

Episcopal Diocese
of Northern Michigan



127th Diocesan Convention
Annual Reports

**Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan
2023 Annual Convention
Annual Reports**

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Becoming Beloved Community

Becoming Beloved Community as defined by The Episcopal Church: "As the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we dream and work to foster Beloved Communities where all people may experience dignity and abundant life and see themselves and others as beloved children of God. The Becoming Beloved Community Vision Document and accompanying resources help us to understand and take up the long-term commitments necessary to form loving, liberating and life-giving relationships with each other. Together, we are growing as reconcilers, justice-makers, and healers in the name of Christ".

The Becoming Beloved Community (BBC) Team of the Diocese of Northern Michigan was born in April of 2019 when members of the Diocese's Justice and Peace Committee attended a BBC gathering in the Diocese of Ohio. This gathering inspired many of the attendants to journey together in the important work of dismantling systemic racism in our church and communities. We learned at this Province V event that efforts are going on all around the church and the Province and we were eager to share the work in our Diocese and hear from other people. Members of the BBC team include Sarah Diener-Schlitt, Arlene Gordanier, Deb Nedeau, Rick Stanitis, Leora Tadgerson, Kathy Vanden Boogaard, and Pamela Vincent-Jenkins.

As part of the larger Dismantling Racism efforts throughout Province V, BBC team members stay connected via quarterly Zoom meetings.

In 2019, the Diocese of Northern Michigan, in partnership with the Great Lakes Peace Center, was the recipient of an Impact grant to continue expanding our Becoming Beloved Community efforts. Plans for a Family Summer Peace Camp weekend this summer needed to be postponed, and plans are now underway to offer a week-long Summer Peace Camp at Fortune Lake in Crystal Falls in August 2024.

The funds received from this Becoming Beloved Community Impact grant have also allowed us to continue our commitment to the work of the United Thank Offering grant project entitled: "Walking Together: Finding Common Ground Through Racial Reconciliation" that began in 2018 and included telling the truth about the Doctrine of Christian Discovery, the history of genocide/erasure, and completing a traveling exhibit that tells the truth about our history, the church's involvement in the harm done to Indigenous peoples and a formal apology by Bishop Rayford Ray.

- After collaborating with Native American students and faculty at Northern Michigan University, working through and with the Beaumier U.P. Heritage Center, an exhibit entitled, "The Seventh Fire: A Decolonizing Experience" was on display at the Beaumier Center from Oct. 9, 2021-April 9, 2022. It is now in the process of being converted into a traveling exhibit to be used for truth telling and educational purposes throughout the

UP and will be completed by early 2024.

- Leora Tadgerson, the new Director of Diversity Equity and Inclusion for the Diocese, has been instrumental in the development of the Traveling Exhibit and continues to work on raising additional funds for ongoing development and coordination of this project.

In 2022, the Diocese, in partnership with the Great Lakes Peace Center, applied for and received a UTO Grant for Creation Care. These funds will allow us to continue strengthening relationships with our Indigenous neighbors by exploring our common interests in caring for the earth as well as honoring our commitment to the work of Indigenous-led initiatives. Leora Tadgerson will also be the main contact for this project, entitled: *“Walking Together: Protecting Our Common Ground”*. She has been working with the 5 Tribes throughout the UP to identify the most pressing needs for each community that can be supported with these grant funds. This is still a work in progress but some examples of how these grant funds are being utilized include a seasonal director for the community garden in Keweenaw Bay Indian Community along with having church members help with the harvesting season this Fall; providing fish for the aquaponics facility in Hannahville Indian Community; restoring trails around the wild rice fields in Bay Mills Indian Community; food sovereignty programming for Lac Vieux Desert Indian Community including the introduction of

culinary mushrooms; and bringing more resources to the Sault Ste Marie Tribe in the Marquette area. Through this project we are intending to move into relationships where we can stand with our Indigenous siblings as opposed to just supporting them.

We will also continue to stand with and support the efforts of the Indigenous Nations in the Upper Peninsula to protect the earth by showing up for events like Water Protector gatherings and making our voices heard with our state and local legislators because we now understand that settler colonialism is environmental injustice and recognize that Indigenous issues are always about the land and need to be included in our efforts towards social justice.

The BBC team worked with Steve Peltó, Missioner for Communication, to develop a tab for Becoming Beloved Community on the Diocesan webpage and other social media sharing. This is a work in progress, but the tab is accessible on the Diocesan webpage and includes an overview of what Becoming Beloved Community is all about, learning opportunities and available workshops, and a variety of resources focused on dismantling racism.

*Submitted by Kathy Vanden Boogaard
Becoming Beloved Community*

Bishops' Collaborative

The Mutual Ministry Initiative's Bishop's Collaborative is a space for bishops in The Episcopal Church (and wider Anglican Communion) to engage and connect around an ecclesiology of

baptismal, collaborative ministry amid a changing church. We meet monthly as well as meeting yearly for an in-person retreat. Our most recent gathering in 2023 took place at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia.

Bishops currently participating are from: Alaska; Central Gulf Coast, Eastern and Western Michigan, Edmonton (Canada), Hawai'i, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Navajoland, Newcastle (Australia), North Dakota, Northern Indiana, Northern Michigan, Rupert's Land (Canada), and Southern Virginia.

