



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — June 14, 2023

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## From the Bishop

### Awareness months and our Baptismal Covenant

*This is a transcript of a video message.*

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. And I want to talk with you about what we do regarding the awareness months in our diocese, and why we do it.

It's very simple. I've asked every parish in our diocese to determine the way that they want to honor, explore, learn, live into five awareness months every year. That's Black History Month in February; it's Asian American Pacific Islander Awareness Month in May; it is Pride Month in June – it happens to be June right now, but that month where we celebrate our, our siblings who are LGBTQ+, and become more aware of their presence in our lives; it is Hispanic Heritage Month in mid-September through mid-October; and then in November, Native American Indigenous People Awareness Month. So those five months – certainly any parish can do more than those – but those five months I've asked us to intentionally take a look at in our congregations.

And there's a reason that we do this, it is drawn directly out of the greatest commandment which you can find within our Baptismal Covenant. So it's our two holiest books that are focused on this one thing that Jesus says, and that is to love our neighbor as ourselves. And as our neighbor has encompassed more and more people, that sometimes we have to be intentional about figuring out how do we do that. So in our Baptismal Covenant, we say that we're going to seek and serve Christ and all people, that means of all cultures. And we've picked

these particular ones that we're going to pay attention to, because they're built into our system. We're certainly not limited to that. And we're going to get to know them and love them as our neighbors.

There's another piece to this, also found in our Baptismal Covenant, and that is that we're looking for justice for all of God's people. That the dignity of all of God's people is important to us, because it's important to God. That God created every facet of creation, every single person, every single culture, and called it good. And so when we spend time in these awareness months, it actually draws us more closely to each other, and draws us more closely to who God has called us to be. As people who know that we are good and that our siblings are good, – whether our sibling looks like us, talks like us, acts like us or not.

Our awareness months aren't simply learning about somebody else, it is actually loving somebody else. It is cherishing them, cherishing them as the beloved person of God that they are. And along the way, as we cherish them, we also care for them. We want the same safety for them, we want the same justice for them, we want the same goodness for them. And that again goes back to that first commandment to love our neighbors, the way we love ourselves. We want for them what we have for ourselves.

It's a very important thing for us to take this time during these awareness months, because all of the groups that I have suggested to us are groups that in some way, shape or form, are feeling the complication of a dangerous time in which certain groups are being looked at, in ways that are hurtful. That people look to be violent with them, to lash out at them. So that sense of our being aware also helps other people to be safe, to be cared for, and helps to create a world where we're

all looking for people to be honored and loved and cherished.

So I offer this to you as a way to approach the awareness months yourselves. To approach it in your parish, but also to approach it as an individual. As God brings people across your path, especially people who are different from yourself, know that God is giving us the opportunity to love, to cherish, to honor, and respect that person. And one of the ways we do that is to be aware of their presence, and to get to know them. Take some time. Enjoy these awareness months. It will be a blessing to you and to somebody else.

## Happening in the Wider Church

### Update: Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to receive ongoing monitoring and pause travel for June

**Jun 8, 2023 | Office of Public Affairs**

Following a recent hospital stay that detected internal bleeding and a new instance of heart arrhythmia, Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is receiving thorough testing and monitoring to understand the relationship between his medication for atrial fibrillation and the episode of internal bleeding.

The necessary process of diagnostic appointments, treatment, and follow-up will take some weeks. To prioritize rest, and in keeping with doctors' orders to avoid air travel in the near term, Bishop Curry will not do any in-person events for the remainder of June.

Bishop Curry remains grateful for the outpouring of prayers and well wishes, and he covets your support moving forward. The Office of Public Affairs will share updates as they become available.

## Stories from Our Congregations

### A week of mission work in El Salvador

*By the Rev. Dr. Miguel A. Hernandez*

From May 30 to June 7 I was in El Salvador for a week of mission work. My original plan was to offer a workshop on Evangelism and to attend the ordination of four seminarians who graduated from *El Seminario Episcopal Anglicano de El Salvador's* first class on May 28, 2021, and who after two years of extensive pastoral experience were ordained to the Sacred Office of Transitional Deacons on June 2.

The Reverend Deacons are:

Vilma Landaverde  
Esmeralda de Guzman  
Jesus de Martell  
Ernesto Velasco

Reflecting on the experience of these four new deacons, we can attest that they confronted numerous challenges ranging from allocating time to attend the classes that in most cases were online, to finding the funds required to support their studies. Three of the deacons were working and studying while taking care of their families. One of the women was taking care of her family needs.

The dedication of the four deacons is observed in the sacrifice that they underwent by traveling to the missions that in some cases were located around 8 hours round trip. In addition to this, these deacons were responsible for the spiritual and organizational life of their communities.

The deacons are following the steps of Jesus in teaching, preaching, evangelizing, and ministering to the spiritual needs of the people.

When there are special needs, the deacons find the resources necessary to make sure that those needs are fulfilled. For example, on August 29, 2021, the seminarian Ernesto Velasco organized, planned, and sought the funds to bring drinking water into the St. Lucas Mission in San Miguel. Holy Trinity, West Orange

provided some funds for the water project to become a reality.

It is worth mentioning that these deacons performed their pastoral responsibilities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The formation of the deacons was supported by professors from Guatemala, Costa Rica, Colombia, the United States, and El Salvador under the guidance of the Rev. Rosa Irma de Alvarado, Rector of *El Seminario Episcopal Anglicano de El Salvador*. I serve in the Seminary as Faculty and as an Academic Adviser.

These are the first four deacons who have been ordained by the Most Rev. David Alvarado, Primate for Central America.

