



The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa



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From Bishop Monnot

Are you familiar with fractals? Fractals are patterns that repeat across different sizes, or that are self-similar across different scales. A quick Google search will bring up all kinds of images, some computer-generated, others from the natural world. Many plants, such as ferns, have fractal patterns: a fern is made up of smaller branches that look like the full fern, and each small branch is in turn made up of smaller branches, and so on, down to the smallest leaf size that fern has. Even the smallest leaf is shaped like the full frond of the fern.

Adrienne Maree Brown, the author of *Emergent Strategy*, uses fractals to understand the way human organizations work. She writes, “How we are at the small scale is how we are at the large scale,” and she goes on, “what we practice at a small scale can reverberate to the largest scale.”

This carries relevance for me as I think about our many congregations, our diocese, and our call to be the body of Christ in the world. On a large scale, the world is so far from the vision of the Kingdom of Heaven that Jesus showed his disciples that it can be

discouraging to think about how far we have to go. However, we know that we can effect change at the small scale, if we are willing to do what it takes.

The first and greatest commandment is to love God, and the second is to love our neighbor as ourselves. Taking these two commandments seriously as a way to pattern our lives and our interactions with each other might lead us to surprising places as a church.

For example, think of what your congregation does when there is change, or disagreement, or conflict. Perhaps people are worried about decline and are concerned for the future, wondering if your congregation will survive. How do people discuss these things and work through them together?

If your congregation is like most congregations, you have discussions in the same way you always have. Some people say what they think, others keep silent, all the usual dynamics of human conversation are part of it. Sometimes small disagreements are resolved easily, other times they grow into bigger disagreements or resentments. Sometimes these escalate into fights that might even lead to people feeling unwelcome in a congregation. It is at these moments that we know that we are very far indeed from God's kingdom.

Many of our congregations are made up of people who love each other, and who tell me that they feel like a family together. At the same time, I know that some families are better equipped than others to continue to love each other even in disagreement, worry, and conflict. Some families, and some congregations, have learned to work through difficult times in the spirit of loving their neighbor, being open to the possibility that the way forward may be different from what any one person or group in the discussion advocates, and may even be different from a "middle way" compromise between competing alternatives. These families or congregations have learned to work through difficulty together with love and discernment, using different tools and ways of talking together than "the way we have always done it." The individuals who make up these families or congregations are open to the possibility of being changed by the encounter they have with different ideas, because they are confident of their identity as one of God's beloved children and they live in the awareness that God invites each one of us to a life of ongoing growth and transformation.

This all may be a long way of saying that our diocesan priority of deepening our connection to God is not just about us as individuals, or about our own individual relationship with God. Like fractals in the physical world, the spiritual growth of an individual leads to their own transformation, and also transforms the way they interact in their family or congregation. The way a family or congregation interacts, especially when times are difficult or during conflict, has the potential to create transformation in the family or congregation, which can lead to more growth and development. The transformation of that family or congregation has the potential to transform the neighborhood and the community, and the fractal pattern continues to grow and repeat over increasingly larger scales.

As we are heading into the season of Lent later this month, I encourage you to take time to consider your Lenten practice. You might want to intentionally undertake something to deepen your connection to God, and open yourself, your family, your congregation, and the world, to the transformation that may come.

Yours in the abundant life of Christ,
+ Betsey

CONGREGATIONAL LEADERS MEETING WITH BISHOP MONNOT

February 28 at 6:00 pm
on Zoom

If you consider yourself a congregational leader and want to attend this zoom meeting with the Bishop, please be sure your contact info is current (with your congregation) or contact diocese@iowaepiscopal.org for the link to connect.

Notice: Website Updates



WEBSITE UPDATES IN PROGRESS

*Thank you for your patience as we update
and move a few things around.*



New Staff Page

Check out the updated staff page! Now with a list of topics and ministry areas for each person so you can find who to contact for what. And follow along on **Facebook** as we introduce everyone for #TeammateTuesdays.

Having trouble finding something on the website as we update and move a few things? Contact Traci Ruhland Petty tpetty@iowaepiscopal.org



Iowa Share

Iowa Share will no longer be a separate website. Resources from it are being incorporated into our diocesan website. In the meantime, contact **Traci** if you can't find something.

