December, 2026



THE CANTICLE

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

WELCOMES YOU

From The Dean . . .



When I celebrate my final Mass on January 10, 2027, I will have served as your Dean for 9,036 days, including 1,291 Sundays. It is an extraordinary span of time to contemplate, and one that has been richer and more rewarding than anything I could have imagined or planned.

Recently, I found myself remembering one of my first experiences after arriving in New Orleans. Hill Riddle, the longtime rector of Trinity Church, invited me to lunch to welcome me to the Diocese. I was considerably younger and less experienced than some of the other candidates who had been considered for Dean, and during our conversation he wondered aloud about my long-term ambitions. Did I hope someday to become a bishop? Did I imagine moving on to some larger position in the Church? Without giving it much thought, I told him that, if I had my way, I would spend the rest of my ordained ministry right here, serving this congregation until I retired. Hill had devoted so many years of his own ministry to Trinity, and I had come to believe that one of the most meaningful ways a priest could serve was to remain in one place long enough to share deeply in the life of a community.

And now, twenty-five years later, I can say that my wish has been granted. Over these years, this congregation has changed in countless ways, and so have I. We have celebrated moments of immense joy and endured seasons of sorrow. We have welcomed new life, commended beloved friends to God's care, faced uncertainty, and discovered strength we did not know we possessed. Through it all, we have continued to gather around the same altar, offering our prayers, sharing the bread and wine, and trusting in the faithfulness of God. As I prepare to say goodbye, I feel sincere gratitude. Gratitude for the trust you placed in me, for the patience and generosity you have shown me, and for the privilege of being allowed into the most sacred and intimate moments of your lives. To have served as your priest through so many chapters of our common life has been a singular honor, and one I will carry with me always.

I also want to say a word about what comes next. The Episcopal Church has a wise and longstanding practice concerning clergy transitions, particularly when a priest has served a congregation for many years. When I retire, I will need to separate completely from the cathedral and its congregation for a time, likely until a year or so after a new Dean is in place. Such a separation is not intended to diminish our years together, nor does it reflect any lessening of my affection or devotion to you. Quite the opposite. It is an acknowledgment that the Cathedral must now be free to discover what its next chapter will be. Your leaders need the opportunity to take stock of who you are as a congregation today, to discern where God may be calling you, and to undertake that work without the burden of wondering what I might think, what I might want, or what I might have done.

After so many years together, that distance will not be easy for me. I suspect it may not be easy for some of you, either. But I have come to understand it as one last gift I can offer this congregation: to step back so that you can step forward. The Cathedral belongs to God, to you, and to generations of faithful people who will gather here long after all of us are gone. Its future depends upon the same grace of God that has sustained it through all the years of its life.

Let us give thanks together for all that God has done among us. Let us remember the baptisms and burials, the weddings and confirmations, the great feast days, and the ordinary Sundays. Let us remember the storms we weathered, the ministries we built, the people who shaped our common life, and those whose absence we still feel. Not everything has been easy, and not everything has unfolded as we might have wished. But through it all, God has been faithful, and we have been blessed beyond measure. I also ask you to begin praying now for the person God is preparing to be your next Dean. Pray for the search, for those entrusted with leading it, and for the wisdom and generosity of spirit that this time of transition will require. And pray for one another, that you may enter this new chapter with courage, hope, and hearts open to whatever God has in store.

When I sat across the lunch table from Hill Riddle all those years ago, I could not have imagined what the next quarter century would hold. I could not have known the faces that would become so dear to me, the joys we would share, the losses we would bear, or the many ways this place and its people would shape me. Now, as the time approaches for me to leave, the words of St. Paul express what is most deeply in my heart: *"I thank my God every time I remember you."* I do, and I always will.



