

# THE Harvest

August 2024 | The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas

## Deep Roots at Camp Wood YMCA

Campers and staff come together for a fun filled week focused on the theme "Linked by Love."

St. John's Window Restoration / 81st General Convention / Pride KC

## Seeking the “Via Media” in a polarized society



**AS A CHILD,** I was immersed in a lively political environment in my family. My parents were usually active Republicans (my mother occasionally registered as an Independent.) We were almost daily in the company of my maternal grandparents, Byron and Helen. Byron was a Republican who voted for Dwight D. Eisenhower and even voted for Alf Landon, while Helen was an Irish Democrat for whom JFK was nearly a saint.

My paternal grandparents, who had survived the Dust Bowl, were Republicans who nonetheless spoke

with great admiration of the Roosevelts whose policies helped them save their wheat and cattle farm.

Even with such a background, I find our current era of political and cultural polarization challenging.

Behavioral scientists consider polarization a distinct social dysfunction: it's a self-perpetuating cycle of communication and relationship dynamics that breeds mistrust, misunderstanding, and dehumanization. Almost any difference in values, perspectives, or identities can evoke polarization. They note eight marks:

1. Discussions about the issue are dominated by people who are passionately certain. They leave no room for complexity and drown out other voices.
2. The most vocal individuals and groups portray themselves as the protectors of virtuous values / objectives and paint the “other side” as ignorant, reckless, or motivated by malicious purposes.
3. Interruptions, angry outbursts, and personal attacks are increasingly common.
4. People selectively cite evidence that supports their views while searching for evidence of lies, ill intent, and ignorance in the assertions of their opponents.
5. People use slogans, shorthand, canned talking points, and buzz words whose meanings and contexts are rarely unpacked.

6. Few genuine questions are asked. Assumptions about the meanings, intentions, and values of the “other side” go untested and unexplored.
7. Little new information surfaces in conversations. Discussions of the topic take the form of a repetitive, well-rehearsed performance.
8. Silence hides significant differences.

Life in a polarized political context is a challenge that leads me to prayer and to tapping our Anglican roots. Much of what we treasure about the Anglican/Episcopal expression of the faith came forth in times of extreme polarization. The late 16th and the 17th-century saw the British Isles rent asunder between opposing political policies and monarchs and the polarizing religious ideas of the Continental Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church.

In such a time, figures like Richard Hooker, George Herbert, Jeremy Taylor, and the Caroline Divines forged ahead in faith. They walked the “Via Media,” the Middle Way, that has become a signature mark of Anglican Christianity. In a time when “people who are passionately certain” left no room for complexity and drowned out other voices, these Anglicans claimed that God had endued humans, who are made in God's Image, with “reason,” the ability to engage complexity and choose nuance in the face of polarizing forces. (contd. p. 4)

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ON THE COVER: Golden hour at Camp Wood, YMCA. Photo by Chad Senuta.

# THE Harvest

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# News and notes from congregations



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bishop Cathleen Bascom with confirmands at Trinity, El Dorado.

## Trinity welcomes new members

Confirmands and their families joined Bishop Bascom and the vestry of Trinity, El Dorado for a picnic and discussion of sacramental life titled “Outward signs of inward grace.” Those in attendance shared personal and corporate stories of how they are experiencing God’s presence at Trinity Church in El Dorado. The church confirmed and welcomed six new members.

**St. John’s, Abilene** offers a monthly Prayer and Praise Potluck Dinner in the church’s undercroft to celebrate the love of God and one another.

**Trinity, Arkansas City** hosted the Arkansas City Chamber of Commerce for its weekly coffee at the end of June. Attendees toured the church and listened to music played by the church’s organist Lucas Kuchar.

**Trinity, Atchison** participated in the local Amelia Earhart Festival June 19-21 by hosting historical tours of the church and having a special service on Sunday featuring traditional liturgy from the 1892 Book of Common Prayer.

**St. Mark’s, Blue Rapids** celebrated Cinco de Mayo together with St. Paul’s, Maryville with a special service and potluck. Attendees received perennials from Vicar Greg Doll’s flower gardens.

**St. Paul’s, Coffeyville** collects donations each Sunday for Genesis Food Pantry of Coffeyville. Genesis serves an average of 375 households per month.

**St. Andrew’s, Derby** empowered youth to lead the Morning Prayer worship service on June 30 and invited youth of the parish to paint stepping stones to be placed in the church’s Memorial Garden. The church also held Vacation Bible School in July.

**St. Martin’s, Edwardsville** prepared a new confirmand by joining with her and starting weekly book discussion for the whole parish using Chad Yaw’s book *Jesus Was an Episcopalian (And You Can Be One Too!)*

**St. Mary’s, Galena** held an ice cream social in May for church family and friends with homemade ice cream, desserts, and outdoor games. The parish also supported a camper from the congregation to attend the Episcopal Summer Mega Camp at Camp Wood YMCA.

**St. Timothy’s, Iola** raised \$5,389 through a fundraiser selling enchiladas and breakfast burritos. The funds will go to the church’s outreach efforts which support Hope Unlimited, Wings of Warriors, and paying for swimmers at the public pool twice during the summer.

**Church of the Epiphany, Independence** prepared and served the Community United Feeding Friends (CUFF) meal at First United Methodist Church on July 25. The ministry provides a free meal to those in need.

**Church of the Covenant, Junction City** started a new YouTube channel. Services are posted on Sunday afternoons and will be live-streamed as soon as the channel has the required number of subscribers.

**St. Paul’s, Kansas City** held a thank you celebration for Mother Dixie Junk and husband Rob, in gratitude of fourteen years of ministry with the parish. Attendees were



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Volunteers from St. Timothy's offer snacks at local pool.

## St. Timothy's, Iola sponsors swimmers at local pool

On two Sundays this summer, St. Timothy's sponsored the first 50 swimmers at the Iola City Pool, paying their entry fee. The church also provided snacks of free hot dogs, chips, cookies, and water outside the pool for anyone who wanted refreshments.

encouraged to wear Royals gear to honor Mother Dixie's love of baseball.

**St. Paul's, Leavenworth** started a ministry with high school youth and young adults that meets at 5 pm on Sundays. The group shares food, fellowship, and conversations about faith.

