

PROCLAIM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

NOVEMBER 2024

4

81ST GENERAL
CONVENTION

8

CAMP PHOENIX 2024

13

COMPANION
COMMUNITIES

15

THE FERGUSON
UPRISINGS:
TEN YEARS LATER

17

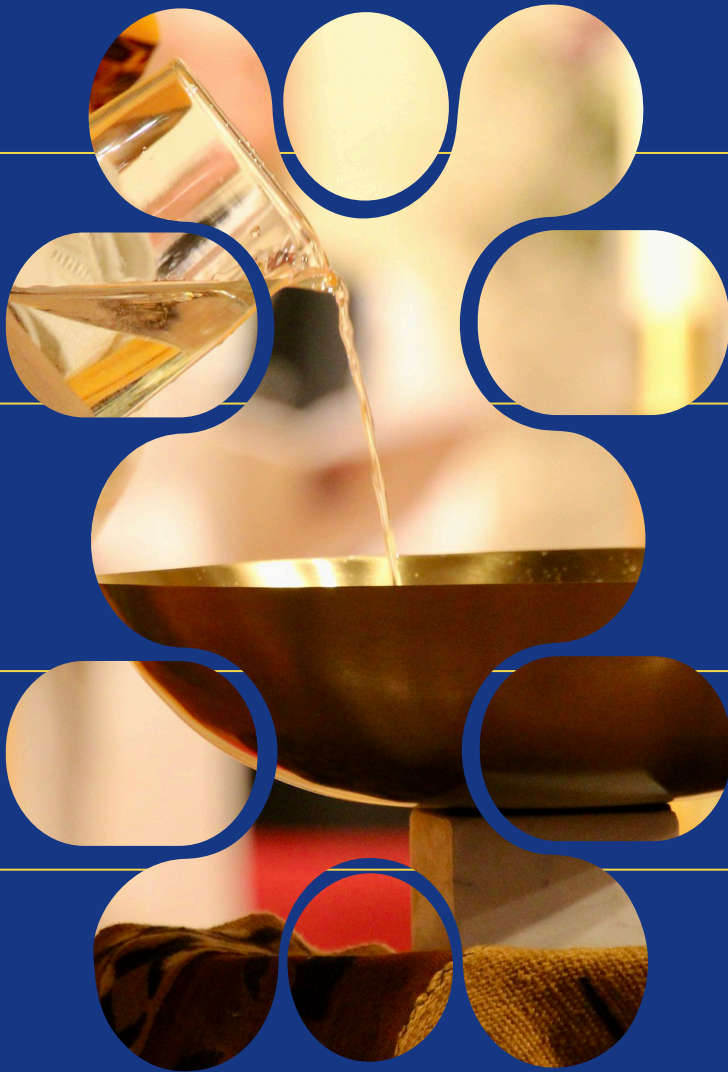
JUSTFOOD TRUCK

19

HEALING IN THE
HEARTLAND

23

DIOCESAN PICNIC



THE STAFF



The Rt. Rev. Deon K. Johnson
Bishop of The Diocese of Missouri



RITA BENSON
Finance and
Benefits Administration



THE REV. CANON DORIS WESTFALL
Canon to the Ordinary



TRACY GRIGSBY
Administrator
for Diocesan Operations



THE REV. CANON WHITNEY RICE
Canon for Evangelism and Discipleship
Development



THE REV. HOPE JERNAGAN
Chaplain, Rockwell House
Episcopal Campus Ministry



CANON
DESIREE BRATTIN
Canon for Finance
and Administration



SUSAN REHKOPF
Diocesan Archivist and
Registrar



THE VEN. HARRY LEIP
Archdeacon (Diocesan) and Deacon,
Trinity Episcopal Church, St. Louis



THE REV. AARON ROGERS
Ministry Developer for Young
Adult Ministry and Priest-in-
Charge, St. Stephen's
Episcopal Church, Ferguson



ERIN MEADOWS
Finance Administrative Assistant



JILLIAN SMITH
Executive Assistant to the
Bishop and the Canon to
the Ordinary



THE REV.
ERIN PICKERSGILL
Ministry Developer
for Children
and Youth Ministry



AHSA-TI NU TYEHIMBA-FORD
Interim Communications Director



LETTER FROM THE BISHOP

“We are one Church, one fellowship, one community living the Good News of Jesus in many places.”

