



# The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa

## JUNE E-NEWS

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### From Bishop Monnot

I had the opportunity to see the musical *Hadestown* recently (great show with fantastic music, worth listening to the soundtrack). The musical is a retelling of two Greek myths: the story of Persephone, and the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. In these myths, Persephone lived with Hades, the Greek god of death, in the underworld for half the year (fall and winter) and returned to the surface of the earth for the other half (spring and summer). Orpheus and Eurydice fell in love and then Eurydice died, going down to the underworld. Orpheus, still living, went down to the underworld to get her back, and made a bargain with Hades that she could come back to the surface with him only if he led her out and did not look back at her until she reached the surface.

As I watched the musical unfold on the stage before me, I knew both of these myths, and I knew how they ended. Still, as I watched Orpheus leading Eurydice around the stage, back from the underworld into the world of light and life, I felt hopeful that this time the story would end differently. I found myself thinking that maybe, because this was Broadway, the desire for a happy ending to satisfy the audience would somehow lead to the couple living happily ever after. It was not to be. Just as in the original myth, as Orpheus on the stage was about to cross out of the realm of the underworld, he looked back to be sure that Eurydice was following, and at that moment she was pulled back into the underworld forever.

The Greek myths served many purposes in Greek culture, one of which was to offer allegories for life as people experienced it. The story of Persephone, for example, offered an explanation for the changing of the seasons: when Persephone went to the underworld, things stopped growing and flourishing, and winter came. Then, when she returned, buds and blossoms appeared and it was spring time again. This repeated in a never-ending cycle. Likewise, the

story of Orpheus and Eurydice shows that no matter how much we miss our departed loved ones, and no matter what we are willing to do to get them back, we can't, because death is final.

At the end of the musical *Hadestown*, as in the Greek myth, Orpheus looks back at Eurydice just as he is about to step into the sunlight and the two lovers are parted forever. Then the character Hermes, who functions as a narrator in the musical, comes to the stage again. Hermes, the winged god of Greek myth, explains to the audience that the story of Orpheus and Eurydice always ends in sadness, but that we tell (or sing) the story again and again, living through it as though it might turn out differently this time, even though it never does. Hermes was expressing exactly what I had just been experiencing: our willingness to hear (or watch) a story unfold and to feel hopeful that it will be different, even though we know the end is inevitable just as it always has been.

This kind of hope, the hope for a happy ending, or for everything to turn out for the best, is a familiar feeling for all of us. When I leave my home later than I intended to, my hope is to hit the traffic lights in such a way that I won't be late to my destination. When a routine medical test requires a followup, we hope that it turns out to be a false alarm. When I watched the story of Orpheus and Eurydice, I hoped that the desire of Broadway writers would have been to change the ending of the classic story.

This kind of hope is different from the hope that we Christians have in Christ. The hope of this world is a kind of optimistic projection into the future: if the traffic lights are all green, if the medical test comes back negative, if the writers change the end of the story, I will get what I want from the situation.

Christian hope is different. Christian hope is not a repeating cycle of optimism in the face of uncertainty, fear, or danger. Christian hope looks to the beginning and the end of time, to the ultimate nature and destiny of all of creation. We know that all creation comes from God and is redeemed in Christ, and is therefore intrinsically good. We know that every human being, in all our many diversities, is made in the image and likeness of God and is deeply loved by God. We know that, despite all our human frailties, sins, and mistakes, Christ's death on the cross has paved the way for the ultimate and final redemption of humanity and our reconciliation with God. Christian hope is to trust in these truths and to trust that God is faithful. That doesn't mean that things will work out the way I want them to in the short term, but it does mean that God is always with us.

In the very early centuries of Christianity, when Christians were subject to persecution by the secular authorities, the image of Orpheus was sometimes used as a stand-in for the image of Jesus. Orpheus played the lyre and charmed animals with it, and so images of Jesus as the Good Shepherd could be understood through images of Orpheus with a lamb that he had charmed. In addition, Orpheus, like Jesus, went to the underworld and then returned.

