

THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

The Official Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi



Volume 149
Issue No. 11
November
2024



“Telling the truth is fascinating”

A Q&A on Beloved Community with the Rev. Andy Andrews





On the cover: Theo Williams, St. Alban's, Bovina; Rebecca Kubler, St. Peter's, Brandon; Ray Hume, Holy Trinity, Vicksburg; and Bernard Hulin, St. Francis, Philadelphia, represent Mississippi's Beloved Community at 2024 Diocesan Council in February.

Letter from the editor



Thanks once again, readers, for your continued patience as we continue to plot a new course forward for *The Mississippi Episcopalian*. Your positive comments on the redesign, the new online presence, and the new editorial direction have been most appreciated.

Scheduling and budgeting have been perhaps the biggest challenges we've faced with the new *TME*, and I'm happy to report that progress is being made. While some decisions will require waiting for the diocesan budget to be finalized at Council, we've been hard at work, under the advisement of Bishop Wells, solidifying our publication schedule for 2025 and are aiming to put new issues out into the world earlier in the month. This will require further revisions to our submission deadlines—the easiest way to know when to send in materials is to check the back of the print (or PDF) edition (you can find that on page 14 of this issue) or on the website at msepiscopalian.com/submissions.

I welcome your questions and feedback any time at msepiscopalian@dioms.org.

Thank you so much for your continued support,

Wil Oakes, Editor and Art Director

2 Welcome Presiding Bishop Rowe

Episcopal Church welcomes new Presiding Bishop in virtual churchwide ceremony

3 "Telling the truth is fascinating"

A Q&A on Beloved Community with the Rev. Andy Andrews

6 Bishop's Journal

September/October 2024

7 Feeding the need

Episcopal Churches throughout the Diocese of Mississippi make a difference, one meal at a time

11 An amazing revitalization

Christ Episcopal Church Hosts William Dunbar Chapter DAR at Church Hill

12 Deployment Report Faithful Departed

14 Diocesan Calendar

Welcome Presiding Bishop Rowe



Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe receives the primatial staff from former Presiding Bishop Michael Curry on Nov. 2, 2024. Photo by David Rider / The Episcopal Church; El obispo primado Sean Rowe recibe el báculo primacial del obispo primado saliente Michael Curry el 2 de noviembre de 2024. Foto de David Rider / Iglesia Episcopal.

courtesy Episcopal News Service

Episcopalians around the world and in various time zones gathered to welcome the Most Rev. Sean Rowe as the church's 28th presiding bishop in a first-of-its-kind virtual investiture service, livestreamed Nov. 2 from the Chapel of Christ the Lord at The Episcopal Church Center in New York City.

Rowe, formerly bishop of the Episcopal Dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York, was elected and confirmed as the next presiding bishop at the 81st General Convention on June 26.

Soon after his election, Bishop Rowe requested a simpler, scaled-down ceremony of Holy Eucharist and Investiture to encourage wider church engagement and reduce carbon footprint. A limited number of in-person attendees participated from inside the chapel.

The rich diversity within the multinational Episcopal Church was highlighted in several ways. A special "roll call" preceding the 11 a.m. ET ceremony featured video greetings from many of the church's 106 dioceses. Water gathered from various provinces of the church was combined in the baptismal font. The Litany for the Mission of the Church featured 15 intercessors who shared prayers in the following languages: Eastern Shoshone, Mandarin, Juba,

Episcopal Church welcomes new Presiding Bishop in virtual churchwide ceremony

See the congregation at St. Andrew's Cathedral send a virtual greeting to the new Presiding Bishop at msepiscopalian.com/investiture.



German, Arabic, Hebrew, French, Anishinaabemowin, Spanish, English, French, and Xhosa.

The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry, who served as the church's 27th presiding bishop from 2015-2024, presided over the first half of the service, which included a land acknowledgment from the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts

"investiture" continued on page 5 →

“Telling the Truth is Fascinating”

A Q&A on Beloved Community with the Rev. Andy Andrews

The Reverend Andy Andrews serves as Diocesan Missioner for Beloved Community and Congregational Vitality, a position with two separate but related responsibilities. The goal associated with the second of those titles—congregational vitality—is fairly self-explanatory. Beloved Community, which many rightly associate with racial reconciliation initiatives, actually has broader goals than some may realize. The initiative trains discussion leaders, puts on a variety of workshops like Sacred Ground, and generally promotes healing and justice making. TME editor Wil Oakes recently sat down to talk with Andrews about his work and learn more about Beloved Community in the diocese. This transcript has been edited for length and clarity.

