



Louisiana Interchurch Conference

December 20, 2016

E-News

“To live the faith we hold in common”

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...And, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. (Matthew 2:9-10)

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[Making All Things New](#)

Article from our Director

Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away. And the one who was seated on the throne said, See, I am making all things new.

Though he didn't know or, perhaps, wouldn't admit to himself, the tired, weary man's life had fallen apart. His best friend and business partner died, and he alone was left to take care of his business. The woman who was really the love of his life slipped through his hands and out of his life. He tried harder and harder to become richer and richer, and he was successful. In the process of becoming a wealthy man, there were many in his village whom he alienated because of the unjust means by which he acquired his wealth. He mistreated his employees and ignored them and the needs of their families. Though no one particularly wished evil upon him, it would have been hard to find someone who

would miss this miserly man when he died.

Then something unusual happened. This is a popular story, but this film of Ebenezer Scrooge with Albert Finney in the title role, is one that for me never grows old and is always current in its message. It's really due to Finney's amazing portrayal of Scrooge whose long night of ghostly encounters leads him to a complete transformation of his life from a "miserly man to a kinder, gentle person." Of course, the transformation in his life also had to do with his relationships with people and his relationships with his possessions. Scrooge woke up the morning after his nightmarish visions realizing he was alive and well and that he was ready to begin again. He was a new man, and it is so exciting to see Finney's Scrooge dance through the streets with a crowd of people, many of whom in the past he'd wronged, but now were reconciled as Scrooge made restitution to everyone. In a way his giving away of his money which was in the past so precious to him, and, instead, reaching out to others to love and be loved is really close to the meaning of Christmas.

It may not be the case that Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* is considered a theological text, but themes in the novel and particularly the character of Ebenezer Scrooge lead me to think about a ghostly, spiritual experience--Conversion. For me Scrooge was a new man because of his conversion experience. This miserly man became a servant for others. Someone shared an illustration that comes to mind now. Some of us may be settling for an *inoculation* of Christianity -- just enough of it so that they don't catch the real thing. Sometimes Christmas is no more than a "booster shot" -- something that helps us *not* catch the real thing. The real thing is "God is with us". The "savior" has been born and is with us. My nieces often say to their mother, "I love you!" My sister will quickly reply, "I love you MORE!" Christmas awakens our love for others, but Jesus loves us MORE! May the Christ who comes to us this Christmas make us new that we might begin again. Is it too much to pray that our national leaders and those around the world might also experience this conversion? May God in Christ make all things new!

Rev. Dan Krutz

[A heart travels to Louisiana after 150 years](#)



Source: Catholic Connection Magazine December 2016

In an extraordinary event, the Heart of Saint John Berchmans traveled to Shreveport this month in honor of the 150th anniversary of a miracle in Louisiana.

The unique relic (see photo on left) contains the actual, preserved heart of Fr. John Berchmans who died at the age of 22 from "Roman Fever" in 1621. Many stories of miracles arose after his death, but the one that led to his canonization took place in Grand Coteau, LA. At the convent of the Sacred Heart, novice Mary Wilson had fallen gravely ill. On the ninth and final day of a novena that she and a group of sisters were praying, he appeared to her and she was immediately and completely healed.

This is the first time the heart has ever traveled outside of its homeland, modern day Belgium, and it has now visited the only cathedral in the world named for this saint. The heart was on display December 8th -18th in Shreveport, except for December 14th, when the heart traveled to Grand Coteau, the site of the apparition and miracle.

Congratulations to Rev. Dr. Nadine Burton of the D.O.C.



Dr. Burton ends her interim service on Dec. 31st, and begins her permanent position on Jan 1st as the new Executive Regional Minister of the Disciples of Christ, Great River Region.

On December 9th, Dr. Dave Britt, moderator of the Great River Region Board of Directors of the Disciples of Christ, announced that Dr. Nadine Burton had been elected to serve as permanent Executive Regional

Minister. “Dr. Burton has done an excellent job as Interim Minister, dealing with a number of unexpected challenges and visiting a terrific number of our congregations in the process. She has earned respect and appreciation not only from our congregations but at the national level as well.”

Rev. Nadine was hired as an Interim and could not be considered for the permanent position during her one-year contract. However, when the year expired, the Board asked her to extend her ministry for several months, and Nadine agreed. During that extended time, and after considering many other candidates, the Search Committee felt both free and strongly led to approach her about the permanent position.

Dr. Burton has already been active with the LIC during her time as Interim and we look forward to continuing the relationship with her.