The difference, of course, is that Jesus was fully God and was wrongly executed by the powers of this world. His death on the cross broke the chains of death and opened the way through death for all. The story of Orpheus does not attempt to make ultimate meaning for all of humanity, but rather serves as a way for us to understand the realities of life on earth as we experience them. Hoping that things turn out all right is natural for all of us, as Hermes pointed out in the musical. We even enjoy repeating stories (think of watching movies or television shows again and again) and letting our emotions be caught up in the hope of the story. As images of Orpheus reminded early Christians of Christ, perhaps our optimistic hope for things to turn out the way we want them can remind us of the ultimate hope that is at the heart of our faith in Christ.

As we move through life, and as we experience disappointments as things around us don't go

the way we want them to, our Christian hope becomes all the more important to hold on to. This may be why some of the most deeply spiritual and holy people are the ones who have experienced hardships in life. They have learned, through hard times, that while optimism has its place, Christian hope is much deeper. It is a lesson that we might all strive to learn, even without being forced into it by difficult circumstances.

Yours in the abundant life of Christ,  
+ Betsey

The Rt. Rev. Betsey Monnot, Bishop of Iowa

## Ordinations



God willing and the people consenting,  
The Right Reverend Betsey Monnot  
Bishop of Iowa  
will ordain

**Catherine Ann Schroeder**  
to the Sacred Order of Priests  
in Christ's holy catholic Church

Saturday, June 3rd  
Two thousand twenty-three  
at two o'clock in the afternoon  
Grace Episcopal Church  
707 Eighth Street, Boone, Iowa

Your prayers and presence are requested  
Festal color is red      Streaming available

[WATCH ONLINE](#)



God willing and the people consenting,  
The Right Reverend Betsey Monnot  
Bishop of Iowa  
will ordain

**Elizabeth Abbott Wells McElroy**  
to the Sacred Order of Priests  
in Christ's holy catholic Church

Sunday, June 18th  
Two thousand twenty-three  
at four o'clock in the afternoon  
Episcopal Church of St. Martin  
640 Hawthorn Lane, Davis, California

Your prayers and presence are requested  
Festal color is red      Streaming available

[WATCH ONLINE](#)

## Upcoming Events & Opportunities

### Summer Ministry School & Retreat



#### "All We Need Is Here" June 23-25th at Grinnell College

Join us for the 33rd annual Summer  
Ministry School & Retreat!

WORSHIP. LEARN. RELAX.

[REGISTER HERE BY JUNE 9](#)

For over 30 years Episcopalians in Iowa have gathered for a weekend in the summer to learn church leadership skills, explore personal spirituality, or just find

**WEEKEND TAKEAWAYS:**

First of all, it was great to see old friends and meet new ones. Second, there are always new insights into our relationship with the scriptures and the world.

The joy of being together and meeting new people.

General refreshment and relaxation. Some new, some deeper friendships. Sense of the church beyond my congregation

A renewed commitment to listening to God's Spirit and call



I realized the importance for me to get away and do something for me. I do too many things for other people. It was a wonderful re-charge. Thank you.

It was a lovely first experience. I look forward to attending next year.

I find it easy to meet and talk to people at SMSR.

Sabbath time. Praying together sets a rhythm and tone for the weekend that culminates in Eucharist on Sunday morning. During the weekend, 8 hours are set aside for “track time” to get in-depth study in one track topic of your choice (track offerings change each year), or choose to do a solo retreat. Spend time catching up with friends and making new ones during meals and morning and evening social times, and enjoy free time built into the weekend’s schedule to socialize, rest, or do an activity.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[CHILD CARE](#)

[BROCHURE](#)

[BULLETIN INSERT](#)

