

Report of Bishop Doyle for 2012



I was recently rereading the book entitled *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. In its earliest pages a faithful, saint-like patriarch Father Zossima is dying of old age and offers a few words to the monks gathered around his bedside. One of the wisdom sayings he offers is, “Love God’s people... Have faith. Cling to the banner and raise it high.”¹ This is similar to the words of Paul in the letter to the Hebrews, “We are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith” (*Hebrews 10:39*). I believe this year we have endeavored to love God’s people, great has been our faithfulness, and we have raised the banner high.

Perhaps some of you may remember the hymn from the Episcopal Hymnal (1892, 1916, and 1940) entitled “Fling Out the Banner!” by George Washington Doane.

*Fling out the banner! Let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide;
The sun that lights its shining folds,
The cross, on which the Savior died.*

*Fling out the banner! Let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide,
Our glory only in the cross;
Our only hope, the Crucified!*

*Fling out the banner! Wide and high,
Seaward and skyward, let it shine
Nor skill, nor might, nor merit ours;
We conquer only in that sign.*



As I reflect on the past year, I am mindful of its myriad distractions of politics, conflict, and economic concerns both within and without the Church proper. Yet at the same time, I believe we have been faithful. We have been intent together to love God’s people. We have earnestly attempted to be a people in mission. We have believed in the transformation of God and the power of God’s love to transform our own lives and our own communities. I am as I write this clear that we have clung to the banner of Christ’s cross and there we have found grace, mercy, and kindness for our own souls and plenteous love for our neighbor.

It is clear in the Episcopal Diocese of Texas that God’s Mission has a church and we are his faithful people. Our mission is clear: to love the people of God and cling to the banner of God. This is our faith, this is our witness, and this is our time.



St Andrew's, Pearland, left their building on Sundays and held worship services and did mission work **all over the area** as a creative evangelism experiment for the church.

My friends, my brothers and sisters in Christ, it is a good time to be in Texas and in the Diocese of Texas.

It is worth remembering and to be reminded that the complexities of our mission context are manifold, and that clarity on every front and in every mission field is needed if we are to be successful in supporting and empowering disciples to do God's work in church and in the missionary fields of neighborhood and city. So it is that we have listened to God

in prayer and clarified our mission and values. We listened to one another in the town hall meetings of 2009. We prayed and discerned a clear and comprehensive strategic plan for the diocese in 2010. And we began to press our missionary efforts into that plan and find that, in 2012, we are making headway. The headway is marked, not with hopelessness about marginalization, but with a spirit of joy and excitement about our work. It is marked, not with a fear of failure, but with creativity, experimentation and a willingness to learn from our failure. Our common life is marked, not with suspicion, but with a sense of Christian fellowship for the common cause of God in Christ Jesus. Despite our variety of congregations and our diversity of cultures and practices, today we grow ever attentive to our personal discipleship as Christians who are unabashedly Episcopalian, and to our service of Christ through *evangelism* and *mission*.ⁱⁱ

The Diocese of Texas has clarity about its mission. We understand that God calls us to build the Kingdom of God together and we know we are empowered by the Holy Spirit in this life and in this ministry. This is experienced in our worship, witness, and ministry together.

In the Diocese of Texas we believe and act out of our continued understanding that we are united and reconciled not by our own efforts but by the work of Christ on the cross. I believe this was reaffirmed as we developed together a partnership that led through General Convention and offered a sense of *Unity in Mission* that binds us more strongly than our individual efforts or issue orientation.ⁱⁱⁱ We recognize that we are to redouble our efforts to pore over scripture and the apostles' teachings, we fellowship together, we pray together and for one another, and we worship and break bread together (*Acts 2:42*).

In the Diocese of Texas we fearlessly recognize the truth of *John 3:16*: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." And we proclaim *John 3:17* because we are Episcopalians and read the whole of any given text:

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” Jesus Christ enters the world to embrace the world. He enters the world in order to participate, to undo the powers of this world, by reorienting, refocusing, and drawing our eyes to the greater work of God.

We remember that people asked Jesus, “Why did you come into this world?” He answers clearly, “To glorify God.” This is his answer and he is our teacher in the life of holiness—in the divine economy. Jesus’ death on the cross purchases and redeems for us freedom from the bonds of self-service that we may follow him along the way, imitating our teacher, and undertaking the glorification of God.

Fling out the banner! For in this last year we have begun to feel free again to love, love God’s people, love one another, and cling to the banner of God’s reconciling mission.

We have begun to be prophetic in our witness to a world that seeks God in all the wrong places. We have begun to cast visions of how God is working in the world and how we can be partners with God in his vineyard. Even those who, after years of ministry, thought that God was finished with them have begun to dream again (*Joel 2:28 & Acts 2:17*). Together, we imagine ministry that transforms and restores. We imagine and have begun to practice and test what it means to be exceptional stewards. And we have a desire to achieve excellence in mission.



Episcopalians serve homeless men and women through our Lord of the Streets ministry in midtown Houston. Find out more [here](#).



Picture was taken by former Camp Allen senior staffer Cameron Spoor, now serving as a missionary in South Africa. Check out Cameron’s blog [here](#).

You told me that ministry that transforms and restores people was a primary result of our living life together. In our culture today we hear a lot about corporate identity. This individualization of corporations has created a situation in the West whereby many organizations have become the ends as opposed to the means. In fact, this is true in our diocesan offices and in our churches. Church—the organization and the building—is not the end of our mission work. Church, in all its forms, is a means to our individual and communal transformation.

We recognize that the organization’s primary purpose of existing is the glorification of God through the transformation of individual life. We know that the



Conspire, a Youth Conference of the Diocese of Texas hosted by St. Martins, Houston, offers a vision of an Episcopal Youth Community larger than any one parish.

most central theme of our mission work is first the changing of our lives and for those people in our care.

Always and everywhere, we as Episcopalians in the Diocese of Texas, see that the beating heart of this work is the love of God in Christ Jesus. As Archbishop William Temple once claimed, and as was adopted by our General Convention in 1973 as the definition of evangelism: We are about the work of presenting “Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in such ways that persons may be led to him as Savior, and follow him as Lord within the fellowship of his Church.” In the Diocese of Texas, we know that we are about this work of presenting and proclaiming the transformative power of Jesus to others, that they may be drawn into Christian community, and specifically into the

Christian community of the Episcopal Church. Transformation for us is unique and particularly focused.

