



## **The Diocese of the Central States**

### **2024 Synod - Canon Missioner's Report**

#### **New Churches & Plants**

The DCS gained a new church this year, St. Luke's Anglican Church in Maysville, Kentucky. The Rev. Dr. Christopher Beckham has been a resident Presbyterian in the DCS since 2013. Many of you may recall him addressing the Synod some years ago here in Mason on the writings of N.T. Wright. Fr. Beckham was attending St. Luke's and assumed duties as Priest-in-Charge in February 2022 upon the retirement of the Rector, and was "on loan" to the ACNA International Diocese of which St. Luke's was a part. Subsequently, upon the retirement of the ACNA Bishop, Fr. Beckham and the Vestry met with +Bishop Manto, and following a season of prayer, both the Vestry and the parish voted unanimously to join the REC/DCS. St. Luke's was received as a mission parish on July 1, 2024.

Fr. Andrew Costa began services last Advent in the church building that was donated to his plant effort in Ansonia, OH. Darke County Anglican Mission has now been live for just over ten months and has seen an average attendance that fluctuates between 10-20 persons. There have been baptisms and confirmations, and the work continues in prayerful hope of more future growth through the work of the Holy Spirit as the Gospel is preached.

Christ the Redeemer REC in Owensboro, KY continues to grow rapidly. Average attendance is now 53 from a handful of folks that started the church. There have been 3 baptisms, 11 confirmations, an ordination to the Diaconate and then to the Presbyterate, and one marriage. Ministry is alive and well with a men's retreat, women's bible study, weekly Holy Communion at a local assisted living facility, BCP study, food pantry assistance, and many other activities.

Fr. Richard Tarsitano continues working to grow Trinity Anglican in Connersville, IN. This year they have had 14 confirmations and 3 baptisms, plus they currently have 8 persons in preparation for confirmation. Fr. Tarsitano continues the practice of keeping the church open all day, and he holds morning and evening prayer each day. This is widely known among the townspeople and has resulted in new attendees, several of whom are among the new catechumens. The church continues to assist the opioid addicted in the community through prayer, food, and companionship.

The possibility of a new REC plant in Johnson City, TN, may have taken on new life. The core REC family there has a few others interested, but no clergyman has yet been found to send there. Recently, however, an ACNA Army chaplain has announced plans to move there upon retirement next year, and he has expressed interest in being the “boots on the ground” clergyman that we need.

## **REC 100 Funding**

Three of the missions mentioned above either have received or are receiving financial support from the DCS portion of funds accumulated through the annual REC 100 drive. While DCS has done quite well in these drives, we need to do better. We simply can't plant churches without clergy, and clergy must be paid.

DCS turned in an excellent contribution this year, second only to DMA which is over twice as large. Here is the 2024 breakdown:

Diocese of Mid America (DMA) – \$58,069  
Diocese of the Central States (DCS) – \$26,707  
Diocese of the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic (NEMA) – \$2,756  
Diocese of the Southeast (DSE) - \$2,340

These numbers clearly show the seeds of a missional mindset in DCS, but we could do better. Let's look into the numbers. If we assume a linear \$100/person rate, then it would follow that 267 people gave \$100 each. But we have more than 267 people attending our churches in DCS, and there were several large gifts from some individuals, meaning that a much smaller number of our people gave. Additionally, 44% of the DCS collection came from one church, suggesting even less per-capita participation across the diocese.

In 2025 we need a more robust program to ensure that people know that these are DCS funds, and that we are using them to grow the Diocese through church planting. Also, we need a higher percentage of participation homogenously across the diocese, and we will continue to need the larger gifts that we have received from some individuals. Making the case for these funds has to be a priority for clergy and vestries if we want to do better.

## **Church Growth & Revitalization**

Three churches in our diocese are pushing past the 100-person attendance level and are close to the limits of their space.

Fr. Davidson Morse at All Saints REC in Lynchburg, VA, 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. Continued growth is likely to soon force the consideration of two services.

Fr. McNamara is seeing young families as a large part of growth that has Christ the King at 125 in weekly attendance. +Bp. Manto confirmed 13 people there last month

Fr. Jonathan Kell, Rector of Church of Our Saviour, Oatlands in Leesburg, VA, is moving past the 150 mark, and has long been holding two Sunday services. He is leading the parish in a building program to expand the Sunday school and fellowship facilities and accommodate the growth. He continues to work with nearby Patrick Henry College in Purcellville, VA, in building up Church of Our Saviour and as a potential participant in a future plant.

## **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.

In Richmond, VA, Hunter Classical Christian School officially become a school of the DCS last year and is now beginning a fund-raising program for its own campus. The school has the opportunity to purchase a 100-acre parcel of land on the James River. Conceptual plans include not only the school buildings, but sports buildings and fields, and an REC church on the campus. 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.

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.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Ven. W. Scott Thompson

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

Archdeacon  
Diocese of the Central States