**2023 TRACK OFFERINGS:**

**STRENGTHEN CONGREGATIONS**

TRACK 1: Transformative Worship in the Absence of a Priest -- *The Rt. Rev. Betsey Monnot*

TRACK 2: Nurturing Spiritually Vital Congregations -- *The Rev. Cn. Meg Wagner*

TRACK 3: What is a Deacon? -- *The Ven. Judith Crossett & The Rev. Patricia Johnson*

**SUPPORT CLERGY & LAY LEADERSHIP**

TRACK 4: Church Office Administrator Retreat -- *Ms. Elizabeth Adams & Ms. Tina Austin*

TRACK 5: Ministry Amid the Eldering Process -- *Mr. Bob Sessions & The Rev. Stacey Gerhart*

**DEEPEN OUR CONNECTION TO GOD**

TRACK 6: In Times Like Ours: The Prophets Speak Today -- *The Rev. Jean McCarthy*

TRACK 7: Deepening our Connection to God through Art and Storytelling -- *Ms. Alescha Caldwell*

TRACK 8: Into The Oneness -- *The Rev. Dr. Catherine Quehl-Engel*

TRACK 9: Solo Retreat/ Spiritual Direction\*

\*optional Come Away and Rest -- *Ms. Helen L. Keefe & The Rev. Mary Jane Oakland*



Join diocesan staff and members of St. Andrew's as we celebrate Pride in Des Moines. The diocese will have a booth at Pridefest with 2 hour shifts. If you would like to come and be a part of spreading love sign up below. You can contact Amy Mellies at [amellies@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:amellies@iowaepiscopal.org) with questions.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



Are you participating in a Pride event?

Do you have a message of love to share with our LGBTQIA+ siblings?

Help us create videos and messages of love by sending in any of the following:

- Photos or videos (30 seconds or less) from you/your congregation/your ministry group at Pride events
- Photo of you wearing a supportive t-shirt ("This priest loves you" "God loves you, no exceptions" etc.) or holding up a supportive/loving message or pride flag
- Short video (15 seconds or less) with a supportive/loving message

**Notice of Media Release:**

*By sending in photos/videos, you're agreeing that you are willingly giving your permission for any or all material, photo or video, to be used in any form, as part of any future production (promotions or publications) made by the church, and that such use shall be without payment of fees, royalties, special credit, or other compensation. You can revoke this permission at any time by sending a written notice to [diocese@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:diocese@iowaepiscopal.org)*

**Important:** *If youth (under 18) are in the photo or video, we'll need a media release signed by the youth and their adult.*

[Youth Media Release](#)

Media will be compiled into promotions and publications (videos, Facebook posts, magazine articles, etc.) for current and future use. Sending in media does not guarantee its use.

Photos and videos (or questions) can be sent to Traci Ruhland Petty, via email [trpetty@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:trpetty@iowaepiscopal.org) or text 515-850-5217

*(if you're texting, please include your first and last name and congregation in case we need to be in touch)*

Did you know that we work with Iowa Trans Mutual Aid? The Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund financially supports Trans, Nonbinary, and Gender Diverse Iowans as





they access gender-affirming care.

This Pride month we encourage you to learn more about and support organizations serving our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Consider making a donation to the Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund - checks can be made out to Iowa Trans Mutual Aid Fund and sent % Interfaith Alliance of Iowa: PO Box 41086, Des Moines, IA 50311, or donate online

[Donate Online](#)

## Leadership Notices & Upcoming Trainings

### Dismantling Racism



JUNE 3

**Upcoming Dates:**  
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.

### Joint Chapter Meeting

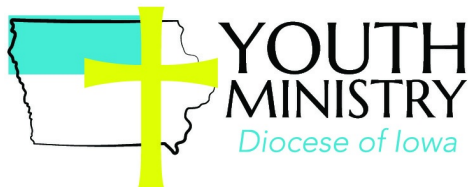


The diocese is arranged into 10 mission chapters, with every congregation being part of a chapter. We meet twice yearly in a joint chapter meeting online via Zoom, usually in the spring and fall.

