



# THE Harvest

Winter 2019 | The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas

## Farewell to a church home

St. Bartholomew's, Wichita, says good-bye to its home of 23 years and moves to St. John's downtown

Diocesan Convention / Wamego window / Junction City evangelism

# Celebrating the PLACE part of Bethany Place



**WE LIVE MUCH** of our lives as house- and-building-centric people. As winter unfolds, it is no wonder that humans occupying the northern hemisphere have delight and interest in structures that keep us warm and dry and from sleeping in the snow! Buildings are a blessing.

However, former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, tapping St. Augustine and the first two chapters of Genesis, reminds us that it is only when humans are engaged with God's creation that we become fully who God intends us to be.

Humans and nature? Without each other we are not ourselves. The soil, plant-life, animal-life, air and water — the places around our houses and offices and churches and schools and vehicles — are holy.

When I think of Bethany Place, first and foremost my mind pictures the old diocesan offices and my meetings inside with Bishop Grein, Archdeacon Cohoon and Mother Mary Schrom Breese when I was discerning a call to priesthood. Or, with Bishop Smalley and Canon Kent as a young priest trying to learn the ropes. I imagine, especially with the flourishing of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry, many in our diocese will think first of time spent inside Upton Hall.

But I do also have memories of Mrs. Grein tending fabulous water gardens that encircled Upton, and recently I've gazed at a 1908 photograph that hangs in Grace Cathedral, of a dean standing in large flower gardens with a greenhouse nearby.

Here is the city of Topeka's official description of our parcel:

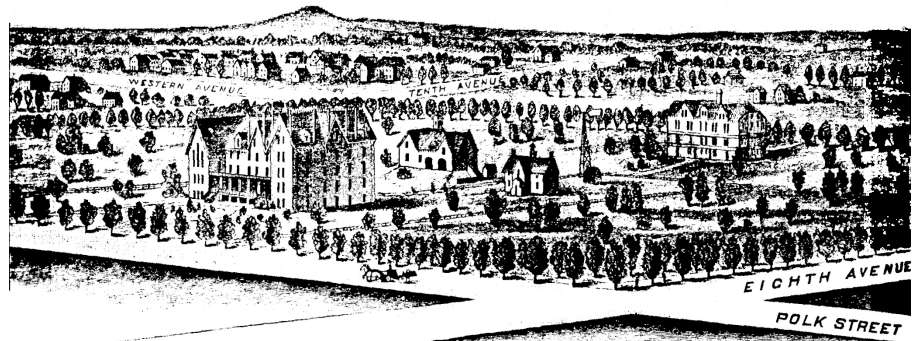
S31, T11, R16, ACRES 4.57,  
BEG SW CORNER EIGHTH  
& POLK TH S 580 W 466.5 N  
580 E 466'(S) TO POB LESS  
BEG SW CORNER EIGHTH  
& POLK TH W 320 S 223.5 E  
320 N 223.5 TO POB

At its first gathering, the Care of Creation Task Force lined up like a

soccer team and did a prayer walk from one edge of the property to the other. So I guess I should not be surprised that partners from the Topeka City Council, Shawnee County, Washburn University and Go Topeka, as well as a young garden designer and a young entrepreneur, have surfaced, interested in the possibilities the land of Bethany might offer the community: Spaces that teach about permaculture and benefits of prairie? Community vegetable gardens?

The book *The City Bountiful* is a study of urban green space that was an inspiration to me when we designed and installed a prairie garden, labyrinth and outdoor chapel around the cathedral in downtown Des Moines. Parks and gardens are a precious commodity in cities, and some of the few institutions that tend to keep and steward urban green spaces are churches.

As we in Topeka continue to open ourselves to see the holy PLACE that is Bethany, we ask your prayers, and hope that you too across the diocese will open yourselves to the holy PLACES near your church that God has given you to steward. ☉



THE GROUNDS OF THE  
**College of the Sisters of Bethany.**  
TOPEKA, KANSAS.  
(20 ACRES.)

*A drawing of Bethany Place as depicted in an 1883 almanac.*

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# THE Harvest

WINTER 2019 | VOL. 107 | NO. 2

#### A publication of

The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas  
835 Polk St., Topeka, KS 66612-1688  
(785) 235-9255  
(800) 473-3563  
www.episcopal-ks.org

**The Anglican Communion** is a global community of 70 million Anglicans in 40 member churches/provinces in more than 160 countries.

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*Archbishop of Canterbury*

**The Episcopal Church** is a community of 2 million members in 111 dioceses in 17 countries in the Americas and abroad.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry,  
*Presiding Bishop*

**The Episcopal Diocese of Kansas** is a community of more than 8,500 members in 44 congregations in eastern Kansas.

The Rt. Rev. Cathleen Chittenden  
Bascom, *Bishop*

**The Harvest** is published four times a year by the Office of Communications of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas. Member, Episcopal Communicators and Episcopal News Service

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#### Need to change your mailing address?

Harvest Address Changes  
835 Polk St., Topeka, KS 66612-1688  
receptionist@episcopal-ks.org

#### Upcoming deadlines:

Spring 2020: March 15, 2020  
Summer 2020: July 15, 2020

#### Postmaster:

Send address changes to  
Episcopal Diocese of Kansas  
835 Polk St., Topeka, KS 66612-1688

**ON THE COVER:** Danny Hutchins and the Rev. Liz Gomes share a moment of reflection before St. Bartholomew's final service in its building in south Wichita. | Photo by Melodie Woerman

## News and notes from congregations

**St. John's, Abilene** gave members several ways to help others at Christmas: a mitten tree, donations to the local food pantry and providing cookies for the annual community Christmas dinner.

**St. Paul's, Clay Center** helped provide needed clothing for children in families the church met through the English as a second language classes it offers for Spanish speakers families in the area.

**St. Paul's, Coffeyville** helped brighten Christmas for some residents of a local retirement home without family who can provide gifts for them, thanks to an extensive wish list in the parish newsletter.

**St. Andrew's, Derby** observed Veterans Day by hosting the local Community Foundation's celebration honoring those who have served and are serving in the armed forces.

