



# Christ Church Cathedral Catedral Iglesia de Cristo

*The Grapevine*  
October 2015

## **A Message from the Vicar** *Participating in God's Mission*

A few years ago, The Episcopal Church in Connecticut [ECCT] embraced a tagline that not only redefines how we see ourselves as an institution but also invites us to redirect our personal and communal focus to God rather than to the institutional church. The "Participating in God's mission" tagline is a profound and healthy reminder that we are part of a bigger picture. It is a reminder that we are called as disciples and apostles of Christ to be part of the ministry of reconciliation and the message of the Love of God to the world. As a cradle Episcopalian, I grew up understanding and embracing the concept of "The mission of the church" and then accept and recognize later in life that the Church does not have a mission, but rather that the God of Mission has a church. This changed my understanding of mission dramatically. For that and for those who helped me understand the difference, I am thankful.

This realization becomes particularly palpable to me, and serves as a friendly reminder to keep things in perspective, each time a community gets ready to start the "Parish Program Year." We are entering a season filled with events and activities that, with God's help, will help build our community life, strengthen our service to those in need, foster our formation as disciples and bring us closer to God through worship, music and fellowship. On October 3 we will host the TREC-CT gathering, a state-wide event designed to present to ECCT members a proposal

for structural changes in our diocesan governance that are motivated by the need of adaptive change, further collaboration and effective participation in God's mission. That same day Cathedral members will gather on the patio to participate in the Blessing of the Animals liturgy.

On October 4, we will host our bilingual Homecoming service. A time to celebrate our diversity, praise God and mark the beginning of our "busiest season" as a community. We will host concerts, Bible study series on healing, youth formation opportunities, even a costume party to welcome the younger families in the Greater Hartford area and young volunteers of Church Street Eats. We will indeed be busy.

In the midst of the "busy-ness" I remind myself and invite you to be reminded that events and activities are only one expression of our community life. An expression that is necessary in the building of our relationships, our formation as disciples and our call as apostles sent to make a difference in the world.

There is much more to God's mission. At a Spring Clergy Gathering in 2002 in Massachusetts, our Diocesan Bishop Ian T. Douglas shared the following words: "*Stephen Neill, the great Anglican missionary bishop in South India and mission scholar, is credited with saying, 'Once everything is mission, nothing is mission.'* Following Neill, one could argue that the position advocated in this reflection is that all that Christians do constitutes participation in God's mission. One might say that the sexton

*Continued on page 2*

*Continued from page 1*

*opening the doors of the church on Sunday morning is as much a part of God's mission as feeding the hungry in a homeless shelter or proclaiming Christ in a far-off country. The mark of mission, however, is not defined by activity or geographic location or holy orders, but rather by the process of crossing frontiers from the known to the unknown, from the safe to the dangerous, from the comfortable to the uncomfortable. Mission thus involves risk. It means risking oneself, one's control, and ultimately one's faith. Discovering God anew in those who are radically different and in unforeseen places is at the heart of mission. Moving beyond parochialism and provincialism in lives of worship, forgiveness, proclamation, service, and justice making, the baptized risk themselves for the sake of God's reconciled creation. The work of the ordained, whether as mission leader, mission interpreter, or mission motivator, is to lead, support and catalyze God's people as they seek to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ."*

Bishop Douglas' words resonate in my heart more than ever. The mark of mission is indeed not defined by activities. It is a process of risking ourselves to be used by God as he sees fit in God's plan and desire to reconcile humans with God and one another. It is a journey of trust, traveling to the unknown and dangerous, to the very heart of God. As we get busy in the months to come, I invite you to ponder your conceptions about the Mission of God and the role of the Church in responding and participating in God's mission. It is a worthwhile spiritual and intellectual exercise, one that may take you to places you may have never imagined and impact your life in a meaningful way. I invite you to do so as we learn from one another and support one another in discerning and responding to who and what God is calling us to be and do.

Faithfully.

