Walking the Way in 2016

Mission Opportunity Grants: Making A Difference

Bishop’s Appeal Report

The Rev. Dwight Edwards: 60 Years of Ministry

Inside: 36th Convention Coverage
Real Episcopal

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On the Cover: “Obstacles and Rewards” by Susan Stanton, photographed at the Fall Creek Unit of Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park near Felton. Above: El Camino Real bell, Highway 101, near San Ardo. Elrond Lawrence

Real Episcopal

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PUBLISHER The Rt. Rev. Mary Gray-Reeves
EDITOR/WRITER Elrond Lawrence, Communication
CONTRIBUTING WRITER Lisa Bennett, Development
EDITORIAL ADVISORS Canon Brian Nordwick, Canon Jesus Reyes
THANKS TO Mary Beth Powell, Scott Kindred, Tiffany Martin

Visit www.realepiscopal.org for news and resources

DIOCESAN OFFICES
The Sargent House, PO Box 689, Salinas, CA 93902
(831) 394-4465 info@realepiscopal.org

Photography by Elrond Lawrence/El Camino Real except as noted
Dear Friends,

Wow! We have a magazine! Who would have thought we could come this far in three years? God did!

I want to thank everyone who has been part of the Bishop’s Appeal process that now makes a good news magazine the perfect next step in communicating our story. As we continue to gather energy and resources for the ministry we live here in El Camino Real, let us remember that we are nowhere without one another – from donors to the many volunteers who make this diocese great, to the staff and resources leveraged by the generosity, passion and creativity we are so blessed to have in El Camino Real. Thank you!

Without one another we could not have come this far in our service of the Kingdom of God, lived out in Jesus’ name. It is together where our purpose finds empowerment. As you will see in this issue, a theme that arises in my convention address and in these stories is that “together” is not just our members, but also our neighborhoods. While our Bishop’s Appeal leverages our church as a body, our church is part of leveraging our communities and our society as a whole. This most essential partnership is how the Kingdom comes.

As you enjoy the stories, ponder how you and your congregation are leveraging your partnerships with your neighborhood for the Kingdom. Sharing the good news is not limited to ourselves; quite the contrary, it is for all. May good news stories abound!

Blessings,

+Mary
Gallery: Walking the Way in 2016

Above photos: Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves and Eliza Linley stand with Linley's colorful banners inspired by the September 11 attacks in New York City. The public art opening drew 300 people to the diocesan offices in Salinas. Left: Bishop Mary awarded the Bishop’s Cross to Archdeacon Jo Weber (left) and The Rev. Mary K. Morrison.
Top: Riding the Roaring Camp Railroad near Felton at a volunteer appreciation event in September. Left: Bishop Mary speaks to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors at a COPA study session in October. Above: The diocese introduced the concept of Living Room Conversations at its Spring Conference in May. The conversations are an ongoing tool for congregations to foster civil discourse.
Response Exceeds Initial Goals, Secures Healthy Future

“Thank you so very much!”

That’s our main message to donors who overwhelmingly responded to the first-ever Bishop’s Appeal, held between late 2013 and mid-year 2016. Our goal was to raise an average of $200,000 per year, for a total of $600,000 – and you responded most generously. In fact, giving from 437 donors added up to nearly $859,000!

Your gifts have made possible a total of nearly $159,000 for multi-year Mission Opportunity Grants from the diocese to parishes with innovative ministries, big ideas and potential (see their stories on pages 8-11), as well as Kaleidoscope Institute training to help our congregations gain the tools and resources necessary to face a rapidly changing world.

Your gifts have also supported the launch of professional communications ($135,000) and development ($84,000) programs and the Bishop’s Appeal program ($75,000) for the diocese. Total expenditures for these areas (through June 30, 2016) are illustrated in the chart at right.