Upcoming Events & Opportunities

Faith in Action

- Did you know that we have registered diocesan lobbyists?
- Wondering what issues and bills



Facebook Group

- we follow and why?
- Want to meet with your own Iowa lawmaker but not sure how to do so?

Join with Bishop Monnot and other Episcopalians from around the state for our annual "Episcopalians on the Hill" day.

For more information, including parking, who to contact with questions, and where to meet, [click here](#).

Contemplative Prayer Workshops



- Do you struggle with how to be still or how to gain some inner silence?
- Have you wondered what centering prayer is?
- Want to know more about it?
- Looking for a new and meaningful prayer practice?

The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa is pleased to partner with Br. James Dowd, who will present workshops on Contemplative Prayer. Br. James has practiced for many years as a Benedictine monk, and he will share his wealth of knowledge and experience with us. These are open to everyone; ALL are invited to these special events.

NEXT UP:
February 18 in West Des Moines
Click the image above to download it
Or for a [flyer click here](#)

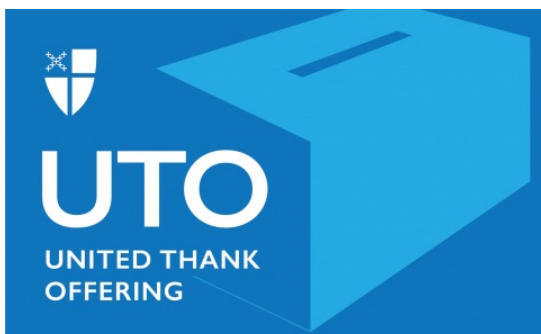


March 25 in Dension
(click image to download)
([click here for flyer](#))



April 22 in Davenport
(click image to download)
([click here for flyer](#))

UTO Grants Due February 10



February 10, 2023 is the diocesan due date for submission of grant applications -- allows time for the grants to be reviewed by the diocesan grant review committee and for the Bishop's endorsement.

2023 grant focus: innovative mission and ministry projects addressing all aspects of the worldwide incarceration crisis, specifically

2023 UTO Grant application materials are open and available [HERE](#).

preventative programs, and intervention, prisoner support outreach, prison reform work, or post-prison re-entry.

Questions?

Email: diocese@iowaepiscopal.org

Agape Cafe



The **Agape Café** serves a free, hot, breakfast dine-in or to-go for their neighbors in the Iowa City area experiencing homelessness and/or food insecurity. In celebration of their 30th anniversary, help sustain their mission by donating today!

"The Café means respect. You're treated as a person here. I've been homeless a lot of years and this is the first place where you sat with us, took our order and I didn't have to stand in line for a ladle of food." --Beth, guest

[Donate](#)

Leadership Reminders & Trainings

Parochial Reports Due March 1



Due online: <https://reports.dfms.org>

Click the following link for a video walkthrough on how to navigate the filing website:

[A Walkthrough Screencast for Congregations](#)

Parochial Report Workbook and Instructions: [WEBPAGE PDF](#)

Convention Delegates

According to CANON 2 OF LAY MEMBERS OF THE CONVENTION, Sec. 1.

Lay delegates from Parishes, to either Annual or Special Conventions, shall be elected by the Vestry or Bishop's Committee, at a

SAVE THE DATE

October 20-22, 2023



DIOCESAN CONVENTION

meeting held as provided in Article III, Sec. 3 of the Constitution. **This election shall take place at the Vestry meeting next following the Annual Meeting.** The delegates (and alternates) so elected, shall serve at any regular and special Conventions held prior to the next Annual Parish Meeting. A vacancy in the delegation shall be filled as provided for in Article III, Section 3 of the Constitution.

Dismantling Racism



FEBRUARY 11

Upcoming Dates:

April 22, June 3, September 16 & November 4

Becoming Beloved Community

Grounded in The Episcopal Church's commitment to dismantling racism as essential to our formation as Christians, this ONLINE training is open to all persons who would like to deepen their understanding of racism, prejudice, and privilege.

This training is required of all lay and ordained leaders in The Episcopal Church (including vestries, search committees, diocesan leadership, etc.). The training will consist of 2 sessions from 10:00am-12:00pm and 12:30pm-2:30pm.