*Submitted by Rayford Ray
Bishop*

Campus Ministry at Northern Michigan University

The Wesley Campus Ministry which is housed in the Marquette Hope building on Fair Ave. in Marquette, directly across from the NMU campus, has spent the last few years building partnerships with other Campus Ministries in Marquette: the Presbyterian Campus Ministry, the Lutheran Campus Ministry, and the Episcopal Campus Ministry. Operating out of the Common Grounds Coffee house and kitchen in the Marquette Hope building, this combined campus ministry provides free coffee and snacks in a study/hang-out space during the week, Sunday night dinners, and weekly "snack and art" or "snack and conversation", Theology on Tap, pop-up nature excursions, and one-on-one meetings with students round out the offerings. In addition, this combined campus ministry took a Spring Break trip to help do hurricane clean-up on Sanibel Island as well as a pilgrimage to the Iona Abbey on the Island of Iona in Scotland.

Beginning a few weeks ago, with the start of the 2023-2024 school year, we have taken on the name "Sacred Space" for this combined ministry. Thursday night worship has been added to our schedule as well and one of our student leaders, who works with the Diversity Office has begun a LGBT2s+ People of Faith Coffee Hour twice a month.

This fall we will be writing grants for funding since feeding people means buying groceries, as well as looking for ways to serve the larger NMU community of faculty and staff in addition to students. We would like to find ongoing sponsors for our activities with programs like "adopt a Sunday dinner". It is an exciting time to nurture what is emerging in the Sacred Space.

*Submitted by Marna Franson
Missioner*

Canterbury House

The ministry of Canterbury House has started this fall semester with a full schedule and regular posted hours. We have a comfortable place to gather, and students are glad to be together. Coffee, tea, conversation, and meals seem to be highlights for folks visiting the house. Our weekly meal is very popular and often features international selections. We continue to be committed to supporting students, faculty, staff and their families at Michigan Tech.

The English as a Second Language (ESL) tutoring program allows international students one-on-one appointments with native speakers to work specifically on ESL topics of interest. This allows domestic students a meaningful volunteer opportunity as they also learn about other cultures and languages. Both the domestic and

international students benefit, and new friendships are formed.

The groceries to go food pantry program along with in person pantry pick up continue to be popular. Students can either fill out a form on line and have items ready to be picked up, or come in and help themselves to our pantry. Our selection is limited due to space and we also offer suggestions on other area resources as we assist students in caring for themselves.

Board meetings are held monthly during the academic year in person and via zoom and provide thoughtful leadership for this important ministry at Michigan Tech. Individuals who would like more information on the board, or the ministry should contact Rick Stanitis at the contact information below. The members of the board are, Bishop Rayford Ray, Brad Baltensperger, Kishan Bellur, Nupur Bihari, Sarah Diener-Schlitt, Roberto Escobar, Debbie Francis, Pat Joyce, Darnishia Morris, Ian Norwood, Valeri Peyser, Ellen Seidel, Dianne and Nancy Sprague and Matt Walters (president).

We would love to hear from you if you have a favorite memory of our Canterbury House or of another campus ministry. We would also like to keep in touch with you by placing you in our database and keeping you updated on our activities here at Michigan Tech in Houghton. Please feel free to send your information to chouse@mtu.edu or 1405 E. Houghton Ave. Houghton, MI 49931.

*Submitted by Rick Stanitis
Campus Missioner, Canterbury House,
Michigan Technological University*

Commission on Ministry

The Commission on Ministry began a new year in November of 2022 following Diocesan Convention held in October 2022. New members were welcomed and those rotating off the committee were thanked for their years of service.

Lydia Bucklin and David Carlise presented an update on Theological Formation for All. The diocese will move forward with the following model: Competency-based model, 8 subject areas that also cover canonical areas of the Episcopal church. Flexible, cohort experience, Zoom format, no cost, designed for ongoing learning and MST formation. This is a project that was carried over from the previous year.

Also, under the leadership of Lydia Bucklin, COM learned about FORMA. There were members of the diocese attending in person as well as some who attended by zoom.

Sue Ray, along with Brad Pickens and Gin Mannisto, led a discernment process with St. Paul's in Marquette, this process was completed, and a new covenant group was called.

Sue Jamison along with Marna Franson led St. Stephen's in Escanaba through a discernment and their process was completed with a new covenant group called.

The COM will follow up with how the current process of discernment went and if it needs to be changed or added to in anyway. Sue Ray and Sue Jamison will be an important part of this discussion.

Bishop Ray put forward Wyndeth Davis for postulancy; the COM heard her

discernment journey and accepted her call to postulancy. She is a member of Christ Church, Calumet.

The MST and Vestry of St. James ask that David Cook begin a journey of discernment to the diaconate and Rayford agreed with this discernment. After a period of time and conversation with the Bishop, as well as taking the required psychological exam, Rayford put forth David's name for postulancy. The COM heard from David and accepted his call to postulancy.

The Wylie fund offers grants to missionaries and others for ongoing learning. The application for a grant goes first to the COM and then with their recommendation it goes to the diocesan council for final approval. The COM worked on a plan to offer more transparency in the use of the Wylie fund. After much discussion the COM Approved: Cap of \$1,000/year per individual, \$2,500 per group. Can be used more than one time as long as it doesn't go over \$1,000. Leftover funds could go to MSTYC; Rayford will follow up on if this is workable. Will revisit after 1 year.

Arlene Gordanier is working on a process to help congregations and the diocesan office keep track of members in Covenant Groups who will be commissioned and ordained in going through all the necessary canonical steps. She presented a first draft to the COM and at the October meeting more conversation and approval will take place.

Each year we are supposed to give some designated money to seminaries or local formation groups. Rayford proposed

using the monies donated for our local formation and our local groups to bring in people from the outside instead of giving to a specific seminary. Gin spoke in support of using the money to allow people to take classes at seminaries as well. Motion to utilize the money in this way was made and seconded and after further discussion the motion passed.

This report summarizes the items taking place that are under the responsibility of COM. We are always kept informed of other things going on in the diocese and where we might offer help or participate.