Bishop’s Appeal expenses and income are audited annually by Hayashi & Wayland, the diocese’s auditing firm, to assure proper allocation of donors’ gifts. Funds are reviewed periodically by the diocesan Finance Committee.

All unexpended Bishop’s Appeal donations to date will be allocated to these same three areas into 2017, since these were the specific areas requested for gifts.

Here’s how it worked

We began in the fall of 2013 with a series of small events around the diocese to get the message out. Bishop Mary visited with some folks personally to discuss three-year pledges. Then we sent twice-yearly mailings between late 2013 and May 2016, inviting gifts and reporting on successes so far.

Leadership

Capably chaired by The Rev. Roger Barney, the Bishop’s Council of Advice has provided guidance and expertise throughout the three-year period. They have also served Bishop Mary as a sounding board on the Strategic Plan Re-Mix, holding a series of conversations throughout the Diocese in early 2016.

We are grateful for the thoughtful service of the members of the Bishop’s Council of Advice:

Al Alvarez
The Rev. Roger Barney
The Rev. James Booth
Phil Boyce
Susan Britton
Martha Dexter
Diane Frankle
Charles Greenleaf
The Rev. Maly Hughes
The Rev. Martin Juarez
Terry Krivan
Kathy Stoner
Diana Trapani
Margaret Weil
Programs Funded by Bishop’s Appeal
2013 — June 30, 2016

Looking Ahead
The Council of Advice is currently discussing priority areas for 2017 and beyond. We will certainly continue to help fund Mission Opportunity Grants. Other exciting priorities will emerge from the Strategic Plan Remix development process, reflecting input from people throughout the diocese. Stay tuned! For more detailed diocesan budget information, please contact The Rev. Canon Brian Nordwick, Canon of Finance and Administration, at brian@realepiscopal.org.

Again, thank you so much for your generous response to the Bishop’s Annual Appeal! We see it as a hearty vote of confidence in the leadership and programs of your diocese.

Resources for Congregations

Lisa Bennett, Development
As Development Officer for the Diocese of El Camino Real, Lisa Bennett focuses on three areas:

Building capacity for the diocese (working with the database, setting up and refining systems, working with Council of Advice; and planning / writing);

Fundraising for the diocese, including the Bishop’s Annual Appeal, major gifts, and planned giving;

Assisting parishes with:
- Planning and developing capital campaigns;
- Considering donor-intent issues and questions;
- Refining and focusing stewardship programs;
- Planned giving;
- Structuring endowments.

Elrond Lawrence, Communications
Communications Specialist Elrond Lawrence is a professional resource for parishes looking to modernize their website or newsletter, develop a social media strategy, or promote their activities to local media.

Following an all-day publicity and website workshop in January, Elrond has met with nearly a dozen parishes to provide counseling, ideas and support.

Elrond also manages the contemporary diocesan website, www.realepiscopal.org, edits the weekly e-newsletter Along the King’s Highway, manages the diocesan Facebook and Twitter pages, and reports on stories across the diocese.

(He also edited the magazine you’re holding.)
Since 2013, thanks to Bishop’s Appeal donors, Mission Opportunity Grants have helped congregations across El Camino Real get the support they need to face a rapidly changing world.

Training workshops led by The Rev. Eric Law of the Kaleidoscope Institute (right) are providing the tools and resources for all parishes to respond to cross-cultural, inter-generational and socio-economic issues. The Kaleidoscope training has developed a team of trainers and facilitators who now serve as a resource for churches throughout the diocese.

For parishes with innovative ministries, Mission Opportunity Grants have provided the financial stability to address the needs of their local communities, as well as the spiritual needs of their own members. For the past three years, three churches have received grants that are supported by the Bishop’s Appeal. They include San Pablo Apostol in Seaside, St. George’s in Salinas and St. Philip’s in San Jose. Let’s visit all three and learn about their experiences, challenges and successes.
San Pablo Apostol, Seaside

“I enjoy the time to read . . . my spirit is getting stronger.”