This notion of our unique voice within God’s mission led me to write the book *Unabashedly Episcopalian*, published in 2012, which after only three months is already in its second printing. It is being used for discipleship classes, confirmation classes, and in book studies around the diocese. Copies have even made their way to South Africa where one of our young adults is doing mission work.

Because we are completely committed to this work we are at work in the lives of every community where an Episcopal Church is present. We are committed to the transformation of people’s lives in our churches AND in our neighborhoods, locally and abroad!

The Episcopal Diocese of Texas is changing the world around us in concert with Christ’s resurrection work. We understand our responsibility to be the geographical boundaries of the diocese first, then Texas, then the world around us. We understand the lives of the people in our churches and in our communities; in fact, the world must be better tomorrow because there are Episcopalians here today.

In 2010, after listening and planning, we recognized that in the Diocese of Texas we will know we are making headway on evangelism and God’s mission when we see that our common life is marked and characterized by:



The Diocese of Texas has provided over 22,500 nets to countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Our goal was a net for each household. In 2013 we aim to meet our goal by donating 5,200 more. Donate at [NetsforLife](#).

- Thriving biblical study and theological reflection
 - * We will see this in the daily life of the laity and clergy alike
- Work that changes people's lives by sharing the life-changing narrative of Jesus Christ
 - * We will experience this as communities realize their missionary potential given the individual missionary context
 - * We will experience a sense of fulfillment wherein leaders, clergy, and laity realize the potential of their missionary calling
- Health and growth
 - * We will grow and plant new churches—congregationally driven start-ups
 - * We will grow and plant new mission initiatives and find new ways to serve the community
- Financial Health
 - * Sustainable mission
 - * Entrepreneurial investment
 - * Strategic evangelism/mission-oriented spending
- Reflecting the world around us
 - * The people in our pews will resemble our Texas demographic reality



Members of Episcopal Churches all over Houston joined in a one-night event called Sharing Faith Dinners. The date for 2013 is May 16. Find out more [here](#).

In 2010 the Diocese, through common prayer and discernment, highlighted the elements by which these characteristics may be accomplished. We should look at 2012 through the eyes of certain mile markers that we have given ourselves: evangelism, growth, diversity, green fields, community impact, and stewardship.

EVANGELISM

We will know we are making progress when evangelism (the proclamation of the good news of salvation and the unique story of Jesus Christ) and caring for others become

the hallmarks of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas.

As you may remember in 2011, we held an evangelism conference at Camp Allen. Clergy and laity from the diocese gathered to pray and worship, to study scripture, and to learn new tools for the practice of evangelism. Some 168 people came away from the conference energized and eager to do evangelism in their own lives, and considering how they might encourage their fellow Episcopalians to do the same work.

This was followed by an innovative event we called Sharing Faith Dinners in 2012. More than 1,000 people across the Diocese of Texas came together to share the story of their faith over a meal and with prayer. We are doing this again on Thursday, May 16, and the Diocese of Texas will be joined by several other dioceses across the country.



Clergy and Laity gather for Newcomer Training in one of the many regional gatherings.

GROWTH

We will know we are making progress when we see more people connecting to Jesus Christ through our churches. We do believe that the average Sunday attendance will increase in the Diocese of Texas; and baptisms, confirmations, and receptions will increase as we do our evangelism work. But it will be the people's stories about how their lives were truly transformed by God in Christ through the Holy Spirit working through the Episcopal Church's evangelism efforts that will matter most of all. Where are we seeing progress on this mile marker?

In 2011 the Diocese of Texas grew. We grew in confirmations, adult baptisms, membership and in our Diocesan Average Sunday Attendance (ASA). According to an Episcopal News Service article we were one of 27 dioceses in the Episcopal Church that showed growth. However, growth is measured in repetition; therefore we will have to see what takes place in the statistics delivered at year's end in 2012.

We are expectant and hopeful. Our newcomer ministry program has been transforming our ministry of hospitality in every congregation that participates. This is a renewal of ministry centered on the idea that "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You." This is a brand, a promise, and the very

minimum of Christian hospitality that dates back to the earliest Christian community. I believe it is difficult to do anything else if the foundation of Christian hospitality is not the exemplar of our time together on Sunday morning. The training is adaptable but has several very important key elements that chart the course for excellent hospitality where Christians truly welcome individuals onto the campus and into worship in our congregations. You can learn more about [newcomer ministry training here](#). The diocese supports this ministry with grants from the [Episcopal Foundation of Texas](#) and the [Quin Foundation](#). What are the results?

A program-sized congregation in Houston—that only a few years ago was struggling to maintain their budget and facility—began the program in January of 2012. This congregation reports 142 new members, 41 new households. Two resource-sized congregations (one progressive and one conservative) report more than 182 new members, representing 65 new households during the same time period. A small transitional-size congregation in a small town 45 minutes from the center of Houston reports 60 new members (25 households) since January 2012. We continue to receive reports on other congregational efforts in this vital ministry. Small or large, the picture is clear. If we are serious about being a welcoming church, then hospitality is essential.

Of course, this strategic ministry is only part of being committed to loving the people who come through our doors and being willing to listen to their story. It must be matched by reinvigorated preaching, committed pastoral care that really connects with people, fellowship where people are involved and included. Most of all, it only works where, as one lay minister for newcomers put it, “hospitality is a core value.”

Our 2012 confirmation and baptism numbers are in the second volume of the Journal, but we are not only interested in numbers. We believe growth is evident in personal stories of transformation. I want to encourage you to see some of the stories we reported this past year through our social media stream and on our website. These stories illustrate the transformative growth of individuals and their ministries:

[Ecumenical Partnership Works on Building Youth Relationships](#)

[Tree of Gratitude Captures Artist Vision and Congregation’s Response](#)

[60 Years of Amazing Grace](#)

[Congregation Members Decide to Do Something About Sex Trafficking](#)

[Congregation Gets Out on Halloween](#)

[A Mission Trip to Arizona Changes More Lives](#)