**St. Martin's, Edwardsville** continues to gather monthly for Evening Prayer, potluck and Bible study.

**St. Andrew's, Emporia** hosted members of the community for "Christmas Serenade," a concert by local musicians, at the church on Dec. 6.

**St. Mary's, Galena** had two fundraiser dinners this fall to help provide an evening meal once a month at the homeless shelter in nearby Joplin, Mo.

**Epiphany, Independence** members enjoyed a caroling party on Dec. 15, with an afternoon of singing capped off by soup and refreshments at the church.



PHOTO BY PATRICK MANNING

## Blessing the boxes and cans

*Every October for the past eight years, St. Margaret's, Lawrence, has collected non-perishable food and household supplies for two local agencies: Trinity Interfaith Food Pantry and the Lawrence Interdenominational Nutrition Kitchen. Items are placed in an area the church calls "Pantry Power." In early November, the church's rector, the Rev. Marco Serrano, offered a blessing over the donated items. ☉*

**Covenant, Junction City** has restarted its St. John's chapter of the Daughters of the King, with 11 women now participating.

**St. Margaret's, Lawrence** has started a new group for moms who gather to discuss how to raise children in a Christian framework in the 21st century. The inaugural meeting was on Nov. 10.

**Trinity, Lawrence** offered an Advent version of "Forward Day-by-Day," with 25 parishioners writing reflections on the lessons of the day, which were posted to the church's Facebook page.

**St. Paul's, Manhattan** offered a special Advent curriculum focused on the themes of light and darkness, meeting on Sunday evenings for

# Winfield church observes annual Tie-dye Sunday



*On Sept. 22 Grace, Winfield marked its annual “Tie-dye Sunday,” which takes place during the town’s popular Walnut Valley Festival. The church said the fun and casual attire seeks to make festival-going visitors feel comfortable and welcome. Clergy even wore vestments with a tie-dye motif. ©*

PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK

dinner and intergenerational discussions.

**St. Michael’s, Mission** helped provide a toy as well as needed clothing and toiletry items for dozens of children at a local elementary school where the church provides other assistance during the year.

**Ascension, Neodesha** women’s group took part in the annual effort to raise money through the local Hospital Auxiliary’s Soup Luncheon.

**St. Matthew’s, Newton** this fall planted crab apple trees near the church, to eventually provide shade to cut down on energy usage from heavy sun. The trees’ spring flowers also aid pollinators, and the fruit supports migrating birds.

**St. Aidan’s, Olathe** in November offered a three-part adult forum on the theology of grief and loss and the many forms it can take.

**Grace, Ottawa** on Oct. 26 enjoyed a congregational pot luck on the farm of the church’s organist, Hurst Coffman. A bonfire, as well as hot dogs and dessert, were provided.

**St. Thomas’, Overland Park** opened its church for a week in November to people who are situationally homeless, through the Interfaith Hospitality Network. Classrooms were converted to sleeping rooms, and the church provided meals. The church was one of 12 area sites hosting families and single women.

**St. John’s, Parsons** supported Ngeya Primary School in Maai Mahiu, Kenya, site of many Kansas 2 Kenya work visits, by offering chances to win a \$250 gift certificate from a local meat market. The goal was to raise \$500.

**St. Peter’s, Pittsburg** provided the site for the annual Southeast

Convocation service of Advent Lessons and Carols on Dec. 1.

**St. Luke’s, Shawnee** Director of Music Ministry Jacob Hofeling on Dec. 10 performed his final recital toward his degree of Doctor of Musical Arts on the organ at the Bales Recital Hall at the University of Kansas.

**Grace Cathedral, Topeka** throughout Advent shared on its Facebook page the wanderings of the three Magi — Gaspar, Melchior and Balthazar — plus their camel Hezekiah. Travels took them around the region on the way to the manger.

**St. David’s, Topeka** members on Oct. 12 spent an afternoon walking the neighborhood around the church and placing door-hanger invitations to an upcoming hot dog lunch, Trunk or Treat at Halloween, or to any worship service.

*Continued on page 4*

Continued from page 3

**St. Luke's, Wamego** on Halloween helped youngsters and their families who were preparing for the annual downtown trick-or-treat activity by offering a hot dog supper before the candy gathering began, in what they called the Halloween Cafe.

**Good Shepherd, Wichita** marked the 30th anniversary of the creation of the church during Bishop Bascom's visit to the church on Nov. 10. Good Shepherd was formed by the merger of St. Mark's and St. Matthias' in 1989.

**St. James', Wichita** offered a variety of gifts, baked goods and homemade treats for sale on Dec. 8 during the St. Nicholas Bazaar, which served as a fundraiser for the church's Episcopal Church Women.

**St. John's, Wichita** welcomed Family Promise of Greater Wichita to its new home in the church's former office building during an open house on Nov. 22. The group helps families with children who are homeless to achieve sustainable independence.

**St. Stephen's, Wichita** book club is collecting paperback books for the urban ministry projects at St. John's, where those coming for weekly Saturday sack lunches also are invited to take a book to read. ☉

## Canon to the ordinary Torey Lightcap is new dean of Grace Cathedral, Topeka

ON NOV. 24 Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom announced that the Rev. Torey L. Lightcap, the diocese's canon to the ordinary, will become the dean of Grace Cathedral in Topeka. His first day is Jan. 15.

In making the announcement Bishop Bascom said, "I give deep thanks for the ministry, past and future, of Torey Lightcap. His steadfast care of our clergy and parishes, skilled leadership and thorough administration have brought health and vitality to the Diocese of Kansas. His oversight between bishops was remarkable. I look forward to watching his leadership and liturgical vision unfold at Grace Cathedral, and to our continued partnership in gospel mission with the people of Kansas as bishop and dean."

Lightcap said, "It is a privilege to have been called to the ministry of dean at Grace Cathedral.

I'm humbled and grateful for this moment. The Holy Spirit was most assuredly within this process, and I look forward to working with everyone to make this a good transition."

