Greetings from your Region Missionary

I hope this letter finds you well and rested from the abundance of the Christmas season. As we settle into Epiphany, I invite you to recall that the word *Epiphany* means manifestation or appearance. Where is God manifesting in your life and in your communities? One of the gifts of the quiet, still, winter darkness is that it beckons us to be still and quiet, too. In this stillness I often hear God’s whisper - *Be still and know that I am here*.

I pray that this Quarterly will bear witness to how God is manifesting throughout our Region, and that we may be "mutually encouraged by each other’s faith" *(Romans 1:12)* through the sharing of our stories about a hootenanny, food pantry, boot party, retreat, a chaplain and more. If the stories below inspire you, click on each link for more information.

Also, below you will see that the structure of this Quarterly is slightly different. Rather than jumping into the work of the Region, the first article comes from our Bishops and invites us all to partake in A Season of Racial Healing, Justice & Reconciliation. You may have seen their letter already, and it is of such importance that it bears repeating. Below the letter are opportunities for you to become more familiar and involved with this work. As your communities live into this season, I encourage you to collaborate with other parishes in our Region. This work is good and holy, and it will take all of us working together to see it through.

Are you interested in learning more about the Region Leadership Team? Is God nudging your shoulder and prompting you to become more involved with the work of the Region? Would like to share your ministry with the Region and seek collaboration? Consider visiting one of our monthly team meetings. We meet on Tuesday 1/29, 2/26, 3/26, 4/23, 5/28, and 6/25 at 6 pm at Trinity, Wethersfield (300 Main St, Wethersfield, CT 06109). If you have questions you can contact our convener, The Rev. Linda Spiers at lindaspiers@aol.com or anyone on our Region Leadership Team.
Dear Companions in Christ:

At our 2018 Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut (ECCT) clergy and lay delegates passed the resolution, “Affirming Racial Justice, Healing and Reconciliation.” This resolution was informed by the concerted efforts of the Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network and the work undertaken by our ECCT Leadership Gathering (Mission Council, Standing Committee, Commission on Ministry, and Donations & Bequests) in response to the 2017 Annual Convention resolution, “Affirming Racial Reconciliation.”

Our recent Convention’s action was comprehensive and called for specific actions and we commend the 2018 resolution to you in its entirety. To begin with, the resolution launched a Season of Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut to last a minimum of two years.

The goals of the Season are to: • Introduce foundational concepts, language, and tools to help encourage and enable congregations to begin opening hearts and minds; • Acknowledge the reality of white supremacy and bias against people of color; • Awaken Episcopalians in Connecticut to the need for concerted action to address the ongoing injustice of the racial divide.

We recognize this is work many of us have already engaged in various ways for a long time. We also recognize that while the resolution invites us into this work for a minimum of two years, we will be committed to this work for the rest of our lives.

The resolution sets aside the second Sunday in February 2019 as a Day of Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation in ECCT during which parishes are asked to begin a conversation about the sin of racism in our lives and in the world. We ask that you take seriously the call of Convention for this second Sunday in February. Resources to assist your parish with this Day of Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation, as well as the Season of the same, can be found on the website of the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, here. As more resources are added, these will be announced in the weekly eNewsetters from ECCT.

Member of the Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network are available to work with you and your parish in our call to undo the racism in our lives, and in our church, and in our world. Contact either Suzy Burke or the Rev. Rowena Kemp to begin this conversation.

We encourage all clergy and lay leaders in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut to begin to plan how you will live into the actions of our Convention resolution in 2019 and beyond. In our ministries, we seek to build up the one body and make space for these holy conversations. This is a season of growth and transformation for all of us. We are committed to making progress toward racial healing, justice, and reconciliation across ECCT over the next few years. We look forward to sharing this journey with you.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Ian T. Douglas
Bishop Diocesan

The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens
Bishop Suffragan
Invitation to Join The Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network

We would like to thank you for attending the Racial Reconciliation Summit on Nov. 28, 2018 and invite you to participate in the work of the Racial Healing, Justice & Reconciliation Ministry Network as you are able. There are many opportunities to be involved in diverse areas depending on your time, talent, and how the Spirit might be leading you at this time.

As mentioned in the meeting, we have divided our work into six categories:

1. **Reconciliation Models** – Research, identify and make available local and global reconciliation models ECCT and/or parishes will find useful as we build our strategy for racial healing, justice and reconciliation in the Episcopal Church in CT and beyond.

2. **Formation/Resources** – Identify formation needs, and curate and distribute resources and user-friendly materials for people of all ages that parishes and individuals can use in their efforts to bring about racial healing, justice and reconciliation in the Episcopal Church in CT and beyond.

3. **Training/Facilitation** – Investigate and coordinate the delivery of training programs focused on helping ECCT address the role of white supremacy in enabling the sin of racism in ECCT and having truth-telling conversations and active listening sessions focused on racial healing, justice, and reconciliation.

