
Networking and Formation NEWS

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September 2019

NETWORKING & FORMATION

NEWS



Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

Networking and Formation News is for clergy and lay leaders interested in formation resources and networking opportunities, especially as they relate to our diocesan mission strategy – Embracing Brave Change: Reimagining Our Congregations, Building Our Relationships and Engaging Our World (www.diomass.org/our-mission).

I love this time of year as the days get cooler and programs gear up for the year ahead. This newsletter only touches on some of the many wonderful ministries happening in our diocese as we embrace brave change and respond to God's mission in this world. Please don't hesitate to send me information about formation and networking opportunities. The next newsletter will be published **Wednesday, Nov. 13** (deadline for submissions is **Oct. 30.**)

Martha Gardner

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FORMATION NEWS



Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
Fall Resource Day
*The Way of Love:
Formation, Evangelism and Discipleship*
Saturday, Sept. 28, 2019

Every congregation is invited to gather a group and go! This inspiring day-long program will be

devoted to learning how the "[Way of Love: Practices for a Jesus-Centered Life](#)" can be used through the ministries of the diocese and its congregations to grow more like Jesus and bear his redeeming love in the world. A group discount price is available. Check with your church to see if it is sending a group!

REGISTRATION CLOSES WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 25

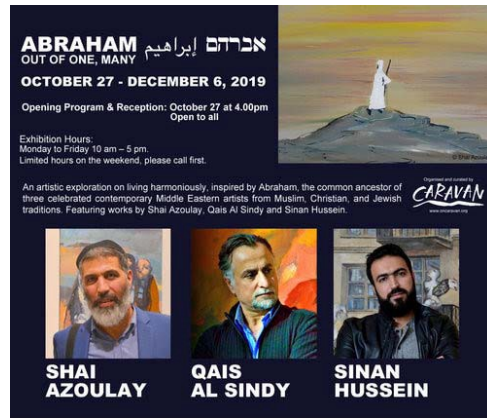
Register here.

"ABRAHAM: Out of One, Many"
exhibit coming to the Cathedral Church
of St. Paul, Oct. 27-Dec. 6

The globally acclaimed art exhibit "[Abraham: Out of One, Many](#)" will be installed at the [Cathedral Church of St. Paul \(138 Tremont Street\)](#) in Boston from **Oct. 27 to Dec. 6**. This exhibit features art by three renowned artists --one Jewish, one Christian and one Muslim-- exploring the story of common ancestor, Abraham. What can we learn from Abraham about hospitality, welcoming the stranger, life with God and other issues critical to our times? This exhibit invites exploration of these questions.

The exhibit's arrival and stay in Boston is the result of a collaboration with the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Central Reform Temple, Emmanuel Church Boston and the Muslim Jumah Prayer Group.

Several events are being planned, including an interreligious opening night celebration on **Sunday, Oct. 27** at 4 p.m. at the cathedral. A guide to the exhibit, with questions for group discussion, makes it an even richer resource for parish groups who would like to visit. Group visits can be scheduled. [Learn more.](#)



Although the exhibit focuses on Abraham, the Boston planning team seeks to lift up the stories of Sarah and Hagar, who are also central to this shared lineage. All are welcome to a book study of [Hagar, Sarah, and Their Children: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Perspectives](#), co-sponsored by the Bishops' Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, which will gather at the cathedral on the afternoons of **Nov. 10** and **17** and **Dec. 1** and **8**. Commission co-chair Jane Redmont will host, along with with a female leader from a different Abrahamic tradition. For details and to sign up, click [here](#).



In August, young pilgrims from the Diocese of Massachusetts went on mission to **Las Fronteras**, the borderlands, in partnership with the Diocese of Arizona. Based on the success

of their experience, plans are already underway for an **August 2020 trip**. For more on the program and this year's trip blog, visit www.diomassyouth.org.



The Diocese of Massachusetts is partnering with the Godly Play Foundation to offer every church in the diocese access to a foundation membership!

Congregations can take advantage of membership benefits including:

- Join the circle of Godly Play practitioners and programs, connecting and supporting one another.

- \$50 discount per registrant on retreat-style U.S. Core and Advanced trainings; \$20 discount on one and two-day trainings.
- Membership certificate and church listing in the online membership directory.
- Permission to use the official Godly Play logos and access to high resolution images.
- \$50 off an order of \$50 or more for [resources](#).
- Invitation to quarterly program support webinar/conference calls.