Lightcap has served the diocese as canon since May 1, 2015. He came to Kansas from the Diocese of Iowa, where he served as transitions officer and as rector of St. Thomas, Sioux City. Before that he served churches in Texas and Colorado.

His wife Jacqueline, and their children Gabriel and Annie, are members of the cathedral congregation.

Bishop Bascom said she is working with diocesan Missioner for Transitions Debbie Kremers to form a profile for the position and then will spend time in discernment. She anticipates having a canon in place in 6-to-8 months. ☉



The Rev.  
Torey Lightcap

## Clergy news

**Bishop Michael Milliken**, retired bishop of Western Kansas and former assisting bishop in this diocese, is the part-time interim at St. Stephen's, Wichita, beginning Nov. 1.

**The Rev. Christine Gilson** has retired as rector of Trinity, El Dorado, after eight years with the parish. Her last day was Nov. 24.

**The Rev. Mary Korte**, former rector of St. Stephen's, Wichita, now is

serving as interim at St. Andrew's, Stillwater, Okla.

**Deacon Diane Kruger** has been assigned to serve at Trinity, El Dorado.

**The Rev. Holly Hutchens**, who served a number of churches in this diocese, died on Oct. 15 in Chanute. She was 77. Her funeral took place at St. Timothy's, Iola on Oct. 29. ☉

## A note to readers

Because of cuts to some program budgets in 2020, this magazine will print three issues instead of four. Our commitment to our readers remains the same: to share stories of God at work in the people and churches of this diocese. We are grateful to you all for reading.

*Melodie Woerman, editor*

# St. Luke's, Wamego celebrates window's return

ON SUNDAY, OCT. 27, during a service of Evening Prayer, St. Luke's, Wamego rededicated its largest stained glass window, after a nearly six-month absence for detailed restoration and refurbishing by Hoefer Stained Glass in Hutchinson. The 121-year-old window is located in the back of the church along the west wall.

The Gothic window, standing 16 feet high and 8 feet wide, was originally funded by the C. Rowland Hill Chapter of the Daughters of the King. The window is a memorial for Bishop Elisha Smith Thomas, the second bishop of the Diocese of Kansas who died in 1895 after only five years in office.

According to an 1898 article in the Daughters of the King publication *The Royal Cross*, Christ the Great Teacher and Preacher was selected as the window's central theme because "Bishop Thomas was remarkable especially as a teacher and preacher."

During the rededication service, the congregation sang the hymn "Abide with Me," which had been sung when the window originally was dedicated by Bishop Frank Millsbaugh in 1898, on the third anniversary of Bishop Thomas' death, during a service of Evening Prayer.

## Color and vibrancy are now on display

After years of accumulating dirt and grime, and a hazy protective glass covering that partially obscured the window, the people at St. Luke's couldn't believe the transformation.

The church's rector, the Rev. Casey Rohleder, said, "Everyone has been blown away by the window's color and vibrancy. I love standing at the altar and seeing the beautiful colors and detailed art in front of me. We like to joke that we can now see the dirt under Jesus' toenails."

The window restoration was one component of a larger capital improvement project that included stabilizing the foundation along the west wall, a significantly improved drainage and guttering system in the front of the church, and repair of the limestone lintel above the bell tower doors.

To improve accessibility for those with limited mobility, contractors laid new, wider sidewalks and installed an automatic door.

Senior warden Larry Hannan said he was impressed at how quickly the capital campaign was completed in

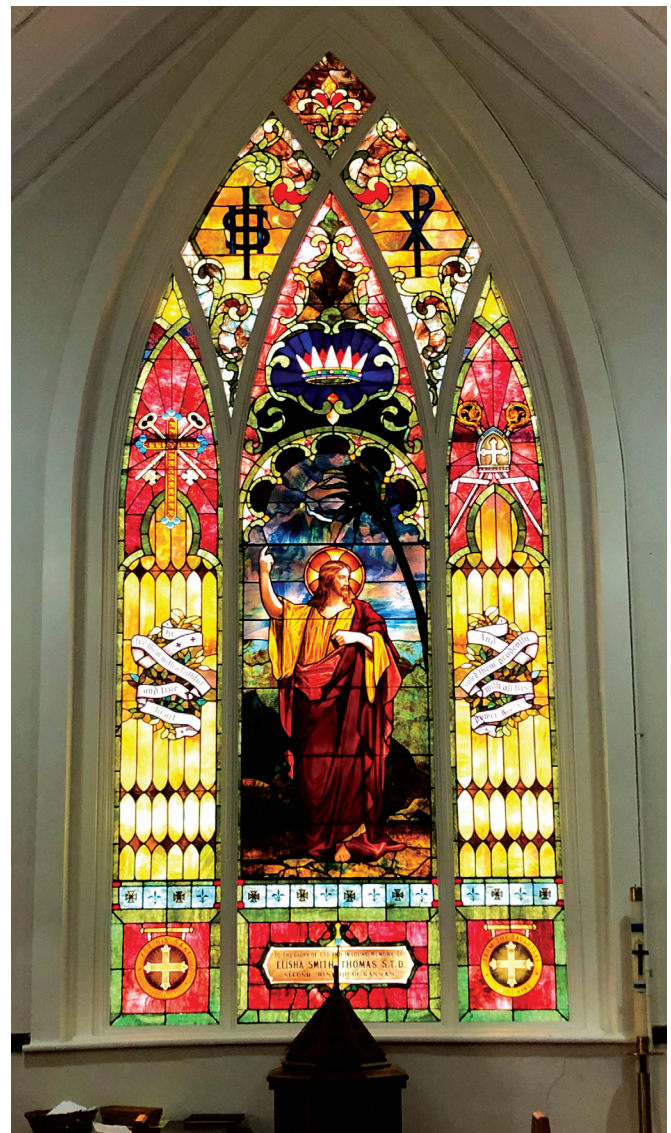


PHOTO BY THE REV. CASEY ROHLEDER

*On Oct. 27 a 121-year-old window at St. Luke's, Wamego, featuring Christ as the Great Teacher and Preacher was rededicated after months of restoration and refurbishing.*

late 2018. "Our community demonstrated that the history of our church is very, very important to us. The effort of the church's leadership team was instrumental for the success of this project."

