

**REPORT TO THE TRINITY CATHEDRAL ANNUAL MEETING, JANUARY 2020  
AND DIOCESAN CONVENTION**

Please permit me to share some achievements, blessings and challenges of 2019.

*“As we work together with God, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For God says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see - we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.” ~ 2  
Corinthians 6:1-10 NRSV*

I've chosen this passage as integral to our understanding of what we need to be about as we consider the challenges of this new decade. Some of the verses that talk about imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, and hunger may seem a bit extreme, but tell me you don't sometimes face the new day with a sense of being somewhat overwhelmed. We can take heart in the knowledge that you and I worship a God, who walks with us in the midst of all our tribulations. Someone says it's not that God does not give us more than we can deal with, rather it is that God will not desert us in the midst of our tribulation.

Trinity Cathedral's members are not exempt from the challenges of this world. But we are grateful for a God who constantly upholds us in the midst of all such circumstances.

### **2019 Pastoral Care**

In 2019 a few very special members of the Cathedral departed this life. Canon Chuck Perfater and Canon Deborah Ford, also Edna Garrison's sister, Sandy Pollard. Many of us saw the passing of our loved ones: Dr. Kerry Heimann, (brother) myself (brother) Michael Pettyjohn (mother) and countless members lost siblings. Patrice D'Angelo's father-in-law also died (Joseph D'Angelo's dad.) The death of a loved one is oftentimes very difficult, however we are comforted by the solace of many caring members. The families of Canon Chuck Perfater and Canon Deborah Ford have both expressed profound appreciation for the compassion expressed at the time of their loved one's passing.

During this year many members have also experienced medical challenges and have found great comfort and support from the compassion of our Cathedral family.

A great Pastoral Care asset of our Cathedral Community is Nancy Hood-Boczar a professionally qualified Social Worker and member, who has been a great asset to our Outreach Ministries. We are grateful to Ellen Wanser, a great asset as a chef with the Loaves and Fishes Ministry. Thanks Judith Miller for your leadership of our Angel Tree Ministry.

### **Property**

The challenges are many for an aging building. I'm grateful to Mike Raab for his commitment and faithfulness in dealing with a myriad of issues; also grateful to Willie Coleman, Georgia Koenig, Bernard McMullan and Canon Clara Gregory. Thanks to Patrice D'Angelo for her assistance in helping prepare a brochure which promotes the Synod Hall facility. Significant efforts have been made to make Synod Hall more marketable and rental-friendly.

## **Justice Issues**

In February we hosted a gathering on behalf of United Mercer Interfaith Organization, Gathering of Families/Remembering Victims of Violence. At homecoming, Mayor Reed Gusciora worshipped with us, and presented a plaque from the Isle of Jersey in commemoration of the Jersey Altar donated to the Cathedral in 1950. In October we hosted a group of young people walking from the Statue of Liberty to Washington, in solidarity and in support of issues around justice for immigrants. I was part of a panel discussion with Taqwa Community Learning Center (Children of Abraham) entitled, "How we can stand together as one."

Thanks to Kimme Carlos, Dr. John Carlos and a faithful committee of Vestry and Cathedral Members who worked together in November 2019 to host A Conversation with the legendary Olympian and Humanitarian (A Conversation on Social Justice & Mental Health.) Young persons from the College of New Jersey and Camden as well as members from our community and the Diocese participated in this important conversation. We were grateful for the support of Bishop Chip and Susan Stokes, as always, Drs. Phil & Gail Lewis, and Ann and Bernie Flynn for their Sponsorship. Beyond the conversation, we need to stay engaged in the issues of the day if we really wish to see progress at home in our respective communities.

## **Mission & Ministry**

For the Fourth Annual Diocesan MLK Day of Service the speaker was Ryan Haywood. The day of service continues to be a tremendous success and a wonderful celebration of the life of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In January 2020 we will host the Fifth Annual MLK Day of Service, in addition to other congregations in the Diocese. The speaker will be Aaron Greene from the Institute for Social Justice.

In 2019 at our Lenten Soup and Study we used *The Way of Love* by Mary Bea Sullivan. Discussion was healthy, around the issues of Spiritual Practice (Turn, Learn, Pray, Worship, Bless, Go, Rest.) Thanks to all who so generously contributed to the discussion and fellowship following. One of the sessions was held at the home of Canon Chuck Perfater. We also distributed copies of *Becoming Barnabas* by Robert Tolan and Tara Miller (A Ministry of coming Alongside.) We encourage your use of the Barnabas Questions.

