

# THE Harvest

Fall 2019 | The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas



## Campus ministry

Diocesan efforts plus parish partners bring ministry to eight campuses across the diocese

The Way of Love / Kansas to Kenya / Women for Women

# The Way of Love is both identity and method



*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ... And this is my prayer, that your love will overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:6,9*

**WHEN THE BODY** of believers describes what they desire in their next leader, it often reveals a lot about their own character and priorities. In the pre-election publication *The Bishop We Seek*, the faithful of the Diocese of Kansas sought a bishop who “loves Jesus and articulates a deep spirituality,” because this

is the foundational identity of the Christ-centered, spiritually committed people here.

Members of this diocese called for a leader who “demonstrates a collaborative leadership style,” because Kansas Episcopalians know how to work together and value collaboration. We do have a few places of conflict (in which we are trying to “courageously engage in healthy conflict resolution”) but blessedly, this diocese “builds and maintains meaningful relationships...”

The Way of Love is our identity. It describes who we are. The word “love” has been so central in Greco-Roman-Euro-U.S. culture for centuries that we can lose the revolutionary character of Jesus’ particular manifestation of love and how it is at the very core of our being.

In penning his encouragement to the early Christians at Philippi, Paul’s description of the transforming love he has experienced in Jesus pours forth. He wishes for them a love that is “more and more” and “abounding.”

For Paul, the Risen Jesus has opened up the flood gates — a feat that the Law could never achieve — for humans to again receive the love God intended from creation.

This is how John Chrysostom portrays it: “There is no end to such love. Anyone who is loved so deeply, loved in this way, wishes to be loved all the more. There is no measure to love. One who loves and is loved in return does not wish to stop but to increase.” (from *Homily on Philipians*)

The Way of Love is our identity, but it is also a method. It is the means of becoming who we are called to be in Christ.

I am extremely grateful that Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has offered the Way of Love as a new rule of life that Episcopal members of the Jesus Movement can undertake in the 21st century. Devoting ourselves anew to these spiritual practices can change us and empower us to bear the gospel in the world.

I as Bishop, along with the Council of Trustees, have voted together to invite all members of the Diocese of Kansas to practice the Way of Love (Rule of Life) on individual, parish, minster, convocation and diocesan levels for two full years: from Convention 2019 until Convention 2021.

At our recent Gathering of Clergy, the priests and deacons of the Diocese of Kansas began to study and share how these practices of Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go and Rest can be strengthened in their own lives and in the lives of their parishes.

From Convention 2019 until Convention 2020, I am asking all clergy to meet once a month in Minster Teams to study, discuss and increase their practice of the Way of Love as outlined by our Presiding Bishop. As the clergy gain a deeper understanding, and support one another in these practices, they will be implementing and expanding these practices for all members of the diocese.

The Minster Project is a way of better organizing ourselves for mission and for bearing the Way of Love to our community contexts.

Explanation of the Minster Project will be a centerpiece of my remarks and our activities at the Diocesan Convention, and it will be the topic of my article in the next issue of *The Harvest*. ◉

## In This Issue

2

### Around the diocese

Learn about recent activities in churches of the diocese, including renovations at a cabin parish hall, and a 160th anniversary celebration.

5

### New deacon ordained

Charles Durland was ordained a deacon in a service Sept. 12 at St. Paul's, Coffeyville, with two bishops in attendance,

6

### The Way of Love

Members of the diocese have been invited by Bishop Bascom to use the Way of Love practices to help enrich their spiritual life.

8

### Campus ministry

Efforts by the diocesan campus ministry program, along with outreach by two churches, are reaching students on eight campuses.

10

### Serving migrants in Texas

Five Kansans made a mission trip to San Antonio in September to learn more about the current situation with migrants seeking asylum in the United States.

12

### Helping women get jobs

The desire of a member of St. Andrew's, Derby, to help women get jobs, or get better jobs, has resulted in a new program sponsored by the church.

14

### Kansas to Kenya

Mission trips to Kenya by two groups of Kansans this summer provided medical care as well as betterment of communities in the east African nation.

16

### Expanding BKSM's reach

Five students of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry gather at St. Thomas' in Garden City for video access to classes at the Topeka campus.

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**ON THE COVER:** One of the students at Canterbury House at K-State takes in the beauty of the Konza Prairie during a group walk in early September. | Photo by Karen Schlabach

## News and notes from congregations



PHOTO BY SARAH KESSINGER

*Marty Malotte (left) and Hannah Malotte paint the exterior of the historic cabin that serves as the parish hall for St. Paul's, Marysville, during a June 8 work day.*

### Work continues on cabin at St. Paul's, Marysville

*Members of St. Paul's, Marysville spent time on June 8 sprucing up the historic cabin that serves as its parish hall and is located next door to the church. The cabin dates to the 1930s and has been a popular community gathering place ever since.*

*In recent years the cabin has been upgraded with a new bathroom and air conditioning. A grant from the diocesan Alleluia Fund helped install an accessible entry. Future plans will add a second main-floor door.*

*The church has undertaken changes so the building can be of greater use to the wider community. ©*

**St. John's, Abilene** celebrated a Eucharist in a park near the church on Sept. 8 with a picnic following the service, complete with fried chicken supplied by the church, and side dishes from members.

**Trinity, Arkansas City** hosted members of **Grace, Winfield** on July 14 for a joint indoor picnic at its education building, followed by fun and games, and the sending off the two churches' rector, the Very Rev. Laurie Lewis, on her sabbatical.

