



The Shepherd's Staff

***Newsletter of the
Diocese of the Western States***

February 2021

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The Thirtieth Synod of the Diocese of the Western States

The Thirtieth Synod of the Diocese of the Western States will be held at Saint Augustine of Canterbury Church and the Hotel Diamond in Chico from April 20th to April 24th, 2021. The membership of Synod consists of: (a) The Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor and Suffragan Bishops; (b) All Presbyters of the Diocese. [Note that Deacons of the Diocese are entitled to seat and voice without vote]; (c) Three lay delegates from each Parish of the Diocese and one lay delegate from each Mission of the Diocese.

Synod is the legislative body for our Diocese, subject to its Canons and the Canons of the Province. Synod may levy assessments on Parishes and Missions and adopts a budget which must be in balance, that is, the projected expenses equaled by the projected income. Synod also admits new parishes and missions; hears and receives status reports about various functions of the Diocese; and elects its officers and committees.

Due to the COVID-19 epidemic, the 2020 twenty-ninth DWS Synod had to be cancelled except for a zoomed Board of Directors meeting so the budgetary business could be completed. It is hoped (Deo volente) that we shall have an in-person synod this year – at least as much as we are safely able to accommodate. To that end, a TENTATIVE SCHEDULE follows on the next page, subject to necessary safety precautions which may cancel, combine, modify, or zoom certain events.

At least one new parish, Saint David's Anglican Church in San Rafael will be formally admitted and there will be a vote to change our Diocesan Canons to reflect the boundary changes that took place when the Diocese of the Southwest was established. Finally (as had been hoped for last year), there will be two Episcopal elections, one electing a Coadjutor Bishop and the second electing a Suffragan Bishop. By canon, the former is nominated by the Bishop Ordinary, but the latter is nominated by the Executive Committee of the Council of Bishops. Our Synod then elects (or rejects) the nominee and, if elected, both the Standing Committees of the other two dioceses and all the bishops of the Province vote with a majority necessary in the House of Bishops and among the Standing Committees for certification of election. Since Bishop Hansen is already in Episcopal Orders, he need only be elected by Synod to become Coadjutor.

The Bishop is aware that attendance at Synod involves personal effort and expense, especially during this Covid economic downturn as well as for working clergy and smaller parishes. He hopes that (wherever possible) parishes and missions will find ways to help their clergy and laity to attend this important Synod. There are limited funds to help this year which underscores the importance of the Men's Auction and Synod Support donations. Finally, if you are not able to attend, please send the proxies (found in your registration packets to Mrs. Gourley) to ensure our ability to conduct a normal synod (Canon 2.04) Remember, Proxies cannot be used for the election of a Bishop (Canon 2.06).

Diocese of the Western States

Thirtieth Annual Synod – 2021

All Events Listed Below are Subject to Change as Necessary

Tuesday (Optional Quiet Day) April 20, 2021

9:00 a.m., Morning Prayer and The Litany
10:00 a.m., Morning Meditation
11:00 a.m., The Penitential Office and Bidding Prayer
12:00 p.m., Low Mass
1:00 p.m., Lunch on own
2:00 p.m., Afternoon Meditation
3:00 p.m., Readings from the Gospel of Saint Luke
4:00 p.m., Evening Prayer

Wednesday April 21, 2021

8:00 a.m. Mass – St. Augustine’s church, (Bishop Hansen)
10:00 a.m. Standing Committee – St. Augustine’s Vestry
Noon break (light meal for Standing Committee and Directors) – St. Augustine’s Vestry
1:15 p.m., Board of Directors – St. Augustine’s Vestry
3:00 p.m. Reception – St. Augustine’s Canon Reed Hall
5:00 p.m. Refreshments, Bishop’s Auction – Canon Reed Hall
No host dinner – local downtown Chico restaurants