January Week of Prayer events

Please let us know of Week of Prayer events in your area!

Please let us know as soon as you are able, of events being planned in your area, so that we may post the events on the LIC website. Find out more about the Week of Prayer, at website: <http://www.geii.org/>

2017 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
Held January 18th – 25th annually

Thus far, we have been made aware of this one event:

Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels us
(2 Corinthians 5:14-20)



January 22, 2017, New Orleans: This year the Order of St. Lazarus will observe Unity Sunday, by worshipping with the St Andrews Episcopal Church congregation. As an ecumenical Order, they worship on Unity Sunday every year with a different tradition. Mr. Hugh Straub, (LIC Associate Member representative), said, "We greatly benefit by using this special day to appreciate and respect the variety of ways we Christians honor our Lord." St. Andrews is located at 1031 South Carrollton Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70118. Phone: 504-866-5959. Office email: administrator@standrewsnola.com

SLLS offering free legal help to Disaster Victims

Southeast Louisiana Legal Services

SLLS provides free disaster civil legal services to low income residents who were impacted by the recent historic floods.

SLLS provides access to legal help for people to protect their livelihoods, their health, and their families and communities. They help individuals, small business owners, and communities devastated by disasters; families facing domestic violence or homelessness; homeowners facing foreclosure, veterans and military families struggling with civilian life.

Legal services include: landlord tenant rights; successions; contractor fraud; FEMA issues; custody; school admission; disaster food stamps (dsnapp); disaster unemployment; & many other civil issues.

Can also apply online at: www.slls.org

Residents of Disaster Parishes of St. Tammany, Washington, St. Helena, & Tangipahoa, contact:
 1200 Derek Dr. Suite 100,
 Hammond, LA 70403
 985-345-2130 or
 1-800-349-0886

For: Ascension, East Feliciana, Iberville, Point Coupee, West Feliciana, Livingston, & East Baton Rouge, residents contact:
 715 St. Ferdinand St.
 Baton Rouge, La 70802
 (855) 512-3980 or
 (225) 448-0080

Dr. Diana Bass coming to Alexandria in January

<p>WHAT'S HAPPENING TO RELIGION IN AMERICA?</p> <p>DR. DIANA BUTLER BASS</p> <p>JANUARY 17, 2017 7:00 PM FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ALEXANDRIA, LA</p>	
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Dr. Diana Butler Bass will speak on Tuesday evening, January 17th, at First United Methodist Church in Alexandria at 7:00pm. Admission is free, and there will be a book signing with refreshments afterward. She will be speaking on the changes and developments in American religion.

Dr. Bass is a leading sociologist of religion and the author of many books on American religion, some of which are specifically geared to the challenges of congregational work. If you'd like to learn more about her, check out her website:

www.dianabutlerbass.com. She grew up Methodist, is now a member of an Episcopal church, but will not be advancing any particular denominational outlook.

There will be more than one opportunity to interact with Dr. Butler Bass:

Tuesday, January 17th, at noon: She will address the Alexandria Rotary Club, which meets at Alexandria's City Hall. Then later that evening will be the 7pm event as mentioned above. On Wednesday morning, January 18th, (exact time and place in the Alexandria area to be determined), it is hoped to have an informal meeting and dialogue with area ministers and interested lay leaders.

Bread or Stones Listening Post – Lafayette, January 29th



LAFAYETTE LISTENING POST

The Bread or Stones Campaign is a Christian coalition of churches and concerned individuals working together to improve the lives of children in Louisiana.

Church members and leaders concerned with childhood poverty and child well-being in Lafayette are encouraged to attend our listening post at **First Presbyterian at 1130 Johnston Avenue** on **Sunday, January 29th**, in the afternoon (official time will be released shortly). This will be a time to learn about the issues effecting children in poverty and what the religious community can do to help.

Come voice your concerns and collaborate with others for the good of our children.

Want more info on the Bread or Stones Campaign?

Please contact [Samuel Rottman](mailto:Samuel.Rottman) or lainterchurch@aol.com

Annual Assembly – plan to be there March 6th – 7th!



The 47th Annual Assembly will be held **March 6-7, 2017**, in Monroe, LA.

Working theme: **"Reformation: Watching the change in our Church and in our Coastline."**

We will soon be sending out requests to leaders of the LIC membership for contact information of delegates to whom they would like for us to send registration packets to. **As always, Guests will be invited to all speaker sessions.** More information on the Assembly will be posted in upcoming newsletters.

