

## **Prayer for a Bishop**

We give you thanks, Gracious God, for your goodness in bestowing upon this Church the gift of the episcopate and its heritage in this Diocese. Grant that in our search for the Eleventh Bishop of Louisiana we may be open to your will, receptive of your guidance, and ready in obedience. By your abundant grace may we lay aside any shallow self-interest so that in seeking to elect your servant we may serve you; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **Introduction**

Our Diocesan Bishop Charles Jenkins has decided to retire and we have begun the process that will lead to his replacement. The people of the Diocese of Louisiana, both ordained and lay, have engaged for several months in a process of reflection and response to discern the qualities we should look for in the Eleventh Bishop of Louisiana. We have considered our history, our current circumstances, those things in the recent and distant past that have shaped us and those issues that loom ahead of us to be dealt with in the future. The results of this undertaking have been compiled in this profile.

It is impossible to capture in an overview of any reasonable length the breadth, depth and variety of thoughtful responses expressed by members of our Episcopal community throughout this process. This profile is offered as a starting point for further exploration and conversation for all involved in this process — for those who hear God’s call to nominate a candidate, those who are nominated, those who will vote in the election, and last, but certainly not least, those who will be in steadfast prayer that we will hear and heed God’s voice in this process.

If you believe being our bishop might well match your perception of your calling to ministry, we would like you to complete the questions which we have also enclosed. They should be returned to me at 7946 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70806 by July 31st, 2009.

Bishop Jenkins has provided tremendous leadership for our diocese — particularly in the wake of a series of devastating hurricanes. He has also been active in the national church and the House of Bishops. He is widely loved and respected in our diocese among both ordained and lay persons — he will be sorely missed. But we as a people of the Baptismal Covenant must look to the future for what God has in mind for us, and we look forward to the possibility of hearing from you.

Blessings,

David R. Pitts

*Chairman of the Episcopate Committee*

## **Who We Are**

Louisiana is blessed with a richness of cultural and natural resources. Its abundance of cultures and ethnic diversity is known around the world. South Louisiana has a multicultural, multilingual heritage, so strongly influenced by a blend of 18th century European, Caribbean, African and Central American cultures that it is considered somewhat exceptional in the U.S. Our people can trace their heritage to more countries than many other regions of the United States.

The people of the Diocese of Louisiana resemble our tasty gumbos that are a staple menu item — we are a rich collective of flavors, colors, and consistency, each retaining a strong sense of our roots and origins, but coming together in a wonderful, flavorful mixture.

Louisiana is also well known for its bountiful natural resources of forests, swamps, and the saltwater marshes that give way to the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The economic downturn and the bursting of the housing bubble that has ravaged other parts of the country has had a lesser impact on Louisiana's economy, which is still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Katrina and her siblings Rita, Gustav and Ike.

South Louisiana boasts rich, delicious and exotic foods, zydeco music, Cajun and Creole cultures, rabid football fans and the most eclectic and gracious people you will ever meet. Baton Rouge, the state capital, is home to our flagship university, LSU; and Southern University, one of the premier historically black land grant colleges in the country. New Orleans, weakened by recent storms, is still the epicenter of all things fun and bizarre, and has a thriving film industry.

In between our two largest cities you will find beautiful bayous and farms, antebellum homes and families that have been settled there for centuries.

Louisiana is the biggest producer of crawfish in the world, and we also supply cotton, soybeans, cattle, sugarcane, poultry and eggs, dairy products and rice. Our industries generate chemical products, petroleum and coal products, and paper products. Tourism and culture are major players in Louisiana's economy.

## **What Has Shaped Us**

### **Our History**

Among the states, south Louisiana is somewhat unusual. Its politics and culture were initially formed by the monarchies of France and Spain and by the Roman Catholic Church. The sudden sale of Louisiana to the United States of America in 1803 surprised its French-speaking inhabitants and thrust major changes upon them.

The Louisiana Purchase brought the possibility of religious diversity, and newly-arriving Americans brought the Episcopal Church. At first, there were only a few scattered congregations, beginning with Christ Church, New Orleans, in 1805. Others followed, but slowly.

In 1838, the General Convention elected Leonidas Polk as Missionary Bishop of Arkansas. His enormous territory encompassed Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and the Republic of Texas — 500,000 square miles and 1,500,000 people. His indefatigable missionary travels endeared him to Louisiana, which organized as a diocese in 1839, and asked the General Convention to name him as Bishop of Louisiana in 1841. His long and fruitful episcopate ended with fame and some notoriety when he became a major general in the Confederate forces and was killed by a cannon ball in Pine Mountain, Georgia.

By 1866, the Diocese of Louisiana — which had never formally joined the Confederate Church — had returned to the Episcopal Church and faced a dismaying loss of young men, the bitterness of defeat, destroyed churches, Reconstruction, chronic poverty, changing demographics, outbreaks of yellow fever, floods, storms, ethnic and racial unrest, and potentially divisive changes in the Church.

Its first post-Civil War bishops, Joseph Wilmer (1866-1878) and Nicholas Galleher (1880-1891), were pastoral and mildly progressive. While the Church in Louisiana was smaller and poorer, it continued to work and hope, and began to grow.

