestry to ensure that development campaigns are coordinated, and that everyone understands what they’re trying to accomplish.

In the end, Peterson puts her faith in God to see the program through: “If you’re taking the time to listen,” she says, “then you’re in the flow of the Divine creative energy, and when that happens, amazing things are born.”

Kairos West: *not* business as usual

By Chris Goldman, Diocesan Staff

On a trip to Cuba, the Rev. Milly Morrow visited a Baptist ministry called the Kairos Center. The Kairos Center is all about community, with a cistern for clean water that draws people in, but Morrow says it winds up being much more than that: “What ends up happening is they do community organizing. They do art together, they do liturgy together, they pray together, and they start solving community problems together,” she says.

According to Wikipedia, Kairos is “an ancient Greek word meaning the right or opportune moment (the supreme moment).” For Morrow, it turned out indeed to be “the supreme moment,” one that led to a new ministry in our diocese called Kairos West (located in West Asheville). Kairos West focuses on creating a system based not on transactional exchange, but on building relationships.

Morrow, who serves as Canon for Missional Formation and Youth and Community Engagement at the Cathedral of All Souls, said it took a lot of people saying “Yes!” in order for her to get to that supreme moment.

When Morrow asked her friends if she should start a project like this in Asheville, they said yes. When she asked the Very Rev. Todd Donatelli, Dean of the Cathedral of All Souls, if she could develop this project, he said yes. When she asked The Episcopal Church for a Mission Enterprise grant, they said yes. When she asked the diocese for help, the grant from The Episcopal Church was matched. And when she frantically tracked down the Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor, bishop of the diocese, and asked if he would sign the lease for the building she wanted to rent...*today*...he said, “Let me think about it.” And then, of course, he said yes.

Kairos West is a joint ministry of the Cathedral of All Souls and the Diocese of Western North Carolina. It is designed to be “a sacred space in a secular world, accessible to all and set apart for community



“The sign says it all” — the welcome sign outside Kairos West

building and for the empowerment of emerging leadership through art, liturgy, and social service.” But as a collaborative, communal space, it would take some time to figure out exactly what shape that would take.

For the Kairos West version of the clean water cistern, Morrow decided to provide a space with coffee, books, and wireless access to draw people in. “We opened a year ago,” says Morrow, “and I sat here for two months feeling really bad. Then people just started pouring in and saying, ‘What are you doing?’ And I said, ‘I don’t know.’ And that got us talking about what we wanted to do with the space.”

That is perhaps the most interesting concept that Kairos West embodies: it is not a ministry intended to accomplish a specific task, or to fix people’s problems. “We want to move from production and consumption as our valued currency to relationship as our valued currency,” says Morrow. So she wants the people who use the space to decide what they



Located on a busy street and surrounded by businesses, Kairos West is one of the few non-commercial options

want to do.

Kairos West provides a host (or hosts) who open the space each day, make coffee, and then welcome whomever comes in. They are happy to facilitate organizations who want to make connections, to get involved in a spiritual conversation, or just to let the person who enters find a space that is quiet and still. "It's not us doing it, it's emerging leaders coming in and doing what they want to do," says Morrow. "We hold sacred space. We are here to hold the space, to be a container for thought processes. Let's let things germinate and see if anything grows."

The center hosts groups that are often marginalized elsewhere, like people with brain injuries, the LGBT community, and the homeless. In addition, other programs use the space to brainstorm or hold meetings about collaboration; for instance, several groups who are interested in feeding the hungry can meet together to talk about pooling their efforts in a space that encourages working together.

"It's a manifestation of a change of theology," says Morrow. "It's getting on board with the fact that we're in a reformation of sorts, and part of it is

moving from a theology of charity to a theology of relationship, or a theology of scarcity to a theology of abundance. It's a shift from where it is as Christians we're meant to show up, and how we're meant to show up. We're being called to show up in the present moment. For a while, it was good enough to donate to your church, or donate clothes. It was a distant thing. But we need to just be with people and stop doing so much. To love our neighbor is to know our neighbor."