Thursday, April 22, 2021

8:00 a.m. Morning Prayer and Mass
10:00 a.m. Workshop – St. Augustine’s Canon Reed Hall (Archbishop Upham)
11:30 a.m. ACW-Clergy Luncheon – Hotel Diamond basement
1:00 p.m. ACW Meeting – Hotel Diamond basement
1:15 p.m. Clericus – St. Augustine’s Canon Reed Hall
3:00 p.m. Evening Prayer – St. Augustine’s church
4:00 p.m. Clergy Dinner (leave for Sierra Nevada Taproom)
No host dinner for laity – suggested downtown Chico restaurants

Friday, April 23, 2021

8:00 a.m. Synod Registration – St. Augustine’s Church
9:00 a.m. - Morning Prayer
10:00 a.m. – Synod Business Meeting and Episcopal Election
12:00 p.m., No host lunch – suggested downtown Chico restaurants.
2:00 p.m. Clergy Practice - St. Augustine’s Church
3:00 p.m. Pontifical Mass and Consecration
6:00 p.m. Social Hour – Chico Event Center
7:00 p.m. Banquet – Chico Event Center

Saturday (Optional) April 24, 2021

8:00 a.m. Mass – St. Augustine’s Church
No Host Breakfast and more time to socialize till next year – Mom’s Restaurant.

Surprise at Saint George's Pro-Cathedral

Following the Eucharist on the Feast of Saint John the Evangelist (Christmas I), Dec. 27 AD 2020, Archbishop John E. Upham Jr. was honored by the parishioners of St. George's Anglican Pro-Cathedral in Raleigh NC for his 19 years in ministry as Rector to the parish. He has resigned from that role in order to focus on his responsibilities as Archbishop of the Province and Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese of the Atlantic States. The parish surprised the Archbishop with a gift of a Holy Water Vat (Aspergillum) and a statue of St. George slaying the dragon. Shown in the picture with Archbishop Upham are Fr. David Sweeney, Archdeacon and Dean of the Pro-Cathedral, who will be installed as the new Rector on Jan. 24, 2020, and Dr. John Schneider, Rector's Warden and Treasurer of St. George's.



Visit to Holy Cross Oklahoma City

On January 19, the Bishop visited the Church of the Holy Cross in the Diocese of the Southwestern States for Archbishop Upham. The Rector, Father Mark Williams presented Shelba Kishur and Nkechi Nwabugwa for Confirmation and Charles and Alysa Newcomb to be received.





On January 23, the Bishop visited Saint John the Baptist in Omaha NE. The choir (the wondrous choir) sang the Oldroyd (Third) Mass setting which was quite lovely and was followed by a delicious Soup-Salad Luncheon. Saint John the Baptist Parish was founded by Father Robert Ponec and since his death last November Saint John's is cared for by Father Richard Andrews (All Saints', WY) who is the Priest in Charge and Deacon Ron Reno. Mrs. Debra Ponec leads our Diocesan Saint Jude's Intercessory Prayer Group.



Driving through snow showers all afternoon, the Bishop arrived in Cheyenne WY and celebrated the Eucharist at All Saints' the next morning. All Saints', shepherded by Father Richard Andrews, is our "Cowboy Church" and looks like a wild, wild west jewel.



That evening the Bishop blessed (set apart for God's purposes) the Chapel of Saint James in Bloomfield CO and celebrated the Eucharist. The choir was magnificent, and the Vicar Father Dan Canda preached. After Mass, an evening supper was enjoyed by all.



The sketch above of All Saints' (The Cowboy Church) was drawn by the Bishop's grandson, Sean

Anglican Church Women Lenten Mite Boxes

Thank you to all have sent in their ACW dues, and a gentle reminder to those who have not, that these are mandatory, even if you do not have an active ACW at your church. Please also remember to order your Lenten Mite Boxes so that you receive them before Ash Wednesday on February 17th. I know that some churches were unable to collect their Mite Boxes in 2020, due to COVID-19 19. If this is the case for your church, please combine both totals and send them after Easter 2021.

