



The Sheaf

A publication of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
Pre-Convention Edition ~ September and October 2023

Convention Anticipation

Submitted by: Bishop Thomas Ely



I've been thinking a lot about our upcoming Diocesan Convention. During my 43+ years as an ordained clergy person in The Episcopal Church I have attended every Annual Diocesan Convention of the diocese in which I was serving at the time, plus some special conventions, including those for the election of a bishop. In addition, I have attended eight General Conventions. Some conventions have been more noteworthy than others. Some have included controversies. Some have contributed to a significant change in mission focus and direction. Some have been livelier than others, and a few have left me feeling empty and/or discouraged.

When we gather in Diocesan Convention this October, I am mindful that this will be my third and final convention as your Bishop Provisional. This "unexpected" ministry has been both a challenge and a gift to me. The gift is to have built so many new and wonderful relationships as I navigated my way through a very different diocese, in a very different part of our church and country, and as I have come to appreciate and to be stretched by all of it. The challenge, of course, has been to offer my best considering what you invited me to bring to the Diocese of North Dakota. You did not ask me to bring a vision, or a plan for your future, but rather to coach you as you lived into the recommendations from the Diocesan Discernment Task Force and set your direction for the next season of ministry. I leave it to you to decide how effective I have been in facing that challenge. For me, it has been satisfying and even fun to be part of this season of ministry in the life of the Diocese of North Dakota, and so I say thank you for that!

At this Diocesan Convention in October, you will be at the threshold of the next and newest season of ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota, hence the Convention theme, *At the Threshold*. I like what Kim Fox has written about the image of threshold elsewhere in this edition of *The Sheaf*. I especially appreciate her reminder about the significance of liminality, where she writes: "Liminal space is therefore the space in between what is now and what is not yet. It is a time of possibility and an opportunity for new energy if we are willing to move through it in faith." In many ways, the report and recommendations from the New Season of Ministry Task Force place us squarely in that liminal space.

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The Task Force has looked back over these past several years, noting accomplishments and challenges. They have listened to the voices of those who participated in the surveys and congregational conversations, as well as diocesan leaders and members of the diocesan Ministry Support Team. And they are now offering a glimpse of a hopeful future if we are willing to step out in faith and embrace some new ideas and directions for the common life of the Diocese of North Dakota. There are no guarantees in what they propose and recommend, and yet I know from working closely with the members of the Task Force that they believe what they are offering is a sound, adventurous, and promising investment in the next season of ministry in the Diocese of North Dakota.

Their report is now publicly available on the diocesan website (www.ndepiscopal.org). Plans are in the works for a series of Zoom conversations with members of the Task Force in advance of Convention and then again at Convention on Friday afternoon, October 27. Those conversations will be important opportunities for you to engage with members of the Task Force, ask your questions, express your concerns, and hopefully your support. My encouragement is that you do not jump immediately to the recommendations, as we often want to do. Instead, read what is written as prologue to those recommendations and listen for your own voice and experience in the words they have written.

I look forward to being with you “at the threshold” in October.

Affectionately yours in Christ,

+ Thomas



Over the next several pages are several helpful pieces of information regarding our Diocesan Convention.

Questions, comments, or concerns?

Please contact the Diocesan Office and Jess, our Diocesan Administrator, will route your inquiry through the proper convention committees.

Email: office@ndepiscopal.org | Phone: 701-235-6688

Diocesan Convention

October 27-28, 2023

Baymont Inn & Suites - Mandan, ND

Theme: At the Threshold!

Convention Website: www.ndepiscopal.org/2023-diocesan-convention

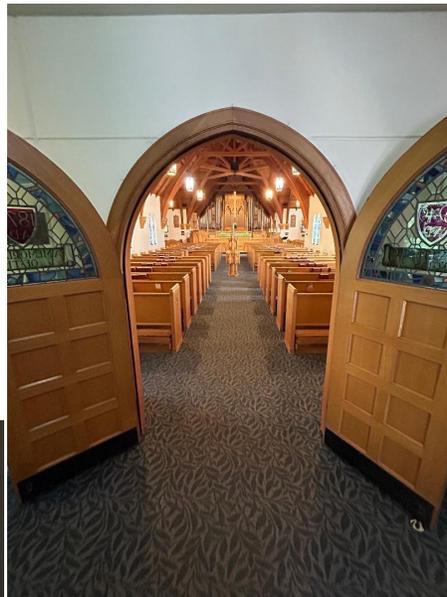
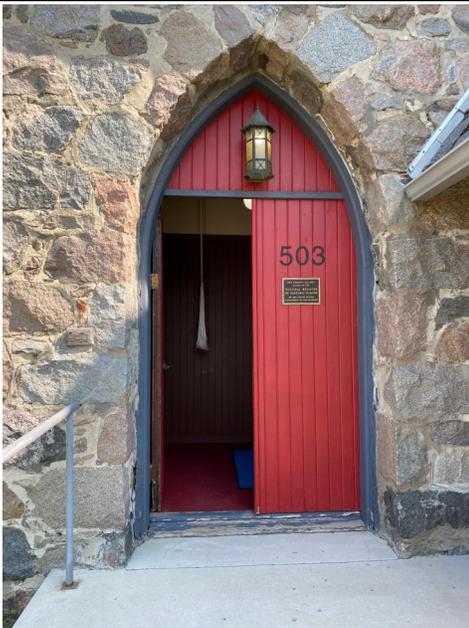
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Invitation to Diocesan Convention