As an example, the hosts at Kairos West talk about getting to know the homeless people who drop in. Many of the marginalized people who show up are surprised that there's nothing required of them, no forms to fill out, nothing being sold, and nothing specific for them to "do." They are simply invited to spend some time in a place that is welcoming and inviting. "What's transformational about it is that it's mutual," says Morrow. "They're transforming us. I don't just have an isolated idea of what it means to be homeless anymore."

Kairos West sits in a commercial zone along Haywood road, surrounded by places to buy something. But when one enters this space, the difference is clear immediately: a sofa, a small kitchen, a wall

adorned with art, a few bookshelves. People wander in wondering what's for sale. "The thing about being right on the street, we want to be sure that relationship is our valued currency, and there are so many options for consumption here around us," says Morrow. "Like, 'Oh wow, one more place to buy a beer or a cup of coffee.' But this is an opportunity for people to enter into the consciousness of another option. It's not about consumption. It's like a library. There's something wonderful about it all being free."



Top: a wall covered with hand-drawn prayer cards; bottom: visitors from Cuba's Kairos Center celebrated with volunteers at Kairos West



For instance, Morrow mentions how a single mother came in with a young child. She was exhausted and needed a break, and she rested on the couch while the child played with toys. Where else could a parent just drop in somewhere without spending money, without being questioned?

So Kairos West is many things: a safe haven, a space

for brainstorming, a place to be inspired, a community for those who are artists, or homeless, or searching for meaning (sometimes all three). When asked what has been successful about Kairos West, Morrow responds, "It's all successful, because it's ministry. It really depends every day. The success can't be measured, because it's about relationship. We just have to have faith that the people who come in have some sense of transformation, have some sense of increase of connectivity, and some sense of not needing to compete for resources. And we hear stories all the time that that's what's happening."

One example of an experiment in new ministry is the free food market that Kairos West holds occasionally. As Morrow says, there are plenty of people who give food to the hungry in Western North Carolina, and she appreciates their efforts. But the free food market allows people to take whatever they need, with no restrictions and no requirements. Morrow says a youth group that came to do mission work was excited by the prospect of being able to just give something away, with no questions asked.

"We used to enter into mission to serve the other, but we now understand it's to serve ourselves," explains Morrow. "The whole purpose is to enter into missional relationships in order to be formed as Christians. God gives us opportunities of great need so that we will know God in a great way. It's not about that other person at all, because God has that other person; we have to engage that need because it's in front of us, but it's about us and God. And then through that, the other person is served. It's a huge shift for a lot of people who show up in this space to do mission work."

Morrow notes that while Kairos West has had success getting grants, she would appreciate knowing that the mission has individual supporters. "It's important to me to know that we have people in our community who stand with us, who support us," she says. Individual donations can be sent care of The Cathedral of All Souls, 9 Swan Street, Asheville, NC 28803 with "Kairos West" written in the memo line. All donations made in this manner will directly support the operations of the center.

Global Mission Grants

By the Rev. Deacon Clare Barry, Church of the Advocate

Each year as part of the Episcopal Church's Millennium Development Goals, the Diocese of Western North Carolina funds grants to parish-sponsored projects across the world. Through these grants, many lives are touched and saved in impoverished global regions. As we do this work, we continue to grow more Christ-like when we collaborate together to create spaces that eliminate poverty and enhance the lives of our neighbor in another country. In our work together, we also grow in our understanding of another part of the world, their challenges as well as their achievements. Our spiritual life evolves as we pray for one another. Please keep these projects in your daily prayers as they depend upon all of us together. Blessings and thanksgiving. **Our total amount distributed in grants this year was \$16,000.**

