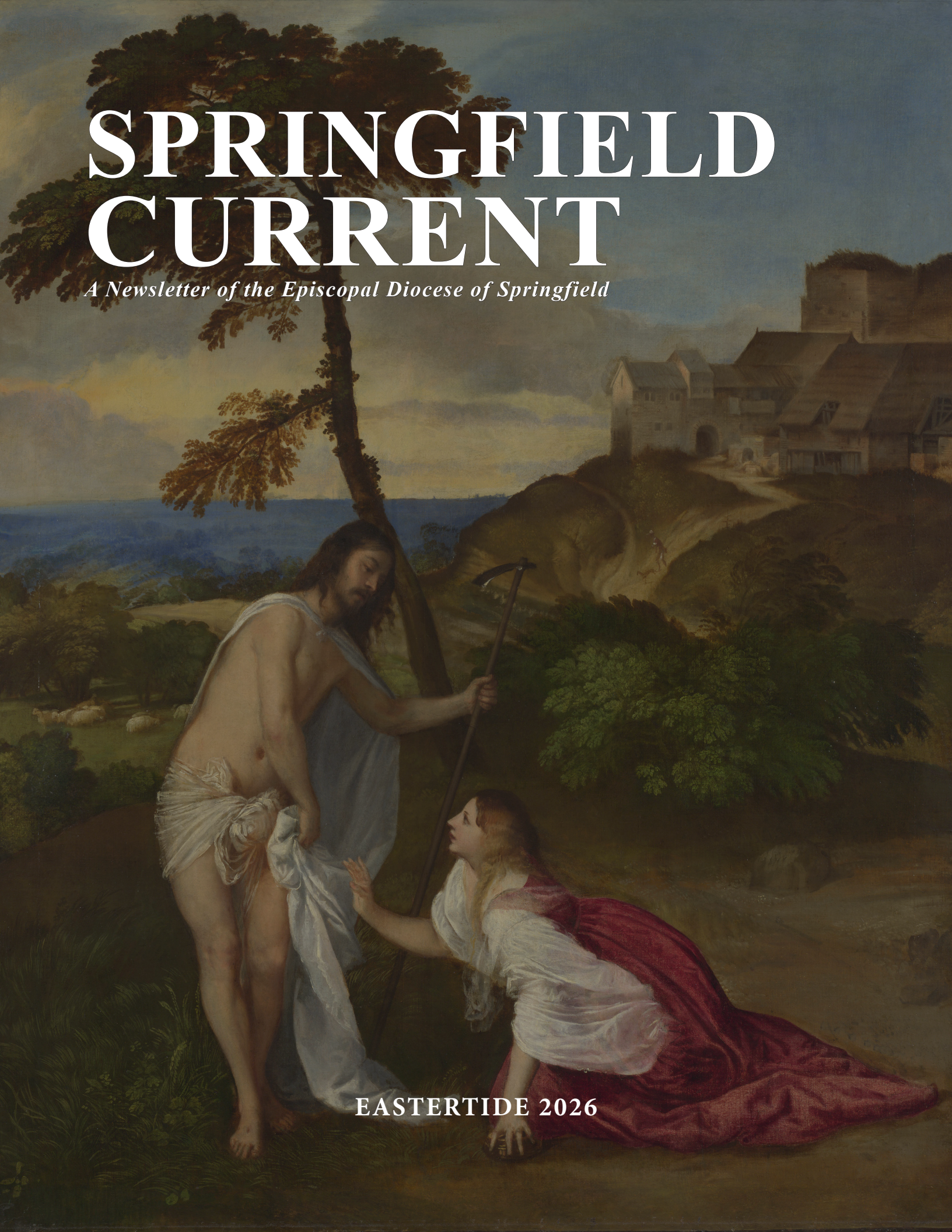


SPRINGFIELD CURRENT

A Newsletter of the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield

EASTERTIDE 2026

*f*rom the Bishop



Alleluia. Christ is risen.
The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

As this Diocese steps into Eastertide (the most glorious fifty days of Easter), I give thanks to our God in Christ for giving us the priority of His mission on this side of Easter. All of human history now bends toward that one event of God having raised Jesus Christ from the dead and the invitation that we, too, live into that life of resurrected glory now.

When meeting others, I like to share how we consider ourselves to be the community of the resurrection, before and above any other definition. There is a great deal of sacrifice going on in central and southern Illinois precisely because we know who our Father is. The ongoing Easter event for us is found in the Holy Eucharist. It is before altars of all shapes, sizes and varying expressions of churchmanship that we get to peer into the kingdom that was won for us by Christ. Our Book of Common Prayer states our present location so beautifully when articulating how we share even now "glimpses of heavenly beauty." If God can raise Jesus from the dead, imagine what it is he can do and is doing within His Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery.

