

REAL EPISCOPAL

GOOD NEWS

ALONG

SPRING RENEWAL 2023

Celebrating together, renewing faith

WEST COAST COLLABORATIVE

New Year, New Diaconal Track

THE DISCOVERY TEAM

Taking Coffee Hour On The Road

PREACHING RETREAT

Inspiring new voices

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Real Episcopal

*A biannual publication of the
Diocese of El Camino Real*

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the Rev. Julie Nelson, the Rev. Canon Filemón Díaz, Elrond Lawrence
the Rev. Jen Crompton, The Discovery Team at St. Benedict's,
The Chinese Congregation at St. Francis, Jamie Chan, and Bob Huang*

*Preachers work on their homilies at
the Preaching Retreat.*



FROM THE Bishop



Dear Beloved of El Camino Real,

We hope that you enjoy the Spring/Summer edition of Real Episcopal, our diocesan magazine. You receive this magazine twice each year to give you the Good News of our diocese—innovative ministries and ongoing endeavors as we serve God in this rich mission field.

In this edition, you will find an invitation to give to our Annual Bishop's Appeal. There is a donation envelope in the center of the magazine, as well as instructions for donating on-line. The Bishop's Appeal supports ministries that are funded outside of our operating budget. We continue to fund two major ministries, the West Coast Collaborative (our School for Ministry), as well as the Community Trailblazer (our outside-the-walls program guided by recent seminary graduates). This magazine contains updates on both of those with an interview with the three deans of the West Coast Collaborative, and a conversation with the Discovery Team at St. Benedict's, Los Osos that is working with the Rev. Jen Crompton.

An exciting part of the West Coast Collaborative is the Lay Preaching Retreat, held at the completion of a full-year of training. This retreat happened in April, with six faculty and eleven students, eligible for licensing. The Rev. Filemon Diaz tells about his experience as a faculty member and the surprise of meeting his students in-person.

Additionally, you will read about an exciting project funded through our Missional Grants — the leadership of Father Jonathan Liu with our Mandarin-speaking congregation at St. Francis, Willow Glen.

The staff and I give thanks to Carole Bartolini for crafting this publication and for the inspiring interviews she held with many people. I know that she enjoyed those conversations, and we appreciate the input of those who contributed to these articles.

The Real Episcopal contains a list of recent donors to the Bishop's Appeal, and we would like to add your name to our list. I hope that you will consider the ways in which you can support our major ministries, and give generously to the Annual Bishop's Appeal.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lucinda Ashby". The signature is fluid and cursive.

