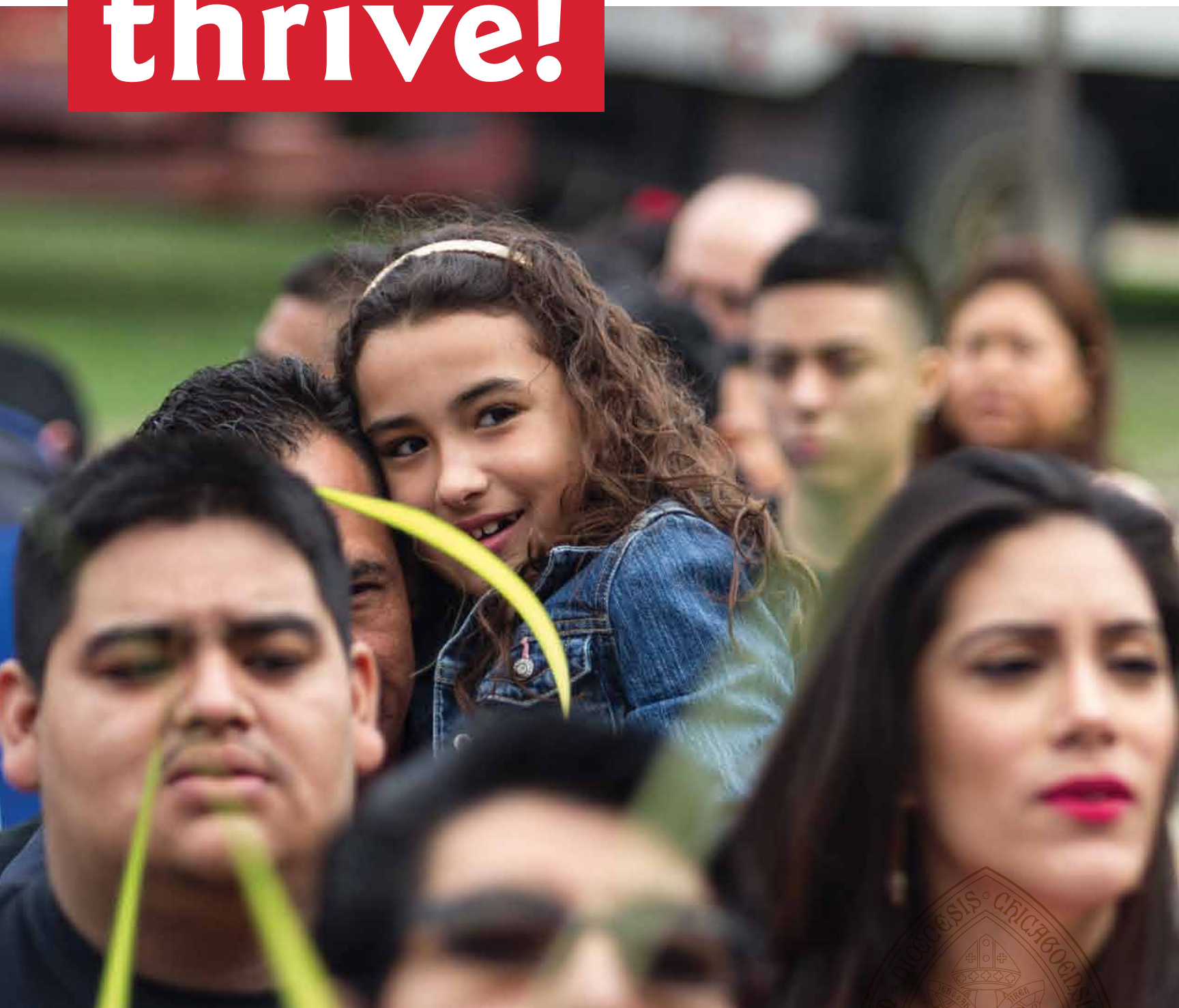


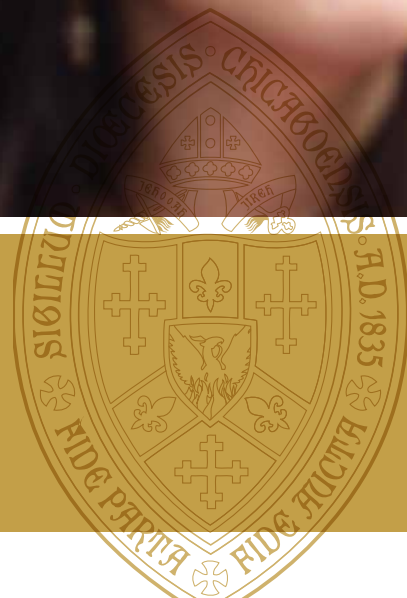
thrive!



[SPRING 2014]

THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE
OF CHICAGO
MAGAZINE

Making joyful noises on Sunday morning
Going where the need is in Peoria
Putting down roots at Cristo Rey



Letter from Bishop Lee



“Many congregations across this diocese are making the Good News evident when they gather. I think the most powerful tool we have to do that is the liturgy, our worship of the Living God.”

“Okay, so this morning we’re going to *sing* the first reading!” That’s how we began a regular celebration of the Eucharist in St. Andrew’s Chapel during Lent. Staff meetings at St. James Commons always include prayer, song and Bible study, and once a month we celebrate the Eucharist together. At this particular celebration the first reading was the story of the Prophet Ezekiel and the “dry bones.” Dent Davidson led us in a rousing gospel music setting of the story. I wish everyone could have heard it...and seen it! People were singing with gusto, snapping their fingers, moving to the music. Dry bones felt alive.

I believe the church at every level is most completely itself when it gathers to worship the Risen Christ who is with us always. That worship can happen in a wonderful variety of styles and modalities, but it is most compelling when it is alive and engaging—not just the intellect, but the body, head and heart. In any given assembly of Christians for worship, how obvious is it that we are gathered together by the best news there could ever be? How clear is our deepest conviction that Jesus Christ has defeated death and the grave? That God has begun to make all things new?

Many congregations across this diocese are making the Good News evident when they gather. I think the most powerful tool we have to do that is the liturgy, our worship of the Living God. Resonant liturgy informs all of our life so this issue of *Thrive!* contains stories not only about how music transforms our worship but also about all kinds of ministries that make a difference. The vibrant congregation of Cristo Rey and the inspiring generosity of Grace Place, Chicago, are just two instances of the Good News echoing out from the church into the world. May God continue to breathe new life into us all.

In Christ,

+Jeffrey



Cristo Rey 16

After “wandering the streets of Chicago for 40 years,” a congregation that called itself “the People of the Desert” is putting down roots and attracting new members to their new home. “It’s better than winning the lottery,” says the vicar of Cristo Rey.

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On our cover

The peripatetic parishioners of Cristo Rey, one of the diocese’s nine Hispanic congregations, are making a joyful new home.

SAVE THESE DATES

June 21

Make Music Chicago

September 27

Bishop’s Associates Bus Tour to Peoria and Picnic at Jubilee Park

October 5–7

Clergy Conference
with Becca Stevens of Thistle Farms

October 13–16

Fierce Conversations at the Nicholas Center

November 7

Episcopal Charities and Community Services Ball

November 21–22

Diocesan Convention

Sept. 18–20 Oct. 20–23 Nov. 10–13

Congregational Wellness Advocate Trainings



Making Music To Thrive By

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING
HELPS SPUR GROWTH

By Jim Naughton



Dent Davidson, the diocese's associate for liturgy and the arts, fell in love with church music as a child. "I have never met anyone who has his capacity to draw people out of themselves," says Bishop Jeff Lee.

Dent Davidson loves to sing. He always has. But he is aware that not everyone shares his passion.

"Making music with our bodies is one of the most intimate things we do," says Davidson, the diocese's associate for liturgy and the arts. "It takes us to a very deep place that words alone can't do, and some people find it dangerous or threatening, and that is why some people won't sing."

Yet, many people who wouldn't dream of making a melodious peep in public will sing softly to an infant, or loudly in the shower. Davidson gets that, too.