**Lina+**

The Rev. Miguelina Howell

## October Calendar

- 3 The Blessing of Animals, 4 p.m.  
(see separate item)
- 4 Homecoming Sunday, combined  
bilingual service, 10:30 a.m. (see separate  
item)
- 18 Asylum Quartet, 10 a.m. service (see  
separate item)
- 20 Soup & Services, 5 p.m.
- 22 Asylum Quartet concert, 7 p.m. (see  
separate item)
- 25 Bach Sunday, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (see  
separate item)
- 30 A Night at the Cathedral, 6:30 p.m.,  
(see separate item)

## Bring Your Pets to be Blessed!

On Saturday, October 3, at 4 p.m., the Blessing of Animals will take place on the Cathedral House patio. In the event of rain, it will move into the auditorium.

The Blessing of Animals is a tradition inspired by the love St. Francis had for all living creatures. His feast day is October 4. All pets are welcome—whether they walk, fly, swim or crawl! If you don't have a pet, come anyway and enjoy the celebration.

## **A Message from the Priest-in-Charge** *Helping released inmates*

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I write to update you on the Onesimus Project, which is a fledgling effort by Christ Church Cathedral to encourage and equip congregations to integrate prison inmates into their communities of faith. It is named for a slave whom the Apostle Paul met while they were both behind bars. Paul comes to regard Onesimus as a son. Thus, when Onesimus is released from prison, Paul gives him a letter to carry to Philemon, head of a house church in Onesimus' home town, that says "I am appealing to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become during my imprisonment....I am sending him, that is, my own heart, back to you....So if you consider me your partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has wronged you in any way, charge that to my account...Yes, brother, let me have this benefit from you in the Lord! Refresh my heart in Christ."

In my May 2015 *Grapevine* essay, I reported on the grand opening of a Community Reintegration Center at Cybulski Correctional Facility in Enfield. As you may recall, the grand opening represented the first step in an ambitious effort by Connecticut's Department of Corrections to break the cycle of recidivism. In essence, a wing of a traditional prison was converted into a learning community where inmates nearing the completion of their sentences can acquire the skills and access the resources needed to make a go of it on the outside. Eventually the entire facility will be devoted to preparing inmates for reintegration.

Since May we have been working closely with the Reintegration Center's program director to explore ways in which the Cathedral might serve as a catalyst for congregations across the Diocese to embrace those whom society has exiled. This holy work includes both attending to the needs of men and women while they are behind bars *and* welcoming them into our communities. As a Cathedral, we are called to equip all the saints to do God's work, without regard for parish or even denominational boundaries. However, when it comes to challenging ministries such as this, it makes sense for us to walk the walk before talking the talk.

We are about to take our first step. In October the Cathedral's intern, Ann Perrott, assisted by Leslie Jones, will begin offering a "Houses of Healing" opportunity at Reintegration Center on Saturday mornings. As Ann explained in the September

*Grapevine*, Houses of Healing is a structured program designed to increase emotional literacy so that inmates can face and address the harms done to them and the harms they have done to others. Among the collateral benefits of offering this program is that we will be able to cement relationships with Reintegration Center staff, work out protocols for future programs, and assess programming needs.

We are about to take a second step as well. One of the Center's greatest needs is for male role models who can serve as mentors. As it happens, a good model already exists for providing men the opportunity to speak openly and honestly with one another about the challenges of manhood, and to learn from one another's experiences. Many churches sponsor "men's groups" which meet over breakfast once a week or twice a month and can be counted on to provide support for various church events. Mostly, though, the men spend time helping each other figure out how to navigate life.

With that in mind, the Cathedral will soon be forming a "Men's Group" whose members will be drawn from both the Cathedral congregation and the Reintegration Center. Fred Faulkner has agreed to take the lead in pulling the men's group together. Please remember to thank him the next time you see him. Initially, meetings will take place at Cybulski but our hope is that once the group gels the meetings can rotate between Enfield and Hartford.

Eventually we will invite other congregations to follow suit. The men's group model, in particular, seems relatively easy to replicate since it builds on existing church culture. In contrast, Houses of Healing is a structured program that requires a unique set of facilitation skills. We have begun reaching out to other congregations to explore what type of programming they would feel comfortable offering at the Reintegration Center, and what it would take for them to get on board. As of this writing, we are in active conversation with clergy and lay leaders at Emanuel Lutheran Church on Capitol Avenue in Hartford and Trinity Episcopal on Sigourney Street.