All chapters meet together in the first part of the meeting where information shared from designated speakers, and the second part of the meeting is when individual chapters meet in breakout rooms for more localized discussion.

Some email servers may shorten our newsletter. Click [View as Webpage](#) to see the newsletter in its entirety.

## Diocesan Ministries & Formation



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



**WHO:** All youth entering grades 4-12 (not limited to Episcopalians!)

**WHEN:** June 26-30, 2023

**WHERE:** Christian Conference Center in Newton, Iowa

**HOW MUCH:** \$375 per camper. Scholarships are always available!

[EPIC BULLETIN INSERT](#)

### EPIC Summer Camp

**Jesus: The Person, The Myth, The Legend**

### REGISTRATION DEADLINE: June 12

June 26-30, Christian Conference Center, Newton

Join youth from around the diocese as we learn about Jesus: The Person, The Myth, The Legend. Jesus was a person and sometimes we forget that. Our theme for EPIC focuses on the human being Jesus was. What did Jesus feel? How was his mental health? Did he deal with the same body aches I do?

Come learn about Jesus and have fun doing typical "camp" things: Singing, roasting marshmallows, swimming, hiking, doing crafts and building community in a safe, welcoming environment where you can be 100% you. We have trained and caring staff who will walk alongside our youth and be there for them, whatever they need. Registration is now open! Cost is \$375 for the week and scholarships are always available.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### EYE 2023 Iowa Delegation

We ask for your prayers as our delegation travels to the University of Maryland, College



Park in July for this amazing event. Please pray for our delegates: Natalie, Harold, Juliann, Robert, Greta, Hazel, and Blake. Also include in your prayers our chaperones: Jeff and Amy.



Congratulations to all of the graduates!! Whether high school or college we know you have put in the hard work and deserve to be celebrated. Many blessings on the road ahead!

For those graduating high school, contact Amy Mellies at [amellies@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:amellies@iowaepiscopal.org) or Traci Ruhland Petty at [tpetty@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:tpetty@iowaepiscopal.org) to let us know



your next steps and so we can send you some goodies next year!



## Young Adult Ministry



The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa, through a GILEAD Grant, has limited funds to assist service corps members with emergency or travel funds. Fill out the form for assistance with travel to and from home, moving expenses, car repairs, medical emergencies, etc. The funds will be given out on a first come, first serve basis. Please fill out the form below to be reimbursed for your emergency expenses.

Email [diocese@iowaepiscopal.org](mailto:diocese@iowaepiscopal.org) for more information.

SCEF FORM



APPLY NOW

## Gather at the River: Young Adult Companion 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.

Applications are open until **May 21**. The total cost is \$750 and \$100 deposit is requested at the time of applying.

## One World, One Church - Companion Pilgrimage



Twenty-five years ago on May 1, 1998, approximately 25 of us from Iowa and Brechin departed Swaziland to return home after two weeks of working to build a priest's house at St. Matthias Church in Ezulwini, Swaziland (now Eswatini). Since then other smaller teams have visited the Diocese of Swaziland to work with our Companions on projects of their choosing. In December 2014 young adults from Iowa and Brechin participated in the Diocese of Swaziland Young Adult gathering. In 2016 a group of young adults from the three dioceses gathered in Brechin to continue their joint pilgrimage.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

## Older Adult Ministry



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons

Older Adult Ministry will launch a workshop on "**The Spirituality of Aging**" at the Summer Ministries Retreat, and will provide a half-day version of it at St. Timothy's in West Des Moines in August. We invite requests from individuals and churches to have the group lead workshops across the diocese on this important topic as we age as individuals and churches. Contact Bob Sessions ([sessions.bob@gmail.com](mailto:sessions.bob@gmail.com)) or Stacey Gerhart ([spgerhart@gmail.com](mailto:spgerhart@gmail.com)).