*Submitted by Gin Mannisto
Missioner*

Diocesan Council

The Diocesan Council continued the practice established during the pandemic of meeting via Zoom. Here are some highlights since the last Annual Convention:

- November – David Carlisle was appointed to fill the unexpired term of John Austin which ends in 2024. Future plans include a youth gathering in Marquette in January and a Peace Camp family retreat in the summer months.
- January – work will begin on renovating the second floor of the Diocesan offices. A loan was approved several years ago for renovations. The roof of the building was replaced but because of the pandemic, it took longer to find a contractor for the apartment work. The third floor will also be renovated. Work is scheduled to be completed in May.
- March – The Commission on Ministry is working to make the discernment

process more flexible. UP Wild is initiating a start up in the eastern UP.

- May – Visitors Weekend will bring in people from Navajoland and Virginia Theological Seminary. There may also be a Visitors Weekend in the fall coinciding with Annual Convention. A new position is being created in the diocese – Director of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. The person hired for the position is Leora Tadgerson. She is a member of the Sault Tribe and is already working in partnership with the diocese and the Great Lakes Peace Center. Money for three-year position will come from a separate draw from the Trust.
- June – The first draft of the 2023 Budget was reviewed. Diocesan apartment work should be completed soon, and the third floor is available for more working space.
- August – The annual audit is nearly complete. Annual convention planning is underway. It will be a one-day event at the First Presbyterian Church in Marquette. Visitors Weekend will be wrapped around the convention. UP Wild will hold a first gathering in the eastern UP in Cedarville and UP Wild Keweenaw will hold a first gathering in Calumet in October.

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Binoniemi, Recording Secretary

Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The position of Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) for The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan is a full time position, working in a hybrid manner both remotely and onsite at the diocesan offices. Travel is mandatory to

ensure responsible building of culturally inclusive rapport.

This position helps the diocesan staff to unpack and deepen understanding of the following concepts from an Indigenous lens while utilizing restorative justice practices:

- Systemic discriminatory inequalities (the unequal distribution of resources, power, and economic opportunity across underrepresented demographics in a society i.e. gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, physical ability, age, socio-economic status) supported historically by various religious organizations.
- Current systemic infrastructure of inequality within the church
- Native American experience of assimilation and genocide
- LGBTQ history and current supportive action initiatives
- Native American boarding school era
- Racial reconciliation and truth telling era movement
- Land back movement
- White allyship
- Culturally inclusive bridge building

There are various duties that serve multiple individual and overlapping demographics. These are grant funded projects, services to the diocese, service to community, outreach and engagement for racial reconciliation research (local, national, and international).

Grant work

Grant work includes the United Thank Offering (UTO) project, titled Walking Together: Protecting Our Common Ground. This \$28,500 grant is designed to focus on strengthening relationships of the church and Indigenous communities

through offering support specifically to the five Tribes of the upper peninsula on pressing earth care issues. Four out of five Tribes have delegated their project funding. These include the following initiatives:

- Trail restoration of wild rice habitats to accommodate all accessibility needs
- Purchasing fish for continuing aquaponics
- Supporting seasonal management of community gardens
- Culinary mushroom growing equipment and supplies to promote food sovereignty

The Walking Together: Finding Common Ground Traveling Exhibit is also a grant funded project that educates viewers on the Michigan based experience of the Native American boarding school era. The Director of DEI is responsible for locating survivors, extensive research, scheduling interviews, assisting with the culturally inclusive recording process, oversight of exhibit development, and program guide development.

Services to the Diocese

- Grant writing and reporting
- Report to Diocesan Council all DEI progress and needs
- Track diversity related resolutions of The Episcopal Church to support advocacy needs
- Create localized and statewide data to aid in justifying advocacy initiatives
- Plans, guides, and advises leadership teams on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives such as: ongoing development of Tribal relationships with the diocese; DEI internal audit; Heritage month activities; Social Justice education/awareness initiatives such as Truth and Reconciliation presentations, and Juneteenth services

- Research and report on latest happenings and trends for Indigenous advocacy initiatives

The DEI position also assists with or leads culturally inclusive hospice services; consults with local schools, universities, state representatives, cities, and community organizations; and engages with the twelve Tribal Councils of Michigan; The Episcopal Church Office of Governmental Relations, Missioner for Indigenous Ministries, and as a staff officer for racial reconciliation in the Office of Reconciliation, Justice, and Creation Care. Works with Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition; US Dept of Interior; US Dept of Justice – Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Task Force; US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; US Conference of Catholic Bishops; and the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Submitted by Bishop Rayford Ray

End Gun Violence Michigan

As we began this ministry, it was with knowledge and commitment that many have felt we had a moral obligation to reduce gun violence in our communities and our state. In our communities, across our dioceses, and in our state, gun violence remains a public health crisis, impacting rural, urban and everything in between. As Episcopalians, we helped form and support End Gun Violence Michigan, an organization that includes faith leaders, advocates, victims and survivors coming together to advance gun safety laws for our state and communities. We began as a ballot initiative, although after the 2022 election, changed to advocating for specific gun safety laws that have shown

to make a difference in reducing gun violence in other states: 1). Universal background checks for all firearms; 2). Safe storage for guns in homes with children; and 3). Extreme risk protection orders for those that pose harm to themselves or others. Many individuals and parishes became engaged in this work through calling their state representatives, attending, or hosting various events within their communities or at the state capitol attending hearings and votes for these laws. We met with lawmakers, sometimes several times within a week. Our voices and actions made a difference! These laws passed largely down party lines with the notable exception of safe storage. Unfortunately, there were not the votes for these laws to take immediate effect and will go into effect early spring 2024. Our ministry will be expanding to support implementation of these laws across our communities and states. Understanding these laws, especially in helping support safe storage and extreme risk protection orders will be an important part of our upcoming work. We are also working with legislators to pass gun safety reforms for domestic violence victims. Vicki Schroeder will continue to work with our Michigan Episcopal Bishops and other faith leaders across the state in response to addressing gun violence in Michigan.