**St. Margaret's, Lawrence** has been "time-traveling" with its Children's Chapel each Sunday as the children travel backwards through the Bible from Acts to Genesis to discover how God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

**Trinity, Lawrence** participated in Lawrence Final Fridays with a performance by the band, Boys of the Prairie, and served free hotdogs.

Sixty members of the parish and the surrounding community attended. The parish also held its annual Garage Sale raising almost \$4000 for its outreach ministries. Items that weren't sold were donated to local charities.

**St. Paul's, Manhattan** collects donations for the Flint Hills Bread Basket each Sunday and parishioners donated over 46 pounds of food in June.

**St. Michael's, Mission** made a one time donation of \$4000 through its outreach ministry to assist with teacher salaries at the St. Paul's School in Torbeck, Haiti. The donation helped the school to remain open during unstable economic times in Port-au-Prince.

**Church of the Ascension, Neodesha** announced this year's Opportunity Quilt made by Elsa Hester. Chances to win the quilt will be raffled for \$1 each. The proceeds will go to the church's outreach funds, and the winner will be announced in December. The quilt features a flying geese pattern in cream, brown, green, blue, and orange.

**St. Matthew's, Newton** collected school supplies in July to donate to Northridge Elementary, which is across the street from the church.

**St. Aidan's, Olathe** welcomed Dick Turner who carved the church's Christus Rex over 25 years ago and recently visited from his home in Florida. He shared stories with the parish of the sacred symbol's creation.

**Grace, Ottawa** welcomed the Lawrence Community Handbell Choir to play during Eucharist on July 14.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Charlotte Buterbaugh (seated) with Bishop Cathleen Bascom, son Matthew, and daughter Laura at the ECW General Convention in Louisville, KY.

## Grace, Winfield parishioner Charlotte Buterbaugh receives ECW Award

Charlotte Buterbaugh received the Episcopal Church Women's Distinguished Woman Award at ECW's General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky on June 25. Charlotte was selected for her work with Church Women United, her work on the Episcopal Church Women's Board, and her leadership in a variety of ministries within the church and diocese.

In Honor of Charlotte, Grace, Winfield and Trinity, Arkansas City held a potluck lunch after Grace's service on June 9 to celebrate. Charlotte passed away one month later on July 9.

**St. Thomas the Apostle, Overland Park** sent 18 youth and 8 adults on a mission trip to Chicago. The group served with immigration and refugee ministries in the Diocese of Chicago.

**St. John's, Parsons** celebrated a special service to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the parish with Bishop Cathleen Bascom presiding. The service concluded with a play featuring the church's youth and was followed by a reception.

**St. Peter's, Pittsburg** celebrated St. Peter's Day at the end of June with a picnic in the church's Prayer Garden following the service. Burgers and bratwurst were grilled and supplemented by potluck sides provided by parishioners.

**St. Luke's, Shawnee** coordinated a Vacation Bible School program for children based on the theme of trusting God to lead, guide, and provide. The church also installed a new Rodgers organ in the sanctuary.

**Grace Cathedral, Topeka** celebrated Independence Day with a special Community Worship Service. Over 520 community members attended the service which included patriotic hymns and music, readings and prayers for the nation, and special guest speaker Evelyn Z. Wilson, Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court. Music featured a handbell choir, a mass choir of 57 singers from area churches and choral organizations, and a brass quintet. Veterans, active members of the Armed Forces, and civil servants were recognized.

**St. David's, Topeka** serves as a site providing summer lunches while school is out sponsored by U.S.D. 501. The church pays for the adults to eat with the students and provides

activities each day including games, crafts, and indoor sports. Three days each week, the children are invited to select a free book to take home with them. The church's food pantry has hit record numbers, providing groceries and hygiene items for 30 individuals/families weekly.

**St. Luke's, Wamego** participated in the Wamego Council of Churches School Supply Drive, collecting school supplies for students in Wamego. The supplies were distributed August 3.

**Good Shepherd, Wichita** is hosting a 13-week video program called GriefShare for those who have lost a loved one. The experience helps participants recover from the pain of loss.

**St. Bartholomew's, Wichita** donated 40 prom dresses to Prom Dress Express, assisting Grace Church, Winfield in providing prom dresses for students in need.

**St. James', Wichita** presented a performance of the classic American musical *Hello, Dolly* by the church's Guild Hall Players.

**St. John's, Wichita** hosts ShowerUp on Thursdays from 6-8:30 pm. ShowerUp serves those experiencing homelessness and anyone in need by providing mobile showers, hygiene resources, and personal care.

**St. Stephen's, Wichita** dedicated the church's newly completed Phillips/Thompson Pavillion and celebrated with a potluck picnic. The pavillion was begun in February.

**Calvary, Yates Center** provided dinner for the Yates Center Community Vacation Bible School on July 30.

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## Clergy News

- The Rev. Dixie Junk celebrated her last Sunday with St. Paul's, Kansas City on July 14.
- The Rt. Rev. Daniel Genovesi was called as Rector of St. Andrew's, Emporia, effective August 1.
- The Rev. Karen Schlabach appointed Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Missioner for the diocese, effective July 1.
- Archdeacon Jim Cummins was appointed to St. Paul's, Kansas City.
- The Rev. Monte Giddings was called to serve as Interim Dean of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry, effective August 1.
- The Very Rev. Casey Rohleder was called to serve as Assistant Interim Dean of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry.

## From the Bishop, continued

*Continued from page 1*

They came to “both-and” conclusions that we hold dear today. They were firm in their nuanced belief that one did not have to choose between scriptures and the sacraments. Lives devoted to radical prayer and holy living led them forward in faith, even when their churches were closed, and their worship was made illegal!

We are blessed to live in a society still free of the breadth of violence they witnessed and the kinds of religious persecution they endured. But in our own period of polarization, may we speak of and walk with courage the Via Media, Jesus' Way of Love inspired by our Anglican forebearers. ☉

# Four Deacons Ordained in June



PHOTO BY CHAD SENUTA

*Left to right: the Rev. Jeanine Blessant, the Rev. Sarah Shipman, the Rt. Rev. Cathleen Bascom, the Rev. Maddy (Bishop) Knoth, and the Rev. Ryan Bloyd-Wiseman.*

*by Chad Senuta*

**The diocese gathered** at Grace Cathedral on Saturday, June 15, 2024, to participate in the ordination of four deacons. The Rev. Jeanine Blessant was ordained to the vocational diaconate, and the Rev. Maddy (Bishop) Knoth, the Rev. Ryan Bloyd-Wiseman, and the Rev. Sarah Shipman were ordained to the transitional diaconate. The ordination was recorded and can be viewed on the diocesan YouTube Page.

