



THE SHEAF



March 2020

Prayers of Sympathy

Prayers of Sympathy are offered for family and friends of Bishop Andy Fairfield, including his wife Sally, and for the people of the Diocese of North Dakota. **Notes and cards can be sent to Sally Fairfield, 281 Leverett Road, Shutesbury MA 01072.**

Andrew Hedtler Fairfield



The Rt. Rev. Andrew Hedtler Fairfield died peacefully at home in Shutesbury, Massachusetts on February 16, 2020. He was sitting in his chair reading a book, waiting to go to church. He'd just brought in a load of wood for the fire.

Andy was born on May 31, 1943, in Northampton, Massachusetts, the second

son of the Rev. Leslie Lindsey Fairfield and Mary Allerton Parke Fairfield. He spent some of his early years in China, where his parents served as missionaries with the Episcopal Church. Because of the Communist Revolution, in 1948 the family was evacuated from China, and came back to Amherst, Massachusetts, where they lived for a while with his maternal grandparents in the "Emily Dickinson House," which the family had purchased in 1915. In Amherst, 5-year-old Andy rode his bicycle all over town, making friends at the fire station and a local bike shop.

Andy first went to Alaska as a church volunteer in 1963, after his sophomore year at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

He kept going back because he knew Alaska was exactly where he wanted to be.

In the summer of 1967, before his last year of seminary in Berkeley, California, he directed a day camp for the children of migrant laborers in Washington State. Two very important things happened that summer: he met Sarah Jane McCune, to whom he would be married for more than fifty-one years, and he learned how to fly a small airplane.

Andy and Sally wed the next summer, in Wilmington, Delaware. After a honeymoon in Maine at his beloved childhood summer camp, they left for Alaska. First assigned to three small villages on the Lower Yukon River, they lived in Shageluk, without running water or electricity. Their daughter Bess was born in 1971, and the family moved to Fort Yukon, where he served as the priest for St. Stephen's Church for five years. Daughter Hannah was born in 1974. In 1977, they moved to Fairbanks, and Andy became assistant to the bishop of Alaska. His focus was supporting Alaska's Indigenous people in church leadership roles, not just as active leaders in their own communities but in representing Native people on a diocesan and national level, and in the wider Anglican Communion.

He flew a small airplane around the Interior and up to the Arctic Coast with his close friend the Rev. Scott Fisher, teaching and holding church services. The Native people of Alaska, especially the elders in the villages he served and lived in, taught him about the importance of community. People hunted and fished and picked berries, and shared it all. They built cabins together, and supported one another through all the stages of life. The time spent participating in these activities and visiting with people in their homes, drinking tea and listening to stories, helped him feel and share the power of God's love.

Andrew Hedlter Fairfield—Continued...

The care and responsibility that Alaska Native people show for each other and for outsiders, and the respect they show for the land, deeply informed his sense of how he wanted to live his life.

In 1989, he was elected the 10th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota. He continued to fly for many years, which allowed him to frequently spend time with Indigenous people in the Dakotas and the people in farming communities in rural parts of the state. He was grateful for the time he had as a pilot; he logged more than 5,000 hours in the air over thirty years, without any crashes. He retired as the Bishop of North Dakota in 2003.

Andy and Sally moved to Shutesbury, Massachusetts, to a farmhouse on 10 acres of woods that had been in the family for many years. In retirement, he joined the Anglican Church in North America.

In Shutesbury, he liked to ride his bike, repair old bikes and give them to people who needed them, chop and haul wood, and grow tomatoes and squash, peppers and pumpkins. He enjoyed going on bike trips in Northern Maine and Quebec because that area reminded him of Alaska; he would haul his gear and camp along the way. He loved visiting his daughters' families in Virginia and Maine. He especially delighted in being a grandpa, holding his granddaughters as babies, fitting them with bikes and helmets, attending their plays and concerts and sporting events. He treasured his sons-in-law, and his dog, Ezra. When he got homesick for Alaska, which was often, he watched videos of Eskimo dancing in communities he cherished on the Arctic Coast.

Andy was a kind and gentle man, loyal to and fiercely protective of those he loved. And he loved so many. He was preceded in death by his brother Tim. He is survived by his brothers Les, John, and Peter; his wife, Sally; daughters Bess and Hannah, sons-in-law Stew and Steven, and his four granddaughters: Maggie, Luella, Sally, and Sadie.