Continued on page 5.

SPRINGFIELD CURRENT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD

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We accept submissions for *The Current* **on the 15th of the months of December, March, June, and September.** Articles, photos, and news can be submitted to *communicator@episcopalspringfield.org*. Contributions to the monthly e-newsletter may be also be sent to that email and are accepted on an ongoing basis.

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Background image: Fr. Parker Asplin

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Communication serves a crucial function in every ministry. Sharing information among congregations, committees, and individual members is no small task. Welcoming new members to our diocesan family also requires unique communication efforts at all levels.

Your contribution to this ministry of communication helps spread the word about what God is doing in our lives, in our congregations, in our diocese, and in the Episcopal Church at large. Please consider making a gift today.

We are committed to sending our diocesan publication to all members and friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield. It is not necessary to contribute in order to receive *The Springfield Current*. Nevertheless, if you choose to support The Springfield Current, your contribution will be of great assistance in this ministry and is tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

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"Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II," Photograph, June 2, 1953.

FROM THE BISHOP

Continued

Once again, I share how proud I am of you: our clergy and all who proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in this time and this place. This is no empty sentiment. Within a YouTube video documenting the final days of Queen Elizabeth II's life and reign, a very simple but poignant statement was made. Having captured in video how as a young woman this monarch came to the throne upon the sudden death of her father King George the VI in 1952; and having heard of her faith and her dedication to the commands of Christ during a reign of 70 years, we were simply told that her Father would have been so extremely proud of her. The producer of this video left it entirely up to each one of us to decide if they meant Father or father. Those who knew Queen Elizabeth II as a devout and dedicated churchwoman would have most likely surmised the former.

My pride in this Diocese is grounded in many earthly experiences of empty tomb and heavenly priorities. Regardless of the Sunday observance or the Church Calendar priority of the day, I find the faithful of this Diocese lending their voices to common prayer, singing Hymns of high thanksgiving, building up rather than tearing down, giving of themselves for the cause of Christ, and living into the Baptismal Covenant as Holy Mother Church has need of us doing. The tension between maintenance and mission is being navigated beautifully by those who understand our goal of being a rescue mission; our sacrificing everything in interest of saving those who are not yet in the boat with us.

> ***"... I find the faithful of this Diocese lending their voices to common prayer, singing Hymns of high thanksgiving, and giving of themselves for the cause of Christ."***

One indication of the sacrificial nature of this Diocese is how you responded to the Diocesan Appeal that was launched during our 148th Annual Synod this past October. Inviting monetary gifts in interest of achieving a $250,000 capital improvement fund goal was a reach that we are not accustomed to taking together at a diocesan level. Beginning before the Synod altar, we stepped out on exodus together. Within just five months, we have already realized 64% of our goal. You will see from the most current list of donors how many leading parishes and leading communicants of our Diocese have made significant gifts in interest of immediately reaching our goal. There are also those who give of their time and talent to ensure we take the right steps in the right order for the right reasons. Every gift is significant. Every gift moves us closer to our stated goal.

To that end, and to make good on our promise that these funds will be used immediately throughout our Diocese, Diocesan Council has authorized that we accomplish Phase I of our plan to rehabilitate St. James' Chapel in Marion. That phase includes demolition of the vicarage, removal of the rotted accessibility ramp and grading/seeding the property to accommodate off-street parking. Beginning



on Tuesday, April 14th and finishing that Friday, after shutting off utilities and pulling all necessary permits, the demolition of the vicarage was completed and the rubble hauled away in dumpsters.



There is still time to help us reach our goal. Gifts in any amount are celebrated and needed as we encourage others to join us. Perhaps a $50 gift honoring a faithful communicant of your parish or a $100 gift in thanksgiving for a grandchild's Baptism





is all that is needed to attract the generosity of other donors. As you survey the list of donors, please consider how many are not from or even reside within our Diocese. The more we proclaim the risen life of Christ from our various altars throughout the Diocese of Springfield, the more the light of Christ shining through us attracts those who are meant to complete us. In Springfield, we resurrect churches and fill them, to God's great honor and glory. We are the community of the resurrection.

> ***"In Springfield, we resurrect churches and fill them, to God's great honor and glory. We are the community of the resurrection."***



Smith, John. *The Resurrection of Christ*. 1650. Oil on canvas.