Bishop Cathleen Bascom presided and the Rev. Lisa Senuta, Canon for Spiritual Formation and Clergy Care, preached for the service. Canon Lisa's sermon explored what is on the surface of our lives and what is underneath. She explained that while in many ways "nothing is changing" for the ordinands, God had been working under the surface in their lives. Looking out at the ordinands and the congregation, she said, "What we see is four people committing to the invitation of the Holy

Spirit and their strong willingness to rearrange their lives and become yoked to the church and humankind for a sacred purpose. And their hidden longing was so deep that they could not help but say 'yes.'"

The Rev. Maddy (Bishop) Knoth attended Princeton Theological Seminary. The Rev. Jeanine Blessant, the Rev. Ryan Bloyd-Wiseman, and the Rev. Sarah Shipman attended the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry.

Deacon Knoth was sponsored by St. James', Wichita, and has been appointed to serve as Curate of St. Andrew's, Derby, and as the New Expressions/Young Adult Missioner. Deacon Blessant was sponsored by St. Peter's, Pittsburg, and has been appointed to serve at St. John's, Parsons, and St. Peter's, Pittsburg. Deacon Bloyd-Wiseman was sponsored by St. Michael and All Angels, Mission, and has been appointed to serve as Curate at St. Paul's, Leavenworth. Deacon Shipman was sponsored by Grace Cathedral, Topeka, and has been appointed to serve as Curate for both Grace Cathedral and Diocesan Youth Ministry. ◉

# Kansas priest preaches in Ireland

by the Rev. Mary Donovan

**For the past three summers** I have accompanied my husband Charles to Ballycastle, County Mayo, Ireland, where he takes painting classes at the Ballinglen Arts Center. Adjacent to the school is a church. Inspired by the former Archbishop of Canterbury speaking about strengthening ties among the Anglican Communion, I emailed the parish's priest, the Rev. Clive Moore, to ask if we might meet while I was in Ballycastle.

My casual inquiry turned into an opportunity to preach and co-celebrate at the Cathedral of St. Patrick, Killala, and the nearby St. Michael's Church of Ireland, Ballina. When we arrived, I was warmly welcomed by the Rev. Moore, Canon Alex Morahan, and the Reverends Carolyn Morrow and Karen Duignam. Together these clergy serve seven churches in the diocese.

Killala was founded circa 431 by St. Patrick as an Episcopal See. In the folklore of the region, thousands were baptized by St. Patrick at a nearby monastery that no longer exists. The present cathedral has gothic architecture and is one of Ireland's oldest Cathedrals.

Entering this holy place was deeply moving. I could feel it had been home to a congregation that had survived things I could barely imagine: war, famine, attacks from outside forces, and losing fellow congregants to storms that swallow fishing boats.

My sermon described the joy and sadness Irish Americans often experience when we return to Ireland. A sense of longing for home left behind and a desire to re-establish family ties long broken.

In the gospel reading for that Sunday, Jesus was crossing the Sea of Galilee with his disciples. While a storm raged, he slept. Awakened by his panicked disciples he said to the sea, wind, and waves, "Peace! Be Still!" And then he asked his followers, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?"

For me the gospel evoked the journeys our ancestral families made, and the ones our families still make to return to our homeland. I think of myself as strong, but I am not sure I could have crossed the Atlantic and landed on Ellis Island to face New York City, where signs in shop windows declared, "Irish not wanted." Mark's retelling of



PHOTO BY CHARLES LINN

*The Rev. Mary Donovan stands in front of the Cathedral of St. Patrick, Killala, where she preached on June 23.*

the story shows us that whatever our journey, it is our faith in Christ that gives us calm and peace.

I thanked the parish and the priests of Killala and Ballina for being my new family, who through our common faith, and our Book of Common Prayer, make me feel safe in the storm.

Canon Morahan and the Rev. Clive Moore surprised me with a copy of the Irish Book of Common Prayer. Inscribed were the names of the clergy that make up the Killala Group of Parishes, and a blessing in Gaelic, "Go maire tu i gcosaint De," which means, "May you live in God's Protection." ①

# Churches partner for youth camp

by Kelsey Phillips

Throughout our summer at St. Thomas, Overland Park much excitement bubbles around the “Reaching Out to the Community” camps, dubbed “ROTC” for short. These camps provide opportunities for all ages to explore ways of providing mercy and enacting justice for those in need.

For the past several years, the senior high youth of St. Thomas have traveled to Parsons, KS, where they are greeted with a warm welcome from St. John’s members. The initial goal of this trip was to facilitate a Vacation Bible School for St. John’s. This provided an opportunity for older youth to teach younger peers about our faith and build connections.

This summer, it became apparent that the youth of St. John’s were beginning to outgrow a typical VBS program. It was then that the idea for a Parsons ROTC week was suggested.

Leaning on leadership from her senior high youth, Mother Kelly Demo explored ways for the St. Thomas youth to share their knowledge through service-based learning. Having participated in ROTC camps for years, the St. Thomas youth were able to facilitate a mirror version of what happens in their parish.

Each morning in Parsons began with program time. The youth gathered for a lesson and then broke off into small discussion groups. The theme of the week centered around



PHOTO BY THE REV. KELLY DEMO

*Youth from St. Thomas, Overland Park and St. John’s, Parsons volunteered at Labette County Emergency Assistance Center during summer event.*