Lectionary Texts
(Sunday Readings)

December 6
Isaiah 40:1-11
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

December 13
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8,19-28
Psalm 126

December 20
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

December 27
Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
John 1:1-18
Psalm 147 or 147:13-21

January 3
Jeremiah 31:7-14
Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19*a*
Matthew 2:13-15,19-23
Psalm 84 or 84:1-8

January 10
Genesis 1:1-5
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11
Psalm 29

January 17
1 Samuel 3:1-10
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51
Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17

January 24
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20
Psalm 62:6-14

January 31
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28
Psalm 111

Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

The Right Reverend
Shannon Rogers Duckworth, *Bishop*

Christ Church Cathedral

The Very Reverend
David Allard duPlantier, *Dean*

The Reverend Canon Steven M. Roberts

The Reverend Canon David B. Lowry,
Theologian in Residence

The Reverend Robert Childers,
Priest Associate

The Reverend Georgene "Gigi" Conner
Priest Associate

The Reverend Travers C. Koerner,
Priest Associate

Mr. Jarrett R. Follette, *Canon Precentor*

Dr. G. Marc Loudon, *Assistant Organist*
Ms. Lisa Wilkie, *Parish Administrator*
Ms. Lisa Sibal,
Executive Assistant to the Dean
Ms. Mary Lynn LeBlanc,
Administrative Assistant
Mr. Daniel Terrebonne, *Parish Secretary*
Ms. Dorothy Phillips, *Sunday Sexton*

Submissions for Cathedral publications are always welcome.

*Items for the February, 2027 issue of *The Canticle* are due January 20.

Please e-mail articles to
jarrettfollette@cccnola.org.

Send ***hi-resolution*** photos to
jarrettfollette@cccnola.org

Sunday bulletin and/or weekly e-blast announcements should be submitted *before noon on Tuesdays* to
jarrettfollette@cccnola.org.

Christ Church Cathedral
2919 Saint Charles Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70115
504.895.6602
http://cccnola.org

Honorary Canon
Non-Residentiary

Mr. David R. Pitts

Vestry

2027
Brian Frilot (Treasurer),
Kathryn Washington,
Ed Whitfield (Secretary)

2028
Jesse George
Charlotte C. Meade (Junior Warden),
Angela Sella

2029
Alan G. Brackett (Senior Warden),
Liz Schafer, Patrick Tuck

2030
Mark Andrews, Melissa Nunn,
Jason Stencel

Weekly Liturgies

Sundays
10:00 AM ~ The Holy Eucharist (Sung)
Rite II (Rite I in Lent)
6:00 PM ~ The Holy Eucharist (Sung)
Real Presence

Weekdays (M-F)
12:15 PM ~ The Holy Eucharist

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A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 13, 2026
4:00 PM

Christmas Flowers



If you would like to make a contribution toward the Christmas Flower array in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, please clearly note this on a Christmas Flower envelope that will be mailed to you soon – return it to the Cathedral office by ***Friday, December 12.*** *Names will be listed in the Christmas service leaflets. Many thanks!*

Christmas at the Cathedral

Thursday, December 24 ~ Christmas Eve
5:00 PM ~ The Holy Eucharist, Rite II
The Dean, Celebrant and Preacher

Thursday, December 25 ~ Christmas Day
10:00 AM ~ The Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Carols

Reconnecting with the Earth and the Light Within: The Celtic Stream

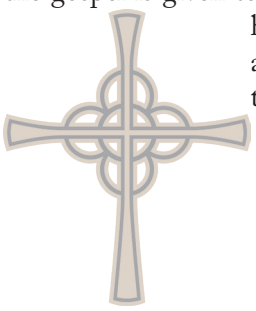
The Reverend Gigi Conner

In 2006 - when I was the Canon Evangelist at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Southwest Florida, I first heard about Celtic Christianity from the teachings of John Philip Newell, a Celtic theologian from the Iona Community of Scotland. We invited him to be our Theologian in Residence - not once but twice because the information he presented invited and challenged us to ask questions about God, Creation, Christ, and the Celtic stream of religion.

Since that time, I've been to the Island of Iona 10 times – to worship in the Abbey started over 500 years ago by St. Columba, to hear what John Philip and other theologians have to say about Celtic Christianity, and to meet Christians from around the world who have come to this 'thin' place for a spiritual 'resurrection.' It has been an interesting journey because as a 'cradle Episcopalian' (baptized 1945/confirmed 1956) I have been challenged to look more closely at our tradition, to rethink the notion about 'original sin', re-examine the concept of 'we are steeped in sin' vs thinking we are born bearing the goodness of God within us, and I guess, finally adopt some of the thinking of that famous heretic, Pelagius. So, my horizons as they say 'have been greatly expanded'.