**Trinity, Atchison** awarded nine college scholarships and eight grants to various organizations this year through the Louis C. McConaughy Endowment.

**St. Paul's, Clay Center** resumed its monthly breakfast and book discussion on Sept. 15. The book is *The Comfort Trap: spiritual dangers of the convenience culture* by Tim Bascom, husband of Bishop Cathleen Bascom.

**St. Paul's, Coffeyville** continues to gather needed supplies each week for Genesis, a social service agency in town that helps people in need. Weekly collections include non-perishable food, and personal care and household products. Cash donations also are welcomed.

**St. Andrew's, Derby** on Aug. 18 raised almost \$1,400 through its annual auction of homemade desserts. Proceeds will go toward building needs.

**St. Martin's, Edwardsville** on Aug. 4 enjoyed an after-church meal of grilled meat provided by the church, with desserts and sides from parishioners.

**Trinity, El Dorado** since July has provided space for the weekly meeting of the local Sexual Assault Support Group.

**St. Andrew's, Emporia** celebrated the start of the fall year for students of Emporia State University with a "Festival of Carbs" on Aug. 25. The lure of homemade chicken and noodles over mashed potatoes helped draw six students to the Canterbury program.

**St. Mary's, Galena** has installed four picnic tables outside the church, made possible by the grant they received in 2018 from the Alleluia Fund. The annual ice cream social was held there, and other events are



SUBMITTED PHOTO

(From left) The Rev. Doreen Rice, Deacon Rex Matney, Gov. Laura Kelly, State Rep. Lonnie Clark and Beth Clark take part in a proclamation signing ceremony in the governor's office in Topeka marking the 160th anniversary of the Church of the Covenant in Junction City.

## Proclamation marks church's 160th anniversary

On Sept. 16 Gov. Laura Kelley signed a proclamation declaring Sept. 22 as Episcopal Church of the Covenant Day in Kansas. On that date the Junction City church celebrated its 160th anniversary. Witnessing the signing ceremony were the church's rector, the Rev. Doreen Rice; Deacon Rex Matney; and church members State Rep. Lonnie Clark and his wife Beth.

The church marked the anniversary with a service that followed the Prayer Book that was in use across the Episcopal Church 160 years ago. ①

being planned to take the church's ministry outside the church walls.

**Epiphany, Independence** Bible study group has restarted for the fall, meeting on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. A study of the gospel of Matthew was the focus.

**Covenant, Junction City** did a

great deal of renovation work to the rectory, next door to the church, in preparation the arrival of its new priest in charge in July and its 160th anniversary celebration in September.

**St. Paul's, Kansas City** continues to recover from the burst-pipe flood that damaged the space occupied by

its food pantry. To meet emergency needs, the church is distributing bags of food to those who come for the weekly breakfast program.

**St. Margaret's, Lawrence** highlighted the youth of the parish with an Aug. 12 back-to-school ice cream social. The church also collected school supplies to help local students who could use them.

**Trinity, Lawrence** members are providing the labor for interior and exterior painting, as well as interior finish work, at a house being rehabilitated by Habitat for Humanity. Work kicked off in September on the effort to help provide a home to someone who otherwise couldn't afford one.

**St. Paul's, Leavenworth** continued its First Wednesday Fellowship Supper on Sept. 3, with a special emphasis on games—board games, cards, etc.—for those attending.

**St. Paul's, Manhattan** blessed backpacks and bikes on Aug. 25 after church as part of its annual fall kick-off. An ice cream social rounded out the morning.

**St. Michael's, Mission** on Sept. 22 continued its annual tradition of providing Bibles to all third grade students in the parish. They were handed out during the 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. services that day.

**St. Matthew's, Newton** on Aug. 12 hosted a welcome lunch for the new principal, as well as returning teachers, at a nearby elementary school. Volunteers provided salads and served as greeters.

**St. Aidan's, Olathe** now has ribbon markers in its Prayer Books and Hymnal, thanks to a project under-

*Continued on page 4*

*Continued from page 3*

taken by women of the parish. A group spent an hour on Aug. 28 creating markers for books in the pews.

**Grace, Ottawa** hosted a special Evensong on July 28 with members of Trinity and Canterbury House in Lawrence, and St. Martin's, Edwardsville.

**St. Thomas', Overland Park** members Blake Docking and Eric Kling in June were among five people inducted into the Kansas Special Olympic Hall of Fame during ceremonies in Wichita. The two men have been lifelong best friends.

**St. John's, Parsons** offered worshipers an instructed Eucharist on Aug. 11, with commentary throughout the service describing what was happening and why.

**St. Luke's, Shawnee** welcomed Dr. David May, professor of New Testament at Central Baptist Theo-

logical Seminary, for two adult classes in September.

**Grace Cathedral, Topeka** provided a beginner's handbell clinic in early September, to give those new to the musical tradition of handbell ringing the chance to learn the basics without feeling intimidated by more experienced players.

**St. David's, Topeka** youth group hosted a bake sale and lunch after the late service on Sept. 8, featuring a taco/salad/potato bar and a variety of baked goods for sale.

**St. Luke's, Wamego** is offering a class on spiritual formation, "Finding Wholeness," to anyone who wants to participate. Running from late September to early November, the class will use Parker Palmer's Circle of Trust discernment model as a way to create spaces to listen to others and one's self.

**Good Shepherd, Wichita** continues to support the children who

live at Our Little Roses orphanage in Honduras, most recently with a shipment of bedding donated by members and friends. Parishioner Tom Sherow visited the facility in July.