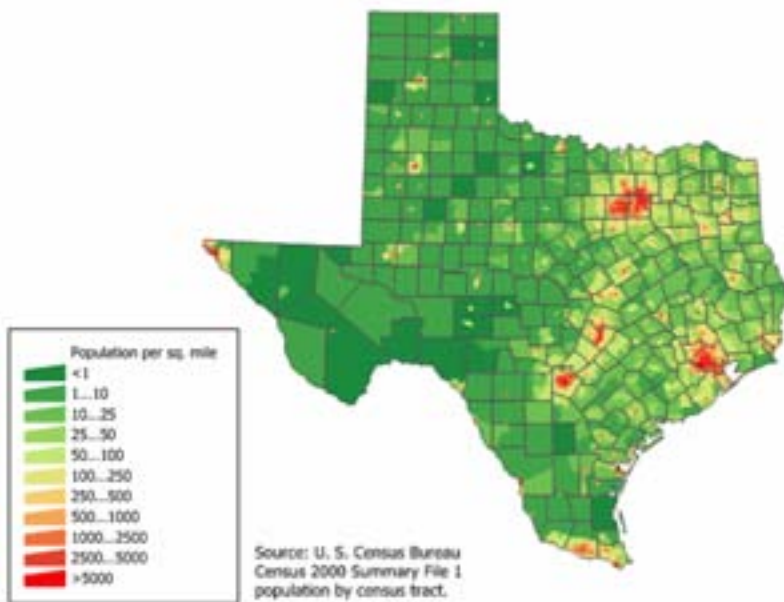
[Dancing for God](#)

Es Café Feeding Body and Soul

Youth Group Hosts Prom for Special Needs Young Adults

Texas Clergy Take to the Streets on Ash Wednesday

Missionpalooza Brings Help After Texas Wildfires



Population centers show major population densities lying within the Diocese of Texas geographical boundaries.

From mission to ministry, from congregational efforts to individual efforts, the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Texas has a story to tell. We are listening to the stories of our neighbors, and we are seeking to improve the communities around us. As bishop I see a surge in creative energy revealing the wonderful and good evangelism and mission that the parishioners of this diocese do every day.

The map shows the surge in growth in population in the Diocese of Texas. The highest growth areas today lie within the Diocese of Texas. Only continued

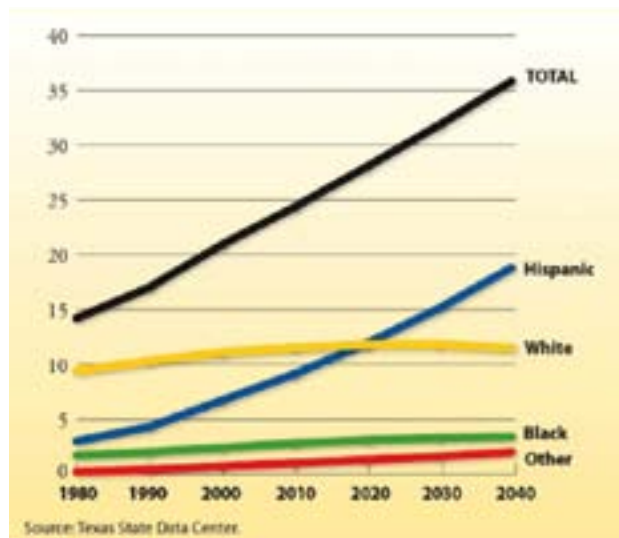
creative focus and energy in evangelism will keep up with the future population now making its way to Texas. Not since the first years of the Republic of Texas have the prospects for our diocese looked so promising. It will take the same evangelical and missionary spirit to do the work God has given us to do in this diocese. We are just now beginning to plant the seeds for this growth and it will be exciting to see the harvest.

DIVERSITY

In 2010 we said that we would know we are making progress when the median age of the membership of our church decreases and our leadership (clergy and laity) is younger and more diverse ethnically—reflecting our mission context. We will also know we are making strides towards our goals when we can see and testify that our mission is broad enough to disciple and form people of every language, ethnicity, and age. There are several key and essential ingredients to this mile marker. The first is to have clergy in congregations who reflect our particular missionary context in Texas. The second is to engage in conversations that help our existing congregations be aware of the multicultural ministry potential as well as the intercultural nature of parish ministry. Today, we need to take

advantage of changing demographic trends in shifting neighborhoods in order to be successful evangelists.

Regarding clergy serving in the Diocese of Texas, we have done well with age diversity. Today, we have a clergy mix that is more diverse. In 2003 we had less than 7% of our active clergy under the age of 40; today 18% are under 40, bringing our total for those under 50 to 41%. Women make up 31% of our active clergy, which is an increase from 18% in 2003. The ethnic diversity of our clergy has grown by 1% in the last four years. However, that means only 4% of clergy active in the diocese would claim a different ethnicity or national background. Although we may be proud of moving our median age towards the target median age of our broader context in the diocese, we are not changing the ethnic diversity of our leadership at the same rate. Diverse leadership is an essential key to diverse and thriving multicultural congregations. We have a long way to go on this front and it will take parish leadership and diocesan leadership to help us reach this goal. As we know from the recent census data, the Diocese of Texas looks something like the graph. A transformation of our culture will be required to achieve these metrics. This will only come with discernment and prayer.



We have a long way to go in order for our leadership to reflect the growing diversity we find in Texas.

A very good [September Episcopalian Dialog Magazine](#) was published this year on this very topic. Many readers read the cover story on Demographics, learning about the change occurring in the lifetime of our ministry. This magazine **illustrated both the changing nature of the state** within which we live and offered a vision for how we are called to be at work inviting and welcoming a great diversity of individuals into our congregations.

We know in the Diocese of Texas that clergy leadership is not the only way to achieve these goals. We understand and we believe that it is incumbent on your diocesan office to provide various multi-, inter-, and cross-cultural resources to congregations, communities, and other groups. Multiculturalism is the appreciation, acceptance and promotion of many different cultures. Evangelism and mission requires an intercultural competence. Intercultural competence refers to the ability to successfully communicate with people outside our own culture. This is an essential tool for growth. Therefore, we are working as a diocesan family to learn more about how to be better hosts and better communicators across a variety of multicultural experiences. We want to do more than value other peoples' cultures; we want to communicate, invite, and make a home for a diversity of God's people—those now living our neighborhoods and those who have not yet arrived.

To this end, your staff member Denise Trevino has personally met with more than 100 people, including clergy, laity, board members and teachers, to learn about their cross-cultural challenges,



Clergy Conference 2012. In 2003 less than 7% of our clergy were under 50; today 41% are under 50.

needs and desires for their communities. Our goal in 2012 has been to reassess or confirm that what we currently offer is still needed and effective, as well as to begin imagining and visioning what the Diocese might look like 10-20 years down the road from a cross-cultural perspective.

To this end we will continue to do Fertile Ground workshops in order to give clergy, vestry, laity and others more effective tools to become more culturally competent leaders. In the last 10 months, over 250 people have been trained. Two

additional trainers will be ready in early 2013, allowing us to better meet the demands of this workshop. Training youth and young adult leaders in cultural competency has been identified as one of the key missing pieces to meeting this mark of ministry. This year, a separate workshop will be offered to train local trainers, further growing our ability to welcome all.

