A Lenten Message

submitted by Bishop Rayford Ray

In the Episcopal tradition we celebrate Lent for 40 days. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday which is February 26th. It is a time in which we pause and take a look at our lives. For me it is a time to reflect Jesus’ life, my ministry as a Bishop in the Church, and what we are called to be and do here in this time and place. Jesus challenged society and the governmental structures of his time and called for a new way of being. A man who pushed the envelope and welcomed the stranger into the kingdom of God. Jesus called humanity to love even those who were unlovable. He reminded humanity that we are part of God and because of this we have a responsibility to live out our lives loving God, loving our neighbor as ourselves, and respecting the dignity of every human.

This man Jesus called humanity to do God in this world. He called humanity to go out into the world and be a witness to the Resurrection. Jesus called his disciples to leave their fear behind and proclaim what they saw and what they saw was life in their midst. Jesus revealed the passion of God’s love for humanity. A love that ultimately changed and transformed this world. I also believe that this transformative love continues to this very day calling each of us to do God and to reveal that “The Kingdom of God” has come near. For what we do reveals that “Christ is all and in all.” For what we do reveals the passion of God’s love for humanity. For what we do reveals the Resurrection of Jesus. Jesus calls each of us to be the essence of the love of God in this world. We are called to do as Jesus did...we are to share the love of God in Jesus Christ. We are to bring the Gospel out into the streets and into our neighborhoods and towns. We are to reveal that the Kingdom of God has come and...con't page 2
proclaim loudly the love of God in Jesus in who we are and in what we do as ministers of the Gospel. Each of us is called to this responsibility to share the love of Jesus and make a difference in this world.

As a Christian I am reminded that I follow the one called Jesus. It is Jesus who calls me to say “No” to oppression and violence. It is Jesus who calls me to speak out for those who do not have a voice in society. We are called to love God with all our heart, mind and soul. We are called to love one another as Christ loved us as revealed in scripture. This is my Christian calling. This is my ministry. This is our ministry as part of the Christian tradition. This is our mission as the body of Christ here in this place and time. As a Christian I believe I am called to proclaim the Good News—even when the world tempts us to do otherwise. Let us keep proclaiming this Jesus whose life changed this world as he walked this earth, challenged humanity, was crucified, died and Resurrected to a life that still has meaning for us to this very day. As we live out our lives let us always look at who we are called to be and what we called to do as we live out our lives here on this earth. Be not afraid of being the “Gospel people” we are called to be for we are the living Spirit of the one we call Jesus who walked this earth.

Benefits of an Ecumenical
Food Pantry/Community Meal
in the Keweenaw

submitted by Rev. Nancy Auer
President CLK - Council of Churches

Sometimes being small can make one realize they have to expand their thinking if they wish to accomplish a task. In the Keweenaw Peninsula three ELCA Lutheran churches in our area merged in 1963. Then, drawn by the request of a family of mixed faith traditions, this group hosted a Community Thanksgiving Worship beginning in 1966 with the Lutheran and Catholic commun- unities which continues today.

In 1970 the Calumet-Laurium-Keweenaw Council of Churches was born, created by lay persons and clergy from 7 different faith groups in the area. Community opportunities grew and in 1973 the first Ecumenical International World Day of Prayer was held at Faith Lutheran church (Pastor Bob Langseth). After that first prayer service on a Wednesday, a weekly prayer opportunity continues on Wednesdays from 9 to 9:30 am, with a regular schedule moving weekly from Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Episcopal churches.

In 1986 The CLK-Council of Churches met with High School officials after a deadly auto accident following the 1985 graduation. The council took responsibility to host an all-night, alcohol-free graduation party and this continues to this day. With the Calumet HS team we also plan and host a voluntary Baccalaureate Service each spring for the students and families who wish to attend; often 60% of the graduating class.

There were many more accomplishments from the early beginning of this group and I was blessed to join them in 2016. I have been president of the organization the last 2.5 years during a another major event. The local Food Pantry was operating for many years out of the Catholic rectory basement and much financial support came through their churches. However in 2016 there was a desire for them to find another group to manage and handle the funds. The board of Directors of the CLK- Council of Churches decided to become a 501 c 3 and took on the financial responsibility of the Food Pantry, Community Meal (held once each month), and Graduation Service and Party and moved the Food Pantry to a ground floor location.