There are a few ways for you to become involved:

- Visit migunsafety.org to sign up and volunteer.
- Vote your faith: meet with your state representatives, school boards, county commissioners and candidates to insure they support and will uphold these new gun safety laws.

• Engage with your parish, local Interfaith organizations, Moms Demand Action to get involved in this issue.

Contact Vicki Schroeder for further information and efforts.

vvschroed@gmail.com

Submitted by Vicki Shroeder

End Gun Violence Michigan Interfaith Action of SW Michigan

Feeding America West Michigan

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan, in concert with other faith leaders in the Upper Peninsula, set a goal of raising \$100,000 to support Feeding America West Michigan's Mobile Food Pantry Program from June - September 2023. Through September 15, a total of \$92,165 has been raised, achieving 92% of the fundraising goal! The result of this initiative has widespread impact. A total of 29 Mobiles will be funded, which is 21% of the 135 Mobiles scheduled in the UP each year. On average, each Mobile serves 321 households; that means this fundraiser will support a total of 9,309 households!!

A Mobile Food Pantry is like a farmers' market on wheels that provides supplemental groceries to anyone in need at no charge. Each Mobile has about 55% fresh produce, 15% dairy, and 10% protein, all products that are the most expensive items found in a grocery store.

There are 41,940 people who are food insecure in the UP, including 7,770 children. Funds raised will provide much-needed nutritious food to our neighbors experiencing hunger across communities in the Upper Peninsula.

Feeding America West Michigan is grateful and thankful to the faith

communities who supported this fundraiser and the food bank's hunger relief efforts!

Submitted by Pattijean McCahill for Feeding America West Michigan

Formation

Formation in our diocese presents a unique set of both challenges and opportunities, and the pandemic has only made this more true. In a series of conversations within COM as well as amongst missionaries and their congregations, it has become clear that there is an increasingly urgent need for a diocesan formation offering that will satisfy a number of requirements: 1) it needs to be accessible regardless of geographic location, as there are now many congregations that have one or two people who are seeking additional formation but not in sufficient numbers to make a regular local offering sustainable; 2) it needs to cover the requirements for ordination or commissioning to an MST, as there are individuals who are in this process without access to local formation support; 3) it needs to be regular and stable enough that individuals and teams without the local resources can rely on its occurrence and plan accordingly. This set of circumstances prompted a new way to look at formation through the launch of a pilot program that could engage people from throughout the diocese in learning modules that are open to all people, and to make formation more easily accessible and responsive to the needs of congregations and individuals, while still meeting all of the requirements for those individuals who are in process for commissioning or ordination.

Through a mixture of in-person workshops and training in specific content areas and robust online courses that are designed to cover the core canonical areas of ministry sufficiency, the Formation for All program will rotate through a regular calendar of courses that can be part of initial training, serve as a refresher for active ministry support team members, and provide an opportunity for ongoing Christian education for people interested in a particular subject. The initial offering covered Christian Living and was taught by David Carlisle, Lydia Bucklin, and Brad Pickens. Based on the success of this initial offering, diocesan staff developed a plan based on this that would allow us to maximize diocesan resources, build relationships throughout the diocese, and offer a comprehensive three-year calendar for formation. This plan was presented to the COM and approved at the June 2023 meeting and a subsequent course on Worship and Liturgy was taught over the summer by David Carlisle. The current calendar is included below and is designed to cycle through every three years.

- Winter 2023 - Commitment to Living a Christian Life (Lydia Bucklin, Brad Pickens, and David Carlisle)
- Summer 2023 - Worship & Liturgy Online Course with David Carlisle
- August 30, 2023 – SoulShop, Mqt Co
- Fall 2023 – Christian Theology Online Course with Brad Pickens
- September 22-23: Ministry with Aging; Dorothy Linthicum
- September 29-30: Ministry Support Team Yearly Conference (MSTYC) with Tom Brackett
- October 2023 – Diocesan Convention workshops and Visitors Weekend

- Winter 2023 – Church History Online Course with Brad Pickens and David Carlisle
- Spring 2024 – Pastoral Theology Online Course with April Stace
- May 2024 – Visitors Weekend
- Summer 2024 – Episcopal Structure and Anglican Studies Online Course with Brad Pickens
- June 2024 – General Convention of The Episcopal Church, Louisville, Kentucky
- Fall 2024 – Ethics and Contemporary Issues Online Course with David Carlisle
- October 2024 – Diocesan Convention and Visitors Weekend
- Winter 2024 - Holy Scripture Online Course
- Spring 2025 – Preaching Online Course with April Stace

*Submitted by David Carlisle
Missioner*

Genesis II

Genesis II: Re-vision and Renew is a project sponsored by the Episcopal Church that is designed to explore innovative ways of being church, through the establishment of new Christian communities and the renewal of existing congregations. Among its activities, Genesis II sponsors discernment retreats and workshops for people who are

exploring innovative ways to facilitate the expansion of the church from being located primarily within the four walls of a building and into places and communities where the church has not traditionally had a strong presence or where it has smaller influence than it once did. Collaborative and experiential learning, deep conversation, caring support, and holy listening are the hallmarks of Genesis II. Moreover, there is a strong synergy between Genesis II and the ongoing efforts of the Diocese of

Northern Michigan to nurture new forms of Christian community while also searching for innovative ways to renew existing congregations.