We are one Church, one fellowship, one community living the Good News of Jesus in many places. We are joined and connected by the One Lord, One faith, One baptism! Today we are leaning deeper in to collaboration, connection, and community as we chart new paths towards the dream of a world transformed by God's love, justice, and peace. Today we plant the seeds of hope and possibility for those who will come after us. We are working for social justice, healing the of sin racism, striving for equity, and advocating for justice.

As part of the Body of Christ professing one Church, one Faith, one baptism, we are all called as a united community of faith to pay attention to the foundational ways of God. We practice and proclaim the One Baptism to which we have been called and united in Christ when we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner, comfort the afflicted, and seek after justice. We are One in Christ when we seek to be agents of healing, ambassadors of reconciliation, and advocates for justice. Christ's work is our work and we embody that work together!

Today we forge a new legacy for those who will come after us in the faith and fellowship of Jesus our Savior. As one we will celebrate the past, engage the present, and inspire the future in the name of Christ who strengthens us.

So let us as one be about the business to which God has called us in this time and place!

Bishop of The Diocese of Missouri

THE 81ST GENERAL CONVENTION

HIGHLIGHTS

June 23 – 28, 2024

Louisville, Kentucky at the
Kentucky International
Convention Center.





The Diocese of Missouri elected the following members to serve as deputies for this convention:

Lay Deputies

- Betty Bowersox (co-chair) - Grace Episcopal Church, Kirkwood
- Doris Lucy-Goodlow - Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis
- Dr. Michael Booker - St. Francis Episcopal Church, Eureka
- Adrienne Dillon - The Episcopal Church of All Saints and Ascension, Northwoods
- Patricia (Pat) Marsh O'Brien (alternate) - Grace Episcopal Church, Kirkwood

Clergy Deputies

- The Very Rev. Kathie Adams Shepherd (co-chair) - Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis
- The Very Rev. Shug Goodlow - Christ Episcopal Church, Rolla
- The Rev. Tamsen Whistler - Trinity Episcopal Church, St. Charles
- The Rev. Joshua (Josh) Huber, Calvary Episcopal Church, Columbia
- The Rev. Leslie Scoopmire (alternate 1) - St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Ellisville
- The Rev. Canon Doris Westfall (alternate 2) - Diocese of Missouri

Bishop Deon Johnson, clergy and lay deputies from throughout the Diocese of Missouri represented us at the 2024 General Convention in Louisville.



The Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe, bishop of Northwest Pennsylvania and bishop provisional of Western New York, was elected and confirmed June 26 at the 81st General Convention to serve as the 28th presiding bishop. His nine-year term as presiding bishop, the face and voice of The Episcopal Church and its chief pastor, begins Nov. 1. The House of Bishops elected Rowe on their first ballot in a closed session at Christ Episcopal Church in downtown Louisville.



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry introduced his successor, and Rowe began by expressing humble gratitude to the four other bishops who had discerned candidacies for presiding bishop.

“I give thanks that the five of us together made this journey together, in solidarity, for the love of this church,” Rowe said.

His speech acknowledged some of the challenges facing The Episcopal Church at a time of membership decline when some dioceses say their ministries are struggling under financial burdens and diminished congregational vitality. Rowe affirmed the concerns raised by some bishops and deputies at this week’s convention, that some aspects of churchwide governance and structure could be hindering the church in adapting to a changing world.

“It’s not too strong to say we’re facing an existential crisis,” Rowe said – not because the church doesn’t have something to offer the world, he said, but “because the world around us is changed and continues to change and is changing all the time. God is calling us ever more deeply into the unknown.”

But Rowe pointed to signs of a more hopeful future in some of the collaborative experiments underway in some dioceses across the church, including his own dioceses of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Western New York.