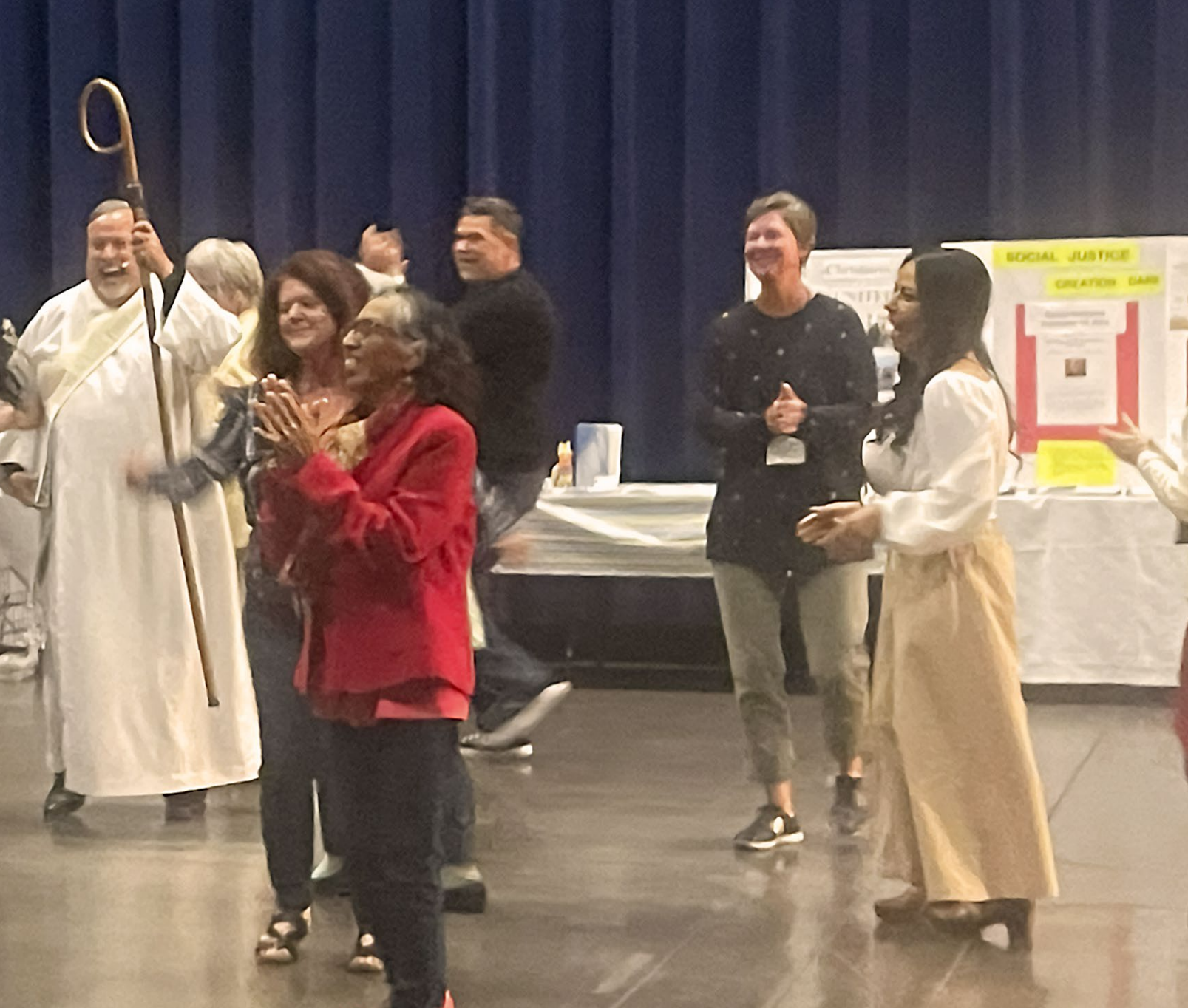


Spring Renewal 2023

In April 2023, the Spring Renewal event marked the first major in-person gathering for the Diocese of El Camino Real since 2020. More than 100 people participated and joined in the celebration with us.

Bishop Lucinda began the awards portion of the event by acknowledging the Rev. Mary Morrison. She was granted an honorary doctorate by the Church Divinity School of the Pacific on May 20th. This honor recognizes individuals whose life and ministry have made a significant positive impact on the Church and the world.

Next Bishop Lucinda recognized Tim Gee from St. Andrew's, Saratoga, with the Bishop's Award for his dedicated service to the Diocese of El Camino Real and the wider Episcopal Church. Tim has held various positions, including Verger, Member of Executive Council, and Deputy to General Convention. Bishop Lucinda praised Tim's exceptional work, humble attitude, and attention to detail.



*Bishop Lucinda dances with the Rev. Salying Wong and others following the Eucharist at Spring Renewal.
Photo by the Rev. Julie Nelson*

Joan Dresser from St. George's, Salinas is the recipient of the Second Annual Pilgrim's Path Award. This award represents the best of our church, as it encourages us to embrace new ways of being as God continues to call us. Bishop Lucinda had high praise for Joan, stating that she did not need to be taught the lessons of pilgrimage. Joan becomes unstoppable when she is passionate about something, as her Sr. Warden candidly attests. Joan's courage to walk wherever the path leads her inspires many. She is a role model for those looking to extend the Holy Spirit beyond the walls of the church and out into the community in need. Joan's name joins the 2022 recipient, Canon Brian Nordwick, on the legacy plaque at Sargent House.

After the awards ceremony, Bishop Diana Akiyama from the Diocese of Oregon delivered a captivating keynote speech. Bishop Diana is an accomplished academic, holding a Masters of Divinity from Church Divinity School of the Pacific and a PhD in Religion and Social Ethics from the University of Southern California. Previously, she served as a priest in the Diocese of Hawaii, where she was

the Vicar at St. Augustine's in Kapauu and Dean of the Waiolaihui'ia School of Formation for the Diocese.

On Saturday, Spring Renewal continued with Morning Prayer, after which the Diocese of El Camino delved deeper into the topic of Courage in the Wilderness. The first session involved attendees discussing their personal experiences of facing wilderness in their lives in table group discussions.

