



The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa

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From Bishop Monnot

Greetings on this Feast of the Epiphany! Today marks the conclusion of the Christmas season as we celebrate the day that the sages from the East arrived in Bethlehem to bring gifts to the infant Jesus.

There is a joke that makes the rounds every year about the “wise men” and how the scene at the manger would have been different if it had been “wise women” who followed the star. The joke goes that the wise women would have gotten there on time and would have brought practical gifts like diapers, warm blankets, and food, instead of arriving twelve days after the baby was born and bringing the symbolic gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

We live in a culture that pokes fun at faith as “impractical” at the same time as encouraging us all to spend time staring at various screens, watching or scrolling. There is very little that is less practical than mindlessly scrolling Facebook, my own personal temptation. Faith, however, can be very practical when we run into hard times. Faith can sustain us in our darkest moments. The love that we share in community can overflow into tangible resources like shared meals and rides to important appointments. Gathering for worship brings us comfort in times of sorrow as well as increasing our joy in times of celebration. Our faith, including our symbols, has its practical aspect in improving our lives. Our diocesan priority of deepening our connection to

God, is, in fact, very practical. Deepening our connection to God improves our lives.

The Feast of the Epiphany reminds us that Jesus is for the whole world, not just for those who were already gathered around him. The sages from the East were the first Gentiles to worship Jesus, opening the way for Gentiles (that is, all of us who are not Jewish) to become disciples of Jesus. We who are now followers of Jesus find encouragement in the story of the Epiphany to embody the light of Christ in the world, and in doing so to invite those who have not yet come to know Jesus to join us in worship. While that invitation may come in the form of a church sign that announces worship times, or your congregation's presence in civic events, the most practical invitations to join in worship come from one individual to another. Try an experiment in this New Year, in the spirit of the Epiphany, and invite someone to church. If they accept your invitation, you will be improving their lives in a very practical way. Isn't that something you want to do for people you care about?

Yours in the abundant life of Christ,
+ Betsey

The Rt. Rev. Betsey Monnot, Bishop of Iowa

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.

Promotional Materials (click to download):

Feb. 18
St. Timothy's, WDM

Mar. 25
Trinity, Denison

Apr. 22
Trinity Cathedral, Davenport



FLYER



FLYER



FLYER

United Thank Offering Grant Applications



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

Questions?

Email: diocese@iowaepiscopal.org

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

Over the next 3 years, The United Thank Offering, in the spirit of Matthew 25:36, will focus on areas of ministry that serve those who society has left out and left behind. Therefore, the UTO grant focus for 2023 will be on innovative mission and ministry projects addressing all aspects of the worldwide incarceration crisis, specifically preventative programs, and intervention, prisoner support outreach, prison reform work, or post-prison re-entry.

Becoming Beloved Community

SACRED GROUND

A FILM-BASED DIALOGUE SERIES ON RACE & FAITH

Circle will meet by Zoom each Monday evening January 9 - March 20
Register: becomingbelovedcommunity.org/calendar



JANUARY 21

Upcoming Dates:

February 11
April 22
June 3

Dismantling Racism: Training for Church Leaders

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

WINTERTALK 2023

January 21-23, 2023
hosted by the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin

REGISTER HERE

As The Episcopal Church **reckons more deeply** with its past involvement in Indigenous boarding schools, the **Office of Indigenous Ministries** invites all Episcopalians to register to watch Winter Talk 2023, an annual conference that highlights Indigenous and Native American traditions and contributions within the church. Register to receive the Zoom link.

Youth Ministry



**YOUTH
MINISTRY**
Diocese of Iowa

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



YMDT January News

Ski Trip 2023
February 11-12, Seven Oaks, Boone & St. John's, Ames

Ski Trip is an annual winter weekend full of fun, fellowship and worship! This year's Ski Trip will take place February 11-12 at Seven Oaks Ski Resort in Boone and overnight at St. John's, Ames. We hope that youth (grades 4-12) and adults from your congregation will join us!

Youth Overnight Fee (includes t-shirt) - \$35
T-shirt - \$10
Ski/Snowboard (12 & under) - \$57.30
Ski/Snowboard (13 & up) - \$75.49
Includes: lift ticket, ski/snowboard rental & helmet.
Lunch can be purchased ahead of time or will be on your own. Pre-paid lunch will consist of your choice of Hot Dog, Hamburger/Cheeseburger, Popcorn Chicken or Walking Taco, French Fries, or Chips, and a drink (soda or water) for \$12.