“We know that we cannot continue being The Episcopal Church in the same way, no matter where we live,” he said. “It’s time to reorient our church ... to support dioceses and churches on the ground, where ministry happens.”

GC81 REFLECTION SUMMARY

From
Deputy
Dr. Michael Booker



Attending General Convention is an intricate, yet fulfilling experience. Legislation is categorized by letters A, B, C, and D, representing the origin of the proposals, whether from Interim Bodies, Bishops, Provinces, or individual Deputies. Notably, “A” Resolutions are well-prepared, whereas “D” Resolutions can be variable, requiring legislative committees to refine them for successful passage. This process was exemplified when my committee evaluated D059, a condemnation of antisemitism, which lacked a clear definition of the term. After discussing with its authors and reviewing definitions, we edited the resolution to enhance its clarity.

The dynamic of the House of Deputies, characterized by its large participation—this year with 823 members—underscores the challenge of debating and amending resolutions efficiently. The first legislative day, which focused on procedural rules, laid the foundation for tackling over 300 resolutions, fewer than usual due to the shift in schedule from 2021 to 2022.

My journey began in 2012, observing an organized but intense House of Bishops and the contrasting, spirited House of Deputies. Since then, the leadership has evolved, streamlining operations, notably under President Rev. Gay Jennings. Today, with President Julia Ayala Harris at the helm, the Convention continues its mission, highlighted by key legislative achievements. Serving on Committee 14: Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, I witnessed firsthand the passing of resolutions fostering deeper connections, such as full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria and guidance against antisemitism and anti-Muslim bias. This work reflects my commitment and honor to represent the Diocese of Missouri at General Convention.

A VIEW FROM CHILDREN & YOUTH



“Our days were filled with brave-making activities like zip lining, wall climbing, and archery, along with learning old-fashioned skills like soap making, foraging, and cooking over the fire. Each afternoon, the campers were able to have time to swim in the pool, participate in arts and crafts, interact with the goats and have cabin time.”

- The Rev. Erin Pickergill



PHOENIX 2024

A reflection from The Rev. Erin Pickergill
Ministry Developer for Children and Youth Ministry

In the summer of 2023, a group of people started to meet regularly to pray and dream and plan - what would it look like to relaunch and re-envision Camp Phoenix? How could we build on the foundations of Camp Phoenix over the last twenty years and Diocesan summer camp for over a century and create something for every single young person in the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri? What an incredibly daunting task!

Fast forward to Sunday, August 4th, 2024, when I stationed myself with Chaplain Oak Tree at the entrance to the Wyman Center to welcome families and campers to the final year of Camp Phoenix. I was remembering our meetings over the last year: it became clear to us as a group that it was time to create something new and to mark that newness by a new name. Hence our theme for camp this year: New Name! Someone wisely said at camp - this is not a subtraction game but an addition game. We're adding to the traditions of Camp, not taking away. And that's what it felt like that Sunday, waving in so many new additions to the Camp tradition. The vast majority of campers this year were new to Camp Phoenix, and many were experiencing overnight camp for the first time! All in all, we had 48 campers, 17 counselors, and a core leadership team ("Village Directors") of eight.

On Sunday night, and every night afterward, we gathered around a campfire and said compline and sang worship songs. One young camper I was sitting next to leaned over to me that night and said, "I love this. I love singing these songs about God. It's my favorite thing to do!" And from there, it only got better. Each morning after breakfast, we were led in song by a team of young leaders, made up mostly of young people from the Indian Episcopal Church, FCCI (Faith Christian Church of India), and through morning prayer by our Chaplain, a student at VTS. Formation Hour was next, a deeper dive into our sacred texts, stories in-keeping with our camp theme. We traveled with Abram and Sarai, Jacob, and Saul to Paul, recalling that whatever God loves, God names. And sometimes, God re-names. That was exactly what God was doing with camp this year. God had been calling us to rename camp with God so that we can explore our new identity and purpose as the official summer camp for the Diocese of Missouri.

Our days were filled with brave-making activities like zip lining, wall climbing, and archery, along with learning old-fashioned skills like soap making, foraging, and cooking over the fire. Each afternoon, the campers were able to have time to swim in the pool, participate in arts and crafts, interact with the goats and have cabin time.