In the second session, Bishop Diana and Bishop Lucinda engaged in a conversation about the concept of "Personal Wilderness." They shared their experiences of being treated as "other" due to their race or cultural background.

During the final session, the focus was on the key takeaways from the concept of showing courage in the wilderness. The participants were encouraged to express their views in the table discussion that followed.

Spring Renewal concluded with a bilingual closing Eucharist with music provided by several talented musicians from San Pablo Apóstol, Seaside (Kaleb Aquino-Lopez; Alma Lopez; and



Above: Bishop Lucinda and Bishop Diana discuss their own experiences in the wilderness. Photo by Carole Bartolini

Right: Joan Dresser receives the Pilgrim's Path Award, Bishop Lucinda asperges parishioners, and Tim Gee receives the Bishop's Award. Photos by the Rev. Julie Nelson

Pedro Aquino) and St Timothy's., Mountain View (Teresa Peters; Will Watkins; Fern Jaspers-Fayer; Michael Shumway; Sandy Watkins; Susanne Sammel; Peter Sammel) and The Rev. Laurel Coote; St. Dunstan's. Readers shared scripture in English, Spanish, Tagalog, and Mandarin, showcasing the wide diversity in our diocese.

We are looking forward to celebrating together again at Spring Renewal 2024! Ω



Disturbance of Deacons

2023 Missional Project

Bishop Lucinda tasked the Deacons of our diocese to create an outreach ministry called ministry that all members of the diocese who were coming to the Spring Renewal could participate in. They dubbed it “A Disturbance of Deacons” to emphasize the deacon’s role in helping people live into the Baptismal Covenant. They encouraged Spring Renewal attendees to bring donations to meet the extra needs of the poor and displaced, especially women and children. The donations were generously distributed among different agencies: All Saints Cristo Rey to assist those impacted by the Pajaro flooding; Santa Maria Urban Ministry in San Jose; San Jose State University’s SJSU Pantry, which caters to students who struggle with food insecurity and other necessities; and El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO) in Paso Robles. The agencies expressed their gratitude and joy, and the Deacons were proud of the Diocese’s response. Ω



Deacons Bertram Nagarajah, Kathy Crowe, Robin Popoff, Rob Sommer, Tina Heidemann, and Senior Warden Dave Heidemann assemble supplies donated during Spring Renewal.

Chinese Language CONGREGATION at St. Francis

At St. Francis, Willow Glen, Father Johnathan Liu has been leading the Chinese Language Congregation since 2019, and his efforts have led to significant growth. Thanks to the Missional Grant program, Johnathan's ministry has been able to offer ongoing education, social media, catechism, and cultural interface to new members of the area's English-speaking congregation.

Father Johnathan's hard work in outreach has been instrumental in bringing in new members to St. Francis. Many people have been seeking not only a cultural community but also a spiritual one in the United States, and Father Johnathan is dedicated to providing both.





Left: The Chinese Language Congregation on Pentecost at St. Francis, Willow Glen .

Top: Jamie Chan

Right: Jamie's Story.
Photos courtesy of the Chinese Language Congregation.

我与美国圣公会和圣法兰西斯堂的缘分始于去年2022年7月份我第一次在社交媒体上与刘贻牧师的一次深度信仰交流。我会来到圣法兰西斯堂也是因为刘贻牧师以及这里有中文团契。我在2015年时受洗成为了一名基督徒，我之前对于圣公会的信仰体系完全一无所知。由于在中国教会的信仰偏向于原教旨主义，这样的信仰核心是唯独圣经，对于教义的解读也偏向于字句而不是经节中的精意。这样的信仰方式曾一度让我很怀疑我的自我认同。当我了解到美国圣公会对于LGBTQ+社群完全抱持开放的态度时我很震撼，甚至还有LGBTQ+的神职人员。这驱动我更加渴望了解圣公会的信仰体系和教会传统以及历史。在初步了解之后就觉得这很符合我对于教会的期待，因为圣公会坚持以圣经、传统以及理性为信仰根基。在了解了部分教会历史后我才知道圣徒相通以及圣而公的教会的具体含义。在与时俱进的信仰中理性能很好地隔绝原教旨主义，这是最让我感动的地方。到了这一步之后我就很想要在圣公会的信仰体系里来过信仰生活和敬拜上帝，所以在今年4月份时我成为了一名圣公会教友。

Among the new parishioners is Jamie Chan, who came to the United States from China and joined St. Francis in January 2023. He recently shared with *Real Episcopal* why he chose to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church this year on Easter.

