



The Sheaf

February 2021

We Have An Election!

The election of Thomas Ely as Bishop

Provisional for the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota took place on Saturday, February 6th in a virtual Special Convention. His term of office, as provided by the Canons and the Letter of Agreement is three years with provision to extend this another year or two as determined by the ongoing discernment of the diocese and the Bishop.

It has been said that extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. The Canons of the Episcopal Church have provided us with a way to gain the experience of a Bishop of the Church without expending the time, energy and resources that would have been necessary to make an election of what is called a Bishop Diocesan. It was the wisdom provided by a study done of the diocese as a whole that suggested that we were not in the place within our common life to determine long-term answers. Diocesan organization that addresses opportunity and need will be of further consideration during these next years of discernment.

Meanwhile there is a need to organize for the life, mission and ministry that is at hand. Bishop Ely, having served in Vermont with its small and rural congregations, began to get to know North Dakotans right away. He first became an Assisting Bishop on January 4 and began his orientation and checking in with the Standing Committee, Diocesan



One of the Special Convention Zoom Screens captured by Amy Phillips

Council, Finance Committee, Commission on Ministry and a newly formed Transition Committee. Since then, Bishop Ely has been forming an Interview Committee for the selection of a Diocesan Minister as well as beginning to “get around the Diocese” via Zoom calls to congregations. After it is safe to return to travel and face to face meetings the newly elected Bishop will begin traveling to and within North Dakota.

In This Issue of The Sheaf

- 2-3 The Bishop's Lenten Thoughts
- 4 - The Niobrara Convocation
- 5 - 6 Lenten Readings /
Grant and Giving Opportunities
- 7 - An open letter of gratitude to Diocesan Clergy
- 8 - Diocesan Calendar

Lent 2021 From Thomas Ely, Bishop Provisional

Dear friends in Christ:

On Ash Wednesday, February 17, we enter another season of Lent, the second year in which we have observed Lent in the wilderness of a pandemic. In the Ash Wednesday liturgy, after reminding us of the historical context of Lent, the Celebrant or Minister appointed invites us to the observance of a holy Lent with these words: “*I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s holy Word.*” I don’t know about you, but I have always found the Litany of Penitence (BCP 267-268) to be helpful in that self-examination, which often does lead me to repentance, and so I commend it to your regular use during Lent, not only on Ash Wednesday.

As I pondered those spiritual disciplines for myself amid the continuing wilderness of Covid-19, I settled on some specific ways of engaging those three disciplines this year. I share those with you here and invite you to ponder in what ways the traditional Lenten spiritual disciplines might become very focused for you.

Prayer: In the wilderness of Covidtide, my prayers will focus on those who have been most impacted by the pandemic, especially those from historically marginalized communities like our native American communities and others on the margins because of race, class, economic or geographic realities, who have struggled mightily to have their circumstances recognized and their voices heard above the din of privilege, power and prosperity. The deaths of so many and the impact of that on families, friends and communities weighs heavily on my heart and so I will pray daily for them. I don’t need to know all their names, for surely God does. I will pray for the many who have lost homes, businesses, employment and social connection in this wilderness. And I will pray each day for one of the congregations in the Diocese of North Dakota.

Fasting: In addition to some of the regular fasting practices I normally take on during Lent, I will do my best to fast from the temptation to dismiss or discount the opinion or belief of another person. Instead, I will do my best to honor the dignity of all and listen deeply to those with whom I might disagree. By doing so, I carry the hope of moving beyond
(continued on page 3)

I also commend the other traditional spiritual disciplines of Lent – prayer, fasting and the study of scripture.

I will also pray daily in thanksgiving for the scientists, medical personal, first responders, teachers and front-line workers who are doing all they can to carry us through this wilderness to the other side of whatever our “new normal” will be.

(Lent 2021: continued from page 2)

some of the polarization that infects our lives, in many ways as severely as the pandemic. I will fast from the temptation to arrive at quick solutions to complicated problems and from the temptation

I really want to go deeper in terms of my understanding and appreciation of the Passion Narrative in the John Gospel...in part because of the anti-Semitism that often gets associated with the 4th Gospel.

to label, pigeonhole people or call them names. I will fast from the temptation to loosen my Covid-19 precautions, even after I receive a vaccination (which I will do as soon as it is offered to me). While all these disciplines are worthy of my ongoing attention and are things I try to do now, I hope that by a focus on this sort of fasting during Lent they might become more integrated and routine for me.