"I believe that we were all created to sing and that it is one of God's greatest gifts," he says. "Often people will be told when they are young, 'Oh, you can't sing,' so you just mouth the words. We hear those things from people who are supposed to be our mentors and teachers and we take them seriously, and it completely robs us of a gift."

Bishop Jeffrey D. Lee is eager to turn Episcopalians who don't sing into Episcopalians who do sing, not simply because he believes the

new singers will find the experience rewarding, but because he believes churches that sing are churches that grow.

"I don't think I've ever been part of a congregation that was thriving that wasn't a singing congregation," he says. "Singing can mean lots of different styles. It has nothing to do with style, but it does have to do with intention and participation."

Davidson, who says his job is "to help enrich and enliven the liturgy of congregations," agrees. "What I don't see going on in the Episcopal Church is getting congregations to sing with absolute abandon and with joy," he says. "When congregations are singing with joy, they will grow. That is a guarantee."

But Episcopalians, like most Americans, are taught from an early age that singing, like playing sports, is something one gives up at a certain age if one isn't "good enough" to continue. This attitude affects not only individuals, but also entire congregations that feel they can't live up to goals that are set unrealistically high, Lee says.

“Liturgy is our biggest tool for evangelism. I don’t get why more dioceses don’t invest themselves in really nurturing that.”

— **Bishop Jeffrey Lee**

“I know some would look at a cathedral with concert quality music and feel demoralized and powerless and say, ‘We could never do anything like that, so we are somewhere down the totem pole,’ as though that was the pinnacle of what church can be,” he says. “That model of performance is just one of several things that simply is not available in every parish. It is not affordable. And I am not opposed to a concert quality program, but it isn’t appropriate in a pastoral sized parish.”

The job of a congregational music leader, he says, isn’t primarily to make excellent music; it is to “mine the context of individual worshipping communities.”

“‘Whaddaya got? Who plays what? Who thinks they can sing? Who thinks they can’t?’ It is really about going in and asking what worship is and what does the community need to be alive and exciting. It is really about fundamentally engaging the community.”



One of the challenges facing parish music directors is finding the right balance in their program between performance and participation. Should they err on the side of making exquisite music that employs the voices of some to delight the ears of many, or should they concentrate on involving as many people as possible in making a joyful, if not perfectly sonorous, noise?

Beau Surratt knew All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Chicago well when he became its music director in 2011, having worked in the parish in other positions. He loved the way that his predecessor, Margaret McCamant, who remained in the choir, “made it clear that everybody gets to play. She empowered people to claim their voice even when they might have felt like they didn’t have one, and as a way of developing

people’s ministries, that’s huge.”

The music ministry, Surratt says, is often “a little bit like a pick-up basketball game. We all kind of get together and make things work.” He thought that the choir and congregation were ready for a new challenge.

“One of the things that I wanted to do is emphasize musical development with the choir,” he says. “I wanted to do some more substantive music while not diminishing participation.”

In one respect, he got lucky. Several members of the congregation, who hadn’t told anyone that they were trained musicians, decided to join the choir. The singers began to work on more challenging music in the Anglican choral tradition, and the response from the congregation was excellent.

But Surratt realized that for All Saints’ to sing up to its potential, he needed to ask more of the congregation and of himself. Last fall, he decided not to print the music for the Sanctus in the worship bulletin, choosing instead to teach the congregation a call-and-response style Sanctus during a break just before the offertory. “I’d go down front, and then I’d sing something and they’d sing it back to me. And for the whole season, that’s what we did, without any instruments, just their own voices.

“We put a lot of work into helping members of the community claim their own voices, just to hear those voices with no organ or descant, and that has improved our congregational singing a lot. It’s visceral. You can feel it.”



Lee believes that changing the way the church thinks about music, and energizing church music programs is



essential, and that is why he is—to his knowledge—the only bishop in the Episcopal Church with a music missionary on the diocesan staff.

One only has to show up at a birthday party to realize that public singing is “not a cultural norm any more,” the bishop says. People might struggle through “Happy Birthday,” and they may know a verse of the national anthem, but that’s about it. Lee says that spells trouble for the church because it is hard for liturgical communities to thrive in a culture with few participatory rituals.

He favors confronting this problem head-on.

“We need to make an explicit linkage of music and the arts to congregational development,” he says. “If we don’t do that, we are just missing the boat. We say over and over ‘Liturgy is our biggest tool for evangelism.’ I don’t get why more dioceses don’t invest themselves in really nurturing that.”

Lee and Davidson worked together at St. Thomas’ Episcopal Church in Medina, Washington, where Lee was rector when he was elected to be the twelfth Bishop of Chicago, and sometimes fantasized about what it would be like to attempt to support excellent music on a diocesan scale.

Davidson, Lee says, is the perfect person for such a job: “He’s just animated. He’s besotted with God and has a very romantic kind of personality. He believes in big gestures. He has a generous spirit. He is very talented in his own right, but he is consistent in pointing it [attention] away from himself. I have never met anyone who has his capacity to draw people out of themselves.”

Davidson visits churches throughout the diocese at the church’s invitation. One of the typical problems he encounters is music leaders who “focus on the choir and the organ and are not doing work with the congregation,” he says. “They are failing to build relationships that are positive and trusting so that people can be set free and given permission and feel empowered.”

When working with a congregation, Davidson says he likes to get away from the organ or piano and interact with the people. “I don’t want a lot of things between me and them,” he says. “I want to get in front of them and gain their trust, smile at them, tell them that they sound good,...offer them encouragement as they go.

“And once they begin to hear themselves, really hear themselves, and hear themselves singing the amazing texts we have to sing, everything goes deeper.”



Sometimes, though, the issue isn’t so much whether to sing, but what to sing. Epic struggles have been waged in congregations over the type of music that will be included in Sunday services. “For some people it’s all about the heritage,” Davidson says. “For others the 1982 Hymnal isn’t big enough.”

His own background is instructive: “I grew up in a wonderful Anglican cathedral in Victoria, British Columbia. I learned only Anglican choral music. It is why I am a church musician today. I knew at age 11 what I was going to be doing.



Richard Clemmitt, choir master and organist, leads a multi-generational choir at Christ Church, Winnetka. He says it is important to engage children in church music. “If you can do that, they will want to keep coming back.”

“We have to get past the issue of taste. All music can be done well. As Duke Ellington said, there is no bad music, only bad arrangements.”

— **Dent Davidson**



Christopher Griffin of St. Martin's, Chicago: “I wanted to remove some of the performance and make it more participatory. I love the Augustine quote: ‘Who sings, prays twice’ and the psalm ‘Come before God’s presence with singing.’”

In his first job, Davidson led a music program that featured Anglican choral classics, but some people in the parish wanted to try “praise music,” a genre of repetitive, pop-like songs that are easy to sing. Davidson wasn’t interested, but one persistent member of the parish kept urging him to “throw a bone” to proponents of praise music.

“I did one song, and suddenly my own spirit melted and my heart of stone was replaced with a heart of flesh,” Davidson says. “I found that the two kinds of music could dwell harmoniously.”

“We have to get past the issue of taste,” he adds. “All music can be done well. As Duke Ellington said, there is not bad music, only bad arrangements.”

Still, when musical change comes to a congregation, it doesn’t always go down easy. The Rev. Christopher Griffin remembers deciding not long after he arrived at St. Martin’s Episcopal Church in Chicago that he wanted the congregation to do a lot more singing and a lot less relying on the excellent jazz pianist who provided most of the congregation’s music.

The church on the city’s west side is across the street from a Pentecostal church that rumbles and rocks on Sunday mornings with electronic instruments and drums.

“We changed out instrumentation a little bit to be less piano and more organ,” Griffin recalls. “Our style now is probably a little more culturally nuanced and fits better with the neighborhood, a little more gospel music and a little more praise music. And we have most of it projected on a screen. That’s greener. But it also means we are less dependent on hymnals and books and that gets the body involved. It changes the focus from standing and holding a book to being more embodied.”

The transition from jazz to gospel and praise music

wasn’t always a smooth one, and in retrospect, Griffin wonders if he may have moved too quickly. “Some people in the parish experienced the previous music program as contemplative, something they could sit and enjoy, which is legitimate,” he says. “But I wanted to remove some of the performance and make it more participatory. I love the Augustine quote: ‘Who sings, prays twice’ and the psalm ‘Come before God’s presence *with singing*.’”