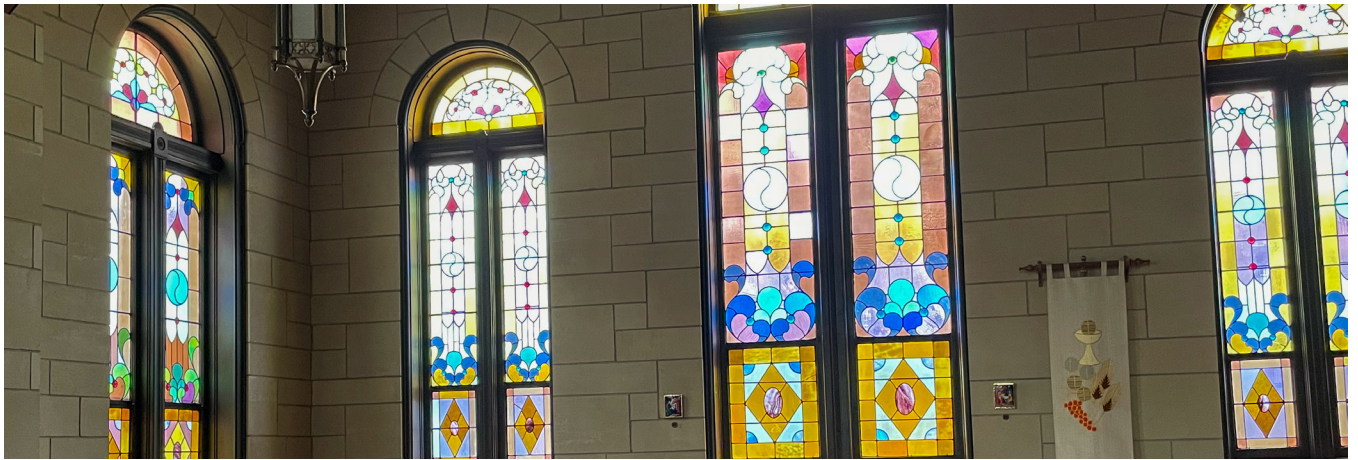
food insecurity. What started with simple definitions, soon turned into a conversation about systemic change.

Following program time, the service-based learning began. This particular week, the youth volunteered with the Labette County Emergency Assistance Center (LCEAC). They spent time packaging bags of groceries to be distributed. The youth of St. Thomas were familiar with organizations like this and able to share assembly-line skills and a demeanor of genuine enjoyment in their work. The youth of St. John’s had local familiarity with the organization and explained its direct impact to the youth of St. Thomas.

As with most things in youth ministry, there were some moments of readjustment. The initial plans to

facilitate a food drive morphed into an on-the-fly bake sale to raise money for LCEAC and better serve the organization’s needs. The youth adjusted with enthusiasm and went on to raise over \$300 in one morning.

In true ROTC fashion, there was an even balance of work and play. Afternoons featured fun with sports, crafts, and a trip to the pool. Needless to say, this cross-parish camp has become a staple in the youth programming for both parishes. It has shown that the St. Thomas youth are well-equipped to share experiences in an impactful way and that the St. John’s youth could give a new perspective and leave their new friends with a spark of joy that would shine through their stories when they returned to Overland Park. ①



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Newly restored windows shine with their original glory at St. John's, Wichita.*

# St. John's restores original windows

*edited by Chad Senuta*

**In April 1893** the Reverend John Von Herrlich arrived at St. John's Episcopal Church. The cathedral-style church had been under construction since 1887 but remained unfinished. The shell of St. John's had been boarded up for four years with only the exterior stone walls, a slate roof, and a boiler in place. Father Von Herrlich promised the parish he would help to get the church building finished.

Just two months later, twelve stained glass windows were lowered into their openings and meticulously wedged in place with wood frames built to encase each window. St. John's first service in the building was a wedding held on July 23, 1893.

For more than 130 years the windows stood as sentries watching over generations of St. John's parishioners. In the 1950s exterior windows were added to protect the stained glass from weather damage. However, after years without maintenance, it became apparent in 2022 that the windows were suffering both inside and out. The colors faded; their vibrancy long forgotten. The exterior was equally distressed, with wood rotting, pieces missing, and an entire pane completely gone. St. John's made a connection with Hoefer Custom Stained Glass in Hutchinson, and work began to restore the windows to their original beauty.

In March of 2023, a crew of six from Hoefer descended on St. John's. The windows were numbered. Then piece by piece the wood that framed each window

was pried loose, identified, and bundled so each piece of wood could be returned. Then attention turned to the windows; two ten-foot sections and one three-and-a-half-foot half-moon piece above.

Over the years some individual panes of glass had been broken. Instead of removing the entire window, the small panes had been cut out and other panes of colored glass had been inserted. In most cases, the replacement panes didn't match. Efforts would be made to replace those mismatched panes with glass that more accurately matched the original panes.

Once back at Hoefer's shop, each window pane was numbered. Tracings were made, wood frames were removed, and each window was placed into elevated, shallow tubs of water. The glass, thick with grime built up over decades, was scrubbed clean. And then the process was repeated. To protect the workers, special safety vents operated overhead as the old lead was removed. As if completing a jigsaw puzzle, the clean panes of glass were placed atop each window's tracing. They were now ready for new lead to be applied.

In late April Hoefer informed St. John's that some of the windows were almost ready. With cameras in tow, eight parishioners made the trip to learn about the process and glimpse these treasures. As the doors opened and sunlight entered, the intensity of the colors bathed the room in glory. The windows looked as they might have in 1893.

Meanwhile, exterior work was being done to prepare for the windows' return. The outside was scraped,

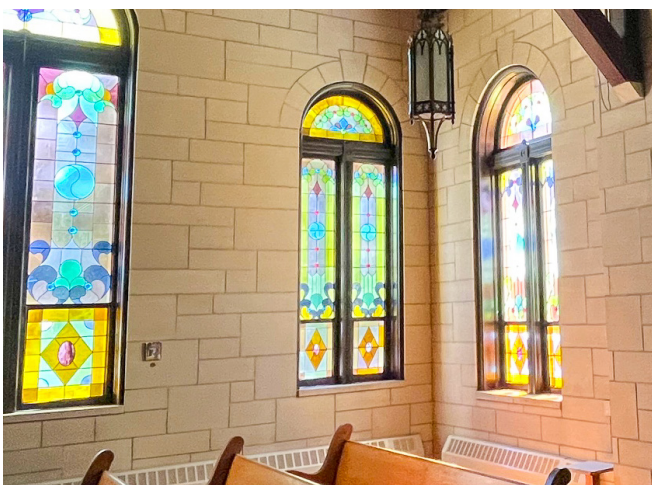


SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Workers from Hoefer Custom Stained Glass remove stained glass windows from St. John's to begin restoration process.*

sanded, filled, primed, and painted. Extra space was created to allow more space between the stained glass and the protective glass that had been ordered. Small vents were built in at the top of each window's metal frame to allow condensation to dry.