We have also undertaken a variety of other tasks to help disseminate and continue to offer new and updated materials to those interested.

- In May of 2012 we hosted an “**Emerging Conversations in a Multicultural World**” workshop at Palmer, Houston. Over 90 people attended the workshop conducted by **the Rev. Eric Law**. It was a huge success.
- Translations: various Episcopal Church materials either have been or are in the process of being translated into Spanish to be made available on the diocesan website in 2013. Most of these items are things that are not available from Church Publishing or The Episcopal Church Center.
- An Intercultural Youth Retreat was held in January. We have begun to work with our youth to give them the skills they need to be culturally competent—this is a clear example of where Matt Blank and Denise’s work will align. The retreat is specifically designed for youth between the ages of 14–16 who represent a wide diversity in the Diocese. The retreat was designed to provide them a respectful space to learn about one another’s cultures and to begin forming more authentic cross-cultural experiences and friendships within a church context. We want these same youth to invite one



St. Mark's Between-the-Bayous has been meeting for two years now.

or two friends to attend in 2014, and so on and so on, building on our youth numbers as they grow into young adults.

This ongoing training will be an essential ingredient to preparing to be missionaries in a diverse community. We have also made a decision to review the changing demographics in areas during the transition from rector to rector and to help congregations call individuals with special skills, language, or background that may make them an effective leader in a quickly changing environment. We have never done this before. Nevertheless, several transitions in 2012 have offered opportunities for congregations to renew their evangelism work and jumpstart their efforts.

GREENFIELD EVANGELISM

Progress in the area of Greenfield evangelism means existing congregations take the initiative for planting new congregations and communities. We will know we are making progress when across the Diocese there are many new communities (fellowships, missions, parishes) annually. We will know when our congregations and the Diocese, where appropriate, willingly fund and support emerging and new initiatives. We will know we are making progress when we see our congregations throughout the diocese reaching out with new ways to improve the lives of their neighbors—in body, mind, and spirit.

This has been an exciting year in the area of Greenfield evangelism. A year ago **St. Mark's, Bellaire**, started a new emerging church plant called **Between-the-Bayous** off of Washington Ave; and we had a few bible studies meeting in pubs. This year, All Saints' in Austin is sponsoring **The Front Porch**, an emerging community in Austin. The Seminary of the Southwest has sponsored a small but growing house church in Austin called **St. Basil's**. We have also seen congregations begin bible studies in a local coffee shop and in homes. This year, the Greenfield Commission will begin to publish and make available resources to leaders who want to plant new groups and communities that meet outside of the church. Furthermore, the diocesan staff has been in conversation with eight different congregations to dream about starting a new mother/daughter or second-campus style congregation. The conversation with one congregation is now in the development stage for south Houston. It will be exciting to report back on this in 2013.



The Front Porch, Austin, began worship in 2012



St. Basil's is an Episcopal house church community in Austin.

Last year I reported on how the three financial institutions of the diocese (Episcopal Foundation of Texas (EFT), Quin Foundation, and Church Corporation) were aligning themselves for new ministry. Today this work has spawned a growth in Strategic Mission Grants around newcomer ministry and restarting congregations. In 2013 we will be looking for partners to begin to seed more Greenfield opportunities. However, one of the key stumbling blocks is determining where we need to start congregations, and the second challenge is developing a strategy that gets a new congregation on the ground quickly. To that end we have appointed a task force to analyze immediate church planting areas so that the Strategic Mission Grant team, made up of members of EFT and Quin Foundation, can begin to work collaboratively with congregations to begin new work. We have found that these are multiyear conversations. In 2013 the task force will evolve into a collaborative working group that will begin to work with the financial foundations to buy property for future congregations.

This is all very exciting, but we still have a problem with getting a new congregation started. It just takes too long. In the secular world property is purchased, and a building is put on the property while a management team is already being trained. Speed is essential in the corporate world, and we need to understand this business concept and tighten up our delivery of a new church on the right property, with the right team as quickly as possible. Doing so lowers the overall cost of new development. In the 1980s and 1990s we thought big, and we could afford to do so. Today we need to think big and we need to be good stewards of our time or money to be efficient. So we are seeding on the Greenfield



Today St. Julian's is located in the midst of its mission field in northwest Austin.

conversations, we are aligning financial resources to partner with congregations to plant new worship sites, and we are developing a realty group to help target geographical regions with the most possibility. So we get the region, we get the partnerships, we get the new team ready, and we finance them—but we have not solved the reality of placing a congregation on their land quickly. Without a new model of thinking, we would still have to wait until a congregation was large enough to afford a piece of property. Then they would still



New Church Concept for Church Plants.

be burdened with debt.

Today, thanks to the work of the finance office, we have two new models. The first model Bob Biehl shared with me as we drove around the diocese when I was Canon to the Ordinary. He and I believed we had to solve this issue of time, property cost, and congregational debt. His idea was to do targeted lease development. Without paying for the dirt, a congregation could get into the right area, own a piece of property, develop it out and begin to worship quickly. We saw an opening in 2012 and we moved St. Julian's, Austin, into a new worship space. They are where they want to be in their mission field, they are building equity, and they have designated space. It still took us too long, but we are ready to replicate the model in 2013 as soon as we have a new congregation ready to launch.

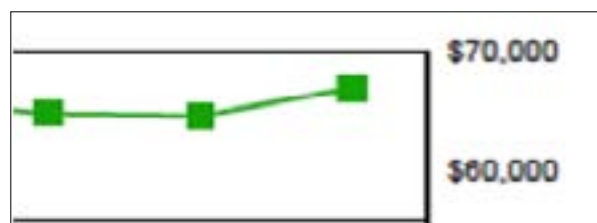
The second idea was floated while I was working with Joel Shannon in early 2003. He believed we needed to get on the property quickly and we need a standard building. As I have thought about the project over the years, I have refined my approach a little. We needed something that looks like a church. People looking for the Episcopal Church want to worship in something that looks like a church; very few people want to worship in cafeterias, schools or funeral homes. (Though we have begun congregations in each; and even a bait shop!) So, the building needs to look like a church. Second it needs to be standard: standard windows, doors, toilets, etc. No specialty requests. That gets expensive quickly. Three: It needs to be movable. Over the years I have found that we don't always have the congregation in the right place; and sometimes when it is the right place, it isn't built on the right place on the property. Fourth, the building needs to be pretty and it needs to last. Fifth, it needs to seat at least 160 people and have space for greeting, vesting, and altar guild. Lastly, the project (with HVAC) needs to come in at a million dollars. That number reflects a \$2.5 million savings compared to everything else we have built recently!