**St. James', Wichita** invites members to donate their loose change through pew envelopes. Since 2015 the project has raised \$10,000 for four organizations that serve children in the community.

**St. John's, Wichita** now is providing storage space for food and personal care items being donated for Paxton's Blessing Boxes. A local woman and her son, Paxton, since 2016 have helped set up boxes in 21 Kansas locations (and one in North Carolina) with supplies that can be taken by anyone in need.

**St. Stephen's, Wichita** started the fall season on Sept. 8 with a potluck lunch after church, featuring steak and hot dogs, plus provided side dishes. ☺

## Clergy news

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**The Rev. Mary Schrom Breese** began her ministry as rector of Epiphany, Sedan, on Sept. 22. She most recently was a chaplain at a retirement facility in St. Joseph, Mo. and had served in this diocese earlier in her ministry. Her husband, **the Rev. Sid Breese**, also has former service to churches and ministries in this diocese.

**The Rev. David Cox** is the new rector of St. Michael and All Angels, Mission, beginning Aug. 12. He previously was assistant and associate rector of the parish, where he has been serving since 2013.

**The Rev. Marco Serrano** is the new rector of St. Margaret's, Lawrence, beginning Aug. 1. Serrano had been Associate for Young Adults at Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral in Kansas City, Mo., since 2017.

**The Rev. Nancy Shank** became priest in charge of Grace, Chanute, beginning July 25. She had been rector of the congregation before taking a call to the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania in 2009.

**The Rev. Stephanie Jenkins**, former campus mission-

er, is the new rector of St. Andrew's in Lawton, Okla., beginning Oct. 27.

**The Rev. Mary Korte** concludes her tenure as rector of St. Stephen's, Wichita, on Dec. 8, after a sabbatical.

**The Very Rev. Sharon Billman**, vicar of St. John's, Parsons, has been appointed by Bishop Bascom as dean of the Southeast Convocation.

**The Rev. Casey Rohleder**, St. Luke's, Wamego, was elected in July by the Council of Trustees to serve as president of the body through Diocesan Convention.

**Deacon Peggy Flynn** has announced that she is taking a one-year sabbatical from parochial ministry at St. James', Wichita, beginning Sept. 1 and continuing through next summer.

Congratulations go to **the Rev. David Jenkins**, St. Peter's, Pittsburg, on his marriage on July 27 to Eva Amy Brown. ☺



*Deacon Charles Durland following his ordination to the diaconate, with Kansas Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom (left) and Bishop Emelyn Dacuycuy of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente*

PHOTO BY CHARLES PEARCE

## Durland ordained deacon in Coffeyville service

**ON SEPT. 12** Charles Durland was ordained to the diaconate in a service at St. Paul's, Coffeyville, his home parish. The service took place while Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom was on her Walkabout through the Southeast Convocation.

The event took on an added level of festivity with the presence of Bishop Emelyn Dacuycuy of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (the Philippine Independent Church), which is in full communion with the Episcopal Church.

Bishop Bascom preached and was a co-consecrator when Bishop Dacuycuy was ordained on May 5 in the Philippines, and Bishop Dacuycuy wanted to visit Kansas while on a trip to the United States, to better understand Bishop Bascom's ministry.

Durland, a retired police officer, is a May 2019 graduate of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry. He is serving an internship year first at St. John's, Parsons, and then at St. Timothy's, Iola. ☉



## Kindness walk raises money for Wichita agency

The annual "Kindness Moves Me" walk at Wichita's Sedgwick County Park on Aug. 10 raised nearly \$23,000 for Breakthrough/Episcopal Social Services and their efforts to help people break the cycle of poverty and mental illness. Two routes—1-mile and 3-mile—drew 150 walkers and a variety of dogs.

Breakthrough/ESS, located in Wichita, is an affiliated agency of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. ☉

PHOTO COURTESY OF BREAKTHROUGH/ESS

# Bishop Bascom invites the diocese to participate in 'the Way of Love'

By Melodie Woerman

IN AUGUST BISHOP BASCOM invited all parish clergy and senior wardens to help members of their churches learn more about the Way of Love, which Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has called “practices for a Jesus-centered life.”

At last year’s General Convention, Presiding Bishop Curry introduced the Way of Love as a simple Rule of Life that can help people strengthen their faith.

The Way of Love involves seven practices that offer guideposts to help Christians remain constant in their faith: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest.

Bishop Bascom reiterated in her letter that “the Way of Love is a faith commitment and not another church program.”

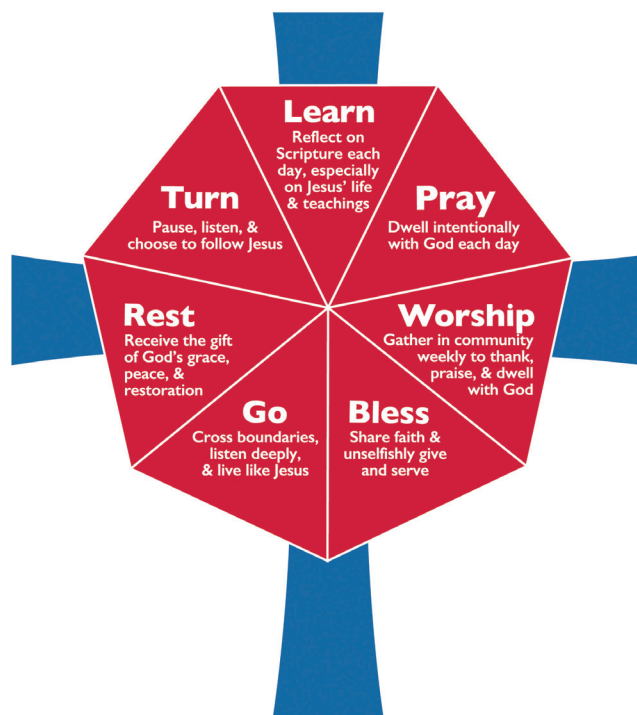
Materials provided by the Episcopal Church offer these descriptions of the seven practices:

- **Turn:** Like the disciples, we are called by Jesus to follow the Way of Love. With God’s help, we can turn from the powers of sin, hatred, fear, injustice and oppression toward the way of truth, love, hope, justice and freedom. In turning, we reorient our lives to Jesus Christ, falling in love again, again, and again.