Scripture: Lent is often a time when communities of faith offer opportunities for deeper engagement with the sacred scriptures of our faith. This year, I have

decided to attend the Sunday evening ***“Careful Reading of the Passion during Lent via Zoom”*** being offered by Father Harvey Henderson, Rector of Saint Paul’s, Grand Forks and chair of our Diocesan Commission on Ministry. I’m sure there are other great opportunities in North Dakota that I could join and through which I could deepen my knowledge and understanding of scripture, so please don’t read this as playing favorites. My reason for adding this to my usual pattern of

I hope this gets you thinking a bit more about your own spiritual discipline during Lent.

scripture study during Lent is because I really want to go deeper in terms of my understanding and appreciation of the Passion Narrative in the John Gospel with which I often struggle, in part because of the anti-Semitism that often gets associated with the 4th Gospel. Father Henderson has extended this invitation to all in our diocese and will send you the Zoom link if you email him at

hrrvyhenderson@yahoo.com. You can also read more about this offering on the Facebook page for St. Paul’s - <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsgrandforks>

So, there you have a bit of insight into my Lenten discipline this year. And whatever you decide is right for you and wherever you find yourself during the wilderness of Covidtide, please remember to be gentle with yourself. Spiritual disciplines are not meant to test us, but rather to help frame and focus our hearts and minds to be more attentive to God and God’s presence in our lives. Most of us fall short in our spiritual practices. I know I do and that will likely be the case again this Lent. Yet, I find that it is less likely to happen when I set reasonable and realistic goals and priorities. I trust and pray that I have done so this year.

Here’s wishing you a holy and blessed Lent!

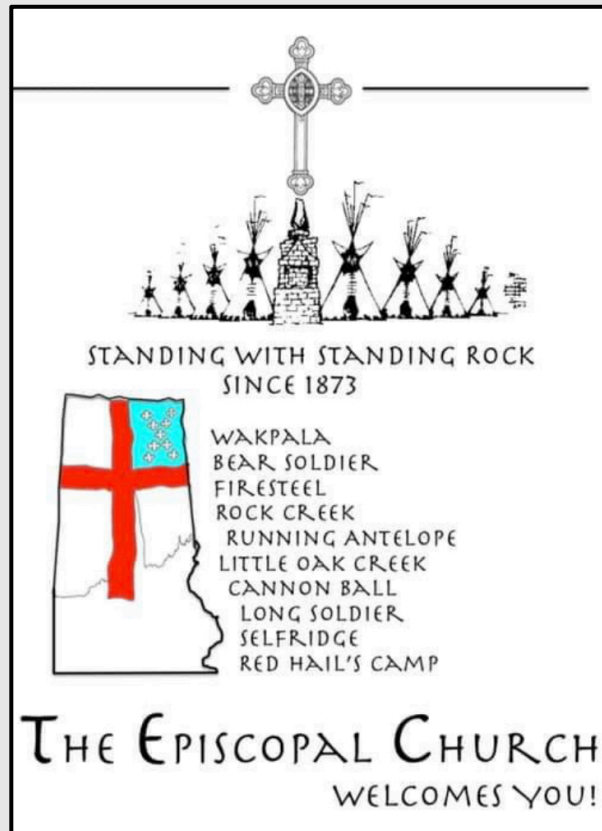
Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'T'.

Make Your Plans Now To Attend The

148th Niobrara Convocation

June 24 - 27, 2021



Con · vo · ca · tion

A large formal assembly of people

At a site to be determined within the Standing Rock Nation

Camping & Bunkhouse Lodging available at St. Gabriel's Camp
7 miles west of Solen on Highway 24

Camping and Lodging
available at Prairie Knights Casino & Lodge
15 miles north of Ft. Yates on Highway 1806

Save the date - Schedules, Registration Forms, and more to follow.

Web Sites: ndepiscopal.org and/or <https://episcopalchurchsd.org>

Reading Your Way Through Lent

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen. - The Collect for Ash Wednesday*

Thursday after Ash Wednesday

- Deuteronomy 30:15–20
- Luke 9:18–25
- Psalm 1

Friday after Ash Wednesday

- Isaiah 58:1–9a
- Matthew 9:10–17
- Psalm 51:1–10

Saturday after Ash Wednesday

- Isaiah 58:9b–14
- Luke 5:27–32
- Psalm 86:1–11

Monday in the 1st Week of Lent

- Leviticus 19:1–2,11–18
- Matthew 25:31–46
- Psalm 19:7–14

Tuesday in the 1st Week of Lent

- Isaiah 55:6–11
- Matthew 6:7–15
- Psalm 34:15–22

Saint Matthias the Apostle - February 24

- Acts 1:15–26
- Philippians 3:13–21
- John 15:1,6–16
- Psalm 15

Thursday in the 1st Week of Lent

- Esther (Apocrypha) 14:1–6,12–14
- Matthew 7:7–12
- Psalm 138

Friday in the 1st Week of Lent

- Ezekiel 18:21–28
- Matthew 5:20–26
- Psalm 130

Saturday in the 1st Week of Lent

- Deuteronomy 26:16–19
- Matthew 5:43–48
- Psalm 119:1–8

Monday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Daniel 9:3–10
- Luke 6:27–38
- Psalm 79:1–9

