



FAITHWAY – Advent/Christmas 2018

The Church of the Holy Faith

welcomes all people into an ever-deepening relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord.

We believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Sacraments, and the Authority of Scripture.

We honor our Anglican heritage and praise God with Solemn liturgy, traditional Prayer Book worship, and music to exalt the spirit.

We strive to live as a community with compassion for one another and the world around us.

We worship together in peace to praise and thank God, to transcend division, and to celebrate the mystery of faith.

A MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR

Dear Faithful and Friends of Holy Faith,

Happy New Year! You may think I am jumping the gun a little bit, but the first Sunday of Advent begins the new liturgical year, about a month before the beginning of the secular new year. In the new church year, we move to hearing at Sunday Eucharists the stories of Jesus' life from a different perspective — this year primarily from Luke's Gospel — and we read a different set of lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer. During the three-year cycle of Eucharistic readings we hear much of the Bible, and during the two-year Daily Office cycle we read most of the Bible (and all the Psalms every six weeks!).



"...when you are thinking about New Year resolutions, think about your own spiritual practices and where you may want to deepen your roots."

When we think of a new year, we often think about resolutions to improve our physical, mental, and even spiritual health — practices that we hope will take root to make us better people. Our new bishop, the Rt. Rev. Michael Hunn, has chosen for the theme of this past diocesan convention and continuing through the year, "Deep Roots ... Broad Reach." He has shared

with diocesan clergy and convention delegates research findings from Episcopal parishes that have participated in a parishioner survey and congregational development program called RenewalWorks, including the parish I previously served. RenewalWorks has identified stages of individual spiritual growth starting with exploring a life of God in Christ, to growing a life with God in Christ, to deepening a life of God in Christ, culminating in being centered in a life with God in Christ. Those who are exploring are taking the first small steps in an intentional spiritual journey with Jesus Christ. Those who are growing are more committed to their Christian faith, but still have many questions. Those who are deepening have a faith by which they rely on God's presence and power through Christ in their daily lives. For those who are centered, their faith in Jesus Christ is the most important relationship in their lives.

Interestingly, 18% of Episcopalians identify themselves as exploring, 55% identify as growing, 23% identify as deepening,

and only 4% identify themselves as being centered in a life with God in Jesus Christ. The research also shows that the key catalysts for individual spiritual growth are engagement with Scripture, the transforming power of the Eucharist, a deeper prayer life, and the heart of the leader. Not surprisingly, the data show that a commitment to daily spiritual practices is a strong driver for movement along the stages of individual spiritual growth.

So, when you are thinking about New Year resolutions, think about your own spiritual practices and where you may want to deepen your roots. If you want to more deeply engage with Scripture, try carving out time each day to read the Bible following the lectionary in the back of the Prayer Book or online, or join your fellow parishioners for Morning Prayer held each weekday at 9 in the church or Evening Prayer held each weekday at 4:30 in the chapel. If you want to experience more deeply the transformative power of the Eucharist, try attending a weekday Eucharist on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. (a contemplative service with Taizé chant and the rite of healing) or Wednesdays and Thursdays at 12:10 p.m. in the chapel. If you want to deepen your prayer life, carve out time each day to sit in silence and let God know what is on your heart and create space in which you can listen for God’s answer.

This time of year, with so many special offerings of liturgies, especially at Christmas (which everyone loves), Bible studies, and spiritual discussion groups, is the perfect time to begin some of these new spiritual practices to see if they will take root for the long term. By starting now, by the time you get to the next new year, I assure you that you will have moved further on the stages of your individual spiritual development, and you will feel all the better for it!

May you have a blessed Advent, a joyous Christmas, and a happy New Year!

Yours faithfully in Christ,

Robin D. Dodge
Rector



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HOLY FAITH AT ADVENT: “REJOICE! REJOICE! EMMANUEL SHALL COME TO THEE...”

STORY BY JANET SANDERS AND MARK CHILDERS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEXANDRA WARD AND CATHY GRONQUIST

Welcome to the new year – or at least the first season of our church calendar. Sunday, December 2, began 2018’s Advent season in which we prepare for the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ (aka Christmas). This season is marked in Anglican churches with liturgy and symbols reminding us of the wondrous Incarnation of Spirit into flesh, from God’s initial creative act celebrated in Genesis to the wondrous birth of Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man, to the sacramental incarnation of the Eucharist as we each receive into our flesh the real Presence of Christ, and forward to the promised Second Coming.

