By David Johnson

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By Brenda Hawkins

The Diocese of Mississippi and the Diocese of Panama are companion dioceses. This was clearly evident during the August trip taken by two Episcopal Church Women from the Diocese of MS, Lollie Everett, Companion Diocesan Chair and Brenda Hawkins, UTO Chair. Bishop Julio E. Murray, Bishop of Panama and Laura Morgan, President of Christ Church, Colon, ECW, and the ECW Diocesan Board of Panama invited Lollie and Brenda to the 85th birthday of ECW at Christ Church by-the-Sea in Colon on Sunday, August 23, 2015. It was a full day of celebration with a service that lasted from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. with Bishop Murray preaching and celebrating. Lollie Everett and Brenda Hawkins were presented special “Guests of Honor” plaques at this service. The party continued around the corner in an open pavilion on the sea where lunch was served along with folk dancing, singing, a mariachi band and numerous presentations. It was a joyful afternoon celebrating ECW in Colon.

On Monday, August 24, Bishop Murray and Carmen McSween, UTO grant writer and assistant to the bishop, met with Brenda Hawkins and Lollie Everett for a brief tour of the diocesan office and a tour of the Bishop Gooden Center in Panama City which received a large UTO grant for renovation as our companion diocese. It’s freshly painted with new walls, new doors and a large round open meeting area. The kitchen provides cooking and storage space for many events. They have used it numerous times for large sessions in the ecumenical community. Lunch was served in the Gooden Center, which was also attended by Anna Murray, wife of Bishop Murray, Provincial ECW officers and companion hosts in Panama – it was a bonding session sharing the love of Christian mission. They are proud of the air conditioned units in the central meeting area, which also cool rooms that open onto the area. These rooms serve as library, ECW headquarters, youth space, planning rooms, etc. UTO is excited to be a part of such a much-needed complex that spreads the good news of Christ so often to so many. The Episcopal brothers and sisters of Panama welcomed Mississippi sisters with open arms and provided many activities, which were scheduled during the trip. Panama will in turn send representatives to the Diocese of Mississippi ECW Annual Meeting in November.

In other UTO news, the grant used to build the casket lift at Trinity/Pass Christian is another miracle at work in Mississippi. Robin Roberts with ABC News recently visited the area to shoot KarTina: Ten Years after the Storm segment. UTO announced that grants were active on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and New Orleans to aid in the rebuilding process.

New UTO grant forms will be available on the UTO website on November 1, 2015 – www.episcopalchurch.org/uto . Now is the time to think about the project you wish to fund. Mississippi can submit one grant to be used in our diocese and one grant to be used in a companion diocese. UTO has two gatherings per year – one in the spring and one in the fall.

Finally, the UTO Fall gathering is Sunday, November 2, 2015. Your prayers of thanksgiving and your coins go to send Christ into the world. Mississippi gave $8,906.58 in 2013 and received $80,000 in grant money. Please participate this year in UTO. Mississippi can submit one grant to be used in our diocese and one grant to be used in a companion diocese. UTO has two gatherings per year – one in the spring and one in the fall.

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Proceeds from the 2015 festival will benefit St. John’s local charities. All proceeds will benefit St. John’s local charities. October 28th, and Sunday, October 25th. Proceeds from the 2015 festival will benefit St. John’s local charities. Each booth at the semi-annual Canton Arts and Crafts Flea Market on Thursday, October 8th. Their booth, Grace Treasures, will feature handmade handmade items donated by parishioners. There will be more than 90 booths on the north lawn; Grace Church’s booth will be located on the northwest corner.

The 2015 festival at Creator/Clinton will take place on Saturday, October 31st. Frozen casseroles and soups will be sold at the festival, as well as a variety of fresh baked items and canned goods. Pulled pork barbeque sandwich plates will also be available for purchase, and there will be live musical entertainment on Creator’s new outdoor stage. Proceeds from the 2015 festival will go to benefit the Methodist Children’s Homes of Mississippi.

Be sure to bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the full day of events on Sunday, October 18th, 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The fair will offer information on the school list to be donated to the school in January after the Christmas break.

Gumbo time is coming to Ascension Hattiesburg. They’ll be making the gumbo on Friday, November 13th, and offer it for sale on Saturday, November 14th.

St. John’s/Clinton will host Happening #82 on Friday through Sunday, November 13th-15th. Staff training will begin on October 16th. There’s a family night out of pumpkin carving set for Sunday, October 25th, at 5:00 p.m. at St. James/Greenville. Everyone is invited for food, games, and pumpkin carving. Stencils and carving tools will be available, but members are asked to bring a pumpkin and any favorite decorations of their own.

St. Paul’s/Corinth will celebrate paying off their building mortgage with a note burning party and bonfire on Saturday evening, October 18th, at 5:00 p.m. The fire will be started with a copy of the paid note and fueled by the donations of prizes for games and bingo and new items for their silent auction.

The Fall Festival at Redeemer/Biloxi has been scheduled for October 17th, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. They are seeking donations of prizes for games and bingo and new items for their silent auction.