Thanks to Bob Biehl and David Fisher, we found Logic Tabola, who is an architect we have known for a long time. He has done some work that I like and thought was beautiful. Logic did his homework. He talked with house movers and he studied the oldest missionary churches. Christ Church in Matagorda, our mother Church, was one he studied. He met with me a few months after the project began and offered me a design that met all of the criteria. Praise God! I have never hugged an architect before, but I did that day. His design, with HVAC, came in at \$400,000 dollars, which was less than half the cost of the original dream I imagined. We took it to the Church Corporation immediately and they paid for the engineering and drawings. In 2013 we will have the final piece of the puzzle finished for our new strategic church planting initiative. A Church building that represents the Episcopal Church well and can get us on the property six months after we purchase. This places the missioner on property, in the mission field, in an Episcopal Church building with its doors open for worship almost 5 years sooner than we have been able to accomplish in the last three decades. We believe with the money and partnerships we could build 10 of these right now; some on property where existing congregations literally have outgrown their space.

All that remains is for us to begin raising the dollars to further develop these new congregations. As the population in the Diocese of Texas is expected to continue to grow over the next two decades we have an opportunity to embrace the challenges of our mission field. We have an opportunity to see that the master gardener is already seeding the fields for the harvest. It is our responsibility in our age to raise the banner high, to raise up missionaries, to fund their work, and to plant new congregations. It is clear to me that we could successfully begin 20 new congregations, communities, and fellowships in the next five years if we had the dollars to embrace the work. To meet this missionary challenge I believe we are ready and our granting process and leadership models will get us going. However, in order to leap into this new era of mission we are going to need a foundation with a minimum of \$50 million devoted to church planting; only then can we begin to meet the opportunity that God has given us. I believe if we continue to be faithful, set our course with clarity, and are deliberate in discernment and prayer, then we will also begin to understand how our stewardship is to lead us into this new missionary era.

STEWARDSHIP

We will know we are making progress when all our organizations are involved in healthy stewardship for the mission of Christ and his kingdom. We will know when we have an intentional diocesan-wide planned giving ministry focused on helping the local congregation or ministry reach its long term visionary goals. In 2012 the diocese experienced its first local stewardship conference, sponsored by **Emmanuel, Houston**. It had as many people as the last decade of conferences reported. Teams from all over the southern portion of the diocese attended, led by the laity and supported by the diocesan staff. It was a great success. We are hoping to do more of these in the future; many teams from the Galveston and Southeastern Convocations were interested in hosting their own conference. We hope 2013 will see more of these spread to Austin, the Northwest, and the Northeast. The diocesan staff is ready to help plan and organize these conferences. I am personally grateful to the lay leadership at Emmanuel who got our first one off the ground and showed us how to do it well.



This is the data from the last three years of our stewardship. Our average pledge has increased from \$3,525 to \$3,679. Stewardship is expected to trend above \$70 million in 2012.

Stewardship is an essential ingredient to the health and wellbeing of the diocese and those dollars that we see increasing have to stay at the congregational level. That is why this year we will again see an almost flat increase in your diocesan budget. Our management of the health insurance also has meant that we have outperformed the rest of the country in dealing with rising insurance costs. Our cost increases have been minimal compared to the 17-and 18-percent increases we are seeing elsewhere. This is good news because keeping as much money at the local level increases the amount that can be spent on evangelism and mission. Along with exceptional budgetary management by your diocesan staff and the finance committee we also must see that the stewardship of the foundations (EFT, Quin,



El Buen received a grant from LCRA to go off the grid with sun panels. El Buen has a history of building community collaboration between foundations like EFT, the Austin Churches, and local community donors.

and Church Corp) also is directed at supporting local congregational efforts. So our strategic plan envisions that we will know we are making progress when the work of the foundations of the Diocese is clearly and strategically focused on its mission. EFT is clearly targeted at funding our institutions: **El Buen Samaritano, St. Vincent's, Camp Allen, St. James' House** and **Seminary of the Southwest**. EFT is also a partner in the Strategic Mission Grants along with Quin, which is working to restart congregations, purchase new properties, and build new churches. And Church Corp is putting its resources together towards planned

giving. We believe we will know we are making progress when we have foundation funds dedicated to church leadership, church planting, and health. In 2009 we launched the Wimberly Leadership Fund which today we use to fund leadership training opportunities. In 2012, the Great Commission Fund grew, thanks to generous benefactors. Two of the three are being built and are growing in order to fund tomorrow's leaders and church planters.

Ultimately, these funds and our growth in stewardship will lead to the birth of more churches, emerging communities, schools, clinics, outreach ministries and community centers focused on the health and well-being of our neighborhoods. In order to accomplish this work we will need not only strong stewardship at the congregational level, but we will need a planned giving ministry that helps every congregation provide for its future ministry. The Church Corp spent 2012 studying the best practices of this program and in 2013 a team of leaders will be selected to work on a regional plan of coaching to bring the very best expertise in estate planning to the congregational level. Our goal at Church Corp and at your diocesan office is to provide the very best resources to support and encourage healthy congregations. For more information on this program contact **David Fisher** at EDOT Financial Services.

THE BASICS

Basic ingredients are needed to reach each of these goals. If we are to become the diocese intended by God, where our ministry transforms and restores, where we exhibit exceptional stewardship, and where excellence is the quality of our mission, then there are three essential pillars of the ministry in the Diocese of Texas: formation, leadership and connection.

FORMATION

We form people to know their vocation and to act out of a centered Anglican perspective that is uniquely and unabashedly Episcopalian. We form people who know and understand God as Trinity. We form people who know and practice a healthy spiritual life. We form people who invite, welcome, and build community. We form people who care about the world in which they live and are integrated into the life of their community. We form people who make a difference. Since the re-creation of the office of formation in Houston, our team has been on the road and improving our field presence and teaching/coaching load in order to achieve these goals.



Missionpalooza team went to Bastrop to rebuild homes.