On Palm Sunday we welcomed eleven new members to the Cathedral. Many of those individuals have gone on to become very productive members of the Cathedral: Fatu Ansah, Maima Sherif, Diane Paulsell, Ellen Heath, Dr. Nyasha Bakare, Dr. Alain Patrice Nganang, Nomsa Nganang, Paul & Esther Masaba, Becky Faith and Kenniescha Tyler.

We participated for the seventh year in the Battle Against Hunger Bike Ride. Co-Captains were Manuel Tejada and John Major; significant funds for Cathedral outreach ministries were collected. Thanks to Willie Coleman, Mike Raab and Sharon Tejada, the support team. Thanks to Canon Clara Gregory, who continues to provide major leadership on this front as Jubilee Officer for the Diocese of New Jersey.

I want to thank Deacon Chris Cox for his diligence and faithfulness in the leading of our Adult Education programs at the Cathedral.

In 2019 we celebrated the 15th anniversary of our Cathedral Community Day Golf Outing. On this occasion St. Luke's, Gladstone was victorious. Thanks Richard Koenig for his stellar leadership of this major fund raising effort on behalf of the Cathedral. Thanks to Bishop Chip Stokes, Fr. Hugh Brown, Tom DiMuzio, Cn. Don Muller, Bill Harmer, Patrice D'Angelo and Willie Coleman. Community Day 2020 is on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

The 16th annual African Festival was a huge success and continues to be a major support for Cathedral ministries. Thanks to Gaw Jones, Canon Noel and Nkiru Amadi, Rev. Dr. Peter Bridge, Rachel Mathis, Veronica Ngwayah and the many faithful volunteers who make this event the treasure it has been.

Stewardship giving in the last eight years has been trending upwards significantly, in part because of the New Consecration program, which has been well received, but also because over many years we've emphasized to our members the importance of being good stewards. Lessons learned from Jim Murphy, Jerry Keucher and the Episcopal Church Foundation have helped in this regard. We were extremely pleased with the leadership of J. Gilbert Williams as New Consecration Chair this year, and our speaker, The Rev. Dr. John Luttrell.

## **Appreciations**

### **Cathedral Staff**

Let me express my profound appreciation for our Cathedral Staff, in particular, Mrs. Patrice D'Angelo. Thank you most sincerely for all you do. Dr. Kerry Heimann, Al Shaw and Michael "PJ" Pettyjohn.

Cathedral Day 2019 was a little different this year; held on a Saturday, part concert, scavenger hunt, reception and tours. Thanks to the efforts of The Rt. Rev. Chip Stokes, David Miller, Susan Remmers, Georgia Koenig, Mike and Debbie Raab, and the Princeton Boy and Girl Choirs.

My sincere thanks to Sharon Scipio, Althia Muse, Jennifer Ahaghotu, Kimme Carlos, Erica Warner and Phil Lewis for their invaluable work with our youth. Helping to coach, shape and mentor youth is one of the most important things we do as adult Christians.

My sincere thanks to Altar Guild Shop Director, Andrea John; and volunteers Howard Ebersole, Ginny Harmer, Georgia Koenig, Linda Lengyel, Sharlie Ross and Cheryl Nagy for their tireless efforts to fulfill the mission of the Altar Guild Shop.

Sincere appreciation to Georgia Koenig and her contingent of volunteers, for coordinating yet another successful rummage sale. To effectively run this fundraising opportunity requires a tremendous amount of work. It, however, affords all an opportunity to get involved in a variety of ways. Please consider how you may get involved and be supportive. Items unsold are donated to the Rescue Mission of Trenton.

We are also eternally grateful to Ellen Wry for her continued generous support of our "Sock Ministry", providing socks, hats, scarves and gloves to Trinity Cathedral for our outreach ministries. Thanks to Ellen for acquiring the materials, who together with Canon Clara Gregory stepped forward to sort this massive supply, which was then distributed to our neighbors and community partners.

We are also especially appreciative of all the energies, planning and diligent efforts of Vickie Anne Tuomari, Darrell Tuomari and their team of volunteers. They have taken our Food Pantry ministry to a new level, building on the foundation of those who served faithfully before. The needs continue to increase and they meet and far surpass any challenges they encounter along the way. Thanks, Food Pantry team! We are grateful to so many individuals and churches who faithfully support this ministry, from our community and our Diocese.

Special thanks to Holy Apostles Church, Yardville (Canon Art Powell and Archdeacon Denise Cavalieri) and St. Luke's Church, Ewing (Sonya and Antonio Brockington.)