St. Peter’s by-the-Sea/Gulfport will sponsor a health fair on Thursday, October 29th, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. The fair will offer information on many health services particularly targeting seniors and low income members of the community; however, all are welcome.

The 2015 SunKing 5K Spooktacular Run/Walk and 1-Mile Boo! Run will be hosted by St. James’ Jackson on Saturday, October 17th, starting at 8:00 a.m. Funds raised from the event will benefit Habitat for Humanity. Everyone is invited to wear their favorite costume and come enjoy healthy haunted breakfast treats.

St. Matthew’s/Kosciusko will have lunch and pumpkin decorating after the service on Sunday, October 25th. Finished pumpkins will go home with their creators or be delivered to members unable to attend church.
ORDINARY CONCERNS

Truckin’

September 1 – I started the morning at St. James’ for the Safe Church Conference for clergy. I was pleased to see the outstanding turnout from the clergy of our diocese. Following my time at the meeting, I went to the office for the staff meeting. I spent most of the day working on plans for a retreat. In the afternoon, I kept several phone appointments. I left the office a little early in order to pick up Katie and Betsy from school.

September 2 – Early morning workout. After workout, I went to the office and spent the morning digging through a variety of projects and correspondence. In the afternoon, I left for West Point for the Celebration of a New Ministry with the parish and their priest-in-charge, Lynn Ronaldi. The service was great and extremely well attended. I’m really excited for this church and their new leader.

September 3 – I spent most of the day working on the upcoming retreat and theological convocation. In the afternoon, I kept several phone appointments. In the evening, I joined ten old friends from seminary for a conference call and our annual Fantasy Football draft. The league was originally formed in 1996 when we were still in Austin. We’ve managed to maintain the league (for the most part) in spite of being spread out across the country!

September 4 – Early morning workout. After workout, I left for the airport in order to fly to Los Angeles to visit for a couple days with my mom and dad. I arrived in the early evening and had supper with my mom at her house.

September 5 – After an early morning surf session with my brother-in-law before visiting Dad. In the afternoon, I helped my mom with a variety of chores around her house. That night Mom and I had supper with my sister and her family.

September 6 – I flew home after breakfast with Mom and a quick stop at the home to say goodbye to Dad. It was a short visit but a really good visit. So glad I was able to spend time with my parents as well as my sister and her family.

September 7 – I skipped workout this morning! After getting to the office, I attended a meeting with the convocation dean. In the afternoon, I met with the canons and an aspirant for Holy Orders. In the evening I attended a vestry meeting at St. Mark’s in Jackson.

September 8 – I’m planning a silent auction for their Oktoberfest celebration on Friday, Oct. 2.

Notes & Quotes
Continued from page 2

On Wednesday, October 28th, St. Paul’s/Meridian will put on their Halloween Carnival. The evening will begin with a parish supper at 5:30 p.m. and be followed by games, a cake walk, and other festivities.

Resurrection/Starkville is planning a silent auction for their Oktoberfest celebration on Friday, October 16th. Gift baskets, specialty items, and trips are some of the items to be offered.

Quotes this month:

The Very Rev. Billie Abraham, St. Alban’s/Bovina: “God gives me the gifts and God gives me the grace to develop my gifts and share them with others. Left to my own resources I am limited within the bounds of my humanity. But, God’s grace is fathomless. Ultimately, stewardship is grace as well. To be a good steward is to live with a sense of sheer abundance and not with a sense of fearful scarcity.”

The Rev. William Ndishabandi, All Saints/Jackson: “Occasionally people give excuses for not being able to commit or provide financial support to the church. There are those who say, ‘They can’t afford to give due to their limited financial resources,’ It takes no faith to wait to give when you have extra. That is like saying, ‘... When the harvest comes in I will plant the seed.’ ‘When the building is completed I will buy the land.’ Giving is on the front end. It is an act of faith of our part, as well as an act of obedience. It shows how weak our faith is when we are reluctant to give.”

A date to remember:
Tuesday, November 3, 2015
Deadline for the November issue of The Mississippi Episcopalian
Greetings from the Coast!

The congregations of the Mississippi Gulf Coast are excited to host the Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi being held from January 29-31, 2016. The theme for this year is “One Church in Mission.” It is our intent to celebrate the mission of our church in word and action with all who come to share in the image of resurrection that is the Gulf Coast. Come and see who you, the Diocese of Mississippi, have empowered us to be in the wake of destruction and redemption. Come and See!

We have been planning and preparing for Council for several months now. Our hosting is unique in that all of the parishes of the Coast Convocation are participating as hosts this year. Many hands have not exactly made for easy work, but it has been a joyful and grateful effort by all. Please make plans to drive along the coast to see the parishes that have been rebuilt or restored over the last ten years.

Much of the schedule will be the same this year as in years past, but I do invite you to take note that on Friday evening, you are invited to explore the local restaurants instead of gathering at a reception. We decided that it would be a missed opportunity to have you all visit our communities and not have ample opportunity to partake of the local foods that contribute to the wonderful coast culture. Join us on Saturday evening for a dinner reception at the Maritime & Seafood Industry Museum for food, music, and fellowship.