There is even more in the works. However, I want to keep something in reserve so I will not lack for good news to share in upcoming issues.

Until then, Grace and Peace.

**Harlon+**  
The Rev. Harlon Dalton

## **Commitment to God the Giver: Stewardship in Our Spiritual Journey**

*Stewardship is living out our lives with the belief that all we are and have is God's, entrusted with us to share.*

The 2015 Stewardship Committee, under its chairman Robert Mueller, is spreading the message of our focus of "Commitment to God the Giver." It's helpful to reflect on the words of other Episcopalians on what stewardship means for them. Here are excerpts from a letter by the Rev. Dr. Eric H. F. Law of Los Angeles:

"When Jesus found out that his friend Lazarus was dead, he started his journey toward 'unbinding' him. Jesus had been teaching and showing his followers the abundance of living in God's realm. God gives life, not takes it. God releases resources, not buries them. God expects us to circulate and 'flow' our gifts, not bind and restrict them.

"The people blamed Jesus for Lazarus' death: 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.'" When Jesus insisted they take away the stone from the grave, they complained: "Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days." How often do we use the same techniques to resist giving and releasing our resources? We might say: How can we give when we are still grieving our loss. We blame it on the bad economy. Some of us blame God for not doing something to turn our economy around. In fear of losing more, we lock up our resources. Resources are like water: When it doesn't flow, it turns rotten and smells and become opportunities for destructive things to grow.

"Jesus finally confronts us by naming the heart of the issue: 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' *Do you believe in God the Giver? Do you believe in the abundance of God?* When we believe in the abundance of God, we can have the courage to open and unbind our resources. In doing so, we join Jesus, with all the saints in the past and in the future, in becoming the extension of God the Giver, causing resources to flow and rejuvenate our lives, communities and creation.

*To think about: How has giving in the past opened your heart to God and others? What steps might you take to "unbind" your spirit of generosity and abundance?*

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## **Cathedral Discernment Task Force Report ~ Engagement Process**

When the Discernment Task Force Report was presented to Chapter on July 14, 2015, Bishop Ian Douglas charged the Parish Committee with the task of engaging the congregation in discussion about the report and its recommendations. He asked us, "Is this the identity that this Christian community on the corner of Main and Church wants to own?" He requested the Parish Committee to report back to Chapter at its October 13, 2015, meeting.

The Parish Committee swung into action. The Discernment Report was made available by an E-News link, by a *Grapevine* link, by a website link and by printed copies. The Parish Committee met on August 11 to discuss the report and the Ministry Team Coordinators met a week later. Two Sunday Forums to engage the congregation were held on August 30 and September 13. A Summary of the recommendations was developed for use by everyone attending the Forums. The Forums took the form of table discussion groups with a Parish Committee member at each table to facilitate the discussion and take notes. A Survey form was developed for use by shut-ins and others unable to attend the Forums. Volunteers from the Parish Committee made up a Writing Team to compile all the notes from these meetings and the surveys that were returned. The Team met twice to write the report to Chapter. It was presented in draft form to the congregation at a Forum on Sunday, September 27, allowing time for a final polishing to meet the October 13 Chapter meeting deadline. It has been a very busy summer!

Lucy Groening, Chair  
Parish Committee

*Note: The report to Chapter will be available online in mid-October via the weekly E-news link and also in printed copies in the Cathedral narthex.*

## HAPPY OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Monica Best  
Melissa Best-McBride  
Sylvia Brown  
Rafaelina Burgos  
Walter DeClaybrook  
Sila Diaz  
Jonathan Dixon  
Ramon Echevarria  
Teresa Espinoza  
Martha Fine  
JaVaughn Fisher  
Michael Greaves  
Sheila Green  
Katie Ingram  
Thomas Ingram  
Katherine James  
Leslie Jones  
David Marcano  
Everton McCalla  
Laura McCalla  
Thomas McGrath  
Michael Navarro-O'Brien  
Amber O'Brien  
Luisa O'Brien  
Peggy Ornell  
Sigifredo Ossa  
Ruth Marie Perry  
Elba Rios  
Marleny Rivera  
Roxana Rosario  
Gilberto Sanchez  
Michael Scinto  
Tyler Tinker

### **Come to Homecoming Sunday, October 4**

After a summer of vacations and trips, let's come together in worship on Homecoming Day, October 4, to refresh our life and ministry at the Cathedral. A combined bilingual service at 10:30 a.m., will be followed by a hearty Fellowship Hour! Please bring a dish to share!