Need help rethinking or revitalizing your children's ministry? Looking for ways to meet the needs of today's children and their busy families?

love first™

Love First is a children's ministry model that aims to give children and their families what they need most, and what the church does best: LOVE. First designed for a parish in this diocese by Colette Potts, family therapist and author of [Love First: A Children's Ministry for the Whole Church](#). Love First is being used by dozens of parishes across the U.S. and Canada and in multiple denominations. Love First focuses on developing empathy in children by loving and serving others, and is built around Christ's teachings to love self, love neighbor and love God. Through biblical and contemporary texts, children explore themes of generosity, gratitude, courage, justice (and, of course, love!), all while doing age appropriate service projects for neighbors in need.

For information about Love First, or to schedule a consultation, visit www.lovefirstproject.org or contact Colette Potts at colette@lovefirstproject.org.

Special renewal gifts are available from the foundation for congregations registering for the second time:

- Send one person to a retreat-style U.S. Core or Advanced training for \$55.
- A one-hour personal room consultation. (Longer consultations may be negotiated for additional time and fees.)

To take advantage of benefits, congregations need to register on this [Membership Page](#), using the promotional code: **sacredcircle**

Questions may be directed to Teresa Phares, Director of Membership, at membership@godlyplayfoundation.org or 931-636-3993.

Register below for upcoming three-part Saturday Commuter Core Trainings:

[Sacred Stories: Sept. 14](#)
[Church of the Redeemer, Chestnut Hill](#)

[Parables: Sept. 21](#)
[Grace Church, Newton](#)

[Liturgical Action: Sept. 28](#)
[St. Mary's Church, Newton Lower Falls](#)

"Celebrating Baptism" video series and reflection guides now available

"Celebrating Baptism" offers an opportunity to teach and learn about this sacrament through a free Episcopal Church video series and accompanying reflection guides available [here](#).

"Whether participants are preparing for Baptism, reaffirming their baptismal vows or simply

learning about the Episcopal theology of Baptism, we hope that this series will help inform and inspire all who participate into a greater understanding of what it means to live a baptized life,” Jerusalem Greer, Episcopal Church Staff Officer for Evangelism, said in a news release.

“Through our Baptism we seek to follow the way of Jesus; we are named as one of God’s own,” Greer said. “As beloved, we celebrate our new life in the body of Christ, and then invite others into transformative relationship with God, others and creation. When we live wholeheartedly into this understanding of our identity as baptized Christians following the way of love, we have a greater opportunity to change not just our own lives, but the world.”

This series is also appropriate for use as part of Confirmation, inquirer and new member classes. The series includes three sessions, and leaves room for a fourth to be offered which could include a baptismal rehearsal or deeper question-and-answer time with clergy. The sessions are user-friendly and can be taught by clergy or lay persons.

"Celebrating Baptism" is available [here](#). Group discussion and reflection guides are provided for each of the three sessions. Access the guides by clicking the “Watch Episode” button.



It’s time for the Episcopal Church to come together as disciples of Jesus and take a bold new step into the next decade. Let’s spend four days together, talking about discipleship, leadership, evangelism, formation, preaching and much more—so we can go out and be the body of Christ.

Registration is now open [here](#). A group rate for the Diocese of Massachusetts has been set up on the registration site. Please contact Martha Gardner at mgardner@diomass.org if you are planning to attend.



All are invited to register for **Super Saturday**, sponsored by the Southern New England Conferences of the United Church of Christ, being held on **Oct. 5** in Framingham. There will be more than 50 workshops to choose from. Download the brochure and registration form [here](#) or register online: www.macucc.org/SS-Oct2019

Offerings from
Virginia Theological Seminary

[Lifelong Learning](#) provides continuous opportunities for theological education in the service of faithful leadership. It is for the committed and the curious, lay people and clergy eager to claim and explore their Christian vocations in today’s world.



Sept. 12 | The Art of Storytelling and Digital

Oct. 10 | Keeping Rest Holy; Taking Sabbath

Storytelling
3 p.m. Eastern, free. [Click here to register.](#)

Seriously
3 p.m. Eastern, free. [Click here to register.](#)

Building Faith is published by Lifelong Learning at Virginia Theological Seminary: "Our mission is to equip and inspire churches and individuals for the ministry of Christian education and faith formation. We believe that Christian education means helping all ages—children, youth and adults—grow in the knowledge and love of God. We also know that formation happens in many ways: worship, church school, faith at home, outreach, mission, camp and more. When you read articles on Building Faith, you are learning from ministry leaders in the field. Our authors are practitioners—women and men, lay and clergy—representing a wide variety of settings and denominations. Through the years Building Faith continues to **equip** ministry leaders to **teach** the Christian faith and **form** disciples of Jesus Christ."

Advent resources can be found [here](#).

MINISTRY NETWORK NEWS

Ministry Networks

Interested in getting a network started? Contact Martha Gardner, Missioner for Networking and Formation, at mgardner@diomass.org for more information. Interested in getting involved in an already existing network? Here are just a few of the networks active in the Diocese of Massachusetts.