The time to register for what promises to be an incredibly fun and Spirit-filled Council begins right now. In the packet to be mailed to your parish very soon, you will find registration information for whatever capacity you intend to join us. It will benefit you, your parish, and your hosting congregations to register early and get your rooms reserved for the coastal council experience that promises not to disappoint. The more information we have early, the better prepared we will be to host you upon your arrival. Thank you in advance for taking the time to register early.

We have holy work to do together. We have holy time to spend. It is our hope that our time together will be filled with fun and fellowship as we give life to the mission of our church in word and action. Thank you and God bless you!

Yours in Christ,

The Very Reverend Robert Wetherington
Rector of The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, Biloxi, MS
Dean of the Coast Convocation

A conversation on race in America

Church leaders to dialogue on race relations at upcoming Racial Reconciliation Celebration Summit and Luncheon

[MSE] Mission Mississippi will host a Racial Reconciliation Celebration Summit and Fundraising Luncheon on Wednesday, November 4th. The event will be held at the Jackson Convention Complex. Dr. Ronnie Floyd, President of the Southern Baptist Convention and Dr. Jerry Young, President of the National Baptist Convention will lead the dialog during the summit and luncheon.

Neddie Winters, President of Mission Mississippi, stated, “Mission Mississippi has been bringing folks to the table to talk about race relations in Mississippi for the past 22 years. It is our honor to host Drs. Floyd and Young, as well as, other church leaders to have a dialog on race beyond Mississippi. We believe this is a great opportunity for churches and businesses to begin to engage in the important talks surrounding race.”

Tickets and event sponsorship are available for purchase by visiting www.missionmississippi.org or calling 601.353.6477.

The purpose of Mission Mississippi is to encourage and demonstrate grace in the Body of Christ across racial lines so that communities throughout Mississippi can see the practical evidence of the Gospel message.

Mission Mississippi has been leading the way for over two decades in assisting the Christian Community to work through the results and consequences of racism in a godly and productive way. Mission Mississippi is statewide movement whose presence has been felt in multiple locations throughout the state.
EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Muslims and Christians to mobilize 1 million faith leaders to improve child, maternal health

[Issued by Episcopal Relief & Development, Member of the Faith Alliance for Health] An interfaith coalition of faith-based organizations has announced it will mobilize one million faith leaders over the next five years to help improve the health of women and children in countries with high child mortality rates.

The Faith Alliance for Health comprises CMMB – Healthier Lives Worldwide, Catholic Relief Services, Episcopal Relief & Development, Islamic Relief USA, the Nigerian Interfaith Action Association, and World Vision. The partnership also benefits from a very strong set of committed advisors from the donor, multi-lateral, and consultant communities.

The group’s commitment to build capacity of local faith leadership and networks to promote both behavior change and increase demand for maternal, child and adolescent health services is its significant contribution to the next phase of the Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy.

Anwar Khan, CEO of Islamic Relief, USA, officially presented the Faith Alliance for Health’s commitment at the Every Woman Every Child launch on Saturday, September 26, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Khan highlighted that marshalling faith leaders’ reach and influence in communities is the Alliance’s strength: “It’s estimated that 84% of the world’s population identify with a religious group. Our newly formed Faith Alliance for Health will capitalize on this fact and [that] faith leaders are key to promoting behaviors that protect the health of the most vulnerable members of our society to accelerate the achievement of SDGs 2 and 3.”

“All faiths want to see women and children everywhere survive and thrive. This is why we will work together to mobilize one million faith leaders to reach 50 million families or an estimated 250 million people living in countries with a high burden of child deaths,” Khan said.

Episcopal Relief & Development has done substantial work in the field of child and maternal health, beginning with its flagship malaria prevention program, NetsforLife®, which to date has prevented more than 112,000 child deaths through engaging faith networks in community education, net distribution and robust follow-up to ensure continued net use. The organization has since expanded successful Early Childhood Development programs in Zambia and later Ghana and Kenya with support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Margaret A. Cargill Foundation.

“Our work in the area of child and maternal health is part of our overall integrated health focus, which seeks to empower communities with knowledge and practices to support nutrition, disease prevention and accurate detection and treatment of illnesses,” said Abagail Nelson, Episcopal Relief & Development’s Senior Vice President of Programs. “Throughout our work, we find that strengthening and mobilizing local faith networks is the most effective way not only to produce results but to create lasting change for generations to come. We are proud to be a part of the Faith Alliance for Health’s bold commitment to Every Woman Every Child and excited to work with our interfaith partners to achieve this movement’s goals.”

Day in the Country

Long-time parish bread baker, Dan Robertson, shows off a truly signature loaf of bread baked for the Chapel of the Cross’s Day in the Country festival. Robertson has been the head baker for the event for years: we salute you and your fellow bakers.

A date to remember: January 16, 2016 at 10:30 A.M.
Presbyters to be ordained!
St. Andrew’s Cathedral/Jackson

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The Mississippi Episcopalian 5
Honored elderly celebrate at annual parish event

By Kathryn Larsen

Christ Episcopal Church held its annual octogenarian and nonagenarian celebration with a cabaret theme on October 4th. This is a reception held to honor parishioners who have lived into their 80s and 90s.