In the peace of God, which passeth all understanding;

Bishop Brian K. Burgess
XII Springfield

NEW CAMP COORDINATOR

For the Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois

The Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois and the Diocese of Springfield are pleased to announce the hiring of Jeremiah Ratliff as the new Camp Coordinator for ECCI 2026. Jeremiah has an extensive professional history with all things youth and camp, serving in the admissions field for two Christian colleges (Admissions Counselor at Lincoln Christian University, Admissions Director at Central Christian College of the Bible) before returning to the Bloomington-Normal area in 2023 to begin a career in chaplaincy, completing a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program at Carle BroMenn Medical Center and serving as the full time chaplain at Luther Oaks Retirement Community in South Bloomington. "I love my current job," mentioned Jeremiah. "Chaplaincy threads the needle between clinical and congregational ministry and helps people make meaning and connect to what is sacred." During his time at Lincoln Christian University, he also acted as the Director of Camp Teams. He has served at over 25 different weeks of church camp and even met his wife, Caitlin, at camp.



When asked what he is most excited about for ECCI 2026, Jeremiah emphatically replied, "All of it!" Even so, there is still much to be done to prepare for the summer. "There is a lot to do with little time to do it, but you need to have a can-do attitude with camp. The best camps are done on a shoe string budget." In particular, a great way to support our church camp team is to either send a camper or to consider volunteering. ECCI is a unique way that our Diocese serves our youth and prepares them to join in our Anglican practice of faith for the rest of their lives. "I am looking forward once again to seeing how God works in the lives of students through the ministry of camp," said Jeremiah. Please spend some time in the coming weeks in prayer for our new Camp Coordinator, for the ECCI team, for their campers, and for the upcoming week of camp.



INVITATION TO CHURCH CAMP

from Jeremiah Ratliff, Camp Coordinator for ECCI

When Christ our Lord felt the pressures around him, He retreated so that He could bask in the solitude of creation and reconnect with the Father. Even on the night he was betrayed into the hands of the religious leaders, he retreated to the Garden of Gethsemane to grapple with the pressure of what was to happen next... What a blessed model for us to follow.

I argue that this is exactly what the ministry of camp does for our young people. Students today have more pressure than ever before: from school, friends, family, and society alike. This is not to even mention the overwhelming pressure that comes from the digital spaces that demand our students attention. Camp is an opportunity to escape into nature, reconnect with the Father, and climb to "Higher Ground" with others who are also "on the journey".



Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois 2026 will take place from Sunday, June 21st to Friday, June 26th at Camp Wartburg in Waterloo, Illinois. The theme of this year is "Higher Ground" and cost is $275. All students who have completed grades 1-5 ("Alphas") and grades 6-11 ("Omegas") are welcome! Discounts are available for first-time campers (50% off), campers who "Bring-A-Buddy" ($25 off), and campers who register during our Early Bird window ($25 off). Registration is open and information can be found using the QR code below or by visiting www.eccillinois.org.



Built across beautiful acreage with fully air conditioned facilities and activities such as zip lining, rock wall climbing, canoeing, creek walking, swimming and more, Camp Wartburg is a place "Where Heaven and Nature Sing". Campers who attend ECCI 2026 will not only have the opportunity to experience unforgettable summertime activities, but will also have a chance to free themselves of distractions, connect with their Creator, and learn about the love of their Savior.

Not a camper but want to serve the Kingdom by volunteering for the ministry of camp? Let us know! You can find a volunteer interest form by following the QR code or by contacting the Camp Coordinator at EpiscopalChurchCampofIllinois@gmail.com.

Either way, we pray that you will consider joining us for an unforgettable week at ECCI 2026!

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A special thanks is extended to the following donors for their generous financial contributions to the Capital Improvement Fund and Restoration of St. James Chapel in Marion, IL

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EPISCOPAL CURSILLO MINISTRY

The next Cursillo weekend is set for October 1-4th at Toddhall in Columbia, IL. Cursillo is a three-day weekend retreat designed to deepen relationships with Christ, ignite faith renewal, and foster growth in Christian service, while strengthening faith through fellowship, prayer, daily worship, music and spiritual reflection. This year's Cursillo weekend begins Thursday evening, October 1st and concludes late Sunday afternoon the 4th, offering a powerful experience for committed Christians seeking spiritual exploration. Additional information is available at episcopalspringfield.org/ministries/cursillo

THE 149TH ANNUAL SYNOD

October 23-24, 2026 in Alton, IL

The 149th Annual Synod of the Diocese of Springfield will be hosted in Alton, Illinois from October 23rd - 24th. More information can be found on the Diocesan website (https://episcopalspringfield.org/resources/synod-2026) as available. Election results, the Bishop's address, and the Diocesan slideshow can also be found by visiting the Synod 2026 page on the Diocesan website.



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