Bishop Davis Sessums (1891-1929) stressed the corporate and catholic aspects of Anglicanism, worked to establish Christ Church, New Orleans, as the diocese's cathedral, sought to empower the laity, and to organize the diocese for mission. Significantly, he was attacked locally and in some national publications for heresy — a sign that the Episcopal Church was becoming differentiated in the public mind from evangelicals. During his long episcopate, the Diocese of Louisiana became less isolated and more fully involved nationally, a development celebrated by the meeting of the General Convention in New Orleans in 1925.

Bishop James Craik Morris (1930-1939) guided the diocese through the Depression. He helped the diocese deal with its accumulated debt, and prepared it for its second century. His successor, Bishop John Long Jackson (1940-1948), undertook to provide the kinds of ministry necessitated by World War II,

encouraged ministry among young people, and, like Bishop Polk before him, placed special stress on ministry to African-Americans.

Bishop Girault Jones (1949-1969) presided over a time of great growth in church membership, which was also a time of great challenge, as the emerging civil rights movement called into question many of the assumptions the diocese had been making since its beginnings.

Bishop Iveson Noland (1969-1975) was the first native Louisianian to be bishop of the diocese. He stood staunchly against racism, and for revision of the prayer book and the liturgical participation of children. He was pastorally patient with the incendiary national debate about the war in Vietnam. His episcopate was tragically cut short when he was killed in a plane crash in 1975.

Bishop James Brown (1976-1998) took the lead in the creation of another diocese in Louisiana. He chose to remain with southeast Louisiana, which, however, faced new difficulties — the decline of the petroleum-based economy, changing demographics in urban centers, and increasing congregational parochialism. Nevertheless, he established new congregations, began to ordain women to the priesthood, created the diocesan College of Presbyters, and was the guiding force in the building of Solomon Episcopal Conference Center.

Bishop Charles Jenkins (1998- ) tried immediately to revitalize the diocese's sense of mission with, he thought, mixed success. Everyone is for mission in theory, but many are not willing to change habits, attitudes, and financial commitments to enable it. Then, in August 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, followed the next month by Hurricane Rita. The storms unveiled the poverty and racism that afflict south Louisiana, resulting in what Bishop Jenkins described as a conversion. He began to work for social justice, for close inter-racial cooperation, for initiatives that specifically targeted the needy, and for a recovery that would result not just in a restored community but in a better one. With help from Episcopal Relief and Development, monetary contributions from everywhere, and nearly 10,000 volunteers, the diocese embarked on helping ministries of unprecedented scope.

Over the years, the bishops of Louisiana have been pastoral leaders, connected us to the larger Church, brought apostolic witness, discerned new directions, and led us in mission. We thank God for them, even as we pray for help in finding someone to carry on their work.

## **What Has Shaped Us**

### **Katrina**

Hurricane Katrina turned our region upside down in 2005 and exposed glaringly unacceptable social injustices. Our diocese responded by getting to work. The clearly inadequate response to the disaster at all levels of government, as well as the sheer size of the devastation, made it clear that we needed to become a hands-on, mission-oriented Diocese — and quickly.

Katrina was followed swiftly by Hurricane Rita, which damaged many parts of the diocese lucky enough to have escaped Katrina — and struck again at some areas already devastated. We began immediately providing necessities such as food, water, and medical and pastoral care through various congregation-based ministries in the Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and North Shore areas. With the help of a generous grant from Episcopal Relief and Development, we soon began gutting flooded houses. Now, four years later, we boast two organizations borne out of tragedy, dedicated to rebuilding lives and providing homes — the Office of Disaster Response (now part of Episcopal Community Services) and the Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative.

Local congregations stepped in and responded in a variety of ways to address immediate needs in the aftermath of these disasters. In Baton Rouge, St. Luke's formed a partnership with Woman's Hospital to house new mothers and their premature babies in the Parish Hall; St. James provided office space for the New Orleans-based Bishop's office and other New Orleans congregations needing a place to work. In New Orleans, the Church of the Annunciation began immediate work in partnership with the people of the Broadmoor neighborhood to rebuild flooded homes and assist families in their return to the city. Christ Church in Slidell served as a clearing house for immediate relief efforts on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. These few examples showcase the work of many — in a time of need, Episcopalians in south Louisiana responded with great energy and compassion.

## **Worship & Community Life**

### **Churches**

The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana consists of 55 worshipping congregations: 35 parishes, 14 missions — including three college chaplaincies — and six mission stations.

To see a map of all of our parishes, click [here](#).

For demographic information about each church, click [here](#).

## **Worship & Community Life**

### **Gathering Places**

**Solomon Episcopal Conference Center:** Situated on 80 rolling acres, the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center (SECC) has been a place of hospitality, renewal, and refreshment since opening its doors in 1992 under the leadership and guidance of Bishop James Brown. The center offers a tranquil setting for retreats, conferences, meetings and training sessions — and is used by diocesan groups, Episcopal congregations and other denominations, schools, civic organizations, nonprofit associations, and even businesses. Individuals are always welcome to come to the center for private retreats or quiet days.