Thanks for taking the time to talk, Andy. In case any of our readers don't know you, tell us a little about yourself and your life in the church.

I was born and raised in Greenville, baptized and confirmed at St. James', Greenville. Early on, I had some pretty strong experiences of God that seemed otherworldly, but they were beautiful and powerful for me, and I'm so glad I had amazing clergy leaders and also lay leaders that helped kind of raise me up to help process those experiences of God. If I didn't have the Episcopal Church, I don't know where I would be theologically or in my relationship with God. I'm so grateful I've had our church to help me be a human being in—rarely given any answers. I know I'm not supposed to be a cookie cutter



Christian. I'm supposed to be who God made Andy to be, and the Episcopal Church has really helped me do that with all of its resources and all of its deep thinking.

So, Andy, tell me what it is you do around here—what is Beloved Community?

Beloved Community is a movement that's been happening in the Episcopal Church broader since the 1970s to try to articulate how the church wants to engage in healing and justice making, especially when it comes to racism. It's expanded. Beloved Community means shalom, it means the Kingdom of God, it means welcome. So just a way for the church to be opening and welcoming to everybody.

In Mississippi, there's four spiritual practices that we've been given to help become Beloved Community: that's telling the truth, proclaiming the dream, repairing the breach, and practicing the way of love. Everybody's in a different spot, doing different things. I've met a number of people all over our diocese, leaders that are really doing interesting things, like looking into the founding of their church and trying to name who built the church and where that economy came from, especially

around enslaved labor. Other people are trying to learn the stories of people acting courageously during the civil rights movement, Freedom Summer. Others are just trying to pay attention to how they welcome folks and asking the questions, you know: “our church is so good and so special, why is it still maybe a homogenous gathering?”

I'm committed to believing that that the future is multicultural. I think the Episcopal Church is positioned for a bright, bright future, because we do proclaim the image of God in everyone, and our doors are red, but they are wide open, and they swing on the hinges of hospitality.

None of those practices—even something as simple sounding as “telling the truth”—is easy, I'm sure. What difficulties do you face in this work?

Telling the truth is fascinating. To gather a group, a diverse group, and put guidelines and kind of a framework around how we're going to engage in this sensitive conversation. You pray in the space, and then allow that conversation to happen, always reflecting back on your ground rules and the framework you've set up. It's beautiful to watch how, at first, everybody's tense and uptight, because rarely do we get together to talk about things of the past that that are awkward and emotionally loaded and sometimes terrible to talk about. But as soon as the conversation begins to happen, and the ice begins to break, and some walls begin to tear down.

I didn't know so much of Mississippi's history—the bad, but also the good—until after college, until I started doing my own kind of homework, and so now I'm fascinated to try to learn as much as possible. I think it helps me become a fuller person, a fuller Mississippian. I see light everywhere. There's so many stars all over Mississippi, of people already doing this great gospel-centered work and loving neighbor, because that's all it is really about, is relationships.

When you talk to someone about one of these events and they come back at you with, “I don't feel comfortable doing that. I don't want to be made to feel uncomfortable. I don't want to be made to feel guilty. I don't want to, you know, to confront these things.” What is your pitch to those people?

Shame and blame aren't the motivators, it doesn't seem, that the gospel calls for. We all have a capacity in our hearts that's still untapped so I can't help but think that all of us still haven't fallen in love with everybody we're going to love, and we haven't met everybody who is going to love us. So just the capacity there is so exciting. It's all about curiosity. It's about learning. It's about discovering. Now, when I go back and I read history, and I know it's connected with white males, I can't help but feel a twinge of guilt and shame and blame because the acts might have been horrible. One thing we do when we go into these conversations is observe some ground rules: no fixing, no shaming, no blaming yourself or others. So we kind of have that as a rule where, when we're talking about ourselves, we're trying to discover something about ourselves.

Vicksburg Massacre 150th Anniversary Remembrance Events

150th Anniversary Symposium

Friday, December 6, 2024 | 5:30 p.m.

Bethel AME Church, 805 Monroe Street Vicksburg, MS
Sessions:

- *Vicksburg Massacres: Causes and Consequences of Black Participation in the Body Politic during the Age of Redeemer Violence.* Al Dorsey, Ph.D.
- *Heroes and Martyrs: Warren County's African American Men and Women Fight for Equality in 1874.* Beth Kruse, Ph.D.

Remembrance Ceremony and Wreath Laying

Saturday, December 7, 2024 | 10:00 a.m.

Shirley House - Tour Stop 2

Vicksburg National Military Park

Music, a libation ceremony, and a wreath laying at the location of some of the key events of December 7, 1874.