A service will be held at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19th, 2020 at Shutesbury Community Church, followed by a potluck tea. In lieu of flowers, please consider two local organizations that Andy volunteered with: Village Neighbors and Not Bread Alone.

Published in Daily Hampshire Gazette on Feb. 18, 2020



Safe Church Training

Saturday, March 14, 2020

9:30 am—12:30 pm

Gethsemane Cathedral

This 3-hour training will cover both the children/youth and adult components of the safe church training. Diocesan policy requires safe church training for all clergy (stipended or non stipended), any paid church employees (support staff, organists, etc.), church school teachers, nursery attendants, and licensed lay ministers. Policy also requires a refresher every three years. Participation in this in-person training will fulfill diocesan policy requirements. Those who plan to attend the March 14 training should register by emailing office@gethsemanecathedral-fargo.org no later than Friday, March 6. Registration will assure space and sufficient copies of training materials are available.

Please be aware: The training session does **not** include lunch.

Safe church training continues to be available online for all those who need the training. To get a login/password for the online training, contact Sandy Holbrook (slholbrook@cableone.net) or Zanne Ness (zannec@bis.midco.net).

Diocesan Phone: 701 235-6688

The phone can record messages, please leave one if it is not answered. Normally within 24 hours the message will be given to a person who can respond to your call.

Diocesan Contact Information:

Hal Weidman, Canon Missioner: 605-390-3570
Canon@NDEpiscopal.org

John Floberg, Standing Committee President: 701-891-2911
jffloberg@gmail.com

Keith Whitmore, Assisting Bishop: 715-577-2759
khwhit2759@gmail.com

These phones can also record messages. Please feel free to call – day time is preferable.

Dionne Nelson, Administrator: Admin@NDEpiscopal.org

Charlotte Peterson, Finance: Finance@NDEpiscopal.org

Please send any invoices, contracts for payment and reimbursement requests to this email address. It will receive prompt attention and payments made according to diocesan policy.



SPECIAL DIOCESAN GATHERING
FARGO, ND
MAY 1 & 2, 2020

Episcopal Diocese of
NORTH DAKOTA

February 25, 2020

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As you well know, the Diocese of North Dakota is in a time of transition. Many of our congregations struggle to stay open as populations shift and Church attendance declines. What can we do to change the situation? Our Discernment team is traveling to all points in the Diocese to hear of your hopes and needs. In order to hear from another voice that has spent considerable time dealing with the questions facing the 21st century Church, I have invited the Rev^d Dr. Dwight Zscheile, an Episcopal priest who teaches at Luther Seminary in Minneapolis, has traveled throughout the Episcopal and Lutheran Churches helping groups and churches discern their future in a changing world.

We hope to have a gathering of congregational leaders, wardens, vestry, other leaders and clergy, from every congregation attend on May 1 and 2, 2020. It will be held at the Cathedral in Fargo and registration forms will be made available. I would hope all would read Dr. Zscheile's book "The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age."

This is a wonderful opportunity for us, individually and collectively, to creatively listen for God's call to the people of the Diocese of North Dakota. I ask that you consider making participation a priority for everyone in your congregations.

In Christ,

The Rt. Rev^d Keith B. Whitmore, D.D.
Assisting Bishop

CONFERENCE BY DWIGHT ZSCHEILE

Normally we have a fall and a spring Ministry Retreat at Assumption Abbey in Richardton. It is a great time to meet other people of faith from around the Diocese. But this year--a time of transition for our Diocese-- we will have an additional **Special Diocesan Gathering in Fargo on May 1 and 2. The keynote speaker will be The Rev. Dr. Dwight Zscheile. Professor Zscheile, an Episcopalian who teaches at Luther Seminary in Minneapolis, is the author of *The Agile Church*. He hopes that lay and ordained people representing every congregation in the diocese will join him.** We don't know all the details--more coming soon!

You owe it to yourself to come and hear Dwight. We'll think about how we in the Diocese of North Dakota can take and apply his ideas on how the Church can be agile in responding to the rapid cultural changes of the time in which we live. The Commission on Ministry is sponsoring this gathering, with some financial assistance from the North Dakota Episcopal Foundation.