"My connection with the Episcopal Church and St. Francis began in July 2022 when I had my first in-depth faith conversation with Father Jonathan on social media. The main reason why I've come to St. Francis was because of Father Jonathan and the Chinese congregation here. I was baptized and became a Christian in 2015, but I had never heard about the Episcopal Church. In China, the church's beliefs lean towards fundamentalism, with the core belief centered around the Bible alone, and the interpretation of doctrine focuses more on the literal words rather than the deeper meaning within the verses. This way of faith led me to question my self-identity as a gay person. When I discovered that the Episcopal Church in the United States fully embraces the LGBTQ+ community, I was shocked, especially knowing that there are LGBTQ+ clergy members. This led me to desire a deeper understanding of Episcopalianism, church traditions, and history. Upon my initial exploration, I discovered that it met my expectations for a church quite well. At the core of the Episcopal Church's beliefs are the Bible, tradition, and reason, which serve as the pillars of faith. It was only after learning about some of the Church's history that I discovered the specific meaning of "communion of saints" and the "catholic and apostolic" nature of the Church. The ability of a progressive faith to separate itself from fundamentalism through reason moved me. At this point, I have a strong desire to lead a spiritual life and worship God through the practices of the Episcopal Church. Therefore, in April this year, I was confirmed as an Episcopalian." Ω



Bishop's Annual Appeal

Thanks to the leadership of Bishop Lucinda Ashby, our diocese has been able to utilize general funds to support various initiatives.

These programs, including the West Coast Collaborative Community Trailblazers, and Leadership Innovation Fund, have been crucial in establishing bilingual programs to educate and train lay and ordained leaders for the diocese and beyond.

We are incredibly grateful for your generous support, which has made these initiatives possible. Thank you for your invaluable contribution.

Please scan the QR Code above to donate to any of the programs listed in this magazine.

West Coast Collaborative

This first successful year with the Lay Preaching Program has lead into the expansion of our School for Ministry as we join with the Diocese of Northern California and the Diocese of San Diego to form the West Coast Collaborative Episcopal School for Ministry. Our own Dean, the Rev. Katherine B. Doar is joined by the Rt. Rev. Jim Mathes as the Dean for San Diego and the Rev. Sr. Kathy Lawler, OEF as the Dean for Northern California. This year the school has expanded deaconal track and is continuing to develop the Spanish Language Lay Preaching track. The funds given to our School for Ministry support our dean, Katherine Doar, and provide scholarships and materials for students plus additional funding for guest presenters.

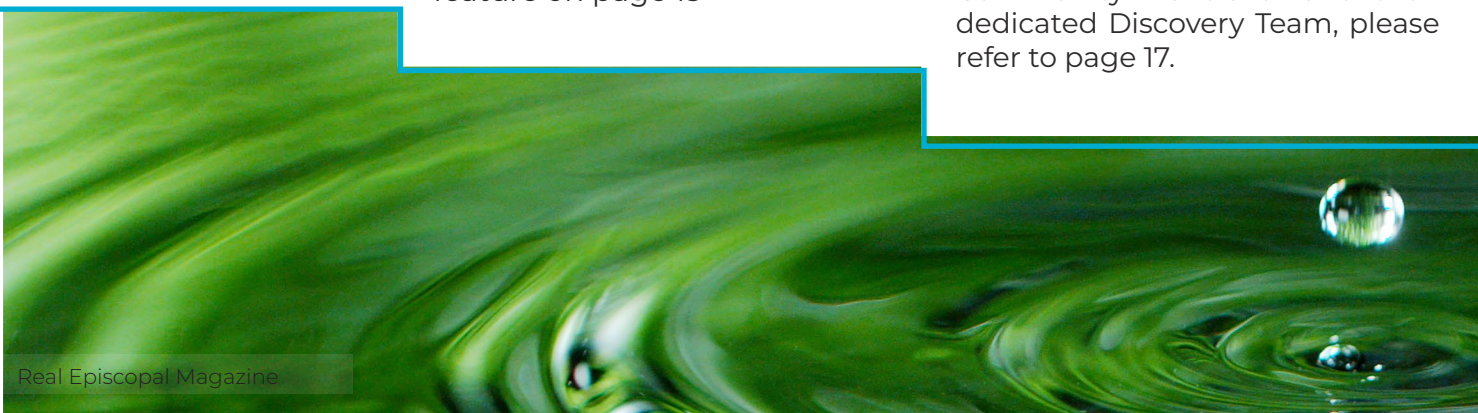
Read more about WCC in our feature on page 13

Community Trailblazer

The role of the Trailblazer is to serve as an integral leader in congregations, guiding them towards meaningful engagement with the local community. Through partnerships with other churches, institutions, and agencies, the Trailblazer helps churches to become more active, vibrant, and relevant to the needs of the community.