Submitted by: The Reverend Kim Fox

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As we prepare for Diocesan Convention, with the theme of "at the threshold," I am reminded of a meeting with the Planning Committee, when the book, *To Pause at the Threshold*, was mentioned as inspiration. This wonderful little book by Esther de Waal has long been a favorite of mine. One of the quotations from this book seems particularly apt for this transitional time in the life of our Diocese:

"...opening up to the new gifts and new forms of life given by God that become possible just when everything seems to have come to an end. Of course there is loss and it is right to grieve and not to pretend otherwise. Insecurity makes certitude attractive, and it is in times like these that I want to harness God to my preferred scheme of things, for it is risky to be so vulnerable. Yet it is this vulnerability that asks for trust and hope in God's plans, not mine. So I try to learn each time that I am called upon to move forward to hand over the past freely, putting it behind me, and moving on with hands open and ready for the new."

Out of endings can come new beginnings. Out of death can come resurrection. In seminary, the word "liminal" was often bandied about and it is applicable to this threshold time in our Diocese: "liminal" simply means, "occupying a position at or on both sides of a boundary or threshold."

Liminal space is therefore the space in between what is now and what is not yet. It is a time of possibility and an opportunity for new energy if we are willing to move through it in faith.

Please pray for God's guidance for our Diocese and for our diocesan leaders, for our Convention, for our Bishop, and delegates, as we prepare to gather in Mandan to celebrate existing gifts and to discern and make decisions about the future of The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota. With Creator's help, we can confidently cross the threshold into new possibilities and new life for ministry!

In Christ's peace, power, and love,
Kim+
Rev. Kim Fox, Northwest Regional Coordinator
240.472.1102
nwcoordinator@ndepiscopal.org

Budget

There is a copy of the budget on our website under the convention tab (www.ndepiscopal.org/2023-diocesan-convention). Budgets will be sent to all lay delegates and clergy 30-days prior to Convention. If there are questions, please contact the Diocesan Office.

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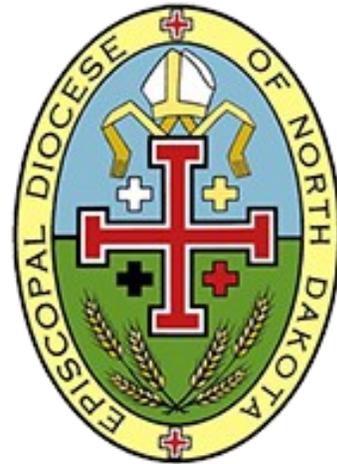
Convention Schedule

Friday, October 27th

11:00am	Registration Opens
11:30am	NDCIM Lunch
1:30pm	Opening Plenary
2:00pm	New Season of Ministry
3:30pm	Workshop Session #1
4:30pm	Workshop Session #2
5:30pm	Social Hour
5:30pm	Friends of Bill meeting
6:30pm	Dinner
7:30pm	Bishop's Address
8:15pm	Night Prayer

Saturday, October 28th

7:30am	Registration Opens
8:30am	Eucharist
10:00am	Break
10:30am	Convention Business
12:30pm	Lunch & East/West Meetings
1:30pm	Reconvene—Convention Business
3:00pm	Anticipated Adjournment



In advance of Convention the New Season of Ministry Task Force would like to offer opportunities for members of the diocese to be in conversation with members of the NSMTF where they can ask questions and deepen their understanding of our report and recommendations. To that end, we are scheduling three Zoom meetings: **Sunday October 8 at 4:00 PM Central Time; Tuesday October 10 at 6:30 PM Central Time; and Thursday October 12 at 6:30 PM Central Time.** The Zoom information is below:

Zoom Meeting ID: 738 714 2226

Zoom Passcode: 763258

You can also receive the Zoom information by emailing the Diocesan Office (office@ndepiscopal.org).