Regarding our formation work dedicated to youth and families, we have seen growth in numbers, depth of relationship and a growth in opportunities. Here are a few of the highlights:

- **Missionpalooza:** This year's annual diocesan youth mission trip included 17 congregations and 170 participants. The group served the Bastrop County residents who suffered loss from the 2011 wildfires.
- CLC (Christian Leadership Conference), cancelled in 2011, was redesigned in 2012 as "Convergence" with 70 participants.
- **Youth events and retreats** – the age ranges for the Youth Encounter Spirit (Y.E.S.) and Happening retreats changed to include 6th-8th and 9th-12th grade youth respectively. We are also rewriting some of the material. All of the youth programs have seen growth in participation as well as involvement over a wider range of congregations. Every event in 2012 had full participation.
- **College retreat:** 45 participants (this is Vocare revamped). In 2011 we almost cancelled the program.
- Youth ministry development: this is our first focused attempt to help churches build sustainable youth ministries where they are. Our goal is to provide congregations with the necessary support to establish and build successful, sustainable youth ministries. The support provided includes youth ministry assessments, coaching, mentorship, training and continuing education and involves the rector, the developer the youth minister, the vestry/youth commission, the youth, parents, and even brings in group leaders/coaches.

Regarding formation conferences and support, Jamie Martin-Currie has done a phenomenal job serving as the primary conference coordinator for our team. *Forming Disciples Conference* in

March had more than 150 participants. *Forming Disciples Road Conference* in September (Austin and Houston) had over 100 participants. Jamie also does amazing work equipping our directors of religious education, working with rectors, and connecting parishes with the resources they need. When we hired her she was a consultant for the national church and still has a strong national presence. Jamie does an excellent job in connecting congregations (in this diocese and beyond) to resources, brainstorming ideas, and networking them with others who are involved in the ministry of formation.

The strategic plan is working in the area of formation as it guides for improved networking. As an example, we can take a sampling of the “Town Hall Goals” that were set in 2008. Today, we are making headway.

1. Develop a clear definition of “multicultural”: We have intentionally changed how we define our work from multicultural to “intercultural development.” Multiculturalism is the appreciation, acceptance and promotion of multiple cultures. Intercultural competence refers to the ability to successfully communicate with people outside our own culture.
2. Provide resources for churches that are transitioning from primarily Anglo to Hispanic: Denise has spent the last year working on a new workshop and materials that will be available to churches by spring 2013 on how to start a Hispanic ministry. The workshop teaches the differences in how to minister to recent immigrants, and second-, third-, and fourth-generation Hispanics and Latinos.
3. Provide educational opportunities that facilitate understanding between different cultures: We have tripled the number of The Fertile Ground workshops and have trained two others to begin teaching workshop in 2013.
4. Train more youth in leadership skills through diocesan programs (retreats, CLC & Council): We have completely revamped CLC into Convergence where youth have leadership roles. Also, more youth are filtering through Happening and YES, equipped to lead other youth. Convergence, Happening and YES all include staff leadership training prior to the weekend.
5. Revamp Vocaré to serve as an effective discernment retreat for college students: We completely revamped Vocaré into the “College Retreat” where we had 50 college students from across the Diocese present.



YES: Youth Encounter Spirit

The achievement in this pillar is outstanding and they have accomplished so much that I have asked Canon John Newton to review the town hall meeting notes and update their goals for 2013 and 2014. We must continue to challenge ourselves and ask: How do we encourage forming disciples at the diocesan level? What is the place of conferences, vision-casting, individual meetings, web communication, curricula, commissions, convocational groups, preaching in churches, new initiatives, trainings, etc. in this work? These are all seeds. Are we sowing the right ones? Are we missing areas? Are we sowing broad enough and with enough intention?

In the end our solid focus upon formation is strengthening our congregations to do this work. The fact that the formation team is constantly on the road means that we no longer have island-like congregations, but we have a network of resourced parishes across the Diocese.



LEADERSHIP

Leadership is the second pillar and ingredient to our overall achievement of ministry goals. We form people to understand their unique leadership vocation within God's creation. We form leaders who are clergy and who are laity and we do this not by forcing them into a mold we have created but by helping them reach their God-given leadership potential.

We help to form leaders who can:

- Identify the adaptive challenge and to see a creative opportunity.
- Keep the level of change within a tolerable range for doing transformative work.
- Focus attention on ripening issues and not on anxiety or stress-inducing distractions.
- Give the work to people—we are a community of the baptized; but at a rate where all can participate and be successful
- Protect the healthy voices of leadership

We help God to form leaders to make a difference in God's world for God's people, in their

congregation and in their community. Certainly we can see that we are doing this in any variety of ways. In our newcomer work, in our Iona initiative (reported on by Bishop Dena Harrison), and through stewardship and the work we are doing in evangelism. Here, though, I want to specifically talk about the work we are doing with the clergy and vestry leadership of the diocese.

In 2012 we continued to grow our clergy groups who have common interests and contextual challenges: church planting, restart, and Hispanic ministry. We have worked not so much as conveners but we are trying to take the role of collaborator and coach. We are allowing our agendas to take second seat while encouraging the voices of these leaders to open up new conversations and challenge us to greater common learning. The support of these new leaders for one another has been outstanding and I am excited because in 2013 we will begin to expand these groups as we fine-tune their work.

In 2012 we also began to work on the next generation of vestry/warden conferences. The success of the local stewardship conference has inspired us to rethink this model and begin to look towards conferences whose topics will be set by the local leadership. These will maintain their focus on best practices to help the leadership of the congregations develop a strong cadre of leaders to work with the clergy and congregation on emerging challenges and goal achievement.

The primary hallmark of 2012 in the evangelism and leadership area of our common work is definitely in congregational visitations. In 2012 we reoriented staff time to focus on being in the congregations, working with leaders, getting on the phone and checking in. This new focus on visitation, coaching, and support means that Mary MacGregor and Bob Schorr have marked a year that will see more than 100 congregational touches, and countless hours of road and phone time, as each of them has been more available to help clergy and laity at the grassroots level. I believe we will see an even greater shift as we continue to build internal congregational leadership through innovative, local, and personalized coaching.

CONNECTION

Our communications strategy continues to set the bar high. We have worked to network and connect congregations and the wider church. Carol Barnwell, LaShane Eaglin and Luke Blount continue to work with congregations, clergy, and laity to set up local strategic communications.

- They have gone on-site to help large and small congregations understand the changing nature of social networking and the importance of an effective web presence.
- When they have discovered new resources, they have reported them out so that the whole diocese can participate in shared wisdom.
- They have networked local stories sharing ministries that work with all the congregations of the diocese.

- Their networking has allowed us to work with those in need, and to cheer and celebrate with those who have worked hard and accomplished much.
- They have produced videos and presentations for ministries and more importantly have helped to coach local parish communication teams in the art of navigating a new electronic age.



Our communication office has worked to train leaders to be communicators. Find an article on how to share what is going on in your congregation through Facebook advertising [here](#).