The current church was constructed in 1893, with a bell tower added in 1910, and the Guild Hall in 1925. ◉

# Minsters create new parish groupings for increased collaboration

By Melodie Woerman

**DURING DIOCESAN** Convention in October, Bishop Cathleen Bascom unveiled details of an idea she first proposed in the weeks after her consecration as bishop — organizing the diocese into church groupings called minsters.



PHOTO FROM PIXABAY

*Westminster Abbey, one of three traditional minsters in England, during the Anglo-Saxon period was a missionary outpost to share the gospel with a mostly pagan culture. Kansas minsters will bring together churches in collaboration to share the gospel in the 21st century.*

Minsters are named after organizations of Christians in England from the sixth to the 11th centuries. Just as those groups were a team of Christians sharing the love of God and the power of Jesus in a mostly pagan culture, these new minsters will be groups of existing churches that share resources to better exemplify the Jesus Movement to those who live in their communities.

In recent months Bishop Bascom has been working with clergy across the diocese to identify the best way to create groups of churches with geographic proximity. On the convention's second day she presented a list of 12 minsters to lay delegates and clergy. After her presentation, they pushed their tables and chairs into minister clusters to discuss the idea and to confirm, or change, the name initially proposed for each one. (*A list of the 12 minsters and their congregations is on the next page.*)

In her presentation Bishop Bascom stressed that minsters are not congregational mergers but rather are “a collaborative way of organizing ourselves for God’s mission in the Diocese of Kansas in the 21st century. It is a vision of our ‘branching pattern’ for the Jesus Movement, and a way of structuring to bear the Way of Love with new vigor.”

The Way of Love is an initiative of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry that offers a simple Rule of Life to help Episcopalians deepen their faith.

“Each parish remains the main locus of mission and its own unique sacramental community,” the bishop said. While providing a way for groups of churches to better share the ministry resources they have, minsters also will give churches an intentional way “to seek to understand the needs and gifts of each parish for God’s mission in their geographic region.”

## Getting started

To help get the minster model organized, during 2020 the bishop asked that all clergy within a minster meet monthly as Minster Teams to explore and strengthen the seven practices of the Way of Love: Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest.

To help keep things on track, she has invited one clergy person to serve as their minister’s shepherd, to facili-

tate these meetings and the minister's work.

She also will invite four ministers during 2020 to expand the Minister Team to include lay leaders who will help begin the work of reaching out into the communities beyond the church doors.

By 2021, that outreach work by clergy and laity combined will take place across all ministers in the diocese.

Convocations, the diocese's four existing governing groups of churches near one another, will remain and will meet as they always have.

Convocation deans, who are selected by the bishop and serve as conduits for information to congregations and pastoral care of clergy, will remain in place and will receive reports from minister shepherds to help keep the new model on track.

### **A greater emphasis on mission**

Bishop Bascom said that all churches in the diocese already are engaged in mission, but she believes the minister model will make that easier — in part because it will help end the notion that people will simply find their way into churches and that growth and mission will automatically happen. “We now are part of a society that increasingly defines itself as not religious,” she said.

But she added, “I believe we live in a missional era, and we must reform ourselves to better carry out that calling.”

The bishop said, “We live in a time more like the days of St. Paul, or Augustine of Canterbury or Jackson Kemper,” noting that each worked to bring the message of the gospel to people and regions that felt they had no need of God's message of love and redemption.

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## **DIOCESE OF KANSAS MINISTERS**

### **Bluestem Minister**

St. John's, Abilene  
St. Mark's, Blue Rapids  
St. Paul's, Clay Center  
Covenant, Junction City  
St. Paul's, Marysville

### **Tallgrass Minister**

St. Thomas', Holton  
St. Paul's, Manhattan  
Grace Cathedral, Topeka  
St. Luke's, Wamego  
Canterbury House, Manhattan

### **Heartland Minister**

Trinity, El Dorado  
St. Andrew's, Emporia  
St. Matthew's, Newton  
St. Stephen's, Wichita

### **Wichita Minister**

Good Shepherd, Wichita  
St. Bartholomew's at St. John's,  
Wichita  
St. James', Wichita  
St. John's, Wichita  
College work at Wichita State

### **South by Southwest Minister**

Trinity, Arkansas City  
St. Andrew's, Derby  
St. Jude's, Wellington  
Grace, Winfield

### **Prairie Minister**

St. Paul's, Coffeyville  
Epiphany, Independence  
Ascension, Neodesha  
Epiphany, Sedan

### **Southeast Minister**

St. Mary's, Galena  
St. John's, Parsons  
St. Peter's, Pittsburg  
College work at Pittsburg State

### **LED (Love-Emitting Disciples) Minister**

Grace, Chanute  
St. Timothy's, Iola  
Calvary, Yates Center

### **All Saints Minister**

St. Margaret's, Lawrence  
St. Aidan's, Olathe  
St. Francis', Overland Park  
St. Thomas', Overland Park

### **Free State Minister**

St. Martin's, Edwardsville  
Trinity, Lawrence  
Grace, Ottawa  
St. David's, Topeka  
Canterbury House, Lawrence

### **Kansas River Minister**

St. Paul's, Kansas City  
St. Michael and All Angels,  
Mission  
St. Luke's, Shawnee

### **Missouri River Minister**

Trinity, Atchison  
St. Paul's, Leavenworth

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She also noted that in the bishop search that led to her election, the diocese identified characteristics that people desired most for the next episcopacy. This included someone who “equips congregations of all siz-

es for evangelism and mission” and who “works outside conventional structures and boundaries.”

Ministers, she said, exemplify both sets of desires. ☉

# Trading Spaces



PHOTO BY MELODIE WOERMAN

*On Oct. 27 members gather for the final service of Holy Eucharist in the building on Meridian Street that had been home to the St. Bartholomew's congregation for 23 years.*



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*The converted chapel at St. John's now provides worship space for the congregation.*

A sale forced St. Bartholomew's in Wichita to vacate the building that had been the congregation's home since 1996. The search for a new location brought them to the oldest Episcopal church in the city, St. John's downtown.