Dr Zscheile is an Episcopal Priest associate professor of Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary in St Paul, Minnesota. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Stanford University, Calif., in 1995, having also attended Oxford University, and a Master of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut., in 1998. He completed the Doctor of Philosophy degree at Luther Seminary with a focus on congregational mission and leadership in 2008.



Diocesan Discernment Task Force

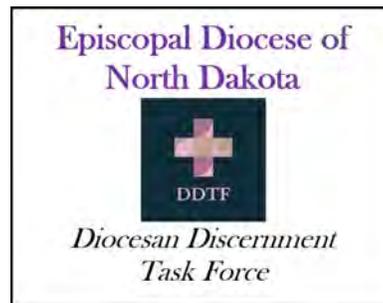
Dr. John Baird, chair

The DDTF continues to work hard examining the charge from our Standing Committee to get input around the question: “*What is God doing in North Dakota?*” We are in the gathering stage to find what all the congregations and others have to say about leadership of our diocese. The nine members of our task force, along with our consultant, are working together to gather the best input. We first met together at Diocesan Convention and have since convened four times via Zoom. Our next in-person meeting will be in a month to examine what we have heard and to begin looking at possible new models of leadership which might help us to follow God’s mission and ministry.

We are gathering as much input as we can. The most important information comes from hearing what the people have to say in our congregations. Two to four members of the DDTF are visiting each of our 20 congregations asking a set of questions we developed. So far, we sat down with 5 congregations. We have 12 more scheduled and 4 congregations to nail down a date. We will look at this input along with other input we have heard from Bishop Keith Whitmore, Diocesan Convention, Regional meetings, Diocesan Council, a clergy conference, history of the diocese, and contact with several similar sized dioceses. We plan to do a survey of all the members. It will be critical to have your email addresses for us to do a good survey. Be sure your congregation and the Diocesan Administrator know your email addresses.

After Easter we will finalize our analysis and develop proposals to present to Standing Committee and Diocesan Council. When these recommendations are accepted, and a plan forward devised it will be presented at the next Diocesan Convention in October 2020.

Help your task force as we proceed with our work. Pray for us, diocesan leadership, our congregations and all our diocese. Be sure the Diocesan Administration knows how to contact you. If you have not been heard let one of our task force members know. If your congregation is not scheduled, talk to us to get our visit. We want everyone heard. Our best analysis will come from all your input.



Diocesan Calendar

Sun 1 Mar - DDTF @ St. George’s Bismarck
Sun 1 Mar - DDTF @ Church of the Cross Selfridge
Thurs 5 Mar - Bishop’s Visitation St. Paul’s, White Shield
Fri & Sat 6 & 7 Mar - Diocesan Council, Prairie Knights, Ft Yates
Sun 8 Mar - Bishop’s Visitation St. George’s, Bismarck
Sun 8 Mar - DDTF @ Church of the Advent Devils Lake
Sun 8 Mar - DDTF @ St. Stephen’s Fargo
Mon 9 Mar - Appointment with the Bishop in & around Bismarck
Sat 14 Mar - DDTF @ St. Paul’s White Shield
Sun 15 Mar - DDTF @ St. Sylvan’s Dunseith
Sun 15 Mar - DDTF @ St. Thomas Fort Totten
Sun 15 Mar - DDTF @ All Saint’s Valley City
Mar - DDTF @ St. Peter’s Walhalla

Sun 5 Apr - Bishop’s Visitation Grand Forks & St. Peter’s Walhalla
Mon & Tues 6 & 7 Apr - Bishop available for appointments—Fargo area
Wed 8 Apr - Bishop Whitmore Worship—Sts. Mary and Mark Oakes
Thurs 9 Apr - Maundy Thursday Bishop Whitmore Worship—St. Thomas, Fort Totten
Fri 10 Apr - Good Friday Liturgy, Bishop Whitmore at Advent, Devil’s Lake
Sat 11 Apr - Diocesan Easter Vigil, Gethsemane Cathedral, Fargo, Bishop attending
Sun 12 Apr - Easter Day, Bishop Whitmore at St. John The Divine, Moorhead
Mon 13 Apr—Open appointments with the Bishop
Fri & Sat 1 & 2 May—Conference with Dr. Zscheile., Fargo
Sun 10 May—Bishop’s Visitation to the Cathedral
Mon 11 May—Bishop available for appointments—Fargo area