Diocesan staff have participated in retreats and workshops as both participants and facilitators and this participation helps to build networks of like-minded practitioners, to open us to new ideas from outside our diocese, and to spark imagination, hope, and excitement for the future. Sharing in these retreats is one of the ways that we are able to participate in the life of the broader Episcopal Church and to also share the faith commitments that are grounded in the unique makeup of the Diocese of Northern Michigan with the rest of the church, in hope that together we might recognize and participate in the fullness of the kingdom of God as it is present both within and without the wall of the traditional church.

Over the past year, Brad Pickens participated in discernment retreats in Birmingham, Alabama as retreat staff charged with companioning those discerning how God is calling them into new ministries of planting and renewal and participating in conversation with other staff about possible church futures. In March, Brad, Lydia Kelsey Bucklin, and Rayford Ray also participated in the inaugural gathering of diocesan triads, which called together small groups of three from interested dioceses for a four-day retreat at Camp McDowell in Nauvoo, Alabama. This retreat intermixed training sessions led by Tom Brackett, Katie Nakamura Rengers, and Steve Matthews on the living systems of the church and we explored positive approaches to change and development

for these systems through large and small group conversation and exercise, along with time for prayer, laughter, and deep conversation. One immediate outgrowth of this retreat was the invitation to Tom Brackett to share some of this teaching with our diocese at our annual Ministry Support Team Yearly Conference (MSTYC) gathering on Sept. 29-30. We look forward to seeing how this work and understanding might create new possibilities for us both now and in the future.

*Submitted by Brad Pickens
Missioner*

Great Lakes Peace Center

Our mission is Building Peace, Celebrating Diversity. Our vision is to offer a variety of services that will shift human understanding toward empathy, compassion, and connection in order to facilitate personal growth. We believe this will create a ripple effect resulting in greater peace and well-being for individuals, families, communities and our world. In recognition of the pain that racial discrimination can create, we founded the Peace Center.

Partnership with the Diocese

Our partnership with the Diocese began 6 years ago when we were invited to become members of the Justice and Peace Committee as well as the Becoming Beloved Community team.

Beginning in 2018 with a United Thank Offering grant project entitled, "Walking Together: Finding Common Ground Through Racial Reconciliation", we have assisted with writing and implementing several grants to help support the work of truth telling, social justice and racial reconciliation.

In 2019, the Diocese received a Becoming Beloved Community Impact grant to continue expanding our Becoming Beloved Community efforts.

In 2022, the Diocese received another United Thank Offering (UTO) Grant for Creation Care entitled, "Walking Together: Protecting Our Common Ground". This grant funding will allow us to continue strengthening relationships with our Indigenous neighbors by exploring our common interests in caring for the earth as well as honoring our commitment to the work of Indigenous-led initiatives. Leora Tadgerson, recently hired Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for the Diocese, will be taking the lead on this project and we will support her in any way we can.

- Peace Camp Curriculum and Design: support the implementation of a pilot peace camp
- Peace building pilot workshop for youth at Trinity, Gladstone
- Peace building workshops and presentations in other Episcopal churches in Michigan and Illinois.
- We are actively participating in Bay de Noc Community College Civics Corp efforts.
- We are actively participating in the Bay de Noc Community College lead dialogue initiative titled *Delta Chats*.
- Met with local libraries to begin Peace Clubs for young children.

Future Plans

- Peace Clubs for young children (ages 4-12) that are story hours to teach tolerance
- Peace Clubs across the UP for elementary, middle and high school students
- Expand to regularly scheduled interfaith and community-wide dialogue sessions

- Participate in earth care initiatives led by Indigenous communities and supported by churches and the general public
- Continue truth telling and bridge building activities and events such as “How To Support First Nations People” and other workshops

While we are a small grassroots organization, we know that every one of us can make a positive impact in our world! We just need to decide what actions we want to make and do them.

We're so grateful to be a part of this important work of walking the way of love!

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only that that ever has.” – Margaret Mead

Submitted by Deb Nedeau, Mollie Larsen, and Leona Young

Justice and Peace

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan focus has been one of making this world a better place. Our Becoming Beloved Community is one such group that has engaged this diocese around Telling the Truth, Proclaiming the Dream, Practicing the Way of Jesus, and Repairing the Breach. Sacred Ground Series, Doctrine of Discovery Workshops, Sacred Ground Movie Nights, and Things You can do to be an Ally” to our indigenous communities here in the Upper Peninsula as we take a stand on being followers of Jesus.

The work of Miskopwaaganikwe Leora Tadgerson as our Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as we continue to work around healing and reconciliation. Our focus has been one of bridge

building as well as speaking the truth around Native Boarding Schools, and our participation in the inequities as a result of colonialism.

We continue to speak out against pollutants and call for the end of Pipeline 5 and the Tunnel along the Straits. Our participation in Michigan Interfaith Power and Light as an organization calls for protecting our environment and build sustainable energy for the future. Clean Energy, Clean Water is the theme for MIPL. We embrace this understanding. Recently Miskopwaaganikwe Leora Tadgerson attended a retreat with MIPL as we worked toward healing of this land, air, water, and ultimately the earth. We continue to call for the end of Gun Violence as we participate in “End Gun Violence Michigan” and gathered an interfaith group to worship to end the violence. Solar is another area in which we are beginning to learn more about along with MIPL and Solar Faithful and both organizations will be at Convention this year. Possibilities for our congregations i.e. solar is in reaching grasp here in the diocese. We are also sharing the learnings and resources of solar to those who have not had the opportunity to benefit from such opportunities.

We are also learning more about gun violence as it relates to the U.P. of Michigan (Suicide is one of the leading causes of death for male adults here in the U.P). In an average year, 1,212 people die and 3,507 are wounded by guns in Michigan. We continue to call for the end of Gun Violence as we participate in “End Gun Violence Michigan” and gathered an interfaith group to worship to end the violence. We

are working Vicki Schroeder (End Gun Violence Coalition) for sensible gun laws.