Adrian Dunn, the new music leader at St. Martin’s, experimented with drums for a while, which Griffin loved. He says it was the first time that both the Episcopal and Pentecostal church could be heard outside their buildings on a Sunday morning. But the small parish, with an average Sunday attendance that has grown from the low 30s to the high 30s, couldn’t afford the expense, so worship is less percussive these days.

“Praise music can be repetitive,” Griffin says, “but it gets people singing, and singing in unison. And that is not as easy as people think, as our music director reminds us. It begins to form a community as singers. My hope is that we can start out with simple energetic praise songs and then gradually step up to other material as we have a feeling of unity. It is wonderful to hear the skills being developed and the vocal leadership being developed.

Adapting a new musical style isn’t for the faint of heart, Griffin says. “Change is scary, and if you are a small church and you make a big change, people might be thinking, ‘If we do that, we are going to disappear.’”

St. Martin’s is still there, however, and sounding bolder than ever. “I had a visitor yesterday who said, ‘I would join this church in a heartbeat. I would join this choir.’ And this was his first-time visit,” Griffin says.

“And we’ve had a lady coming with her son and I have been on her case to join the choir. Saturday night she sent me a text and said, ‘I am ready to join the choir. I am ready to sing.’”

“Every now and then, you get these affirmations that you are doing something that is developing some traction.”



Not everyone gets excited about the prospect of better congregational singing, or the musical growth of the parish choir, or the development of a musical repertoire that better reflects the culture of a parish’s neighborhood. But in these days of declining denominational allegiances, almost everyone who is concerned about the future of the church is looking for a way to interest new people in the life of their community.

“Music is one of our best tools for evangelism,” says Richard



above: Young choristers at Come Children, Sing at Grace, Oak Park.

Clemmitt, the choirmaster and organist at Christ Episcopal Church in Winnetka. “Some people love to come to church and sing, and the more we can make that experience meaningful for them and rich, then the better their experience will be and the more they will be drawn to our congregation.

“I am big on participation so I like to err on that side,” he says.

“Our Eucharist is very participatory. We have offertory and communion anthems, but lots of congregational singing. Then, on the other end of the spectrum, we have a traditional choral evensong. That service is one where the choir is doing most of the singing, creating on behalf of the congregation. It is a chance to listen and let it influence your quiet prayer.”

Clemmitt directs an extensive music program, but his work with children is most likely to persuade skeptics that music is essential to healthy congregational development. Christ Church has more than 80 children involved in making music during its liturgies, most of whom sing in the main Sunday choir.

“Some are in first grade through the first half of third grade, and they sing less often,” Clemmitt says. “But children in the second half of third grade or older are an essential part of a multi-generational choir. They love that experience because it is one of few opportunities in their lives where they get a true multi-generational experience.

“If the children were missing we wouldn’t have a proper choir,” he says. “And if the adults were missing we wouldn’t have a proper choir. The generations depend on each other.”

Clemmitt says a good music program is essential to children’s religious formation. “A choir is a great beginning for a youth group,” he says. “It draws in families.

“It is important to try to engage children when they are young. If you can do that, they will want to keep coming back.”



On any given weekday, scores of organizations hold staff meetings in the office towers of downtown Chicago. It is a safe bet that at most of the meetings, the participants do not burst into song. Lee and his staff are almost certainly unique in that regard.

“I have just put it out there that my goal is that we never have a meeting, a gathering, an educational event of any kind that doesn’t have music,” Lee says. “I just think music goes to a place that grounds all the other stuff. Music can inspire a sense of playfulness as well as a sense of the transcendent, a playfulness grounded in serious purpose.”

Davidson, the bishop and congregational leaders all over the diocese are trying to cultivate a spirit of song. They want to establish participatory singing as a diocesan norm. “It’s kind of Jesus sending out the disciples two by two,” Davidson says. “It is a slow process. We aren’t going to win over everyone, and we aren’t going to win over anyone quickly.”

Taking the first steps needn’t be difficult, the bishop says, and the focus needn’t be on results, but on relationships and exploration.

“Find some musicians,” Lee says. “Pull them together. And ask, ‘What can we get up to here?’” ✦



Jim Close learned about the realities of poverty while picking crops during a UAW strike. Now he heads up the food pantry team at St. Paul's, Peoria. A friend says he "exemplifies what it means to be a Christian."

Practicing Resurrection in Peoria

Diocese's new deanery serves neighbors in need

By Lu Stanton León



Great things are happening in the Peoria Deanery of the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, where congregations bear a powerful, passionate witness every day to carrying out God's mission in their communities. The deanery includes the nine congregations of the former Diocese of Quincy, which reunited with Chicago last year. Here we highlight two outreach ministries—the East Bluff Community Center and St. Paul's Food Pantry—that demonstrate the faithfulness and love of God's people as they serve those around them.



A little more than a year ago, the East Bluff Community Center in Peoria had a piano, a pool table, a ping pong table, and—as one board member said at the time—funds that wouldn't fill a peanut butter jar. Today, there is furniture, money to cover

maintenance costs, and so much happening in the former St. Bernard's Catholic School building that “when someone asks what we have going on there, it almost seems like we're lying,” said the Rev. Thomas Stone.

Programs operating in the 47,000 square-foot building include after-school tutoring, athletic programs, computer skill classes, conversational Spanish, addiction recovery programs, feeding programs, urban summer camps, and much more.

“This building was empty the day we took it over in January 2013,” said Stone, an East Bluff Community Center board member who has been active in the neighborhood since he arrived in Peoria in 2007. “We don't have an empty room at this point. Every room is furnished, and that is all through donated goods,” including desks, chairs, ten computers in the lab for grade school students and another seven for GED students and adults.

The center offers an oasis of community activities and services in an area that had offered very little in the past.

“Peoria went through huge transitions in the late 70s and early 80s,” Stone said. “There were big population shifts in a short period of time. The East Bluff transitioned from predominately white, blue-collar families to primarily African Americans. The history of Peoria is that there were two parts of town, and the service organizations were in the other part. In the East Bluff, we ended up with a service desert. There is almost no commercial real estate in that area, and there were no places for service organizations to go.”



The need for youth programs in the East Bluff neighborhood became the catalyst for the creation of the community center.

“About six years ago a group of us realized there was not much go-



ing on in the neighborhood, especially for children and youth, so we started sponsoring a Saturday morning basketball program. Last year we had 147 boys. At the end of the program in 2012, we realized that a lot more needed to be done. So we decided to do our homework, incorporate as a nonprofit, get our ducks in a row and start looking for a home for a community program.”

Stone was one of a handful of individuals who formed the East Bluff Community Center Board, a group that negotiated with the Catholic diocese to lease the building and sought neighborhood associations and service agencies to use the space for offices and programs. The community center now includes a Catholic Charities food pantry, programs sponsored by the Peoria Park District and the Boys and Girls Clubs, and a GED program offered by Illinois Central College. There’s also an office for the Peoria Opportunities Foundation, which focuses on developing affordable housing.



St. Barnard’s parish continues to own the building and use it for office space and some activities. As of January 1, 2013, the East Bluff Community Center has a long-term, cost-free lease and pays all operational costs of the building. Discussions are underway to transfer ownership of the building to the community center by the end of the year.

This year the community center became an Episcopal Charities and Community Services program.

“The involvement with the Episcopal Church came primarily through my involvement with the establishment of the community center,” said Stone, who was canon to the ordinary while Bishop John Buchanan was provisional bishop of the Diocese of Quincy, before it reunited with the Diocese of Chicago and became the Peoria Deanery. “We’ve received terrific support. Episcopal Charities and Community Services gave us a grant of \$12,500 and we received financial support from the ECW [Episcopal Church Women] of the Diocese of Quincy and this year from the ECW of the Diocese of Chicago and St. John’s, Kewanee.”

“We begged. We got terrific support from throughout the community from sources we never would have anticipated.”

Volunteers from St. John’s Church in Kewanee, where Stone is rector, and St. Paul’s in Peoria have provided advice and support, as have nearby Bradley University and Illinois Central College students, who have helped paint, clean, and move furniture. Earlier this year the community center received a \$9,000 gift for its basketball program, and Stone said a Methodist congregation on the border of the neighborhood held a special fundraising event and handed the center a check to cover all of its emergency lighting needs.