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Special Guest

We are excited to welcome the Rev. Lydia Kelsey Bucklin. Lydia will offer the workshop on Mutual Ministry and the sermon at the Eucharist.

Lydia Kelsey Bucklin serves as Canon to the Ordinary in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan and Senior Advisor to the Mutual Ministry Initiative at Virginia Theological Seminary. Lydia was formed from a young age in baptismal, collaborative ministry and works with communities in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in areas of redevelopment, formation, new expressions of faith communities, and baptismal ministry. In her role at Virginia Theological Seminary, Lydia works with the department of Lifelong Learning to enhance theological education with the training and skills needed for today's church, in which the ministry of all the baptized is crucial. Previously, Lydia served the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa for 11 years, in the areas of children & youth, young adults, communications, evangelism, and new initiatives, including co-founding the "Breaking Bread" community, a church plant in the Des Moines area. As a 2021 Luther Seminary Seeds Fellow, Lydia was selected as an "entrepreneurial ministry leader engaging in ministry at the intersection of Gospel and culture."



Baymont Inn & Suites Information

2611 Old Red Trail | Mandan, ND 58554

Book your hotel room by calling the Baymont (701-663-7401). Mention the "Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota" to be reserved in our room block. ***To receive the group rate, be sure to make your reservation by October 17, 2023.***

Display Tables

At our convention, there will be space for display tables. We look forward to as many tables as there are people interested in sharing their ministries. We ask that tables be ministries or interests appropriate to the Episcopal Church. These display tables could also be a chance to showcase a special ministry or program at your church. Once you get an idea for your display table, please [email Jess](mailto:jess@ndepiscopal.org) in the Diocesan Office for the next steps.

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Nominations

There is a nomination form available on the website.

Know of someone who is passionate about the Diocese and would do well in a position of leadership? Nominate them for one of the many open positions throughout the Diocese. You yourself want to run? You may turn in your own nomination form. Questions about what it means to be a part of Diocesan Council or Standing Committee? Reach out to Bishop Tom Ely or Diocesan Minister Steve Godfrey for more information.

Nominations to be included in the Convention packets will be accepted until Monday, October 10, 2023. After that date, as in the past, nominations “from the floor” for candidates for elective office will be in order at the Convention. Nominations from the floor will require all information from the nomination form to be distributed to all delegates by the nominee/nominator.

Secretary of Convention

Elect: 1 person, 1 year term, repeatable

This person is responsible for the recording of the proceedings of the Convention, and for their publication. The staff of the Diocesan Office provides assistance.

Treasurer of the Diocese

Elect: 1 person, 1 year term, repeatable

This person is responsible for oversight of receipt and disbursement of all diocesan funds, and for reporting the same in accordance with church and state laws. The Treasurer should have general knowledge of accounting procedures, and a close and supportive relationship to the Diocese and the local church. The position carries seat, voice, and vote in Convention and on the Diocesan Council. The Treasurer is usually, though not necessarily, the Chair of the Finance Committee. The Diocesan Administrator handles the day-to-day bookkeeping, payment of accounts, etc.

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Standing Committee/Diocesan Council

Standing Committee: Elect 1 clergy, 3 year term

Standing Committee: Elect 1 clergy, 2 year term

Standing Committee: Elect 1 lay person, 3 year term

East Region to Diocesan Council: Elect multiple positions, 3 year term

West Region to Diocesan Council: Elect multiple positions, 3 year term

The Standing Committee meets concurrently with Diocesan Council (7 times per year) or on call by the President, or the Bishop. Its concerns are final approval, with the Bishop, of persons in process toward ordination, with legal matters, especially the sale or encumbrance of diocesan properties, and various canonical responsibilities at the wider church level (e.g., consents to the election and consecration of bishops). The Standing Committee also serves as a Council of Advice to the Bishop, and when the diocese is without a bishop and under certain other situations of the Bishop's absence or incapacity, the Standing Committee becomes the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. The President and Secretary of the Standing Committee are elected annually from among its membership. Members of this Committee are also members of the Diocesan Council.

The Diocesan Council is similar to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee of a local congregation. It serves to carry out the program, policy, and budget of the Diocese between meetings of the Convention. Currently, meetings are held in person [up to 4 of them (Friday evening to Saturday afternoon)] and on Zoom [3 of them (Tuesdays or Saturdays)]. Members need to have good internet access and the capacity to attend all in-person meetings, including required travel (at diocesan expense) and Zoom meetings. This is an important leadership, policy setting, planning, and administrative group, which, with the Bishop, make many decisions about the on-going life of the Diocese. Persons serving on Council should have a good understanding of the Church at the local level and a strong personal commitment to Christ.