4. **Communication** – Work with Karin Hamilton to develop a comprehensive communications strategy that keeps ECCT’s myriad effort to bring about racial healing, justice and reconciliation in the Episcopal Church in CT clearly visible and execute agreed communications initiatives.

5. **Event Coordination** – Plan, coordinate and lead the field trips associated with ECCT’s two-year season of racial healing, justice, and reconciliation.

6. **Advocacy/Civic Engagement** – Develop a comprehensive strategy for civic involvement on the issue of racism including advocacy and political action, communicate it widely and facilitate suggested activities and events.

We encourage you to review this list, then pray and invite the Holy Spirit to guide your decision. If your answer is YES to this work, kindly send us an email to let us know how you would like to participate in and with our ministry network. You have two options:

1. **Moderate involvement** where you are kept abreast of the happenings in the Ministry Network and can volunteer at events as you are able. You will be included in our google group and sent a digest of emails.

2. **Full involvement** where you will choose one of the six areas mentioned above and concentrate your efforts in that ministry area and regularly meet with the team by conference call, video conferencing and in person to do the work you have been assigned.

We hope that you join us in this important work and we look forward to hearing from all of you.

Blessings,
Rowena Kemp+ and Suzy Burke
Ministry Network email: eccracialjustice@googlegroups.com

Want to know more about this Ministry Network? Listen to the podcast below:
**Coffee Hour at The Commons**

Episode 28: Karin and Alli sit with the Rev. Rowena Kemp, to discuss the Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation Ministry Network.

Check it out: [Coffee Hour at The Commons](#)

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**One-Day Workshop on the History of Racism**

On Saturday, April 6, 2019 ECCT will host a one-day workshop with **The Very Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas**, Dean, Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary and Canon Theologian, Washington National Cathedral, on the history of racism open to all in ECCT; this will be held at **Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford**. For more information about this event please contact The Very Rev. Miguelina Howell, Cathedral Dean’s office at 860-527-7231 ext 101 or office@cccathedral.org. Click here for [Kelly Brown Douglas’ biography](#).

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**God’s Mission in North Central Connecticut**

_Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:  
Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church,  
and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen._ - Ephesians 3:20-21

**Parishes Give a "Hoot" & Help a Neighbor**

_Do you give a "hoot"? We do!_ While there are questions regarding the origin of the term, “Hootenanny” first came to wide public attention during the folk revival of the early 1960s. There was even an ABC TV show by that name. A "hoot" is an informal gathering of musicians (often for a good cause) who play together and individually without any particular structure or organization. On **Sunday, January 13, we gave a "hoot" at Church of Our Saviour in Plainville**.

One of our Plainville neighbors was suddenly and recently deported leaving a wife and two daughters behind. The Iriarte family owns a restaurant just a few blocks from the church. When we got the news about this tragedy, The Rev. Armando Ghinaglia knew that we needed to help. He set to work establishing contacts with the family and I did what old musicians do: sent out the word to other old musicians. In less than two weeks’ time, with the help of good Plainville neighbor Bill Morrell, we had an event. The folks of **Church of Our Saviour** (Plainville), **St. John’s** (Bristol), and **Circles of Central Connecticut** provided long tables filled with food. About a dozen folks showed up to play music. We played all afternoon while many folks came and went donating money while enjoying food, fun, and fellowship. We raised over $1,500 for the Iriarte family with money still coming in this week! Just neighbors helping neighbors.
Music is good for folks. It brings us together and helps us to remember that we like one another. The parish hall was filled with laughter, music, and even a few folks dancing. We had crafts for the kids and, since we’re Episcopalians, more food than we could possibly eat in one afternoon. Without a doubt, a good time was had by all, but the best part was people uniting in that space showing love for others in our community. "Love thy neighbor" is not just a Bible verse; it is a way of life that is alive and well. Let’s not be afraid to give a "hoot."

- The Rev. Link Hullar, Priest-in-Charge
Church of Our Saviour, Plainville & St. John’s, Bristol

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The Red Door of Grace: Food Pantry from Concept to Opening

Originally the idea of building a Little Free Food Pantry came about from seeing Little Free Libraries popping up all over the place. Then I saw a post on Facebook about a Church who made a Little Free Pantry that benefited the homeless. So, Fr. Chip and I wanted to have one built in front of our Church in Windsor. We wanted to test it in our area for a few months and as it turned out we couldn’t keep our Little Free Pantry & Blessing Box stocked for very long! It was slow going at first but within a couple of months it really took off. Several months into it, however, we could no longer afford to keep it stocked which made us realize there was much more of a need in the Windsor Community than we thought. In fact, we could help a lot more people if we expanded and built a walk-in Food Pantry inside our Lower Parish Hall. So, we did our research, held all parish meetings, did a feasibility study and contacted Foodshare to become members of their Buyers Program enabling us to purchase food from them at up to .17 per/lb. and order Free food! It took 6 months to get it all together. But at last, starting January 9th, The Red Door of Grace Food Pantry is open every Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. and is funded through donations only. God is in the details!