“This book helps us to overcome difficulties that we’ve had in the past, so we have a new attitude on life.”

“I understand more of my past and more of my present.”

“I am more open with my family and I better understand the roles of my family…I also learn to listen better. This is another way to connect with God.”

These powerful statements are made at the Wednesday night reading group at San Pablo Apostol in Seaside, a Latino congregation experiencing joyful growth and transformation.

The reading group started in 2015 and members are on their fifth book. The group includes about 15 members and meets weekly, explains The Rev. Martin Juarez, Priest-in-Charge of San Pablo. On a cool October evening, they’re reading *La Revolución* by Sergio de la Mora and members rotate reading paragraphs until they’ve finished a chapter. It’s opened conversations about life experiences, difficulties, and faith.

Reading is a strong aspect of Latinos’ culture, explains Juarez. “Few people used to read here, so the fact that we’re reading together has encouraged them. It’s a moment of liberation, to give relief from everyday life . . . it’s something special to look forward to. We’re closer, like a family.” While some members work double jobs, they always make time for Wednesday nights.

San Pablo once shared space with the offices of the Diocese of El Camino Real, before Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves and her staff moved to the Sargent House in Salinas in December 2014. The congregation quickly made use of the new space, remodeling the offices, expanding the kitchen, and landscaping the vast outdoor space with brickwork and other improvements.

“Our facilities have undergone huge changes,” says Juarez, “but the main change that I see is the attitude of the people. A lot of them are taking on different kinds of responsibility. They feel a part of this family. And they’re taking more ownership. People are willing to step in and do more. It’s helping us to motivate more leadership in the congregation.”

While the reading group meets, the sanctuary is alive with the sound of the youth choir, one of four at San Pablo. The church has wifi and one member is taking typing classes; San Pablo hopes to offer computer classes soon. Two services take place on Sunday, with a youth group meeting on Saturday mornings, and more time is devoted for fellowship. San Pablo purchased bilingual Bibles so both parents and children can worship together.

“One of the biggest benefits we have received [from the Mission Opportunity Grant] is opportunity,” adds Juarez. “It is incredible what is happening, because we have the resources to do what is good for the congregation. It’s another opportunity to have more connection with God.”
St. George’s, Salinas

For St. George’s, the Mission Opportunity Grants gave the small-but-active parish the financial stability to launch a series of programs that tackled the needs of the Salinas community. When The Rev. Lawrence Robles arrived as the new rector in 2012, the congregation had already identified its top priorities in concert with diocesan guidance: develop a multicultural presence in Salinas, and raise the church’s visibility by community outreach.

Despite a rollercoaster of financial challenges, St. George’s is achieving its vision. “The grant enabled our leadership to look beyond the walls of the church,” says Robles. “That can stir up a lot of emotions: it can raise curiosity, fear, energy – all of those things become possible because you’re looking at the world in a different light.”

St George’s quickly joined the city’s “Night Walks” program, fielding a walk team for years that offered a peaceful presence to the Acosta Plaza neighborhood in East Salinas. This was followed by a Sunday “Eucharist in the Park,” where Robles and congregation members traveled to a large soccer complex and offered blessings and Communion to parents and players between games. A food pantry at the church feeds up to 50 local families a month, and monthly “Touchstone” luncheons for seniors are held in the parish hall.

For the past two summers, St George’s has hosted a Community Fair and BBQ that draws hundreds to the church and raises funds for community programs. The parish also hosts diocesan leadership development events such as Kaleidoscope training and a Saturday evening service was established for Spanish-speaking residents – many attracted to St. George’s by the “Eucharist in the Park” services.

The “Dragon Slayers” youth group also played a role in raising St. George’s visibility, with colorful floats in the Salinas Parade of Lights during the holidays.

Yet challenges have become part of the St. George’s story, as membership has steadily dropped. Robles acknowledged that too much community outreach overextended the congregation and created a drop in pastoral care.