The reinstallation was a well-choreographed dance, each worker moving in the right direction at just the right time. With crowbars and mallets in hand, they eased each window back into their cradles. A slight move here, a pry there, a few taps of the mallet, and the windows descended back into their original positions,



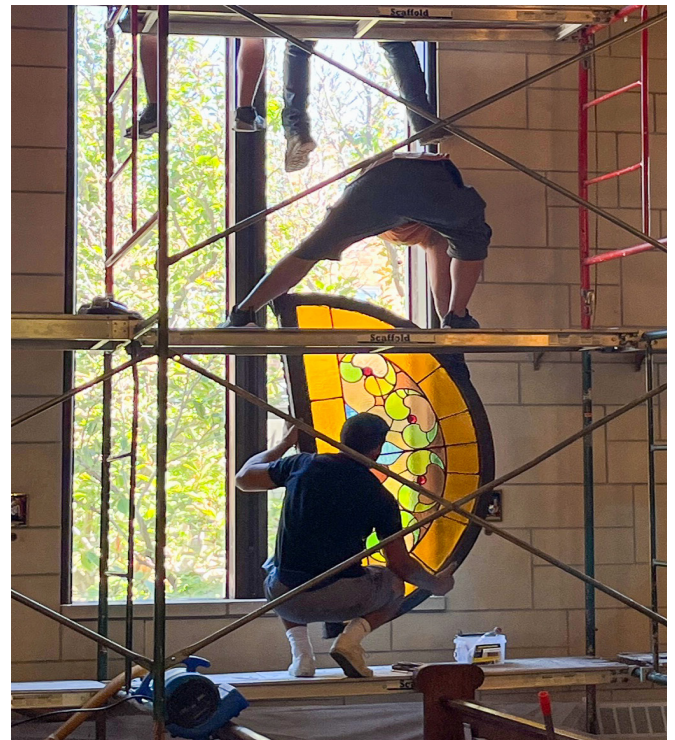
SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Sunlight streams through newly restored windows at St. John's, Wichita.*

where each had stood watch for more than a century.

Once in place, each window was meticulously cleaned. Wood trim was placed in position; not a single piece of the thin 130-year-old wood was lost or damaged. With a fresh coat of stain and finish, the wood casing looked new. The workmen scrambled up and down the scaffolding on both sides of the windows. With the stained glass clean and firmly in place, the exterior protective glass was installed, and the job was complete.

On July 7, 2024, St. John's celebrated 131 years of ministry in its building since that first wedding service in 1893. The windows that have marked the passage



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Workers from Hoefer Custom Stained Glass work to reinstall stained glass windows once window restoration is complete.*

of time shone fresh light on the Word of God as the congregation prayed, "Oh Lord God, the whole world is filled with the radiance of your glory: Accept our offering of these windows which we now dedicate to you for the adornment of this place and the inspiration of your people. Grant that as the light shines through it in many colors, so our lives may show forth the beauty of your manifold gifts of grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." ①



PHOTO BY CHAD SENUTA

*Sunrise over the prairie at Camp Wood, YMCA.*

# Tall grass from deep roots: a look at Episcopal Summer Mega Camp

*by Weston Curnow*

**From Emporia to** Florence, Kansas, Highway 50 glides across mile after mile of tallgrass prairie, offering endless vistas of the Kansas horizon.

One of the most notable features of this region is the prairie grass itself. Although prairie grass can grow to six or seven feet tall, the real glory occurs below the sod, in the hidden and nutritious soil. Fed by Spring rain and enriched by prairie burnings, it is not uncommon for the roots of prairie grass in Central Kansas to grow 10 feet deep!

In the heart of this prairie, stands Camp Wood YMCA - a place where Episcopalians have made spiritual retreat for over 100 years. This year, from June 2-8, youth from across the country enjoyed Episcopal Mega Camp, hosted by the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. This year's theme was "Linked by Love."

Like the grass surrounding Camp Wood, Episcopal Summer Camp occurs above and below the surface; like the roots of the venerable Kansas prairie grass, what is visible accounts for only a fraction of the camp experience. Where one may see campers playing basketball, there grow the roots of beloved community. Where one may see campers completing art projects, there bloom the fruit of authentic expression in Christ. This year,

linked in the love of God and neighbor, campers let their spiritual roots grow deep.

Before the campers' arrival, the Rev. Karen Schlabach explained the week's theme with a sermon preached at the Staff Eucharist. In her message, Mother Karen examined the relationships that form the roots of Camp Wood. From campers turned to counselors, to parents returning to volunteer years after their children graduated, it is people and their relationships, like prairie grass, who form the deep and complex root structures that feed and strengthen the campers' experience.

During the camp's opening welcome, Bishop Bascom further demonstrated the deep roots of Camp Wood. Calling to the stage Andrew Hoyt of Lawrence and Randy Harrison of Wichita, Bishop Bascom recounted how Randy once served as Andrew's camp counselor. Now, decades later, both Randy and Andrew would serve alongside one another as counselors. Yet, Bishop Bascom was clear that Randy and Andrew's story, though powerful, was far from unique - all around camp there were deep roots - counselors who have served for over 50 years, parents serving alongside children, and couples who met at camp.

Like the prairie, stretching mile after mile, campers traveled from far and wide to attend camp, some even traveling from as far as California and Louisiana. This

year the Diocese of Kansas was also glad to welcome over 30 campers and several clergy from the Diocese of West Missouri. The Rev. David Wilcox, West Missouri's Missioner for Youth Ministry served as the Junior High Camp Director, and the Rev. Brittany Savage, Associate Rector at St. Paul's, Kansas City, Missouri, served as the Junior High Chaplain.

In addition to the daily rhythm of worship, communal meals, and "Y-Time" (activities ranging from horseback riding to kayaking led by YMCA staff) campers also enjoyed nightly events and celebrations. One especially beloved evening event was the camp-wide carnival. What began in 2023 as a makeshift way for the older campers to entertain the younger campers with games and activities during a bout of severe weather evolved this year into a full-scale celebration. High school and junior high cabins teamed up to create numerous carnival games and activities. Ranging from homemade mini-golf to pin-the-beak-on-the-flamingo, elementary campers competed for tickets to redeem for prizes. The carnival concluded with a particularly picturesque prairie sunset. Campers also enjoyed participating in talent shows, dances, and "paint the counselor" – a game that is exactly what it sounds like, much to the counselor's enjoyment.