The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers speaking at an evangelism gathering at Clergy Conference in April.

Creation Care Justice Network

Creation Care Season is coming! It runs from St. Francis Day (**Oct. 4**) through the last Sunday after Pentecost (**Nov. 24**).

The Creation Care Justice Network invites individuals and congregations to take positive steps to address the climate crisis. If you have not already done so, [take the Climate Pledge](#) which outlines how we can work toward a "loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with the whole of God's Creation."

We pledge to love Creation, to share our stories of love and concern for the earth and link with others to protect the sacred web of life. Some ways of doing this: Spend time outdoors every day. Preach, teach, pray and/or talk about your love and concern for

Evangelism Network

As the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement we are called to seek, name and celebrate Jesus' loving presence in the story of all people... then invite everyone to more!

Interested in joining Episcopalians from around our diocese to explore the way we share our faith by word and example? Does evangelism scare you? Think talking about Jesus is best left to our clergy?

Our diocesan Evangelism Network is excited to form regional networks of Episcopalians interested in exploring and growing in the spiritual practice of evangelism. If you are interested in participating or convening a regional group, please contact Billy Boyce at billboy721@aol.com or the Rev. Debbie Phillips at gcis1@verizon.net.

Check out our Practical Evangelism ideas [here](#). Try one on. Share pictures or stories of your practices of Episcopal evangelism by e-mailing diomassevangelism@gmail.com.

Practical Evangelism

Take a picture during a church service and post it to your own social media. Share a quote from one of the readings or a line from one of the hymns

our "island home." Join the "[Mass Meditation](#): Love for the Earth, Love for the Future" on Friday, **Sept. 27** at 3:30 p.m., Dewey Square, Boston, sponsored by Xtinction Rebellion, Boston.

We pledge to work for Creation liberation, to stand with those most affected by environmental degradation and climate change—women, children, poor people, communities of color, refugees, migrants. Some ways of doing this: Join in **Global Climate Week activities Sept. 20-27**. On Friday, **Sept. 20**, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., join the [Global Climate Strike](#) at Boston City Hall Plaza (or in Lexington, Andover, UMass-Dartmouth and Cape Cod. Use the map on the website linked above to find other events near you).

We pledge to act in life-giving ways, to change our habits and choices in order to live more simply, humbly and gently on the earth. Some ways to do this: Use the Episcopal Church carbon tracking resource "[Sustaining Earth, Our Island Home](#)."

Contact the Rev. Laurie Rofinot LARofinot@gmail.com for more information. Contact Anne Goldman at anneipseng@gmail.com to learn more about the "Carbon Tithing" booklet available to help track and reduce carbon emissions. Attend the diocesan [Resource Day](#) on Saturday, **Sept. 28** at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston for more on these and other great ideas.

Join the Creation Care Justice Network by clicking [here](#) to get regular updates on activities in the Diocese of Massachusetts and beyond.

Adolescents Mental Health Network
Please join for the second meeting of this newly emerging network. The meeting will take place on Tuesday, **Oct. 29** from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Lawrence Room at [138 Tremont Street, Boston](#). Dinner will be served. Online participation via Zoom is an option. The goal of the network is to share best practices and resources so that clergy and congregations can be most effective. RSVP to Martha Gardner at mgardner@diomass.org to attend.

Practical Evangelism

Take a picture during a church service and post it to your own social media. Share a quote from one of the readings or a line from one of the hymns.

#episcopalevangelism #wayoflove
#jesusmovement
@theepiscopalchurch



Diocese of Massachusetts
Evangelism Network



Please join us!

Jerusalem Greer, the staff officer for evangelism on the presiding bishop's staff, will be the

speaker for Clergy Day on **Tuesday, Sept. 24**. Everyone—whether lay or ordained—is invited to a conversation later that day with Jerusalem about the spiritual practice of evangelism and how we all can learn how to tell our story. The conversation begins at 5 p.m. and will extend over an early supper. For questions and to RSVP, contact Martha Gardner at mgardner@diomass.org.

Global Mission Commission

This commission is happy to announce that applications are being received this fall for the second round of grants from two programs:

- Applications for Sustainable Development Grants are available [here](#). They are due on Monday, **Oct. 21**. Sustainable Development Grants fund mission partners undertaking projects with tangible benefits for communities outside the Diocese of Massachusetts.
- Applications for Mission Tithe Relationship Grants are available [here](#). They are due on Monday, **Nov. 25**. Mission Tithe Relationship Grants provide financial support for congregations embarking on new relationships with partner communities from around the world.