Mon 15 Jun—Requests for Diocesan Budget Due—
Finance@NDEpiscopal.org

DDTF Congregational Visits* COMPLETED

Sun 19 Jan—St. John’s Moorhead, Arabic Service
Sun 2 Feb – St. John’s Dickinson
Sun 2 Feb – All Saints’ Minot
Sun 9 Feb – Gethsemane Cathedral Fargo
Sun 9 Feb – St. John’s Moorhead, Anglo Service
Sat 15 Feb - St. Peter’s Williston
Sun 16 Feb - St. Michael & All Angel’s Cartwright
Sun 16 Feb - St. Paul’s Grand Forks
Sat 22 Feb - Sts. Mary & Mark Oakes
Sun 23 Feb - St. James’, Cannon Ball, & St. Luke’s Ft Yates
Sun 23 Feb - Grace Church Jamestown

Church Restorations

This past summer Kurt Barnes, the Treasurer of the Episcopal Church, released a \$271,000 grant to the Diocese of North Dakota for remodeling and restoration work to proceed on the property in Fort Yates. Both the Rectory and the Church, each constructed in the 1960s, were in need of significant remodeling and repair.

Included in the work at the Rectory was a complete remodel of the interior of the house, new windows, doors, roof, electrical and heating/cooling system. The interior of the house was gutted with a new floor plan laid out that included the addition of a Master Bath and a claiming of space from the garage to enlarge bedroom space on the first floor. The kitchen and dining areas are now opened up into a spacious floor plan with the living room. All new cabinets and plumbing are being installed with a new suite of appliances. The electrical in the kitchen is boosted so that several countertop appliances and roasters can operate at the same time without concern for tripping the fuse. This creates a home that will be able to provide lots of hospitality to members of the church and community in the years to come.

With the new plumbing lines in place it is expected that the persistent problem of basement sewer backups will be eliminated as well and the basement will, in time, be able to be remodeled as well with bedroom and family room space. St. Luke's Church has also been getting significant – and long overdue – attention. The main door of the church to the parking lot on the south has been a concern for some time as the bell tower posts were bringing moisture into the building, rotting the posts and damaging the sheet rock. The tower is being dismantled to remedy the situation. Many of the interior doors were damaged and their frames and latches have been repaired. The doorway between the parish hall and back area of the nave has new French Door that will allow for heating and air conditioning to be better regulated by isolating the areas controlled by three different thermostats.

New roofing material and flashing will also be installed on the three roofs of the structure to replace worn shingles and valleys that occurs over

time. Due to insufficient budgets to address building repair in a timely fashion there have been many issues that are being resolved with the result being a better looking interior and more importantly a more secure structure.

The aim is to secure the major structural concerns that begin with a secure roof and moving on through the framing of the building. As with any building, a consistent repair and replacement plan needs to be made on Standing Rock and throughout the NDCIM congregations. There has been significant differed maintenance to the properties that has required extensive work to either repair or replace them all together.

The work will be completed well in advance of the upcoming Niobrara Convocation that will be hosted by NDCIM in Ft. Yates this coming June.



Roofing work on St. Luke's church in Fort Yates, ND.

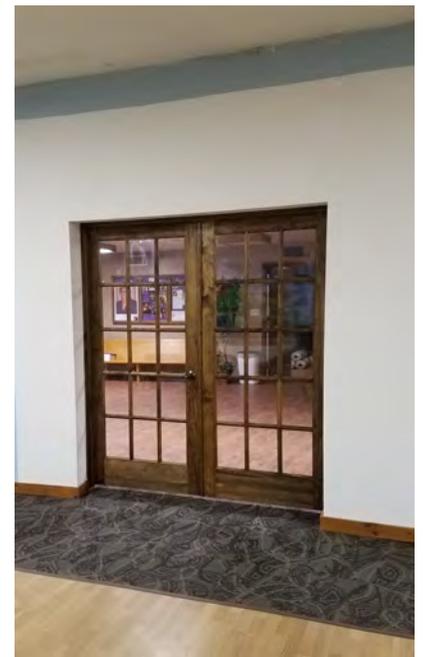


Photo: Contractor

New French Door at St. Luke's church in Fort Yates, ND.