Unlike prairie grass, which every year undergoes the ancient cycle of resurrection and regrowth, prairie weather is far less predictable. This truth was particularly palpable at this year's Mega Eucharist. Traditionally the Mega Eucharist, a camp-wide celebration of communion, is held at "High-Y," an outdoor sanctuary with unbroken views of the surrounding prairie. This year, due to a hulking summer storm, counselors scrambled



PHOTO BY KIRSTEN LEE

*Campers ride horses at Camp Wood, YMCA.*

to prepare Ritchie Hall, the camp's main dining facility, for the Eucharist.

Unfortunately, due to the severe weather, the power in Ritchie Hall went out, plunging the assembled campers and staff into semi-darkness. Undeterred, the worship went on, led by the Rev. Karen Schlabach. The sermon was delivered by senior high camper Josh McCall. Midway through the service, the power was restored, creating for some a Genesis-like miracle. By the conclusion of the service the storm had passed and campers returned to their cabins under a clear and twinkling prairie night sky. Such is the rhythm of this sacred part of the world, where the Spirit brings its children to remember the power and the glory of God.

Whenever a prairie is burnt it sends the land into a paradox. On one hand, the land is exhausted – the grass has given all that it can give. On the other hand, the land is restored to its most fertile – the burnt grass becomes food for the vast network of underground roots.

Prairie fire, through exhaustion, allows the plains to roar back to life, healthier and more resplendent than ever before. Camp accomplishes the same thing. At Mega Camp, campers give their all. After a week of new friends, new activities, and enriching worship, campers are often exhausted. Yet, that exhaustion leads to a profound and rejuvenated relationship with God and God's church. It is a sign that, like the prairie grass, the camper is ready to grow into something more than before.

A previous bishop of this diocese was fond of saying that, "A week of camp does more for a child's life of faith than a year of Sunday school." In many ways, this is true. Camp provides the spiritual nutrients for youth to deepen their roots so they can bloom into the verdant children of God we know them to be. ☉



PHOTO BY THE REV. SHAWN SHERRADEN

*The Rev. Karen Schlabach celebrates "Mega Eucharist."*

# Election of new Presiding Bishop



PHOTO BY SCOTT GUNN FROM EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

*Presiding Bishop-elect Sean Rowe addresses the 81st General Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, after his election and confirmation as the 28th presiding bishop of The Episcopal Church..*

*By the Very Rev. Casey Rohleder*

## The election of the Presiding Bishop

is a much-anticipated day in the life of The Episcopal Church, and it was a powerful moment to witness during the 81st General Convention as a Deputy from the Diocese of Kansas.

The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, Diocese of Northwest Pennsylvania and Western New York, was overwhelmingly elected by his fellow bishops on the first ballot. At 49, he is the second-youngest presiding bishop ever, and the first from Gen X.

When the House of Deputies received word before lunch that the election was complete, there was an audible gasp and excited murmuring throughout the House. We had to wait until after lunch to hear the announcement and vote to consent. It is quite the process.

Being on the House floor for this announcement and then casting my vote to consent to the election of Bishop Rowe was perhaps the highlight of General Convention for me. I was moved by his address to the House of Deputies following the vote, with bishops, alternates, and visitors in attendance.

His passion, commitment to stewarding financial and human resources in service to dioceses and parishes, and his desire that we walk together in love and practice forgiveness was inspiring.

Before the election, we had celebrated the Eucharist together, and the primary language was Spanish. It was lively and Spirit-filled – the music and prayer filled my soul. I sat near the Nebraska deputation and watched as Scott Barker, Bishop of Nebraska, was surrounded by the

Nebraska deputies in a moment of prayer before heading to the election as one of the five candidates.

I think this captures something that blog posts, articles, and even conversations with deputies might struggle to convey. Yes, there is much business we must attend to as the Church. Yes, there are many strong and differing opinions.

However, what I have witnessed over and over again is the spirit of discernment and the deep prayer that permeates our work. There is openness and civility on the floor – something that we don't see much in our communities, our nation, or in the world today.

After the day's legislative session, the Kansas deputation walked back to our hotel. I caught a glimpse of a rainbow in the sky through the Convention Center window. It felt like a meaningful sign affirming the work we do at General Convention. ☉



PHOTO FROM EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

*Presiding Bishop-elect Sean Rowe.*

# History in the making

by the Rev. Andrew O'Connor

**It's not every day** that you get to be a witness to history being made, but one of the joys and privileges of serving as a deputy from the Diocese of Kansas at the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church is that on any given day you just might.

Having represented our diocese at the 2015, 2018, 2022, and now 2024 General Conventions as either a Deputy or an Alternate, I have been blessed by witnessing some truly amazing moments over the years.

Marriage equality and the election of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry in 2015; the reunification of the Diocese of Cuba to the Episcopal Church in 2018; the election of Julia Ayala Harris as the first Latina to serve as President of the House of Deputies and the first steps towards potential revision of the Book of Common Prayer in 2022—these are just some of the amazing moments I have been privileged to witness.

One of those moments occurred again when the House voted to adopt resolution C009 granting the petition of the Navajoland Area Mission to become a Missionary Diocese of the Episcopal Church. The action will likely not garner quite the same worldwide attention as when a certain bishop of our church preached a stemwinder of a sermon at a certain royal wedding, but it was profoundly significant. As a Missionary Diocese, Navajoland will be able to elect its bishop rather than having one appointed. Indeed, the creation of the Missionary Diocese of Navajoland is something that captured all of our attention.

In honoring the petition of the Diné people of Navajoland to raise the status of the area mission to a missionary diocese, we were honoring the work of generations of leaders who have sought to preserve their indigenous traditions while fully Episcopalian, claiming their full and rightful place in the life of our Church.

When the House of Deputies considered resolution C009, the normal Rules of Order were briefly suspended so that every member of the Navajoland deputation could speak. Each deputy described their hopes and dreams coming to fulfillment in this historic action.

The Rev. Cornelia Eaton, a Navajoland deputy and

canon to the ordinary said, “We have come a long way, a long journey. We are the hopes of our ancestors and what our elders prayed for.”