Community center board members are working to develop a web and social media presence.

“I cornered the Bradley students last month and told them that developing a website was becoming a nightmare for us,” Stone said. “I got an email from them yesterday saying they had a group of marketing students who are interested in helping us. Now I’d like to find somebody in the neighborhood who would be willing to do a Facebook page for us.”

Finances are going so well, Stone said, that the center is on track to hire a full-time executive director in July.

The generosity showered on the community center has been stunning, but the needs of the East Bluff neighborhood are immense. Stone said the neighborhood has some 2,000 households with an average income at or below the poverty level. Fifty percent of the housing stock is rental, and the neighborhood has high crime and dropout rates.

“It met all of the criteria for the city calling it a blighted area,” Stone said. “We have tremendous need. There is unlimited possibility for what can be done here.”

The past year hasn’t been an easy one.

“Of course, we couldn’t do any fundraising before we had the facility, and when we walked into the lease on January 1 of last year, we walked into enormous heating bills. The first six months of that year were a mad scramble to keep the lights and heat on in that building.”

How did they raise the money?

“We begged,” Stone said. “We got terrific support from throughout the community from sources we never would have anticipated. They knew what we were doing. In the winter, utilities run over \$3,000 a month. It’s a beautiful, old structure built 100 years ago, but it is 47,000 square-feet with a rather ancient boiler. It’s been cold here. At least this year we were in a financial situation where we were able to pay those heating bills.

“Our goal was, within two years, to have enough rental income to cover the base cost on the building, utilities, insurance, etc. I’m very pleased to say as of January 1 of this year, we have those costs covered for the year. And we’re still working to attract people to the building.

“A lot of our thinking is we’ll maintain the space and allow organizations to extend their services to this neighborhood. They do great work in town; we just need them to do it in the East Bluff.”

Because the large building has flexible space, the same rooms can be used by different organizations at different times. So there is room for more tenants, and Stone said there is always free space for community groups who need it for special events.

Basketball, which was the center’s first offering, has now expanded and includes an evening Rebound Program that serves 40 boys for three hours, twice a week.

“They have recreation time in the gym. We have presenters for programs on smart choices and character building. We’d like to have that program for girls as well,” Stone said.

“We also serve them dinner, prepared onsite by volunteers. Food is an issue in a neighborhood like this. Since the beginning of the Saturday program we have always served them lunch. Last summer, in conjunction with Boys and Girls Clubs, we were able to provide lunch and breakfast to 100 girls and boys a week. On Saturdays, another 100 boys have lunch. So we were doing 600 meals a week. If we could find funding, we could triple the number of children we serve lunch to Monday through Friday.”

Can Stone sense a difference in the youth being served? He thinks so.

“We started the evening program for boys last fall. On one Saturday in December, in conjunction with other organizations, the boys



“We try to talk to people and get to know them. One woman... worked at Walmart, and they cut her hours back. She broke down and cried; she had never had to ask for help from anyone before.”

handed out fruit baskets, carried food to people’s cars, and gave out Christmas trees. Every one of the boys in that program volunteered to help. Many of the boys volunteer on a regular basis.

“That’s the kind of response that we were hoping for. To see it come about that early is very, very encouraging,” Stone said. “One of the hopes in a venture like this is that it sparks some new attitudes and new ways of thinking in the community.”



Jim Close aptly uses the word *miraculous* when talking about the food pantry at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Peoria. In the two years he has headed up the program, no one has ever been turned away empty handed, even when the shelves were bare.

“Last year, the week of Thanksgiving, I went to the Peoria area food bank where I had certificates for 50 turkeys, but the turkeys weren’t there,” Close said. “We called people in the church and within 24 hours I had 55 turkeys. Within two days I had everything I needed—and more—for all of those Thanksgiving dinners. It was miraculous.

“Other times I have been short of canned food, and I think, *What am I going to do?* And I walk in the next day and *Pow!* Someone has contributed cases of vegetables. One time it was 150 pounds of steak burgers. The congregation has done that again and again.

“Last year we fed close to 2,000 people, and it’s continued to grow since then.”

Close and six volunteers run the food pantry, which is open from noon until 2 pm the third and fourth Thursdays of the month at the

church at 3601 N. North Street, Peoria. About three-fourths of its food comes from the Midwest Food Bank. The rest is from donations of food and money, which Close uses to buy whatever is needed.

Prior to Close becoming committee chair, the food pantry served only neighborhood residents. He expanded the pantry outreach to surrounding areas because “I was very concerned about people not having jobs and not having enough money to make ends meet outside our neighborhood.”

Some of St. Paul’s 325-member congregation frequent the food pantry; most clients have jobs.

“This is not an assembly line. We try to talk to people and get to know them,” Close said. “Most of the people who need the help are employed. One woman came over from Mississippi. She had picked cotton as a girl and had retired on a very small pension from a full-time job at St. Francis Hospital in Peoria. She worked at Walmart, and they cut her hours back. She broke down and cried; she had never had to ask for help from anyone before.

“In another case late last fall, a woman came in seven months pregnant. She had on a t-shirt, and our worker said, ‘Where is your coat?’ She didn’t have one, so our worker gave her the coat off her back, and we gave her a ride home.

“If I weren’t a Christian, I would be now.”

Close said the pantry tries to give every family enough food for three days.

“That’s what I shoot for. Sometimes we have fabulous stuff. One time we got a whole bunch of dates. Another time we got fine chocolates. We never know what we’re going to get.

Close, a retired soldier—four years active service in the Navy and

20 years in the Army, including reserve and active service—knows what it is like to fall on hard times, to be desperate for money, desperate for food, desperate to provide for his family.

“I got a job once as a migrant food picker, would you believe? I had three small children and it was almost Christmas. I was a member of the UAW [United Auto Workers] and they went out on strike for five months in 1991. I’ve never had an experience like that. When this happened to me, I was in the union but I had one of the highest paying union jobs there was. I have always had a good job and earned an above-average wage. My family never had any problems with income. I never wanted for anything.

“My brother exaggerates terribly—then again, so do I—and he said you could make a lot of money by being a migrant worker in southern Illinois, where they had acres and acres of apple fields. He was wrong.

“I was desperate. It was Christmas time, and I had three children at home. I was able to come up with \$20 apiece for my kids, and it was the happiest Christmas of my life because my children accepted the situation. My wife was working but it wasn’t enough. When the strike was all over, we got very little.”

The experience was an eye-opener for Close.

“After that I got involved in the Illinois Migrants Council. You would not believe how they treat those people.”

St. Paul’s Food Pantry doesn’t wait for people to find them. They go out and search for those in need. Close has printed food pantry fliers in Spanish and handed them out at restaurants and other businesses in the St. Paul’s neighborhood that employ Hispanics, but response to that effort has been minimal.

“We’ve tried to reach out to the working poor. I’ve put out little signs at places and said we’re available for help if you need it. A lot of people do not like to accept charity. And the thing they typically say is, ‘We’re down now, and when I get back on my feet I’ll pay you back.’ I tell them that’s not necessary.”