A Service of Sacred Remembrance

Sunday, December 8, 2024 | 11:00 a.m.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 900 1st North Street, Vicksburg, MS

Event sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi's Racial Reconciliation Task Force

When I talk about difficult things, they can get emotive. They can get heightened. It becomes a debate. The church is trying to train us to be in dialog, be in conversation. The root word of conversation is also the root word of conversion, and so having a good, healthy conversation converts the people who are participating.

I like that approach. We're here to sort of illuminate the truth, and, by doing so, I guess, set ourselves up for that conversion, right? It's not that we're here to magically fix huge problems right here in the room. What's next?

I'm convinced that God's just getting started with us, that maybe this is our new next chapter. I'm thrilled with the leadership that Bishop Dorothy Wells is bringing, and the energy she's stirring up and the relationships she's already establishing.

This is also fun work. I can't tell you how many friends I've met that I just didn't know. Just by trying to ask questions and trying to learn and discover. I'm also more hopeful, even though the news is really scary and difficult out there, to hear people's personal stories and how they're being Christians in their own context, and how they're making these connections, and how they're bringing liberation and new life is inspiring. You don't get that on the news. You only get that through personal



More of Rev. Andrew's interview is available to see in video, to watch, visit msepiscopalian.com/andrews.

connections. And so I'm much more hopeful than when I began this inaugural position two years ago. I'm seeing so many people and so many beautiful churches doing, doing the right thing, and the generous thing and the loving thing. That's exciting. That's exciting.

It's good, long, slow work. And you know, we're just riding on the coattails of so many great people, Bishop Allin, both Bishop Grays, Bishop Marble, Bishop Seage, Anita George, the racial reconciliation task force that used to meet in the 80s, the citizens for concern that met in the 70s. This has all just been a great movement that I know I get to be the loudest cheerleader for at this moment. 🙏

“investiture” continued from page 2...

Schori, who served as 26th presiding bishop; a welcome from diocesan and investiture committee representatives and House of Deputies President Julia Ayala Harris; the renewal of baptismal vows; and the presentation of the primatial staff.

Bishop Jefferts Schori joined youth presentative Maya Lattimer in offering prayers for the new presiding bishop, whom Bishop Curry presented along with Bishop Rowe's family.

Bishop Rowe presided over the service of Holy Eucharist and delivered a sermon based on the Gospel passage of John 11:32-44.

“I believe that it is in our gathered communities across our church where we come closest to glimpsing the real power of the story of Lazarus,” he said. “Every time

we feed the hungry, care for the sick, and welcome the stranger, we are reaching for life in the face of death. As we baptize and bury God's people, as we make disciples and proclaim the gospel, as we soothe the suffering and shield the joyous, we are unbinding our congregations and setting our hurting world free.”

The service also included greetings from the Anglican Communion Office. Bishop Rowe encouraged donations to Episcopal Migration Ministries during the offertory through a QR code in the worship service booklet. Per the Canons of The Episcopal Church, Rowe became presiding bishop and primate on Nov. 1. He also will serve as chief pastor, president and executive officer of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society (the church's corporate body), and chair of the church's Executive Council, which next meets Nov. 7-9 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. 🙏



Bishop's Journal

September/October 2024

September 2024

- 11** → Call with Clergy person
- 12** → Finance Committee Meeting
- 12** → St. Philip's Church, Jackson (CNM – the Rev Les Hegwood)—Preached
- 13** → Meeting with Staff Members; Meeting with Clergy person; Meeting with Community Foundation of Jackson
- 15** → No Sunday Visitation Scheduled
- 16** → Bishop's Sabbath
- 17** → Staff Meeting; Meeting with Staff Members
- 18** → Meeting re: Diocesan Young Adults; Meeting with Clergy person
- 19** → Call with Clergy person; Funeral of Staff Member's Father; Meeting with Clergy person; Meeting with Postulant
- 20** → Meeting with Staff Member; Meeting with Clergy person; Meeting re: Title IV Matter
- 22** → St. Elizabeth's, Collins—Preached, confirmed 8
- 23** → Bishop's Sabbath
- 24** → Staff Meeting; Presiding Bishop's Zoom on Sacred Ground; Meeting with Communicant re: Diocesan Task Force on Safety and Gun Violence; Meeting with Staff Members
- 25** → Church of the Good Shepherd, Terry—Spoke
- 26** → Executive Committee Meeting

- 27** → Meeting with Creation Care team; Meeting with Staff Members; Meeting with Clergy person; Commission on Ministry meeting (Zoom)
- 28** → Capital City Pride; Cursillo (Camp Bratton-Green)
- 29** → St. James, Port Gibson—Preached, confirmed 2
- 29** → Church of the Holy Trinity, Vicksburg
- 30** → Travel to University of the South

