



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — October 6, 2021

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From Bishop Hughes

Boldness

This is a transcript from a video message.

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. And I want to talk with you about boldness. And specifically how we've been using that word "bold" in our diocese, how we've begun to use it.

Several months ago, members of our governing bodies (that is the Standing Committee, Diocesan Council and the Trustees of the Diocese) began meeting, meeting to talk about where we were as a diocese and where we felt called to be. One of the things that we discussed was the number of assets that we had in the diocese, the resources that we had in the diocese, the ministries that we're doing already and the ways they needed continued support and the ways some of those were changing. We also talked about the kinds of ministries that we want to take on in the future, where we felt that we had become complacent with things that had happened in the past and assumed that those were continuing forward. And meanwhile, all around us, the landscape had changed and some of those old ministries weren't fitting any more. And we needed to think our way through what were the needs of today.

And one word we kept coming back to in all of those many months of discussion was the word "bold." There was a genuine desire by the members of the committees to see our diocese,

this large and diverse faith community that we are, to see our diocese step out in boldness into the world. That we don't want to be the best-kept secret in Christianity anymore! That we feel like we've got something special and unique to offer and we want to offer that in bold ways. To boldly stand up for those who need someone to speak for them. To boldly be there for those who are hungry or who do not have a place to stay. Or who are fresh out of prison or headed into prison. To boldly commit to the needs, the spiritual needs of our very young and our very elderly parishioners.

That word boldness kept coming back so often that eventually a statement was crafted and it sounds like this:

We believe that God is calling us to bold faith, bold love and bold actions and that together we are creating communities of love.

Bold faith, love and action – that sounds like something that followers of Jesus Christ would do. And creating communities, new communities – sometimes shoring up communities that have always been there but reaching out to new communities of love is something that is so needed in the world that we live in today.

I want to invite you to think about that statement and to think about boldness. As you go about your day, wherever you are – at work, at school, in your neighborhood, in your home – what does it mean to have bold faith for you? What does bold love look like? What does taking bold actions look like?

And then, how do we together – how do we together create communities of love in this diverse place that we live that is Northern New Jersey?’

I hope that word sticks with you; I’m looking forward to seeing us explore it. We have only just begun to think about this and I invite you into thinking about it with us. Boldness.

Stories from Our Congregations

St. George's supports mobile COVID vaccine team

By Ron Garner

In our parish profile at St. George’s, Maplewood, one of the desires identified by the parish was to expand the congregation’s impact beyond its immediate South Orange/Maplewood community. The Rev. Grant Mansfield, called as our new rector in early 2020, recognized that St. George’s historical commitment to social justice was an opportunity to expand the congregation’s outreach efforts.

Deacon Sun Spriggs took on this challenge and found a willing partner in The First Congregational Christian Church of Irvington, NJ (FCCC). This United Church of Christ (UCC) parish, led by Pastor Dolores A. Watson, is a fixture of the African-American and Caribbean community of Irvington.

Pastor Watson has attracted a collective of disciples who work tirelessly to deliver services to the community. They include the exuberant Alison Bryant who runs the Church Women United Food Pantry (CWU), offering weekly help to clients.

Alison has invited North Jersey Community Research Initiative (NJCRI) to provide COVID vaccinations for people visiting the pantry. One of the largest community-based providers of HIV/AIDS care and treatment in New Jersey, NJCRI has also taken on the job of bringing COVID vaccines and

info to the public, deploying teams to sites throughout Essex County.

On September 23, St. George’s collaborated with these partners through the efforts of a small group of volunteers who assisted with research questionnaires for vaccination recipients, and offered fruit and water to food pantry clients, as well as volunteers from our partner church and NJCRI. For NJCRI, this was their third site of the day.

After speaking with the NJCRI team, we hope to bring the vaccination van to St. George’s and offer all eligible persons in our community a convenient way to get their shot. The team would return to administer shots to those who require a second dose.

We also had a chance to speak with Pastor Watson, who has amazing goals to more fully support the community. In addition to the food pantry, they also run a program for high school students. Pastor Watson wants to add a women’s shelter and a community commercial kitchen, and to expand the afterschool program.

This opportunity to engage with each of these community groups was a mutually rewarding effort in St. George’s outreach to the wider community.

Diocesan Announcements

Third BCEF Call of 2021: Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral, Newark

The Bishop’s Church Emergency Fund (BCEF) provides financial support for church buildings in the diocese needing repairs and renovation, usually with a special focus on emergency and unforeseen needs. Through the BCEF, you can support the critical needs identified by the Bishop.

The third BCEF call of 2021 is for a security upgrade at Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral, Newark. You can mail a check payable to Diocese of Newark with BCEF Call #3 in the memo line to: Diocese of Newark, Attn: BCEF, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

On Sunday, July 11 the congregation of Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in downtown Newark returned to worship in their historic building after many months of gathering each week on Zoom. The day was especially meaningful for vestry member Gail Barkley who was confirmed at the cathedral at age 12, having been a member of St. Philip's Church prior to its merger with Trinity Cathedral a half century ago. "It was so energizing," said Ms. Barkley. "We were really delighted to be in the church building again. All of us even applauded after the organ was heard again for the first time!"

St. Philip's Church in Newark was a predominantly black Episcopal parish. Destroyed by fire in 1964, St. Philip's merged with Trinity Cathedral two years later. Prior to being elevated to cathedral status in 1944, Trinity Church had a rich history dating back to colonial times. Occupying almost the same footprint as the present day Cathedral, the first Trinity Church building was erected in 1743. It served as a hospital during the Revolutionary War, during which time it sustained severe damage. Construction on a new church building was completed in 1810. The church was significantly enlarged in 1857. Today Trinity and St. Philip's stands as the nation's oldest Episcopal cathedral building.

Though it is central to the Diocese of Newark, the Cathedral functions as a self-supporting parish church. Members of the congregation serve as vestry members, in the altar guild and as ushers. There is an active Bible study group that meets each Wednesday and a singing group that performs periodically.

The Cathedral serves the surrounding community with a lunch program for seniors twice a month.

There is also an Advent program that provides Christmas gifts to children and seniors. In February the Cathedral invites homeless guests to a Super Bowl Party during which the game is screened and a wonderful meal is shared. The Cathedral serves the Newark community indirectly through the many programs offered at its nearby property on Park Place. Outside service providers at Park Place include a cycling center and a meditation group.

Situated in the state's most populous city, the Cathedral faces many of the same challenges as other inner city churches—chief among them being security. Adjacent to Military Park where many of the city's homeless gather at night, the Cathedral has recently had to upgrade lighting and add security cameras and new door locks. While the Ward J. Herbert Fund has provided assistance for the expense of new fencing, the cost of these other measures must be undertaken by the Cathedral congregation. I urge you to be as generous as you can to help as we seek to defray these costs with this our third BCEF Call for 2021.

God's peace,

+Carlye J. Hughes

The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes

Bishop of Newark

Clergy ministry transitions

Departure:

The Rev. Kathryn King

Rector, St. Alban's, Oakland/Franklin Lakes

October 17