Our current Trailblazer, the Rev. Jen Crompton, is working with the SLO Canterbury Campus Ministry and St. Benedicts, Los Osos to create new pathways for connecting with communities beyond the walls of our church. This work is made possible through the Bishop's Appeal, and we encourage you to show your support by using the donation envelope and marking your contribution accordingly.

For more information about the Community Trailblazer and their dedicated Discovery Team, please refer to page 17.





Leave a Real Legacy

Help Build the Emerging Church

Is the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of El Camino Real enriching your life? Do you want to make a difference in advancing the Jesus Movement and help develop the emerging church in our diocese? How many times have you said, "I wish I could do more" to support work you believe in?

Legacy gifts provide an opportunity to designate a more significant future gift than might be possible through your annual contributions. Consider making a Real Legacy commitment to the Diocese. Common approaches include:

- *Bequests*: Designate a percentage of your estate after making provisions for family and friends; leave a specified sum of money; or leave a particular piece of property.
- *Beneficiary Designations*: Name the diocese as one of the beneficiaries of your retirement fund or life insurance policy.

During your lifetime, you can make qualified charitable distributions (QCD) from your IRA directly to the diocese if you are at least 70½ years old. Please discuss with a qualified financial advisor.

If you choose to designate a legacy gift, or if you already have done so, please inform the diocese of your plans. We would like to include and recognize you, if agreeable, as a member of our Real Legacy society to help inspire others.

For questions please contact Kirstin Nielsen, Bishop's Assistant & Diocesan Coordinator, at kirstin@realepiscopal.org or 831-394-4465.

Making IRA qualified charitable distributions

Please remember that there is a tax benefit to making charitable contributions directly from your IRA account if you are 72 years old (or 70½ if you reached 70½ before January 2020). Your qualified charitable distributions can satisfy all or part of the amount of your required minimum distribution from your IRA, without being taxable to you.

For more information, visit www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/retirement-plans-faqs-regarding-iras-distributions-withdrawals.

BISHOP'S ANNUAL APPEAL

Thank you to our donors

Your generosity helps the Diocese of El Camino Real to support parishes and communities, and to carry out the vision of New Church. Below we've recognized all who have given to the Bishop's Annual Appeal since June 1, 2022, through May 31, 2023. Please contact Carole Bartolini at carole@realepiscopal.org or call 831-394-4465 regarding any errors or omissions.

We are deeply grateful to those who have given anonymously. Thank you all for your gifts!

Lee Adinolfi
Joan Anderson †
Jason and Macy Andrews
Phyllis Annett
Susan & Jim Arnold †
Lucinda Ashby † &
Robert McEvilly
Ricardo Avila †
Roger † & Dottie Barney
Lance † & Ann Beizer
Helen Blakeney-Staton
Chris Bracher
Betty Brolly
Wanda Bryan
Matt & Anne Cameron
Carol Campbell
Duncan & Ann Clarke
Shonna Close
Bleakley Coats †
Nancy Mahoney Cohen
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Nelson Crandall
Jon & Jodie Crase
Christopher † & Barbara Creed
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Karl and Sarah Delong
Shelley Denney † &
David Starr †
Jeffrey Diehl & Rob Keim †
John Dotson
Doug † & Lynn Edwards

Donna Elder-Holifield †
Lenore Erickson
Don Fennell
Dottie Fuller & Gil Grady
Tim & Mary Ann Gee
Lisa Gonzalez
Joe & Marilyn Gutierrez
Caro Hall †
Alice Hansen
Joe & Yvonne Head
David & Tina Heidmann †
Joe & Beth Heston
John & Frances Hostettler
Maly † & Allan Hughes
James & Valerie Isaacson
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Jean Jensen
Joan Johnson
Kristine Johnson †
Pitch & Cathie Johnson
Kozue Knowles
Martha Korienek †
Bill & Terry Krivan
Ann Lane
Bill Lavallee
Elrond & Laura Lawrence
Richard † & Kathy Leslie
Carol & Lloyd Lowrey
James & Rhoda Lynch
Barbara Lyon
Hayy Machens
Toshikyo and Yasuko Matsui