You will register and pay for TUBING ONLY directly with Seven Oaks. You can visit their website here:
<https://sevenoaks.whitepeakstechnologies.com/tubing>

Financial scholarships are always available for the registration fee and confidential. Please fill out the FORM for a confidential request.
If you have questions or concerns, please email them to registration@youthskitrip.com. Dale Schirmer of St. John's, Mason City, Jacob Nastruz, St. Timothy's, West Des Moines, and Amy Mellies, Children & Youth Missioner.

[Register Here](#)
[Printable Flyer](#)

January Challenge
Your challenge for January is to make or gift a blanket. You can make a fleece tie blanket. You can knit a blanket. You can give a blanket that you have outgrown, if its in good shape.
You can donate it to a local hospital, thrift store, shelter or school.

**Ski Trip
2023**

FEBRUARY 11-12
SEVEN OAKS, BOONE & ST. JOHN'S, AMES

Ski Trip: February 11-12, 2023

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 at Seven Oaks. Lodging, if you wish to stay overnight, will be provided by St. John's, Ames including dinner and breakfast. You can find more information on the diocesan [website](#) and register [HERE](#). Click the image to the left 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 have turned at least 15 and be no older than 19 by July 4, 2023.

Applications are live [HERE](#).

[EYE23 Facebook Page](#)

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.

Episcopal Diocese of Iowa



YOUNG ADULTS FACEBOOK GROUP

<https://tinyurl.com/YAEDOI>

Listen to your life.



Through Episcopal Service Corps, young adults 21-32 are invited to a year apart. A year of listening, of learning and growing, of making new friends in a new place. A year of considering how you can use your unique gifts and experiences to create real, meaningful change in the community around you.



Apply Today: [EpiscopalServiceCorps.org](https://www.episcopalServiceCorps.org)

Do you know someone who might be called to this transformative experience? Share this information with them with an invitation to consider an ESC year.

APPLY NOW

DISCERNMENT QUIZ

Episcopal Service Corps. Open House

Young adults 21-32 considering an ESC Year are invited to participate in one of our upcoming Open House:

- **January 11**, 8 pm Eastern/7 pm Central/6 pm Mountain/5 pm Pacific

Feeling ready to set aside a year to build lasting connections, dive deep into vocational and spiritual discernment, and engage the challenges facing our communities? Then an ESC Year might be the next step for you!

These Open Houses are low-key, interactive opportunities to explore the benefits of an ESC Year. We hope you can join us!

OPEN HOUSE REGISTRATION

Episcopal Church Young Adult Service Corps

Applications are open to Episcopalians ages 21-30 and are due February 1, 2023. Check out this press release with a new video from Presiding Bishop Curry and stories from alumni, and learn more about applying here:

LEARN MORE & APPLY

READY TO DEEPEN YOUR FAITH IN A GLOBAL SETTING?

Episcopal Church Young Adult Service Corps
Applications open for 2023-24

Due February 1st

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



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.



Service Corps Emergency Funds

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. You can find the form on the diocesan website or click the button below.

Email diocese@iowaepiscopal.org for more information.

SCEF FORM

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

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

GILEAD Grant Spotlight: 2021 Recipients



**Labyrinth Ministry
at Grace, Cedar Rapids**
\$5,000

Grant funds were used to purchase the portable labyrinth and the supplies needed to develop the labyrinth ministry.

Labyrinths have long been used for meditative reflection and healing, and Grace plans to offer this ministry to a variety of individuals and groups, including: clients of the Medical Lending Closet, community partners, including Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, who meet regularly at the church; and members of Grace and other faith communities. Specific benefits individuals have experienced as a result of labyrinth walking include: answers to, or insights to personal problems or circumstances; a general sense of inner peace or calm; emotional healing from past abuse or other traumas.

[GRACE WEBSITE](#)



**Parish Hall Upgrade at St. Paul's,
Durant**
\$15,000

Grant funds were used to put a handicap accessible ramp from the sidewalk to the landing at the back door on the West side of the Parish Hall and to put in a handicap accessible restroom with appropriate stool, sink, fixtures, and water heater.

Previously, a lack of accessibility has prevented many community groups from utilizing the Parish Hall on a long-term basis. Also, St. Paul's is listed as an emergency shelter with the City of Durant, and being handicap accessible will better equip them to serve this need. Making the Parish Hall accessible was part of a larger project vision, which included using additional funding sources to make the space more welcoming and usable through other repairs and additions.

[ST. PAUL'S FACEBOOK](#)

Learn More About Grants:

[GILEAD GRANTS](#)

[2021 GRANT RECIPIENTS](#)



Mental Health First Aid Training
Saturday, February 4, 9am - 3pm

Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. This training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem and help connect them to the appropriate care.