On January 9th we served 9 families and gave out 154 lbs of food! Not bad for our first day! It was a slow start for our opening day despite radio, newspaper ads, emails to town officials, churches, etc and fliers around town but we expected as much given that we opened during midwinter when it’s cold and gets dark early. One of our volunteers said "This is a really good thing to do and starting out a little slow gives us a chance to grow into it." All of the guests who came to shop in the pantry thanked us over and over and one couple said "We’re going to tell our friends and other family members about the good you’re doing here but be warned once the word gets out in Hartford you’ll be inundated!"

On Sunday, Feb 17th Grace will host a benefit concert for the Red Door of Grace Food Pantry. All are welcome. For more information click here.

- Rev. Denise Adessa, Deacon
Grace Episcopal Church, Windsor

If you would like to know more about how Grace started up a pantry for their community please reach out to The Rev. Denise Adessa (LadyDeacon2011@comcast.net) and The Rev. Chip Elliott (frchip@gracewindsor.org).
Opportunity: Go on Retreat with NC Parishes

North Central Region parishes are invited to join churches in the Hartford area who have for many years joined together for a retreat at Holy Cross Monastery, West Park, New York. This year’s retreat is **February 8-10, 2019**, and the churches participating are Grace, Hartford; Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford; Trinity, Hartford; and Trinity, Collinsville. We take over most of the monastery and share in the rhythm of worship with the brothers. Experience the silence of looking within, listen to God and rest in the arms of God in a setting apart from your normal routine, explore with others how God is calling you to observe a holy Lent, and enjoy time to rest and relax from the busyness of life. The Revs. Rowena Kemp and Linda Spiers will lead the retreat with one meditation on Friday night and two on Saturday. After Friday night’s service of Compline, we are in silence until after Eucharist on Sunday morning. Cost for the weekend is $200 including all meals, linens, towels, single or double rooms by request.

**To register or ask questions:** Contact The Rev. Linda Spiers (lindaspiers@aol.com | 860-559-5070) or The Rev. Rowena Kemp (revrowena@gracehartford.org | 203-209-4178) by January 25. There are still spots available, and we hope you’ll join us. [For a printable flyer click here.](#)

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New Region Chaplain to Serve Retired Clergy

The new year brings opportunities for new relationships and strengthening of the old. To this end our bishops have appointed 5 Chaplains to tighten the bonds of collegiality among the retired clergy and surviving spouses in the diocese. I’ve been assigned Chaplain to our North Central Region and serve the 40+ retired clergy and surviving spouses in our region.

Why so many chaplains? Simply because the number of retired clergy and serving spouses of clergy has increased dramatically in recent years. 50 years ago 85% of clergy were active and only 10% retired. Today only 35% are active clergy! The majority of clergy are retired (45%) or inactive (20%), according to the Church Pension Group statisticians.

How might a chaplain to the retired be helpful was brought home to me the other night when I couldn’t carry all my purchases in one load to my car. Dismissing an offer of assistance (grumpy old man that I am) I took what I could and headed out into the cold and dark and roughly dumped a load in the back seat. Then turning wearily to retrace my steps to pick up the rest of my belongings, a woman, who obviously followed behind me with my remaining packages, handed them to me and explained, “We’re all in this together, you know.” Then smiling warmly, she turned and walked away.

She might have been an angel, but certainly she was chaplain for she was there when needed. I’d like to be there for you, if needed. I won’t follow you into the cold and dark but I will contact you to see if I may, at some point, be of assistance. And Why? Why, “Because we are all in this together.”

- The Rev. Jon Widing, North Central Retired Clergy Chaplain
  860-670-0778 | jon_widing@yahoo.com
Thank you!!! Boot Party 2018

I am humbled by the positive response to action which was realized through the donation of 580 care packs containing waterproof gloves, soap, deodorant, and hand cream and for the volunteers who gave up their free Saturday to work the Boot Party on December 8th. The outpouring of love given to the homeless as they were cared for was overwhelming. Clearly our commitment to our Baptismal Covenant seeking and serving Christ in all persons with respect and dignity was met. As I made rounds on the day of the Boot Party, I experienced service provided with empathy, compassion and joy. Some of you had the privilege to hear stories of gratitude and some stories of despair, yet each person was treated with dignity and respect.