The address for Lenten Box requests and ACW dues is Gillian Golden, P.O. Box 558, Selma OR 97538.

I would also like to remind churches that I need to have photos and descriptions of items for the ACW Drawings at the synod no later than Wednesday, March 24th to get brochures and tickets out in time for Easter. Thank you for your cooperation!

Please order your boxes today, distribute them by Ash Wednesday (February 17th) and collect the full (!?) boxes on Easter Sunday (April 12th). Count the money in the boxes, make one check payable to:

Provincial Anglican Church Women, and mail to:
Gillian Golden
Lenten Chairman, Provincial Anglican Church Women
P.O. Box 558 Selma OR 97538-0558

Thank you for your parish participation!!!

Email Lenten Box requests to gillian.golden@yahoo.com, phone 541-597-4270, or mail to above address.

Church Name:

Mailing Address:

City:

_____ State _____ Zip _____

Number of Boxes required _____

Requested by: _____ Phone # _____

Anglican Province of Christ the King

Anglican Church Women

Diocese of Western States

2021 Dues

All churches, whether or not they have an active ACW, are responsible for the following ACW dues. Please pay as promptly as possible so that Provincial ACW can receive the officer list in a timely manner before the synod, as is specified in the bylaws.

Diocesan Dues:	\$35.00
Provincial Dues:	<u>\$15.00</u>
TOTAL DUE:	\$50.00

Please forward your parish's check, payable to ACW DWS to:
Gillian Golden, Diocesan ACW President, P.O. Box 558, Selma, OR 97538

Thank you so much for your timely response.

(Please complete form and return with your check.)

Parish _____ has __has not__ an active ACW.

ACW President, or contact name _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone # _____

Email address _____

ACW Vice President _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

ACW Secretary _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

ACW Treasurer _____

Phone # _____

Email _____

A Sermon for Septuagesima Sunday

The lessons for the ninth Sunday before Easter represent some of the most ancient in the Western Church. Septuagesima (about seventy days before Easter) is often called the Sunday of the Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (or the Parable of the Generous Householder). It marks the beginning of Gesima-tide and a turning toward the austerities of Lent (especially the farewell to the Alleluia), as the Church guides us today towards the divine concept of justice; just as next Sunday (Sexagesima) she will guide us towards divine courage and the following (Quinquagesima) towards goodness and sincerity of heart.

Today's parable is similar to those told by rabbis except that the rabbinic parables stress man's need to earn God's favor, whereas Jesus stresses God's unlimited grace. All the men in the marketplace needed a day's wage to provide for their families, symbolized by a penny. Now the laborers who worked a full day were paid a full day's wage but those who worked less would normally have been paid less. But the householder who represents God knows that all the laborers needed a day's wage, so those who did only one hour's work also received a full day's wage; the same as the men who worked all day. In theological terms, the penny represents salvation and all who labor in the vineyard attain salvation.

So what more can we learn from this parable? First of all, the parable is a warning about the pioneer syndrome. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more. When churchmen who have been members of the Church for a long time, or have given much of their talent, time, or treasure, they often begin to think that they own the Church and can dictate policy. They resent new blood and new ideas; and what was once joyful service begets malaise and resentment. It has been said many times that God requires laborers, not loiterers.

Second, this parable was a clear warning to the Jews and is a clear warning to us that there are no chosen people or inner circle. As one scholar noted, this parable tells us that there is no such thing as a most favored nation clause. Following that same logic, we must understand that no matter when a man or woman enters the vineyard and works for the kingdom, he or she is equally dear in the sight of God. There is a story told of General Eisenhower during the planning of the Normandy invasion. A major general who had been a roommate of Eisenhower at West Point got drunk one night and talked too much in a crowded restaurant about sensitive invasion plans. After his arrest, he begged Eisenhower not to send him home in disgrace because, after all, he was part of the inner circle. Eisenhower responded, "That is the worst thing you could have said." Eisenhower understood that none of us is special, just part of a team.