By Melodie Woerman

**THE BUILDING** on Meridian Street that the members of St. Bartholomew's, Wichita, called home for 23 years wasn't a typical Episcopal church. It had no stained glass windows, no tall steeple. It did have a marquee out front, along a busy commercial street. That's because before it was a church, it was an auto parts store.

But church members years ago had made a conversion that provided a light- and plant-filled entryway, space in the old parts department for worship and an adult class, a kitchen for

a weekly Sunday morning breakfast, and room in the old repair shop for the church's clothing ministry.

And it took a lot of room for that: rack after rack of clothes of every size, and shelf after shelf of hats and shoes. It was thousands of square feet of clothes to be given away to anyone in the area who needed it, because that's what was required to help people. The only thing asked of these picking up clothes was to leave some for others.

Also atypically, St. Bartholomew's didn't own the building. When they found the space in 1996, it was for rent. A yearly rental agreement had worked out well for the church of 20 members and the owner, until he decided in June that he wanted to downsize his properties and called Senior Warden Gary Charter to tell him the building was going on the market.

Charter said he wasn't worried at first. "Before we moved in 23 years ago, the building had sat vacant for five years," he said.

But this time, a construction company made an offer just weeks later, and the owner accepted. The church would have to move out by the end of October.

Charter's first call was to the Rev. Elizabeth Gomes, the church's long-term supply priest, and together they decided how to break the news to the congregation. Everyone came together for a meal, and each person had time to say how they felt.

Charter said the members, many of whom had worshiped in two other buildings since the church's founding in 1963, were sorry to be leaving, but they also were very clear about one thing.

"The church isn't the building, it's the people," he said.



PHOTO BY MELODIE WOERMAN

*Racks and racks of clothing filled the back part of the building that was home to St. Bartholomew's until it was sold. The congregation decided they would not move to any new space that couldn't take their clothing ministry, too.*

The church then started looking at options. "We really wanted to stay in south Wichita," Charter said, not only to continue to serve the regular clients of their clothing ministry but also to maintain an Episcopal presence in that part of the city.

Could they find another space to rent? Charter said they looked and looked, but nothing that was big enough was affordable.

Could they use space in another church? They talked to several churches from a variety of denominations in the area. Each would have been happy to make space for the congregation, but none had room for all the clothes. And leaving the clothes behind was not an option.

### **The search leads downtown**

By early September, Charter knew they had to try something different. And he had a feeling that just might lead them downtown to some kind of venture with St. John's, the city's oldest Episcopal church.

There already were connections between the two. Gomes in the past had been on St. John's staff, and

St. John's rector, the Rev. Eli Montes, previously had served St. Bartholomew's. And both congregations had a strong commitment to serving the poor and marginalized in their community.

In mid-September Charter arranged a meeting with St. John's senior warden Shirley Orr, along with Gomes and Montes. He said, "We talked about what do we need? What do they have that we can use?" And soon a decision was reached.

St. Bartholomew's would use the chapel as its worship space, and St. John's would provide room for the clothing ministry, as well as an office.

And then, St. Bartholomew's had to get busy: to decide what they would take with them; have one final clothing give-away; and then find homes for liturgical items they no longer needed.

### **Good-bye to the church**

And they needed to say good-bye to the church, in the final service on Oct. 27. About two dozen people

*Continued on page 10*

Continued from page 9

attended, where in the Epistle they heard Paul's words to Timothy, "I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished the race."

In her sermon, Gomes said that going forward, "St. Bartholomew's is about to be transformed into a new creation," and would be relocating "with gratitude for what we are moving toward and for this location." She added, "Our doors may be closing but our ministries are not ending."

After the service Charter addressed the congregation, calling it a "bittersweet day," but noting, "We are going to a sweet home. We should fit in there."

As the congregation moved toward tables for a light lunch, Danny Hutchins said the day left him with mixed emotions. Recalling a former priest, the Rev. Robert Layne, who had presided over a previous move, Hutchins said, "Father Bob told us, 'It's a building; the church is the people.' And they will all be going with us again."

He added, "I'm glad we aren't dying out and we all will go together."

Charter said that some of the hardest work of the move had taken place before the last service, and more followed. After seeing the space they would occupy at St. John's, members sorted through what they would take and what needed new homes. Congregation members took or bought a number of things, and liturgical items were offered at no cost to anyone who could pick them up. A two-day garage sale moved more things, followed by the church's final clothing give-away day on Nov. 9.

Bishop Cathleen Bascom was there for that, and afterward she read the declaration of desecularization, removing the building from the spiritual care of the Episcopal Church. Charter said that short service "was probably the saddest part in our transition. We had been through it before, but this was more poignant and final."

### St. Bartholomew's at St. John's

To observe All Saints Sunday, on Nov. 3 the two congregations had a joint service at St. John's. And then, on Nov. 10, the two congregations offered their own services in two spaces — St. John's in the chancel at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., and St. Bartholomew's in the chapel at 10 a.m.

Charter said the new space "looks a lot like home," in part because so many familiar liturgical items are there. While using St. John's chapel altar, the space includes St. Bartholomew's lectern, pulpit, ambry, candles, baptismal



SUBMITTED PHOTO

*A sign welcomes worshippers to the church's new worship space in the St. John's chapel.*

font and organ.

Charter said throughout the process, "St. John's has been most gracious in everything." He added that at the suggestion of St. John's leadership, each Vestry is sending a liaison to the other's meetings, to help with communication and coordination.

Orr, St. John's senior warden, said "It is great to have St. Bart's sharing our worship space," adding that their presence has brought new faces and new energy into the church. Montes, St. John's rector, echoed that feeling. "St. Bart's is a blessed gift from God to St. John's."

Charter said that the church now is calling itself St. Bartholomew's at St. John's, in recognition of its new location.