...con't page 3
Benefits, con’t
The first couple of years have been bumpy but with several churches involved we have been able to keep our heads above water and this year have a bit of breathing room. In 2019 we served 328 family units with monthly bags of food and money donated by all faiths and organizations as well as through Postal and State Police Food Drives. It has the touch of the Holy Spirit, as can be seen in the people who volunteer and pull together to plow snow, repair toilets, recycle waste cardboard and help our neighbors.

At the Fall 2019 Amen Conference Bishop Michael Curry was speaking with a group of us and said, something to the effect of ‘oh yeah, Food Pantries, the Episcopal Church is good at that, we get lots of requests for help with those (not a true quote). Way up at the top of the Keweenaw the faith communities, understanding our remoteness, have been united together for many years and continue to join forces to provide safe food, meals and places for those in our community who might have less. Yes we are remote, but blessed? Absolutely!!!

The Three Pillars of the Christian Church
 submitted by Jacklyn Lenten

Recently, I’ve become very involved within the Episcopal Diocese of No. MI and I don’t know how this happened, but I’m glad it did. I’ve always been an active member of St. John’s, Negaunee and I knew all about the inner workings of my own congregation but absolutely nothing about what went on within in the Diocese. So, I would like to share with you some of the things I’ve learned since getting more involved and how it’s made me optimistic about the future.

The Episcopal Church has outlined what they believe are the three fundamental aspects of our faith - evangelism, racial reconciliation, and creation care. This isn't to say that these ideas weren't already a part of our faith, we are just highlighting the fact that these concepts need to be at the forefront of our actions and that we're doing the most we can as Christian people to be a light in the world.

Evangelism is probably the most obvious of these three pillars, our Christian duty has always been to go forth and spread the word of Christ. A little less obvious, but equally as important, are racial reconciliation and creation care.

This country was founded on bloodshed and the outrageous mistreatment of Indigenous people. However, it's taken an incredibly long time for white Americans to understand how much suffering Indigenous people experienced back then and continue experiencing to this day. If our moral obligations are to love thy neighbors as ourselves and be a positive light in the world, we must start healing this societal wound. This is not something that will happen overnight, but it is something we have to start working on right now and that is why racial reconciliation is one of the three pillars of the Episcopal Church. Creation Care refers to the conservation and preservation of the environment and if you need an explanation as to why Christian people need to be active conservationists, I recommend you look into my last article (I'll conserve paper by not repeating myself) Editor note: the article can be found in the February Cross Roads. But basically, we need to understand that our love for thy neighbor extends further than only human relationships and that the responsibility of taking care of this planet was a gift to us from God.

Now that we’ve established the pillars of The Episcopal Church and the parts of the world that need the most attention, we have to take action. This is where things get exciting within the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan specifically. Forming community partnerships with like-minded organizations has been the most efficient way for us to have a meaningful impact. We are still in the early processes of this, but one thing we are very excited about is our participation...con’t page 4
in planning the Earth Day Climate March here in Marquette. We are representing the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan, as well as Michigan Interfaith Power and Light and UP Wildchurch. The Marquette Earth Day March is based on Indigenous Action and will be led by local tribe leaders. Our participation emphasizes our desire to be advocates for Creation Care and Racial Reconciliation. By being active participants on matters within the community, we will hopefully get people interested in finding out more about what it is to be an Episcopal, interested in attending our services, i.e. evangelism. It's amazing how all three pillars come together to better our individual churches, our entire diocese and our society as a whole. Our faith needs to be expressed more often and in more places than just our Sunday morning services and The Episcopal Church is very unique in their efforts to spread Christianity. If you didn't realize this already, very special things are happening within the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan.

Environmentally Friendly Lenten Season Sacrifices

submitted by Jacklyn Lenten

Although we are several days into the Lenten season, it's not too late to share some environmentally friendly sacrifices for those who haven't committed to a sacrifice or would like a challenge.

