

## Rector's Report January 2024

- On Tuesday December 19<sup>th</sup>, we hosted the final of four Advent Soup Suppers in which I shared [videos of my Sabbatical Adventures](#). All the videos are still available on YouTube and links to them were included in the Christmas e-card sent to the congregation on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. Although the average length of each video is about 5 minutes (the shortest is less than a minute and the longest is over a half hour), it takes a good 2 hours and 10 minutes to watch them all.



- On December 21, I participated in an Interfaith Winter Solstice Gathering at “The Reach,” the home of David Lochtie. The ceremony included the sounding of a gong, Sufi dance, body movements, songs, poetry (including a poem by Byrd Lochtie), and spiritual reflections, including my reflection on the Western Saint of the Winter Solstice: <https://deforestlondon.wordpress.com/2023/12/22/the-western-saint-of-the-winter-solstice/>



- I was encouraged by the high attendance at our Christingle Family Service and “Midnight Mass” on Christmas Eve (Dec 24) as well as our service on Christmas Day (Dec 25)

- On January 6, we celebrated Epiphany with King's Cake and the Chalking of the Doors, including the doors of the Chapel. Although the Joy Mass is experiencing a post-Christmas lull when it comes to the number of children in attendance, we are committed to continue offering the service until Easter and perhaps Pentecost, when we will re-evaluate our plans.



- On January 9, I met with Austin Roberts, who is the Roaster for Jitter Bean Coffee as well as the Philosophy Instructor at College of the Redwoods. He completed his PhD in Theology at Drew University, where his dissertation focused on political theology, process thought, and the Anthropocene. He will be donating five pounds of Jitter Bean coffee to the Betty Chinn Book Signing Event. Jitter Bean is referenced in *The Gray Bird Sings*: “Local coffee company Jitter Bean named a roast ‘Betty’s Blend’ and gave the organization twenty-five percent of the proceeds” (128 – 129).



- Also on January 9, Patty Hecht of HAPI (Humboldt Asian and Pacific Islanders in Solidarity) joined the Betty Chinn Event Planning Committee and she will be working with HAPI to provide Chinese New Year food and treats along with explanations about the traditional meaning associated with the food.
- January 11 was the tenth anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood. The day began with a phone call from Betty Chinn informing me that Zhao Parks, the owner of Bayfront One restaurant, wanted to donate sushi, pot stickers, and wine for the Book Signing / Chinese New Year Event. That was followed by a call to the bishop's office about **an upcoming trip that I'm now planning to take to Honduras next month (Feb 23 – March 5)**, followed by spiritual direction with a Jewish sage (Caroline Isaacs), followed by a hospital visit to see a parishioner, followed by a visit to another parishioner's home,

followed by a meeting with the committee planning worship for Presiding Bishop Curry's upcoming diocesan visit/Revival, followed by dinner with the Director of Sacred Music at the Chautauqua Institute (Joshua Stafford), his partner, and the Christ Church concert committee at Bayfront One where I met another Episcopal priest from the East Coast (the Rev. Sandra Etemad) who said she saw my book for sale at a monastery in New York and also where I met with Zhao Parks. And that night, I finished a first draft of my distillation of St. Aelred of Rievaulx's "Spiritual Friendship," a project inspired by my ordination on the Eve of his Feast Day (Jan 12).



- On January 12, Ashley and I hosted the clergy of the deanery for a Clericus Epiphany Party, which included food, drinks, and a fun round of White Elephant Gift Exchange.



- On January 16, the Rev. Tammy Smith-Firestone and I sent a letter to the clergy and congregational leaders of the diocese, seeking video testimonials to share at the Revival in April. See copy of letter below.



- On January 20, we celebrated, blessed, and bore witness to the joining together of David Arthur Tschoepe and Valerie Jean Budig Markin along with members from St. Alban's, St. Francis, Grace-Good Shepherd Lutheran-Presbyterian congregation, the Roman Catholic Church, Temple Beth El Synagogue, the Yup'ik community, and more.
- On January 22, I began teaching my Celtic Spirituality and English Mysticism course through CALL (Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership). This winter, I have students from Sacramento, Washington, Texas, West Virginia, New York, and Canada. Also, Mother Geri Cunningham of St. Francis Fortuna is taking the course.
- The former dean of the Episcopal School for Deacons, Rod Dugliss, invited me to lead an online Lenten Retreat with the Pacific Center for Spiritual Formation on St. Aelred of Rievaulx and Spiritual Friendship on Saturday February 17<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 3 PM. Some information below and more information to come.