“Transformation is hard work,” he said. “You can get so outward-focused that you lose your balance and lose the inward strength. The strength of our family was being pulled in such a degree that we lost the identity of family.”

The tempo of change is a key learning for congregations. “Don’t blow up the balloon too fast because you’ll lose your center.”

The diocese is assisting parishioners as they regroup and renew their commitment to the community and each other. While the city quietly abandoned the Night Walks program, the parish’s “Eucharist in the Park” recently ended the soccer season with its biggest Sunday morning ever: more than 70 blessings given and nearly 50 children and parents sharing in Communion on the field complex.

With its food pantry, Touchstone luncheons and other programs, St. George’s is determined to continue its legacy of reaching out to the people of Salinas.
St. Philip’s San Jose

For St. Philip’s, a small parish in a diverse East San Jose neighborhood, the Mission Opportunity Grant helped the church get back on its feet financially and its leaders are eager to minister to the community.

In 2014 the church suffered a loss when a longtime group of members who lived in a residential area called The Villages petitioned to move to Trinity Cathedral in downtown. The church applied to the Mission Commission for help.

“At first, the aid was largely to help us through losing a third of our congregation,” explained The Rev. Lucie Thomas, Priest-in-Charge, who arrived in August 2014, a few months before the Villages transition.

The Mission Opportunity Grant allowed the church to regroup and regain its financial footing while fixing a leaky roof, replacing crumbling gutters and other structural needs. Now that the physical and financial needs are met, the congregation is looking outward.

Two priorities have emerged, according to Thomas. The first is to develop outreach programs that serve the multicultural neighborhood of largely Hispanic and Asian families, along with longtime Anglo residents. Two Sundays a month St. Philip’s offers separate English and Spanish speaking services, while the other two Sundays are combined bilingual services. Spanish speaking members are increasingly joining the vestry.

One outreach program began in March: a clothing exchange for preschool and first grade children in needy families. St. Philip’s shares its five-acre grounds with Mandala Children’s House preschool, which was founded by Marilyn Drino in 1975. Mandala collects good used clothes from members and gives them to the church, which is talking with other community groups to expand the program. The congregation also plans to launch an ESL class (English as a second language), for which they’ll begin advertising soon. Another idea is to host a “family night out” near the holidays. Church leaders are also considering sending volunteers to Santa Maria Urban Ministry where they can participate in classes and evaluate programs that St. Philip’s might adopt locally.

The second priority is to increase St. Philip’s visibility. “We’re not that well-known in the neighborhood,” says Thomas, adding that “everyone thinks we’re a preschool, because they see families bringing their kids and picking them up . . . we don’t look like a church from the street, even though we have a sign.”

The founders of St. Philip’s in 1957 built the original structure with plans for a bigger church later. Those plans were never realized, so there’s no traditional church building. The parish is working to overcome the perception problem with banners and signs, going to neighborhood meetings, and sharing the word on online sites such as Facebook and Nextdoor.

With help from Canon Jesus Reyes, St. Philip’s is talking with area Episcopal churches who have offered support in developing a stewardship program and building membership. The church hopes to host a capital campaign in time for its 60th anniversary next year. St. Philip’s continues to brainstorm, and while many of the original ideas have changed, Thomas stresses it’s all positive. “I think it’s good that we’ve been in the morphing process because we’ll be more successful than just charging off and doing things. It’s been good to talk.”
The past 18 months have been a time of celebration for The Reverend Dwight Edwards, a man of God whose impact and ministries have been felt by generations across the Diocese of El Camino Real.

In June of 2015, he celebrated his 85th birthday and in December he was honored by the diocese for his 60 years of ministry. In January of 2016, Edwards fulfilled a childhood dream when he and the Hartnell Community Chorus traveled to New York to sing at Carnegie Hall’s famed Isaac Stern Auditorium in New York. “Somebody asked me in amazement, “You’re going to New York in January?”’ he recalls with a laugh. “I told them that I was an 85-year old tenor who likely wouldn’t be asked again. Of course we’re going to New York!”