After dinner, we had all-camp fun like English line dancing, Quirky Counselors, or Messy Olympics, and of course, the famous Thursday Night Live Talent Show. As we hiked to different activities and waited for meals, counselors and campers who had been to Camp Phoenix before led us all in some great circle songs and chants!

For returners, a lot of Camp felt different than in years past. One high school returner reflected, "I could see that you all did things differently this year, and it worked really well. I loved the activities in the morning and all of the songs and prayers and discussion after breakfast." He also said he'd like to come back and help be a junior leader next year! Our behind-the-scenes administrator, Rita Podolsky, was also a

“There were identifiable ways that the Spirit of God was working to encourage us all throughout the week”

Camp Phoenix returner and has helped at other Episcopal camps. She writes, “What a blessing it was to be at Camp Phoenix and to see the joy, smiles and laughter of the campers in everything they did from worship to "slab" time. Thank you to all the wonderful leaders.” Reverend Meghan Ryan and Reverend Aaron Rogers helped to create the formation content throughout the week. Rev Meghan has seen her share of Episcopal camps in her lifetime - as a camper, a counselor and a leader. She reflects, “Camp Phoenix is everything you’d want an Episcopal summer camp to be! Uplifting music and worship, lifelong friendships, and ZIP-LINING! (Okay, zip-lining was a bonus.) I left feeling energized and hopeful about the future of camp ministry in the Diocese of Missouri.” And Rev Aaron commented this about his time at camp, “It was a joy to participate in Camp Phoenix. No other opportunity in our diocese presents such an open space for collaboration and joint mission. It was a wonderful opportunity to see the unique gifts of our diocese on display while also saying we want to invest those treasures into the future.”

There were identifiable ways that the Spirit of God was working to encourage us all throughout the week, in the formal settings and also around the dining tables and conversations while walking or while making art; through new friendships, in laughing so hard, in learning silly songs and in quiet moments in the woods.

It would be impossible to name everyone who joined in to make camp run so beautifully! But it was absolutely a labor of love from dozens of folks who were not up front. Thank you to everyone who prayed for us, for Wyman staff, for anyone who donated to our Camp scholarship fund, for all the clergy who encouraged families to sign up for camp this year, and for every parent who sent their children. The real heroes were our incredibly loving and committed counselors who spent the majority of their time with campers! After camp, one parent said that their camper, “had such a great time! She told us it was even better than her previous favorite overnight camp experiences. It’s so important for young people to have community in church and we’re so appreciative of your efforts to build it.” During the camp week, one staff member asked a middle school camper how they liked camp so far. They replied with a smile, “Everything. I love everything about camp.”

An important part of Camp was linking our camp experience to the wider diocese at the end of the week. For our final Eucharist, we had around 50 visitors - clergy and parents - who came to worship with us. And, of course, it was there that we had our big reveal; the campers chose several new name options for Camp, voted on them, and gave the top three choices to Bishop Deon. The Bishop chose the most popular option: Camp Firebird!

The similarities between the new and old names of Camp are definitely present - two unique and mythical birds! Camp Phoenix was chosen over 20 years ago, appropriately, as a team was resurrecting camp after it had not been in the diocese for a season. The phoenix represented new life and new possibilities for us. And now, we embrace a firebird narrative. “Firebird” brings together two words that both point to the Holy Spirit - fire, like the tongues of fire that fell on the worshippers at Pentecost or the on-fire bush that brought God’s voice to Moses. And a bird, like that dove descending on Jesus after his baptism, sealing his Father’s love and promise to him. Camp Firebird calls this Diocese to consider how it is that the Spirit is speaking to the church - and certainly, we can know that, in part, it is through and with and in this newer generation of Jesus followers.

“An important part of Camp was linking our camp experience to the wider diocese”

Camp Firebird is an all-Diocese project and mission. Please consider how you and your parish and community will participate in Camp Firebird’s inaugural year, 2025. Reach out to me, Erin (epickersgill@diocesemo.org) (Camp name: Bear) to explore exciting partnership options!