1. **Haitian Freedom Fish Farm** (Church of the Incarnation, Highlands). The goal is to improve the economic condition of families in Cange through the initiation of a community-driven farming cooperative. The program will begin with 15 families and after the initial expenses, the program will be self-sustaining. Grant: \$2,500.
2. **Increased Food Security for La Gonave, Haiti.** (St. Alban's Parish, Hickory). This ministry will serve the people of La Gonave, Haiti through the ten mission churches operated by the Episcopal Church of Haiti on the Island of La Gonave. Fifty families from these 10 churches/1,700 children in schools will be directly impacted by becoming goat farmers. Each family will receive food for the goat and instruction in care of the animal. As the animals grow and reproduce, they will provide a source of food and income for these fifty families. Grant: \$6,650
3. **Egyptian Baby Wash program, Cairo, Egypt.** (St. Francis, Rutherfordton). This ministry serves babies and their mothers in Egypt. Mothers need education in how to care for their babies basic needs and also need supplies for their care. This program will help reduce infant

- mortality, disease and abuse. Grant: \$1,050.
4. **The Consider Haiti Sustainable Nutrition Program**, Montrouis, Sous Bourgne, Ivoire, and Fond Baptiste, Haiti (Grace, Asheville). A minimum of 120 children and their families will be enrolled in the Community Health Agent program for severely malnourished children. Each enrolled family obtains a pregnant, female goat and education through the Sustainable Nutrition Program. Additionally, we provide health checks and nutritional support and training for the hundreds of graduates and families. Grant: \$2,500.
5. **The Crucifix Project for Haiti** (St. Francis Chapel, Cashiers, NC). Goals of project: This ministry serves 300 hundred students and 30 faculty in Good Shepherd School Montrouis, Haiti. The sales from these crosses will be used for supplies, tuition subsidies and hopefully to initiate a modest feeding program. Grant: \$1,500.
6. **ESL Teacher for our Little Roses Ministry at St. Pedro Sula, Honduras Central America** (La Capilla de Santa Maria, Hendersonville, NC). This ministry serves formerly abused and abandoned girls living at Our Little Roses who do not have the opportunity for English education. English fluency provides the graduating girls with a skill they need to obtain a good job leading to self sufficiency. Grant: \$1,800.



The 8 Millennium Development Goals

When Neuroscience Comes to Church

By the Rev. Beth Turner, St. Thomas, Burnsville

St. Thomas Church, Burnsville offers an essential “missing piece” for Justice and Outreach ministries

In February and August of this year, St. Thomas Church, Burnsville hosted basic skills trainings in a cutting-edge wellness and prevention program called the Community Resiliency Model (CRM). The focus of this model is to re-set the natural balance of the nervous system. CRM skills help people understand their nervous system and learn to track sensations connected to their own wellbeing, which CRM calls Resilience. With practice, an individual's normal balance or rhythm (referred to as the Resilient Zone) is restored. Using the wisdom of their own bodies, people often experience rapid relief from stress and trauma symptoms, accompanied by increased sense of control over future wellness.

Among the full house of over 50 attendees in the initial training were 12 parishioners and representatives from a range of local service agencies – including the Yancey County Family Violence Coalition, public school teachers and guidance counselors, therapists from RHA Behavioral Health, hospice nurses and social workers, campus ministry interns from Appalachian State University, and healthcare professionals from Blue Ridge Regional Hospital (Mission Healthcare).

A subsequent training in August was offered as part of a strategic plan enabled by an \$11,000 grant from diocesan Justice and Outreach Ministries. Local agencies and school systems sent teams in order to maximize the impact of their training. Included were representatives from Mitchell and Yancey County Schools; Bakersville Community Medical Clinic; Mitchell-Yancey Healthy Families (Toe River Health District); the Appalachian Foodshed Project and Dig In Yancey Community Garden; a peer support group for veterans; and several Episcopal clergy.

Qualified persons who attend the basic skills training can later complete a Burnsville-area train-the-trainers program and become “neighborhood resiliency educators.” We know that individual and social transformation cannot be sustained apart from the fusion of service, education, and empowerment that the Community Resiliency Model brings to life. Our strategy will produce companions for local skills trainers to help engender a resiliency-focused community – an outward and visible sign of resurrection!