Third, the parable tells us much about the nature of God himself. God's generosity is limitless! The householder did not look at the amount of labor but at the willingness to serve. I received a letter this week with a small donation from a parishioner in poor health living many miles away. The amount wasn't important; the love was. God's compassion is also limitless! There are few things that sadden us more than an unemployed spouse or parent who cannot provide the basics of life. The householder knew this and, in his compassion, brought hope to many homes; in like manner, God knows the mess we humans have made here on earth and in his limitless compassion sent his only begotten Son to save us.

Finally, the parable tells us about our response to God's generosity and compassion. If we ask what we get out of our labors in the vineyard, we miss the whole point which is that a Christian works for the joy of serving God and his brothers and sisters. That is why God's laborers are happy and the first shall be last and the last shall be first! For it doesn't matter – we all get the penny; we are all saved. Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? But to convince Christians to be happy with no expectation of reward is one of the greatest challenges we laborers face. But I heard a story once. In a prep school, the two least popular teachers were sharing their sorrows. Finally, the Latin teacher said to the German teacher, "Max, what is worse than a teacher who cannot make his students understand the value of what they are learning?" The German teacher did not miss a beat and shot back, "A teacher who doesn't try." Who will join me in the Lord's vineyard?

Some Friendly Reminders

- † Remember, it does not matter how big or small our parish is. What counts is how many people we send to our Blessed Saviour. I know we sometimes feel marginalized and fighting an unwinnable fight (that kind of despair is the devil's most powerful weapon!) but, if we are faithful, if we laugh at the devil and his minions, we cannot lose because we will be given the Vision of God. Be happy; be a happy church family in Christ. These words may not "grow" a parish but visitors, if they encounter a happy church family in your church, will be given a glimpse of the Vision of God.
- † Clergy and laity, one way we can fend off this "devil's disease" (also known as spiritual depression over things we cannot control) is to take "continuing education" classes through the Seminary Zoom system. It's not just the knowledge (although that in itself is a comfort), it's a venue to work with our brothers and feel less isolated. And encourage our parish families to participate in the Saint Jude's Intercessory Prayer Group. See last month's front page for details.
- † Please try to get your Parochial Reports into the Diocesan Office and to Bishop Hansen well before the cutoff date of April 17th. Parish assessments and the Diocesan Budget are contingent on your parish reports and the treasurer must submit a balanced budget. Thank you, ahead of time. Your promptness really helps!

The Final Word

"Remember, O man, from dust thou didst come."

We start this season of Lent with a taste of ashes. Ashes, the burnt remains of something once whole and complete—a moment of life, palm branches, the yule log. Now they are burnt up, gone, turned to ash. It's not unexpected that this sign of destruction marks the beginning of our preparation for the end of our life and the foretaste, the touch, of our resurrection in Christ.

The beginning of the religious life is the acceptance intellectually of our mortality, bringing a concentration, a focus to existence, optimism and purpose, making us alive, for we think of death in terms of life. "In my end is my beginning," writes T.S. Eliot.

Life without eternal meaning leads to despair. We become aware that we lose everything in time—our youth, our energy, what little beauty we might have, our teeth, our hearing, our eyesight, our hair. We are aware of the transitory nature life.

The discovery of God calls us to fall on our knees. I have spent forty years in Holy Orders and feel I have given little time to the mystery and the wonder of God, the worship of God. I only know now, after all these years, that He is, and He will make all things right in eternity, as we gradually grow in knowledge of Him.

So many say, superficially, they don't go to church because they were forced to go to church. What they are really saying is they never learned how to pray, let alone worship.

To worship is to enter into that other dimension, the eternity of God. With my body I thee worship.

How do we begin to find God, let alone to love Him? Perhaps they are the same, that to know God is to love Him and to have Him is to know Him.

+Robert Sherwood Morse