## Behavioral Health Ministry Team (BHMT)



[READ MORE HERE](#)

### Mental Health & the LGBTQ+ Community

June is PRIDE month. Pride is a month “dedicated to celebration and commemoration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender pride, observed in the Western world. Pride Month began after the Stonewall riots, a series of gay liberation protests in 1969, and has since spread outside of the United States.”

What does Pride have to do with mental health? A lot actually. The rate of suicide in the LGBTQ+ community has risen significantly in the last three

years. Some of it is due to COVID isolation, but lately, a lot of it has to do with what is happening in politics.

## Congregational Mental Health: Suicide and What to Know



### Episcopal Parish Network

Strengthening Leaders  
for a Changing Church

**Monday, June 26th - 3:00pm EDT**

Suicide. It's an occurrence that is all too common and nearly unparalleled in its capacity to devastate families, communities, and congregations. While suicide is often linked to depression, it is more accurately described as the worst possible outcome of a complex combination of things that often includes mental health challenges but also includes isolation and despair. Given the Surgeon General's recent announcement that named loneliness as a public health crisis, this should get our attention. As leaders in your congregation, Episcopal Parish Network is honored to work with our partner Soul Shop to offer an overview of the societal situation, the risk factor, and how you can address this in your community.

During this workshop, the Soul Shop team will discuss the dimensions of suicide including:

- How prevalent it is the general public and in your congregation;
- Some of the often undetected indicators of suicide risk and what some of the complex variables are that lead to suicide; and
- How parishes can begin to think about building out their infrastructure of support to minister to all those impacted by suicide, including loss survivors and people with previous lived experience of suicidal thinking.

Panelists include:

- Michelle Snyder - Co-Director, Soul Shop; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- Christopher Epperson - Co-Director, Soul Shop; Little Rock, Arkansas
- Matt Holcombe - Priest, St. Michael's Episcopal Church; Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Marna Franson - Missioner, Diocese of Northern Michigan and Trainer, Soul Shop; Marquette, Michigan

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## BHMT Partner Organizations:

### Pastoral Care Special Program

This virtual two-year course is available to anyone, anywhere, via Zoom. It is designed for clergy, parish nurses, Stephen Ministers, chaplains, and others involved in pastoral care ministries. Meeting monthly, participants learn about areas critical to effective pastoral care, and receive support, encouragement, and consultation on their work. Participants will reinforce what they already do well and integrate new





### Pastoral Care Specialist Program



This virtual two-year course is available to anyone, anywhere, via Zoom. It is designed for clergy, parish nurses, Stephen Ministers, chaplains and others involved in pastoral care ministries. Meeting monthly, participants learn about areas critical to effective pastoral care, and receive support, encouragement and consultation on their work. Participants will reinforce what they already do well and integrate new knowledge and skills into their ministries.

For more information contact Chris Waddle, Director of Leadership and Spiritual Life, 515-868-7172 or [cwaddle@mindspiritcenter.org](mailto:cwaddle@mindspiritcenter.org)

FLYER



VIEW UPCOMING WEBINARS

knowledge and skills into their ministries.

For more information contact Chris Waddle, Director of Leadership and Spiritual Life, 515-868-7172 or [cwaddle@mindspiritcenter.org](mailto:cwaddle@mindspiritcenter.org)

### New Topics + More Webinars

As always, these events are absolutely free and everyone is welcome  
Reserve your [virtual] seat today

## GILEAD Grants

**GILEAD Grants**

Applications Open  
May 15th - July 15,  
2023

[www.iowaepiscopal.org/gilead-grants](http://www.iowaepiscopal.org/gilead-grants)

**NEW: Book online!**

Select an appointment time

June 2023							THU	FRI
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2
06	09	08	01	1	2	9	12:00pm	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12:30pm	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
25	26	27	28	29	30	1		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8		

Meetings with GILEAD Grant Review Committee

Do you have an idea for:

- a new project or ministry?
- reaching people in new places or in new ways?
- growing an existing ministry?