In early 2006, an additional 92 acres contiguous to the existing property were purchased for a youth conference center.

**Camp Hardtner:** In operation since 1948, Camp Hardtner has seen untold numbers of children, many now active adult members in the Church, come up through its programs. Hardtner offers a serene, woodland setting for young people to learn about themselves, enjoy outdoor activities, build friendships and develop new, lasting relationships with their peers and with God.

Located near Pollock in central Louisiana, Camp Hardtner is owned by and part of the Diocese of Western Louisiana, but remains a spiritual center for children and adults from all over the state and beyond.

## **Commitment to Episcopal Education**

### **Diocesan Schools**

**Episcopal School, Baton Rouge:** Episcopal is the leading independent school in Baton Rouge. Located on a beautiful 55-acre campus in the southeastern section of the city, it was established in 1965 as a challenging college preparatory school.

It now serves students in grades PK-12. The low student/teacher ratio of 11:1 allows a relationship between student and teacher that recognizes the personal needs and individual levels of achievement of its 1,034 students.

Episcopal's Statement of Mission and Ministry promises to "nurture and develop the whole child — spiritually, morally, physically, and artistically—through challenging academic and co-curricular programs which prepare our graduates for college and for purposeful lives."

**St. Martin's, Metairie:** For 60 years, St. Martin's Episcopal School has built a reputation for excellence among New Orleans' independent college-preparatory schools. Though located in the suburbs of New Orleans, St. Martin's has been committed to serve as a metropolitan school not limited to or dominated by a particular neighborhood, area, or social grouping.

This metropolitan approach has been an integral part of the school's history and remains a consistent element of the school community today. Leadership is nurtured by a distinctive faith-based approach to learning. At the heart of its mission, the school focuses on developing the whole child within the context of a Christian community, a family atmosphere, and a coeducational environment.

There are 22 parish day and preschools in our diocese.

## **Ministry & Mission**

### **Youth, Students and Young Adults**

The Diocese of Louisiana is proudly committed to ministries serving youth, college students, and young adults. For many years, dedicated clergy and lay leaders have collaborated in ministries such as diocesan youth events, Happenings, and parish-based youth programming.

In the past year, the diocese initiated a new ministry to young adults in their 20s and 30s known as the New Orleans Episcopal Young Adults (“NOeYa”) in response to the large influx of young people coming to post-Katrina New Orleans to begin their careers and participate in the city’s rebuilding efforts.

Recently, the bishop and executive board created a new diocesan staff position of Missioner for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. The missioner will develop supportive relationships with youth ministers in congregations and work to develop youth programming in all our congregations. In addition, the missioner will foster connections between young Episcopalians and local community service opportunities in New Orleans and throughout all areas of need in our diocese.

### **Chaplaincies**

**St. Alban’s Chapel, Baton Rouge:** Erected in 1929, St. Alban’s Chapel and the Davis Sessums Memorial University Center is situated in the heart of the campus of Louisiana State University, the state’s flagship university. St. Alban’s is blessed with a permanent congregation committed to the mission of serving the students and faculty of LSU, hosting such programs as Lunch with C.S. Lewis and Canterbury Club. The clergy, staff, and congregation aim to live and to present the Good News in an environment of reverent worship, open inquiry, intellectual challenge, and spiritual honesty.

**The Chapel of the Holy Comforter, New Orleans:** In 1999, the mission congregation of Holy Comforter began providing a campus ministry to the adjoining academic communities of University of New Orleans (UNO) and Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO), as well as the surrounding Gentilly neighborhood. Undaunted by the challenges caused by Katrina, parishioners continue to see themselves as ministering to the people of Gentilly and the academic communities of UNO and SUNO.

**The Chapel of the Holy Spirit, New Orleans:** Since the late 1940s, the Chapel of the Holy Spirit has served as the primary location for the Episcopal and ELCA Campus Ministry to Tulane and Loyola Universities. During the academic year, weekly student services of Holy Eucharist are held in addition to various other weekly opportunities for worship and fellowship. A family-sized congregation helps to oversee the use and upkeep of the facilities, and many of its members continue to assist the campus ministry through cooking meals and offering support to students.

**Episcopal Ministry to Medical Education, Tulane University, New Orleans:** In 1970, the Episcopal chaplain to Tulane University and the Chapel of the Holy Spirit began a bold move and ministry at the Tulane School of Medicine. The Rev'd Prim Smith began an elective course in medical ethics at Tulane and LSU medical schools. It was a great success which gave birth to the Episcopal Ministry to Medical Education (EMME). The ministry was one of a kind, which is still the case. The Rev'd Don Owens took over in 2000 and ministers to the whole community regardless of their religion or creed. He looks at this one-of-a-kind ministry as civil service, his parish a geographical and civil entity as well as an ecclesiastical one.

## **Episcopal Community Services**

The Diocese of Louisiana has a long history of assisting those in need through both congregational and diocesan initiatives. Episcopal Community Services (ECS) is a product of those ministries.

