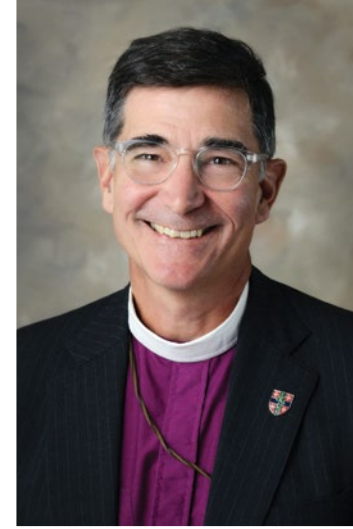




News From The Vine
A Publication From The Episcopal Church of NH

Letter from Bishop Rob



"...let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which have grown old are being made new..."

Someone once told me that faith is simply a way of seeing. Arguably, persons of faith... any faith... are generally those constantly looking for a deeper or more compelling truth — truth that may not be obvious at first glance. The eyes of faith are trained to see the hand of God, the movement of the Spirit, and the face of Jesus in circumstances that may otherwise tell us that what we initially perceive is all there is.

For many years now, we in mainline Christian denominations have been persuaded to see things through a lens of decline — that our Church is dying, crucified on the crosses of our society's rise in materialism, secularism, political extremism,

and growing mistrust, often warranted, in institutions of any kind. We've all seen these trends. They can easily lead us to despair.

I also see things that are equally true and heralds of resurrection. Today, for instance, a church in Franklin that has been shuttered for 17 years has now opened its doors for prayer. Mr. Joe Rose of Grace Church, East Concord, took up my invitation to "just go up there and pray with folk and see what happens." Within a month a small congregation has formed, the local paper showed up with a reporter and photographer, and suddenly, what was cast down seems to be rising.

Living with a strict budget and limited clergy support, St. Stephen's in Pittsfield is exploring lay worship leadership and sharing the Real Presence of Christ in a new provision I am exploring called "Communion by Extension."

In another sign of God's mission of renewal, we are enjoying the benefit of welcoming a number of priests and deacons in their 20s and 30s — young people asking wonderfully disruptive and energizing questions. "Things which have grown old are being made new."

Many churches are actually growing in attendance, maybe not on Sunday morning, but during the week as we adapt to the economic reality that over one third of the our workforce now works on weekends. Despite that, souls still search for signs of new life, holy purpose, Jesus Community. We enjoyed two vibrant and successful events recently: *Revival: Reimagined* and *Spring Renewal*. These events look to the eyes of my faith as signs of just that — revival, renewal, even resurrection.

As we prepare for our annual Convention in November, you will see bold new initiatives that build on the work the Holy Spirit seems to be already doing. A new school for mission leadership. A network of new clergy to serve as "curates," to learn from seasoned pastors

Bishop Rob's letter continued inside...

200+ Attend Inspiring and Informative Spring Renewal Event

Over 200 people from across the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire (and beyond) gathered at Manchester Community College for a day filled with personal spiritual growth, ministry development, connecting, and renewal.

"It always renews my faith and strength in the Lord to be around people who are there for the same reasons," said one of the attendees. "It is wonderful to think out-of-the-box, and the sessions I attended certainly helped me to do that. I have already been talking to people about ways to involve our mission in our community."

Bishop Rob led everyone in worship, gave thanks, and rejoiced for a "loving, gracious, renewing, restoring, recreating God to be at work in the Episcopal Church of New Hampshire." He prayed, "May we find our rising today."

30 presenters conducted a wide-range of workshops throughout the day, and Spring Renewal's Keynote speaker, the Rev. Jay Sidebotham, Director of RenewalWorks, a ministry of Forward Movement, energized us with insights from his stories about the initial development and subsequent growth of RenewalWorks. He urged everyone to ask themselves "in what areas might you benefit from renewal in your lives and the lives of your congregations?"



"The quality of the offerings was very good" noted an attendee. "The keynote was thought-provoking and humorous."