CRM skills are also useful for self-care. They can be taught as a peer-to-peer intervention in a variety of contexts. Clinicians, educators, clergy, and other frontline helpers responding to stress and trauma can apply CRM skills in medical and counseling centers, classrooms, faith communities, and crisis interventions in the field. These skills can help prevent burnout among the same leaders. The model is a tremendous resource for individuals coping with chronic stressors such as physical pain, recovery from addiction, or grief and loss. A range of marginalized populations that suffer effects of cumulative trauma (e.g. poverty, racism, homophobia) benefit greatly from these tools.

CRM is unique in that it provides a biological, non-stigmatizing perspective on normal human reactions to stress and trauma – among them, the depression and anxiety that are so often labeled as “weakness.” Relief from the burden of shame is a focus often absent in our efforts to respond to the whole person, as Jesus did, especially in communities of the poor and marginalized. Our intent is to engage our neighbors in a way that brings wholeness of mind, body and spirit – which is how Episcopalians understand “reconciliation.”

Although not a substitute for provision of food, shelter, clothing, or acute medical care, CRM is spreading rapidly in our region, nationally, and internationally because people who are overwhelmed by challenging life situations need accessible, affordable interventions that help restore them to wellbeing. This includes recovering self-regulating behavior and access to the part of the brain that allows for critical thinking. Improved decision-making abilities can then allow full participation in every form of relief or justice made available.



Participants at a CRM workshop at St. Thomas teach brain science to one another using their hands

Local organizations serving “the last, the lost, the least, and the littlest” are wanting for holistic tools that may be used in tandem with their direct service offerings, tools that rebuild dignity, support sustainable change, and ignite hope. In addressing physical and mental health, CRM is both restorative and preventive. This both/and approach is an essential missing piece.

The hope is for widespread peer-to-peer education at the grassroots level. The Community Resiliency skills have been called “the democratization of mental health.” People are urged to pass them along to family, friends, and their wider social network. Discovering one’s own ability to work with the wisdom of their own body is comforting and empowering.

In Burnsville, CRM is influencing the ways members of St. Thomas Church care for themselves and one another. Practice groups for parishioners and the wider community are offered in the church. The rector routinely incorporates the skills in the course of the liturgy and pastoral care, especially in relation to medical crises, since a person’s confidence in her/his resilience is a potent force for healing. The implications of engaging in parish

decision-making and leadership development from a place of balance and self-regulation are apparent and promising.

A presentation on the Community Resiliency Model was offered at the 94th annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. In the midst of ongoing angst about the future of our faith, we can hardly do better than to provide state-of-the-art tools that help form communities increasingly balanced in mind, body, and spirit – and people who are increasingly resilient and therefore able to apply centered, thoughtful attention and creativity to all our ministries.

Ours is a decidedly incarnational faith. Giving thanks that our Creator has blessed us with bodies elegantly designed for resilience and resurrection is a matter of faith and, ultimately, of stewardship. It’s a good thing, a true gift from God, when neuroscience comes to church!

For more information: the Rev. Beth Turner, rector of St. Thomas, is a certified skills trainer in the Community Resiliency Model. She can be contacted at strector@gmail.com.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

ST. ALBAN'S, HICKORY

Habitat for Humanity House

Thanks to the generous grant from The Human Hurt & Hope Fund, The Diocese of Western NC contributed \$5,000 to St. Alban's for our Habitat for Humanity — Women Build House. Along with support from the St. Alban's Outreach committee, our total monetary donation was \$11,250. These funds will go directly to complete the model home in Habitat's new development, Northstone. Construction will begin this fall and women from St. Alban's are ready to continue their donation through sweat and equity, building and decorating the new home.

