



DIOCESAN E-NEWS

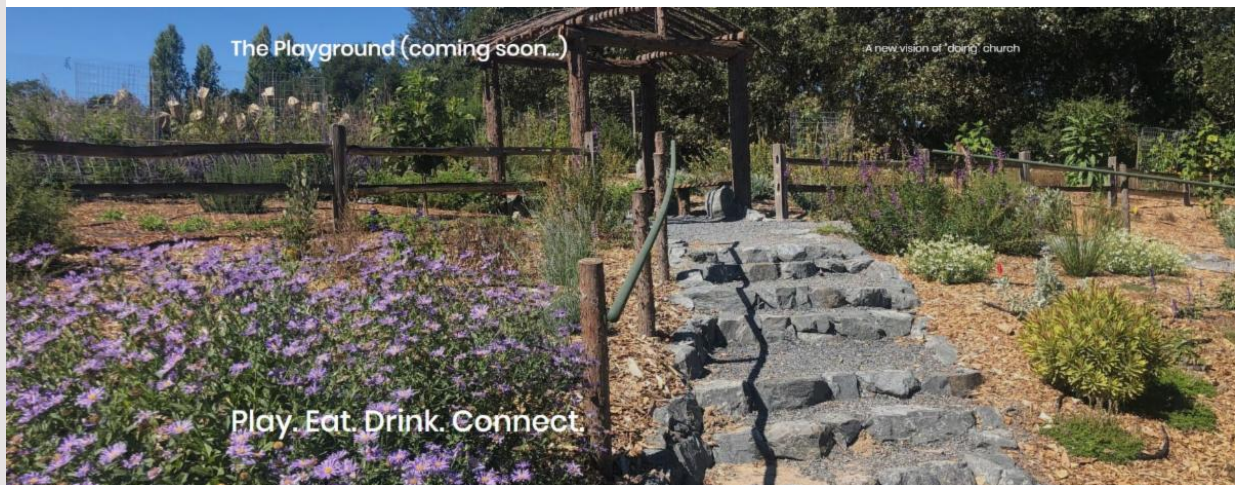
The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California

News for the week of July 7, 2020

Three things from the Office of the Bishop

- The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California receives United Thank Offering grant for [The Playground](#) at St. Stephen's, Sebastopol
- Online Day of Discernment, Saturday, September 12 [registration](#) is open
- A [message](#) from Bishop Megan - new state guidelines

Episcopal Diocese of Northern California 2020 Grant Recipient



United Thank Offering recently announced the grant recipients for the 2020 granting year, and we are excited to share that the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California will receive \$145,000 in funding for The Playground at St. Stephen's, Sebastopol. The focus of the granting process this year was 'Bless: Share faith, practice generosity and compassion, and proclaim the Good News of God in Christ with hope and humility.

The Playground will be a place where community is gathered and formed at a playground-café-beer garden, where neighbors from a wide variety of spiritual backgrounds come together to play, to be nourished, to have deep conversations, share their journeys, and, in the midst of their diversity, journey deeper together. It is a vision of a new way of "doing" church. Believing that we do not need be on the same spiritual journey in order to journey together and to help one another dig deeper, St. Stephen's in Sebastopol plans to create this space on their land to foster deep conversation and connection with neighbors in a particularly unchurched/post-Christian community.

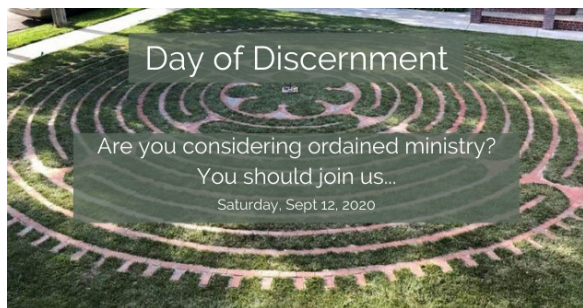
This generous United Thank Offering grant will fund the purchase of a shipping container to be used as a commercial kitchen for property. The plan is to serve simple meals for all ages, local craft beer, wine, kombucha, and have a full espresso bar. The play area will be an enclosed Waldorf-style play yard, the grounds will have picnic tables and seating, to explore a new model for gathering and forming church community in the richness of spiritual and religious diversity.