A campaign was launched this past year to reach 100,000 dollars in feeding those who experienced food insecurity. We are partners with Feeding America West in making this happen and we will reach our goal. Thank You!

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan focus has been one of making this world a better place. So much more is happening to reach out to the Justice and Peace group and find out more about this group.

Rayford Ray for the Justice and Peace Committee

Michigan Interfaith Power and Light

Michigan Interfaith Power & Light's mission is to inspire and equip people of faith and conscience to exercise stewardship of and love for all Creation. We work statewide to gather and focus the immense grassroots power within Michigan's faith communities to help them become leaders in the effort to address environmental degradation and the climate crisis. In our work, we reference a 3-legged stool metaphor for engagement: Practical Actions, Relational/Spiritual Development, and Systems Change—mutually-dependent dimensions of sustainability work that enable faith communities to engage their spirits and pursue change within and beyond their four walls. We strive to center justice and equity in all that we do, and a core focus is amplifying the voices and priorities of marginalized communities and channeling more resources toward those experiencing environmental injustice.

In 2023, some key programs include:

- Sacred Spaces, a \$1.1million project that brings \$100K in energy improvements to 11 low-income, low wealth congregations across Michigan
- Solar initiatives that remove financial barriers for congregations—especially those that are predominantly Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC), from faith traditions that are non-Christian or non-Unitarian, and who have small budgets or low wealth membership—to accessing and owning clean energy.
- Climate Conversations, which engages congregations in heart-centered dialog about our climate crisis, what we love, and how we can mobilize our communities and resources into loving action for climate justice.

Submitted by Leah Wiste, Executive Director, Michigan Interfaith Power & Light

MSTYC

The Ministry Support Teams' Yearly Conference (MSTYC) was held June 3-4, 2022 in Garden, Michigan, with 33 people attending from congregations across the diocese. The theme of the 2022 MSTYC was "Creation Care as a Locus for Theological Reflection and Spiritual Formation".

Interdisciplinary theologian and founder of Nature 120 (www.nature120.org), Lea Schweitz led the plenary sessions. We were also joined by Good News Gardens Coordinator of The Episcopal Church, Brian Sellers Petersen, and Leah Wiste, Executive Director of Michigan Interfaith Power and Light.

We worshipped in the style of UP Wild Church and enjoyed the music of diocesan musician Charles Murphy.

*Submitted by Lydia Bucklin
Canon to the Ordinary*

Province V

Province V is a network of 14 dioceses of the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Northern Michigan is one of those 14.

The Theme of Province V: *Connect. Network. Support.*

Connect people to people and people to resources.

Network to build communities across diocesan lines.

Support each other in a variety of ministries.

Leadership

The Province V Executive Board is responsible for the operations of the province. There are 20 members of this board, which includes the 14 diocesan representatives, 2 members (one lay and one clergy) who serve on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, and 4 elected officers. Each diocesan bishop appoints a representative, and I have been appointed to this task.

Board members meet monthly via Zoom to share resources from our dioceses and hear about and help develop provincial events and programming. Most board members also serve as a liaison with one of the Province networks; I currently serve as a board liaison to Campus Ministries. The board gathers in-person once per year to make deeper connections and get to know each other and the province better.

Networks

<https://www.provincev.org/networks.html>

The networks continue to expand to serve leaders across the province. Networks are open to any

person who would like to be connected to others working on similar ministries. If there is a network that you might find helpful, contact the coordinator, Heather Barta at provinceVcoordinator@gmail.com.

Big Provincial Gathering: Apr 26-27, '24
Please mark your calendars for the next Big Provincial Gathering!

- April 25-26: pre-event trainings
- April 26, afternoon: Province V Synod (Synod Deputies need to attend and all are welcome)
- April 26, evening – April 27: Big Provincial Gathering (worship and workshops)

Please contact me for more information about anything presented in this report.

*Submitted by Rick Stanitis
Prov. V Executive Board Representative
chouse@mtu.edu*

SoulShop: Faith-Based Suicide Prevention

In 2022 the Diocese of Northern Michigan was awarded a grant by the Marquette County Health Department for SoulShop Suicide Prevention for implementation in 2022-2023. Using the funding from this grant, we have been able to do three things: host two SoulShops in Marquette; send mailings to seventy-five churches in Marquette County about Suicide Prevention in congregations; and host a brainstorming session with SoulShop's Executive Directors concerning the follow-up program that they are creating called "Hope With Skin On". Because of our efforts, we have seen a beginning openness in conversation around suicide prevention and a growing interest in having more trainings throughout the Diocese. It is possible now for us to provide two-hour trainings or whole day

trainings in the SoulShop model of faith-based prevention where our vision is "Creating communities where no one loses hope and no one feels alone." For more information about SoulShop, contact Marna Franson at marna@upepiscopal.org or at 906-458-6395.

*Submitted by Marna Franson
Missioner*

Standing Committee

The Standing Committee consists of Wyndeth Davis, Marna Franson, Susan Harries, Charlie Mineau, Rick Stanitis, Cheri LaKosky, Kathy Binoniemi, and Bishop Rayford Ray, ex officio.

At the first meeting of 2022, Wyndeth Davis was elected as president and Kathy Binoniemi, secretary. Jane Cisluycis reviewed the role of the Standing Committee.

We were involved in several consent processes since our last convention including consents for the Bishop of Columbia, Central Florida, New Jersey, Bp Provincial for the Diocese of Olympia, and the Diocese of Ohio.

We were updated on discernment processes taking place at St. Paul's, Marquette, and St. Stephen's, Escanaba.