Register on the diocesan website.

REGISTER HERE

Behavioral Health Ministry Team
 Thought for the Month: January 2023

Love your neighbor as yourself is one of the most important commandments we are given and as Christians, we are expected to do. So, how do we go about this? I think we have to learn what it means to love ourselves first, not in a self-indulgent way but in a way where we actually take care of ourselves. Self-indulgence can look like eating all the chocolate we want, not keeping to good hygiene (i.e. not showering regularly, or not brushing our teeth), loading up on sugared sodas, and eating bags of chips. It can mean staying up half the night playing video games or watching Tik Tok videos. It can mean not being a disciplined life which means a healthier life. Sometimes indulgence in eating the wrong things, and staying up too late into the wee hours of the morning can be fun, but too much of what was once a fun thing doesn't become fun anymore. It can just be a "default" habit where people get stuck. People become isolated and that can become a problem. It is not how we love ourselves. And we cannot love others when we are overly consumed with self-indulgent behaviors. When we are isolating ourselves in different ways we often don't notice or pay attention to someone who could really use some support. When we notice someone who may not be doing well, we might want to jump in and try to fix what is wrong, even when we don't know what to do. We might be talking so much, sharing great ideas on how to fix things, but we miss the conversation the other person is so desperately wanting to have. Loving our neighbor might look like simply being present with them, listening to what they need to say or simply being present with them in their silence. This is coming alongside, offering presence in a non-judgmental way. Letting the person know you are there for them without offering advice. Just being there. This is a wonderful way to love your neighbor. To help with figuring this out there is free training available for both clergy and lay people in the church. It is being offered by Iowa State University Extension on February 4th from 9:00 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a live training via ZOOM and is free! The recognition of and support for folks who struggle with mental health issues is as common as the cold. This training offered gives us another tool, another opportunity to learn how to come alongside in loving our neighbor. Stepping outside ourselves is a huge way to love ourselves as well. It bolsters compassion, and kindness, it builds courage and fortitude (look it up), virtues which we do not speak of very often. This new year take some time to think about how you might find ways to love yourself, and care for yourself and see how that in turn encourages you to love your neighbor. Mental Health First Aid training through ISU Extension on February 4, 9am-3pm. This is free to clergy members and lay leaders who are involved in youth ministry. There will be some training you will have to do individually prior to the Saturday live training via Zoom. You can register here: <https://go.iastate.edu/ZSEUSE>
 Rev. Kris+

Safe Church, Safe Communities

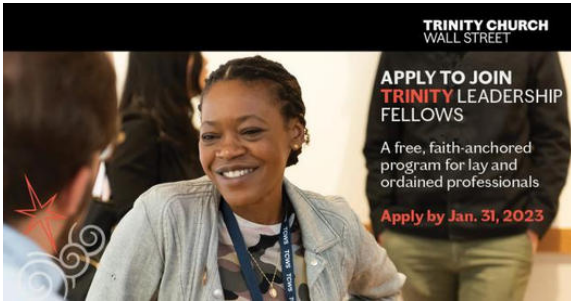


Who needs to take the training?
 Everyone! As members of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement, we are all called to take part in keeping all people in our church safe. Training is a requirement for those in leadership roles.

Which courses do I need to take?
 Depends on your role - See the chart **HERE** for which courses (#1-9) you should take.

There are 8 active courses. Find all **Safe Church** information on the diocesan website.

Resources



LEARN MORE


Trinity Leadership Fellows

Join a diverse cohort of emerging leaders on a two-year journey of faith-inspired learning. This non-residential, free program will prepare lay and ordained professionals with the tools they need to energize and empower their congregations and communities. Learn from leading scholars, experts in the field, and mentors.

Apply by January 31, 2023

January 22, 2023
Religious Life Sunday!



Celebrating the many gifts of religious orders
in the Episcopal Church
Go to www.religiouslifesunday.org
for free print and video resources to share with your parish
on Religious Life Sunday.
The Episcopal Church Welcomes you. 

LEARN MORE

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

The last **General Convention** designated this Sunday as an opportunity for dioceses, congregations, and individuals to learn about the many religious orders and communities in the Episcopal Church. 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).

With Bishop Monnot's permission, he is seeking to gather and encourage those connected to religious orders in our diocese. You can also contact Fr. Goodrich for resources and ideas for observing religious life Sunday on January 22.

- **Joint Intercession List**
- **Mental Health Resources**
- **COVID-19 resources**
- **Faith in Action Facebook Page**
- **Episcopal Relief & Development**
- **The Partner's Path** (support for spouses of Episcopal clergy)

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