Safe Church, Safe Communities



Who needs to take the training?

Everyone! As members of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we are all called to take part in keeping all people in our church safe. Training is a requirement for those in leadership roles.

Which courses do I need to take?

Depends on your role - see the chart [HERE](#)

LEARN MORE

Some email servers may shorten our newsletter. [Click](#)

Diocesan Ministries & Formation

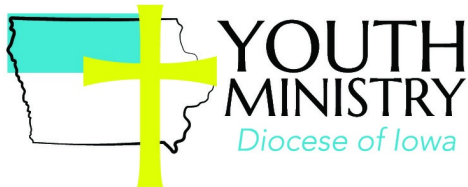
Older Adult Ministry



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

Don't miss the opportunity to include an Older Adult Ministry event in the life of your church. With one of several programs offered through the diocese, older adults in your congregation can explore some of the major spiritual issues and opportunities of aging. Instead of viewing and experiencing aging as a dreaded decline, a workshop or reading group could help your older adults discover and develop their abilities to be elders.

Contact Bob Sessions at sessions.bob@gmail.com
or Stacey Gerhart at spgerhart@gmail.com



Stay up-to-date on all of our upcoming events [HERE](#).



February 11-12

Join youth from around the diocese for a day of fun on the slopes of Seven Oaks Ski Resort in Boone! Youth 4th-12th grade can come ski/snowboard from 10am - 4pm.

Registration closes on February 4.

You can find more information on the diocesan [website](#) and register [HERE](#). Click the image for a printable flyer for your bulletins.



EYE (Episcopal Youth Event) 2023

Every three years the Episcopal Church convenes an international youth event so "that the energy of the youth of the Episcopal Church can continue to be utilized in active ministry as members of the Body of Christ." Youth participants in EYE23 must currently be enrolled in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade during this school year. Participants must

Applications are live [HERE](#).

have turned at least 15 and be no older than 19 by July 4, 2023.

[EYE23 Facebook Page](#)



Small Acts, Big Impact

March 25-26 at All Saints, Storm Lake

Our year of service continues with Small Acts, Big Impact. This March event is for high school students. We will be working with NE Iowa churches to serve their communities.

Check the website for more information.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

Young Adult Ministry

Service Corps Emergency Fund

Are you a service corps member looking for emergency funds for a medical bill, travel home or other expense that your stipend does not cover? If so, we've got your back. Through a GILEAD grant we can offer you funding to help offset emergency costs. Check the Young Adult page the diocesan website for more information.



Email diocese@iowaepiscopal.org for more information.

[SCEF FORM](#)

DEADLINE EXTENDED!

*Ready to deepen your faith in a global setting?
Apply for the Episcopal Church Young Adult
Service Corps 2023-24 service year.*

Application deadline extended to
February 17th

LEARN MORE:
<https://tinyurl.com/YASC2324>



[LEARN MORE](#)

SAVE THE DATE AUGUST 8-17, 2023



Young Adult Pilgrimage IOWA



This is the third leg of a young adult (ages 18-30) pilgrimage between Iowa's companion dioceses of Brechin in Scotland and Swaziland in eSwatini. In 2023 young people from each diocese will meet together in Iowa.

August Pilgrimage

Join young adults from the Diocese of Brechin in Scotland, the Diocese of Swaziland in eSwatini, and the Diocese of Iowa, on a pilgrimage in Iowa from August 8 - 17, 2023. Get to know fellow young adults as we spend time together learning, exploring, and having fun! Our activities and discussions will focus on the topics of Mission & Evangelism, Reconciliation, and Creation Care.

Open to young adults ages 18-30.
More information, including cost &

Behavioral Health Ministry Team



[READ MORE HERE](#)



BHMT February Thoughts:

Planting Seeds

We are certainly in the deep mid-winter. Several snowstorms raging through the state, below zero windchills, school cancellations...all the ingredients of winter. What better time to think about planting seeds.

What?!?!

Gardeners, those who both dig in the dirt gardeners and armchair gardeners enjoy passing the time going through seed catalogs. Dreaming. Planning. Preparing for the planting season.