To make sure people in need had winter clothes, members quickly set up new space for the clothing give-away, with the first one set for early January.

"We are moving forward," Charter said. "No one likes change, but we all go through it in our lives. We all are positive about the possibilities for St. Bartholomew's at St. John's."

Recalling the saying about what to do when life hands you lemons, he said, "We are making lemonade." ◉

# Evangelism fuels church's new efforts

By Melodie Woerman

## WHEN THE CHURCH

of the Covenant in Junction City decided in 2018 to move from a part-time to a full-time rector, it did so knowing that evangelism and growth were key to its future. And with the arrival in July of the Rev. Doreen Rice, the church already is seeing new efforts to share the gospel beyond its doors.

Since late November, Rice and Deacon Rex Matney have begun leading weekly Eucharist services at a retirement facility and at an income-based apartment building. This follows the addition of a Eucharist on Wednesday at noon at the church, bringing to five the number of weekly communion services the church of 70 members offers.

While many churches offer worship at a local retirement facility, Rice said Covenant's service at Brookdale assisted living home is a bit unique. "We don't have any members there," she said. In early November she cold-called the office to see if the church could conduct worship there. The facility's manager told her that a resident just the day before had asked if they could have an Episcopal service.

On Dec. 4, with a third of the residents attending, they began to celebrate the Eucharist every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. Rice reported one worshipper was a member of the Church of England who said she hadn't heard an Anglican liturgy in years.

The church already had an outreach relationship with Bicentennial Manor apartments, having collected quarters for several years to



PHOTO BY DOREEN RICE

*Linda (left) and Shirley are among a small group who attend the new weekly service at Bicentennial Manor apartments, provided by the Church of the Covenant in Junction City as a way to offer the gospel to the community.*

help residents pay for laundry in the building's washing machines. Rice approached the management about offering a service there, which required special authorization because the facility receives federal funds. Once permission came through in late November, Rice began leading services every Sunday at 2 p.m.

"It is fantastic," Rice said. "Some of the folks are disabled and can't get out. None of them are Episcopalians but they enjoy the service and the pastoral care." Most services have two or three residents attending.

Rice said the congregation's decision to go all-in on evangelism was born, in part, by a harsh reality. "When they called me full-time, they knew that if they didn't do something different, the church would die. So they decided to do it."

Now, "they are all about evangelism," Rice said. "Preach the gospel.

Feed the hungry." The church already serves dozens of hungry schoolchildren through its Wheels of HOPE food ministry.

Senior warden Melanie Laster said the emphasis on sharing the gospel, and Covenant's story, in the community already is reaching people. "On Halloween we had trick-or-treaters at the church, and one lady told us she always wondered what our church looked like on the inside, as she had walked by it as a little girl each day. She was in awe of its beauty."

Evangelism recently extended to entering a float for the first time in the city's Christmas parade and coming away with an award.

"Mother Doreen's vision for evangelism is remarkable," Laster said, "and we hope we can give to the community through outreach projects. We are so blessed!"

# The 160th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Kansas

By Melodie Woerman

**THE 160TH MEETING** of the annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Kansas — and the first with Bishop Cathleen Chittenden Bascom presiding — took place Oct. 18-19 in Topeka with the theme “Who is my neighbor?” taken from the gospel of Luke. It highlighted a new focus of Bishop Bascom, where she has emphasized getting to know the neighbors, and neighborhoods, around the churches she has visited since becoming bishop in March.



PHOTO BY BOB HIRST

*Bishop Cathleen Bascom presides at her first Diocesan Convention during its meeting in Topeka Oct. 18-19.*

She also was able to introduce the convention to three people with whom she and the diocese are forming closer bonds as neighbors. Two of them will be using the previous diocesan office building for their offices:

- Juliette Swedlen of the Topeka Doula Project, which provides doula birthing services to women who are underserved — teens, people with low incomes or those who are incarcerated; and
- Sarah Shipman of the Kansas Book Festival and Freedom Now, which fights human trafficking.

Rabbi Moti Rieber of Kansas Interfaith Action is working at the nearby State Capitol to promote policies from a faith standpoint.

## **The Way of Love and new parish groups**

In her opening address, the bishop highlighted an initiative that she introduced to the diocese in August. She said she hoped the Way of Love, a simple Rule of Life for Episcopalians promoted by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, will form the basis for much of the interaction among members of the diocese in coming years. The seven Way of Love elements — Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest — are seen as keys to cultivating what Bishop Curry has called a Jesus-centered life.

Later in convention she offered an in-depth look at minsters, her plan for a new way to group congregations so they can share resources to better spread the gospel. That was followed by conversations among minister groups, to start to get to know one another better. (*A closer look at minsters, including a list of the congregations in each of the 12 Kansas minsters, is on pages 6-7.*)

## **Legislative matters discussed**

The convention also undertook its legislative functions, including electing members of the Council of Trustees as well as deputies and alternates to the next General Convention, which will take place in 2021 in Baltimore, Md. (*See the list on the next page for the names of all those elected.*)

Three debatable resolutions also were presented. One, calling for a review of the diocesan canon on apportionments (the amount paid by each congregation to fund the diocesan budget), was defeated. A second, calling on the diocese to participate in the Becoming Beloved Community initiative for racial reconciliation, was referred to the new Task Force on Justice and Racial Reconciliation. The third, calling for greater awareness of and commitment to brain donations after death, was amended and then adopted.



*Clergy gather outside the front doors of Grace Cathedral, Topeka, before the start of the convention Eucharist. Clergy processed and were seated in groups by their convocation.*

PHOTO BY  
MELODIE WOERMAN

The convention also adopted a financial mission plan, or budget, for 2020 totaling \$1,779,257, a reduction from the 2019 mission plan of almost \$92,000, or nearly 5 percent.

Because of a decrease in apportionment income — most of it due to the calculation of the effect of

Grace Cathedral's capital expenditures for its new construction projects in 2018 — the diocese will fund the 2020 budget by raising overall apportionment rates about 0.4 percent and asking many program areas to cut expenses by 7 percent.