## **Parish Life**

I am especially grateful to our Parish Life Committee. Ginny and Bill Harmer, Anthony Rabara and all of you who so tirelessly coordinate the task of making sure our Sunday Fellowship is outstanding. We heard from many persons how key a good coffee hour/fellowship was to a congregation's growth. Thanks Winnie Daniels, Willie Coleman, Brenda Whiteman, Carolyn Ford, Clara Gregory, Susan Remmers and Edna Garrison, and everyone who contributes.

Many thanks to our Associate Clergy: Noel Amadi, Peter Bridge, The Rev. Dr. John Luttrell (part-time Assistant) and Deacons Carol Gilbert and Chris Cox. We are greatly indebted to them for their generous support and service to the Cathedral and its community. Beginning in 2020 we welcome The Rev. Bruce & Lani Montgomery, as members and Bruce as an Associate. The Rev. Dr. John Luttrell has also been of great assistance, preaching and celebrating quite frequently.

My sincere thanks to the wardens and vestry for their generous support and service to our Cathedral and its community: Willie Coleman and Dennie Higgins, Wardens; Ron Zilinski, Treasurer; Canon Paul Cooper, Clerk; Althia Russell Muse, Kimme Carlos, Wipson Joseph, Jocelyn Francis-White, J. Gilbert Williams, Mike Raab, Sharon Scipio, William Harmer and Lee Whiteman.

Thanks to Dr. Kerry Heimann, and Fay Manicke and our faithful Choir members, Laretta Ketter, Bobbie Powell, J. Gil Williams, Brenda Whiteman, Paul Cooper, Kim Neighbor, Susan Remmers, Sue Gummere, Ellen Wry, John Gummere, Howard Ebersole, Mike Raab, Bernard McMullan and Eugenia Collins for their weekly, wonderful presentations at our many occasions of worship. The countless rehearsals and uplifting presentations by a choir do much to inspire our worship to God.

Thanks to the many Cathedral commissions and organizations: Finance and Budget, Outreach (Food Pantry, Loaves and Fishes and Soup Kitchen), Evangelism, Choir, Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Hamilton Grove Care and Rehab. team, Prison Ministry, Sunday School, Youth Group, Adult Education, African Festival, Parish Life and Hospitality, and the Trinity Cathedral Altar Guild Shop. Their members are owed a great debt of gratitude for constant energies expended in fulfilling the mission and ministry of our Cathedral.

Thanks to the many organizations with whom we are affiliated; we are so appreciative of what we are able to accomplish together, for our community and God: Trenton Health Team, Trinity Academy, Urban Promise, Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer, St. Francis Hospital, Hyacinth Foundation, Rescue Mission of Trenton, the Anti-Poverty Network, and United Mercer Interfaith Organization (UMIO.)

My sincere thanks to Lee Whiteman for his efforts to capture Cathedral memories with his photography throughout the year. We owe you a great debt of gratitude, and to Susan Remmers for keeping the photo bulletin boards around the Cathedral updated all year.

Congrats to Georgia Koenig and Dr. Phil Lewis, who were recognized for their contributions to the Cathedral and the Diocese at the Diocesan Celebration of Older Adults.

My sincere thanks to Susan Remmers for her tireless efforts with the Flower Guild Ministry, providing beautiful altar arrangements, flowers and plants in celebration of Easter and Christmas, and arrangements to

benefit our shut-ins and parishioners. Thanks to Rose Ananthanayagam for her posting of hymn numbers, and Canon Terry Cooper and Rachel Mathis for their diligence and dedication as leaders of our Altar Guild ministry.

I want to once again thank the Wardens, Willie Coleman and Dennie Higgins; Deacon Chris Cox, and all our convocation delegates for consistently attending Trenton Convocation meetings: Canons Paul and Terry Cooper, Howard Ebersole, Larry Gustin, Brenda Whiteman, and Jocelyn Francis-White.

Thanks to Sherri Anderson, Stretto Youth Orchestra and the Trinity Strings for their faithful Ministry of Music development amongst our youth.

### **Future considerations**

Please consider how you may serve at the Cathedral in 2020 and beyond. **Seriously needed are drivers to help bring members for Worship.** We continue to need help with the hospitality and greeters ministries. In addition to which, all our committees could benefit from your energy and input. At baptism we were asked, "Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?" Our response: "I will, with God's help." Let us get on with God's mission and our ministry.

### **Remembrances**

#### **Rest in peace: Sandy Pollard, Canon Chuck Perfater and Canon Deborah Ford**

We have by the grace of God managed to accomplish quite a few things in 2019. We are grateful to countless individuals, too many to mention. We are also grateful to so many churches throughout the Diocese, whose support - monetary and otherwise - enabled us to achieve much by way of God's mission. To God be the Glory.

**"Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours."**

~ Teresa of Ávila

Respectfully submitted,

The Very Rev. René R. John, Dean