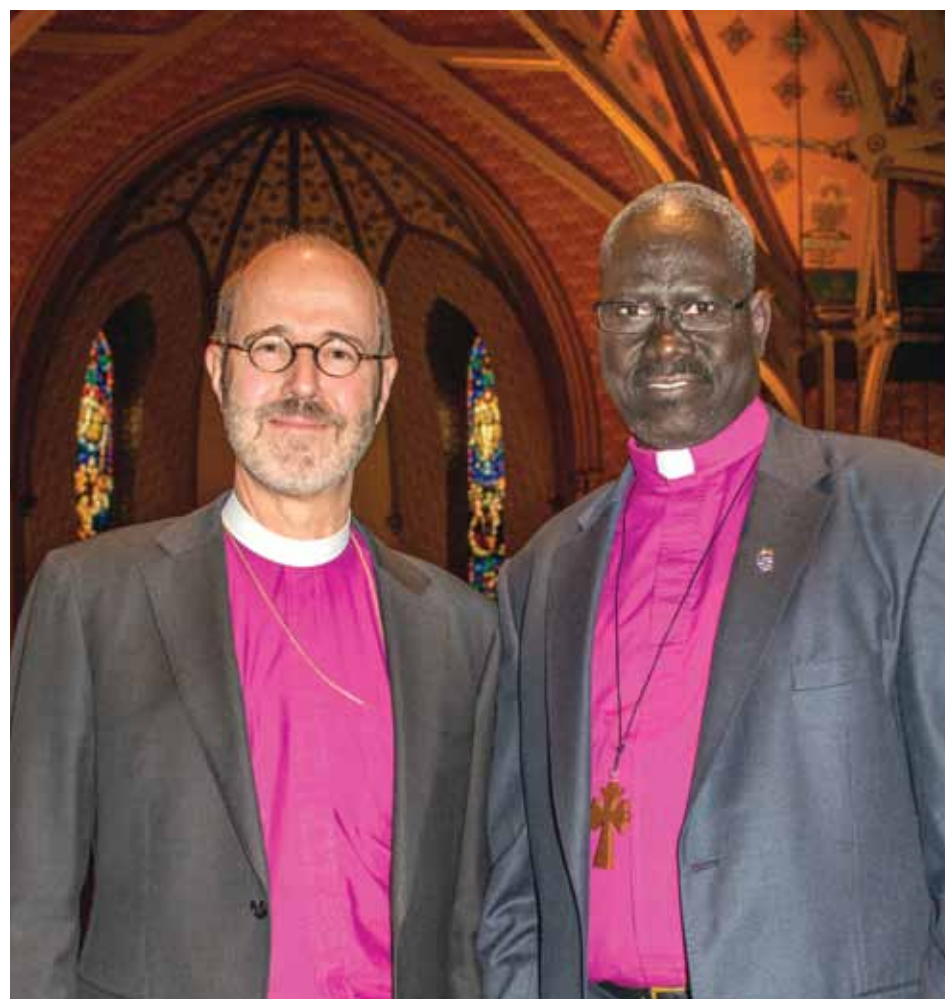
St. Paul’s Food Pantry recently moved from cramped quarters into three rooms that served as the diocesan wing of St. Paul’s when it was the cathedral for the former Diocese of Quincy. The congregation has designated the third Sunday of each month as Food Pantry Sunday, which is when parishioners bring in non-perishable food to be distributed through the food pantry.

“We used to be a very affluent church; we’re not anymore,” Close said. “We still have people who have a lot of money and are generous with it. I had a beat-up old freezer, and one guy came up and said, ‘I hear you need a freezer.’ I said I do, and he said to go out and buy one and send him the bill.”

In appreciation for all of Close’s work with the food pantry, in 2012 he was awarded the Dean’s Cross, an engraved silver cross necklace given in recognition of parishioners who embody their baptismal vows to “strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.”

Angel Langley, St. Paul’s office manager, said the award was well deserved.

“Jim exemplifies what it means to be a Christian,” she said. “He has a huge heart and a passion to help underprivileged people. He totally lives our mission statement.” ✚



Clockwise from upper left: Jackie Kraus, coordinator of the diocese's partnership with the Diocese of Renk at the prayer vigil; Bishops Jeffrey D. Lee and Joseph Garang Atem of Renk; young people in Pariak; worshippers at St. Barnaba in Geiger; St. Mark's in Jalhak.

NO EASY PEACE

Diocese Keeps Faith with Distant Friends As War Flares in South Sudan

By Natalie Vanatta

In December, fighting broke out between the South Sudanese army and rebels loyal to former deputy president Riek Machar. The violence has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians and more than a million people fleeing their homes.

In April, the Rt. Rev. Joseph Garang Atem, bishop of Renk, visited the Diocese of Chicago to ask for prayer and support. The two dioceses have had a companion relationship for more than a decade.

Renk and surrounding areas have come under attack by rebel forces several times, disrupting the planting season. Both local leaders and humanitarian agencies have warned that famine is looming.

Jackie Kraus, who coordinates the Renk partnership in Chicago, says that direct support is essential. "Support from humanitarian aid agencies is often too late to help with immediate needs. Bishop Joseph has people coming to him all the time for help, and we can help him be an instant responder. Our relationship

with the people in Renk is truly what can make the difference."

On April 27, people from across the diocese gathered at St. James Cathedral for a vigil with Garang and Bishop Jeffrey D. Lee. "We gathered to sing, to lament and to intercede for this crucified country—all by the light of the Paschal Candle," Lee said. "It felt like an extension of Holy Week. Prayer of this kind is a powerful incentive to advocate, give and work for the peace and protection of all God's people."

"This prayer vigil is very important because we believe, as Christians, in the strength of prayer," said Garang. "Peace does not come at an easy price. Without help and support we cannot make peace. We are looking for support from our brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Chicago. We need you now more than ever."

To learn more about supporting the Diocese of Renk, please email Jackie Kraus at Kraus.jackie@yahoo.com. ✚



Thriving in a Home of its Own *Cristo Rey Sets Down Roots and Nurtures Growth*

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The congregation of Cristo Rey has come a long way since the 1970s when it was a small group of Spanish-speaking worshipers meeting at the Church of the Atonement in Chicago. They've worshiped wherever they could find space, relocated when necessary, and persisted in their pursuit of a place to call their own.

"The People of the Desert is what they called themselves," said the Rev. Alvaro Araica, who has served as vicar of the congregation since 1993 and also serves as the bishop's associate for Hispanic ministry in the Diocese of Chicago. "They were wandering around the streets of Chicago for about 40 years."

Not anymore. Cristo Rey Episcopal Church is flourishing at 5101 West Devon Avenue in Chicago. It has developed deep roots and enjoyed steady growth since its 2010 move to the site, home of the former St. Richard's Episcopal Church.

Araica repeated a comment made by a member of the Bishop's Committee when the congregation moved to the new location: "Cristo Rey has just arrived to the Promised Land; this is better than winning the lottery."

The majority of parishioners at Cristo Rey, one of nine Hispanic congregations in the Diocese of Chicago, have origins in Guatemala and El Salvador, but included in the congregation are families from Nicaragua, Mexico and Ecuador. The average Sunday attendance is 170.

"Families with little kids, between one and 12 years old, are attracted to Cristo Rey because of the formation and the opportunities and activities for kids," said Araica, a native of Nicaragua who, in March, celebrated his 21st anniversary as vicar of Cristo Rey. "Some of our new immigrants are professional people coming from Latin American countries who arrive in the United States and maybe are not working in their fields of expertise, but they are sharing their talents at church. I have to say Cristo Rey is different in relation to other congregations because we have people who have been in the country for more than 30 years, so they have second-generation children and grandkids."





About 170 people attend Cristo Rey each Sunday. Some new immigrants “are professional people coming from Latin American countries who arrive in the United States and maybe are not working in their fields of expertise, but they are sharing their talents at church,” says the Rev. Alvaro Araica.

“I think people in the neighborhood were a little suspicious of us. Little by little, as we were respectful and made connections with the community, we got respect in return.”

IN THE BEGINNING

Cristo Rey is one of the two oldest Hispanic ministries in the Diocese of Chicago. It was received as a mission congregation in 1978, Araica said, the same year as Nuestra Señora de las Americas, where he also serves as vicar. Araica said Cristo Rey’s beginnings go back as far as 1972, when a Hispanic congregation was meeting in the Church of the Atonement. The Rev. Carlos Plazas, now vicar of St. Michael and All Angel’s in Berwyn, was Cristo Rey’s first vicar.

The birthing of the new congregation and the search for a place to call home was not pain-free, said Araica, who was ordained an Episcopal priest in Nicaragua in 1989 and came to the United States in 1992 to study at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, where he received an MDiv in 1995 and a DMin in 2009.

When he arrived at Cristo Rey, the 35-member congregation was meeting in a rented space in The People’s Church at 941 West Lawrence Avenue in Chicago. They already had worshiped in several places since becoming a mission and moving from Atonement in 1979. Until 1981 they worshiped in the chapel at St. Augustine College, a bilingual private institution that Plazas, Cristo Rey’s first vicar, helped found. Then in 1987 they moved to All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Ravenswood and shared space with the English-speaking congregation there. Cristo Rey moved out in 1991.