Due to health reasons, Cheri Lakosky had to step down from the committee and Bp Ray appointed Nancy DeKoster to fill her term.

*Submitted by Kathy Binoniemi
Standing Committee Secretary*

Title IV

"Title IV" refers to the section of The Episcopal Church's Canons (laws) that

addresses the grounds and processes for 'ecclesiastical discipline', a canonical process adopted by the Church to encourage accountability, reconciliation, and pastoral response when a member of its clergy (deacons, priests, or bishops) is accused of misconduct. Matters involving a bishop are addressed to, and handled by, the Disciplinary Board for Bishops. (Canon IV.17.1)

The Title IV Structure: Roster and Roles for the Diocese of Northern Michigan

Intake Officer: Brad Pickens
Conciliators: Sue Jamison, Nancy Olexick
Investigator: Jim Martindale
Title IV Process Coord.: Arlene Gordanier
Pres. of Disc. Board: Arlene Gordanier
Bishop: Rayford Ray
Church Attorney: Richard Graybill
Advisors: Kathy Martindale, Bob Railey

Disciplinary Board

Wyndeth Davis, Marna Franson, Arlene Gordanier, Susan Harries, Gwen Hetler, Gin Mannisto, Rick Stanitis, Mary Sullivan, Wendy Wils

Those who serve on the Title IV Process meet to refresh their roles and to review any canonical changes in the Title IV Structure and Procedures from the General Convention of The Episcopal Church. The Title IV Roles are also reviewed and using the General Education and Best Practices as well as the Title IV Structures and Procedures. These materials have been prepared by those in The Episcopal Church with expertise in particular areas and are contributors who are deeply committed to the foundation of this process. The materials, "Understanding Title IV", is an

information resource of the Ecclesiastical Discipline of the Church. You can access this website of The Episcopal Church at www.titleiv.org

How to Use This Website

The "General Education and Best Practices" defines roles, shares best practices, and details how this process came into being. There are messages from the presiding bishop linking this process to our Baptism and reminding us that our baptism calls us to the benchmarks of the Title IV process. "Structure and Procedure" is an opportunity to click and learn about the procedure.

In the annual review and refresh of the Title IV process, our team has an opportunity to ask questions, regain a facility with the terms and be familiar with the heart of the process. With God's help, we keep current and are committed to serve.

*Submitted by Arlene Gordanier
Title IV Process Coordinator*

Trust Association

For the Year Ended December 31, 2022 with supplemental information through August 31, 2023.

2022 Year End Summary

Investment returns for the year ending December 31, 2022 were poor to say the least. Investments, which are managed by Range Bank Trust and Wealth Management for the Trust Association, showed a total return of **-18.79%**. This rate of return is based on a weighted average calculation which takes into consideration the timing of all deposits, transfers and withdrawals. The return is also net of all fees. This return compares

with a benchmark return of -17.96%, which is made up of 80% S & P 500 and 20% Barclay's U.S. Aggregate Bond Index. The S & P 500 Index itself was down -19.44%.

All stock and bond segments of the portfolio showed negative returns for the year as the economy struggled with steep inflation and rising interest rates, with the Prime Rate increasing from 3.25% at the beginning of the year to 7.50% at year-end.

Total assets under management at year-end were \$17,015,004. This is a decrease from \$22,360,639 reported one year ago. Disbursements from the Trust Association for the year 2022 totaled \$1,226,249 consisting of both diocesan draws and draws taken by participating congregations. The Trust Association currently uses a "growth oriented" asset allocation model, with a target of having 85% equities and 15% fixed income and cash. Fund diversification is accomplished using a variety of broadly based, low-cost exchange traded funds (ETF's) which include large-cap stocks, mid-cap stocks and small-cap stocks as well as U.S. Treasury and corporate bonds.

August 31, 2023 Interim Results

Now for some good news. Year-to-date as of August 31, 2023, the investment portfolio was up **17.84%** net of fees, with all stock and bond segments showing positive returns. Inflation continues to be a concern for most Americans, although improvement is slowly being seen. The most recent data shows the inflation rate at 3.18%, compared with 8.52% for all of last year.

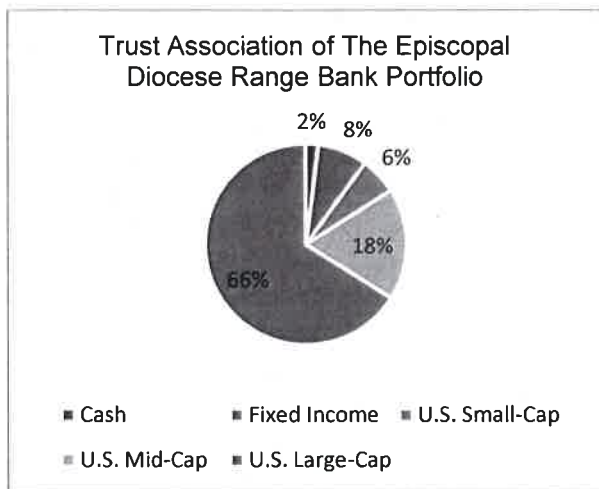
The Fed continues to be aggressive in raising interest rates, with the Prime Rate

now at 8.5%. International and political issues are also having an impact on the markets. Still, employment is strong and for the most part, companies are meeting or beating earnings expectations.

As of August 31, 2023, assets under management totaled \$18,573,595, with \$1,046,239 taken out in diocesan and congregational distributions. It should also be noted that since management of the Trust Association's investments were taken over by Range Bank back in January of 2015, they have provided us with a total annual return of 9.13%.