Mental Health and the Bible

Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about Mental Health. Or if any of the people we read about in the Bible dealt with mental illness? Join Rev. Kris Leaman and Amy Mellies as we dive into the word of God and discuss how the Bible talks about mental health and how we use that information to break down the stigma around this issue and help educate others.

Meetings on Zoom during Lent. March 1, 8, 22 & 29 at 7pm. [REGISTER HERE](#)

Becoming Beloved Community



Download these toolkits for changes to language and materials for each story. Be sure to read the introduction to learn more about our process and ideas for doing an equity audit of other stories and materials.

The Godly Play Equity Audit team has been busy developing materials and script toolkits to ensure our materials reflect the beauty of God's diversity. We are thrilled to share with you the materials and toolkits for our first three stories.

- [Equity Audit Toolkit Introduction](#)
- [Creation Toolkit](#)
- [Parable of the Good Shepherd Toolkit](#)
- [Circle of the Church Year Toolkit](#)

Skilled artists developed these materials, and we are committed to paying them well for their work. We also want everyone to have access to these materials, so we are offering

GILEAD Grants

Spotlight: 2021 Recipients



[Grace Church Facebook](#)

Expanding Tools & Technology Grants

Grace Church, Boone \$4,865.30

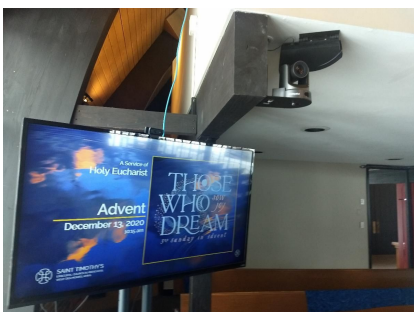
In early 2020 Grace in Boone and Good Shepherd in Webster City began offering joint online worship services via Zoom, and both churches remain committed to maintaining their partnership and offering both in-person and online services. Grant funds are being used to upgrade internet service and purchase audio and video equipment and software to enhance current technologies.



[St. Mark's Facebook](#)

St. Mark's, Fort Dodge -- \$4,000

St. Mark's has been recording/broadcasting Sunday services via telephone (a parishioner's cell phone) for over a year, but the quality of video is fair at best. An upgrade of video equipment is needed. Grant funds are being used for technology including cameras, camera controllers, a laptop, video switcher, microphone, data converter, and installation.



[St. Timothy's Website](#)

St. Timothy's, West Des Moines -- \$3,000

St. Timothy's built on an initial investment, including a previously received GILEAD Grant, to enhance the online worship experience and improve conferencing abilities. Grant funds were used to purchase items such as additional cameras and microphones, cabling, a camera controller, and expenses associated with moving a camera to a better location.

[Read more about these and other 2021 recipients here.](#)

Online Around the Diocese

NEW! Do you have an online offering you'd like to share with others in the diocese? Let



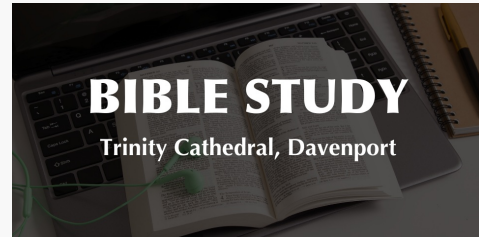
us know! Email:

tpetty@iowaepiscopal.org

We'll highlight it here in the e-news, and there's a new page on the website [HERE](#)

Online Saturday Mornings

Meets Saturdays on Zoom for Morning Prayer at 8:30 am followed by Bible study from 9:00-10:30. Email Greg Braid gbraid@sbcglobal.net for the Zoom information.



Resources

Religious Life

In case you missed it: check out Fr. Goodrich's video that aired on Facebook for Religious Life Sunday on January 22. If you have an affiliation with a religious order please let us know by contacting The Rev. Dr. Kevin Goodrich, O.P., Rector of St. John's, Dubuque, who is a life professed friar in the Anglican Order of Preachers (Dominicans).



Contact Fr. Goodrich at FatherGoodrich@StJohnsDBQ.org or 563-556-0252

[LEARN MORE](#)





**Mental
Health**



The Partner's Path

*(support for spouses of
Episcopal clergy)*

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