- **Learn:** By reading and reflecting on Scripture, especially the life and teachings of Jesus, we draw near to God and God’s word dwells in us. When we open our minds and hearts to Scripture, we learn to see God’s story and God’s activity in everyday life.

- **Pray:** Jesus teaches us to come before God with humble hearts, boldly offering our thanksgivings and concerns to God or simply listening for God’s voice in our lives and in the world. Whether in thought, word or deed, individually or corporately, when we pray we invite and dwell in God’s loving presence.

- **Worship:** When we worship, we gather with others before God. We hear the Good News of Jesus Christ, give thanks, confess, and offer the brokenness of the world to God. As we break bread, our eyes are opened to the presence of Christ. By the power of the Holy



## THE WAY OF LOVE *Practices for Jesus-Centered Life*

Spirit, we are made one body, the body of Christ sent forth to live the Way of Love.

- **Bless:** Jesus called his disciples to give, forgive, teach and heal in his name. We are empowered by the Spirit to bless everyone we meet, practicing generosity and compassion, and proclaiming the Good News of God in Christ with hopeful words and selfless actions. We can share our stories of blessing and invite others to the Way of Love.

- **Go:** As Jesus went to the highways and byways, he sends us beyond our circles and comfort, to witness to the love, justice and truth of God with our lips and with our lives. We go to listen with humility and to join God in healing a hurting world. We go to become Beloved Community, a people reconciled in love with God and one another.

■ Rest: From the beginning of creation, God has established the sacred pattern of going and returning, labor and rest. Especially today, God invites us to dedicate time for restoration and wholeness - within our bodies, minds, and souls, and within our communities and institutions. By resting we place our trust in God, the primary actor who brings all things to their fullness.

The Episcopal Church has provided a wide range of resources to help people engage with the seven spiritual practices in a variety of ways, including videos, podcasts, brochures and digital offerings.

A list of Way of Love resources is on the diocesan website at [www.episcopal-ks.org/life/Way-of-Love](http://www.episcopal-ks.org/life/Way-of-Love)

### Special Advent events

The Diocese of Kansas also is planning two special events focusing on the Way of Love, both taking place in Advent:

**Bishop's Book Club.** Everyone in the diocese is invited to read *The Power of Love* by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. An online discussion group will offer readers the chance to discuss the book. Details on purchasing the book are on the Way of Love resource page on the website.

**Advent Quiet Day.** People across the diocese will be invited in November to sign up for a Quiet Day on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. David's in Topeka. The leader will be the Rev. Ted Blakely, rector of Grace, Hutchinson.

Additional details about both Advent events will be available on the website soon. 📍

## Presiding Bishop Curry offers a description of the Way of Love

*I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. – Ephesians 3:17-19*

**IN THE FIRST CENTURY,** Jesus of Nazareth inspired a movement: a community of people whose lives were centered on Jesus Christ and committed to living the way of God's unconditional, unselfish, sacrificial and redemptive love. Before they were called "church" or "Christian," this Jesus Movement was simply called "the way."

Today I believe our vocation is to live as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. But how can we together grow more deeply with Jesus Christ at the center of our lives, so we can bear witness to his way of love in and for the world?

The deep roots of our Christian tradition may offer just such a path. For centuries, monastic communities have shaped their lives around rhythms and disciplines for following Jesus together. Such a pattern is known as a "Rule of Life."

The framework of "The Way of Love: Practices for a Jesus-Centered Life" outlines a Rule for the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.

It is designed to be spare and spacious, so that individuals, ministry groups, congregations and networks can flesh it out in unique ways and build a churchwide treasure trove of stories and resources.

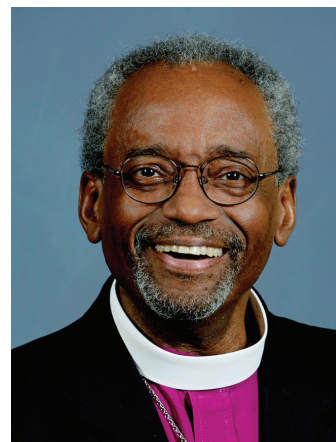
There is no specific order you need to follow. If you already keep a Rule or spiritual disciplines, you might reflect and discover how that path intersects with this one.

By entering into reflection, discernment and commitment around the practices of Turn • Learn • Pray • Worship • Bless • Go • Rest, I pray we will grow as communities following the loving, liberating, life-giving way of Jesus.

His way has the power to change each of our lives and to change this world.

Your brother in the Way of Jesus,  
+Michael

*The Most Reverend Michael B. Curry*  
*Primate and Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church* 📍



# Campus ministry serves students across the diocese

By Melodie Woerman

**IN THE PAST** two years, the campus ministry program in the diocese has undergone significant reorganization and expansion, resulting in a program presence on five campuses, with parish-based ministries on three others.