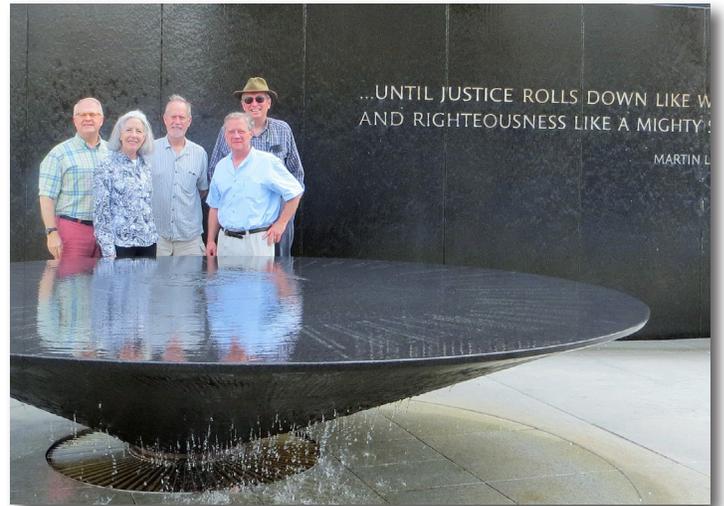


Jan Knotts & Maria Headrick presenting the check to Mitzi Gellman of Habitat for Humanity

INCARNATION, HIGHLANDS

2015 Jonathan Daniels Pilgrimage (by Frank and Ruthie Oliver)

On August 14, a group from Church of the Incarnation led by Gary Moore left for a weekend in Alabama to participate in the annual pilgrimage honoring Episcopal martyr Jonathan Myrick Daniels and other civil rights martyrs. Also attending the pilgrimage from Church of the Incarnation were Al Brady, Frank and Ruthie Oliver, and Fr. Bruce Walker. This year marks the 50th anniversary of Daniels' death on August 20, 1965.



The pilgrimage group visiting the Civil Rights Memorial

Daniels was an Episcopal seminarian who heard the call from the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1965 to work in the civil rights movement with an emphasis on voter registration. While attempting to register voters in Fort Deposit, Alabama, he was arrested and jailed with a group of activists in Hayneville, Alabama. Shortly after his release from jail, he was killed as he shielded the then 16-year-old Ruby Sales, one of the activists, from a shotgun blast as she attempted to enter Varner's Cash Store to buy a soft drink. The Episcopal Church declared Daniels an Episcopal Martyr in 1991, and his day on the church calendar is August 14.

The group arrived in Montgomery Friday afternoon. The first stop was to visit the Civil Rights Memorial on the grounds of the Southern Poverty Law Center. This beautiful circular black fountain records the names of 41 martyrs, including Daniels, and chronicles the dangerous struggles of the civil rights movement during that era. The group then visited the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, just a block from the state capitol grounds. Dr. King served at the church from 1954 to 1960 in his first pastorate. The tour was both informational and spiritual, including prayer and singing. Dr. King's office has been faithfully preserved, and the sanctuary exudes simplicity and grace.

Next was the Rosa Parks Museum, also near the capitol grounds. The museum has a multimedia presentation of the key events around the Montgomery bus boycott organized by Dr. King and others after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to

give up her bus seat to a white passenger.

As the last event on Friday, a memorial service for Daniels was held in the historic St. John's Episcopal Church in downtown Montgomery. The keynote speaker was Morris Dees, who gave a spirited talk. Presiding Bishop elect Michael Curry and a number of other Bishops were present, together with a large crowd of pilgrims and others.

Early Saturday, the group left Montgomery for the short drive south to Hayneville for the main pilgrimage event. By the time it began, there were about 1,500 pilgrims present. The crowd started at the town square and marched a few blocks to the jail where Daniels and the others were held. The pilgrims sang hymns along the way and prayed. The last stop on the march was the now-demolished Varner's Cash Store where Daniels was murdered. A historic marker honoring him has been erected at the site. The pilgrims returned to the Lowndes County Courthouse to celebrate Eucharist with the judge's bench serving as the altar. Presiding Bishop-elect Michael Curry gave the homily for the service with the theme that "Our task now is to keep the movement moving," Bishop Curry left the packed courtroom on their feet at the end: "If you don't remember anything else about what I say today, remember this: 'Just keep going.' It's God's dream that we change this world so there will be room for everyone. We must not stop."