ECS administers disbursements from the Gaudet Fund, an endowment funded from property donated by Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet in 1921. Mrs. Gaudet was a missionary whose tireless work for social justice improved the juvenile justice system and helped educate African American children in early 20th century New Orleans. In keeping with Mrs. Gaudet's wishes, money from the fund is used for scholarships and grants to individuals and programs that further the education of African-American children within the diocese.

The 2009 Diocesan Convention approved a resolution that set the stage for evolving ECS from a program of the diocese to a wholly owned subsidiary nonprofit corporation of the diocese. It is now poised to live into a mission glimpsed over the years through the use of the Gaudet funds. ECS is now more fully envisioned as a result of ministries carried out by the diocese and by local congregations in the wake of recent hurricanes — initiating, supporting, providing, and funding congregational and diocesan programs that serve the poor, speak to issues of justice, and build the beloved community.

Mrs. Gaudet was recently added to the Lesser Feasts and Fasts calendar. Her collect reads: *Merciful God, who raised up your servant Frances Joseph Gaudet to work for prison reform and the education of her people: Grant that we, encouraged by the example of her life, may work for those who are denied the fullness of life by reasons of incarceration and lack of access to education; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.*

## **Community of Deacons**

Although several deacons were ordained prior to his consecration, Bishop Jenkins encouraged the growth of the Louisiana Diaconate, recognizing and organizing it as a full and equal order. Jenkins appointed Deacon Ormonde Plater, a writer and scholar of the diaconate, as archdeacon. Plater formed a Council on Deacons, drafted guidelines for the diaconate, and was an active member of the bishop's staff. Hurricane Katrina forced Plater, a New Orleans resident, to temporarily move, and as a result resign. Deacon Charles deGravelles, well known for his prison ministry, was appointed archdeacon.



Under the leadership of Plater and deGravelles and the Director of Deacon Formation, Deacon Maggie Dawson, many new deacons were ordained and the role of the diaconate was refined and strengthened. Deacons have played a vital role in social ministry and leadership in the post-Katrina response. deGravelles retired as archdeacon in 2008, and the diaconate is now guided by its Council on Deacons, of which deGravelles remains chair.

Deacons serve many roles in the diocese: Chaplains in schools, hospitals, retirement communities, prisons, the police force; directors of Christian education and parish outreach; advocates for children; spiritual directors and Stephen Ministers; and providing social justice and outreach ministries throughout the diocese and mission work outside the U.S.

### **School for Ministry**

The School for Ministry is an advanced study program established in January 2000 to provide academic preparation for deacons and congregational leaders. In its early years the School for Ministry also provided academic preparation for locally trained priests. Classes are held one weekend a month for two nine-month terms.

The current curriculum includes Scripture, The Church in History, Worship and Liturgy, Theology, Christian Ethics and Moral Theology, Polity and Issues in the Anglican Communion, Ministry in the World and Leadership in Servant Ministry. All faculty members are academics or clerics. Through the current class, 130 people will have graduated.

### **Others Ministries**

**Episcopal Church Women:** The Episcopal Church Women is a venerable organization that has served the Diocese of Louisiana for the past 117 years. All Episcopal women are considered members and are welcome to participate in the many activities available at the parish and diocesan level. The ECW sponsors many outreach projects and hosts worship, prayer, fellowship and service activities throughout the year in many different venues.

**Addictions Recovery:** The Addictions Recovery Ministry (or ARM) is a local affiliate of the Recovery Ministries of the National Episcopal Church. This ministry welcomes recovering people into the Episcopal community and also helps recovering Episcopalians find a home within the organized church. ARM provides education, guidance, and support for families and parishes struggling with or wishing to learn more about addiction — any activity or substance that interferes with healthy functioning.

**Cursillo:** Since the 1970s, there have been 143 Cursillo weekends in the diocese. After Katrina, a partnership was established with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mandeville, Louisiana. That has now expanded to include ELCA churches in Metairie and Baton Rouge. A new vision was cast with a

renewed focus on encouraging servant leadership in our parishes and striving to build healthy small group ministry and discipleship.

**Partners-In-Mission:** Our diocese became a companion to the Diocese of Honduras in 2004, and more specifically, to two isolated and very poor deaneries – Copán and Maya. In recent years more than half of our congregations have given funds for specific projects in Honduras, and ten or more have sent members on Mission Teams or to do specific mission work.

Funds are used to directly support the worship, education and well-being of the nearly 50 congregations in Copán and Maya and their two deans, providing bibles, prayer books, hymnals, Sunday School materials, guitars, furniture, fuel, horses, lanterns, communion sets and other supplies.

**Prison Ministry:** In the 1990s, a worshipping congregation led by Deacon Charles deGravelles started to gather at Angola, Louisiana's maximum security prison. Under Bishop Jenkins, this congregation became The Episcopal Chapel of the Transfiguration, a mission station of the diocese.

Inmates are trained and empowered to be Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors, taking communion and ministering to other inmates in lockdown. The ministry includes an active Disciples of Christ in Community (DOCC) program of Christian Education.

Diocesan prison ministry includes a leadership role in the Louisiana Kairos Prison Ministry, active at Angola and the Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women.