When classes started this fall, the diocese was providing ministry at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas State University in Manhattan, Washburn University in Topeka, Baker University in Baldwin, and Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence.

Additionally, two parishes were offering programming to nearby college students on three campuses: St. Andrew's, Emporia at Emporia State University; and St. Timothy's, Iola at Allen County Community College in Iola, and Neosho County Community College in Chanute.

## Creating a formation team

In February 2018 Karen Schlabach was invited to add interim campus missionary to her existing role as youth missionary, a move that helped bring into closer connection ministries for youth, college student and young adults.

The youth and campus ministry councils combined into one body, and Michael Funston was hired as a full-time associate for youth and campus ministries.

In addition, the duties of the two post-graduate interns at the Canterbury Houses (currently Will Chaney in his third year at Canterbury at KU, and Anastasia Cunningham, new this year to Canterbury at K-



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

*Anastasia Cunningham (second from left), program assistant at Kansas State University, shares information about ministry opportunities at Canterbury House through a table at the K-State Union. Assisting her are (from left) students Amber Kelly, Carson Avery and Jeremiah Shipman.*

State) were reorganized to cover a full 12 months of programming for youth, college and young adults, and their titles became campus ministry program assistants.

Schlabach said that combining the two ministries under one umbrella “has streamlined the pipeline from youth to college to young adult, and it has helped young people not feel so lost during these major transitions in their life.” Besides, she said, “having a team to work with makes both programs more sustainable.”

## Episcopal campus programs

Diocesan campus ministry efforts are based in the two Canterbury Houses that have been home to Episcopal ministry at KU and K-State for decades.

In Lawrence, Chaney oversees several gatherings:

- A weekly dinner and program at the Canterbury House on Tuesday evenings;

- Blessings on the Go twice a week on the KU campus (students are invited to drop by for a snack and prayers); and

- Tea and Compline at the Canterbury House on Thursday evenings, broadcast live on Facebook.

He also provides outreach to three other campuses:

- Washburn University, for an hour of Bible study each Monday afternoon;

- Baker University, hosting a two-hour drop-in time for Bible study and snacks on Thursday mornings; and

- Haskell Indian Nations University for an hour of discussion and doughnuts on Wednesday afternoons.

Cunningham oversees three programs based in Manhattan:

- Dinner and a program at the Canterbury House every Monday evening;

- Service every Tuesday morning at the “Happy Kitchen” at St. Paul’s, Manhattan, to provide breakfast to anyone who stops by; and

- Brewing on Belief on Wednesday evenings at a local café, for conversations on tough, relevant topic.

Students say that being a part of campus ministry has made a difference in their lives. Jonah Brandley, a peer minister at KU, said, “The Canterbury House at KU has accepted me with the most Christ-like love that I have experienced in my life outside of my parents. I have never felt the need to justify myself while I am here, and I have the freedom to truly be myself. The Canterbury House has been my example of what it means when Jesus told me to ‘love my neighbor.’”

Carson Avery, a peer minister at K-State, said. “Canterbury is a comfortable and welcoming community where I feel loved and accepted for who I am, and where I can show that same love and acceptance to others.”

Jeremiah Shipman, also a K-State peer minister, said campus ministry made the transition from being part of a youth group to being on a college campus much easier. “Canterbury was an extension of the welcoming environment of youth events,” he said. “I found a group of people who were accepting and supportive, even though I had never met any of them before. They helped me get my bearings as a new college student.”

### Grants help parish partners

St. Andrew’s, Emporia in 2018 revived its outreach to students at nearby Emporia State, and the parish now hosts an event every Sunday evening: twice a month for worship and Bible study, and twice a month for dinner, fellowship and service.

The rector, the Rev. Marc McDonald, said part of his call to the parish in 2017 was to help restart the parish’s ministry to ESU students. “Over the past few years, the parish sponsored fun events, dinners and worship opportunities specifically designed to engage students. The Canterbury Club has grown slowly, and we are excited about the ministry that has taken place.”

The parish also provides stipends to college singers who join the church choir, who McDonald said have greatly expanded the church’s music ministry.

In addition to Emporia, “choral scholar” programs enhance the music ministries at Grace Cathedral, Topeka; St. Thomas, Overland Park; Trinity, Arkansas City; and St. Peter’s, Pittsburg.

St. Timothy’s, Iola, for several years has offered a unique way to reach students at Allen County Community College in town — they provide meals for student athletes when they have to be on campus during school breaks for practice and games but when dorms don’t serve meals.

Deacon Oliver Bunker said of small church’s efforts, “We are blessed to feed a community and let young people know there is a place for them that will care for them spiritually and physically,” he said.

Bunker also is part of a partner grant at Neosho County Community College in Chanute, where he serves as a chaplain to two women’s athletic teams. The grant helps provide team meals, as well as a bracelet charm of St. Sebastian, the patron saint of athletes. Bunker said in return the athletes have helped St. Timothy’s with outreach projects.

More information about campus ministry is on the diocesan website, [www.episcopal-ks.org](http://www.episcopal-ks.org).



Students gather for a Tuesday night dinner at the Canterbury House near the KU campus in Lawrence.

# San Antonio trip reveals immigration complexities

By Melodie Woerman

**FIVE KANSANS TRAVELED** to San Antonio in September to get a first-hand look at how an Episcopal church and other area agencies are providing help to asylum-seekers, and in the process they learned of the complexities surrounding the issue.

The trip was organized by the Rev. Kelly Demo, assistant rector at St. Thomas, Overland Park, who was

joined by parish members Laura Bond, Susan Ott and Bob Preston. Laura Stanfill, a member of St. David's, Topeka, also took part.