A bit about the Island of Iona: It has been said "You don't stumble onto Iona because it isn't en route to anywhere else." One does certainly feel, physically and mentally, that normal life is being left behind because Iona is known as a 'thin place' – where the realities of this world and the possibilities of another merge in the spirit. It is where a person can reflect, form new relationships with other pilgrims, and change perspective about whatever it is that exists back home. When we leave the familiar in order to experience new birth - we become alive to what we never imagined before

One of the aspects that Newell puts forward is that we put a period at the end of our Christianity – our tradition – whether it's Episcopalian or another – as if whatever we've inherited or learned is the end all. Period. Done. Over. Rather than seeing the possibilities of what we might gain from other voices, other wisdoms. In an interview he said, "I do not believe that the Gospel, which literally means 'good news', is given to tell us that we have failed or been false. That is not news and it is not good, The gospel is not given to tell us what we already know. Rather the gospel is given to tell us what we do not know or what we have forgotten, and that is who we are, sons and daughters of the One from whom all things come.





It is when we begin to remember who we are, and who all people truly are, that we will begin to remember also what we should be doing and how we could be relating to one another as individuals and as nations and as an entire earth community. A genuine love of creation, a belief that everything is created out of God, including us, is the basis of the Celtic stream. St. Patrick's Breastplate, (Hymn 370 in our hymnal) which is a Lorica - a shield - mentions the importance of creation: I bind unto myself the virtues of the starlit heaven, the glorious sun's life-giving ray, the whiteness of the moon at even, the flashing of the lightning free, the whirling wind's tempestuous shocks, the stable earth, the deep salt sea, around the old eternal rocks.

The Celtic cross on the island of Iona holds together the love of Christ and its love of creation by combining the images of the cross and the orb - so we see Christ and creation coming forth from the same point – emerging from the heart of God. Christ is viewed as coming to reconnect us to that Heart - to the unity from which all life comes. Our deepest identity, the image of God, is at the core of our being.

John Scotus Eriugen, a great Irish teacher (his name means Irishman), taught that there are basically two books: the big book and the little book. The little book, which is physically little, is the Bible, and the big book is creation, vast as the universe. The Cosmos is like a living text. Just as we prayerfully ponder the words of the Bible in our Christian practice, so should we listen to the life of creation as an ongoing, living utterance of God. The problem is that we hardly know the alphabet of that language. We have not been taught to read creation with the same devotion as we read Scripture.

We could ask ourselves - what do we need to be doing in order to study 'the big book' of creation? Especially as we learn more and more about living creatures or waters or foliage becoming extinct because we are using them up or sweeping away what grows naturally to put yet another building in place.

The light within all light is that goodness of God which shows forth in all people and Jesus was and is the one sent to us as a reminder of that light. He is our memory of that goodness. How might we view the world and its inhabitants - human - plants - creatures - if we looked for God's goodness in all that we encounter? How might we view Christ if we saw him as the one bringing us the good news that we are all carrying the light which shines from within - that we all come from the same source - that we are all called to be life-givers to the world.

December



2 Meryl Fink
4 Anne Abbott
Juan Barroso
Paloma Pardo
5 Erich Shofstahl
Olivia Shofstahl
6 Charley Browning
8 Jake Appleford
Rene Mithun
9 Erin Tuck
Lois Shofstahl
Patrick Tuck
10 William Mallery
Davis Slocum
Walker Slocum
12 Harry Leche IV
Marcia Molloy
Rick Mithun
Karen Williams
13 Joella Burlingame
Sandy Johnson
13 Jack Meade
14 Jessie Haynes
15 Bill Buckley
Heidi Smith
17 Greg Fahrenholt
Michael Krass
Elizabeth Martin
18 Carolyn Deyo
Addison Dodson
Greg Gunter
John Thomas
19 Adeline Smith
21 Hunter Meade
Anna Schieffelin
23 Meredith Johnson
24 Charles Schmidt III
26 Pamela Wootten
27 Hollie Carlson
28 Justin Allen
Caroline Beary
Bp Shannon Duckworth
Isabella Stencel

January



2 Diane Genre
5 Jen Jones
6 George Haynes
8 Violet Clement
Andrew Poland
10 Harlan Bush
12 Amelia Airey
Nicholas Day
15 Rick Mithun, Jr.
16 Delta Dwyer
17 Sam Kellum
Carol Messersmith
18 Ricky Dunn
Mia Mithun
19 Chris Walterman
20 Sandy Jackson
Bill Renaudin
21 Yvonne Browning
Carol Butcher
Robin Werner
Liam Whalen
23 Holly Dupaquier
24 Richard Garrity
Michael Martin
Margaret Wild
28 Melissa Nunn
Lucille Whitley
29 Donovan Airey
Jackie Gunter
30 Judson Mitchell III
31 Vikki Shofstahl

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servants who begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen their trust in your goodness all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

If your name isn't listed, we don't have your date of birth in our records.
Please send an e-mail to acs@cccnola.org or call the cathedral office and we'll be sure to wish you a *Happy Birthday* next year!