One of the Navajoland elders also addressed the House with her heartfelt thankfulness for the arrival of a future that had finally arrived. It was tremendously moving to hear these words and a great joy when the vote was affirmed by unanimous acclamation.

It is a privilege to be a witness to history. It is even more amazing to be a witness to the movement of the Holy Spirit helping us lament our shameful treatment of Indigenous Peoples and inspiring us to take the next steps into becoming the fully realized Dream of God.

We were reminded that the Diné people of Navajoland who have been Episcopalians for generations have full and equal claim to the very identity we all love so much. We know we have much more work to do to support our siblings in Christ in Navajoland and so very much to learn from the beauty of their faith expression. History has been made once again. Now we join God in crafting a new future, and we celebrate! 🎉



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Bishop Bascom and Kansas' Deputation on the floor of the 81st General Convention.*

*(The articles on pgs. 12-13 originally appeared in a series of blog posts written by Kansas Deputies reflecting on their experiences during the General Convention. All of the posts can be accessed on the diocesan website.)*

# Group Spiritual Direction



STOCK IMAGE FROM CANVA.COM

*By the Rev. Mary Becker*

**Group spiritual direction** is a process that I recently introduced to the clergy of the diocese at the clergy retreat in April held at St. Crispin's Conference Center in the Diocese of Oklahoma. It is a practice in which people gather together regularly to assist one another in an ongoing awareness of God in all of life.

They seek support for their responsiveness to God and they agree to support others in that same responsiveness. Three conditions are important to the life of the group. Members agree to:

- Commit themselves to an honest relationship with God.
- Participate in the group process through prayerful listening and response.
- Open their spiritual journeys for consideration by others.

The depth of sharing necessary in Group spiritual direction requires a level of trust not often found in other types of groups. This trust is not dependent upon similar personalities, mutual interests, or common experiences; it is grounded in a trust of God's desire for each participant individually as well as the group as a whole.

Group spiritual direction is now being introduced in the Diocese of Kansas for those who desire support for their relationship with God within a spiritual community.

A group consists of 3-4 people that meet once a month for two hours. For group members living in different towns or cities, there will be an option to meet via Zoom.

I have received training to lead Group Spiritual Direction and also train facilitators from the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation.

Anyone interested in learning more about Group Spiritual Direction can contact me at [mbecker@episcopal-ks.org](mailto:mbecker@episcopal-ks.org). To learn about Shalem Institute, their resources, and training contact [info@shalem.org](mailto:info@shalem.org).



PHOTO BY MICHELE MOSS

*The Rev. Mary Becker, Deacon for Diocesan Spiritual Life.*

# Pride Parade and Eucharist in KC



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Episcopalians from Kansas City area churches gather to march in Kansas City Pride Parade.*

*By Chad Senuta*

**The Dioceses of Kansas** and West Missouri came together to celebrate a special Pride Eucharist on Saturday, June 8, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Kansas City, MO. Bishop Cathleen Bascom presided with Episcopalians from both sides of the state line worshipping together to affirm that all are welcome in The Episcopal Church.

Following the Pride liturgy, those wishing to join the Pride parade made the short walk through the Westport neighborhood of Kansas City to take their spot in line. Parishes were encouraged to bring signs and banners identifying their churches. The parade route was approximately 2 miles in length, ending at Pridefest located at Theis Park in front of the Nelson Atkins Museum. The festival went throughout the weekend, featuring national recording artists, vendors, food trucks, family activities, and more.

Many in the LGBTQIA+ community have experienced rejection by the faith traditions they were raised in. The Episcopal Church affirms that everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, is a beloved child of God, and is invited to practice their faith as their authentic self.

For those Episcopalians attending Pride KC, their participation was a way to show love and support to the LGBTQIA+ community during Pride Month.

The Rev. Dr. David S. Cox of St. Michael and All Angels, Mission said, "It was a blessing to participate with

Episcopalians from Kansas and West Missouri in such a fabulous event, kicked off by a meaningfully rousing sermon by CJ Duffie, who is in the ordination process in West Missouri. A number of us were struck by the absence of negativity, let alone hate, along the parade route. The event was pure joy, which filled me with gratitude for the leaders of Pride events going back decades when the atmosphere was so daunting and hateful. The struggle is not over, but I am grateful to be in The Episcopal Church where justice for the LGBTQIA+ community is affirmed and advocacy is seen as a means of building relationships." 🙏



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*Pride Eucharist held at St. Paul's, Kansas City, MO.*

# Seeing Others and Being Seen

by Canon Lisa Senuta

**Driving around the diocese** has invited me to find podcasts and books to fill the time as I watch the road. Occasionally, I am so touched by something I don't stop listening even when I arrive at my destination.

David Brooks' new book, *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen* is that sort of book. As I listened to him read his own words, I often found myself in tears, pulling over to take a note, and constantly sharing it as a current favorite book. David Brooks is an op-ed columnist for *The New York Times*, writer for *The Atlantic* and a bestselling author.

As a journalist he presents ideas concisely and with integrity, quoting psychological, sociological, and interpersonal sources researched and studied, but with the voice of a regular guy. He tells the reader that he wrote

the book to understand why his best friend committed suicide and why he could not be a better friend.

*How to Know a Person* is like a primer. It gives rise to countless moments in our lives where we wanted to be there, but ended up too angry, impatient or frustrated. I kept reading because of the longing that welled up in me to be seen and known.