If you would like to reduce your fuel emissions: sacrifice your car keys by carpooling with a coworker or spouse on a day your schedules don't conflict, bundle up and walk to your destination, make sure you're running errands as efficiently as possible so you don't have to go out several times a week, stay in instead of going out one night, shop locally to reduce fuel emissions associated with shipping costs.

If you would like to reduce your waste: sacrifice single use plastics by shopping with reusable bags, dining in rather than getting food or drinks in to-go containers, refuse plastic straws, use Tupperware containers or purchase reusable silicone storage bags instead of using Ziploc bags.

If you would like to contribute to forest ecosystem conservation: sacrifice some of your pulp product dependency by replacing paper napkins and paper towel with rags and handkerchiefs, purchase furniture secondhand from thrift stores stores or online resources like craigslist, consider using reclaimed building materials for any home-improvement projects, avoid products with palm oil to help combat deforestation, you can lower you meat consumption to help fight deforestation as well.

If you would like to reduce your household emissions: sacrifice some of your electronics by doing a family game night instead of watching television, unplug electronics when they are not in use (especially remote-control electronics because they are never truly "off"), turn the thermostat down by a degree or two.

These are just a few suggestions to get the ball rolling on your efforts to become more environmentally friendly. There are countless other sacrifices you can make and there is no act too big or too small.

CROSS ROADS
Episcopal Relief & Development
Resources for Lent
submitted by Arlene Gordanier

As we begin our journey this Lent, there are many resources to guide the 40 days. Perhaps you might consider these days as time to rest in the Holy Spirit, to listen and feel in your soul the voice of the Holy Spirit. Jesus went to the desert - to rest and gather sustenance. This is a time to seek the face of Jesus in one another - in the stranger, the neighbor, and our siblings on the other side of the world. To spend time in prayer and meditation using many of the resources The Episcopal Church offers.

Every year at the season of Lent, Episcopal Relief and Development creates meditations to enter into our time of reflection. In 2020, Chad Brinkman, Campaign Director for this ER & D meditations series, invites us to focus on the spiritual lives of children. To become aware that children inspire the spiritual lives of adults. These meditations celebrate the campaign ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE. These ONE THOUSAND DAYS OF LOVE are a grassroots, church-wide campaign focused and dedicated to expanding programs which touch, in significant ways, the lives of children up to age six. This age is particularly critical for learning and thriving as children grow. The goal is to reach many children with improved nutrition and health care and well-being. You can learn more at www.episcopalrelief.org/1000DaysOfLove.

As you pray and reflect during these next 40 days and beyond, pray for the children in your family, in your community, children everywhere. We encourage you to write prayers for children to use in worship, or personally share them on Facebook and social media. Give them to Nancy Olexick or Arlene Gordanier and we can put them together - share them at Diocesan gatherings.

My personal experience of prayer for my students took 15 years for me to see. When I commuted to Munising each day, I prayed for my eighth graders by name. (Don't panic, I took the bus.) I started this a few years before I retired because I was finding teaching a difficult calling and I simply didn't know what else to do. Last spring I posted a walking prayer article on Facebook and mentioned my praying discipline, forgetting I am friends with former students. One of those young women said, "I felt those prayers, and didn't even know." Prayer changes lives, impacts situations, and makes life a beautiful experience. Jesus has called children the greatest among us. Jesus invites us to be a part of the plan and actions to help them grow, learn and thrive.

Children's smiles always make me smile - Hannah Grace, a three year old, has the gift of hospitality in her smile, and when I see her Mom has posted pictures, I am delighted and blessed. Pictures of the kids in our diocesan communities thrill me - I love to talk with them.

There are awesome stories on episcopalrelief.org as well as at coffee hour where I workshop and where you all live and move and have being. Share those stories. Prayer is a precious gift to offer and if you are called and able to give financial support that is wonderful. I have a jar on my counter and because coins in my purse hurt my shoulder, I put them in my jar - they will add up.

Every congregation is invite to have an ER&D Sunday, traditionally it is the first Sunday in Lent - this year March 1st, but it can be any Sunday.