General Convention Alternate Deputies

Elect four clergy and four lay alternate deputies

Four Lay and four Clergy Alternate Deputies will be elected at the 2023 Diocesan Convention. Our current plan is to have the 1st Alternate in each order (the ones receiving the highest number of votes) attend the 82nd General Convention of The Episcopal Church, currently scheduled to be held June 22-29, 2024, in Louisville, Kentucky. Elected Alternate Deputies will move up to the status of Deputy should one, or more, of our elected Deputies be unable to attend General Convention. Again, this will be based on the number of votes each Alternate Deputy receives. General Convention Alternate Deputies must be able to travel and participate in a rigorous, 8-day business agenda there, as well as commit considerable time before the convention reading and preparing individually and in deputation Zoom meetings.

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Workshops

Mutual Ministry for Today's Church: This workshop will focus on the history, theology, and practical implications of the Mutual Ministry movement in the church over the past 40+ years. Mutual Ministry, also known as Baptismal Ministry or Total Ministry, is about equipping people to live out the promises of baptism, both within the church gathered and the church scattered into the world of everyday living. *(Offered at 3:30pm and 4:30pm)*

Native Americans – Celebrating Tribal Diversity: This workshop will feature brief presentations and discussion by Indigenous leaders from each of the four Reservations in North Dakota where the Episcopal Church is engaged in active ministry. These include Spirit Lake, Fort Berthold, Turtle Mountain, and Standing Rock. Come and learn about some differences and similarities in culture, language, customs, spiritual practices, and how the Episcopal Church is engaged in ministry with and among the people living in these places. *(Offered at 3:30pm and 4:30pm)*

Understanding the Native American Boarding School Reality: Both the Executive Council and the General Convention of The Episcopal Church have adopted resolutions establishing committees related to the Native American Boarding School crisis. The Diocese of North Dakota is honored to have a member on each of these committees. Come and learn more about the historical realities and continuing issues associated with this difficult chapter in the lives of our indigenous sisters and brothers, including the role of The Episcopal Church, as well as other religious and governmental entities. *(Offered at 3:30pm and 4:30pm)*



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Workshops

Creation Care: The Creation Care Committee wants to spread the message of caring for God's good earth to your congregation! This year, St. Stephen's, Fargo created a "Green Team" and we hope to encourage others to do the same by providing support, resources, and infrastructure in doing so. Through this program, we hope to bring to the table more Creation Care centered liturgy, eco-friendly churches, and general excitement and education about nature, gardening, and ecojustice. *(Offered at 3:30pm)*

Black Elk's Life Speaks: "That Much...More": Black Elk's story is remarkable on several levels and inspires many. While the cannon of Black Elk literature is established, there would appear to be a gap in terms of how Black Elk's life speaks through his familial descendants, who, when consulted about what has been written about Black Elk, due to their knowledge of stories based on familial accounts of Black Elk, stipulated his life speaks "that much ... more." Based on the author Mike Taylor's research endeavor and two years of interviews with Black Elk's great-great-grandson, Maka Black Elk, *Black Elk's Life Speaks: "That Much...More"* explores how Black Elk's life speaks. The publication and Taylor's presentations internationally integrate personal life journeys, narratives, and participant researcher interviews and experiences to highlight historical, anthropological, and contemporary perceptions of Black Elk in particular and Native people in general. In addition, it considers the implications of how Black Elk's life continues to speak in the face of historical trauma, survivance, and cultural healing through additional familial and related stories as the educator, culture bearer, and "old man" dreamer and visionary. *(Offered at 4:30pm)*



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On September 15, 2023, Diocesan Council received and endorsed recommendations and resolutions from the New Season of Ministry Task Force. The full New Season of Ministry Task Force report can be found on our [website](#). What follows are the resolutions council will be submitting to Convention on October 28, 2023.

Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota

Diocesan Convention Resolution submitted by the New Season of Ministry Task Force and endorsed by the Diocesan Council

September 15, 2023

Resolved, that the 53rd Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota, meeting in Mandan, North Dakota on October 27-28, 2023, gives thanks to the New Season of Ministry Task Force for its faithful work throughout this past year and for the excellent and informative Report presented to this Convention, and be it further,

Resolved, that this Convention adopts the five recommendations from the New Season of Ministry Task Force, as follows:

A. Invest in remaining one diocese:

1. Maintain identity as the Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
2. Elect a part time Bishop Provisional for another 3 years with specific mission charge to:
 - a) Support goals
 - b) Support dMSTeam, evaluate and discern future staffing needs
 - c) Support collaborations/cooperation with other dioceses
 - d. Prepare for election of Bishop Diocesan (part-time or full-time TBD) no later than the end of 2026

B. Invest in Goals/Priorities for the next 3-5 years and evaluate on an annual basis (at a minimum):

1. Develop Youth/Young Adult Ministry
 - a) Establish presence on college campuses
 - b) Cultivate youth leadership pathways
 - c) Raise awareness and support local congregational efforts for youth/young adult ministry initiatives.
 - d) Pursue ecumenical connections (e.g., Young Life)
 - e) Address liturgical opportunities to more fully engage youth/young adults.