While in El Salvador, I was informed that numerous religious and civic organizations were organizing an event named: *XXIII Caminata Ecologica de El Salvador* (Ecological Walk of El Salvador). This event was scheduled for June 6.

I offered to walk along with other members of the Episcopal Anglican Church in El Salvador. As I joined the walk, I met various religious leaders from the Catholic Church, Lutheran Church, and other civic leaders.

There are numerous issues that are causing difficulties to vulnerable communities in El Salvador. Here are some of the most important examples that can be mentioned:

- the mega urbanistic project in *Valle de El Angel* in San Salvador that will affect the quality of the water to neighboring communities;
- the construction of a water dam in the Rio Sensunapan that will affect indigenous farming communities in Sonsonate;
- the threat of contamination of the rivers Lempa, Paz, and Goascoran due to mining projects in the borders of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras;
- the arrest of community leaders of Santa Marta in Cabañas who protest against mining in order to protect the water from contamination.

It is important to mention that according to a statement made by the organizers of the Ecological Walk, 90% of the superficial water is already contaminated. The potential ecological catastrophe in El Salvador should be

a call to action for all to stop development projects in areas where there are aquifers that support life.

# Diocesan Announcements

## June update from the Strategic Visioning Team

After an intense two months of work, the four working teams have completed their goal and initiative recommendations, which they have now forwarded to the Strategic Visioning Team to review, finalize and format into a final report by the end of June. After a review by the Bishop and Canon over the summer, the team will present the recommendations to the diocesan leadership in September.

On June 11, 2023, the Visioning team hosted a gathering at All Saints, Glen Rock to thank the members of the four working teams for their time and efforts this spring, as well as to celebrate all that the full team has accomplished throughout the visioning process. The members of the working teams include:

### Children, Families, Youth, and Young Adults

- Co-leader, the Rev. Carrie Cabush - Calvary, Summit
- Co-leader, Nelson Diaz - Church of the Epiphany and Christ Church, Orange
- Co-leader, Belinda Stokes - St. Paul's and Incarnation, Jersey City
- Heather Allen - St. Clement's, Hawthorne
- Anthony Briggs - Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center
- Donna Caputo - Grace, Rutherford
- Kathy DeWalt - St Lukes, Montclair
- Militzia Diaz - Church of the Epiphany and Christ Church, Orange
- Susan Fuller - St Paul's, Morris Plains
- Dana Leach - St Peters, Essex Fells
- Kristen Lee - Christ Church, Ridgewood
- Althea Maynard - St. Paul's and Incarnation, Jersey City
- Paul Nobleman - St Lukes, Haworth
- Holly Petro - Church of the Messiah, Chester

- Tamra Petrona - St Agnes & St Paul's, East Orange

### **Communications and Technology**

- Co-leader, the Rev. Mark Collins - All Saints', Glen Rock
- Co-leader, Janelle Grant - St. Paul's, Paterson
- Nerissa Boccino - St. Peter's, Morristown
- Lynda Dickey - Christ Church, Hackensack
- Nina Nicholson - Director of Communications and Technology; St. George's, Maplewood
- Thomas Reynolds - Christ Church, Bloomfield/Glen Ridge
- Chris Whitaker - Christ Church, Short Hills

### **Congregational Collaboration**

- Co-leader, the Rev. Raul Ausa - Trinity, Allendale
- Co-leader, the Rev. Vicki McGrath - All Saints', Millington
- Co-leader, Jewels Quelly - St. James, Hackettstown
- The Rev. Canon Margo Peckham Clark - Canon for Congregational Life
- Jill Commings - Grace Church Van Vorst, Jersey City
- Mary DePinto - Grace Church Van Vorst, Jersey City
- Merica Dermody - Church of the Messiah, Chester
- Bernie Milano - Trinity, Allendale

### **Justice for People and Planet**

- Co-leader, the Rev. Miguel Hernandez - Holy Trinity West, Orange
- Co-leader, Michele Simon - St. Paul's Church, Englewood
- Co-leader, the Rev. Lorna Woodham - St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange
- Jody Caldwell - Redeemer, Morristown
- Paula Cappel - St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange
- Rosie Grant - St. Paul's, Paterson
- Valyrie Laedlein - St. George's, Maplewood
- The Rev. Grant Mansfield - St. George's, Maplewood
- Laura Russell - All Saints, Hoboken
- Marguerite Smith - St. Peter's, Mountain Lakes

## **New life in Livingston**

On Thursday, June 8, the former St. Peter's, Livingston held its first event as the future Episcopal House, a thank-you dinner for those who helped make possible this next step in the life of the diocese. They are:

- The 31 Mulberry Discernment Committee, who collected the information that informed the decision to sell 31 Mulberry to NJPAC;
- The Episcopal House Relocation Working Group, who sifted through the diocese's needs and the real estate options available to recommend St. Peter's;
- The Building Committee, who worked on initial concepts for the space and recommended an architect to the Trustees;
- the volunteers at the Heavenly Finds Thrift Shop located at St. Peter's, who have been patient and gracious during the walk-throughs and inspections involved in this process;
- members of the former St. Peter's, whose careful maintenance of the building made possible its continued service in the diocese;
- the governing bodies of the diocese - the Trustees, Standing Committee, and Diocesan Council;
- and the Bishop's staff.

St. Peter's next-door neighbor, the Ritz Diner, catered the family-style "cookout" of hamburgers, hotdogs, barbecued chicken and side dishes. The event was moved indoors due to the wildfire smoke blanketing the area.

The Trustees will be working with G3 Architecture to renovate the space. Bishop Hughes and her staff look forward to moving into the new Episcopal House in September 2024.