Demo said she was inspired to organize the effort by Bond, an attorney who already had made several trips to the border to assist people seeking asylum.

"St. Thomas' members were seeing things in the news, but it felt far away," Demo said, noting that some migrants have traveled to Kansas City to resettle with a sponsor. "We wanted to learn what we could be doing and how to serve these people, whether in San Antonio or Kansas City."

What Demo and the others found when they arrived in San Antonio were migrants who had spent time in detention centers in the U.S. but who had already completed an interview with an immigration judge.

Until January, U.S. policy called for putting migrants in this situation on buses to San Antonio from detention centers across the border. They arrived not knowing what to do next to get to the city where their sponsor lived, mostly without aid of any Spanish-language interpreters.

But earlier this year, "the city of San Antonio and a coalition of churches came together to help," Stanfill said.

She said the Kansans served in three San Antonio locations that work together to help traveling migrants: the Migrant Resource Center, Travis Park United Methodist Church and St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

The resource center offers meals and a place to spend the day for migrants leaving on an evening bus. The Methodist church provides sleeping space, and St. Mark's collects and distributes clothing.

Stanfill said the group first landed at the Methodist church for a three-hour evening shift, setting up cots and supervising children at the arts-and-crafts table. "There were crayons and coloring books, colored pencils and markers and even some play dough, but by far the kids loved the scotch tape," she said. They covered three overnight shifts during their time in the city.

During three afternoon shifts at the Migrant Resource Center, the group helped with dinner and also served snacks to the adults and children who spent their days there awaiting the departure of outbound buses.



PHOTOS BY KELLY DEMO

*A girl and her family head to the bus station in San Antonio after being processed through facilities in the city for migrants on their way to cities where their sponsors await.*

## A dwindling number arriving

Stanfill said on any given day the Kansans served as few as 12 people and on others more than 40. But these numbers are a sharp decline from more than 400 who had been arriving earlier this year.

A change in federal policy now requires migrants to wait in Mexico for their meeting with immigration officials. Stanfill said the migrants they served had been seen in immigration court before the new policy was enacted. She said they also were told that those now spending months in border cities in Mexico waiting for their hearing are facing an increase in violence, as gangs prey on large numbers of vulnerable migrants.

Demo said she was surprised when more than 400 refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo



*Bob Preston, St. Thomas', Overland Park, sorts arts-and-crafts supplies at Travis Park United Methodist Church in San Antonio.*

arrived in San Antonio over a two-day period when they were there.

“We learned that it was cheaper for Congolese migrants to travel to

Mexico and try to seek asylum in the U.S. than it is for them to come directly to the U.S.,” she said. “Those arriving on the southern border are not just from South or Central America. They are coming from other places, too.”

Demo said she also had spoken with Episcopal clergy serving congregation near the border, and many of them have members who are officers for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, which has contentious relations with people working on behalf of migrants and asylum seekers.

“We were learning about the complexities of the situation,” she said.

Demo said that she will use the experience to see how the church can be of help to migrants who come to the Kansas City area to join their sponsors.

Stanfill said that working with the four other Episcopalians in the ministries in San Antonio showed her “we do not have to have perfect conditions to start an outreach program. You just need good people pulling together.” ☉

*A San Antonio city employee (left) helps with food preparation at the Migrant Resource Center, assisted by Susan Ott (center), a member of St. Thomas', Overland Park, and Linda Stanfill, St. David's, Topeka. The food is provided by a San Antonio program that also helps feeds people who are homeless.*



# Derby church offers a helping hand to women seeking jobs

TO MANY PEOPLE, the city of Derby provides outward signs of affluence. As the largest suburb in the Wichita area, it is home to a number of major industries, and Derby High School is the fifth largest in the state of Kansas.

But the Rev. Mike Loyd, rector of St. Andrew's in Derby, knows another part of the community's story. He said that almost half of Derby High School students report they don't always have money for lunch, and six of the city's nine elementary schools include so many low-income students that they qualify for additional federal funding.

Parishioner Cheri Gage earlier this year had an idea of how to help. Armed with 25 years as a business consultant and job coach, plus experience as a volunteer in the employment program operated by Wichita's Breakthrough/Episcopal Social Services, she believed helping women find jobs, or better jobs, could be one key to helping their families.

In April, her idea took form with the creation of Women for Women.

## Program offers practical help

The program, which meets at St. Andrew's, offers a six-week course of once-a-week, three-hour sessions that help women with job-search skills: setting goals; writing a resume; researching job opportunities; networking; practicing interview techniques; and overall job readiness.

The church provides childcare during classes, and the JaNell Clark, parish's administrator, is the first point of contact for those who wish to participate. She also keeps track of program details on the church computer.

Parishioners have embraced the program, Loyd said, offering transportation to participants when needed, and helping with mock interviews. Loyd said he makes himself available for advice and spiritual support to the women involved and to Gage in her role as organizer.

"The congregation is enthusiastic and supportive of this venture and views this program as one way the



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

*Cheri Gage (left), a member of St. Andrew's, Derby, helps a women try on clothes as part of the "Women for Women" program Gage founded to aid area women in finding employment. The church provides meeting space and logistical support.*

uplifting ministry of Jesus Christ can be taken to those in need in the local community," he said.

## Local partnerships and positive results

Gage said partnerships with other community organizations have been a real key to the program. The thrift

store of Woodlawn United Methodist Church provides gently used clothing at no cost to help women be ready for interviews, and a \$3,000 grant from the Derby Community Foundation helps provide things like shoes and handbags that can complete an interview outfit.