If you want to use the Lenten Meditations 2020 electronically, you can sign-up at: www.episcopalrelief.org click on the blue box CHURCH IN ACTION, scroll down to Lent and you will open to the page where you can sign-up for meditation emails, you can also find Podcasts you can listen to. You can use your Spotify or Apple Podcast app on your Smartphone or tablet (You can also subscribe to the Way of Love with the Presiding Bishop and others on Spotify or Apple Podcast.)
Breaking Bread

The next Breaking Bread will take place on Tuesday, March 3rd at Jack’s Restaurant in Rapid River. We begin at 6 pm followed by a conversation at 7 pm. If you plan to attend, just email diocese@upepiscopal.org or leave a message at 228-7160 with Jane so that we can have enough meals prepared for the evening.

Becoming Beloved Community

The Diocese has been working on the Becoming Beloved Community initiative as part of the Justice and Peace Committee. To help us with this work, we were recently the recipients of two Becoming Beloved Community grants, one for the Diocese and one for the Dismantling Racism efforts occurring throughout Province V which encompasses the states of fifteen dioceses across the six Midwestern states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

The grant awarded to the Diocese, in partnership with the Great Lakes Peace Center, will focus on:
- Providing additional Co-Human Harmony workshops to interested groups/congregations
- Developing Peace Camp curricula and too kits
- Adding a Native American Resident Elder position to the Diocesan Leadership Team.

The Province V grant will focus on:
- Coordinator position for Province V church leaders and representatives doing this work
- Anti-Racism training for church leaders such as Visions/Kaleidoscope training
- Creation of tool kits for church leadership

A Becoming Beloved Community Summit for all grant recipients will be held in Minneapolis on May 5-7, 2020 with representation from the Diocese and the Peace Center in attendance.

Other Becoming Beloved Community efforts in the Diocese include:

**A Sacred Ground Curriculum** - Arlene Gordanier is continuing to work on putting materials together so they can be used as stand alone sessions; Rick Stanitis plans to use these sessions at Canterbury House this semester. Find out more about the Sacred Ground Series here: Sacred Ground

**Doctrine of Discovery sessions** - will continue to facilitate these discussions throughout the Diocese and believe that these sessions would be most effective and meaningful with groups/congregations who have already participated in a Co-Human Harmony workshop.

**Traveling Exhibit from United Thank Offering Grant**

- We received a one year extension to continue working on this exhibit which will include truth telling about native history as well as church history.
- Peace Center staff are working with NMU staff - Dan Truckey from the Heritage Center and Leora Lancaster with the Native American Language and Culture Club - to assist with the Native history component.
- Several healing stories have been recorded for the exhibit with more stories to be recorded in the Spring.

**Bay College Diversity Committee**

- Peace Center staff are members of the Bay College Diversity Committee and have been working to set up screenings for the movie, "Dawnland", which documents the process the state of Maine undertook in forming a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address the child welfare practices for Native children in their state. The Dawnland screening for the West campus will take place on Wednesday, April 15th and at the Escanaba campus on Thursday, April 23rd. Each screening will be followed by a panel discussion with local Native American elders.
Observing Lent

This year there seems to be more thought going into how a person chooses to observe the 40 days of Lent. In the past, "chocolate, or sweets" would be the answer to the question, "What are you giving up for Lent?"

One Lenten practice to consider is from Jerusalem Greer, who some may remember from our Island Retreat and the Revival: UP North. She offers simple suggestions to help us slow down and connect with life. She has written several books and The Multitasking Fast (left) can be found in her book "At Home in This Life". You can find her books and more on her website: jerusalemgreer.com.

"Lent Madness" is another way to move through this season. It began in 2010 as the brainchild of the Rev. Tim Schenck. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women comprising the Church’s Calendar of Saints, Tim came up with this unique Lenten devotion. Combining his love of sports with his passion for the lives of the saints, Lent Madness was born on his blog “Clergy Family Confidential” which has subsequently moved locations and become “Clergy Confidential.” The format is straightforward: 32 saints are placed into a tournament-like single elimination bracket. Each pairing remains open for a set period of time and people vote for their favorite saint. 16 saints make it to the Round of the Saintly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo. You can find out more here.