October 2024

- 1-4** → University of the South: St. Luke's Lectures and Trustees Meeting
- 1** → Staff Meeting (via Zoom)
- 1** → Title IV meeting (via Zoom)
- 5** → St. Paul's Church, Corinth—meeting with clergy person
- 6** → Church of the Resurrection, Starkville—Preached, confirmed 17, received 3
- 6** → Meeting with aspirant; Meeting with clergy person
- 6** → Church of the Good Shepherd, Columbus—Spoke
- 7** → St. Paul's Church, Columbus (meeting with Rector and Vestry)—Spoke
- 7** → Travel to Jackson
- 8** → Staff Meeting; Meetings with Staff Members; Meeting with aspirant; Spiritual Direction
- 9** → Meeting with Clergy person
- 13** → St. Paul's Church, Meridian—Preached, confirmed 11, baptized 5, reaffirmed 2

- 13** → Travel to Biloxi
- 14** → Bishop's Sabbath
- 15** → Staff Meeting (remote); Meeting with Staff Members (remote)
- 16** → Meeting with Clergy person; Meeting with Warden re: Transition; Meeting with Clergy person
- 17** → Coast Episcopal School – chapel—Spoke
- 17** → Meeting with clergy person; Meeting with postulant
- 17** → St. Pierre's Church, Gautier (Celebration of New Ministry, Chris Schaefer)—Preached
- 18** → Travel to Jackson
- 19** → Commission on Ministry meeting
- 20** → Calvary Church, Cleveland—Preached, baptized 1, reaffirmed 1, received 2
- 20** → Grace Church, Rosedale—meeting with communicants
- 21-23** → Clergy Conference, All Saints Church, Tupelo—Preached twice, Spoke twice
- 24** → Diocese of MS Trustees Meeting
- 25** → Meeting with staff member; 2 meetings with clergy persons; Phone conversation with clergy person
- 27** → Trinity Church, Natchez—Preached
- 27** → Christ Church, Church Hill—Preached
- 28** → Bishop's Sabbath
- 29** → Staff Meeting; Meetings with staff members



Feeding the need

Episcopal Churches
throughout the
Diocese of Mississippi
make a difference, one
meal at a time

Volunteers serve hot breakfasts to guests at All Saints', Tupelo's Saints Brew program, a feeding ministry that has been in operation now for nearly a quarter century.

"Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." (Matthew 25:44b-45)

by The Rt. Rev. Dorothy Sanders Wells

Mississippi has, for a number of years, had the unenviable distinction of being home to one of the nation's highest poverty rates: From a peak of 24% of our citizens living below the poverty line in 2012, the percentage of persons living below poverty has dropped to about 18% in 2023, but that is compared to a national average of about 11%. No matter the cause to which we point or the source upon which we place blame, the fact remains that too many of our people are hungry, without shelter, without healthcare, without basic necessities – without hope. And while many solutions will need to be employed to lift us, basic needs must be addressed while longer-term solutions can be imagined and implemented.

The Episcopal Church in Mississippi is actively working to feed the hungry. We've previously highlighted a few ministries in this space that have been committed to sharing food with our neighbors. Here, we focus on just a few more ways in which our churches have responded to hungry neighbors around us.

Saints Brew – All Saints' Church, Tupelo

On a sunny, warm Tuesday morning in October, guests entered All Saints' Episcopal Church, Tupelo, as they do every weekday morning – streaming in to be greeted by the morning's hosts and treated to a hot breakfast and warm hospitality. On that particular morning, chicken and waffles were on the menu.

Saints Brew has been serving neighbors in Tupelo since 2010. The Rev. Gene Asbury, a former All Saints' rector, had a passion for supporting and caring for hungry neighbors and giving them a place to come inside from the elements; from his vision, Saints Brew was born.

Since that start in 2010, Saints Brew has served up over 285,000 meals, and its original mission has expanded to include providing basic hygiene products and some emergency clothing items.

On any given weekday morning, 85 to 100 guests arrive for breakfast; on some mornings, there are more guests – particularly near the end of a month, when a guest’s resources may have run dry. “Regulars” often visit Monday through Friday – and team members who serve daily know these guests by name and by their stories. The ministry is about relationships, and the serving teams are well-acquainted with guests who have health issues or other particular needs. Often, the serving team members will help guests access care at the Tree of Life Clinic, a no-cost clinic which provides healthcare and dental services.