“In those days, it was difficult for both groups to get along; there was miscommunication,” Araica said.

Cristo Rey then moved to The People’s Church of Chicago building, where it was housed when Araica arrived. People’s Church provided the congregation with a small chapel and space for coffee hour.

“When I got there it was not a healthy situation,” Araica said. “The former priest just resigned without letting the people know, so at that

moment they had no priest. It was very sad for me to see how upset the people were. They were divided. They felt they had been abandoned by everybody. It was really hard because they felt there was no place for them.

“At that time we were having two services for only 35 people, one at 8 am and one at 1 in the afternoon,” Araica said. “The issue was the 8 o’clock service was mostly made up of new immigrants. Those at the 1 o’clock were the ones who had been in the United States a number of years. It was a case of self-identification and social status. My first challenge was to tell these people to get together, to help them understand that there was no point in having two services. So I proposed to have a Christian education program at 10 and the service at 11 am. I remember three people didn’t like it and left. The rest decided to go with the new time.”

As soon as he arrived, one of Araica’s goals was for Cristo Rey to become more actively engaged in the life of the diocese. In the summer of 1993, he encouraged parishioners to take part in the St. James Pilgrimage, an event in which parishioners from participating churches walked to St. James Cathedral for the Festival of St. James.

“I remember talking to that small group of people and telling them that we needed to show that we were alive and I encouraged them to participate in that pilgrimage,” Araica said. “Most of us, 33 people, decided to do it, even the elders. It was more than a mile on a very hot summer day. When we arrived to the Plaza, we didn’t know that the congregation bringing the most people would get a banner. Cristo Rey was that congregation, and we got the banner, we got the prize! That was a new beginning for Cristo Rey. The first thing we wanted to do was get out of that space on Lawrence Avenue.”

Getting out wasn’t easy. Araica was unable to find an Episcopal Church that was willing and able to take them in, so in September 1994, Cristo Rey moved into space rented from Ebenezer Lutheran Church, where the congregation continued to grow.

Cristo Rey worshiped at the Lutheran church until 1998 when the Episcopal diocese offered them the property at 2514 West Thorndale Avenue. The building there had housed St. Francis Episcopal Church, which was closing. Cristo Rey moved into the 1850s-era building and, with the diocese’s help, completed necessary renovations.

“The congregation was really, really excited because for the first time, Cristo Rey had its own building,” Araica said. “They took the ownership commitment very seriously and took good care of the building.”

But the congregation outgrew the space, which could only seat 112. “We were having big problems with parking, and the congregation grew so much that we were losing people because they couldn’t find parking and the worship space was too small,” Araica said. “We began to look for a bigger space.”

In early 2010, the congregation moved into the former St. Richard’s Episcopal Church, an English-speaking congregation that had diminished to the point of closure.

“It was not an easy experience,” Araica recalled. “It is not a Hispanic neighborhood; it is a very affluent area. I think people in the neighborhood were a little suspicious of us. Little by little, as we were respectful and made connections with the community, we got respect in return.”



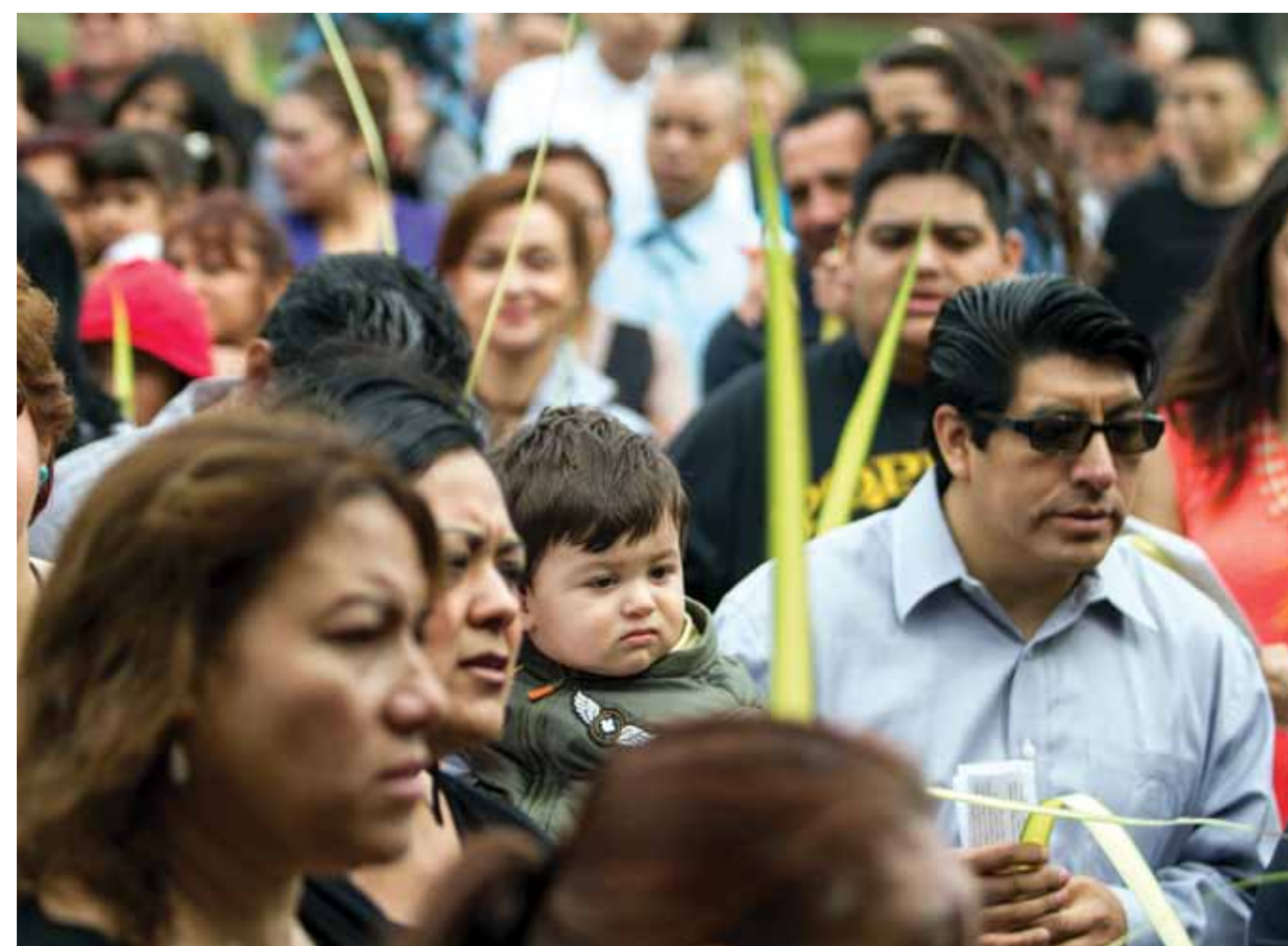
“For me, the Resurrection message is crucial. We have to recognize suffering, but we need to believe there is hope in new life in whatever situation you find yourself.”

Most parishioners live within 10 to 15 minutes of Cristo Rey, which offers cultural as well as religious programs. Araica said he sometimes delivers sermons in both English and Spanish, but the children’s Sunday School classes are always taught in English.

“We decided about eight years ago that our classes for kids and young people would be in English. We are clear about that. Our kids are using English. Back in 1990s, when working with the first generation of kids, our teachers taught in Spanish. Now, the children understand Spanish a little, but they mainly use English.”

Cristo Rey is blessed with strong, active lay leaders who run eight different committees within the church. He said it is common to see as many as 50 parishioners involved in Sunday activities. Every Sunday, one or two families in the parish provide food for lunch, and about 100 people usually stay to eat at the church. During the service the hosts are recognized and Araica offers a blessing for their ministry.

“For the immigrant community, the church becomes a second home,” Araica said. “People arrive at 9 am for Christian education classes, stay for church, and then stay for lunch. It becomes the place for the family gathering, for those who are from the same country to come and get together. Some stay until 3 pm.



“Most people are working in factories or in the construction industry. Some ladies are cleaning houses. They have long hours of work, and so church is the only time and space for them to be recognized with all their dignity as human beings.”

