

The Diocese of the Central States

2023 Synod - Canon Missioner's Report

New Churches & Plants

Fr. Andrew Costa has a church building that was donated to his plant effort in Ansonia, OH. He is currently assisting Bishop Manto at Trinity REC in Mason, OH, and plans to start worship in the new building during Advent.

Holy Cross Mission in Richmond, started by Fr. Ken Mills several years ago, has finished construction of an addition to the church building they purchased in Amelia, VA. Bishop Manto consecrated the church on February 19th this year. The church now sees 40+ worshipers per Sunday and is growing.

Fr. Richard Tarsitano continues working to grow our REC funded plant in Connersville, IN., despite serious illness within his family and an early delivery of a baby girl recently. Trinity Anglican now averages 25 regular attendees.

There is interest on the part of an REC family in Johnson City, TN to plant a church. Bishop Manto visited the family and Fr. Tony Melton has been working with them as well. However, there is currently no clergyman to send there, and the plant is on hold unless some solution is found to provide clergy leadership.

Regarding our annual Lenten REC100 drive for \$100 from every member, the funds given by DCS churches are for the exclusive use of DCS. Fr. Tarsitano is currently receiving DCS REC100 funds for his plant in Connersville, IN. We are also planning some support from these funds for Fr. Costa's plant in Ansonia, OH. These funds can also be used to pay planting clergy, for church revitalization, and for other REC 100 thrusts. Please be insistent during our drive in the 2024 Lenten season. The \$100 per person request is reasonable for most everyone, and it provides critically important resources for church planting.

Church Growth & Revitalization

Churches in our Diocese continue to experience growth in these post-pandemic times. At the risk of leaving someone out, I wanted to mention a few highlights.

Under the leadership of Fr. Davidson Morse, All Saints REC in Lynchburg, VA. (the host church for our 2022 Synod) has experienced rapid growth and now sees over 90-100 worshippers each Sunday. This is coming close to capacity for the newly expanded chapel facility. Another 20 or so in regular attendance could force consideration of two services.

Fr. McNamara is seeing young families as a large part of growth that has Christ the King at over 100 in attendance weekly. Likewise, Fr. Boettner is experiencing solid growth at St. James in Memphis. In Owensboro, KY, Fr. Goodwin has gone from an original three or four people to 35 plus each Sunday at Christ the Redeemer.

St. Paul's Anglican (REC) in Lexington, VA is approaching triple the attendance since the arrival of the Rev. Dr. Eric Parker as Rector. St. Paul's hosted a very successful "Revive" seminar in 2022, conducted by the Rev. Canon Mark Eldredge.

Fr. Jonathan Kell, Rector of Church of Our Saviour, Oatlands in Leesburg, VA, is experiencing attendance at 150, and has gone to two services. He continues to work with nearby Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, VA, in building up Church of Our Saviour and as potential participation in a future plant.

Fr. Josiah Jones and Dcn. Bill Barto are experiencing steady growth in the new facility of Holy Trinity Church in Fairfax, in spite of a highly transient population from which to draw.

Fr. Bart Gingerich at St. Jude's Anglican (REC) in Richmond, VA, continues to see steady growth. Average Sunday attendance is now in the 70-90 range, including noticeable growth in young families with children.

Schools

Affiliated schools are a major priority of the REC, as evidenced by the formation of our own Anglican Schools Association (ASA) and the emphasis by our Presiding Bishop. Classical Christian Schools meet a tremendous demand in our society today, and they do so in a godly and Biblical way.

St George Classical School in Lexington, VA, started by the Rev. Dr. Eric Parker last year, has doubled in attendance this year. They are members of the ASA, and affiliate with the REC through the DCS.

In Richmond, Hunter Classical Christian School has now officially become a school of the DCS, and has joined the REC Anglican Schools Association. It has a strong Headmaster in Mr. Jeff Brown (a member of the DCS Standing Committee and of the REC General Committee, and Jr. Warden of St. Jude's Anglican), and is experiencing strong annual growth. Under Mr. Brown, the school student body has nearly tripled to 130 over the last two years.

Two other classical Christian schools in the Diocese have been in operation much longer and are well established. Dominion Academy, affiliated through Christ the King REC in Dayton, has 120

students. New Covenant School in Lynchburg, under headmaster Fr. John Heaton, has an enrollment of approximately 450 K-12 students.

Clergy Incubator

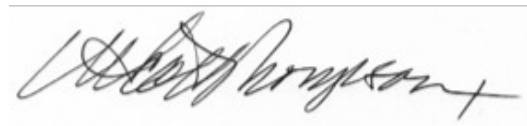
To plant churches and grow the Diocese, we need boots on the ground. We struggle to replace retiring or departing clergy within the Diocese, much less spin off new plants.

The Piedmont Convocation of DCS recently invited the Very Rev. Canon Matt Harrington, President and Dean of Reformed Episcopal Seminary, to present at its August Clericus meeting. The Ohio Valley Convocation recently hosted him as well. The plan is to foster better communications and relationships with REC seminaries and establish stronger pipelines of clergy to meet DCS growth needs.

Revitalization Resources

Some of our churches may have static or shrinking membership, and some may have aging congregations that are not being replenished with new young families. For churches experiencing these symptoms, I continue to urge using Canon Eldridge as a revitalization resource. I can arrange for REC 100 funds for churches that need financial assistance for this program. I am ready to work with any of you who would like to give this a try, and I encourage you to do so. Give me a call and let's get the ball rolling.

The Ven. W. Scott Thompson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Scott Thompson", written over a horizontal line.

Archdeacon
Diocese of the Central States