Gage said, “One of our clients was so elated and proud that she was able to get her hair done and had clothes that gave her the confidence to go on an interview.” The grant also can help with transportation and child-care costs, if needed.

Women for Women also has formed an alliance with Circles of Hope in Derby (another program that helps people overcome economic insecurity), and Gage said the local office of the Kansas Department of Children and Families “is supportive and views Women for Women as a wonderful, empowering program for their clients.”

Gage said that since the program launched in April it has served 11 women.

“The results have been good,” she said. “We have seen improvement in self-confidence and real excitement as these women discover that they do have abilities and talents that they just haven’t had the opportunity to utilize.”

She said one participant is taking computer classes and getting help with job searches through Kansas Workforce. Some women have moved out of town to obtain employment.

Two women have gone back to school — one to become a Certified Nursing Assistant and another is working on completion of a Master’s degree in social work.

But results go beyond actual employment opportunities, Gage said. “True joy is seen in the faces of the women and heard in their laughter as they share their stories and give support to each other.”

Gage said that her fellow parishioners at St. Andrew’s also now have an increased awareness of the barriers

that lower-income women, many of them single, face — dependent children, raising grandchildren, lack of education, inability to afford child care, lack of reliable transportation, abusive relationships.

### **A valued parish ministry**

Loyd said it has been exciting to see Women for Women grow into a program that is being accepted and valued in the Derby community.

“The church is so happy to be the vehicle for the vision and commitment Cheri has to improve the lives of lower-income, disenfranchised women. The congregation sees Women for Women as an example of the hands of Christ working in the world.”

Anyone who is interested in learning more about the program, or who knows a woman who might benefit, is invited to contact the church by email at [saintandrewsderby@gmail.com](mailto:saintandrewsderby@gmail.com), or by phone, (316) 788-2595. ☎



*Cheri Gage (second from left) shares a laugh with participants in the Women for Women program started by St. Andrew’s, Derby, to help women get jobs or get better jobs.*

# SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF KENYA

*Editor's note:* Since 2006, members of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas have provided assistance to the people of Kenya, first through general medical mission trips and later through the Kansas to Kenya ministry, or K2K. During that time, K2K has worked with the Anglican Diocese of Nakuru on many projects, most of them near the town of Maai Mahiu.

Besides Episcopalians, others with special expertise have served, including physicians, nurses, dentists and pharmacists, as well as those with experience in agriculture, education and women's empowerment.

This is a story of the work of K2K during mission trips this summer.

By Joe Bob Lake

**THE K2K MEDICAL AND** Community Teams made their annual mission trip to Kenya, and as usual a lot of activities for both teams were packed into a short period of time. The Medical Team went first this



SUBMITTED PHOTO

A calf helps keep grass short at the Agatha Amani House, Kenya's first safe house for victims of domestic abuse.

year, departing the U.S. on May 30 and returning on June 12. The Community Team departed June 6 and returned on June 19.

Pat Parker, Medical Team leader, reported record activity at three clinics set up by the team. The majority of patients were very poor, and this opportunity to be seen by a doctor, nurse or dentist is the only time some have to be seen by a health professional. For many it is the



PHOTO BY DIANE KRUGER

Members of the K2K Community Team lead a conference for women in All Saints Anglican Church in Maai Mahiu. They offered information on women's physical and mental health, as well as how to deal with domestic violence.

*Bishop Cathleen Bascom (left) looks on as Nyakio Kaniu-Lake holds the baby of one of the survivors of abuse who lives at the Agatha Amani House.*

SUBMITTED PHOTO



first time ever that they have been seen and treated.

The team treated more 2,000 people during the week and issued at least 5,000 prescriptions.

Two neurologists on the team made a special trip to Karati School, a special-needs boarding school where approximately 35 children live and attend school. They conducted assessments on the children and coordinated the trip and subsequent delivery of medicine to the school with Nyakio Lake, leader of the Community Team.

### **Work of the Community Team**

It was a special trip for the Community Team as Bishop Cathleen Bascom and her husband Tim, along with Deacon Jim Cummins, K2K's director, joined the team for several days and witnessed firsthand the team's work.

A day was spent at Agatha Amani House, the country's first safe house

for victims of domestic abuse. They were greeted by Nyakio Kaniu-Lake, the shelter's founder and executive director, as well as by abuse survivors at the house, who offered song and dance. The team then participated in the construction of a banana circle.

There followed a day at Ngeya Primary School in Maai Mahiu and a visit to the Osborne and St. Nicholas libraries that were built by K2K. The team undertook an assessment of the libraries' needs for next year.

The women on the Community Team organized and conducted conferences for women in a village of the tribe, and also in two Anglican churches.

The Community Team made another visit to Karati School and provided funds to create a dining room with tables and benches — an improvement over students who normally ate outside or in the classrooms during the rainy season.

They also donated soccer balls for the boys and colorful dresses for the girls.

It was a real blessing for the Community Team to have Bishop Cathleen participate and to hear suggestions that she had for the work in Kenya.

*Joe Bob Lake, a member of St. Thomas', Overland Park, is a long-time participant in K2K and husband of Nyakio Kaniu-Lake. ☉*



PHOTO BY DIANE KRUGER

*The Community Team spoke about women's empowerment to members of the Maasai people in one of the tribal villages.*

# BKSM welcomes Western Kansas group to fall classes

By the Rev. Casey Rohleder

**THIS FALL** the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry and the Diocese of Western Kansas launched a new way to bring theological education to men and women responding to a call to ordained ministry.