## **Building on Hope**

### **The Office of Disaster Response**

The Office of Disaster Response began its ministry in the fall of 2005 in response to hurricanes Katrina and Rita. ODR's mission is to bring our hurricane-displaced neighbors home and to reclaim for all a dignified place in the building of the beloved community. Seed funding from Episcopal Relief and Development allowed ODR to immediately begin addressing the overwhelming needs in our diocese.

From its inception, ODR worked with the most vulnerable among us — those who have fallen through the cracks of other government or charitable assistance programs.

Disaster recovery efforts have been guided by a vision of "The Beloved Community," articulated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, where:

- Biblical standards of human decency and justice do not allow us to tolerate homelessness, hunger, or the impoverishment and diminishment of our fellow human beings.
- We cherish the image of God in each other and are blessed with an all-inclusive spirit of sister- and brotherhood.

- A critical mass of people has agreed that the attainment of these standards is possible, and God's grace has made our hands strong to achieve them.

The explicit approach of ODR is to "meet people where they are". Initially this meant providing such basic human needs as food, water, and cleaning supplies, together with pastoral and minor medical care needs. Later, ODR developed a system for coordinating volunteers and distributing supplies to teams gutting houses and helping our churches with outreach programs.

An army of volunteers has served as the backbone of ODR's work, allowing us to accomplish much more and touch many more lives than we could have with the resources at hand. We are delighted and amazed that our supply of volunteers has continued as strong as ever.

As much as these volunteers have blessed us with their contribution to the rebuilding of our community, we are aware that they have also been blessed by this work. Hearts have been changed from the experience here. Some groups have come back multiple times. Others have taken what they learned about poverty and social injustice in New Orleans and applied it in their home dioceses.

Today we stand ready to face adversity, tested through the 2008 hurricanes, Gustav and Ike. We are focused on rebuilding, but not only rebuilding homes. We are focused on rebuilding the beloved community, repairing the fabric of a society whose inequalities were so clearly exposed when the storms ripped it apart.

At its 2009 Convention, the Diocese of Louisiana authorized the creation of a newly incorporated Episcopal Community Services to expand on the work begun by Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet and to provide a permanent home for the social justice ministries started in our diocese post-Katrina. In so doing, our diocese has chosen to place mission and social ministry at the center of our common life. We also remain hopeful that the communities we help rebuild will benefit from a more just distribution of resources and opportunity because of our efforts. We aspire to nothing less than what Bishop Jenkins has called a "revolution of values."

- Almost 10,000 volunteers have helped ODR enable nearly 3,000 families return home to New Orleans
- Over 900 houses have been gutted and 55 homes rebuilt
- Through May of this year, 7 homes were rebuilt — with a value totaling over \$1 million
- Case managers have helped another 2,000 families put their households and lives back together

### **Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative**

Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative of New Orleans is a neighborhood-based nonprofit homebuilder that provides families with healthy and energy-efficient affordable housing opportunities in the blighted Central City area of New Orleans.

It was begun in the aftermath of Katrina, seeded by a grant from Episcopal Relief and Development. Partnering with neighborhood residents, organizations, and businesses to create and maintain a stable and thriving community, Jericho Road is a catalyst that helps bring people home by providing high-quality, affordable, permanent housing opportunities.

Our community-based approach collaborates with Central City Renaissance Alliance and ACT (All Congregations Together) to foster a spirit of neighbor-helping-neighbor among residents, with the goal of improving the quality of life in Central City.

Lots Acquired: 56 • Houses Constructed or Under Construction: 20 • Homes and Properties Sold: 21

### **St. Paul's Homecoming Center**

St. Paul's Church and the surrounding Lakeview community suffered catastrophic damage from Hurricane Katrina. Under the leadership of the Rev'd Will Hood, a former chaplain to the Marine Corps in Iraq, a revolutionary ministry began to take shape. The Office of Disaster Response began using the school's gymnasium to store materials and stage operations in the area. In 2006, St. Paul's joined forces with grassroots rebuilding organization Beacon of Hope — and with funding from ODR — opened St. Paul's Homecoming Center. Case management, a washeteria, and basic household necessities the center provided enabled many Lakeview residents to return home. The Diocese of Olympia became St. Paul's partner diocese in 2006 and has pledged \$500,000 to the center.

St. Paul's Homecoming Center has put over 20,000 volunteers to work over the course of three years, clearing debris from yards and green spaces, painting and landscaping homes, building playgrounds, planting trees and public green space, and cutting grass in abandoned lots and public areas. The lives of these volunteers and the residents alike have been forever changed.

In January 2009, St. Paul's Center moved operations from Lakeview, which has recovered at a much quicker pace than other areas of New Orleans, to the nearby working class neighborhood of Gentilly, still largely neglected. St. Paul's Homecoming Center in Gentilly now brings to that neighborhood the same skills, volunteer support, and enthusiasm that helped Lakeview residents get back on their feet.