Music has always played a key role in the life of the man whose name adorns the parish halls of the two churches where he served as rector: St Mary’s by-the-Sea in Pacific Grove and St. Timothy’s in Mountain View. Edwards grew up in a musical household, started piano lessons at age seven and sang in junior high and high school choirs. But in college he shifted his major to history, transferring to UC Berkeley where he studied Byzantine history, then moved to seminary school at Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP).

“By the time I got to seminary, I didn’t know what faith was about,” he explains. “I’d had what I thought was a calling to the ministry, but it didn’t get fleshed out for a while . . . so I spent four years at CDSP instead of three.”

In his third year he was at a wedding party in King City when the local rector pulled him aside and told him about “two little churches that were just waiting to blossom.” The churches were St. Luke’s in Jolon and St. Matthew’s in San Ardo, located at the southern end of Monterey County. He offered Edwards the opportunity to start a summer Vacation Bible School at each church and start church services in the fall.
Edwards didn’t drive, so he hitched a ride to King City with friends driving to Southern California; the rector had arranged local housing with two area families. Edwards purchased a car and learned to drive from the local Studebaker dealer. On his first Sunday he drove to San Ardo for their 9 am service, then got directions from the locals to drive “over the hill” to Jolon.

He crested the hill and “couldn’t see how to get anywhere, because all those roads went off into fields.” When a bucket of flowers in his back seat began to turn over, he reached around to secure them and promptly drove his ‘41 Studebaker into a ditch.

“There I was in my vestments, walking up to a ranch house!” he recalls. “The guy dragged my car out of the ditch and told me how to get to St. Luke’s.” When he arrived, he noticed the first wooden step of the church included a warning message: “Rattlesnake here.”

A pivotal event occurred in his early ministry when a teenage girl was killed in an auto accident and suicide was strongly implied. “None of the other spiritual leaders in the area would preside over the [memorial] service,” Edwards explained. “The grieving parents came to see me and they hoped I would do something, which of course I did. How could you not? That gave me a real feeling of what it meant to be a priest, and what God could offer people through my work.”

His weekend drives between Berkeley and San Ardo and Jolon continued for two years. As both churches blossomed with active families and children, St. Luke’s added running water, electricity, and a new parish hall built by Edwards’ eventual successor, The Rev. Norman Boyd.

After seminary Edwards was ready to return to St. Matthew’s and St. Luke’s; however, Bishop Karl Morgan Bloch of the Diocese of California was impressed with his success and sent him instead to St. Timothy’s in Mountain View. He arrived in 1955 driving his sister’s Buick with a small trailer, 100 books, and “not much else.” At Mountain View he lived for four years in the upper floor of a farm house, with the church downstairs. The small congregation steadily grew and purchased land for a new church, building not only the church but also a parish hall and preschool. They took on housing issues, set up an office for Cuban and Indonesian refugees, and provided space for Alcoholics Anonymous and other community groups.

It was during this time in the 1960s that he joined thousands of Americans who marched with Martin Luther King and his protest group to Selma to support the voting rights of African Americans. He was reluctant to go, he admits, but he felt he could never preach from the pulpit again if he did not support the rights of all people.

“In that period there wasn’t much hands-on oversight,” he recalls, “It really was sink or swim. Of course I always thought of myself as sinking rather than swimming!”

The congregation thought otherwise, and supported him through 18 years as rector of St. Timothy’s – including a six-month sabbatical with an honorarium and a car for his trip to Europe, in the hopes of enticing him to stay indefinitely. “It was a good group of people caring about each other and having a good life together.” But as he and the congregation changed, he reached the difficult decision to move on.
His new parish was St. Mary’s by-the-Sea in Pacific Grove, where he arrived in 1973. He chose the parish because they had experienced recent highs and lows and were in disarray. On the very first Sunday he noted an isolated group; when he introduced the peace, one woman approached him and shared her concern for shaking hands with some non-regulars. “She wasn’t going to shake hands -- they might be tourists!” he recalls.