From what began as a simple meal of pastries, fruit and coffee has evolved a full breakfast menu, with offerings ranging from cereal and fruit to that morning’s chicken and waffles, the chicken having been given by a fast-food restaurant which also helps support the ministry. And while a rector and parishioners started the ministry, it now has support from throughout Tupelo: The local United Way, nursing students from Itawamba Community College, physicians, veterinarians and other supporters have gathered to serve on teams showing hospitality to neighbors who need a hot meal and often a kind word or hug.

Cindy Hudnall, current Director of the Saints Brew ministry, shares a story of a guest she calls the “KoolAid” guest, who, after falling one morning at Saints Brew breakfast, confessed that he had a drinking problem. Hudnall became an advocate for the guest, who continues to work toward sobriety and has been living a stable life on his own for the past two years. The “KoolAid” guest, Hudnall says, is grateful for the opportunity to give back, and is trying to help others.

The Saints Brew ministry is supported primarily through gifts and a community of committed servers. Hudnall suggests that worshipping communities wanting to find their own niche for serving their communities prayerfully study their neighbors’ needs and the ways in which they can faithfully respond.

IONA House, St. Columb’s Church, Ridgeland

Neighbors in the West Jackson area near the site of the former St. Columb’s Church have come to rely upon the generosity and hospitality of St. Columb’s communicants who return to the community every Friday morning to share grocery items with neighbors in need.

IONA (Isle of Outreach for Neighborhood Assistance) House began in 1986, as a way for St. Columb’s to share food in a neighborhood that was becoming increasingly impoverished. Even after the church relocated to Ridgeland, the ministry continued. Each week, one team of six or so persons helps on Thursdays with gathering, unloading, staging and bagging the food items, and a second team of about eight persons helps on Fridays with the logistics of sharing the bagged food items with neighbors.

Multiple community partners – including Mississippi Food Network, Kroger, Ben E. Keith Company Food Distributors, Good Samaritan Center, Extra Table and Stewpot – have shared food items which help IONA House provide groceries for up to 140 families weekly. IONA House also relies upon financial gifts that help sustain the ministry, through the purchase of additional food items and upkeep of the house.

IONA House Board Chair Cy Tandy is grateful to continue to steward a ministry with a rich history. “It’s a lot of fun, it’s a lot of work...”, Tandy says. “The true blessing is to be able to help those in need every Friday... to see their faces light up, to have conversations, to share a prayer...”

Burgers n Tunes, Trinity Church, Natchez

Trinity Church, Natchez, was looking for ways to make their ministries more welcoming and invite more neighbors to share the beautiful spaces with which they’re gifted. A lovely outdoor courtyard that was open, visible and blessed with great acoustics seemed to present a wonderful possibility. Trinity parishioner and Vestry member Adam Gwin, inspired by an idea that a former curate, the Rev. CJ Meaders, had employed at St. Columb’s Church, suggested that Trinity begin inviting local musicians to share their music as a way of



Guests at Trinity's Burgers n Tunes enjoy live music and fresh cooked food in a lovely courtyard environment that's open to all.



extending Trinity's ministry out into the community.

Local musician and promoter Gabe Bass was invited to help identify musicians for the events. Parishioner and Vestry member Bruce Scarborough guessed that food would be a wonderful accompaniment to great music, and offered to grill burgers for anyone who was hungry and wanted to eat. Burgers n Tunes was born – and became a great way not only to share a meal in community with hungry neighbors, but also to provide a venue for up-and-coming musicians to showcase their music.

Between the sounds of the tunes and the smell of freshly grilled burgers, parishioners hoped that neighbors would come to check them out. So far, Trinity has hosted five Burgers n Tunes gatherings, each drawing between 35 and 50 guests, Scarborough estimates. The Burgers n Tunes gatherings are open to the public; everyone is invited to eat, visit and enjoy the great music. Trinity has welcomed and fed a variety of neighbors, from curious passersby, to unsheltered folks in need of a meal and community, to a group of German tourists, proving, said Scarborough, that “people come from all over the world to visit us!”

Biscuit Brigade, St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport

On Saturday mornings at St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, homemade biscuits are “what's for breakfast,” as teams

from the church prepare to feed 50-60 persons who need a hot meal. The Biscuit Brigade prepares a bagged breakfast for neighbors that includes two hot sausage biscuits, a fruit cup, fruit bar, jellies, juice and water. The breakfasts are delivered to the site of the Feed My Sheep ministry in Gulfport – a collaborative that was named one of America's 1,000 Points of Light by the late President George H.W. Bush. Feed My Sheep provides lunches for in-person dining and for shut-ins from its kitchen. The Biscuit Brigade sweeps in to provide the Saturday breakfasts, and shares prayer and conversation along with the hot meals.