As we enter Holy Faith on Advent’s first Sunday, Mary in her niche is uncrowned, as she is not yet the Mother of the Holy Child. The usual floral bouquets are replaced with evergreen arrangements – even in the baptismal font! – proclaiming life and resurrection even in barren winter. Evergreens surround the Advent Wreath near the pulpit; each week another candle adds its bit of illumination until Christmas Eve when the Christ candle is lit, truly bringing Light into our world.



On the first Sunday of Advent, just as on Lent’s first Sunday, our service begins with the Great Litany. Acolytes, choir and clergy enter, with clergy dressed in vestments of blue to honor Mary. The litany is chanted as they process down the center aisle, make two right turns and retrace the center aisle path before taking two lefts. The Solemn Procession’s route can be described as a figure eight, but I personally consider it an infinity symbol [∞] for “...yesterday, today, and forever...” We, the congregation, are enveloped by and participate in this ritual, beseeching God to hear our communal prayer.

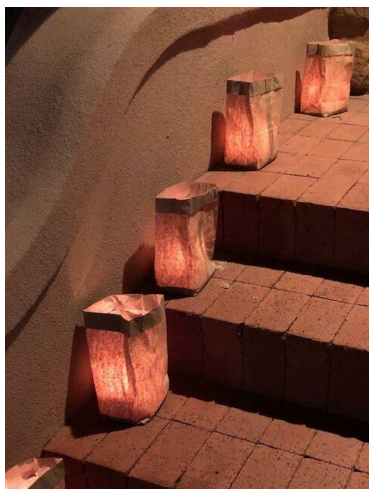
Advent Sundays have unique and beautiful collects (BCP pages 211-212) and blessings at dismissal which echo the true meaning of the season. The musical setting of the liturgy changes in Advent to Schubert’s. Many of us stumble at first in placing the familiar words and responses to a new melody. That helps shake us out of mindless habit to remind us we’re entering a very special time. But, while friends in other faiths may belt out Christmas carols throughout December, we don’t — which helps us remember that Advent is a time of waiting and preparing, and helps us relish singing the traditional melodies when at last we celebrate Christ’s birth.

This musical waiting period can be especially noticeable during the second Sunday’s Service of Advent Lessons and Carols. The readings that take us from creation, through the fall, into redemption are punctuated with Advent hymns, not noels and carols.

In church history, Advent has been called “Little Lent,” a time of penitence and spiritual preparation. While Roman Catholics still mark this tradition with the same violet/purple vestments as are worn in Lent, we Anglicans use Mary’s blue as our Advent color — until we celebrate the third Advent Sunday with clergy in rose-colored vestments and the lighting of a rose-colored candle Advent Wreath candle. Rose is a lightening of violet appropriate for this day called “Gaudete” Sunday, from the word meaning “Rejoice!” This Sunday, midway through our time of reflection and preparation, is reminder of the joy that is coming soon.



Just before Advent’s fourth Sunday Holy Faith’s altar guild “greens” the church with evergreen boughs, wreaths and bows. The creche is placed, awaiting its Family and it, our sanctuary and our hearts are in readiness.



On Christmas Eve that readiness finds release in beauty, blooms, bells, and a baby. Holy Faith's façade along Palace Avenue is lined with farolitos and our chancel is massed with poinsettias – memorial and thanksgiving gifts of congregants. The altar is draped with its festive skirt reserved for Christmas and Easter, and vases again are filled with flowers. The procession for Christmas Eve "midnight Mass" is vested in gold to honor the newborn king whose figure is borne by a priest. They move to the creche where angels, shepherds and animals wait (the wise men, still on their way to Bethlehem, are below the pulpit), bless it, and place the babe in the manger. The processional music is "Oh Come, All Ye Faithful" in an arrangement by Sir David Wilcox which is sung in Anglican churches throughout the world on this night.



As the liturgy reminds us that "The Light has come to us once again..." the church, in dusk after the lights gradually dimmed, are brightened by the lighting of the Christ Candle. Acolyte's tapers spark from it and the congregation's candles from theirs – evidence that Christ is present among, and in, us. Bells peal, another Advent is ended, and Christmas begun.

"WE WILL LOVE GOD, FOR THERE IS MUCH WORK FOR US TO DO..." - THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES OVERTON

With a prevailing theme of reconciliation and staying together, Michael Buerkel Hunn has been consecrated as the 10th bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

More than a thousand people, including Holy Faith clergy and parishioners, attended the service on November 3, which took place in Albuquerque's First Presbyterian Church — New Mexico's largest church. The ceremony was witnessed by thousands more around the globe, as it was live-streamed on Facebook and posted to Twitter.