Not long after, he walked the neighborhood and discovered a family of Episcopalians across the street from St. Mary’s . . . who had never been invited to the church. “You wonder why they didn’t come, but no one had made a connection with them – nobody knew it and no one had ever invited them to come across the street.”

In October of 1993, the Church Divinity School of the Pacific conferred an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity for his “distinguished service to God and the Church.”

By the time he retired in 1998, the congregation had grown and was reaching out to the community, feeding and clothing homeless while hosting suicide prevention and other groups. “They took care of each other,” he added, “and they were shaking hands with tourists.”

Following his retirement, the Vestry of St .Mary’s honored Edwards by designating him as their Rector Emeritus.

**Reflections on 60 years of ministry**

Relaxing with Rosi, his wife of 26 years, at their Pacific Grove home, Edwards reflects on his extraordinary life. “I have been nourished, supported, helped, assisted and upheld by the people in my life. No one can make it alone in the world; it is with other people that we build community and help one another. I am grateful for my loving community, as well as thankful for the critics who have helped me to change directions when I was heading down a wrong path. My life is filled with gratitude.”

He also marvels at the sweeping changes he’s seen in more than six decades of ministry. He stresses that congregations have to take an active role in their neighborhoods and communities to stay healthy.

“You have to be willing to go wherever you think God is taking you.”

Of his many learnings, he cites the need for honesty, genuine caring, not getting lost in the details of worship, and keeping an open mind to God’s calling.

“You have to be willing to go where you think God is taking you,” he adds with his trademark smile, “and to do what you think Jesus would do.”
“Learning Together” was the theme of the 36th Annual Meeting of Convention, which took place November 4 & 5 at Sherwood Hall in Salinas. The convention hosted delegates from every church in the Diocese of El Camino Real to conduct business, share ideas, worship, and inspire one another.

“Being a learning community is very Biblical,” said Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves in her annual address, which examined the characteristics and benefits of a learning organization. “It is also a concept found in the corporate world … spreading the Kingdom of God would suggest we learn to be partners together so that justice and well-being for all can be a reality. People of faith are the link between the two.”

Bishop Mary’s 2016 Convention Address can be viewed and downloaded at www.realepiscopal.org.

The annual Bishop’s Cross Award was given to both Archdeacon Claudia Jo Weber and The Rev. Mary Morrison, who could not attend but received the awards in advance.

The Simple Servant’s Award brought nearly 30 recipients on stage for their life-changing volunteer work with prison and jail ministries such as Kairos Inside and other programs. In all, more than 50 volunteers from the Diocese of El Camino Real and other faiths received the award and a few shared powerful stories with the banquet crowd.

Another highlight of the convention was the Friday Evening Prayer service. The special guest preacher was Bishop Richard Garcia of the Catholic Diocese of Monterey. Bishop Garcia’s homily focused on learning together and examined ideas for extending and expanding shared ministries. “Look out and reach for new possibilities as God offers them,” he said, urging the audience to continue to collaborate with other church communities.

“Bishop Mary, you and your clergy and your people, whom you serve are a blessing to me and to us all,” he concluded. “And in God’s time and place you will know more fully what lies before you as a community of servant brothers and sisters in ministry.”

We’re excited to announce . . .

**Presiding Bishop Michael Curry**

at our Winter Conference

**January 7, 2017**

9:30 am to 3 pm

Sherwood Hall in Salinas

*No charge* *(bring your own lunch)*

All are invited. Visit [www.realepiscopal.org](http://www.realepiscopal.org) and [Along the King’s Highway for details.](http://www.realepiscopal.org)