St. Peter's-by-the-Sea parishioner Jan Shook leads the Brigade, which has been serving up the breakfasts



Members of the Biscuit Brigade hard at work at St. Peter's-by-the-Sea in Gulfport



for about 11 years. On occasion, the Brigade is called into service to help support the local Salvation Army Cold Weather Shelter. And, once each year, the Brigade prepares about 200 of the breakfasts as Gulf Coast Community Mission hosts Operation Homeless Hope, to help provide support to persons experiencing homelessness.

The Biscuit Brigade brings together teams representing all faiths and beliefs for the work of feeding Gulfport's neighbors. "We have so much to be thankful for each day... To be a part of the Biscuit Brigade, providing for those that have so little is an honor."

Stewpot Community Services, Jackson


In 1981, seven Jackson faith communities – including St. Andrew's Cathedral – teamed up to begin serving a weekday no-cost, no-questions lunch to neighbors who were hungry. The "Community Stewpot," modeled after a similar ministry in Dallas, was born.

Fast forward more than 40 years, and what is now

Stewpot Community Services – now occupying the former Central Presbyterian Church site – offers not only the weekday meal, but also an array of services to support Jackson's most vulnerable citizens. The work of Stewpot has risen to national prominence – with the ministry becoming one of only 38 such programs to receive a \$1.25 million grant from the national Bezos Day One Families Fund in 2023. That grant, according to Stewpot's Executive Director, Rev. Jill Buckley, will help build stabilizing support for families who are experiencing homelessness.

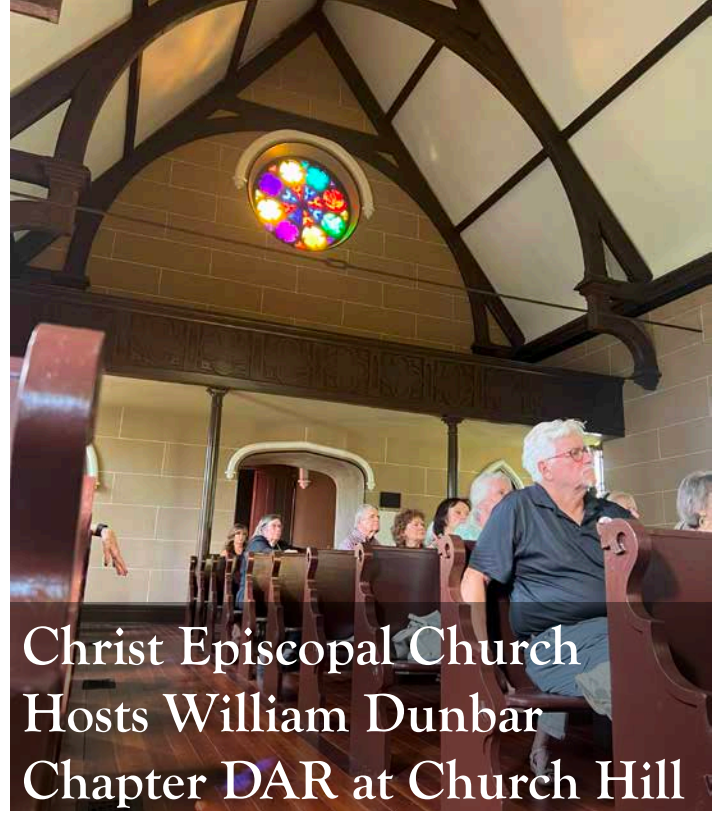
Stewpot's many ministries today include emergency shelters for men, women and children, housing assistance,

a clothes closet, healthcare clinic, legal clinic, after-school care, and summer camp care for children. With Stewpot's many ministry offerings, there are a variety of opportunities to serve.

The Episcopal Church has a long history and close relationship with Stewpot: Among Stewpot's prior directors are three Episcopal clergy whose tenures with Stewpot span much of the ministry's history – the Rev. Luther Ott, the Rev. Carol Stewart Spencer, and the Rev. Deacon Frank Spencer. The Rev. Molly MacWade, the first woman priest in the Diocese of Mississippi, is a board member. In a 2016 article from the Clarion Ledger, the Rev. Deacon Frank Spencer acknowledged his initial fear in traveling from his Madison County home to serve at Stewpot, but his fear was almost immediately replaced with a sense of true calling to inner-city ministry; he served as Executive Director of Stewpot for 13 years. Episcopal worshipping communities in Jackson – including St. Andrew's Cathedral, St. Philip's Church and Chapel of the Cross – still faithfully serve the ministry. Members of the Diocesan office staff also share in serving at Stewpot. 