Five students, from Episcopal churches communities in Garden City, Dodge City, Goodland and Ulysses, are utilizing Zoom video conferencing technology to attend classes each month from the parish hall of St. Thomas' in Garden City.

When the BKSM campus, housed in the lower level of Grace Cathedral, was built in 2017, the classrooms were equipped with large monitors, video cameras and high-quality microphones to pave the way for students to attend classes remotely.

Several students have taken advantage of this technology over the last two years, but this is the first time an entire cohort is attending classes by video conferencing.

The students at what is called "BKSM West" follow the same schedule as students in Topeka. In addition to Zooming in for nine hours of face-to-face instruction, the group joins the Topeka campus for monthly "praxis" sessions: a 90-minute session dedicated to topics of practical ministry.

The cohort in Garden City eat meals together, pray the daily office and celebrate Eucharist as a community, and they also participate in small group formation called "collo-



PHOTO BY CAROLYN BALLINGER

*Five members of churches in the Diocese of Western Kansas are forming a new cohort of students at Bishop Kemper School for Ministry, called BKSM West. They are (from left): Jane Lindamood, St. Cornelius', Dodge City; Scott Mentzer and Pat Schiefen, St. Paul's, Goodland; Julie Meier, St. John's, Ulysses, and Brian Schwartz, St. Thomas', Garden City.*

quium," as do their fellow students meeting in Topeka. Each month, BKSM West will be supported by a clergy-in-residence.

Academic and spiritual formation in community is a critical component to the BKSM experience, one that the seminary has been intentional about building over the past seven years.

Western Kansas Bishop Mark Cowell said, "The community that BKSM builds between those sharing this experience is vital, and the friendships last throughout each participant's ministry. As we envisioned this West campus, we quickly realized that without establishing a good, supportive cohort, we would not truly be serving these students."

It is the hope of both Bishop Cowell and BKSM's dean, the Very Rev.

Don Compier, that the cohort might travel to Topeka once or twice a year to experience the BKSM community and campus face-to-face.

BKSM West is simply the latest in innovative approaches to theological education in the heart of the country. Dean Compier said, "we are committed to making our good offerings available to all. We are so grateful for the partnership with the Diocese of Western Kansas. This new cohort will enrich our whole community and allow us to further refine the use of video technology to overcome the barrier of distance to ensure students have access to affordable, high quality theological education."

*The Rev. Casey Rohleder is director of communications for the Bishop Kemper School of Ministry.* ☉

# What to make of declining numbers?

IN WHAT HAS become an annual Eeyore moment, the research and statistics arm of the Episcopal Church recently released the latest attendance numbers. You may want to sit down for this.

Over the 10-year period 2008-18, overall attendance in congregations was down about one-fourth, at -24.7 percent. That's slightly lower than for the Diocese of Kansas, at -29.9 percent, and a bit higher than the one for Province 7, at -22.9 percent.

What do you make of those figures? Do they cause despair, self-pity, alarm? Turn you into Episcopal Eeyore? Make you want to run and hide like Winnie the Pooh from the Heffalump? Or do you figure to double down, and like the old cart horse in *Animal Farm*, vow to simply work harder every time the news gets worse?

I'm only asking because maybe I did all of those things myself when I saw the numbers. Any one of those reactions seems perfectly normal. But give yourself a minute. Take a walk, get a cup of coffee, clear your head, say a prayer. Perhaps these numbers are not about Henny Penny at all. Perhaps this is simply a call for us to come to our senses.

First, consider the theology that often comes bundled with this news, and how so very often, it's just terrible theology that you might have to set aside for a more mature perspective. It's an attempt to theologize loss, which is human nature, but that doesn't mean it's true.

For example, you don't have to believe that God is causing people to leave and that that's somehow a sanctioned testing of the church. In the same way, you don't have to give air

to those who (sometimes gleefully) report this as divine punishment for being apostate.

Second, realize there are many ways to understand the reporting of numbers. If you are skilled, you can tease the true elements of a narrative from a column of numbers, but in and of themselves they will only tell a portion of the whole story.

Perhaps we need new metrics. Even one meaningful encounter can turn a life to God, but not all stories can or should be quantified.

Despairing over things that can be counted is easy; by contrast, tales of transformation and deep soul-work and real evangelism are harder to tally, but that doesn't make them any less important or joyous to behold.

Third, trust Scripture for guidance. Today I find myself in John 15, where Jesus commends many things to his closest followers on the night preceding his death.

Using a metaphor with which they are familiar, he reminds them that branches must be pruned to remain productive and healthy — that every fruit-bearing branch has to be pruned “to make it bear more fruit.” It's easy to obsess on the pruning part and in the process forget about why it needs to happen, or indeed what shape that fruit may take.

Fourth, remember, as Paul says so eloquently, that we don't grieve “as those who have no hope.” We profess through creeds our belief in the resurrection. After years of repeating those words, perhaps it's time to ask in faith whether that was one time only and just for Jesus, or if a sense of resurrection and of a time beyond this temporary moment is also possible. May we pray for the vision to



take us there. I am staked firmly to this vision both for myself and for “that wonderful and sacred mystery” known as the church.

Fifth and finally, we have each other, and apart from the power of God no greater tool exists for ministry. Together we have incalculable creativity, spirit and love. We are deeply bound and obligated to one another in ways only God understands.

So do not despair. Look around you. Everything we need we have already been given, and this is cause for great joy. Thanks be to God! ☪



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