Each honoree had a biography listed in a booklet. All honorees in attendance were given a booklet and flowers to remember the day. Nine members of Christ Church have achieved this milestone. Two members just entered their 80th decade, Ted Dawson and Betty Richards. One member enjoys good health, still attends church and is in his mid 90s, Vernon Bourdette.

A buffet of assorted breads, cold cuts and salad was offered with champagne and other drinks. A Dobache cake and cheese cake was available for dessert. Cabaret music was played in the background. The parish has observed this event since the 1980s.

Jean MaGee, Betty Richards, Vernon Bourdette, Shirley Lansden, Alice Baird and Fr. Ted Dawson were all honored at Christ Church/Bay St. Louis.

Bishop Seage confirmed or reaffirmed 12, baptized three and also celebrated the Rev. Lynn Ronaldi's and Incarnation/West Point's new ministry.

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Dr. John Switzer (left), a communicant of St. John's/Ocean Springs and the ecumenical officer for the Diocese of Mississippi, became an oblate in the Community of St. Joseph at the community's fall retreat at Gray Center. Switzer did a year's study as an oblate novice. The group is a Benedictine Religious Community in The Episcopal Church that includes both vowed brothers and single or married, lay and ordained oblates. "We seek to be a presence of prayer, hospitality and charity in the world through dedicating our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ with the Rule of St. Benedict as our guide," writes Br. Vincent Bache (pictured right), the superior and founder of the community on the order's website, www.csjms.org. Visit the site to learn more about this unique order in the Diocese of Mississippi.

Long-time St. John's/Ocean Springs parishioner Lena Melton was elected as Grand Marshall of the Ocean Springs High School Homecoming parade. Melton was honored for her 27-years of service on the school board. Lena serves on the vestry at St. John's, and is the head verger of the parish.

Lisa Coleman and Deanna Bickham, officers of St. Pierre's/Gautier ECW, were on duty selling jellies and jams at the Zonta Festival in Pascagoula. They said the sales were strong this year.

Barbara Jones/Photo

Kristen Stephens/Photo

Scott Lenoir/Photo

James Ricketts, Ocean Springs Gazette/Photo
The Rev. Tom Fanning and the Rev. Ede Plovanich at the Blessing of the Animals at St. John’s/Pascagoula. Plovanich holds her new pup, Beau Brummell, named after a 19th British dandy, but in Mississippi, the King Charles spaniel, will just be good ol’ Beau.

Kamme Riddle’s dog, Angel, received a blessing from the Rev. Paul Stephens at All Saints'/Tupelo. The service was team inclusive—Angel wore a Boston Red Sox jersey.

The Rev. Susan Hrostowski, vicar at St. Elizabeth’s/Collins, blesses Becky Tough’s dog, Rosie, in the church’s outdoor chapel on St. Francis’ Day.

The Rev. Josh Messick, St. Paul’s/Meridian, blesses Julie Martin’s humble bully, Ester Bell Martin, the sister of Jak, Mississippi State’s mascot. Ester Bell’s posture is evidence that Bulldogs are on the side of the angels.

Episcopal Habitat for Humanity volunteers from four Jackson-area parishes began work on the Randall family home in Greenview Drive in October. Pictured are: Hank Aiken, St. James; Thorne Butler, St. Andrew’s; the Rev. Katie Bradshaw, St. Columb’s; Billy Burke, St. Philip’s; Arrington Widemire, St. Columb’s; Greg Buyan, Habitat construction director; the Rev. Ann McMorrow, St. James, and the Rev. Melanie Lemburg, St. Columb’s.

Habitat transformation of Greenview Drive

Continued on page 10

The Future Plan for Greenview Drive
Music and liturgy conference inspiring

By Beau Surratt

I was blessed beyond measure to participate in the Mississippi Conference on Church Music and Liturgy for the first time this past July. At the parish where I serve, St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Park Ridge, IL, our new rector, former Mississippian, Patrick Skutch, and I have been in the midst of planning an intergenerational “Discipleship Sunday” during which all ages engage in formation and worship together. We’ve begun to center these Discipleship Sundays around a threefold pattern of Feeding Our Minds, Feeding Our Souls, and Feeding Others. As I began to reflect on my time at the Mississippi Conference this year it occurred to me that our time together followed the same threefold pattern.

Feeding Our Minds

Faculty members Dent Davidson, Bill Roberts, and the Rev. Susan Anderson Smith started us off in keeping with our theme, Vital Worship. Food for the Journey, with an opening Eucharist that began with a heart and mind-opening opportunity to consider what was needed and how we might arrange our space and ourselves in order to make Eucharist together. Each of us at the Mississippi Conference, from choir member to organist/choirmaster learned at least some piece of music that was new to us, whether it was something we sang in one of our liturgies or something that was in a reading packet. Reading sessions, times in which we get together and read through a batch of pieces of choral music, introduced me to new-to-me pieces of music to share with my congregation and choirs back in Park Ridge. Jackson Hearn’s handbell workshop was a perfect refresher for me as I prepare to restart a handbell choir in my parish. Choir rehearsals with Bill Roberts and Dent Davidson were chock full of practical tips for good singing and refinement of choral sound. Dent led us in a journey of improvisation with the hymn “Let all mortal flesh keep silence” that, I think, it is safe to say, both fed and blew our minds.