I have highlighted a few of the excellent pieces that they have done already. They have made it easy to get regular news. All you have to do to receive a weekly newsletter is [click here](#). You can check out the overall communication page by [clicking here](#). It includes parish, diocesan, church-wide and international news stories in both video and written formats. I would like to highlight for you a few pieces that are of particular importance in illustrating the communication of excellence in media skills. Here are a few excellent stories; just click on the link:

[William Temple Envisions New Ministry With A Move](#)

[Loving Your Neighbor Makes Headlines](#)

[East Texas Judicial Workers Come Together for Service](#)

[Small Local Church Invite Local Outreach to Join Hands](#)

[Two Youth Groups Learn About Black History](#)

[A Love For A Parent Leads To Ministry](#)

Your communication office also has been updating us on how to do our work better, with more efficiency, and with an eye to creating more readership across all media networks. Their media room helps you find the resources you need for news, stories and websites. Check out the following links: [audio & video](#), [bios & photos](#), [photo galleries](#), [image shop](#) and [press releases](#). Further help can be found on the [communications blog](#). It has articles on style guides, tips on shooting video, web conferencing rules to live by, and Gmail and Google tips. This office is doing a great job at connecting us.

Additionally, the other offices (finance to formation) are all beginning to use the services as well. This means that the whole diocese is beginning to move towards the goal of being an interconnected body where communication and news travels fast and thoroughly throughout the organization.

A lot of work has also been done on our internal computer systems. I reported last year that we would be undertaking the next phase of our document and information databases. We have almost

fully completed the SRS project, where we are streamlining the Safeguarding document management. The SRS goal is to make the Safeguarding process easier for our parishes while ensuring the integrity of our records and process over the long-term. The second project is the **DORIS project**, which will help us to better track our communication network and addresses. With DORIS we are creating a resource for the Diocese to use in expanding the use of electronic communication. It also marks a major improvement that we are moving towards one common database for the whole diocesan office. When I began work in the Diocese of Texas in 2003, we had over 18 separate databases. In 2012 we have finally made it to one. We would not have gotten here with either SRS or DORIS without Cecilia Smith and Shirley Platt. They have done an excellent job!

ST. LUKE'S HEALTH SYSTEM

The Diocese of Texas is privileged to have **St. Luke's Episcopal Health System** as part of its missionary institutions. St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital is one of the U.S. News and World Report's **best hospitals in America**, and today it has 10 specialties that rank in the very best across the U.S. It has launched the **St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities**, which has in a very short time given away more than \$85 million, most to Episcopal Diocese of Texas institutions. Bishop Harrison served as the Chair of the Board over the last few years, and this has allowed me to get to know the organization and act as the Chair of the Charities Board. I have served on the Board of St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital at the Texas Medical Center and have been a member of the Joint Conference Committee.

In these roles, and as I have met regularly with Bishop Harrison and Chester Jones, The Executive Chair, it has become clear to me that there is an incredible amount of change the System faces as we try to adapt to external pressures, both in the midst of health care reform (which has been developing over the last decade) and the local competitive market. Furthermore, it has become clear that there is a need for scale and collaboration.

Last fall, the *Houston Chronicle* published an article regarding the possible sale of the hospital. Because of this particular article and other rumors, I feel moved to respond in this address.

As background, it became very clear in the early spring of 2012 that it was time to make a move of some nature. It was time to build a new hospital in the medical center. It was time to figure out how we would achieve the quality care matrix needed. It was time to figure out the collaborative and scale questions before us. Every organization of size must do this on a regular basis and the St. Luke's Episcopal Health System is no different. In fact, we have done this at least six times in the last 15 years. I encouraged the System Board to be proactive. A special committee was created to begin to study the changing health landscape. While not formally a member of that committee, I participated fully in terms of listening, asking questions and meeting regularly with the chair of the committee, Bob Blakely, and key individuals involved in its work. At every point Bishop Harrison and I have been on the same page.

My job has always been, and continues to be, that of a moral and ethical voice at the table to ask “Are we taking proper care of our patients?” and “are we taking care of the people that do this work?” That’s the proof of our faithful, loving care. I do feel that we have a responsibility to our “family,” which includes the individuals who manage and staff St. Luke’s as part of our ministry. At the same time I am responsible, ultimately, for ensuring that God’s mission and God’s Church is doing the work it needs to be doing. I recognize that this process has an impact on each of you in the congregations I represent as it does for the doctors, nurses, administration, and service men and women who work so hard on our behalf and on behalf of God’s mission that we oversee.



Nurse Exchange Program Members at St. Luke’s, Medical Center.

Throughout the process we have constantly asked ourselves when the right time is to bring different stakeholders into the conversation. The Diocese of Texas is part of that stakeholder conversation to be sure. Regardless of what the future may look like for St. Luke’s, we have to be faithful to our mission. And I promise you that the very best board members have been recruited and appointed over the years. These are some of the finest men and women I know. I am working with them as is Bishop Harrison, who is doing an excellent job. As we evaluate the way forward I will most likely invite others in the Diocese to help me assure adequate representation in decisions. The Episcopal Diocese of Texas remains dedicated to the ministry of health and healing and views the current committee work, chaired by Leonard Tallerine, as an introspective evaluation and discernment process of how we can best fulfill that ministry.

There are rumors afloat all around us. Regardless of who professes to have definitive knowledge of the discernment process at St. Luke’s, no decisions have been made yet and no choices have been narrowed down. This evaluation process could conclude that the independent course is still best for the Diocese and its people, or it could conclude that a sale, merger or joint venture is the best course. I am working with Bishop Harrison and the Board to ensure a strong vision for health ministry well into the future. I believe that the Episcopal Diocese of Texas has great confidence in the leadership and managerial abilities of the board, of David Fine and his executive team, and the leadership of the System. I also know we have a commitment from every level of the organization to keep the many and diverse aspects of the System’s clinical and business operations functioning successfully, notwithstanding the added complexity resulting from uncertainty. The Diocese should be proud of the System and her leadership. They have and continue to represent us well. As decisions are made, I can assure you that I will keep the Council fully informed.

LOOKING BACK

As I look back, I pause and realize that together we have already done a great amount of work in the diocese. It is hard to believe that we are beginning our fifth year together! We have accomplished a lot.