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2. Develop Native American Ministry
 - a) Address local/diocesan needs for leadership
 - b) Connect to church-wide initiatives related to Boarding Schools and other issues.
 - c) Identify Indigenous perceptions of church
3. Develop Congregational Ministry
 - a) Identify members of our diocese with gifts and skills to be ordained for sacramental ministry on a diocesan-wide basis.
 - b) Identify and support locally trained, ordained, and commissioned ministers, especially for small congregations.
 - c) Explore possibilities for local ministry team development.
4. Develop Reconciliation and Creation Care Ministry
 - a) Continue building on current efforts and communicate more widely.
 - b) Expand education related to these areas (e.g., Doctrine of Discovery, Dismantling Racism, Indigenous creation teachings, resources for environmental awareness, liturgical resources, sustainable energy opportunities)
 - c) Encourage connections between congregations

C. Invest in Staffing to Align with Goals and review structure annually:

1. Continue funding for full-time Diocesan Administrator
2. Commit to 3-Year funding for a full-time Diocesan Missioner (formerly Diocesan Minister) for Diocesan Ministry Development and Administration in advance of the election of a Bishop Diocesan.
3. Commit to 3–5-Year funding for a full-time Missioner for Youth/Young Adult & Congregational Ministry Development. This position will support and serve various long-term goals, including sacramental support for congregations, youth/young adult ministry, Native American ministry (in particular Saint Thomas, Fort Totten) and other congregational development.
4. Commit to 3-5-Year funding for a full-time Missioner for Reconciliation, Creation Care & Congregational Ministry Development. This position will support and serve various long-term goals, including sacramental support for congregations, Native American Ministry, in particular Saint Paul's, White Shield and Saint Sylvan's, Dunseith, and Reconciliation, and Creation Care. This is a refocus of the Northwest Ministry experiment, based on what we have learned these past two years, and builds on the ministry of the current Northwest Coordinator.
5. Reallocate General Convention block grant funding and increase annual budget approximately \$150,000 by making strategic use of additional withdrawals from trust endowment; use of other diocesan assets such as designated reserve funds; use of other funds invested in NDEF such as congregational renewal and revitalization, and contributions from congregations benefitting from these ministry positions.

D. Invest in collaboration/cooperation with other dioceses:

1. Continue to explore and engage in opportunities for cross-diocesan collaboration and cooperation in mission and ministry (e.g., youth EYE participation with Minnesota, South Dakota Racial Reconciliation efforts, Companion Relationship with Texas.)

E. Invest in structural/organizational changes:

1. Request that Diocesan Council address the following:
 - a) Delegates to Diocesan Convention (proportional or equal representation?)
 - b) Eligibility of canonically resident clergy to vote at Convention.
 - c) Scope and functions of regions, if any?
 - d) Consequences of non-participation in Diocesan Stewardship Share
 - e) Ways to encourage larger congregations to partner with smaller congregations

Calendar

Bishop Ely's Schedule

October 2023

- September 28th - October 20th: Bishop Ely on vacation
- 24th-31st: Bishop Ely in North Dakota
- 29th: Bishop's Visitation at St. Paul's, White Shield

November 2023

- 14th-20th: Bishop Ely in North Dakota
- 19th: Bishop's Visitation at Gethsemane Cathedral, Fargo and St. John the Divine, Moorhead

Diocesan Events and Dates to Note

September 2023

- 29th-30th: Owaste Wakan | Racial Reconciliation Training (Prairie Knights Casino)

October 2023

- 3rd: Diocesan Ministry Support Team Meeting (Zoom); 9am
- 3rd: Clergy/Congregation Leaders Meeting (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 3rd: Province VI Small Church Gathering (Zoom); 7:30pm
- 8th: New Season of Ministry Conversation w/the Diocese (Zoom); 4pm
- 10th: New Season of Ministry Conversation w/the Diocese (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 12th: New Season of Ministry Conversation w/the Diocese (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 14th: School for Ministry Preaching Workshop (Jamestown); 10am
- 26th: dMST Meeting (Mandan); 12:30pm
- 27th-28th: Diocesan Convention (Mandan)