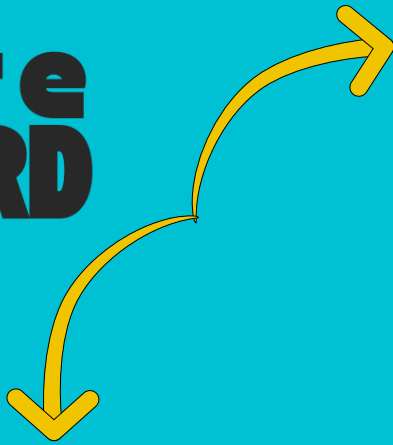


A CALL WAS MADE

for Camp Firebird logo submissions from our youth.

Here are our two finalists submissions!

**fire
BIRD**
2025



2025
JULY 27 - AUGUST 1
CAMP MOVAL
UNION, MO

“And now, we embrace a firebird narrative. “Firebird” brings together two words that both point to the Holy Spirit”

COMPANION+ COMMUNITIES



“While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them.” Luke 24:15a

The Church is in a time of transition and change. Over the last few years, we have seen the beginnings of what author and theologian Phyllis Tickle calls “the Great Emergence.” The Great Emergence envisions significant shifts in organizational structures, theological understandings, and a reorientation towards creative collaboration. In this time of transition and change in the Church and the world, being grounded in the collaborative call of Jesus to be companions one to another offers us hope and resilience for the future.

Companion+Communities is an opportunity for faith communities of all sizes within the Diocese of Missouri to learn from each other ways of discipleship, community engagement, and ministry outreach. This is not a program but a way of caring for and being companions with each other in the journey with Jesus. There is much we can learn together and much we can learn from each other. Our companionship with one another must first and foremost be rooted in the transformative power of prayer. Jesus prayed for his disciples before sending them out, the apostles prayed before choosing one of their numbers, and we are called to pray for each other as we seek to go out into the world. The future of the Church lies not in silos or solos but in collaboration. As we strive to navigate a world in the throes of transition and change, we must walk together in the Way.

As communities of faith that comprise the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, we recognize that companion relationship requires intentional communication and active participation by both companions regularly. We are mindful that active participation will help weave and strengthen our relationship into a pattern of being and serving as Christ in the world where Love is the way. We therefore seek to commit to being in companionship with another community of faith within the Diocese of Missouri to deepen our connection, build bridges of understanding and learning, and seek the transformation of the Holy Spirit as we walk together.

We are mindful that active participation will help weave and strengthen our relationship into a pattern of being and serving as Christ in the world where Love is the way.



MEET OUR COMPANION COMMUNITIES



- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Journey, Fulton | + | Calvary, Columbia |
| Grace ACC, St. Louis | + | Trinity, St. Charles |
| Faith CCI, Ballwin | + | St. John's, Tower Grove |
| All Saints & Ascension, Northwoods | + | St. Peter's, Ladue |
| Advent, Crestwood | + | St. Thomas, Crestwood |
| CSMSG, Clayton | + | St. Vincent, St. Genevieve |
| St. Mark's, Portland | + | Hope, Town & Country |
| St. Barnabas, Florissant | + | St. Timothy, Creve Coeur |
| St. Mark's, St. Louis | + | St. John & St. James, Sullivan |
| Trinity, St. James | + | Trinity, Central West End |
| Trinity, DeSoto | + | St. Francis, Eureka |
| Grace, Jeff City | + | Christ Church, Rolla |
| Christ Church Cathedral, St. Louis | + | Christ Church, Cape |
| Holy Communion, University City | + | St. Stephen's, Ferguson |
| Trinity, Kirksville | + | Trinity, Hannibal |
| Emmanuel, Webster Groves | + | St. Paul's, Carondelet |
| St. Martin's, Ellisville | + | Grace, Kirkwood |
| All Saints, Farmington | + | Holy Cross, Poplar Bluff |
| St. Paul's, Ironton | + | Transfiguration, Lake St. Louis |
| Calvary, Louisiana/St. John's, Eolia | + | St. Paul's, Sikeston |
| Rockwell House, St. Louis | + | ELCM, Columbia |

THE FERGUSON UPRISINGS: TEN YEARS LATER

This year the St. Louis region and the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri remembers the 10th anniversary of the killing of Michael Brown and the Ferguson Uprisings.