An amazing revitalization



Christ Episcopal Church Hosts William Dunbar Chapter DAR at Church Hill

Christ Episcopal Church, 1858, hosted a program for members and guests of the William Dunbar Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) on Monday, Oct. 7, 2024 at 3pm. The illustrated program “The Amazing Revitalization of Church Hill, Miss.,” by Carter Burns, Executive Director, Historic Natchez Foundation, Natchez, Miss. featured Christ Church, Wagner’s Store, Church Hill Variety store/restaurant, and other outlying historic properties. After the presentation the attendees were invited across the street to Church Hill Variety for refreshments of finger sandwiches, charcuterie, cheeses, seasonal fruits, cookies, lemonade and iced tea. Drink cozies were souvenirs of the program.

In attendance were members of Christ Church Vestry: The Hon. Marion Smith (Trinity Warden) and his wife the former Carolyn Vance, Mr. Eddie Thompson (Bishop’s Warden) and his wife Rose, John Norris (Junior Warden) & Tate Taylor (project manager for the restoration of Christ Church).

William Dunbar Chapter Regent Caroline Cole led the afternoon meeting. Ms. Betty Jo Harris represented Natchez Historic Foundation, and happens to also be a member of the William Dunbar Chapter, DAR. The parents of Mr. Burns were also in attendance, Mr. Peter Burns and his wife the former Diane Carter. Mrs. Burns and all three of her sisters (Mrs. Ben Yarbrough, Mrs.

Tom Schwager, and Mrs. Judy Flurry) are members of the chapter.

Also in the crowd were Mr. & Mrs. George Bates (Mr. Bates is the President of NHF’s Church Hill Commission), Ms. Christy Williams (Executive Director of the Pilgrimage Garden Club), Mrs. Judy Stahlman (charter member of the chapter), Mrs. Susan Cassagne (DAR district director) and her daughter Ms. Juliette Cassagne (Regent of the Natchez Chapter NSDAR and the Recording Secretary for Mississippi State DAR).

The church sits on a small hill on land donated by Col. James Gillam Wood, a member of a patriot family and the ancestor of William Dunbar Chapter NSDAR member Cammie Wood Dale.

Wagner’s Store dates to 1870. It is being restored by the Historic Natchez Foundation to become a welcome center and meeting place for the Church Hill community.

The Christ Episcopal Church congregation is the oldest in the state of Mississippi, founded in 1820. Today’s church building, constructed of brick in 1858, is the third church structure. The church inspired the name of the Jefferson County unincorporated community called Church Hill, Miss. The entire nave of Christ Church needed repair and restoration during a months-long project headed by filmmaker Tate Taylor (“The Help”). Taylor is a member of the church. Tate Taylor was project manager of the Christ Church restoration in 2023-2024. 



Please submit Faithful Departed notices to your church for submission

The Official Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi

118 N. Congress Street | P.O. Box 23107
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3107

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dorothy Sanders Wells, XI
Bishop of Mississippi, Publisher

Wil Oakes, Oakes Creative Agency, Editor & Art Director

The Rev. Scott Lenoir & Liz Evans, copyeditors

The Mississippi Episcopalian (USPS 024755) is published monthly by the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, 118 N. Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Periodical postage paid at Jackson, MS, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to the Mississippi Episcopalian, P. O. Box 23107, Jackson, MS, 39225-3107. In giving changes of address, send the old address as well as the new address. We cannot be responsible for the return of manuscripts or photographs.

Oscar Weir Conner III, 95, communicant of St. James', Jackson, died on July 24, 2024.

Dewey Frank Myers, 85, communicant of St. James', Jackson, died on August 4, 2024.

Ed Jones Bledsoe, 90, communicant of Nativity, Greenwood, died September 17, 2024.

Mary Lynne Taleff, 82, communicant of St. James', Jackson, died on September 21, 2024.

Jack Montgomery Barnes, 71, communicant of St. James', Greenville, died September 26, 2024.

James Edward (Buddy) Vance, 70, communicant of All Saints', Tupelo, died October 20, 2024.