The 2020 Niobrara Convocation

In the Community of Fort Yates
On The Standing Rock Nation

June 25 – 28, 2020

Fort Yates Middle School

*“From Generation to Generation
In the Church and
In Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Lodging Available: - Grand River Casino at the Grand
- Prairie Knights Casino and Lodge River Crossing near Wakpala
with Marina Campground 605 845 7104
701 854 7777 - St. Gabriel’s Camp with Cabins
 & Camping

Hosted by The North Dakota Council on Indian Ministries



For the second time the Niobrara Convocation will be hosted by NDCIM on the north side of the Standing Rock Nation. Several years ago, the relationship of Indigenous Ministry within the Dakota Territory was renewed through the Niobrara Council. This is the first organization of the Episcopal Church within the Dakota Territory and Bishop Hobart Hare was its first bishop. While all Indigenous Mission in the Dakotas was organized through the Niobrara Deanery, not all of Indigenous Mission in what became North Dakota none established through Hare. St. Sylvan’s in Dunseith was established through Whipple and Enmegawboh, St. Thomas’ on Spirit Lake also has its connections back into Minnesota. The work on Standing Rock was begun with young adults being sent off the Hampton, Virginia, for Boarding School.

Even so, the Niobrara Deanery has played a significant role in bridging between these two dioceses. The Standing Rock Reservation has, in the past, functioned as a whole. The Dakota Leadership Program was a joint venture between North and South Dakota as well. There is a common heritage that can be found between the Indigenous Congregations in the north with those in the south.

This year’s theme for the Convocation is: “Generation to Generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus.” It is being hosted on the campus of the Ft. Yates Middle School. It begins on Thursday evening, June 25 and continues through Sunday noon, June 28, 2020. All members of the Episcopal Church in North and South Dakota are invited to attend part or all of the long weekend.

The whole of the Diocese of North Dakota is invited to take in part or all of the Convocation. All meals are provided during the Convocation. Camping and Cabin bunk space and local transportation is available at St. Gabriel’s Camp as well.

God of wisdom and might, you have raised up people in every generation to lead your church. We bless and praise you for Keith, our Assisting Bishop, and all who will accompany us into the future you have prepared for us. Fill them, and us, with your Holy Spirit. Awaken us to fresh hope and open our hearts as together we seek to walk in the way of love and to serve Christ’s mission in our communities, in this diocese, and in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

St. James' Making Its Space in the Middle

Seven years ago, the beams of St. James' in Cannon Ball were being lifted into place and the building was being framed. Walking around the inside of the skeleton of the building a person could trace where fixtures would be, counters, kitchens and altar. The ceiling was open to the sky and then panels began to be placed to create the roof and the walls.

When the building was being designed by the congregation it was purposeful that it become a multi-purpose space. The altar set to the east, the kitchen to the north, and entry way to the west and furnace room to the south marked the perimeter of a 45' x 45' center under the canopy of a 30' tipi lodge pole ceiling. Without pews the "space in the middle" can host any number of gatherings and groups.

History is being made within the church. During the end of the NoDAPL stand off to the north of Cannon Ball it served as a one-time meeting place between the head of the Bureau of Indian Affairs Justice Division and those facing eviction from Sacred Stone Camp. The purpose of the meeting was to make sure that the eviction would be orderly, peaceful and without injury. It provided that "space in the middle" and when the BIA came into Sacred Stone, they were able to come without riot gear or assault weapons. It happened so quietly that when the Bismarck Tribune learned of it a day or two later everyone was out and safe.

On January 30 a group of around forty people gathered again at St. James'. Representatives of the State Historical Society, the State's Archeologist (Andrew Clark, son of the former Dean of the Cathedral), and riders from the Wounded Knee (Bigfoot) Ride and the Dakota 38+2 Ride along with others came to Cannon Ball to meet about a White Stone Hill Ride. These rides are all about healing from the conflicts and sins of the past. Riders experience healing atop a horse as they remember the women, children and men that faced massacre while flying a white flag of non-hostility.