## MUSIC REIGNS AT THE CATHEDRAL

### ***Two Chances to Hear the Asylum Quartet***

In October the Asylum Quartet, Ensemble-in-Residence at the Cathedral, will offer enjoyable music to the Cathedral community on two occasions. The very talented four saxophonists will participate in the 10 a.m. service on Sunday, October 18, and will give a free concert at 7 p.m. on October 22. If you've heard them, you know you're in for a musical treat; if you haven't heard them, plan now to do so.

### ***Bach Sunday Celebration on October 25***

The third annual celebration at Christ Church Cathedral of music by Johann Sebastian Bach will be held on Sunday, October 25. The event's origin goes back to a 2013 Bachtoberfest held by the Hartford Symphony involving local churches and arts organizations. The Cathedral decided to continue the tradition each October. This year's Bach Sunday will feature works by Bach at the 10 a.m. service and in a recital at 3 p.m.

The morning service music will include Cantata 115, "Make yourself ready, my spirit" with the Choir, soloists, and musical instruments.

The afternoon recital will feature two cantatas: 161, "Come, O sweet hour of death," a solemn and beautiful duo cantata for a mezzo- soprano and a tenor with recorders and strings; and 49, "I go forth and seek with longing," a cheery duet for soprano and baritone. There will also be a choral motet "Praise ye the Lord, all nations."

Soloists will be Olivia Miller, soprano; Mary Gerbi, mezzo-soprano; Eric Christopher Perry, tenor; and Jacob Cooper, baritone. The leader will be Joseph Anand Slater, Music Director.

All events are free and open to the public. Come and bring others to enjoy the wonderful music.

### ***Looking Ahead: November 8***

Simon Jacobs, Director of Music and Organist at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in New Haven, will give a recital at 3 p.m. At 4 p.m. the Cathedral Choir, together with Jacobs and Joshua Anand Slater, Cathedral Music Director, will offer a memorial evensong.

## Have Fun With Ghosts and Goblins!

Come on Friday, October 30, for **A Night at the Cathedral** offered by the Music Department, the Acolyte Ministry and the Youth Ministry. Starting at 6:30 p.m., there will be a showing of the classic silent film *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* that stars John Barrymore. It will be enhanced with music by the renowned improvisateur Peter Krasinski. That will be followed by a costume party and food—all for a \$5.00 donation. Come in costume and don't miss the fun!



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## Artist Supports Donations to the Black Lives Matter Movement

Wendy West, artist and Cathedral member, will donate 50 percent of all proceeds of sales from her online gallery directly to the Black Lives Matter movement in Connecticut. The gallery is at [www.etsy.com/shop/SkyLyteStudio](http://www.etsy.com/shop/SkyLyteStudio)

Wendy believes that making this effort helps her stay faithful to her baptismal vow “to strive for justice and peace.” She is planning a new series of works dedicated to “the beautiful and courageous spirits” she has encountered while participating in the BLM recently, and hopes to share this work through an exhibit with other Cathedral and community artists. Her goal is to raise \$1,000 via this project. You can contact Wendy through her Etsy website or speak to her any time with questions or ideas. She will happily refund any shipping costs for website orders and personally deliver in the Greater Hartford area.



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**The Grapevine** is a monthly newsletter for the Christ Church Cathedral audience. Copies are available in the Cathedral, in the Cathedral House, via e-news and online at [www.cccathedral.org/documents/October2015Grapevine.pdf](http://www.cccathedral.org/documents/October2015Grapevine.pdf)

**Deadline for November issue: October 15**

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