Tuesday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Isaiah 1:2–4,16–20
- Matthew 23:1–12
- Psalm 50:7–15,22–24

Wednesday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Jeremiah 18:1–11,18–20
- Matthew 20:17–28
- Psalm 31:9–16

Thursday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Jeremiah 17:5–10
- Luke 16:19–31
- Psalm 1

Friday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Genesis 37:3–4,12–28
- Matthew 21:33–43
- Psalm 105:16–22

Saturday in the 2nd Week of Lent

- Micah 7:14–15,18–20
- Luke 15:11–32
- Psalm 103:1–4(5–8)9–12

Monday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- 2 Kings 5:1–15b
- Luke 4:23–30
- Psalm 42:1–7

Tuesday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Song of the Three Young Men 2–4,11–20a
- Matthew 18:21–35
- Psalm 25:3–10

Wednesday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Deuteronomy 4:1–2,5–9
- Matthew 5:17–19
- Psalm 78:1–6

Thursday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Jeremiah 7:23–28
- Luke 11:14–23
- Psalm 95:6–11

Friday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Hosea 14:1–9
- Mark 12:28–34
- Psalm 81:8–14

Saturday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Hosea 6:1–6
- Luke 18:9–14
- Psalm 51:15–20

Monday in the 3rd Week of Lent

- Isaiah 65:17–25
- John 4:43–54
- Psalm 30:1–6,11–13

Tuesday in the 4th Week of Lent

- Ezekiel 47:1–9,12
- John 5:1–18
- Psalm 46:1–8

Wednesday in the 4th Week of Lent

- Isaiah 49:8–15
- John 5:19–29
- Psalm 145:8–19

Thursday in the 4th Week of Lent

- Exodus 32:7–14
- John 5:30–47
- Psalm 106:6–7,19–23

Saint Joseph - March 19

- 2 Samuel 7:4,8–16
- Romans 4:13–18
- Luke 2:41–52
- Psalm 89:1–29 or 89:1–4, 26–29

Saturday in the 4th Week of Lent

- Jeremiah 11:18–20
- John 7:37–52
- Psalm 7:6–11

Monday in the 5th Week of Lent

- Susanna [1–9,15–29,34–40],41–62
- John 8:1–11
- or John 8:12–20
- Psalm 23

Tuesday in the 5th Week of Lent

- Numbers 21:4–9
- John 8:21–30
- Psalm 102:15–22

Wednesday in the 5th Week of Lent

- Daniel 3:14–20,24–28
- John 8:31–42
- Canticle [2] or 13

The Annunciation

- Isaiah 7:10–14
- Psalm 45
- or Psalm 40:5–11
- or Canticle 15 (or 3)
- Hebrews 10:4–10
- Luke 1:26–38

Friday in the 5th Week of Lent

- Jeremiah 20:7–13
- John 10:31–42
- Psalm 18:1–7

Saturday in the 5th Week of Lent

- Ezekiel 37:21–28
- John 11:45–53
- Psalm 85:1–7

Monday in Holy Week

- Isaiah 42:1–9
- Hebrews 9:11–15
- John 12:1–11
- Psalm 36:5–11

Tuesday in Holy Week

- Isaiah 49:1–7
- 1 Corinthians 1:18–31
- John 12:20–36
- Psalm 71:1–14

Wednesday in Holy Week

- Isaiah 50:4–9a
- Hebrews 12:1–3
- John 13:21–32
- Psalm 70

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

NDEF Grant Cycle Announced

The North Dakota Episcopal Foundation is accepting grant applications for the next cycle of grants, to be disbursed in early April 2021. The application deadline is March 1, 2021. The stated priorities for NDEF grants are evangelism, theological education, youth ministry, campus ministry, mission outside the Diocese, and Sudanese ministry. However, the NDEF board of trustees has interpreted the guidelines broadly and funded grants related to feeding the homeless, enhanced music during services, advertising, etc. Grants are available for up to \$10,000. To obtain a copy of the grant application and grant guidelines, go to the NDEF home page at the "Ministries" tab on the Diocesan web site, ndepiscopal.org