The middle space at St. James' during the meeting considering the White Stone Ride
Photo: Volney Fasthorse

Years ago, Bill Little Bird, born in the early 1900's recounted the story of White Stone Hill and the Yanktonai that had gathered on the eastern prairie of the Dakota Territory and how they were attacked by Gen. Sully without provocation. The survivors of that fatal day (September 3, 1863) were scattered

Some taken on a march by the Cavalry south, others to Canada and some to the west and crossing the Missouri River at Cannon Ball. Bill's family was Yanktonai and he recounted the story from his personal vantage point as a grandson of those at White Stone Hill.

On January 30 those stories were being retold by the descendants. The stories were not from books or articles written on a page. These stories came from their hearts as they recounted the stories that have been told between and among the generations. If they form a ride to White Stone following the trail of those removed to the reservations to the south it will be about healing. St. James' was that space in the middle that was safe to bring these stories forward.

The building has also been used by members of the community that speak the Dakota dialect. Many resources have been provided to advance the multigenerational use of Lakota, but not as much on Standing Rock for Dakota. This group that has met at St. James' and in Cannon Ball are making sure that the language is not lost. Language among Indigenous Nations is vital to the culture, healing and their relationship to one another, creation and the land. Language creates a space in the middle. The Episcopal Church in the middle 1800's produced a translation of the Prayer Book and Hymnal to join a Bible into the Dakota dialect helped to maintain that space in the middle. These books have been tools in maintaining the language. It isn't that the Church makes the claim that it maintained the language for the people in these communities, but these books have been a tool for them to maintain their own language.

This is part of the heritage of the Episcopal Church and the present context of its ministry on Standing Rock. Each of the Tribal Nations in North Dakota have Episcopal Congregations that not only share the history of their families and that of the Church. As a denomination the Episcopal Church was the first to repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery and continues to find ways that reinforce that repudiation.



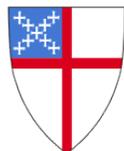
Standing Rock Elder and Dakota Hymn Singer Virgil Taken Alive
Photo: Volney Fasthorse

Indigenous Ministries Meet at Winter Talk

Participants came out of Winter Talk saying things like, “The music, the worship and the fellowship were so good along with the ideas, hopes and plans.” Winter Talk 2020 was held in Fife, Washington, on the Territory of the Puyallup Nation. Whenever Tribal Nations gather, they show respect to the original people of the land by recognizing them and their connection to that territory. It is a practice that is becoming more prevalent beyond indigenous nations.



Presenters included: The Rev. Dr. Brad Hauff, Missioner for Indigenous Ministries; The Rev. Dr. Mary Crist, Indigenous Theological Education; The Rev’s Angela Goodhouse Mauai and Cornelia Eaton, Members of the Episcopal Church Executive Council; and The Rev. Dr. John Floberg on Youth Ministry. Bishops in attendance included the Bishop of Alaska, Northern Michigan and South Dakota. Several members of the North Dakota Council on Indian Ministries attended an annual gathering called Winter Talk. Robert Fox (Arikara), The Rev. Angela Goodhouse Mauai (Lakota), Carmine Goodhouse (Lakota), Elaine McLaughlin (Dakota) and The Rev. Dr. John Floberg. Most of the others attending Winter Talk came from the Dioceses of Minnesota, South Dakota, Idaho, Utah, Navajo Area Mission, Northern California, Los Angeles, Arizona, Fond Du Lac, Alaska, Hawaii, Iowa, Northern Michigan, Oklahoma, Olympia and Nevada.

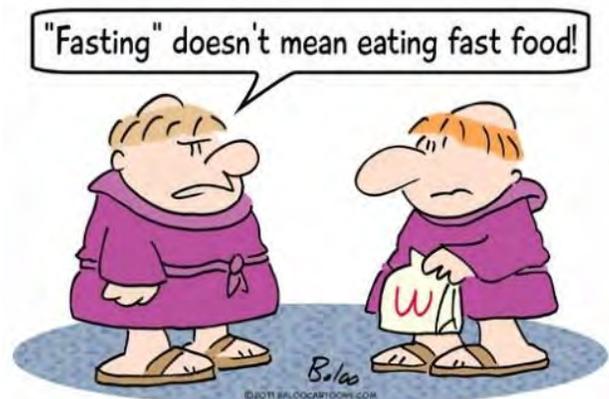


For further reading, please check on the following links:

<https://episcopalchurch.org/indigenous-ministries>

[Meet The Rev. Dr. Brad Hauff](#)

<https://episcopalchurch.org/posts/indigenousministries/rev-dr-bradley-s-hauff-named-episcopal-church-indigenous-missioner>



Ministry Conference

Participants (L to R)

Front: Canon Hal Weidman, Kathy Davis, Deacon Sloane Floberg, Deacon Terry Overbo, Father Bart Davis.

Back: Deacon Beth Lipp, Father Robert Hoekstra, Father Paul Zaharia, Father Harvey Henderson & Bishop Keith Whitmore.

Photo credits: Father John Floberg



The Diocesan Ministry Convention was held on February 7-9 at Assumption Abbey in Richardton, North Dakota. There were eleven in attendance. The topic of the weekend dealt with developing and deploying the gifts God has blessed us with for ministry in our congregations. Discussions were held on how to learn to be agile and do low-budget, high-impact ministry. Throughout our diocese there are evidences of effective ministry happening now. Our time was spent reflecting on the past but also having discussion about moving into the future.

There were three presentations that produced excellent discussions.

On Friday evening, we worshipped with the monks in the Abbey Church. Following that, Bishop Keith Whitmore led us as we reflected on ways to identify, train, and organize congregational leaders for meaningful worship.

The fellowship time was good as some of us are new to the diocese and it helped us to get to know one another.

On Saturday morning, Fr. Bob Hoekstra, rector of Grace Church, Jamestown, led a discussion helping us to better understand the people to whom we minister as they journey through life's transitions. Following a break, Deacon Sloane Floberg helped us to sharpen our vision for inviting young people to meet and give their lives to Jesus. More gatherings will be planned for future dates.





The Sheaf

Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
3600 South 25th Street
Fargo, ND 58104-6861

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit No. 727
Fargo, ND

Dimensions of the Faith;

The Rev'd Mary Johnson, Chair

The Commission on Ministry (COM) helps the Ecclesiastical Authority (the Standing Committee) to equip all the people of the diocese for ministry.

We are excited an online series of lectures from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary called "Dimensions of the Faith" (<https://my.gordonconwell.edu/page.aspx?pid=416>). It is for anyone who is interested in learning more about being a follower of Jesus Christ. Gordon-Conwell offers these classes for free. Members of the COM are wondering if these courses might be an effective way for our diocese to have a shared knowledge base for ordained or lay ministries.

We are hoping it will help you to keep the promises you made when you were baptized, that you would "continue in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship." It will give you some foundational principles that will enable you to serve faithfully, whether you are a Sunday school teacher, a reader of lessons, a Eucharistic minister, someone who sings in the choir or helps to plan worship, or somebody who would like to know how better to support fellow parishioners who are shut-in. Or maybe you are new to the Episcopal Church and would like to learn more about the historical roots of the Church. There are courses in Old and New Testament, Theology, Church History and others.

You can help us determine how useful this program might be for us. The COM would love to

see high school and college students take a course or two. We'd like to see somebody try taking a class even though they finished their formal schooling half a century ago. We'd like a professional or two from some other field to see what you think. Is this material too complex? Is it too simple? Just right? It is NOT created by or endorsed by The Episcopal Church. What questions come to mind as you listen to these lectures? What do we need to add to make this material relevant to our situation as Episcopalians? Why not register for a class and then email Mary Johnson (mjp0619@gmail.com) or Harvey Henderson (hryhenderson@yahoo.com) to tell one of us what you think?

Watch for details in the NEXT Sheaf about how we will build discussion groups around a different class every couple of months!

The COM's liaison from the Standing Committee is Deacon Terry Overbo, and Canon Hal Weidman offers diocesan staff support. Mary Ann Henry, Kathy Hintz, Joanne Lassiter, Elaine McLaughlin, Sloane Floberg, Bart Davis, Harvey Henderson, and Jamie Parsley are the other members of this team. Bishop Keith Whitmore attends meetings in an advisory and pastoral capacity.