Recognizing and paying homage to New Mexico's tri-ethnic culture, the service included Spanish music, the gospel proclaimed in Spanish and English and prayers in the Navajo language as well as Native flute music.



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry joined 30 other bishops to ordain Hunn. Hunn was Curry's canon to the ordinary in North Carolina for 10 years and most recently served three years as canon to the presiding bishop for ministry within the Episcopal Church.

Presiding Bishop Curry, who achieved global "rock star" prominence for his sermon at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and American-born actress Meghan Markle, preached on St. Paul's view of the ministry of reconciliation. "To you, O Father, all hearts are open; fill, we pray, the heart of this your servant whom you have chosen to be a bishop in your Church, with such love of you and all the people," and it says, 'all the people.' There's no asterisk — I checked," Curry said to applause and laughter and reported by the Episcopal News Service.

In his first remarks to the congregation, the newly ordained Bishop Hunn stressed the importance of staying together as a diocese: "We will love God, for there is much work for us to do. We will go from this place into the world and we will ask,

what is the most loving thing we can do? We will ask, what is the most liberating thing we can do? We will ask, what is the most life-giving thing we can do? And we will do those things together,” he said.



Bishop Hunn, 48, succeeds the Rt. Rev. Michael Vono, who served eight years and is retiring. “Today, I thank God that he (Hunn) was chosen to succeed me,” Vono said.



“STAY TOGETHER” - BISHOP MICHAEL VONO: REFLECTION ON A PRIESTLY LIFE WELL LIVED

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES OVERTON

Michael Vono’s pathway to the priesthood began with a shortcut through an empty lot. Then a church was built on the lot, and the rest, as they say, is the history of a journey in faith. “When I was in junior high school, I used to cut through a vacant lot which got me to school earlier. Then they built St. Augustine’s. After that, I cut through the church itself to get to school,” he said during our interview. “The nuns thought I was there to pray. In time, I became an altar boy.”

Michael grew up in Providence, RI. His family was Italian and Roman Catholic.

“We were nominal Catholics. We went to church on Christmas and Easter. My father was the neighborhood grocer. He worked long hours six days a week. I did hear the name of Jesus, because my father used it quite often,” he said with a chuckle.



When he decided in high school to go to seminary, the parental response was somewhat predictable. “My father, in so many words, said, ‘I don’t think so.’ My mother said, ‘We’ll see what the Lord wants.’ ”

Becoming a priest, it seems, was there from the beginning. He decided in junior high school that he would go to seminary. “I never had any dreams of being an author, fireman, policeman, actor,” he said. “I was on a pathway. It was the work of the Holy Spirit, not my doing.”

Today, Bishop Michael Vono expects retirement from the Diocese of the Rio Grande in New Mexico to bring the freedom of being busy – without the paperwork. “It does really feel wonderful,” he said during a recent interview. “It’s like being on sabbatical but that only lasted four months. I loved the freedom of spending more time reading, studying and traveling around. I feel absolutely prepared and ready.”

Bishop Vono is looking forward to helping out in other dioceses when their bishops take sabbatical or need a hand with confirmations and other pastoral work. He's open to working with refugees, migrants and other displaced souls who may be seeking comfort and counsel from clergy. And, he's interested in education or teaching by participating in seminary programs. "I'm not just going to do nothing like sit at home and watch TV all day. I hope to be engaged somewhere but not where it's stressful or full time," he said. "These are the plans. But you know how it is: We make plans, the Lord laughs, then we do something else."

The bishop was elected April 24, 2010, and was consecrated on October 22 of that year as the ninth bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande following the resignation of Bishop Jeffrey Steenson. Steenson resigned after just three years, renounced his orders in the Episcopal Church and sought ordination in the Roman Catholic Church. His departure left the diocese in chaos. "When I came, the diocese was so fractured, broken in spirit and morale. But I'm one of those people who loves a challenge and has a better life when I am challenged."

Bishop Vono set about creating a task force of some 20 people. Recognizing the diversity of views and goals, he sought guidance not only from clergy but also from the Episcopalian laity, young, old, male, female and gay. "Some said, 'This is dangerous. It could all blow up.' I said, 'No, it won't. This will bring us together.' We created a covenant of understanding that we use to this day. Then the peace began."