We served roughly 380 guests providing them with foot exams, socks, new winter boots, hats, scarves, gloves, a lunch and most importantly a listening heart while caring for our guests. This year the number of volunteers was overwhelming. I would describe the event at times as being controlled chaos. More than 30 volunteers from ECCT responded to the call by welcoming our guests to the party, having conversation, distributing lunches, fitting boots, giving guest care packs with waterproof gloves, or providing a foot massage. This could not have been done without the generosity of the North Central Region of The Episcopal Church.

In the days following the Boot Party, Officer Barrett and Footwear With Care went out to the shelters delivering the boots, socks, gloves and toiletries for guests who registered and did not attend. To read about the success of this endeavor please see the Hartford Courant article from Sunday December 9th or go to Footwear With Care site to see the many pictures of love in action. There was also an article published for Connecticut Public Radio. Remaining items were dispersed to Church Street Eats and South Park Inn in Hartford and The Friendship Center in New Britain.

Once again thank you for giving of yourselves during the busy holiday season.

- The Rev. Bonnie Matthews, Deacon
Upcoming Events

01/26 Serving God’s Mission with the Poor & Marginalized: Convention Follow-up Meeting from 9:00 AM - 12 NOON. Join the Rev. Jessie Karpf and the Rev. Ron Steed, ECCT deacons, for the first gathering on January 26 at The Commons in Meriden. Please RSVP for planning purposes, and review the report to Convention from this workshop.

04/04 North Central & South Central Region Clericus Gathering from 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM. On Thursday, April 4 clergy of the North and South Regions have an opportunity to gather with Bishop Ian T. Douglas at St. Paul’s, Wallingford. Please bring your own lunch. Beverages are provided. Register here.

04/27 Annual Spring Training & Gathering from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM: The 7th Annual Spring Training & Gathering will be held at Berlin High School in Berlin, CT (this is a change from earlier announcements). Join Episcopalians from across the Episcopal Church in Connecticut for a day of fellowship, learning, prayer and fun. All are welcome - people in the pews to vestry members to parish leaders and staff. Register here.

Parish & Ministry Network Events:

01/21/2019 - 26th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration. Inspirational remarks & procession @ 12 Noon from the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way & Main St. to the Church of the Holy Trinity. For more information visit the event page.

01/27/2019 - Heads Up! Hartford Super Youth Group from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM at Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford. HUH periodically meets throughout the year for fun and food! All are welcome – past, present, and future HUH youth, advisors, and parishioners who would like to join us. For more info click here.

01/31/2019 - Celebration of New Ministry: The Rev. Taylor Albright at Trinity, Tariffville from 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM.
03/08-03/10/2019 - **Happening renewal weekend for teens at Camp Washington**: A spiritual retreat for **teens (grades 10-12)**. Filled with community, conversation, music, and worship geared toward spiritual growth and awareness & giving young people a safe space to talk and hear about Jesus, faith, and life. Ideal for candidates for Confirmation, Youth Groups, or individuals seeking a closer relationship with God. [Click here for a flyer and more info.](#) Register by March 1

05/19/2019 - **ECCT 50th (or more) Wedding Anniversary Celebration**. Have you been married (or in a same-gender partnership) fifty years or more? The Diocese is planning a worship service to honor you at 3 PM at our Cathedral. For more info [click here](#).

For more events and gatherings [click here](#).

**Click to SUBMIT AN EVENT**

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**Communications for the North Central Region**

* Join the North Central Region [Facebook Group](#), a community bulletin board for the region. This is your place to share parish/community events, photos, videos and more.  
* Like and follow the North Central Region [Facebook Page](#). This is where the Leadership Team will post news of upcoming Region events, gatherings, conversations, resources, etc.
* If you want to know what your Region Missionary is up to, like and follow her [Facebook Page](#).

* Subscribe to this [Quarterly](#) to have stories from the Region delivered straight to your inbox
* Reach out to your [North Central Region Leadership Team](#) members
* Check out the [Region Calendar](#) on the ECCT website. Submit your parish events to the Region Calendar [here](#) and they will be added to the [ECCT Weekly eNews](#). Be sure to select 'North Central Region' under category.

Please note that all of these links can also be found on the [ECCT North Central Region webpage](#).

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**From the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans**

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is proclaimed throughout the world. For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers, asking that by God’s will I may somehow at last succeed in coming to you. For I am longing to see you so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— or rather so that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine (Romans 1:8-17).

The scripture mediation for January 8, 2019 as part of [The Good Book Club](#). [The Good Book Club](#) is an invitation to all Episcopalians to join in reading Saint Paul’s Letter to the Romans during Epiphany 2019 (January-March).
Would you like your community or event to be included in the next North Central Region Announcements/Quarterly? Contact me, your North Central Region Missionary, and let’s set up a time to chat so that I might hear your story and be a witness to God’s work in your community. The next Quarterly will be sent out in April.

North Central Region, Episcopal Church in Connecticut
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