1. Further developed sound financial structures
 - A. Clean audits
 - B. No use of our line of credit in three years
 - C. Decrease in foundation funding for diocesan budget
 - D. Lean diocesan budget—having managed the economic downturn and now are reshaping for our budget for future congregational and mission growth.
 - E. A budget that is beginning to be strategically formed
 - F. A missionary asking that gives congregations credit for local missionary dollars spent\
2. Strong multicultural and diverse development strategies
3. Strong leadership recruitment among the laity and clergy alike
4. Increased lay participation throughout the varying processes of church leadership
5. Increased participation and shared Episcopal leadership of the institutions of the diocese
6. A stronger and healthier regional ministry by the bishops
7. A strategic plan with accountable metrics and goals
8. A staff that is reorienting around common goals
 - A. More hands-on work
 - B. More visitations into congregations
9. Launched the Greenfield Commission to support creative church plants
10. Began funding of the Great Commission Fund—to start churches
11. A visitation schedule supportive of growing congregations that gets bishops to all the congregations on a regular basis



Bishop Jeff and Susan Fisher join their sons for a standing ovation, **celebrating his new ministry** as Bishop Suffragan of Texas.

12. We are managing major transitions in the diocesan staff and in committee leadership roles smoothly
13. Healthy relationships with primates/bishops and dioceses/provinces of the Anglican Communion
14. Healthy relationships with The Episcopal Church leadership and House of Bishops
15. Blossoming ecumenical and interreligious relationships and peer friendships among other judicatory leaders in Texas
16. Growth in global missionary partnerships
17. A strategic communication plan for evangelism, mission, and networking the diocese
18. Recasting the role of bishop diocesan as chief
 - A. Preacher
 - B. Teacher
 - C. Communicator
19. Brought together a diverse group of leaders to build unity around mission instead of division
20. A successful bishop suffragan election



Bishop Harrison with our new friend Bishop Griselda, Bishop Diocesan of Cuba.

LOOKING FORWARD

What will be the primary goals of my Episcopal leadership in 2013? There are numerous pieces to this but they are worth a brief look here.

1. I want to challenge the people of the diocese to increasing biblical engagement by clergy and laity and to commit with me to reading the **Bible in a year**.
2. To see the real estate task force up and running and partially funded to begin its work.
3. To see the *planned giving* initiative launched.
4. To work with emerging leaders to think about the very front line of evangelism: invitation.
5. To see our formation office has a greater East Texas presence.
6. To see us meet our goal of 27,700 nets.

7. To see the work of deacons include helping laity leave the church and meet their neighbors and to listen and learn about the needs of their neighborhood.
8. To see the Episcopal Service Corps officially launched in the Diocese of Texas.
9. To see more congregations and communities launched doubling our efforts.
10. To see the “new rector” ministry come online; where we coach and help new rectors in their transition.
11. To see the new LOGOS video project launch. This is the TED style video channel we are launching across the country and based in Texas. The videos will be about mission and leadership, best practices, and stories shared to support and inspire ministry.
12. To lead the St. Luke’s Health System through this time of discernment.
13. To be of use to the Structure Committee of the Episcopal Church.
14. To hold a successful conference on formation, evangelism and stewardship—The Conference.
15. To end the fifth year of my episcopate and our common ministry by looking back at everything we have accomplished, and by taking some time to reflect with you in prayer about our future. Then, to launch a new “town hall” series where I visit with every region of the diocese to discern the next five years.



With the Rev. Susan Kennard at the groundbreaking of Trinity Gym given by the Moody family in Galveston. Don’t worry; they didn’t let us operate heavy machinery!

There are so many people who make this work happen. I cannot possibly name them all. From Archdeacon Oechsel to Canon Newton, from Bob Biehl to Canon Normand, I feel blessed. We in the Diocese of Texas are truly blessed with a very fine diocesan team. There are many who go unnamed, but who I pray for daily because I am grateful for their partnership. I believe you have given and provided two fine bishop suffragans in Bishop Harrison and Bishop Fisher. I truly love my work with them. As you all know, I could not do this work without my own staff, those who help to make the diocese run smoothly. Canon John Logan as secretary serves as a counsel and great aid to me as well. Let me also pause to say that the Bishop Diocesan office staff made up of Alice Kerr, Rebecca Sweitzer, and Sarah Meyers are my very real associates in my endeavors. Stephanie Taylor, most of all, is someone upon whom I trust, can count on, and I believe the clergy and parish leaders find to be truly helpful in our communication and scheduling. We thank God for this team, named and unnamed, who join with all the clergy and laity of this diocese to carry out the work of God given to us.

I can imagine no other ministry, no other mission, no other group of people that I would rather serve with. The Diocese of Texas is a blessing in my life and I love her dearly. Your support of my family and me this year as we lost Charles Doyle (my father) and Fred Pearson (JoAnne's father) was nothing less than an outpouring of love for which our whole family is grateful. Working with you is grace indeed. And I am as excited about our future as I have ever been; if not more so. Indeed there can be nothing better than to go through life with you, the good people of the Diocese of Texas, loving God's people, having faith, and clinging to the banner of God and raising it high.

We are off to a great beginning. As I have repeatedly said, "Now we set our face firmly towards the vision God has for us of being a missionary diocese. We cannot measure our success based upon accomplishments or numbers. Our success will be measured in the course of time as people look back at us and see people who were willing to pick up the banner of God in Christ Jesus and the Episcopal Church and carry it forward. We will be measured by our own transformation in the process of our pilgrim journey and by the stories shared by those for whom life was changed by meeting us along the way."

*Fling out the banner! Let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide;
The sun that lights its shining folds,
The cross, on which the Savior died.*

*Fling out the banner! Let it float
Skyward and seaward, high and wide,
Our glory only in the cross;
Our only hope, the Crucified!*

*Fling out the banner! Wide and high,
Seaward and skyward, let it shine
Nor skill, nor might, nor merit ours;
We conquer only in that sign.*

ⁱ Trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Macmillan Co, 1912) 170.

ⁱⁱ Evangelism is the spreading of the Good News of the Gospel of Salvation through a unique witness to God in Christ Jesus through the work of invitation, hospitality, and discipleship, which leads to baptism and confirmation in the Episcopal fellowship of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. (*Matthew 28:16–20*) Mission is the spreading of the Gospel of Good News by practicing works of mercy, justice, and love. (*Micah 6:8 & Matthew 25:31–46*)

ⁱⁱⁱ You may find the paper and resources regarding Unity in Mission on our [epicenter website](#). The Unity in Mission document now has a study guide to help individuals and congregations think about the nature of our work of common mission in an era marked by division. Over 17 other dioceses have engaged the work we have done; in fact, it has been circulated and used globally. The work of the task force was also recognized in [Time magazine](#) by [Jon Meacham](#).