The invest portfolio as of August 31, 2023 consisted of the following:

Cash – Federated Money Market	
	\$ 365,564
SPDR S&P 500 Index	\$ 8,640,865
Vanguard Mega-Cap 300 Growth Index	\$ 2,678,189
iShares Core S&P Midcap 400	\$ 3,390,705
SPDR Select Tech Sector	\$ 811,198
iShares Russell 2000	\$ 1,046,031
iShares Barclays 1-3 Year Treasury Index	\$ 699,801
SPDR Barclays Short-Term Corp. Bond	\$ 770,935
USTN, 4.25% due 9/30/24	\$ 442,978



*Submitted by Jack Lenten
Trust Association*

U.P. Wild Church

In 2022, we added more ways to donate via the website beyond just PayPal. We now have the options for monthly and recurring donations via credit card through the website and we also have a "text to give" option. We are able to ask for donations at each offering and pass out the text to give cards during the services. I meet with my Diocesan team once a month and we have quarterly meetings with the wisdom counsel (made up of ELCA, Episcopal reps). UP Wild Church has broad, strong support from within the greater Diocesan structure, Church wide in the ELCA, the Great Lakes Synod, and the Episcopal Church through grants.

We offer gatherings monthly in the Marquette area with our Nature Prayer Service and Wilderness Walks. Yet, we do much more with our core groups like foraging, service projects, home outreach, etc. One group that seems particularly affected in a positive way is the 30 to 50 age family groups. Children are particularly welcome, and the Wild Church format is perfect for including and involving families. In fact, a Wild Church School Program has developed which has an educational and nurturing focus and outdoor activities.

The main theme of the past year has been nurturing expansion of UP Wild into other areas of the UP. We have groups actively meeting in Delta County, Keweenaw, and Marquette with groups currently in formation in St. Ignace and Menominee with interest in Paradise and Ironwood. Lanni Lantto, the Mission Developer has been working with these branches throughout the formation

process and will continue to offer resources, guidance, and in person visitations.

One telling aspect regarding the acceptance of Wild Church is the fact that there are and have been no less than three pastors who attend, participate in, and seem to consider Wild Church as their church home. Two ordinations have occurred where candidates wanted Wild Church to be identified as their home parish. An effective communication system has been developed consisting of email, texting, and social media announcements which serve regular attendees but is also a public announcement as well. The beauty is that we are intergenerational with our youngest member being 6 months and our elder being 87 years old.

Thank you all for your continued prayers and support!

*Submitted by Lanni Lantto
Mission Developer, UP Wild*

United Thank Offering: Practice Gratitude and Change the World

The United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, individuals are invited to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude. UTO encourages people to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for those blessings and make an offering for each blessing using a UTO Blue Box. UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute the 100% of what is collected to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal

Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

Gratitude

UTO invites individuals to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude.

Granting

UTO distributes 100% of Thank Offerings received to ministries throughout the Episcopal Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

Leading

UTO is made up of Lay and ordained members throughout the world and the United Thank Offering made possible through this wonderful grassroots leadership.

The Diocese Northern Michigan as well as congregations in the diocese have been blessed with several grants over the years. In researching some of the UTO Grant information, I discovered a grant for the Women's Center in Marquette and the impact of changing lives from domestic violence. You might want to see if your church community received a UTO Grant. I recall a lift for at least one community to make it possible for those needing assistance in our buildings.

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan's UTO account balance as of December, 2022 was \$627.31. The current balance, as of the date of this report is \$934.96.

When sending your UTO Ingathering check to the Diocesan office, please make the check payable to Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan UTO. All monies collected are sent to the United Thank Offering headquarters in St.

Louis, Missouri. Postage and other charges come from another account.

There are many unique opportunities and information on the UTO website: www.unitedthankoffering.com. You can sign up for the monthly newsletter, register your church community UTO, find resources for the season – and stay connected.

The Diocesan UTO Coordinators, Susan Harries and Arlene Gordanier, would be delighted to help you. You can contact them at bmcsharries@yahoo.com (Susan) and ajgorda@gmail.com (Arlene).

For donation supplies such as envelopes and the UTO blue boxes, contact Arlene Gordanier.

You can find other information about UTO, the grant opportunities, and resources at: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/united-thank-offering>

*Submitted by Arlene Gordanier
Co-Coordinator UTO*

Visitors Weekend

The Diocese of Northern Michigan continues the longstanding tradition of hosting visitors from all over The Episcopal Church and beyond. This year, we were blessed with a \$28,500 grant from the Roanridge Trust to support the costs of travel and lodging for visitors. This has resulted in a more diverse group of visitors who we have had the blessing of hosting.

A new approach to Visitors Weekend has been an opportunity for visitors to attend and engage with members of the diocese during Diocesan Convention. Previous

visitors have expressed curiosity regarding the structure and polity of a Mutual Ministry diocese. Welcoming visitors to convention allows them the opportunity to witness collaborative decision making in addition to the previous format of Visitors Weekend, which includes an introduction to the ecclesiology of shared, baptismal ministry. The 126th Annual Diocesan Convention in October 2022 welcomed students from Virginia Theological Seminary, the Diocese of Alaska, the Diocese of Ruperts Land, and the Dioceses of Western & Eastern Michigan. We had 12 visitors overall.

On May 19-21, 2023, the diocese hosted a spring Visitors Weekend in Marquette, Michigan, with an opportunity to worship with UP Wild Church Delta County. Twenty-one visitors came from Detroit, Michigan, North Dakota, Virginia Theological Seminary, Minnesota, Los Angeles, and Episcopal Church Building Fund, Central Gulf Coast, and Southern Ohio. Visitors worshipped with the communities of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Marquette; St. John's Episcopal Church, Munising; Trinity Episcopal Church, Gladstone; and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Iron Mountain.

*Submitted by Lydia Kelsey Bucklin
Canon to the Ordinary*