Julia † & John
McCray Goldsmith
John McVey
Barbara Merrill
Barbara Miller †
Susan Miller
Mary K. Morrison † &
Claudia Jo Webber †
Julie Nelson †
Charmaine Ngin
Abby O'Connell
David and Tricia Ottesen
Lyn Park
Steve and Betsy Pearson
Jon Perez † and Robert Munoz
Rick & Ann Pettit
Jaqueline Pierce & Matt Masuda
Hugh & Carolyn Platt
Lewis & Patricia Pollard
Bob Pomeroy
Robin Poppoff †
Diane Posnak
Barbara Pugh
Jeffrey Pugh & Jennifer Stern
Joan Raiter
Vincent † & Carol Raj
Susan Robertson
Tom & Virginia Scott
Becky Shan †
Bill & Joanna Shreve
Richard & Susan Smith



Steve Sonowski &
 Christopher Kenward
 St. Thomas', Sunnyvale
 St. Jude's, Cupertino
 David Steele
 Duane & Ann Stevenson
 Tom & Jill Stolarik
 Amber Sturgess †
 Bob & Nancy Taylor
 Bruce & Linda † Taylor
 Fred Terman &
 Nan Borreson
 Laura Trovato
 Celeste Ventura
 Rusty & Claudia Ward
 Linda White
 Robert Wilbourn &
 Joanne Westendorf
 Carol Wilcock
 Jani † & Deborah Wild
 Dave & Anne Wilde
 David Wittrock
 Salying Wong †



Your support makes work of the Diocese of El Camino Real possible!

Above Left: Sign pointing to the Cathedral of the Redwoods at the 2023 Preaching Retreat.

Above Right: The Bishop and diocesan staff hosted a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper for local Episcopalians and friends at Sargent House. Photo by Elrond Lawrence

Below: The Preaching Faculty at Sargent House in Salinas. Left to Right the Rev. Cn. Filemón Díaz, the Rev. Karen Cuffie, Bishop Lucinda, the Rev. Katherine Doar, the Rev. Susan Arnold, and the Rev. Cn Martha Korienek



Deaconal Formation Program

The School For Ministry expands the deaconal track in its second year.

RealEpiscopal met with the three Deans of the West Coast Collaborative to get their perspective on how the School for Ministry partnership has grown in the last year and what they see in their future. The Rev. Katherine Doar, Dean for El Camino Real; the Rev. Sr. Kathy Lawler, Dean for Northern California; and Bishop Jim Mathes, Dean for San Diego talked about what they have accomplished and what they hope to accomplish now that they are about halfway through the second year of the collaborative school for ministry.

The Diocese of El Camino Real piloted the lay preaching program in its initial year. The first cohort in lay preaching finished early in 2023 and officially graduated with the preaching retreat in April. As WCC launched in February 2023, a second preaching cohort began, double in size from last year with participants from all three dioceses. These changes have caused some growing pains. For example, working out how to manage a larger group on Zoom, but it's nothing the collaborative hasn't been able to handle.

The classes are laid out in a modular way (Diaconal Ministry, Spiritual Formation and Preaching) so that students on either the deacon or the lay track can learn the overlapping parts together. The preaching module mentor team, Deacon Susan Arnold

and the Rev. Canon Filemon Diaz, decided to have the Lay cohort and the Diaconal cohort read all the same materials. As a result, the Lay students have been exposed to more theologically dense writings than they might normally read, but Katherine Doar says they manage it well.

The Iona Collaborative has been a critical working partner with WCC to create the Spanish Language material. They offer the scaffolding onto which WCC builds the unique courses they offer. Both sides are benefitting from the partnership and learning from each other.

“What’s exciting is that all of the congregations in all three of our dioceses can really start looking at their people and saying, ‘Who has these gifts?’ because we have a place to send them now.”

WEST COAST COLLABORATIVE EPISCOPAL SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY



Northern California/San Diego/El Camino Real

The courses work on a flipped pedagogy model and online instruction. Still, one significant difference in the WCC is that the online students are also part of a cohort. Although each student is attending online, they are not working in isolation. They are part of a community. Each dean expressed their pleasure and surprise at the deep, collegial bonds the students have formed even though they are not going through the formation processes in person.