And are you a congregation, worshipping community, chapter, or an individual

Reminder: meeting with the GILEAD Grant Review Committee prior to submitting an application is required.

**NEW THIS YEAR:** you can see all available appointment times and schedule your appointment online! Appointments are

member of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa?

If so, you may be eligible for a GILEAD Grant. Check out the grants page of the website or contact [Traci Ruhland Petty](#) for more information.

[GILEAD GRANTS WEBSITE](#)

available between now and July 13th - scroll between the months, choose a date in blue (like shown in the graphic above) to see available appointments that day.

[BOOK AN APPOINTMENT ONLINE](#)

## 2022 Recipient Spotlight:



### **Clergy Support at St. Matthew's By-the-Bridge, Iowa Falls -- \$15,000**

St. Matthew's for all of its history of over one hundred years has been a mission congregation. For the past forty years it has always relied upon part-time or visiting clergy. As the availability of visiting clergy became scarce, they began searching for alternatives and also realized the need to have a larger presence in the community to help them grow and prosper. They hope to find an enthusiastic, recently-ordained priest who will become a community presence, can help with the rejuvenation and diversification of St. Matthew's membership, a raising of its profile in the community, and for the spreading of the Gospel to the rapidly diversifying population of Iowa Falls and surrounding area. GILEAD Grant funds will be used to help fund the salary of the clergy person, which will in turn help grow the congregation and build a wider presence in Iowa Falls and the local community.

[ST. MATTHEW'S FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

St. Matthew's is seeking a half-time priest who will lead them in liturgy, engage and be a



### **Safety Net for Service Corps**

**Participants** in partnership with Tiffany Farrell -- \$5,000

In an effort to keep the connection between the church and young adults, this project intends to provide safety net funding to young adults involved in service year programs (ex. Episcopal Service Corps, Young Adult Service Corps, AmeriCorps). Programs tend to provide minimal monthly stipends to its corps members; when emergencies arise, or gas prices are high and you are moving across the country, money can become tight. Small stipends can also prevent young adults from traveling home for the holidays or special events. Having recently completed a year of service with the Episcopal Service Corps, this grant's project leader learned more about the structure and support systems offered and not offered through such programs. Although service years encourage simple living, the monthly stipends do not cover all expenses for many in these programs. This makes this opportunity less accessible for those who are already vulnerable to financial struggles. With programs covering the globe, even traveling to the program can create a barrier. Having funds available to help with these necessary but unforeseen or uncovered expenses may

presence with their small vibrant community of Iowa Falls, and help them organize their talents to be the “hands of Christ.” They have a beautiful and well-cared-for church building and rectory, large enough for use, and yet not so big as to be a liability to their budget needs for outreach and mission.

Clergy interested in applying can find information on the diocesan website "Transitions" page - click on the "More Information" button below.

encourage young adults who are unsure of whether or not they can afford to serve to go ahead knowing that there is a safety net provided to them from the diocese. Corps members would be able to fill out an application to use funds for a wide variety of reasons, such as (but not limited to): travel expenses, car repairs, medical bills, moving expenses, etc. GILEAD Grant funds will be used as this “safety net” funding for corps members, available to corps members upon application approval.

[More Information](#)

[FUNDS FORM](#)

[Read more about these and other 2022 recipients here.](#)

## Resources



### NOTE ABOUT UNSUBSCRIBING:

if you click "Unsubscribe" below it removes you from ALL diocesan emails (including the e-news, letters from the Bishop, etc.) and our office cannot re-subscribe you. You'll need to re-subscribe yourself by clicking on "start sending me the news!" at this link: <https://www.iowaepiscopal.org/news>.



*If you wish to be taken off of a specific email list or have questions, contact  
diocese@iowaepiscopal.org*

Episcopal Diocese of Iowa | 225 37th Street, Des Moines, IA 50312

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