This year marks the 10th anniversary of the death of Michael Brown and the subsequent Ferguson Uprisings—events that reshaped the St. Louis region and sparked nationwide calls for racial justice and reform. In August 2014, the shooting of 18-year-old Michael Brown by a police officer in Ferguson ignited widespread protests and reignited crucial conversations on race, policing, and systemic inequality in America.

A decade later, the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, alongside the Commission for Dismantling Racism, reflected on this significant milestone with events to honor Michael Brown's memory and encourage the ongoing work of reconciliation. The Diocese urged individuals and parishes to participate in a week of remembrance from August 5-9, dedicating themselves to prayer, reflection, and active steps toward healing.



Memorial events commenced with a Memorial Vigil at St. Stephen's and the Vine in Ferguson. The church opened its sanctuary, adorned with candles and art inspired by the Uprisings, for daily vigils from August 5-9. These quiet hours of reflection offered the community a space to remember and seek peace.

On August 7, the church hosted a Memorial Evensong, blending prayers and music to honor the lives lost and the work still ahead.

The following evening, August 8, the Missouri History Museum featured a Chosen Fathers Panel, where fathers who have lost children to police violence shared their stories and discussed how their grief fueled movements for change.

On August, a Memorial March from Normandy High School to Canfield Greens took place and concluded with a remembrance ceremony alongside Michael Brown's family and Chosen for Change.

The commemoration culminated on August 10 with a Community Barbecue and Heal Our Cities Concert, inviting the public to gather in solidarity, foster community spirit, and renew commitments to justice.



JUBILEE MINISTRY



JustFood

Launched in October of 2023, the JustFood truck is bringing free food to areas of high poverty throughout our diocese.



Since March 2024, the JustFood truck has been a vital source of nourishment and community outreach in St. Louis, serving 1,455 made-to-order sandwiches to 818 individuals outside Christ Church Cathedral. This mobile ministry, driven by a mission to reach those in need, has extended its service to other locations, reinforcing its commitment to community care.

Starting in August 2024, JustFood expanded its reach to Grace House Safe Haven, a St. Patrick's shelter at Grace Hill, where it has provided 463 made-to-order meals to 295 residents. This initiative has strengthened bonds within the local community and offered consistent support to vulnerable individuals seeking safety and sustenance.

JustFood's engagement has gone beyond food distribution, embracing visibility and celebration. On June 30, the truck proudly participated in the St. Louis Pride Parade, demonstrating solidarity and inclusivity. This presence highlighted its dedication to not only serving meals but fostering an environment of acceptance and shared joy.



On August 7, the truck served 45 individuals with 60 hot, customized sandwiches, showcasing its reliable presence in times of need. Additionally, on August 9, JustFood visited Camp Phoenix, now known as Camp Firebird, where campers were treated to a special meal on their final day, underscoring the ministry's commitment to community-building and joy.

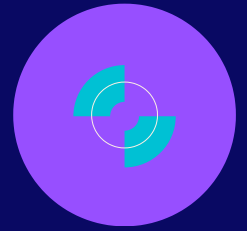


This impactful work is supported by mutual ministry partners including St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Christ Church Cathedral, Trinity Episcopal StL, and Grace Episcopal, as well as countless individuals from across the Diocese. Their collective efforts highlight that this is just the beginning of what JustFood can achieve. Through these partnerships, the JustFood truck continues to embody the values of service, fellowship, and compassion, ensuring that more people receive nourishment and the warmth of community care.



"This truck will not only offer good food to people who are hungry, it will offer a ministry of presence in areas that the Episcopal Church rarely goes - - into neighborhoods of high poverty. It is about meeting the people where they are."
-The Rev. Dn. Barbi Click

HEALING IN THE HEARTLAND: A CALL TO RENEWED MINISTRY OF HEALING AND RECONCILIATION



"We must start with reclaiming our humanity. It's all happening on our watch," said the Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, Interim President at the Episcopal Divinity School.