The program is in a constant state of growth and improvement. Jim Mathes jokingly says that since the beginning, they have been putting the plane together as they were taking off. They are continuing to adjust to maintain flexibility, responding to demand as it fluctuates.

Katherine Doar expressed the hope that all congregations in all three of our dioceses can really start using the WCC as a tool for formation. “What’s exciting is that all of the congregations in all three of our dioceses can really start looking at their people and saying, ‘Who has these gifts?’ because we have a place to send them now.”

One additional benefit of the online model to formation is that the barrier of traveling several hours to a physical school is not preventing someone from answering a call to ministry. Removing one more barrier broadens the pool of people who can hear and respond to that call. Ω

Your support is critical to keeping the West Coast Collaborative going. If you’re interested in contributing to the WCC, please make a donation using the envelope on page (?) or go to www.realepiscopal.org/donate.



Preaching Retreat Class Photo: the Rev. Canon Filemón Díaz, the Rev. Canon Martha Korienek, Paul Mallatt, Rebecca Miller, Karen LeBlanc, Beth Wigen, Laura Learned, Bishop Lucinda Ashby, the Rev. Katherine Doar, Deacon Susan Arnold, Juanita Aquino, Matty Mijangos, Sue Ramar, Esther Hernandez, the Rev. Karen Cuffie, and Todd Long

PREACHING RETREAT

The students of our First Lay Preaching Class attended a weekend retreat in April. The purpose of the retreat was two-fold. It was a working retreat in which each student preached a sermon they had already preached in their home parish and received feedback from their peers. It was also a time for them to connect with each other, sharing their experiences from the class throughout the year and performing impromptu skits.

Students were divided into Preaching Support Groups with a mentor as a facilitator. Students preached their chosen sermon and received positive feedback from their peers and mentor in their assigned support group.

The retreat concluded with a Eucharist and a commissioning ceremony where Bishop Lucinda commissioned the students as Lay Preachers.

Real Episcopal asked Preaching Module Mentor the Rev. Canon Filemón Díaz about his experience at the Preaching Retreat.

Q: What was the retreat like for you?

My experience of the retreat was very good; from the moment I arrived, there was an ambience of peace and calm that invited me to a place of reflection and taking time to myself. I thought that if the students experienced these same feelings, it would surely be a very enriching experience for all of us—and so it was.

Q: What surprised you?

Since we had been in a virtual learning environment until then, meeting each other in person was surprising. It revealed the importance of relationships that happen in-person. I was surprised to experience this as a participant; for us to see in-person people that we had only known virtually was surprising—we could see the surprise on each other's faces. I think we thought that everyone would be the same as they were virtually, but in-person was entirely different.

Q: What did you learn?

I learned that I needed to dedicate time to speak with each participant personally, not as I had imagined them, but as they are. I learned about the richness of gifts each person brings to our diocese, and that the most important part is to use those gifts in service to others. I could see that all the work we have done has borne fruit for our diocese, and that when we act lovingly and respectfully, we all feel good about that.

Q: How do you think this retreat affected the preaching experience of the students?

I believe that our students were profoundly impacted by this retreat; they were able to hear each other and see each other in person. Most of them said that this was an important moment in their lives, and I could tell by the way in which they were nurtured; the space and time that they enjoyed together was very positive. All that they experienced will be reflected in their next preaching. One of the main reasons for having them be together was to help them to overcome their self-limitations and to expand their abilities. This rich experience gave them many tools and resources. Ω

¿Cuál fue su experiencia en el retiro?

Mi experiencia en el retiro fue muy buena, desde el momento en que llegue había un ambiente de paz y tranquilidad que me invitaba a reflexionar y a tomar un tiempo para mí, pensando que si los estudiantes tienen esa misma sensación que yo, seguramente será una experiencia muy enriquecedora para todos, y así fue.

¿Qué te sorprendió?

Después de haber estado con clases virtuales durante todas las clases, el encontrarnos en persona fue algo muy sorprendente, me hizo ver lo importante que son las relaciones en persona, me sorprendió mucho experimentar que de los que participamos, al vernos, teníamos una cara de sorpresa sobre todo porque no nos habíamos visto en persona sólo virtualmente, así que nos imaginamos a los demás de acuerdo a nuestra relación virtual, pero en persona era totalmente distinto.