Bishop Vono reorganized the decision-making processes to be more participatory. He involved himself in the purchase and renovation of the Bosque Center, which houses the diocesan offices and provides retreat and conference facilities. He also oversaw the revitalization of Camp Stoney into Bishop's Ridge to provide year-round ministries. He is also pleased with diocesan outreach in reconciliation and building community, especially the covenanted relationship with the ministries in Navajoland, as well as the reaching out to Hispanic communities in New Mexico and far West Texas. He leaves with a legacy of improved unity, organization and stability.

And, he still champions the idea that diversity and the middle way is at the heart of Anglicanism. "Diversity is the unity that Anglicans have and appreciate. We don't see diversity as the impetus for division and separation but rather we see it as a way to unity."

Bishop Vono leaves the church after serving as deacon, priest and bishop for 42 years. While relieved of everyday duties, he's staying in the diocese and will become a parishioner at St. Chad's in Albuquerque, having found a peaceful refuge and embraced life in the Land of Enchantment. "Being here, I've changed spiritually, as well as emotionally," he said upon reflection. "New Mexico is a place I absolutely love. I love the openness, the mountains, the geography and the people — especially the generosity and the diversity. I'm one of those people who have completely converted to the landscape, the multicultural, the multilingual with the Hispanic, Native American people and Anglos."

"It's like the unity Anglicans have and appreciate." This is something Bishop Vono brought with him after 18 years as the rector of St. Paul's Within the Walls Episcopal Church in the shadow of the Vatican in Rome. "The congregation was divided, physically and financially. We grew from a church of 40 people to 400 by the time I left. By the grace of God, I was able to bring people to that middle place."

He is equally optimistic about the future of the Episcopal Church of the U.S., the middle path and religion in general.

On the topic of reconciliation, the bishop is split. "Our political culture is in such a mess that reconciliation hasn't yet taken place."

But the historical antecedents offer hope. "Every 500 years or so, the Church goes through a shift because the culture goes through a shift. No matter where Christianity is, the culture in which it lives influences its transformation to address in new ways the new language and a new paradigm of the liturgy. We continue to go through changes in position and in language. Yet, Christianity is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Transformation happens."

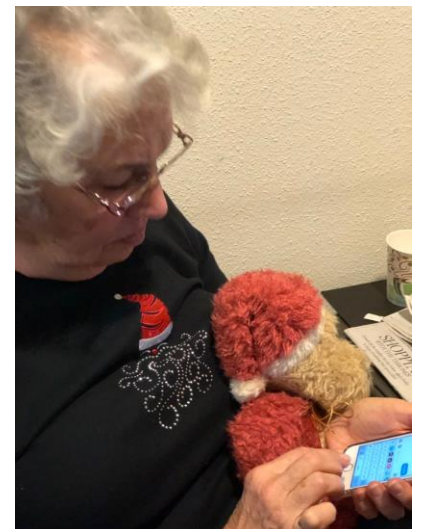


Bishop Vono said it is highly likely that voices in the Middle Ages predicted the end of the church, which is why he believes that studying and knowing philosophy is critical to an informed clergy. "Clergy has to understand philosophy to understand religion. It is the handmaiden of our theology. I didn't understand this so much when I was young. I understand it today. The teaching of Jesus in terms of the Kingdom of God: That's not going to go away."

"This is an exciting time rather than a time of despair."

As his successor takes the diocesan helm, Bishop Vono points out that among the new bishop's many outstanding qualities, one of the more valuable may be his comparative youth and the energy that comes with it. He is hopeful that the Rev. Michael Hunn's recent ordination as the 10th Bishop of the Diocese of the Rio Grande will continue the focus on congregational and clerical life. "I would say to him – like the name of our newspaper: Stay 'Together,' just as the disciples had to stay together with Christ. Michael is very pastoral. And, he has a great sense of humor. Sometimes, that's half the battle."

136TH ANNUAL ST. NICHOLAS BAZAAR PHOTOGRAPHS BY CATHY GRONQUIST





ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS RECEPTION – DECEMBER 9, 2018
 PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES VAUGHAN





CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES
TO TWO MEMBERS OF OUR CHOIR WHO
WERE MARRIED AT HOLY FAITH ON
NOVEMBER 10, 2018 – KATE LOWERRE AND ROB SHAY
PHOTOGRAPH BY CATHY GRONQUIST

IN MEMORIAM – ALEXANDRA WARD (1942-2018)
PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES OVERTON

Friend, Colleague, Linguist, Photographer and
Co-Editor of this publication.
You are missed.



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