Feeding Our Souls

My did we have some church at the Mississippi Conference! We shared in portions of the Daily Office and Eucharist several times and each liturgy was filled with spirited singing of music from all times and places. The Holy Spirit showed in a powerful way. I will never forget the acapella singing of the spiritual “Lord I want to be a Christian” in which the stirring improvisation moved me to tears. Our souls were fed with daily reflections on our theme from Susan Anderson Smith and her sermon about manna from heaven at Evensong provided our souls with some much-needed food for the journey. And as all y’all Mississippians know well, our souls were fed in the abounding fellowship we shared with each other. Whether between sessions, at meals, or late into the early morning hours, participants at the Mississippi conference laughed together, cried together, ate and drank together, and had a real experience of the beloved community. I made some wonderful new friends at the conference that I know I will cherish for years to come.

Feeding Others

In every moment of the conference it was clear that we were being fed so that we could feed others. The Mississippi Conference on Church Music Liturgy has a clear missional focus. Each person involved, choir member, parish musician, and clergy alike, is equipped to better serve God in the world by feeding others through the liturgy and music we share together. Our hearts and minds were changed and filled through God’s presence in our singing and worship together so that we might in turn, with God’s help, fill and change the lives of others with whom we serve and those whom we have not yet encountered.

The Mississippi Conference on Church Music and Liturgy is a true blessing to the Church and to the world. Thank you to the Diocese of Mississippi for continuing to bless so many through this amazing ministry.

My journey from church musician to seminarian

By Raphiell Ashford

As I prepare to begin my second year of seminary at Virginia Theological Seminary, I have been asked to reflect on what my journey has been like transitioning from church musician to seminarian. The transition has been surprisingly smooth. There are no longings to return to the role of organist/choirmaster, nor do I miss the Wednesday night choir rehearsals, stressing because I’ll have to rethink the anthem because there are no sopranos are at rehearsal, cringing as the descant is not quite right, lamenting that the psalm chanting is too slow, or wondering “How in the world am I going to survive Holy Week? Why didn’t I choose easier anthems?”

God works in mysterious ways, often in ways that we cannot see or understand. All of those experiences were preparing me for what is to come. I’m at a different place in my life now; a Postulant for Holy Orders. However, my years as a church musician continue to shape and guide along this journey and will forever be a part of who I am.

During my discernment process, a member of the Commission on Ministry asked me if I would be able to give up the organ. I paused for a brief moment, and said, “I’ll never give up the organ. It’s a part of me, and I’ll find ways to incorporate that part of me into my ordained ministry.” I must say that the answer even surprised me a little, but was confident that I would be able to accomplish this, especially after witnessing the Rev. Erika Takacs (Associate Rector at St. Mark’s, Philadelphia, PA) and the Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray III (IX Bishop of MS, retired), incorporate singing into their sermons. The wheels in my head have been turning ever since.

As a seminarian, being on the other side of the bench, so to speak, has given me a different perspective into the role of music in the church as well as how vital clergy-musician relationships are. This perspective has been shaped by my thirteen years at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Jackson, MS (where I served as organist and choirmaster), continued participation in the Mississippi Conference on Church Music and Liturgy as well as my Liturgical Music and Advanced Musicianship classes at VTST. Whereas before I studied the text of hymns in relation to the lessons for a given Sunday, now I find myself delving even deeper into the text, searching for theological meaning and understanding. As a seminarian, having a background in church music helped to solidify my faith, which in turn has served me well in seminary.

The transition for me has been easy because I still get to use my music skills in many ways. The seminary is ripe with opportunities for musical expression. Whether it’s doing sub work at a local church, playing at some of the seminary Evening Prayer services, or helping seminary friends with learning to sing the Exsultet and/or the Sursum corda, my love for music is still fulfilled. The main difference between pre-seminary and now is that my passion and calling are in a different place. During this past Lenten season, I was the sub at a local church for a portion of the season through Easter Day. The Rector asked me to pick the hymns, rehearse the choir, and to bring psalm chanting back to the services. I remember thinking, “It’s nice to be at the organ again, but am glad that it’s only for a few weeks and not every Sunday.”

That confirmed for me that my focus was where it needed to be and that my calling was to become a priest. Ordained ministry is where my passion, focus, and calling now dwell, and I have no regrets; only excitement as I look forward to the future and being ordained clergy person in God’s one holy, catholic, and apostolic church. I also realize that I have not left my training as a church musician behind. It is a part of me and I use my gift of music and experience as a church musician as a resource in my studies, in meditation and prayer, and self-care practices. One of my friends at the music conference once joked, “You’re one of them now.” I told him that yes, I hopefully will be ordained clergy one day, but that I will always be one of them too.