Sunday Christian Formation Class during Advent



The Last Word: Revelation Through the Tapestries of Angers
An Advent class with the Rev. Dr. Jean McCurdy Meade
Sundays, December 6, 13 & 20 following the 10 AM Mass

What is the last book of the Bible really about? "The Revelation to John" (not "Revelations"!) is a single ecstatic vision recorded by John during his exile on Patmos. Written for faithful Christians, it answers big questions: Where is Jesus now? Why do the faithful still suffer? How will evil finally be conquered, and how do we live in the meantime?

We'll explore Revelation through one of the great masterpieces of medieval art: the Apocalypse Tapestry of Angers, France. It was commissioned by Louis I, the Duke of Anjou, and woven in Paris between 1377 and 1382. It originally had 90 scenes, and it is the largest set of medieval tapestries to have survived. It was looted and cut into pieces during the French Revolution, and most of it was recovered and restored in the 19th century.

Along the way, we'll find Revelation's images in the hymns, spirituals and oratorios we sing, which makes our worship richer.

*The Rev. Dr. Jean McCurdy Meade has been a member of the Cathedral for many years. She served here as Director of Christian Education and led the children's choir. For 19 years she was lay chaplain and school organist at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. She was ordained in 2001 and served at St. Philip's and then as Rector of Mount Olivet Church on Algiers Point until she retired in 2015. She holds a Ph.D in Philosophy from Tulane and has taught at Tulane, Loyola, Notre Dame Seminary, Dillard, and UNO. She also writes for *The Living Church*. Her book, The Last Word: A Study of the Revelation to John and the 14th-Century Tapestries of the Apocalypse of Angers, France , is the basis for this class. Two of her children and their families are active members of the Cathedral.*

Voices
Of New Orleans

On Tuesday, December 1st, join the Symphony Of New Orleans, Voices Of New Orleans, and some of New Orleans' finest opera singers for "Incanto", an evening of dazzling music from the operatic repertoire. The program will feature beloved arias, choruses, and overtures from the canon, including works by Verdi, Puccini, Paulus, Rossini, and Smyth. Vocal soloists will include the talents of Tyler Smith, Irini Kyriakidou-Hymel, Charles Mukaida, and many more. Don't miss this wonderful evening of song! Concert is at Christ Church Cathedral on Tuesday, December 1st - 7:30 pm show with doors opening at 7 pm. $20 encouraged donation. Visit our website at SymphonyOfNewOrleans.com to reserve your program.

Symphony
Of New Orleans

Jericho Road Helps Families Remain Safe and Rooted

For a homeowner, an aging roof can quickly become more than a maintenance concern. It can mean water entering the home, mounting repair costs and constant worry whenever severe weather approaches. For many low-income and working families, the cost of replacing a roof is simply beyond reach.

Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative is helping change that for homeowners in Central City. With support from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas and through partnerships with Hancock Whitney and Mackie One Construction, Jericho Road is nearing completion of a $156,000 project to install roofs built to the nationally recognized FORTIFIED Roof standard. These stronger roofs are designed to provide greater protection against hurricanes, high winds and wind-driven rain.

One of the most important benefits of a FORTIFIED Roof is the potential for a significant reduction in the wind and hail portion of a homeowner's insurance premium. This benefit is especially important as Louisiana's ongoing insurance crisis has pushed many property owners to the brink, with rising premiums threatening their ability to remain in their homes. By helping reduce insurance costs while strengthening homes against severe weather, this project supports both immediate safety and long-term housing affordability.

The impact extends far beyond the roof itself. A stronger roof protects the entire home, helps prevent costly storm damage and reduces the risk that a family will be displaced following a hurricane. It also gives homeowners greater peace of mind while protecting the stability and generational wealth they have worked hard to build.