Visit The Playground website <https://www.theplaygroundsebastopol.org/>

United Thank Offering Funding

The United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, individuals are invited to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude. UTO encourages people to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for those blessings and make an offering for each blessing using a UTO Blue Box. UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute the 100% of what is collected to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion. To donate, please visit: www.episcopalchurch.org/united-thank-offering

Day of Discernment - September 12, 2020



During this time of social distancing, as we continue to do everything we can to insure the safety of the members of our community, we are revising the Day of Discernment to be by ZOOM rather than in person. It will still be held on September 12 as originally planned, but given the on-line format, it will be shortened to one half day beginning at 9:00am.

Attendance at the Day of Discernment is required for sponsoring clergy and those seeking ordination. It is intended to help all members of the Episcopal Church deepen their understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit and the many ways one can be called to serve in the Church. During the Day of Discernment, there will be presentations on the priesthood and the diaconate. There will also be an overview of the ordination process (including access to an application packet and copy of The Manual and Guide for Ordination).

We will have break-out sessions in the new online format. These will be targeted to the seekers specific area of interest. Breakout sessions will be limited to five persons to enable discussion. In order to make sure we can accommodate everyone who wants to participate, it is still necessary to register in advance so we can plan accordingly.

Please fill out the registration form prior to August 30. [Registration Form](#)

If you have questions about the virtual event, you may contact the Co-Chairs of the Commission on Ministry, Leta Parks, parksleta@gmail.com, the Reverend Kate Sefton, deacon@ststephensebastopol.org, or The Office of The Bishop (916-442-6918)

We look forward to seeing you in September.

New state guidelines - a message from Bishop Megan

On Friday, July 3, Bishop Megan shared a message regarding the new state guidelines that have recently come out about safe practices for places of worship during this

pandemic.

Our priorities remain:

- Protect the Vulnerable
- Follow state and county health guidelines
- Flatten the curve (slow transmission)

As we learn more about Covid-19, we get a clearer understanding of how to keep one another safe. The new guidelines give us additional information to protect everybody.

You can download the new state guidelines issued on July 1, 2020 by the California Department of Public Health [here](#).

Major updates include:

- Discontinue singing (*in rehearsals, services, etc.*), chanting and other practices and performance where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets.
- Places of worship should continue to provide services through alternative methods (*such as via internet and/or recorded streaming, telephone, drive-in, etc.*) whenever possible.
- Required use of masks/face coverings for both members of the public and workplace settings where there is a high risk of exposure.

The public health authorities and leaders in this area (CA) understand the difficulties we face "on the ground," which is why we are looking to them for guidance on how to keep our communities safe.

It is becoming clearer with each day, that infection numbers are rising in California, and that is why we must each do our part in protecting those most vulnerable in our communities.

We will faithfully continue our efforts to stay physically distant, and wear masks/face coverings where we cannot physically distance.

I am grateful for your resilience in keeping ahead of the virus and still connecting our people to the Living God through Jesus Christ.

May God bless us and our nation with health and the ability and will to care for others.

In Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Bishop Megan



We are pleased to welcome you to the One Hundred Tenth Annual Diocesan Convention of The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this convention will be held online. Below are a few dates to keep in mind as we head toward our convention.

Here is the [Letter from the Secretary of Convention and Call and Appointment of Diocesan Convention by the Bishop](#) for the 2020 Diocesan Convention.

Important Dates (Clergy in charge, lay delegates and alternates, please add these to your calendar):

August 3 - Certificate of Lay Delegates due

August 28 - Resolutions due

September 11 - Nominations due

October 10 - Deanery Convocations

October - Second filing for Nominations (if needed) due

November 6-7 – Diocesan Convention

Registration will be posted and available by July 17, 2020.

More information on convention is available at norcalepiscopal.org/convention, including the full Pre-Diocesan Convention packet, and forms.

Racial Reconciliation as the People of God: LEARN

LEARN + PRAY + ACT

As Christians, we are committed to the healing of divisions in our society: particularly right now learning about and facing the racism that affects all of us. Our focus right now is on our Black siblings who have repeatedly called for attention and action as they suffer violence at the hands of police, discrimination in our institutions, and aggression in daily life.

We are called to [LEARN + PRAY + ACT](#)



Pathways Youth Pilgrimage: still time to participate



Time for connection, music, prayer, and learning - we are walking together in youth planned and youth led events.

5:00 - 7:00 PM Thursdays until July 30 (registration is ongoing - youth grades 7-12 may join any time.)

[Click here to register](#)

[Click here for permission form](#)

CLERGY NEWS

June extraordinary ordinations in extraordinary times

June was a busy month for ordinations. The Rt. Rev. Megan Traquair ordained six people in our diocese to Holy Orders last month.