For me, both can coexist and make for a richer and deeper relationship within the church and most importantly, with God. I will sing and make music to the Lord (Psalm 27, v3). Yes, I will definitely continue to sing and make music to the Lord, but now it will be in a different role as I continue on my journey to the priesthood. My training as a church musician has served me well and has prepared me for the journey that I am now undertaking. The text from an old country gospel song sums it up quite well, “I wouldn’t take nothing for my journey now.”

Thanks be to God.

Raphiell Ashford is a postulant for Holy Orders from the Diocese of Mississippi and wrote this piece for a religious blog that focuses on church musicians.
The Book of Forgiving: A review

By Janet Nail

The Rt. Rev. William Frey once said that we should say the Lord’s Prayer with fear and trembling. I’m not sure which part he was referring to, but I suspect it was the phrase that I say with great trepidation: “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Simple, right?

Not really; forgiving is the hardest work I have ever done, and I am never sure that it is complete.

In The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World (HarperOne, 2014), Desmond Tutu and Mpho Tutu offer a way of forgiving that may make the difficult task, if not easy, at least possible.

When apartheid ended in South Africa, the world held its collective breath, waiting for the explosion of violence. But instead of revenge and repayment of hate with hate, there was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. South Africa showed the world that there was another way.

Desmond Tutu was part of that Truth and Reconciliation Commission, just as he had been part of the horror of apartheid. He and his daughter both had suffered the injustices, but they chose the way of forgiveness. The Book of Forgiving offers the steps of the Commission for individuals to use in their need to forgive.

The first step is telling the story. All of us have experienced the frustration of trying to tell someone—especially the person who has hurt you—why you are hurt. They brush it away with “Oh, you just take things too seriously” or they ridicule you. They imply that you are a whiner. Sometimes they tell you to suck it up, you deserved the hurt.

Don’t believe it. Tell your story. Keep telling it until someone listens. Tell it until it is believed. Tell it until your pain is acknowledged.

Name the hurt. You have told the story, explained the facts. Why are you hurt? Why does this anger linger and rob you of peace of mind? A mother of a sexually molested child finally wails, “How could I have been such a bad mother?” Pain. You can’t be healed of something you don’t own. By naming the shame and guilt, you can begin to heal.

It may be the hardest part, to take that pain that you now own, that you have dug out and exposed to the light—and let it go. Forgive the perpetrator.

Many of us go through stage two and stay there. We polish our story and bring it out to keep the memory of the pain alive. We may tell the story so often that people have stopped listening. That isn’t moving on—that is stagnation.

Grant forgiveness. This is not for that person who hurt you. This is for you. Lay the burden down and move on. Sure, it’s hard; C.S. Lewis once called a friend, excited and bubbling over, “I finally forgive **** after trying to for twenty years!” Yes, it can take that long. Or it can happen in a moment; a woman whose husband and child was killed in Mumbai in the terrorist attack on the hotel says that she simply heard a voice in her crying, “Forgive them, they don’t know what they have done.”

Finally comes renewing—or releasing—the relationship with the person who hurt you. This comes after you have forgiven (yes, even if it takes that twenty years!). You have wiped the slate clean; nothing stands between you.

Now you decide whether to renew the relationship, or to release. Is this a relationship that is important to you? Is this someone with whom you will be in contact constantly? Are you ready to move on from this person or do you want to be friends (family, coworkers) again? Be sure of your decision. Be sure you have truly forgiven. Too many marriages falter after one has “forgiven,” a spouse but loudly proclaims that he/she can never trust again. (Go back to the beginning, in this case.)

This is an experiential book, as well as an informative one. You will have exercises to do to move you along the path. One of the most powerful for me was to take a stone in my non-dominant hand and carry it for six hours. That is the way carrying a pain that has not been forgiven feels!

Forgiving is not permission. Forgiveness doesn’t say it doesn’t matter. Forgiveness is not denying the pain. Forgiving is bringing the pain out of hiding, examining it, naming it, owning it. Then letting it go.

Finally comes renewing—or releasing—the relationship with the person who hurt you.

This is a powerful book. You will be a better person for reading it. I was.
Speaking in Faith

Approaching the saints, Episcopal style

By Carol Mead

While praying to saints may be more of an issue with our friends in the Roman Catholic Church, I have had a number of people ask me why our church “prays to saints.” Usually the questioner will make an additional statement like, “We only pray to God.”

An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church says that the communion of saints denotes the “union and shared life of all Christians in Christ, including those who now live in the world and those whose mortal lives have ended.” So while the term “saints” can refer to persons formally recognized by church authority as being heroes of the faith, the word also includes all Christians. In the Episcopal Church, we don’t pray to saints, but we do remember the support and presence of the saints in our worship and prayer life.