Women's World Day of Prayer

The women of the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Negaunee are hosting this year’s Women’s World Day of Prayer and are inviting women from all denominations across the UP to participate. The service takes place on Friday, March 6th at 1:00 pm at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Negaunee.

Contact Jonelle Collins at 475-9177 with questions. Immanuel Lutheran Church is on the corner of US 41 and Baldwin Ave. in Negaunee.
Make Me An Instrument of Your Peace: A Guide to Civil Discourse

Online course debuts ahead of 2020 engagement

The Episcopal Church’s Office of Government Relations and Department of Faith Formation, in partnership with ChurchNext, a ministry of Forward Movement, has released “Make Me an Instrument of Peace: A Guide to Civil Discourse.” This five-part online curriculum covers the following topics: civil discourse in context, tenets for civil discourse, values-based conversations, the complexities of policy, and sacred space for debate.

Peacebuilding involves learning from and working with others, while also sharing different perspectives with humility and vulnerability. Bishop Curry says, “Love your Democratic neighbor, love your Republican neighbor, love your independent neighbor.” Civil discourse helps us to understand how we can engage with people who have different views from our own and lays out the value for doing so. This guide to civil discourse curriculum aims to enhance our ability to learn from and understand one another, and to apply that practice to public policy conversations.

“This effort to equip Episcopalians for engaging in tough conversations comes out of a desire to unlock the potential in the diversity of ideas and perspectives we have within The Episcopal Church; a potential we believe is an asset to our country as we seek solutions to the greatest challenges of our time,” states Alan Yarborough, church relations officer, Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations, “Yet it’s not a new effort—it is inspired by previous Episcopal civil discourse initiatives and by the strong tradition of civic engagement going back to the founding of the U.S. and the Church itself.”

Read more and register by clicking on This Link.

Presiding Bishop's Invitation: Theology of Gratitude Conference

The United Thank Offering (UTO) and Bexley Seabury Seminary are collaborating to host a Convocation and Scholars Conference on the Theology of Gratitude with Diana Butler Bass, April 23-24, 2020, in Chicago, Illinois. “The Theology of Gratitude is based on the premise that the attitude of gratitude is a game-changer in life,” says Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, “That’s true if you listen to any of the parables of Jesus, it’s true if you read the New Testament. That gratitude as a way of living and as a way of being and as a spiritual practice that guides and directs our lives makes a difference in how we live our lives.”

Gratitude has become a phenomenon in popular culture and is written about in books ranging from self-help to the Harvard Business Review. Scholarly engagement has developed primarily in the psychological community, which has demonstrated the correlation between gratitude and improvement in personal health and the development of strong, healthy relationships. There is far less scholarship arising within the theological community. The Convocation and Scholars Conference will feature speaker Diana Butler Bass, Ph.D., Duke University, who will identify two ways in which gratitude is defined: as an exchange and as abundant grace given by God which all are called to share. Butler Bass will serve as keynote speaker and will unpack ways that gratitude is a radical practice that is needed now. Butler Bass is an award-winning author and internationally known public speaker and thought leader on issues of spirituality, religion, culture, and politics. Seminary Bookstore will have editions of her books available and she will sign them both days of the conference.

Read more, watch the Presiding Bishop’s video and register at this link.
March Calendar

3rd - Breaking Bread, 6:00 pm, Jack's Restaurant, Rapid River
6th - Women's World Day of Prayer, all denominations, 1:00 pm,
    Immanuel Lutheran Church, Negaunee
13th - Gift of Water Conference, 1:00 - 2:30 pm, Jamrich Hall, NMU
    Gift of Water Lake Superior, 7:00 pm, Messiah Lutheran Church

Cross Roads
A monthly newsletter published by the
Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan
131 E Ridge St
Marquette MI  49855
906.228.7160
www.upeepiscopal.org

Send announcements and events to be published to kathy@upeepiscopal

Follow us on Facebook