For information please contact Lauren Zook at lzook@diomass.org.

IMMIGRATION RESOURCES



Join partners in welcome

Episcopal Migration Ministry's online learning and networking community

This community offers the ability to connect with a wide range of individuals and ministries engaged in work with refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants. [Join here.](#)

The fall 2019 "Pray, Learn, Engage" series invites individuals, study groups and congregations to join Episcopal Migration Ministry's Partners in Welcome, learn from its online courses (learning modules) and participate in its growing online learning community and ministry network. [Request the curriculum.](#)

Thursday, Sept. 19, 1-2 p.m. Eastern: "U.S. Immigration–The Basics" is a 50-minute overview of U.S. Immigration history, laws and system. This webinar is for those working with refugees, immigrants and the unauthorized, and it is for anyone who, as a curious citizen, wants to understand U.S. immigration. Register [here.](#)



EPISCOPAL CITY MISSION

Annual Meeting: Saturday, Oct. 12 at St. Cyprian's Church (1073 Tremont Street) in Roxbury, 9 a.m.

Each year Episcopal City Mission (ECM) members gather to conduct business and learn how to partner in the work of God's transforming love. This year, ECM will share a summary of findings from its parish focus groups and incorporate feedback. In addition participants will have the opportunity to engage in "mini-sessions" that introduce ECM's four key practices for racial and economic justice: partnership, consciousness, spirituality and collaboration. [Sign up here.](#)

Accompaniment & advocacy for immigration justice with BIJAN

ECM partners with BIJAN in acting for immigrant justice. BIJAN is a grassroots network of volunteers who offer support to those caught up in the harm of a racist immigration system, through court accompaniment, participating in rallies and vigils, offering rides and letters of support, and fundraising for bonds, legal fees and family support. Sign up to join the network [here.](#)



"The Last Dream" film screening

All are invited to join Episcopal City Mission at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (138 Tremont Street) in Boston on **Wednesday, Sept. 18** at 6:30 p.m. for a film screening of "The Last Dream," a documentary play depicting the feelings and experiences of children with Temporary Protected Status (TPS) parents. Following the screening will be a discussion with the [Massachusetts TPS Committee](#) (Comite TPS) about concrete action steps to support TPS. [Sign up here.](#)

ProGente Connections

ProGente Connections—formerly known as the Metrowest Mission Hub—is proud to offer these resources for diocesan or parish mission:

- English as a Second Language programs
- Organizing legal, citizenship and education workshops in areas of interest to immigrants and their allies.
- "Orientation to American Culture" curriculum and materials through partnership with *Intercambio*.
- Coaching for immigrants (including those without documents) interested in going to college and securing financial aid, and guiding students through the process of navigating college admission.
- Connecting immigrants with American partners to build relationships and find common ground in cross-cultural connection—an “easy-entry” format, suitable for first steps by communities for whom allying with immigrants is new.
- Heritage language programs: ProGente Connection’s Português Plus program offers instruction in Portuguese as a heritage language and cultural education to children ages 5-14. ProGente Connections can provide coaching and curriculum development ideas to enable other communities to reproduce a heritage language program. ProGente Connections is also delighted to host workshops and trainings on its model and best practices, for groups wishing to start heritage language programs of their own.

Read more about these opportunities [here](#). Contact ProGente Connections at lmillscurran@diomass.org or visit www.progenteconnections.org.

"The Episcopal Church: Walking with Immigrants" video available

The Episcopal Church continues to respond to the complex array of challenges facing immigrants across the United States, including support for children and other people seeking asylum at the U.S. southern border, assisting immigrants who are undocumented, advocating comprehensive immigration reform and resettling refugees through Episcopal Migration Ministries.

In a new video, *The Episcopal Church: Walking with Immigrants*, [available here](#), Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry introduces five bishops, including Bishop Thomas Brown of the Diocese of Maine, whose dioceses are actively engaged in immigrant welcome. Each bishop shares ways individuals or groups can support this work. Their intent is to inspire action and to highlight the many ways people can engage with and deepen their understanding of immigration issues. The video ends with an overview of the advocacy and refugee resettlement work done at the national level.

“Many Episcopalians have asked, ‘what is the Episcopal Church doing?’ And maybe the deeper question behind that has been the question, ‘what can I do?’” Curry says. “This video is intended to address those questions and to provide some ways that we, as followers of Jesus of Nazareth, can respond to this humanitarian crisis.”

What in the world is ZOOM?

Zoom is an online video conferencing platform that a number of diocesan groups and offices, including the Office of Networking and Formation, use for many of their meetings, webinars and workshops. To learn more about using Zoom, and to find tutorials, webinars and articles which walk users through the steps, visit the help center: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>.

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