In the Episcopal Church, we honor and recognize the courage and strength found in all persons of faith. On All Saints’ Day, we especially remember the communion of saints, known and unknown. We also assign “least days” for particular saints—martyrs, missionaries, theologians, pastors, teachers, and monastics—and we assign particular readings and prayers (or propers) for each of those days. According to the Episcopal Handbook, for our formally recognized saints, “There is no formal canonization process, such as the Roman Catholic Church has, but saints can be added to the Church’s calendar by resolution of the General Convention…”

In the remembrance of specific saints in our tradition, we have a relatively new source in the Episcopal Church, a 2010 book called Holy Women, Holy Men. In the foreword of that book, former Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold beautifully described the role of saints in our Christian tradition. He wrote, “The men and women commemorated in the [church] Calendar are not simply examples of faithfulness to inspire us: they are active in their love and prayer. They are companions in the Spirit able to support and encourage us as we seek to be faithful in our own day.”

So, in the Episcopal Church, do we “pray to saints”? No, we pray to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. We do find great comfort, though, when we are challenged or hurting, knowing that the saints are with us. Through our church calendar, feast days, and propers, we help each other to remember that we have companions on the way, saints known and unknown. Thanks be to God, we have companions on the way.

Next time, we will consider the statement, “I have too many doubts to believe in God or the Bible.” Please contact me if you have input about the idea of doubts in the life of faith. You can contact me as follows: The Rev. Carol Mead, St. Peter’s by-the-Lake, 1954 Spillway Road, Brandon, MS 39047. You may also send me an email at stpetepriest@bellsouth.net

The Rev. Carol Mead is priest-in-charge at St. Peter’s by-the-Lake Episcopal Church in Brandon.

Habitat transformation of Greenview Drive

Continued from page 7

A partnership of Catholic Churches is sponsoring and providing volunteers for the Catholic House. This is the 30th HFHMCA house built by the Catholic community.

In October, volunteers began work on two more HFHMCA houses on Greenview – the Episcopal House, sponsored by Episcopal churches in the tri-county area, and the Bankers House, sponsored by nine banking institutions in the tri-county area. This is the first time banks in the tri-county area have joined together to provide sponsorship dollars and volunteers for a HFHMCA house.

Additional community stakeholders supporting, contributing to and sharing the dream for the revitalization of Greenview Drive are — the City of Jackson, other faith-based institutions in the tri-county area, corporations, businesses, and community donors and volunteers.

A federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program grant from the City of Jackson is being utilized for the construction of four homes. An Enterprise Community Partners grant is helping to fund house designs and street layout plans, a Self-Help Home Ownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) grant is funding site preparation, and a Federal Home Loan Bank Affordable Housing Program (FHLB, AHP) grant is funding principal reduction grants for qualifying homeowners.

“With its ideal location, Greenview Drive can once again be a highly sought after residential area,” said Cindy Griffin, HFHMCA’s executive director. “The street is minutes away from the interstate, providing easy access to job centers, colleges and universities, banks, retail, hospital and a police precinct. Not only are we turning a blighted and decayed street into a place where families will live and grow, but we also believe the rebirth and transformation of this street can serve as a catalyst for more economic development and investment in south Jackson.”

HFHMCA has acquired additional lots on Greenview Drive and already has commitments for at least two more Habitat house builds in 2016:

- Nissan Build, sponsored by Nissan/Canton; and
- Women Build, sponsored by women donors and volunteers throughout the tri-county area.

The model for revitalization of Greenview Drive is Englewood Gardens, the 29-home HFHMCA neighborhood in west Jackson that was dedicated in 2013. With the support of the City of Jackson and the community, HFHMCA transformed an illegal dump into this beautiful, safe neighborhood.

“Unfortunately, there are many areas within our community with vacant and derelict properties strangling the life out of the surrounding area,” Griffin said. “We know putting homeowners in safe, decent, affordable housing stems the tide of crime, builds strong neighborhoods and provides a platform for more economic development.”

To learn more about how to support HFHMCA’s work on Greenview Drive by becoming a donor, volunteer or homeowner, please call 601-353-6060 or visit www.habitatmca.org.

About Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area:

Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area (HFHMCA) is a nonprofit Christian housing organization that seeks to put God’s love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Working in partnership with low income families and using volunteer labor and donated materials whenever possible, the organization is building basic, affordable houses that are then sold to families at cost with no profit or interest. Since its founding in 1980, HFHMCA has partnered with families to build MORE THAN 600 HOMES in the Mississippi capital area.
EVENTS

DIOCESAN CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2015
• 11: Bishop Seage visits St. Francis’, Philadelphia — 11:00 a.m.
• 12-15: Clergy Conference — Gray Center
• 18: Bishop Seage visits St. Luke’s, Brandon — 11:30 a.m.
  Bishop Seage visits St. Mark’s, Raymond — 4:00 p.m.
• 20: Standing Committee Meeting — Allin House — 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
• 21: Diocesan Trustee’s Meeting — Allin House — 1:00 p.m.
• 23-25: A. C. Marble School
• 24: Cursillo #129 Fourth Day Meeting
• 25: Bishop Seage visits Annunciation, Perkinston — 10:00 a.m.
• 31: Fall Festival — Gray Center
  31-Nov. 1: EYC Fright Night — Camp Bratton-Green