The diocesan event, "Healing in the Heartland," held at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Creve Coeur, MO, aimed to spark dialogue on how Christians could begin to heal the many divides in society. "We live in divided times," noted the Rt. Rev. Deon K. Johnson, Bishop of the Diocese of Missouri. "Like you, I often ask, 'What can I do? What difference will I make?' We make a difference when we decide to speak the truth in love, when we choose to be healers of the broken and repairers of the torn. We live in divided times, yet God is doing a new thing in your life and in the life of the Church."





Nearly 200 attendees joined in person, with over 30 more participating via livestream. The day began with a multilingual Holy Eucharist, featuring readings in English, Swahili, Kiswahili, Tamil, and Chinese, reflecting the diversity within the diocese. Healing ministers were present for the laying on of hands and special prayers. The Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu, daughter of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, served as the preacher, while the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers presided.

Four guest speakers shared impactful stories about division and healing. The Rev. Tutu emphasized that love is demonstrated through action. The Rev. Traci Blackmon, an activist known for her work following the death of Michael Brown, highlighted that truth-telling is foundational to healing. The Rev. John (Jack) Danforth called for empathy and bridge-building. The Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas underscored the importance of offering others what one desires for oneself.

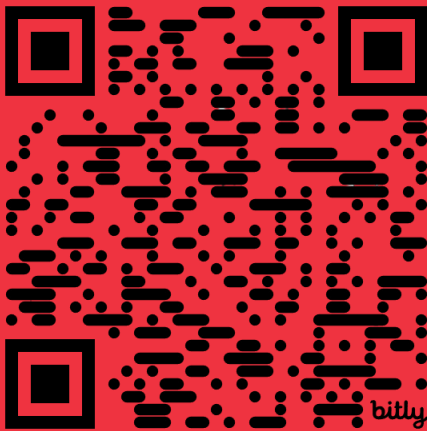


A panel discussion led by Bishop Johnson delved into biblical themes and the church's response to division. The event concluded with the launch of "Beautiful Bridges: An Initiative for Sharing the Peace," inviting diocesan churches to engage in studies promoting dialogue and connection.

PROCLAIM



SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER



NEVER MISS AN ISSUE!



CONNECT TO OUR LINKTREE

- Discover the 11 in 11 podcast
- Discover our social media links
- Find links to our website

DIOMO AT A GLANCE

TOTAL
CONGREGATIONS
40

MISSIONS
10

PARISHES
28

MISSIONERS
10

TOTAL
CLERGY
130

CONVOCATIONS
4

MISSIONAL
COMMUNITIES
2

TOTAL
MEMBERS
8708

CAMPUS
MINISTRIES
7

Diocesan Picnic

On September 14, Bishop Deon Johnson and the Gathering Space Task Force planned a fun day of fellowship for the entire diocese. This event took place at Camp MoVal in Union, MO.



The Diocesan picnic was a joyous occasion, filled with laughter, food, and heartfelt fellowship. As people mingled, it felt like the true essence of community, where everyone was united in warmth and love. Differences seemed to melt away in the presence of shared purpose and togetherness. Watching friends and families connect, share stories, and simply enjoy each other's company reminded me of the stories where Jesus broke bread with His friends. This gathering felt like a modern-day version of those sacred meals, where the bonds of faith and friendship were stronger than any divides.





Though the world outside was filled with struggles, this gathering offered a moment of respite and renewal. The joy, love, and fellowship that filled the room nourished not just the body, but the soul. It was in moments like these that we are reminded of the strength that comes from being in community. We leave with our hearts full, ready to face the challenges ahead, buoyed by the love and support of those around us. In this shared space of belonging, we find the courage to continue, knowing that the joy and connection we experienced will carry us forward, and inspire us to extend that love and compassion to others.

-AhSa-Ti Nu Ford, Interim Communications Director



PROCLAIM

2024
ISSUE



www.diocesemo.org