In the meantime, please save the dates!

Prayer Requests

Please hold in prayer Rev. Ron Sutto (Judicatory Leader to the LIC for the Presbytery of South Louisiana), and family, after the passing of his beloved daughter, **Mrs. Debra Jean Vetvick** of Plano. Debra passed away December 12, 2016, at the age of 49 after a lengthy battle with cancer. Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org. Visit <https://www.turrentinejacksonmorrow.com/obituaries/debra-jean-vetvick> for her obituary link and guest book.

Last month, we had requested prayer for **Mrs. Marguerite Rucker**, wife of Mr. Bill Rucker. Marguerite passed on November 20th at 90 years of age. We offer prayers and condolences to the Rucker family. Bill is a member of the LIC Commission on Criminal Justice (CCJ).

Mrs. Betty Puckett, LIC Farmer's Advocate, has had to immediately step down from her position with the LIC due to a diagnosis on November 30th of chronic CML leukemia. She has already started Chemo to get her white blood cells down. We know that the farmers will miss Betty's invaluable assistance. Our prayers remain with Betty.

Please continue to remember in prayer those still struggling with the effects of the March and August **flooding** in Louisiana. Many will still not be back in their homes and/or businesses this Christmas.

Mrs. Kitty Smith has been in hospice, and as of the last report we received, nearing the end of her time here. Kitty was formerly a Secretary on the LIC Board and was quite active in the LIC at that time. Please remember her children Marilyn Pratt, Katie de Koster, and Doug Smith, and the rest of the family in prayer as they hold vigils by her bedside. They plan to bring her ashes back to Louisiana to bury with her husband John, in Lafayette.

Offering thanks to our recent contributors

The majority of the LIC operating income is contributed through the leadership of our member Judicatories, whom we deeply appreciate and depend upon. Additionally, we offer our sincere thanks to our ministry partners who have contributed as listed below.

Contributions received from November 18, 2016 through December 20, 2016:

Friends of the LIC and Miscellaneous Contributions: Mary Jane Jones; Sara L. Simmonds; Louis and Jackie McHardy; Keith Horcasitas; Donna

Crider; Rev. Susan Gaumer; Rev. David Greer; Rev. Larry & Linda Miller; Carol S. Broussard; Bishop Cynthia & Dean Harvey; Rev. Mallery Callahan; and Fr. Wayne Carter

Stovall Endowment Fund for Advocacy & Social Justice: Estate of Mary E. ("Betty") Cummings

Bread or Stones children's anti-poverty initiative: Estate of Mary E. ("Betty") Cummings; The American Association of the Order of St. Lazarus, Inc.; and the Order of St. Lazarus – Grand Commandery of the South.

Sabbatical and Continuing Education Fund for Executive Director: Madeline St. Amant

Thank you!

Please pray for this ecumenical ministry. If you would like to help financially, please mail contributions to: Louisiana Interchurch Conference, 527 N. Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, or contribute online via PayPal at <http://www.lainterchurch.org/contribute/index.htm>.

Dates to calendar & LIC Holiday schedule

Bread or Stones Listening Post: **Sunday, January 29, 2017** at First Presbyterian Church, 1130 Johnston Avenue, Lafayette. (Exact time t/b/a)

Bread or Stones Task Force Meeting: **Thursday, February 2, 2017** at the UMC Conference Building in Baton Rouge, beginning at 10am. Guests are welcome! Contact the LIC at LaInterchurch@aol.com for more information.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

Annual Assembly meeting dates:

2017		March 6-7, Monroe
2018		March 5-6, Baton Rouge

Fall Board meeting dates:

2017		Sept. 25-26, Alexandria
2018		Sept. 24-25, Lake Charles

LIC Holiday Schedule:

Closed for Christmas: Friday, December 23rd through Tuesday, December 27th. Will reopen on Wednesday, December 28th.

Closed for New Year's: Friday, December 30th and Monday, January 2nd. Will reopen on Tuesday, January 3.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Louisiana Interchurch Conference

527 North Blvd., 4th Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

(225) 344-0134 www.lainterchurch.org

President: The Rev. Dr. C. S. Gordon, Jr.; President Elect: The Most Rev. Michael G. Duca;

Executive Director: Fr. Dan Krutz

You are receiving this message because you have previously expressed interest in the work of Louisiana Interchurch Conference. ***We hope you enjoy our newsletter!*** However, if you'd like to discontinue receiving this e-newsletter, please [click here](#) or call us at: (225) 344-0134.