Workshops included The Way of Love, Green Guidance for Your Spiritual Home, Supporting Your Marriage and Family Life with the Five Love Languages, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Holding Courageous Community Conversations Across Difference, Parishes

Welcoming Recovery, RenewalWorks, Vital Conversations, Crossing Boundaries as a Way to Encounter Christ, The Upside Down Week: Reclaiming Sabbath, Stories of Humble Chutzpah, Reflections on Spiritual Authority, and more.



"What a great day. I only wish I had been able to attend more of the workshops!"

Feedback about the event has been very positive. "Overall over 81% of attendees said they were "very satisfied" with Spring Renewal, and over 93% said they were "very or somewhat satisfied." When asked how likely they would be to attend Spring Renewal next year and recommend it to friends, 90% said "likely" or "most likely."

"This was a great opportunity to get together and meet people from other parishes and to do something interesting and informative!" Most agreed that Spring Renewal strengthened their relationships with others in the Diocese, and almost half said that the workshops gave them "a lot" of practical spiritual growth tools they can implement now.

Spring Renewal created a wonderful sense of community and offered insightful tools for transformation. Stay tuned for Spring Renewal 2020!



**SERVICE MISSION TO CUBA:
Fellowship, Sharing and Clean Water**

Late on Easter Sunday, 22 members of Christ Church Episcopal in Exeter, many of them young people, departed for a service trip in Cuba. The Rev. Mark Pendleton, rector of Christ Church led the group, which included Bishop Rob.

When you watch the videos on Christ Church's website and Facebook page and read the social media posts published during the week-long trip, there's no mistaking the enthusiasm, curiosity, good works, and fellowship among the travelers, and between the American and Cuban communities.

Based in the port city of Cardenas in the Matanzas province, the Christ Church team transported a water filtration system and spare parts for other water systems previously brought to Cuba. Over-the-counter medicines were also delivered — many of which were generously donated by Christ Church members.

"One of the greatest needs in Cuba, after decades of economic isolation and decline, is clean drinking water," said the Rev. Pendleton. "The public water and sewage system has broken down after decades of disrepair. Malaria and Typhoid are common throughout Cuba. Clean drinking water is vital to public health."

While the service visit's core mission was to build and maintain water filtration systems, human connections may have been the most important thing built.

"On the first night, the American and Cuban kids were playing separately," said church member Mike Hays. "Then, from somewhere, a soccer ball came out and the sport transcended language and transcended unfamiliarity. By the end of the trip there were some tears as we were saying goodbye to friends that we made."

The Cubans the mission team met were very welcoming. They were happy to share their stories and invite the team into their homes. One Christ Church team member said, "It's been an enlightening trip," and talked about how he consistently saw gratitude for their lives, their community, and a sense of hope for their future.

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."
MARCEL PROUST

One young man said, "Visiting people really opened my eyes. It was cool to see how much faith people have, and how much everyone cares for each other and takes care of one another."

Bishop Rob was excited to accompany the group and was inspired by what he experienced. "I felt like when we walked into their homes, they'd been waiting for us a long time."

"One of the amazing things I noticed during the trip was the ease and the sense of familiarity that the members of the Church had in talking about Jesus and their own faith. Their belief and dependence on God runs counter to a political regime that is atheist. So their belief comes with some sense of resistance to the wider culture. New Hampshire is one of the least religious states in the country. So that's something I'm wondering and thinking about, and have taken back home."

To see more about Christ Church's Cuban experience, go to www.ChristChurchExeter.org, and visit their Facebook page.