Deployment Report Churches/Chaplaincies in Transition

Redeemer, Brookhaven

Calvary, Cleveland

Good Shepherd, Columbus

Christ Church, Holly Springs

St. James', Jackson

St. Matthew's, Kosciusko

Mediator, Meridian

Trinity, Natchez

St. Peter's, Oxford

Canterbury: Mississippi State University /

Resurrection, Starkville

Incarnation, West Point

DAVENPORT WATTS & DRAKE INVESTMENT ADVISORS, LLC

A REGISTERED INVESTMENT
ADVISORY FIRM OFFERING

Financial Planning, Asset Management,
and Retirement Plan Services

Sonny Davenport

234 West School Street | Ridgeland, MS

www.DavenportWattsDrake.com

Office 601.898.8069 | Cell 601.672.9202

228.435.4255 asklandmark.com



Wheeler & Associates, Inc.

Residential, Commercial & Property
Management REALTORS

Jim Wheeler, Broker/CEO

Daughters of the King Installation

Below: A most joyous reception for newly installed daughters for the freshly installed DOK Sophia Chapter of St. Thomas, Diamondhead. State Vice President, Barbara Hammer (Ascension, Hattiesburg) graced the group with her presence as well.

Right: The Sophia Chapter of the Daughters of the King sharing feminine products with Hancock County Middle School's nurse. The chapter is supporting a statewide project addressing 'Period Poverty.'



Celebration of New Ministry at St. Pierre's, Gautier

The Rev. Christine Schaefer was installed as the rector of St. Pierre's, Gautier, on Thursday, October 17. Mother Chris stands to the right of Bishop Dorothy Sanders Wells (center) surrounded by priests and deacons in the Coast Convocation and beyond. The Celebration of a New Ministry was followed by a reception in Bridges Hall.



Diocesan Calendar

Diocesan Meetings continue by Zoom unless otherwise noted. Though the Diocesan Staff works in a hybrid model (office and home), the Allin House is staffed daily, M-Th, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Fridays (through Labor Day) 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

November

- 27-29** Allin House staff holiday in observance of Thanksgiving
- 28** Thanksgiving Day

December

- 3** Small Churches Collaborative, online
- 4** Racial Reconciliation Task Force Meeting; 12:00 noon
- 4** Standing Committee, Allin House
- 4-6** Province IV Bishops and Spouses Conference, Camp McDowell
- 8** Bishop visits Trinity, Hattiesburg
- 9** Deadline for Submission of Budget Requests/Reports to Annual Council VPG % Due
- 12** Finance Committee: 1:00 -4:00 pm
- 14** Come to the Light, an Advent Retreat with the Rev. Dr. Mark Bozzuti-Jones, Priest and Director of Spiritual Formation, Trinity Retreat Center, St. Christopher's, Jackson and COFO Center
- 15** Bishop visits St. John's, Laurel
- 15** Deadline for Submission of Resolutions/Deadline for Pre-filed Nominations

- 17** Executive Committee, St. Andrew's Cathedral, 1:00 - 4:00 pm
- 20** *MS Episcopalian* Deadline
- 20-21** A.C. Marble School, online
- 21** Ordination of Gabrielle (Gabbie) Annelise Munn to Diaconate, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
- 22** Bishop visits Grace, Canton
- 24** Bishop visits St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
- 24-26** Allin House closed for Christmas
- 27 - 1** Winter Solstice (12/27-1/1), Camp Bratton-Green at Gray Center

January

- 1** Allin House closed for New Year's Day
- 5** Bishop visits Holy Trinity, Crystal Springs
- 5** Bishop visits Good Shepherd, Terry
- 10-11** A.C. Marble School, Solomon Center
- 12** Bishop visits St. Paul's, Hollandale
- 19** Bishop visits St. John's, Aberdeen
- 19** Bishop visits St. Bernard's, Okolona
- 20** Allin House closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 29** Bishop visits Mississippi State, Starkville
- 31 - 2** 198th Annual Convention, Mississippi Gulf Coast

we want stories . . .

about your church, your ministry, your school... or whatever is on your Episcopal mind! Send us fully realized stories, photos, or just ideas at msepiscopalian@dioms.org.

Submission deadlines for the next six months (always available at msepiscopalian.com/submissions):

January 2025 issue

January 7th, 2025

February 2025 issue

January 15th, 2025

March 2025 issue

February 15th, 2025

April 2025 issue

March 15th, 2025

May 2025 issue

April 22nd, 2025

June 2025 issue

May 15th, 2025



The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi
118 N. Congress Street
P.O. Box 23107
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3107

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

JACKSON, MS
PERMIT NO. 224

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Volunteers at The Biscuit Brigade at St. Peter's-by-the-Sea in Gulfport prepare biscuits and other breakfast items for their Saturday morning feeding ministry. On a typical weekend, the Brigade serves 50-60 hot meals to community members in need. All over the diocese, churches are finding ways to provide food to the hungry—read about a few great examples in this issue on page 7.