**CELTIC SPIRITUALITY AND ENGLISH MYSTICISM**  
 Online Course through CALL (Center for Anglican Learning and Leadership)  
 January 22 - March 11, 2024

This online course will cover the history of Christian Spirituality in the British Isles prior to the Protestant Reformation, including Celtic Spirituality, Romano-British Christianity, Anglo-Saxon spirituality, and medieval English mysticism. Students will practice and reflect upon the spiritual disciplines described and prescribed in primary texts (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, *Walter Hilton's Scale of Perfection*, *Julian of Norwich's Showings*, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History*, *Aelred of Rievaulx's Spiritual Friendship*, Celtic prayers, and more) in order to better understand the texts in light of their experiences and their experiences in light of the texts. Their reflections will focus on the following questions: How does the text inform my experience of the spiritual practice? And how does my experience of the spiritual practice inform and deepen my reading of the text?

The Rev. Daniel DeForest London, PhD, is the rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka, CA. He has taught courses on Christian Spirituality, World Religions and Christian Social Ethics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, the Graduate Theological Union, and the Episcopal School for Deacons. He is the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing Distilled and Theology and Spirituality in the Fourth Gospel*. He served as a Visiting Scholar at the College of St. John the Evangelist in Auckland NZ and has presented papers at academic conferences around the world. He was trained as a Forest Therapy Guide in Yorkshire UK.

Register for online course here:  
<https://odsp.edu/bair/online/call/winter-2024/#celticspirituality>

Church Divinity School of the Pacific



## SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP RETREAT

In this daylong Lenten retreat, participants will engage with a distillation of a medieval masterpiece titled *Spiritual Friendship* written by English Cistercian abbot St. Aelred of Rievaulx, who integrated the wisdom of Celtic Christianity, Anglo-Saxon spirituality, Roman Classic philosophy, and Cistercian spirituality in a text that invites us to connect with the heart of friendship and the friendship of the heart.



The Rev. Daniel DeForest London, PhD, is the rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Eureka CA. He has taught courses on Christian Spirituality, World Religions and Christian Social Ethics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, the Graduate Theological Union, and the Episcopal School for Deacons. He is the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing Distilled* and *Theodicy and Spirituality in the Fourth Gospel*. He served as a Visiting Scholar at the College of St. John the Evangelist in Auckland NZ and has presented papers at academic conferences around the world. He was trained as a Forest Therapy Guide in Yorkshire UK.

## Call for Revival Testimonies – January 16, 2024

Dear Clergy and Congregational Leaders,

The Worship committee for our upcoming Revival on April 27 is calling for stories about where we are seeing love planted and hope harvested in our diocese.

We trust that God will speak to us at the Revival not only through Bishop Curry but also through the lived experiences of others. For this reason, the Revival event will include testimonies from members of our congregations.

We would appreciate your inviting one or two individuals from your congregation to prepare a short testimony about a personal experience of God's love and hope in their daily lives, in the church, or in serving others.

The best is when all three come together! We would like to hear from the diverse voices of our diocese, especially in the areas of Racial Reconciliation, Disaster Resilience, Environmental Justice, Latino Ministry, and Youth and Young Adult ministry, among others. A helpful outline is:

- Before ... - *the situation the individual was facing.*
- Then God! ...
- And now... - *the difference it has made.*

Videos should be 2-3 minutes long, and if recorded with a smart-phone should use horizontal orientation and high resolution. If it is possible to accompany the video with a written script, please do so.

Our team will review all the testimonies we receive. Some may be used only for our team's planning to help us learn more about how the Spirit is at work in our diocese. Others might be shared in the Revival worship service or in other diocesan events and communications. Our team will check back in with submitters to let them know if we intend to share the testimonial in one of these ways and to ensure that the submitter's permission to share is given.

The written script or video must be submitted later than **February 21**. Please go to the follow link and drag the video to upload: [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1E6r-GB9\\_0HSt5IAej65he4yZiQUe8Xlq?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1E6r-GB9_0HSt5IAej65he4yZiQUe8Xlq?usp=share_link)

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us at: [revtammy@saintpetersredbluff.org](mailto:revtammy@saintpetersredbluff.org) or [daniel.london@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.london@gmail.com)

With gratitude,  
Tammy + and Daniel +