November 2023

- 7th: Clergy/Congregation Leaders Meeting (Zoom); 6:30pm
- 7th: Province VI Small Church Gathering (Zoom); 7:30pm
- 9th: **Sheaf deadline: Advent edition**
- 16th: Full-time Priests/Pastors Gathering (Jamestown); 12pm
- 17th: dMST Meeting (Jamestown)
- 17th-18th: Diocesan Council (Jamestown)
- 23rd-24th: Diocesan Office Closed (Thanksgiving Day & Friday after)
- 30th: dMST Meeting (Zoom); 9am

Safe Church—Renewing our Efforts



Congregational To Do's:

1. Read **and adopt** the revised polities (vestries should record their adoption in meeting minutes); any local adaptations of the policies, requested in writing, must have Bishop's approval (requests are due no later than **September 30, 2023**).
2. Develop a list of those in the congregation (names and email addresses) who need background checks and training and send the list to the Diocesan Office *electronically*. See Appendix A-1 and A-2 in the policies to determine who should be on the list and what training is required. Note that role(s) individuals have in the congregations determines background checks and required training. At least some people are likely to have more than one role and so require more/different training. The next step will take place in the Diocesan Office and will be followed by emails directly to the individuals whose names you provide telling them how to access the background check and the training.

IMPORTANT: See the detailed *Instructions* on the safe church section on the diocesan website at this direct link: <https://bit.ly/3PEilCE>. Those instructions describe the process that follows after names/emails are sent to the Diocesan Office. For the policies and other important resources related to safe church compliance go to the newly created safe church section of the diocesan web page; safe church information is listed under the Ministry tab; see (<https://www.ndepiscopal.org/ministries/safe-church/>).

Episcopal Youth Event Recap—Chloe Gullikson



Attending EYE was an incredible experience that I hope every Episcopal youth gets to experience. I have never felt more comfortable and safe in a large group of teenagers than I did in Maryland. Everyone there was incredibly kind and it was very easy to make friends. One day, the ND/MN delegation were playing sand volleyball and a couple delegations joined in after a while. That is just one example of how great the people were.

At worship on Thursday night, Bishop Curry gave the sermon. It was one of the best sermons I have ever heard. To see his passion for God in person was very inspiring. All of the speakers at plenary sessions and bishops at worships were amazing. The theme was about Esther and how we all need to be the Esther of today. I learned so much and my faith grew even more.

-Chloe Gullikson

Creation Care Corner

Submitted by: The Diocesan Creation Care Committee



Eco-Friendly Home Cleaning

Did you know that commercial household cleaning products can be bad for your health and harmful to the environment? Conventional household cleaning products may contain chemicals that can irritate your eyes, skin, or lungs, or cause more serious health issues. Many of these products biodegrade slowly or become more toxic when they biodegrade, thus representing a threat to aquatic or other wildlife. Chemicals in conventional cleaning products can also negatively impact indoor and outdoor air quality, and the packaging of commercial cleaners may be non-recyclable or contain harmful materials such as heavy metals or BPA (an industrial chemical). [Research](#) shows that disinfectant wipes and sprays, especially those that claim to “kill 99.9% of germs,” are linked to serious health problems, they contribute to antimicrobial resistance, they pollute the environment, and they are not particularly effective.

How to clean your house the GREEN WAY!

1. Make your own cleaning products! Below are some formulas that really work and that are safe for humans and the environment.

All-Purpose Cleaner (Mild)

- 1/2 cup white distilled vinegar
- 1/4 cup baking soda
- 1/2 gallon hot water

Mix ingredients in recyclable plastic spray bottle. For very light jobs, you can also just use baking soda with water or 1/2 cup white distilled vinegar with 1 quart water.

Window Cleaner

- 1/4 cup white distilled vinegar
- 1 Tbsp corn starch
- 1 quart warm water

Mix ingredients in recyclable plastic spray bottle. (**Tip: Newspapers leave a streak-free shine!**)

Toilet Bowl Cleaner (Moderately Strong)

- 1/2 cup borax
- 1 gallon hot water

Mix solution and scrub basin. Borax helps get rid of stains better than baking soda.

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More options for DIY cleaning products can be found at the University of Arkansas' Cooperative Extension Service website <https://www.uaex.uada.edu/environment-nature/water/quality/clean-green-homemade-cleaners.aspx>, and the Good Housekeeping website <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/cleaning/tips/a24885/make-at-home-cleaners/>.