- **Sat, Jun 13, 2020** - Grace Flint, Portia Hopkins, and Libby Vincent were ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons at Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento

- **Sat, Jun 20, 2020** - Laurie Warren was ordained to the Sacred Order of Deacons at St. John's, Petaluma
- **Fri, Jun 26, 2020** - John W. Heidel and Karen Joyce Lawler were ordained to the Sacred Order of Priests at Trinity Cathedral, Sacramento

While the in-person groups were small the online presence was wonderful. Many friends and family were able to join in from throughout the country for these special days.



June 26 - Rev. John Heidel, Bishop Megan Traquair, Rev. Karen Lawler

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE: BENEFITS

Telehealth Services & Virtual Provider Visits

In response to COVID-19, the Medical Trust is waiving member costs entirely if a member uses a telehealth platform offered by Anthem, Cigna, or Kaiser Permanente (e.g., [Anthem's LiveHealth Online](#), [AmWell for Cigna](#), [MDLive for Cigna](#), etc.) through 12/31/2020. For Kaiser Permanente, you can access Kaiser's telehealth platform services by calling the number on the back of your ID card.

The Medical Trust is also allowing claims for virtual visits with network and out-of-network providers that do not use a telehealth platform offered by Anthem or Cigna. Standard levels of benefits and coverage will otherwise apply. This is an exception for medical and behavioral health services rendered through 12/31/2020. Please note standard copay, deductibles, and co-insurances apply for virtual visits with network and out-of-network providers that do not use a telehealth platform offered by Anthem or Cigna.

For more information, click [here](#) to download the PDF, or [here](#) to be taken to CPG's COVID-19 Support Resources.

RESOURCES AND LINKS

[Resources for Online Worship](#)



Mental health resources from Ministries of Health

During this challenging time of pandemic, mental health may be more significantly impacted. We hope these resources give you additional tools to add to the wonderful work in which you are currently engaged. [Click here for resources...](#)

Be well...

Diocesan Partners in Ministries of Health

Susan Wahlstrom RN, Coordinator

Questions? (209) 304-8321 email: wahlstrom@volcano.net



Here are [additional resources](#) from Church Publishing on mental health.

[Online resources for people in recovery](#)



NEWS AND EVENTS IN AND BEYOND THE DIOCESE



Presenters will include Sarah Stonesifer Boylan, VTS digital missionary, and Merrill Whatley, Membership Vision.

eFormation 101: Presentations and Coaching

Presented by the [eFormation Learning Community](#) and [Lifelong Learning at Virginia Theological Seminary](#), the eFormation 101 conference will give the opportunity for those new digital ministry leaders to dive into a few different platforms and then have follow-up opportunities to ask questions and context-specific information. This unique setup will create multiple opportunities to learn and then apply the information within your ministry. We look forward to learning with you and expanding our ministry horizons!

Fridays in July, there is still time to register.

[Register Here](#)



Presiding Bishop Curry offers a word to the Church

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Word to the Church: **When the Cameras are Gone, We Will Still Be Here**



The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church, released a word to the Church last week. He said, “Our long-term commitment to racial justice and reconciliation is embedded in our identity as baptized followers of Jesus. We will still be doing it when the news cameras are long gone.”

[Click here](#) to read this important message.

POSTPONEMENTS AND CHANGES

A message from Camp Living Waters

Dear Camp Families,

We have made the very difficult decision to cancel in-person Camp Living Waters for 2020, based on Humboldt county's current guidelines for summer programs, along with concerns of our staff and church officials. If anyone has questions or would like to discuss the cancellation further, you can send an [email](#) to our Coordinator Emily Armstrong Buck, or contact The Very Rev. Sara Potter at [email](#).

We make this announcement with heavy hearts. This is a huge disappointment for many campers as well as staff, and we intend to offer a day of online camp programming as well as activities through the mail: information on that is forthcoming. Beyond that, we look forward with great joy to our reunion in 2021.

Emily Armstrong Buck, Camp Coordinator
Camp Living Waters Task Force

A letter to Episcopalians from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry and President of the House of Deputies the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings on June 5, 2020 announces that the General Convention 2021 may be postponed or canceled.



[Click here for the Episcopal News Service article and the letter.](#)

To submit news/events, please email communications@norcalepiscopal.org. The submission deadline is the Wednesday before the Tuesday publication.

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
Making Disciples, Raising Up Saints & Transforming Communities for Christ
www.norcalepiscopal.org