### **Congregational Ministry Initiative Programs**

Our diocese has funded a range of other congregation-based ministries that have made significant improvements in the lives and communities they serve. These include:

- St. Anna's New Orleans Mobile Medical Unit
- Christ Church Covington Suicide Prevention Program
- St. Andrew's New Orleans Preschool
- St. George's New Orleans Dragon Café feeding ministry
- Grace Church New Orleans Child Care Center
- Trinity New Orleans Social Renewal Program

- St. Anna's New Orleans Hispanic Apostolate
- Chapel of the Holy Spirit New Orleans Legal Aid
- St. Luke's New Orleans Food Pantry

*The diocese has granted almost \$1.4 million to these vital ministries from funds donated by individuals and groups around the world.*

## **What We Know**

### **Where We Are**

The general operations budget of the diocese, reflecting both administrative and program ministries, typically runs just under \$2 million. Oversight of the financial workings of the diocese is provided by the Executive Board.

Ministry expenses are funded primarily by congregational giving, which falls into two categories. First, all parishes, missions and chapels are assessed a mandatory 5% of their Normal Operating Income for the funding of ministries related to the episcopate. Second, congregations are requested to accept a voluntary "Asking" that varies (depending on the size of their budget) between 4.5% and 8.5% of their Normal Operating Income for the purpose of funding program ministries.

In addition to general operations, the Office of Disaster Response manages a budget of slightly more than \$2 million. The programs of the ODR are funded entirely by grants awarded and donations made for its purposes.

Since the storms of 2005, the diocese has experienced budget deficits in each fiscal year. Fortunately, the actual deficits have been considerably less than originally forecasted. The Finance Committee and the Executive Board continue to work hard at controlling costs and finding new ways to generate funding. Current planning forecasts a return to a balanced budget by fiscal 2011.

The Executive Board of the diocese has determined that a preliminary compensation and benefits package (both pension and non-pension related) of approximately \$200,000 will be offered to the next bishop.

## **Where We Are**

### **Online Survey: Diocesan Assessment**

An online survey was conducted by Holy Cow Consulting as part of the discernment process and was open to all Episcopalians in the diocese. It was promoted heavily in order to give notice to as many

potential respondents as possible. There were 942 responses, including clergy and lay, diocesan leadership and those not active at the diocesan level.

*Top four goals identified by respondents:*

1. Equip rectors and other leaders in congregations with strategies that help them reach new members.
2. Equip rectors and other leaders in congregations to help members become growing, vital disciples.
3. Streamline the diocese organizationally and administratively so that it makes better use of financial resources.
4. Cultivate a more consistent hospitality and develop a higher level of trust within the diocese.

*The priorities for critical abilities in the next bishop are:*

1. Ability to articulate a clear vision for the future
2. Ability to be pastoral and approachable
3. Ability to administer and insure fiscal responsibility

*The personal qualities in the next bishop that are most important are:*

1. Sound judgment and wisdom
2. Integrity
3. Deeply spiritual and prayerful

Overall, approximately 24% of respondents are clearly satisfied with things in the diocese and 31% clearly agree that there is not much excitement among members. This suggests that the morale in the diocese is low. It does not answer the question of why this may be the case. On the other hand, respondents indicate an increased level of involvement with the diocese, with 41% indicating their churches are more involved than three years ago.

Given the right opportunities, respondents indicate that they have additional resources to offer. Nearly half agree, to one degree or another, that they have something to offer the diocese, but don't know how to give it. The respondents are not satisfied simply with the status quo and ready to go to work to make a difference.

## **Clergy Forum**

The clergy of the diocese recently convened as the College of Presbyters and the Community of Deacons. During their convocation, a focus group was conducted in which clergy identified the qualities needed in our next bishop, the challenges for the next bishop and the strengths of the diocese identified for the 11th Bishop of Louisiana.

*Qualities needed in our next bishop:*

1. Sound judgment and wisdom
2. Deeply spiritual and prayerful
3. Courage to make hard decisions

*Challenges for which our next bishop should be prepared:*

1. We lack a communal and collegial-based vision that engages a diversity of (1) geographical locations, (2) parishes of different sizes, (3) races, (4) sexuality.
2. The diocese is under financial stress and necessarily dependent on fundraising, without adequate practice of stewardship.
3. Lack of participation in clergy functions is an outward and visible sign of lack of trust among the clergy, low expectations, and lack of collegiality.

*Strengths of the diocese:*

1. We have a post-Katrina awareness and response to the needs of the community.
2. We know that crisis equals opportunity. This has been learned through our involvement in the rebirth of our own region with a resiliency and sense of mission.
3. Louisiana has a rich and diverse culture that is welcoming and joyful. The church is relevant in this society.

## **Lay Forum**

Four lay forums were conducted over four nights in four different regions of the diocese and 155 people participated in these four events. Each group worked with the same three questions:

1. *What are the challenges the diocese faces?*
2. *What are the strengths of the diocese?*
3. *What qualities are needed in our next bishop?*

The responses from the four lay forums were similar to the responses that emerged from the survey and the clergy forum. Finances, the need for church growth, divisions within the church on social and theological issues, challenges to church traditions and the authority of scripture, and the need for more social ministry were identified as challenges.