¿Qué aprendiste?

Aprendí a dedicar más tiempo para hablar en persona con los demás, aprendí a no imaginarme a los demás sino a darme el tiempo de conocerles en persona, aprendí la riqueza que tiene la diócesis en tantas personas con regalos diferentes, aprendí que lo más importante de todo es poner los regalos que hemos recibido al servicio de los demás, aprendí que todo el trabajo que realizamos ha traído buenos frutos para nuestra diócesis, aprendí que cuando hacemos las cosas amor y respeto todos nos sentimos bien.

4. *¿Cómo creen que este retiro afectó la experiencia de predicación de los estudiantes?*

Creo que los estudiantes han sido impactados con este retiro muy profundamente por todo lo que implica el haber tenido la oportunidad de verse y escucharse en persona, la gran mayoría de ellos dijeron haber experimentado un momento importante en su vida, y lo noté al escuchar la retroalimentación que se hacían, además de ver como el espacio y el tiempo de convivencia que tuvieron fue muy positivo. Todo esto que vivieron se verá reflejado en sus próximas predicaciones, esa es una de las principales intenciones de reunirlos, superar sus limitaciones y progresar en sus habilidades tomando en cuenta todas las herramientas y recursos que se les ofrecieron en esta rica experiencia. Ω

The Discovery Team: Exploring New Roads

Saint Benedict's Los Osos was excited to apply for the Community Trailblazer program established by Bishop Lucinda. Given the parish's active involvement in the community, the program was a perfect match for their ministry. Since joining St. Ben's as the ECR Community Trailblazer last June, the Rev. Jen Crompton has personally reached out to parish members directly to find out where they saw needs in the community. From these discussions, the Discovery Team was born. The team, consisting of Jen Crompton, Cathy Gildea, Sandy Fisher, and Barbara E. Murray-Hirahara, meets regularly to brainstorm the best ways to reach out to the community in Los Osos. However, the team has had to pace themselves, Sandy notes, to narrow their focus to achieve their objectives effectively.

The primary objective of the team is to extend the church's reach and bring the Holy Spirit

The Discovery Team's mission is to cultivate what Cathy calls the Tree of Curiosity, which, like most trees, thrives best outdoors.





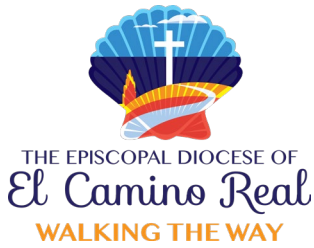
Above: *The Discovery Team (the Rev. Dcn. Jen Crompton, Barbara E. Murray-Hirahara, Sandy Fisher, and Cathy Gildea) meets on Zoom.*

Left: *The Discovery Team's Pop Up at Central Coast Pride in June.*

out into the community. They have found success in reaching out to the community through events they call “Pop-ups.” These events, which are named after the pop-up tent they put their table under, involve the ministry of presence and hospitality. Showing up and offering refreshments while answering questions, praying, and sharing blessings with anyone who is interested. Cathy likens it to taking coffee hour on the road. The Pop-ups initially began at the Abundance Shop and community events like the Los Osos Oktoberfest. Their most recent and successful Pop-ups have been at three separate Central Coast Pride events. The team was inspired and honored to be able to share stories, laughter, and tears with the many people who stopped by for a chat. While not specifically an evangelism ministry, the team did encounter individuals seeking a faith community or younger people who were simply not aware that affirming faith communities exist, bringing a few new faces to church in the following weeks.

The Discovery Team is fortunate to have the help and support of members of the congregation who participate in Pop-up events. With the Rev. Caro Hall’s retirement, The Discovery Team has also helped with the clergy transition at Saint Benedict’s by organizing and leading the Neighborhood Walk, a congregation-wide event that is part of the diocese’s clergy transition guide. The members of the congregation put on their walking shoes and set out to “see the familiar with new eyes” to gain insights for the parish profile. This profile will be used to assist in the selection of a new rector.

The team’s purpose is centered on discovery, rather than achieving a specific end goal or producing a deliverable. As their name suggests, they focus on uncovering, seeking, and posing the next pertinent question. Their mission is to cultivate what Cathy calls the Tree of Curiosity, which, like most trees, thrives best outdoors. Ω



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The Diocesan Convention is November 4, 2023

This year's theme is Stepping Out With Soul

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