2. Purchase cleaning products that are safe for humans and the environment. The US Environmental Protection Agency has a program called "Safer Choice" which provides a long list of certified Safer Choice products (such as Gunk Multipurpose Cleaner, Clorox Compostable Wipes, Simply Green All-Purpose Cleaner, and Charlie's Soap Kitchen and Bath Household Cleaner). You can find the list of certified Safer Choice products here: <https://www.epa.gov/saferchoice>, and look for the Safer Choice label when you're shopping.



Thank you for doing your part to be a steward of God's creation!

(The Diocesan Creation Care Committee thanks the St. Stephen's Green Team for providing this content. If you would like to join the Diocesan Creation Care Committee or have questions about it, please contact Solveigh Barney at Solveigh.barney@gmail.com)

TENS News: "Rooted in Abundance"

As you make plans for your fall stewardship campaign, resources from The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) are available free of charge to all congregations and members of the Diocese of North Dakota through the diocese's annual TENS membership.

The [TENS website](#) has materials to download, adapt, and use to develop your fall stewardship programming. This year's theme is "Rooted in Abundance." Resources include:

- Seasonal Reflections 2022—2023 Year A
- Campaign logos and artwork
- Timeline for Campaign Implementation
- Campaign Materials, Pledge Cards, Letters, and Prayers
- Weekly Reflections: September 17—November 26



Access to this year's resources is password protected and available by contacting Jess Thielke, Diocesan Administrator, at 701.235.6688 | office@ndepiscopal.org.

TENS is an association of church leaders, both lay and ordained, "who are committed to living generously and helping others live lives of generosity."

If you have questions about TENS or the annual resources, contact Fr. Mark Strobel who is a member of the TENS Board of Directors at 701.232.3394 | markstrobel@gmail.com



WHITE PRIVILEGE: Part 2

What does it look like in the church?

Submitted by: Amy Phillips, Sandy Holbrook, & Dan Rice

This is Part 2 of a three-part series on White privilege. The series was written at the request of the Diocesan Racial Reconciliation Committee. To read Part 1, go to this link and click on the June/July 2023 Sheaf: <https://www.ndepiscopal.org/the-sheaf/>. The third and final part will appear in the next issue of *The Sheaf* and will address how White folks can respond to White supremacy and White privilege.

What does White privilege look like in the church?

Those of us who are White may be inclined to ignore or deny the reality of White supremacy and our own White privilege for a variety of reasons—including the fact that if we're Christian, we may think our faith-based beliefs and behaviors ensure that we are thinking and acting in non-privileged, non-racist ways. In reality, Christianity in the U.S. has been inextricably linked with beliefs about White supremacy and it's impossible for all of us *not* to be affected by this reality.

- White Christian supremacy was the basis for the 15th-century “[Doctrine of Discovery](#)” which justified White European oppression, colonization, and genocide of entire groups of non-Christian/“non-White” peoples around the world.
- White Christian supremacy justified [the enslavement of black Africans](#) for the benefit of White plantation economies and the lynching and killing of black people during the eras of Jim Crow and the civil rights movement.
- White Christian supremacy identified Asians as representing a “[Yellow Peril](#)” which justified discriminatory legislation, persecution, murder, and internment.
- White Christian supremacy justified the enslavement and killing of [Native peoples](#), the establishment of reservations, [the theft of Native lands](#), the eradication of Native people's sources of food, and the forced placement of Native children at [White Christian-run boarding schools](#).
- White Christian supremacy has been a source of long-standing [antisemitism and Islamophobia in the U.S.](#), resulting in violent and sometimes fatal attacks against Jews and Muslims.

White Christian supremacy continues to be the reason that the average White Christian in America today is more likely to hold racist attitudes than someone who does not claim a religious affiliation. As [Robert P. Jones](#), the head of the Public Religion Research Institute notes in his [research-based book, *White Too Long*](#), “If you were recruiting for a White supremacist cause on a Sunday morning, you'd likely have more success hanging out in the parking lot of an average White Christian church—evangelical Protestant, mainline Protestant, or Catholic—than approaching Whites sitting out services at the local coffee shop” (Quoted in “[American Christianity's White Supremacy Problem](#)”).

Reader Reflection Question: What are my reactions to the relationship detailed above between Christianity and White supremacy?

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Since the link between Christianity and White supremacy runs so deep, **what privileges do those of us who are White have in the church?** The [Rev. Joseph Barndt](#), in his book *Becoming an Anti-Racist Church*, provides a few examples:

- We can expect that White culture, White norms, and White music will dictate the style of worship, and we can choose to add or not to add multicultural flourishes to our White worship style.
- The images of God, Jesus, and other biblical figures are usually portrayed as White.
- We are taught church history and biblical and theological interpretations that are filtered through the historical European/White experience.
- We have bigger and more adequate church buildings.
- Seminary education and the shaping of a pastor is tailored mostly to fit White definitions and White needs.
- A White pastor is can far more easily be assigned to a White congregation.
- We are much better represented in decision-making gatherings and conventions of the church.
- Nobody asks a White Christian how long they have been a Lutheran (Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, or other mainline Christian).