NOVEMBER 2015
• 2: Bishop Seage visits All Saints’, Jackson — 6:00 p.m.
• 3: Deadline for The Mississippi Episcopalian
• 3: Fresh Start — Trinity, Hattiesburg — 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
• 5: Fresh Start — All Saints’, Grenada — 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
• 6-8: Sr. High DOY — Camp Bratton Green
• 8: Bishop Seage visits Christ Church, Holly Springs — 11:00 a.m.
• 8-10: Presbytery POC — Gray Center
• 13-14: ECW Fall Conference (The Rt. Rev. Kee Sloan) — Gray Center
• 13-15: A. C. Marble School
• 3-15: Happening #82 — St. John’s, Pascagoula
• 15: Bishop Seage visits All Saints’, Tupelo — 9:30 a.m.
• 25-27: Allin House closed for Thanksgiving
• 30-Dec. 4: Gee’s Bend Quilting Retreat — Gray Center

DECEMBER 2015
• 1: Deadline for The Mississippi Episcopalian
• 3: Standing Committee Meeting — Allin House — 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
• 4-5: Gray Center Board — Gray Center
• 6: Bishop Seage visits Holy Cross, Olive Branch — 1:00 p.m.
• 9: Convocational Deans’ Meeting — Allin House — 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
• 10: Finance Committee Meeting — St. Andrew’s Cathedral — 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
• 11-13: A. C. Marble School
• 13: Bishop Seage visits St. Paul’s, Woodville — 10:30 a.m.
• 17: Executive Committee Meeting — St. Andrew’s Cathedral — 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
• 23-28: Allin House closed for Christmas
• 27-Jan. 1: Winter Solstice — Camp Bratton-Green
• 31: Allin House closed at noon for New Year’s Eve

FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Please submit Faithful Departed notices to your church for submission

Robert Aubrey Hanson, 82, communicant of St. Matthew’s, Kosciusko, died April 21, 2015.

Ralph A. Henderson, 93, communicant of St. Patrick’s, Long Beach, died August 1, 2015.


Marcia Lois Kline Boney, 86, wife of retired priest The Rev. Canon Sam Boney, died September 19, 2015 in Pensacola, FL.

Deployment Report
For The Diocese of Mississippi
October, 2015

New Calls/Appointments
The Reverend Chuck Culpepper, to be Priest-in-Charge, St. Luke’s, Brandon, to continue as Vicar, St. Alexis’, Jackson
The Reverend Liz Jones, to be Interim Head of School, Coast Episcopal School, Long Beach
The Reverend Harold Roberts, to be Priest-in-Charge, St. Pierre’s, Gautier

In Transition
Christ Church, Bay St. Louis
St. Thomas’, Diamondhead
Redeemer, Greenville
St. Paul’s, Hollandale
St. John’s, Leland
St. Mary’s, Lexington
St. Paul’s, Meridian
Mediator, Meridian
St. Peter’s, Oxford
St. Francis’, Philadelphia
St. Timothy’s, Southaven

The Episcopal Church of the Nativity presents a weekend with WALTER BRUEGGEMANN The Prophetic Imagination: Judgment & Hope January 22-24 Greenwood, Mississippi For more information, visit nativitygreenwood.org or call 662.453.7786

Best Friends, A Pet Crematorium
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Gibson Sims

October 2015
St. Andrew’s School begins transformation on two campuses

By Patrick Taylor

St. Andrew’s Episcopal School announces the groundbreaking for two major construction projects on its Jackson and Ridgeland campuses. This marks the first phase of a multi-year, $34 million expansion that will transform and modernize one of the South’s premiere academic institutions.

The groundbreaking for a state-of-the-art early childhood center for pre-K3, pre-K4, and kindergarten on the South Campus on Old Canton Road in Fondren began on Friday, September 18, at 9:00 a.m. This event was followed by a similar ceremony at 10:00 a.m. for a 65,000 square foot athletic healthplex on the Highland Colony North Campus in Ridgeland.

“St. Andrew’s has had two transformational moments in its history,” said George Penick, Head of School. “Establishing the campus on Old Canton Road in Jackson and purchasing property in Ridgeland for our Middle and Upper Schools, when it was only farmland, were bold moves by visionary leaders. This is the third transformational moment made possible by bold and visionary leaders.”

The school has made fundraising history in receiving in excess of $9 million dollars in just 9 months. The Forward Saints Capital Campaign for St. Andrew’s supports a total of $34 million for five major projects in three stages. Each stage will unfold as fundraising continues.

Tim Alford, Head of Lower School, states that, “St. Andrew’s has always looked at its future in its totality while being firmly rooted in our mission. This first stage reflects the importance we place on early childhood education and our strong commitment to athletics. As a whole, this campaign and these projects allow us to grow in excellence at every grade level, on each campus, for each child.”

Founded in 1947, St. Andrew’s Episcopal School is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory day school serving over 1,100 students in pre-K through grade 12 on two campuses. St. Andrew’s is nationally ranked and recognized for academic excellence while cultivating the critical thinking skills needed to excel. Valuing diversity, St. Andrew’s welcomes students of any race, color, religion, nationality, or ethnic origin. Typically, 100 percent of St. Andrew’s graduates attend four-year colleges and universities.

Patrick Taylor is the director of communications for St. Andrew’s School.