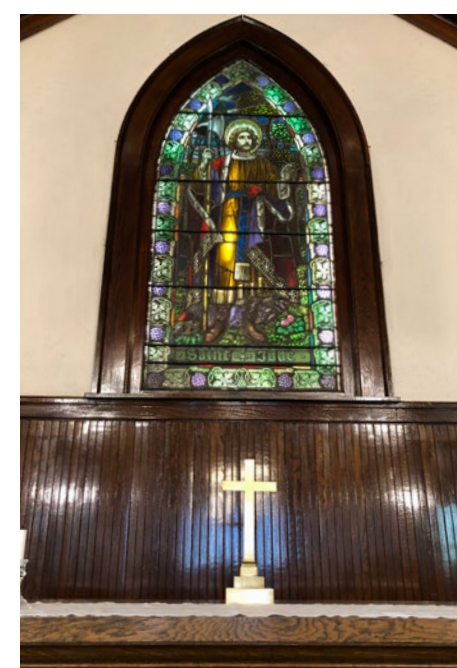


“Letter from Bishop Rob” continued from front page:

and multiply area Christian communities. A system of coaching to support newly assigned priests. All these things you will hear about as we seek to strengthen the church as it pursues God’s mission of loving, liberating, and giving life to all God’s people.

If we are truly the Body of Jesus Christ, we will always be giving up ourselves to the death of the cross. It’s what Jesus said would happen. But the eyes of faith always look beyond, to the glory of Resurrection. I pray you see signs of that renewal wherever you are. Look for them. They are there, just as surely as the Risen Jesus is walking with us along the Way.

The Rt. Rev. Robert Hirschfeld



Weekly Prayer Service Now Being Held in Franklin

After closing its doors to worship over 15 years ago, the Diocese is excited to announce that a weekly prayer service is now being held at St. Jude’s in Franklin. A noonday prayer service occurs every Thursday and is led by Lay Leader Joe Rose. We are thrilled to once again be offering weekly services to the Franklin community and surrounding towns.

For the past several years, the Twin Rivers Interfaith Food Pantry has been using the St. Jude’s building. They recently relocated about half a mile away to 2 Central Street in Franklin, with the assistance of the Diocese. In addition to the relocation, the Diocese assisted to help the food pantry update and strengthen its fundraising and governance structures.

Whether you live in the Lakes Region or are vacationing in the area, please join us. All are welcome!



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revival:reimagined
find meaning, purpose & community

Sharing
FAITH
and
Fun

“Insightful, playful, a real celebration,” *Revival: Reimagined* drew over 110 people in early May for a day of spiritual exploration, discussion, and worship in a festive, music-filled setting.

Organized by St. Christopher’s in Hampstead and St. Peter’s in Londonderry, *Revival: Reimagined* featured a Celebration Eucharist, six different presentations covering a diverse range of spiritual topics... and a jazz band, a bluegrass band, and an ice cream truck!

Presentations included the Intergenerational Church, Experiencing God in the World of Pop Culture, Becoming Beloved Community Through the Way of Love, Losing Faith and Finding It, Where the People are: Unexpected Christian Formation, On the Way of Love, and a conversation with Bishop Rob.

Revival: Reimagined featured special guest, the Rev. Dr. Tricia Lyons. She lives and teaches evangelism at Virginia Theological Seminary, and is finishing her latest book, “What is Evangelism?” (to be published in late 2020). “People raved about our guest speaker,” said the Rev. Colin Chapman, St. Peter’s, Londonderry. “She had an amazing ability to speak uncomfortable truths about sharing faith and evangelism in a way that was straightforward and genuine.”

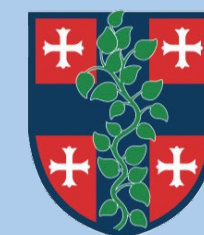


People had fun and learned a lot about how to share their faith, share their stories, engage their communities, and work to find deeper peace and meaning in their lives. Many attendees commented on learning about the importance of “listening for the voice of God in their lives” and “meeting, talking, and listening to people where they are to establish a true, loving connection.”

Energizing and celebratory music was provided by the WildVine Jazz Sanctuary House Band and the New Revival Bluegrass Band.



Annual Diocesan Convention and Budget Updates



The 217th Annual Diocesan Convention will be held on Saturday, November 9, 2019, at the Waterville Valley Conference Center in Waterville Valley, NH. The Convention for clergy and lay delegates will include a service of Holy Eucharist, the Bishop’s address, elections, budget approval, and resolutions.

This year’s Convention is hosted by the Northern Convocation — although Waterville Valley is “south of the notch” it is the most northern event space large enough for our convention.