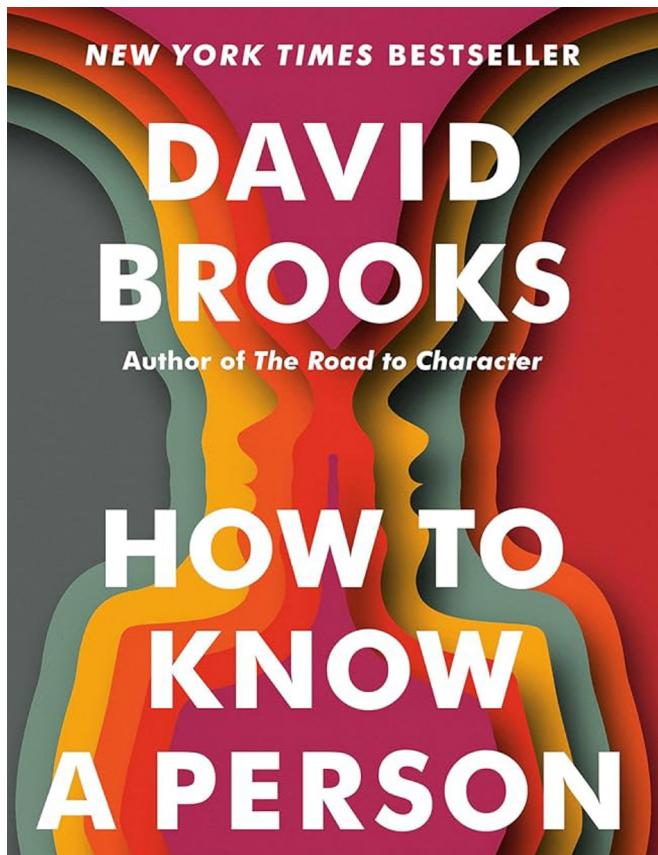
David is vulnerable time and again. For example, he shares candidly about a panel discussion and failing to take time to understand the people he was sitting with and only later noticing how his failure deprived the audience of the most important message – that we as humans can disagree and yet deeply respect each other enough to listen with curiosity to each other's point of view.

He does not hold back from disclosing his other reason for writing the book: to show a way through the polarizing rhetoric of our political life in America.

This book is also profoundly spiritual. Brooks quotes clergy, spiritual leaders, the Bible and other sacred texts. Beyond that he states openly he believes deeply seeing others and being seen is a spiritual act. He wrote, "Seeing someone is a creative act. No one can fully appreciate their own beauty and strengths unless those things are mirrored back to them in the mind of another. There is something in being seen that brings forth growth. If you beam the light of your attention on me, I blossom. If you see great potential in me, I will probably come to see great potential in myself. If you can understand my frailties and sympathize with me when life treats me harshly, then I am more likely to have the strength to weather the storms of life. In how you see me, I will learn to see myself."

He invites us to be what he calls "Illuminators." These people are skilled at the art of seeing others and being deeply seen and naturally draw others out into the field of freedom and trust to share their best selves.

I commend this book to you because Jesus' life giving, loving, liberating, presence echoes in our attentiveness to others. In our willingness to see others deeply and be deeply seen, we light up this world with the presence of God with us and beyond us. We are walking in the light of God. ☉



*How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen* by David Brooks.

# Covering Christ



**THIS SUMMER** we have been working our way through the high points of the Letter to the Ephesians and its commendation of Christian community’s body-to-head relationship with Christ. The Letter articulates the value of a Christian community bound together, unified but diverse. Seeking unity in Christ without requiring a flattening of our identities and giftedness is a powerful counter-cultural call, especially in the charged, political present. The Right and the Left value ideological purity and those who stray might find themselves punished by the powers of their party, castigated and whipped back into compliance, or ostracized entirely.

In addition to Ephesians, my summer has been full of a new album

by Alabama-based bluegrass band Iron Horse: *Pickin’ On The Doors*. As you might imagine, the album is a collection of bluegrass covers of the influential band, formed in Los Angeles in 1965 and one of my favorite groups. *Pickin’ On The Doors* is approximately the eighteenth album Iron Horse has made covering a rock act and each of them is incredible.

I’ve always been a big fan of cover versions, especially covers that drastically transform the genre of the original. The talent of cover artists amazes me, the way they find a pleasing balance of familiarity and individuality, accessibility and exclusivity. I’ve been reading Ephesians this summer with the dulcet sounds of a banjo transforming Ray Manzarek’s organ lines.

When we speak of the paradoxical “diverse unity” of the Church, it’s helpful to remember that our diverse identities are unified, not through our own will or action, but through the faith of Christ and our “grow[ing] up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). In other words, we are related to each other in the same

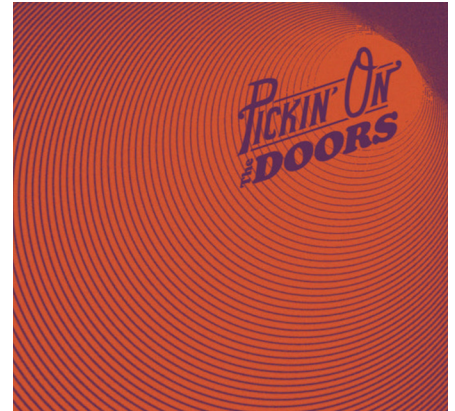


PHOTO BY AMERICANA HIGHWAYS

Album cover for Iron Horse: *Pickin’ On the Doors*.

way that every cover artist of a single song is united: through the original artist. Each cover artist’s work builds the panoply, the beautifully diverse community of musicians. Just so, each of us works to “cover” Christ, building into our lives shared and unique practices of worship, prayer and service.

Thank you for faithfully trying to sing the same song as me! Thank you for your grace in supporting my cover of the song! I love the little ways your cover is different from mine; I love the way Christ’s original shines through what you sing!

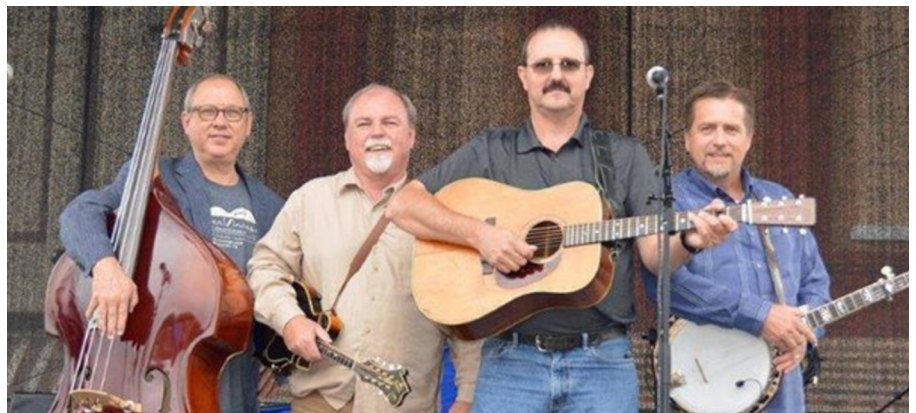


PHOTO FROM CHATTANOOGAPULSE.COM

*Iron Horse band members left to right: Ricky Rogers, Tony Robertson, Vance Henry, and Anthony Richardson.*



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