THE GOSPEL OF RESURRECTION, OF JUBILATION

Services at Cristo Rey include many festivals with dancing, singing, food and celebration because they need to believe in new life, Araica said. They need to celebrate, understand and experience the joy of the Resurrection story. It is a story they embrace.

“Since 1994, every year for the Easter Vigil a group of between 50 and 70 people spend the whole night together, from Saturday at 9 pm until Sunday at 5 am, celebrating the Resurrection. I have to tell you that that event has marked the spiritual life of that congregation.

“Our people need to know the gospel of the Resurrection because most Latinos come from the gospel of suffering,” Araica said. “For me, the Resurrection message is crucial. We have to recognize suffering, but we need to believe there is hope in new life in whatever situation you find yourself. I am committed to helping people recognize that new life. New life is at the center of my preaching.”

BELONGING TO THE CENTER, NOT THE FRINGES

Araica has made sure that Cristo Rey remains active in the diocese, the city, and the country.

“I am persuasive in telling people we are not just visitors in this country; we are members and must be active. Citizenship is crucial. I am persuasive and persistent in helping parents encourage their kids to go to college because education is crucial. We help families find out how to get support to send their kids to college and have created a network of support.”

Cristo Rey’s congregation and relationship with the diocese continues to grow stronger, Araica said, partly because it is one of the first parishes to participate in Thrive, a diocesan-sponsored two-year program that energizes church leaders for congregational renewal and vitality. “This is our second year in Thrive and we are clear in our mission of being an inclusive church in the Hispanic community,” Araica said.

“And I’ve always been clear that there should not be a gap between the life of the congregation and the life of the diocese. We have to participate and be part of the diocese, not an island.

“We have not just been invited; we are part of the body of Christ.” ✚

NICHOLAS CENTER [by Rebecca Wilson] RETREATS SET



“Jesus was a healer,
but the church hasn’t
always followed his lead.
We intend to reclaim
the church’s role as a
wellness center in our
communities.”

Living Compass founder Scott Stoner believes that wellness, like charity, begins at home. And at church. “We want to create a network of people who are passionate about wellness and about integrating faith and wellness in local congregations,” says Stoner, who will launch a series of wellness ministry training retreats in July. “We’re all going to learn from each other.”

The three-day events, called Congregational Wellness Advocate Trainings, will take place at the Nicholas Center, a new 5000-square-foot space on the fifth floor of St. James Commons built to host programs that strengthen clergy and lay leaders for service in the church and the world.

Stoner and his colleagues are recruiting people from near and far to attend the trainings and be certified as congregational wellness advocates. He reports that clergy and lay leaders from Texas, New York, Kansas and California are registered for the trainings happening this summer, as well as many people from the Diocese of Chicago.

“The Nicholas Center retreats will combine the chance to reflect on one’s own integration of faith and wellness with training in congregational wellness ministry,” says Stoner. “We can’t be advocates for wellness in our congregations if we’re not practicing this ourselves.”

In addition to attending a Nicholas Center retreat, the certification process will require preparatory work and activities to start or enhance a congregational wellness ministry back home. Certified advocates will regularly receive Living Compass tools, including monthly newsletter articles, educational materials, and curricula for small groups and retreats.

“We want to immerse people in the mindset of Living Compass and

give them what they need to take this ministry back to their congregations,” says Stoner, who hopes that congregations will send several people at a time to be certified. “The retreats will give people time to figure out how to embed wellness ministry in their parishes, as well as how wellness programs can serve as an outreach ministry to the wider community.”

Congregational leaders who travel to the Nicholas Center will participate in retreat time, classroom teaching and experiences that foster wellness and wellness ministry. “One night, we will have a healing Eucharist. People can experience it and then take the liturgy and music back to their congregations. We also plan a meal that incorporates mindful eating,” he says, referring to the practice of eating with attention not only to food’s nutritional value and caloric content, but also to its social, spiritual and moral dimensions. “People will get a chance to do it and then take the materials back home to use.”

The retreats will be led by Living Compass staff including Stoner and Holly Hughes Stoner, a tutor, teacher and therapist who is married to Stoner. She says the retreats will be highly interactive. “We want to connect people in a new way and facilitate ongoing conversations about wellness with people from different backgrounds who can share ideas with each other. We want people to inspire each other and push each other.”

The Living Compass training events will be among the first programs at the Nicholas Center, which was made possible last year when Living Compass and the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago shared a \$10 million gift from Ab and Nancy Nicholas of Milwaukee. Stoner serves as the Nicholas Center’s director.

Having a location in downtown Chicago to house overnight retreat participants will take Living Compass “to a whole new level,” he says, by making it possible for people from across the church to learn about Living Compass and embrace its potential for fostering healthy, growing congregations.

“Jesus was a healer, but the church hasn’t always followed his lead,” says Stoner. “We intend to reclaim the church’s role as a wellness center in our communities.”

To learn more about attending a Congregational Wellness Advocate Training at the Nicholas Center, please visit www.episcopalchicago.org/our-diocese/nicholas-center and look for a new website at www.nicholascenter.org coming soon. ✚



Grace Place, an incubator of ministry, keeps giving

— { BY LU STANTON LEÓN } —

Outwardly, Chicago's Grace Episcopal Church and St. James Commons don't bear much of a resemblance, but they share a desire to give all congregations in the diocese the opportunity to thrive.

From the last Sunday in March through Easter morning, Grace Church in Chicago's South Loop collected money and pledges for *Places of Grace and Gladness: A Campaign for the Diocese of Chicago*. Contributions totaled more than \$7,500.

That's quite a sum for a congregation that averages about 60 in the pews on Sundays.

"I have given a lead gift, and I've asked others to give lead gifts also," said the Rev. Ted Curtis, rector of Grace. "People give to what they believe in. We have a lot going on here in the diocese. St. James Commons is very hospitable, and it gives a feeling of what the energy is here now."

This third and final phase of the diocese's capital campaign is taking place at the congregational level. The money collected will replenish diocesan resources to fund vitality grants. As a result, dozens of ministries and congregations will benefit.

"I know the vitality grants have funded terrific ministries," said Andrea Billhardt, who has been a parishioner at Grace for five years and who, with Curtis, co-chaired Grace's campaign to raise money for St. James Commons.

Although the Grace congregation is small, it has been blessed by two trusts left by former parishioners in the early 20th century.

"These trusts have allowed this congregation to dream and to dare, both faithfully and thoughtfully," Curtis said. "These funds that we've

raised for the diocese's capital campaign will serve as a resource for other congregations who then can dream dreams, too. What a blessing to be able to do that. I'm really excited about being able to be a resource for other congregations."

Billhardt also was a lead donor and, in addition to giving \$1,000, matched the first \$1,000 given to the campaign by Grace parishioners.

"As Ted has stressed, not every parish can afford the resources that Grace has at its disposal," Billhardt said. "Yet, all parishioners deserve the same opportunities. It is wonderful to share all we have. It was a charge made to us by Jesus."

Grace Church was founded in 1851 and is one of the oldest congregations in Chicago. In 1985 it moved to its current location, a three-story red brick building at 637 South Dearborn Street in the Printers Row neighborhood. Its location is part of the congregation's resurrection story.

"This is our sixth location, and the remarkable thing about this congregation, as verified throughout its history, is they have reinvented themselves at least three times," said Curtis, who has been the church's rector since 1991.

"Grace used to be housed in a Gothic, limestone church building on Indiana Avenue (its fourth location)," Curtis explained. "In the late 60s, most of the congregation moved out of the neighborhood, and remaining parishioners left trusts to be used for ministry.

"These trusts have allowed this church, not a cushion, but more like a jet pack propelling this band of pilgrims to take huge risks. In the 60s, when some congregations packed up and moved to the suburbs, Grace tried untested, unknown waters by moving right into the center of the

“It is a place where people are accepted as they are and where questioning is accepted and even welcomed. It is a place of warm community, the best I have found in a church.”

Loop,” Curtis said. “The congregation offered daily Eucharist, pastoral counseling and arts activities for workers and the people beginning to move downtown in the 70s.”