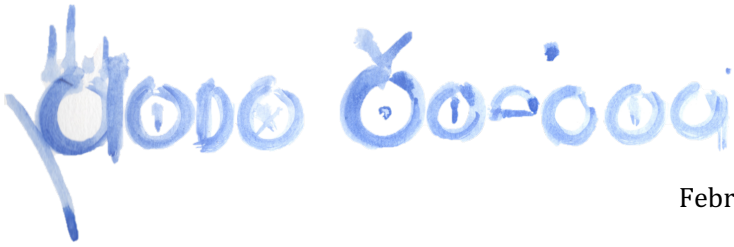
**United Thank Offering
Ingathering**

If your church is interested in a little competition, please mail your donation to
The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
and in the Memo designate "UTO Ingathering"
The Episcopal Diocese of ND 3600 25th St S,
Fargo, ND. 58104 - by May 31st, 2021

or:

United Thank Offering DFMS - Protestant
Episcopal Church USA
PO BOX 958983 St Louis, MO 63195

To Donate Online, please
visit: unitedthankoffering.com/give/



The Rev. Dr. John F. Floberg
"NAPE WAKAN"
820 W Central Ave
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501
701 891 2911

February 10, 2021

Dear Colleagues:

I wish to write you all a letter to express my gratitude for your faithful ministry during our time of transition in the diocese. Whether your ministry engaged any diocesan responsibilities directly or not, your ministry in and through your local congregation has served us all in a significant way. I hope that you receive this letter as if it is written only to you whether you are a Priest or a Deacon.

To the Deacons I give particular thanks for the various ministries inside and out of the Church in the many communities in which we have congregations. Your reading of the Gospel and indeed your living proof of the Gospel in and through your life has been a vital witness. The ways in which you have made us more aware of the needs and concerns that you find in our communities helps us to be a vital witness of Christ's love with those around us.

To the Priests I give particular thanks for the various ministries of pastoral care and leadership in your congregations and for several in the larger diocesan life as well. Together with the Deacons you have called your congregations together in worship and study in order to send them back out into the world empowered by the grace of God.

And now we have contributed to the election of a Bishop Provisional for the diocese. We are returning to what I have been calling "regular order." We journeyed for a time in what is more like a Presbyterian order for the life, mission and ministry of our Church. I and the Standing Committee took up responsibilities normally assigned to that of a Bishop. As a whole we are thankful to return to what our canons and tradition assign for us to be doing as a Standing Committee.

I wish to express a word of thanks directly to and for Canon Hal Weidman. He has taken up responsibilities with us in a way that literally saved my ability to do what I have needed to do on Standing Rock and in the diocese.

So, with the last remaining task of exercising an expanded role in the diocese, I want to express my personal gratitude for each and every one of you and the servant leadership that you have exercised during our extended transition. In many ways you made it possible for us all to come through this time with a renewed vision for ministry and expectation of good things for our Church in the next phase of our discernment. We haven't arrived yet, but through the graciousness of each one of you we have made it this far.

And now we are able to once again commend ourselves to the Bishop Provisional that God has graciously provided for us and again to the life, mission and ministry of our congregations and to this diocese. If I, or any of us, have caused any offense during these months we seek your grace and forgiveness. The way for us was not always easy nor clear. The way ahead of us is now shared and I am grateful for Bishop Ely and for you all. We all look forward to the next step in calling a Diocesan Minister to join with Bishop Ely and us. I look forward to working with them in their call among us.

Faithfully,

The Rev Dr John F Floberg



The Sheaf

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

Diocesan Calendar – *God Giveth The Increase*

February

21 - Bishop's Visit Virtual: Saint Luke's, Fort Yates (morning)
21 - Bishop's Visit Virtual: Saint Michael's and All Angels, Cartwright (evening)
28 - Bishop's Visit Virtual: Saint James, Cannonball (morning)

March

5 & 6 - Diocesan Council (Virtual)
March 7: Bishop's Visit Virtual: Church of the Advent Devil's Lake (morning)
28 - Palm Sunday

April

2 - Good Friday
4 - Easter Sunday

May/Spring

TBD - World Council of Churches Pilgrimage to Standing Rock

June

TBD - St. Gabriel's Camp Reopens for Middle and High School Youth
24 through 27 - Niobrara Convocation on Standing Rock

July and August

TBD - St. Gabriel's Camp is Open for Middle and High School Youth

Congregations wishing to arrange virtual visitations for worship and/or conversation should contact Bishop Ely directly at bishop@ndepiscopal.org