### **Alleluia grants awarded**

During the convention banquet, five churches were recognized as recipients of an Alleluia Grant, which provides matching funds for a project that expands the church's

*Continued on page 14*

## **Results of Convention elections**

### **At-large members, Council of Trustees:**

- The Rev. Doreen Rice, Covenant, Junction City
- Marilyn Trubey, Grace Cathedral, Topeka

### **Ratifying lay members, Council of Trustees, elected by the four convocations**

- Northeast: Richard Wilson, St. Thomas', Overland Park
- Northwest: Larry Hannan, St. Luke's, Wamego
- Southeast: Todd Allison, St. Peter's, Pittsburg
- Southwest: Mike Morrow, St. Stephen's, Wichita

### **Deputies to General Convention (2021)**

- Mike Morrow, St. Stephen's, Wichita
- Michael Funston, St. Paul's, Manhattan
- Sarah Shipman, Grace Cathedral, Topeka
- Kirsten Lee, St. Michael and All Angels, Mission
- The Rev. Torey Lightcap, canon to the ordinary, the Diocese of Kansas

- The Very Rev. Don Compier, dean, Bishop Kemper School of Ministry
- The Rev. Andrew O'Connor, Good Shepherd, Wichita
- The Rev. Casey Rohleder, St. Luke's, Wamego

### **Alternate deputies to General Convention:**

- Will Chaney, Trinity, Lawrence
- Larry Hannan, St. Luke's, Wamego
- Tyler Kerr, Good Shepherd, Wichita
- Madison Bishop, St. James', Wichita
- The Very Rev. Laurie Lewis, Trinity, Arkansas City and Grace, Winfield
- The Rev. Ashley Mather, Grace Cathedral, Topeka
- The Rev. Gar Demo, St. Thomas', Overland Park
- The Ven. Monte Giddings, St. Michael and All Angels, Mission

# Three convention awards recognize service

**AT EACH** Diocesan Convention, three awards are presented during the Friday evening banquet to recognize outstanding service to the diocese. This year those went to:

**Bishop's Chair**, a rocking chair presented to a lay person: Jeanne Atha, Bishop Bascom's executive assistant;

**Archdeacons' Cross**, a silver cross presented to a deacon: Deacon Oliver Bunker, St. Timothy's, Iola; and

**Canon's Award**, a plaque presented to a priest: the Rev. Richard McCandless for his nearly 53 years of service to the diocese. ①



PHOTOS BY BOB HIRST

*Archdeacon Monte Giddings (at podium) prepares to place a silver cross around the neck of Deacon Oliver Bunker (second from left) while Bunker's wife Jo and Archdeacon Charles Pearce look on.*



*Above: The Rev. Richard McCandless (right) receives a plaque bearing a replica canon from Canon to the Ordinary the Rev. Torey Lightcap.*

*Right: Jeanne Atha sits in the rocking chair presented to her by Bishop Bascom, who looks on with Atha's husband, Steve.*



## Diocesan convention, continued

*Continued from page 13*

outreach efforts. Grants went to:

- St. Andrew's, Derby, for its Women for Women empowerment program;

- St. Paul's, Clay Center, to share good news with its community;

- Epiphany, Independence, for sidewalk repairs for better disability access to feeding ministries;

- St. Jude's, Wellington, to expand its Blanket Ministry; and

- St. Luke's, Wamego, to make church doors more accessible to people with disabilities.

# Diocese's Advent offerings highlighted aspects of the Way of Love

**WHEN BISHOP CATHLEEN** Bascom in August invited the people of the diocese to participate in the Way of Love —a seven-part Rule of Life to help Episcopalians grow spiritually — she announced that the diocese would provide two special events in Advent, open to all who wanted to participate, to help in that effort.

The seven parts of the Way of Love are Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go and Rest.

The first event, a book discussion led by the bishop, took place on Dec. 12 and explored Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's book, *The Power of Love*. The discussion, which was facilitated by Adult Formation Committee chair Mike Morrow, St. Stephen's, Wichita, was designed to address the "learn" element of the Way of Love.

A dozen readers from across the diocese joined the discussion by video chat. Morrow said another diocesan book discussion will take place in Lent.

The second diocesan Advent offering was a quiet day led by the Rev. Ted Blakley, rector of Grace, Hutchin-



*A video screenshot shows Bishop Cathleen Bascom leading an online discussion of the book *The Power of Love* by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, on Dec. 12*

son, and a former priest in this diocese, which took place at St. David's, Topeka. The day's theme was "Creating Space for God" and offered the 13 participants the opportunity to exercise three Way of Love elements — pray, worship and rest. ☉



PHOTO BY MELODIE WOERMAN

*The Rev. Ted Blakley (center), rector of Grace, Hutchinson, leads an Advent quiet day on Dec. 14 for people from across the diocese. The event took place at St. David's, Topeka.*

# A Christmas message from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

IN THE FIRST chapter of John's gospel, sometimes referred to as the prologue to the gospel, sometimes spoken of as the whole gospel in miniature, the gospel writer says this.

As he reflects on the coming of God into the world in the person of Jesus, as he reflects on Christmas, he says, the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

I don't think it's an accident that long ago, followers of Jesus began to commemorate his coming into the world when the world seemed to be at its darkest.

It's probably not an accident that we observe Christmas soon after Dec. 21, the winter solstice — the winter solstice being in the northern hemisphere the darkest time of the year.

Undoubtedly, these ancient Christians who began to celebrate the coming of God into the world, knew very well that this Jesus — his teachings, his message, his spirit, his example, his life — points us to the way of life itself, a way of life where we take care of each other. A way of life where we care for God's world. A way of life where we are in

a loving relationship with our God and with each other as children of the one God, who has created us all.