As the good work of renewing the faithful, revitalizing the church, and reconciling the world continues, “The \$1.88 million 2020 Diocesan budget sustains the progress made in 2019 and funds important new initiatives — while reducing the Fair Share request from our congregations,” said Bengé Ambrogio, Canon for Mission Resources. “New initiatives flow out of the Bishop’s vision of strengthening our leadership, particularly younger leadership, as well as developing lay pastoral leaders and supporting the Way of Love.”

Initiative 1: Development of a NH-based School for Formation. The School for Formation will be designed to provide a more convenient and lower cost alternative — in terms of both money and time — for people called to become ordained clergy or lay pastoral leaders.

Initiative 2: Creation of the Bishop’s Curates Fund. Intended to support leadership development, the Bishop’s Curates Fund will make available funds to help churches hire curates. Curates are early career clergy who typically serve for 2 or 3 years in a congregation. Curates get a boots-on-the-ground understanding of parish ministry and they have a positive impact on the congregations they serve, as well as the wider Church.

Initiative 3: Clergy Coaching. Newly ordained clergy, or clergy who are stepping into new calls often benefit from a coach to help them navigate the landscape of their congregations and work through the day-to-day realities of parish ministry, enhancing the health and spiritual well-being of the entire parish community.

Initiative 4: The Earth Care Commission. The Earth Care Commission has operated for many years without dedicated funding. It’s time for us to put our money where our faith is and commit to funding this important ministry.

More information about Convention including overnight accommodations, updates on the pre-convention journal, and details from last year’s Convention can be found on our website at www.nhepiscopal.org/convention. Please email Canon Tina Pickering at tpickering@nhepiscopal.org with any questions.



Waterville Valley Conference Center in Waterville Valley, NH

Transition Ministry Updates:

• **The Church of the Good Shepherd in Nashua** has called the **Rev. Michael Greene**, former Dean and Rector of Christ Church Cathedral of the Diocese of Eau-Claire, Wisconsin, to be their new Rector.

• **The Rev. David DeSalvo**, formerly of St. Andrew’s Episcopal School in Baltimore, joins **St. John the Baptist in Sanbornville** as their new Priest-in-Charge.

• **Grace Episcopal Church in East Concord** has called the **Rev. Kate Harmon Siberine** as their new Rector. The Rev. Kate will also be serving as **Missioner of Franklin**, a newly created position to support the good work started by Lay Leader **Joe Rose**, a parishioner of Grace Church, who is leading a weekly prayer service every Thursday in Franklin. Both positions will be part-time.

• **Jessi Quinn**, office assistant at our Diocesan offices, has accepted a position with the United Church of Christ’s offices in Washington DC as Communication Strategist. Taking her place at Diocesan House is **AshleyJane Boots** who will serve as part-time Operations and Communications Coordinator.

• Unitarian Universalist minister, **Rev. Hillary Collins-Gilpatrick**, will begin work at **White**

Mountain School this fall as Chaplain, Religious Studies teacher, and co-leader on the Farm and Field Crew.

• **The Reverends Alice and Drew Courtright** are moving to New York State, leaving their respective positions as Dean of Chapel at **St. Paul’s School** and Curate at **St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Concord**. Alice has been accepted into Yale’s Master of Sacred Theology program and Drew has been called as Associate Rector at St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church in Bedford, NY. In August, **the Rev. Jeff Lewis** will join **St. Paul’s School** as the next Dean of Chapel.

• **Please join us in welcoming** the Reverends Michael Greene, Dave DeSalvo, Kate Harmon Siberine, Hillary Collins-Gilpatrick, and Jeff Lewis; Lay Leader Joe Rose; and AshleyJane Boots in their new positions, and in wishing the Reverends Alice and Drew Courtright and Jessi Quinn well. Blessings upon them and their families.

For more information about ministry transition please contact the Rev. Canon Gail Avery, Canon for Transition and Community Engagement at gavery@nhepiscopal.org.



Bishop Rob leading worship at Spring Renewal