When the congregation moved to its current location, it recreated itself as Grace Place, a church and community center. The church’s circular sanctuary space is on the second floor, and a large open hall on the ground floor is used for church and community affairs. Most of the rest of the space is shared with community organizations. Organizations that have been in Grace Place over the past decades include the national office of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, the Midwest Offices of the American Friends Service Committee, and Lutheran, Pentecostal, Korean and Reformed Church of America congregations.

Grace has always been committed to social outreach, Curtis said.

“When I came here I just picked up the DNA of the place,” he said. “We had 15 of the core people for Occupy Chicago living here for six months. It was great. All these young people around, all this excitement, all the energy and hope and purpose. The Industrial Areas Foundation main office was here for a while.

“We’ve been privileged to be able to incubate a number of ministries, including, with the Heartland Alliance, an outreach for thirteen years to our homeless neighbors in the Loop. We currently co-sponsor a breakfast every Saturday morning for 200 people with the Chicago Temple/First United Methodist Church. We are excited to participate with our diocese and the Metro Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in the South Loop Campus Ministry, which is thriving these days under innovative and charismatic leadership.”

Curtis said Grace’s congregation, which has numbered fewer than 100 for the last century, includes people from all walks of life, “everybody from lawyers to people living in the mission.” He said about one-third of



The circular sanctuary is on the second floor of Grace Place, and a large open hall on the ground floor is used for church and community affairs. Grace has always been committed to social outreach, the Rev. Ted Curtis says.

“I think of St. James Commons as a spiritual oasis in the middle of all the materialism and hustle of downtown Chicago... a place to learn and grow; a quiet place to contemplate and seek renewal.”

Grace’s funding comes from past parishioners, a third from current parishioners, and about a third from rent.

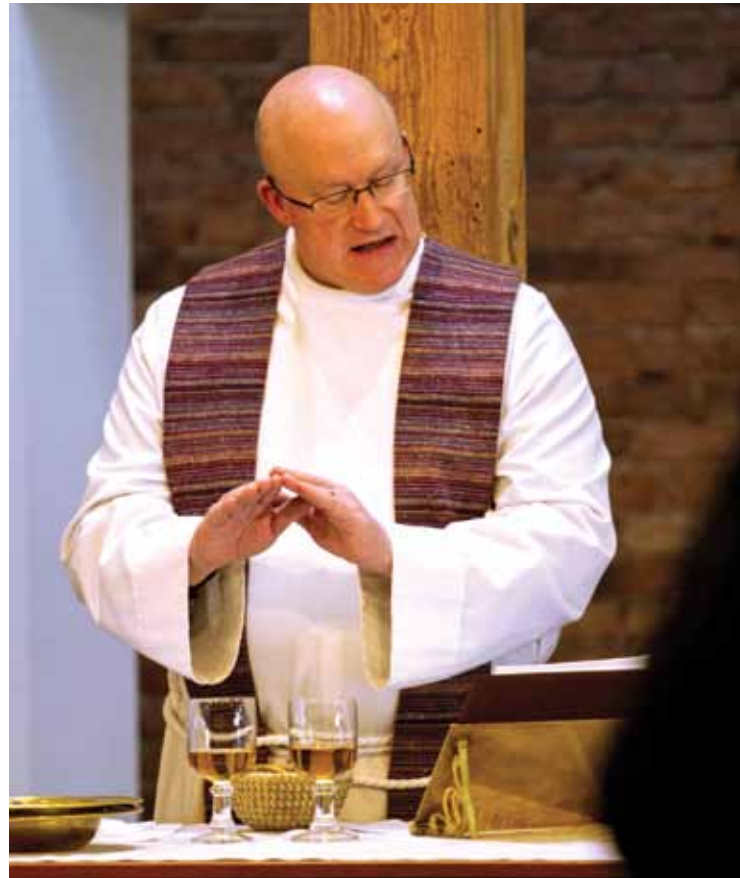
Billhardt said that at Grace, she has found the perfect church for her. “The strength of the congregation is in its warm and universal welcome,” she said. “It is a place where people are accepted as they are and where questioning is accepted and even welcomed. It is a place of warm community, the best I have found in a church.”

Billhardt uses similar words to describe St. James Commons and why it is important to the city.

“I think of St. James Commons as a spiritual oasis in the middle of all the materialism and hustle of downtown Chicago, a place for gathering to hear and speak about the issues facing our communities; a place to learn and grow; a quiet place to contemplate and seek renewal,” Billhardt said. “It is the face of our faith in our community. It is a place where hungers, physical and spiritual, can be satisfied.”

And again, Grace Church, like St. James Commons, welcomes all and serves the city.

“We share our riches, material and spiritual,” Billhardt said, “with anyone who is open to them.” ✚



A few years ago, during some difficult times in the former Diocese of Quincy, I wrote, “At its best, the Episcopal Church will be one in which there are no outcasts.” Nearly a year after the vote to reunify the dioceses of Chicago and Quincy, what I see suggests that we are coming close to that vision.

For such a long time before the former leaders of the Diocese of Quincy broke away, the ideas that were presented to people about the wider Episcopal Church were not positive. But now, people in the Peoria area tell me that they see and hear a positive view of the Episcopal Church, of Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and our other bishops, clergy and lay leaders of the Episcopal Church. It is fresh air for people to breathe, and it has made people happier about their life in the church.

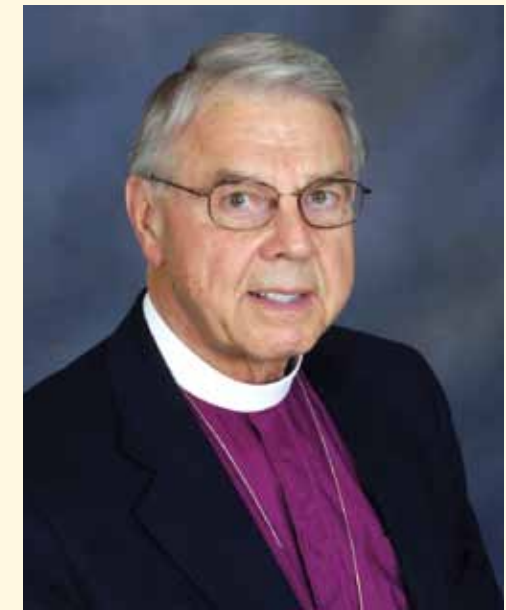
Likewise, people in the former Diocese of Quincy who appreciate the ministry of women and hold an inclusive view of the church, as I do, had not been comfortable expressing those views for many years. Being members of the Diocese of Chicago has allowed them to be who they really are and to find compatriots in mission and ministry.

Since reunion, the congregations of the new Peoria deanery are thriving, as the article on pages 8-13 of this magazine attests. The Diocese of Quincy had been, for many years, among the smallest dioceses in the church and was without the resources to enhance congregational life. Now the resources of the Diocese of Chicago are a blessing to the nine congregations in Peoria. Jim Steen, the director of ministries, is helping St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Peoria with the significant task of choosing new ordained leadership.

At the same time, St. George’s Episcopal Church in Macomb has benefitted from a Diocese of Chicago Vitality Grant that has allowed them to move out of the rector’s house where they had been meeting and move into their own space—the first they have had since 2008. The new storefront near Western Illinois University offers many opportunities for outreach on campus and in the community. The Rev. Paula Engelhorn, St. George’s rector, says, “I feel like when we were in my house we were thriving, but we were also treading water. Now, we will be able to swim.”

None of this would have been possible without the Diocese of Chicago. The benefit to reunion, however, runs both ways. Members of congregations in the Diocese of Chicago as it existed before reunion are seeing a view of the wider church that they didn’t have before, and they see that they are helping a part of the church that was struggling become involved in mission, ministry and outreach. Many people who helped make reunion possible have seen for themselves the inspiring and unflagging commitment of the faithful Episcopalians in the former Diocese of Quincy, and it has given them a sense of what it means to stand up for what we believe and who we are as the people of God.

We still have work to do to realize our vision of a church in which there are no outcasts. Thanks to reunion, however, we are closer today than we were a year ago. I am grateful beyond measure to be a part of the new Diocese of Chicago. ✚



Joys of Reunion

[by the Rt. Rev. John Buchanan]

“At its best, the Episcopal Church will be one in which there are no outcasts.”

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