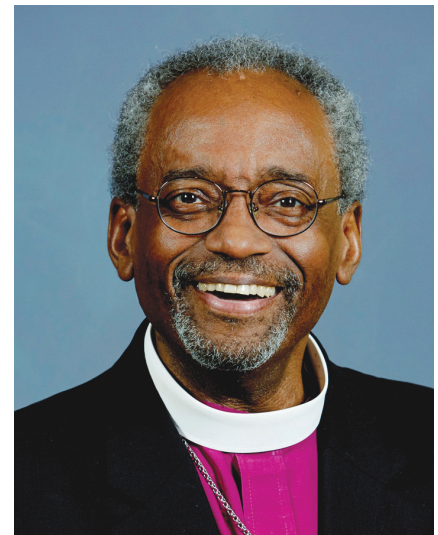
They also knew John's gospel and John's Christmas story. Now there are no angels in John's Christmas story. There are no wise men coming from afar. There's no baby lying in a manger. There's no angel choir singing *Gloria in excelsis Deo* in the highest of the heavens. There are no shepherds tending their flocks by night.

Matthew and Luke tell those stories.

In John, it is the poetry of new possibility, born of the reality of God when God breaks into the world.

It's not an accident that long ago, followers of Jesus began to commemorate his birth, his coming into the world, when the world seemed darkest, when hope seemed to be dashed on the altar of reality. It is not an accident that we too, commemorate his coming, when things do not always look right in this world.

But there is a God. And there is Jesus. And even in the darkest night that light once shined and



will shine still. His way of love is the way of life. It is the light of the world. And the light of that love shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not, cannot and will not overcome it.

God love you. God bless you, may you have a Merry Christmas, and may this world be blessed. Amen.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry  
Presiding Bishop and Primate  
of the Episcopal Church

# Looking back on experiences as canon

ON NOV. 24 I made the announcement that I had been nominated, elected and called to be the next dean of Grace Cathedral in Topeka. The expected start date for this new venture is Jan. 15.

This is the fulfilling of a few years' worth of personal discernment, prayer and consultation with trusted friends, advisers and colleagues.

While I will miss being in regular contact with people from around the diocese, I'm also looking forward to the opportunity to apply some of the lessons I acquired while functioning as canon to the ordinary.

In the Christian life, whenever something comes to an end, it means we get to charitably take stock of the experiences, people and ideas that have shaped us during the previous phase. In my case, I have so much for which I feel compelled to show gratitude.

When I look back on the past four-and-a-half years, what is foremost for me are the relationships we have been able to cultivate with one another, often when dealing with things that were difficult to manage/change. Each day of my time so far here in the Diocese of Kansas, I have felt enormous love and respect for priests, wardens, Vestry members, lay members and search committees.

I have appreciated the spirit you've exhibited as Kansans, figuring out how to make things work, even and especially if the situation was not in your favor. It takes a lot of fiber to get back up after you've been knocked down.

I also recall some of the things that happened during my time as canon that I feel particularly attached to — positive moments when

I saw diocesan leaders planning, speaking, voting or otherwise acting about things that were truly important to them; or stopping everything to pray and just be in God.

There were also some major milestones that we quietly marked as we passed them. Here I'm thinking of recent changes in the episcopate, or the way we have come to grips with the ordination process, or the routinely incredible contributions of the Bishop Kemper School for Ministry.

I've been around the Episcopal Church some lately, and I can assure you that despite the fact that it's slightly unchristian to compare yourself to others ... still, we're doing just fine; and in many cases, far better than "just fine."

That said, I'm aware that there may be gaps (justifiable or otherwise) in the ministry of the diocese. A church institution, while of God, is nevertheless stewarded by imperfect people.

There may be things that you have sensed are not being done particularly well, or perhaps not being done at all. I have never inherited anything, nor handed it back, in perfect shape. Sometimes all you can do is tend it if you can for as long as you have it, while the other 25-or-so plates of your life are also spinning.

My only advice is to listen to how God's Holy Spirit may be directing you to get more fully involved in offering solutions. Sometimes just being willing to explore or experiment with some new possibilities and paradigms is all it takes to go from a little spark to a real flame.

I want to say how thankful I am for my peers in this ministry. They know who they are, but let's name



them: Jeanne Atha, Gisela Bartling, Greg Bennett, Will Cheney, Anastasia Cunningham, Jay Currie, Michael Funston, Debbie Kremers, Michele Moss, Karen Schlabach, George Wiley and Melodie Woerman.

I was hired as canon under Bishop Dean Wolfe; worked on matters related to transition with Assistant Bishop Michael Milliken; and have been hugely fortunate to have worked closely over the past year with Bishop Cathleen Bascom. These three have my deepest gratitude.

That's it; that's all for now. If you need anything, I'll be just down the hall from where I currently sit. And I will see you around! ☪



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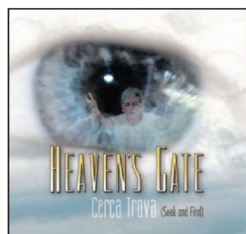
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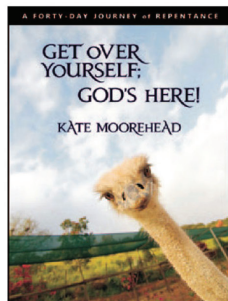
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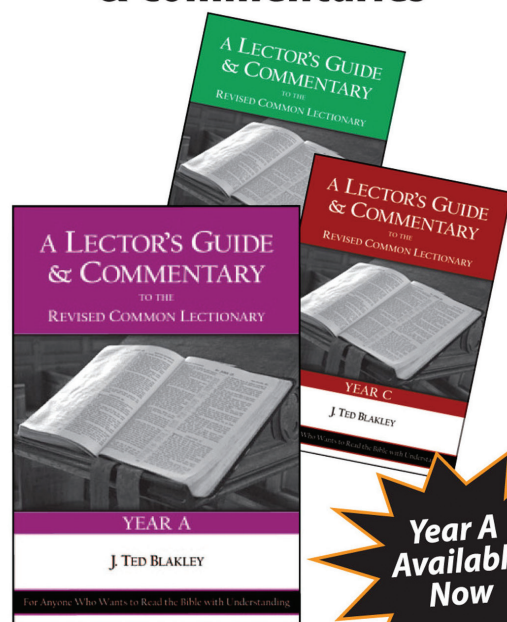


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