Strengths identified were the people and culture of Louisiana; a commitment to social ministry; the developed resources of the diocese, such as SECC, Episcopal schools, strong diocesan ECW, current programs and ministries, diocesan staff and well-established parishes; and our liturgy, strong spirituality and worship traditions.

Participants identified many qualities that they would like to see in the next bishop. Among the more frequently mentioned were:

1. Strong teaching, preaching and worship skills
2. Able to build good relationships with clergy and provide strong pastoral leadership

3. Compassionate and caring
4. Ability to work with parishes of varying sizes and needs to strengthen efforts for growth, ministry and evangelism

### **A Letter From the 10<sup>th</sup> Bishop of Louisiana**

“Where Y’at?” is not an uncommon greeting in some neighborhoods in New Orleans. As we work to discern the person God is calling to be the next bishop here, I am pleased to have been asked by the Executive Board and Standing Committee to respond to that question as concerns our mission of the past four years in south Louisiana.

The Eleventh Bishop of Louisiana will have a wonderful and exciting set of choices as she or he assumes a ministry of service in this Diocese. Should God so call, and should the Bishop answer affirmatively, the Bishop may chose to serve not only as Bishop of the Episcopal Church but also as Bishop to many people in southeast Louisiana who are not part of the Episcopal Church. This seems to me an opportunity to live truly as a catholic bishop, a bishop for all people.

There are many who depend upon the work of Episcopal Community Services (and the Office of Disaster Response which is soon to be part of ECS), Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative, and congregational ministries supported by the Diocese such as St. Anna’s Mobile Medical and the Hispanic Apostolate, to name but two. I think I have been led to bring the Church (and not just the Diocese but the entire Church) into service for those who have never heard of the Episcopal Church as a positive force for justice, mercy and compassion. Perhaps that calling will remain constant for the Diocese of Louisiana and her new Bishop. This may be a matter of discernment that will need space and time to live out.

The Church continues to send volunteers to Louisiana at an amazing rate. The multiplier of the contributions of those volunteers is beyond my capacity to calculate. Our small and dedicated staffs of ECS and Jericho Road are amazing stewards of offering to God the little we have and watching God bless that offering and return it to his people many times over. We hear time and time again that those who come here to do volunteer work, those who come to Louisiana on a mission, return home blessed far beyond their gifts of time, talent, and treasure offered unto the Lord. In a newly developing opportunity, we have been asked by several seminaries to provide hands on training and education for students in their Epiphany terms. We expect to have eighteen seminarians with us in January of 2010! We are giving back to the wider Church who has been so generous to us.

The Church is among the last remaining group for good of the many who have come to south Louisiana after the storms of 2005. We stand for those who “fall between the cracks.” Little did we ever realize that so many would fall. The 11th Bishop may choose to give time and energy to such standing, and to do so does take both time and energy, or he or she may find another way to enable the Church to continue this ministry.



Louisiana stands in the midst of a great evangelistic and human endeavor as we make manifest the love and mercy of God to people who have known little of either.

Yours in Christ,  
The Right Rev'd Charles E. Jenkins

## **The Search**

### **Our Process**

Process for the Nomination and Election of the Eleventh Bishop of Louisiana  
As Approved by the 172nd Convention of the Diocese of Louisiana

<i>Date of Episcopal Election:</i>	December 5, 2009
<i>Place of Election:</i>	Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans
<i>Date of Consecration/Ordination:</i>	May 2010
<i>Voting at Electing Convention:</i>	Election by simple majority in each order. A concurrent majority of both orders on the same ballot shall be necessary to elect a Bishop. Note that delegates to the March 2009 Convention shall be called upon to vote at the Electing Convention.

#### *Members of the Episcopate Committee*

##### *Lay*

David Pitts, St. Luke's, Baton Rouge (Chairman)  
Louise Bruce, Trinity, Baton Rouge  
John Musser, Trinity, New Orleans  
Marty Stroble, Mt. Olivet, New Orleans  
Marsha Wade, St. James, Baton Rouge

##### *Clergy*

Deacon Linda Armstrong, St. Alban's, Baton Rouge  
The Very Rev'd A. J. Heine, St. Augustine's, Metairie  
The Rev'd Hill Riddle, St. Paul's New Orleans (Co-Chair)  
The Rev'd Phoebe Roaf, Trinity, New Orleans  
The Rev'd Canon Mark Stevenson, Baton Rouge  
The Rev'd Lonell Wright, All Souls, New Orleans

#### *Members of the Transition Committee*

##### *Lay*

Jim Evans, St. Mary's, Franklin  
Sherrill Lane, Trinity, Baton Rouge  
Harriet Murrell, Trinity, New Orleans  
Bonnie Siegrist, St. Matthew's, Houma  
Liz Taurman, Christ Church, Covington

#### *Clergy*

The Very Rev'd David duPlantier, Christ Church Cathedral (Chairman)  
The Very Rev'd Paul Bailey, Grace Memorial, Hammond  
The Rev'd Stephen Craft, St. Phillip's, New Orleans  
The Rev'd Francis Daunt, St. Mary's, Franklin  
Deacon Mike Hackett, St. Augustine's, Metairie  
The Rev'd Chad Jones, St. Patrick's, Zachary

*In the event a member of the Episcopate or Transition Committee resigns or is disqualified from serving, the Standing Committee shall name a replacement.*

#### *The Episcopate*

The Episcopate Committee shall create a Diocesan Profile, prepare questions of the candidates, issue nomination forms, receive names, conduct background checks and qualify the candidates. The creation of the Profile and the preparation of questions of the candidates shall incorporate input from clergy and lay leadership from across the Diocese. The Spring College of Presbyters/Community of Deacons shall be devoted to soliciting feedback from clergy for this purpose. Some other type of gathering or mechanism shall be employed as well to solicit feedback from lay leadership across the Diocese.