"The homebuyer journey does not end when a family receives the keys to a home," said Nicole Barnes, executive director of Jericho Road. "Families must also be able to maintain their homes, protect their investment and preserve it for future generations. This program helps protect not only the physical property but also the long-term affordability and stability that homeownership can provide."

As this project approaches completion, participating homeowners will be better prepared for future hurricane seasons. Yet many families throughout our community still face critical home repairs they cannot afford on their own.

For 20 years, Jericho Road has worked alongside families throughout Southeast Louisiana to expand access to affordable homeownership, preserve existing homes and strengthen neighborhoods. We invite the members and friends of Christ Church Cathedral to help us continue this vital work.

Your Gift Can Help a Family Remain at Home

Your contribution will help Jericho Road address critical housing needs, preserve affordable homeownership and create stronger, more resilient communities. Every gift, regardless of size, moves this work forward.

Please consider making a gift today. Together, we can help more families remain safe, stable and rooted in the communities they call home.

To donate or learn more, contact Peter Davis at development@jerichohousing.com.

JERICHO ROAD
EPISCOPAL HOUSING INITIATIVE

EPIPHANY

The 2nd Annual Epiphany Luncheon will take place after the 10:00 AM Eucharist on January 10. We will be serving New Orleans-style dishes.
Please look for sign-up sheets in the back of the Cathedral.
We ask that food not be frozen when it is delivered to the kitchen.

Our children will be a vital part of this celebration: decorating crowns and leading the congregation to the Parish Hall while we sing "We Three Kings."
More instructions on this part of the event to come!

Please circle the date on your calendar!!

Lift your gaze - Lift your heart
YOGA IN THE CATHEDRAL



Cathedrals evolved to become spaces which invite the eyes and the heart to lift toward the heavens. The arches point the way for eyes to lift; the stained light from windows high above entice the vision higher; and the lofty vaulted ceilings complete the illusion.

Yoga teaches that the heart follows the eyes. This yoga practice will focus on opening the heart to loving kindness, accepting the human-ness of our selves and others and creating a lightness in the heart. But 'you gotta move' to teach your heart to open.

All Levels of Experience are Welcome

Every Tuesday ~ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Cost: FREE (Donations are welcomed but are not required)

What to Wear: Comfortable, layered clothing

What to Bring: A yoga mat

Baptism

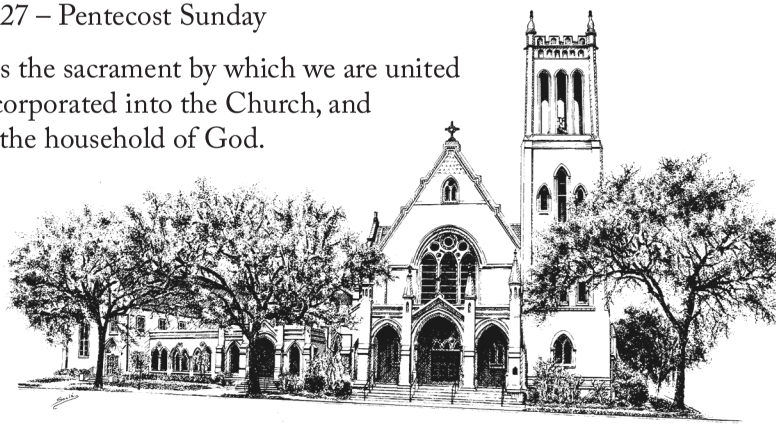


Holy Baptism is especially appropriate on the great feast days of the Church and on occasions when a Bishop is present.
We invite those considering Holy Baptism to join us on one of the following dates:

- January 3, 2027 – The Second Sunday of Christmas
- May 16, 2027 – Pentecost Sunday

Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which we are united with Christ, incorporated into the Church, and welcomed into the household of God.

Please contact Canon Roberts stevenroberts@cccnola.org.



Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, December 1
7:30 PM
Symphony Of New Orleans
Voices of New Orleans
In Concert

Wednesday, December 9
6:00 PM
Deaconal Ordination

Sunday, December 13
4:00 PM
A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

Thursday, December 24
Christmas Eve
5:00 PM
The Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Friday, December 25
Christmas Day
10:00 AM
The Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Sunday, January 10
The Sunday after the Epiphany
10:00 AM
The Holy Eucharist, Rite II and
Epiphany Luncheon