We have thought of additional ways that White folks experience privilege in the church:

- The hymns we sing are mostly written by White people and reflect images of purity as being White
- The children's chapel curriculum may mostly reflect images of White people
- Our diocesan and parish leadership and membership may be predominantly White
- Parish and diocesan investments, accounts, budgets, and funding decisions and mostly controlled by White individuals
- Because most of the clergy are White, the sermons tend to reflect the experience of White people.

Because the history of Christianity is so entwined with White supremacy, our churches are inevitably impacted by this history. It takes a conscious effort, and courage, to see this reality anew.

Reader Reflection Question: In what way(s) do I see White privilege present in my church?

The next and final installment of the White Privilege series will reflect on what White individuals can do to respond to White privilege.

If anyone has questions or comments about this essay that you would like the authors to address in the next *Sheaf*, or if you just want to be in conversation with them, feel free to contact them at the following email addresses: Amy Phillips (kaphillip@gmail.com), Sandy Holbrook (slholbrook41@gmail.com), Dan Rice (danielroyrice@gmail.com).

Editorial Note: The Reconciliation Committee is hosting "Owašte Wakarj: Sacred Healing, Antiracism and Racial Reconciliation," an overnight retreat for leaders of the dioceses of North Dakota and South Dakota, September 29-30, led by The Ven. Paul Sneve, Archdeacon of the Diocese of South Dakota. Over 40 leaders are registered to attend. The committee is also evaluating other options for dismantling racism formation and looks forward to hosting other opportunities in the coming year that would help us to respond as Christians to the challenges raised in these articles, fulfill our commitments as Episcopalians as identified by General Convention, and be effective in our context. Watch for announcements in coming issues of *The Sheaf* and *The Prairie* email newsletter. If there are questions, please contact Christie Iverson (christieiverson@icloud.com), vice-chair of the Reconciliation Committee.

Financial Transition

This Spring our previous Diocesan Treasurer retired from her commitments with the diocese. The Diocesan Council then elected Amy Morrow to become the new treasurer. We also hired Sheila Leier as a part-time bookkeeper. The new finance team consists of these two members and then our Diocesan Administrator, Jessica Thielke. As we move into this new season of ministry, we are excited about a full-team approach with sharing of duties.

Although there is overlap in the team approach, most often Jessica is handling accounts payable, accounts receivable, grants, and the day-to-day financial reports. Sheila handles all the payroll and everything involved with payroll and taxes, and assists Jessica in learning the financial ropes. Amy provides oversight, finalizes council reports, and chairs the finance committee.

One of the major transitions that took place this Spring was moving from the old accounting software, ACS, to using Quickbooks Pro. Not only were Amy and Sheila used to and acquainted with this program, it is extremely user friendly for whatever the finances may look like in the future. With the approval and excitement of Widmere Roel, our auditing firm, the transition took place.

Where we stand as of this article is the following: the transition to Quickbooks is almost 100% complete. We are simply waiting for the 2022 audit to be finished to finalize the transition. The team approach to finances has been going well, with oversight from Amy as treasurer and boots-on-the-ground work being done by Sheila and Jessica.

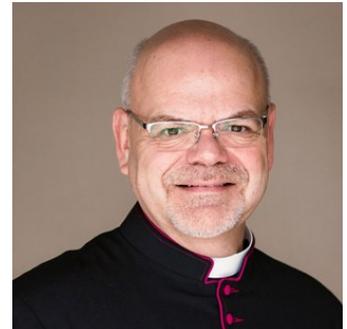
The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota
School for Ministry
Announces

“Proclaim the Good News”

A workshop for all who may be called to preach (lay and ordained)

with
The Very Rev. Mark Strobel
Dean of Gethsemane Cathedral, Fargo

Saturday October 14, 2023
10:00am – 3:00pm
Grace Church, Jamestown



The School for Ministry is shifting its focus to providing training for local ministry. This workshop is for lay people, deacons, and priests who are preaching or considering a call as preachers in their community.

Dean Strobel has written about preaching and for preachers for the past 25 years.

There is no charge for this workshop.

To register send an email to

Jess at the Diocesan office - office@ndepiscopal.org

or to Steve Godfrey - sgodfrey@ndepiscopal.org

Please let them know if you have any food restrictions.



The Sheaf

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The Sheaf—Pre-Convention Edition

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If you would like to see a colored
copy of the *Sheaf*, or read it
digitally, please go to:
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