TRINITY, ASHEVILLE

Red Bag Food Drive

One Sunday every quarter, the chancel at Trinity is full of worshipers, acolytes, candles, and...red bags. Stuffed with groceries, the bags are destined for agencies that feed the hungry. Parishioners have filled the brightly colored totes with food and supplies as instructed on a stapled-on grocery list, and brought them to be piled high around the pulpit. Red Bag Sundays garner almost one and a half TONS of food each. This successful ongoing food drive is the brainchild of the Outreach Committee.

Katie Chappell, long-time member, remembers: "As I recall, the Red Bag food drive came about a couple of years ago during a meeting of the Outreach Committee when we were discussing the shocking increase in "food insecurity" in Buncombe



Katie Chappell and Barbara Bell

county despite the economic improvement. My dad (the late Mac Patton) used to collect food donations for ABCCM from baskets at the back of the church. I believe there were published suggestions in the newsletter of items to bring in, but the weekly contributions pretty easily fit in the trunk of Daddy's Honda Civic. We thought if we could put lists onto grocery bags to hand out, then we might get a better response. Cloth grocery totes would be even better, and one of the Outreach Team found a way to have them donated with "Trinity Outreach" printed in black letters on the front."

The project works simply and well, partly by providing a very visible reminder during the week. You can hardly miss that red bag hanging on the door-knob! An organization is contacted and asked for a list of needed items. On one Sunday a representative of the chosen agency is invited to give a brief talk at the services and bags are handed out by ushers at each door. The next Sunday, bags are collected in the same manner. The organization picks up the bags early the following week, returning the empties and getting any stray full bags. As Katie says, "Parishioners have responded very positively. The most frequent comment: "It is so easy!""

As Barbara Bell from Loving Food Resources said, "A sea of red bags from you provided LFR with the largest food drive in our history — 2,869 pounds (almost 1 1/2 tons.) I cannot begin to tell you how appreciative we are."

Episcopal Diocese of
Western North Carolina

900B CentrePark Drive
Asheville, NC 28805

Indicia

Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina
Calendar for January, 2016 through April, 2016

- December 30-January 1: **Diocesan Office closed**
- January 9: **Ordination to the Sacred Order of Deacons, Cathedral of All Souls, 11 a.m.**
- January 16: **Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast**
- January 18: **Diocesan Office closed**
- January 19: **COM & Standing Committee orientation, Grace Episcopal Church, Asheville, 1 p.m.**
- January 26: **Fresh Start, Bishop Henry Center, 9:30 a.m.**
- February 4: **Staff planning day, diocesan office closed**
- February 5-6: **Executive Council Retreat**
- February 9: **Fiscal Ministries Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 10 a.m.**
- February 9: **Episcopal Foundation Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 1 p.m.**
- February 10: **Ash Wednesday**
- February 11: **Executive Council Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 10 a.m.**
- February 13: **Wardens & Treasurers Day, Trinity, Asheville**
- February 16: **COM meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 1 p.m.**
- February 16: **Standing Committee meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 3 p.m.**
- February 23: **Fresh Start, Bishop Henry Center, 9:30 a.m.**
- February 25: **Clergy Ember Day, Hendersonville Deanery Host, 10 a.m.**
- February 25: **Deans Meeting, 12:30 p.m.**
- March 1: **Parochial Reports due to the Episcopal Church, copy sent to diocesan office**
- March 6-8: **Clergy Retreat, Valle Crucis Conference Center**
- March 10-15: **House of Bishops, Camp Allen**
- March 17: **Renewal of Vows, Cathedral of All Souls, 11 a.m.**
- March 20-27: **Holy Week**
- March 25-28: **Diocesan office closed**
- April 5: **Fresh Start, Bishop Henry Center, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
- April 12: **Fiscal Ministries Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 10 a.m.**
- April 12: **Trustees Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 4 p.m.**
- April 14: **Executive Council Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 10 a.m.**
- April 19: **COM Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 1 p.m.**
- April 19: **Standing Committee Meeting, Bishop Henry Center, 3 p.m.**
- April 28: **Deerfield Board Meeting, Deerfield, 3 p.m.**