The Committee shall establish the dates and general guidelines for the "walkabouts," to be held in Baton Rouge and New Orleans between November 10 and December 1, 2009. It shall handle all correspondence with the candidates, as well as with the delegates and the Diocese as appropriate. The Diocesan Profile, nomination forms, questions of the candidates, guidelines for the 'walkabouts,' compensation package, and candidate questionnaires, shall all be subject to final approval by both the Standing Committee and the Executive Board.

#### *Background and Other Checks*

A subcommittee comprised of Bishop Brown (Chair), Canon Mark Stevenson, Ms. Marsha Wade, Mr. Cove Geary, and the President of the Standing Committee shall perform background and other checks. If a member of that subcommittee is a nominee, that person shall be recused from the subcommittee, and the Standing Committee shall name a replacement. The subcommittee shall be charged with determining eligibility of nominees to become candidates for election pursuant to the requirements of the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church of the United States. It shall also review in

confidence the background checks, medical examinations and psychological examinations. It shall have the authority to request additional information as needed to make its determination. It shall have the discretion to approve candidates based upon compliance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church of the United States, and based upon the results of the background checks, medical examinations, and psychiatric examinations. All correspondence relating to background and other checks shall be handled by the Chair of the subcommittee. Its decision shall be final, and at the conclusion of the background and other checks, the Chair of the subcommittee shall report in confidence to the Chair of the Episcopate Committee.

#### *The Transition Committee*

The Transition Committee will provide oversight, leadership, planning and assistance in the transition process. It will be responsible for planning and hospitality for the Electing Convention, the consecration, and the celebration of Bishop's retirement. It will also attend to the details in support of the transition of the Bishop-elect and family. This includes insuring that the Bishop's residence is in good repair.

#### *Process of Nominations to the Episcopate*

Who may be nominated?

Any priest or bishop in good standing of the Episcopal Church who will be at least (30) years of age at the time of consecration as a bishop may be nominated.

Who may make nominations?

Any delegate to the 172nd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Louisiana may submit nominations. Each person must be seconded by exactly three (3) other Communicants in Good Standing or Canonically resident Clergy. All four must be from different congregations (or institutions) within the Diocese. The nominator must state his/her reasons for making the nomination, and must see to it that all biographical information is provided, and that the nominee's consent is secured. Members of the Episcopate Committee may not nominate or second. Any clergy member of the Episcopate Committee who is nominated shall resign from the Episcopate Committee and its subcommittees.

How can nominations be made?

The Chair of the Episcopate Committee will receive nominations to the Episcopate between June 15 and July 31, 2009. Each person proposed for nomination must give his/her written consent in order to participate in the election process and give permission for a background check to be made by the Oxford Document Management Company. Copies of the official nomination form will be available online well in advance of June 15, and will also be available by request from the Episcopate Committee chair. Nominations "from the floor" are not allowed.

Where can nominations be made?

Completed nomination forms should be hand delivered, sent by fax, or mailed to:

Mr. David Pitts, Episcopate Committee Chairman

Pitts Management  
7946 Goodwood Boulevard  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806.  
The fax number is 225-923-0302.

When will the slate be announced?

The final slate of nominees will be announced only after all checks have been successfully completed (Tentatively October 1, 2009). All who are nominated and qualify shall appear on the ballot.

How can delegates learn more about the nominees?

By November 1, 2009, the Episcopate Committee will compile and distribute to all delegates pertinent biographical information about all nominees and their written responses to a set of questions developed by the Committee. This information will be included in *Churchwork* and on the Diocesan website.

Additionally, delegates will have opportunity to meet the nominees at the 'walkabouts' to be scheduled in both Baton Rouge and New Orleans sometime in November 2009.

Any promotion of an individual candidate outside of public events, and/or publication organized by the Episcopate Committee is discouraged. Except for the official gatherings known as 'walkabouts,' no gatherings to introduce or promote candidates shall be allowed. Except for the information about the candidates that is distributed by the Diocese, any written, electronic, or other widely distributed communications from or in support of a nominee shall be out of order.

Chaplain for the Process

The Rev'd John Senette has been appointed Chaplain for this process. He will offer a meditation on the Episcopate during the organizational retreat. He may also offer meditations during the Electing Convention. He will also be available to provide pastoral care and counsel for Bishop Jenkins in the coming months.

*Any matters not otherwise addressed above shall be addressed by the Standing Committee and Executive Board.*