



Louisiana Interchurch Conference

L-Newsletter

February 2019

"To live the faith we hold in common"

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Director's Corner

*Article from our
Executive Director,
Rev. Dan Krutz*



Epiphany, Presence, and Sense of Call

Jesus took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. They appeared in glory...Luke 9:28-31a

The glory of some of the Mardi Gras floats can be breathtakingly stunning, though, of course, others are a bit risqué and cleverly devilish. However, the glory of the King or Queen atop an elegant float like Rex makes me think of another kind of glory, that of Jesus on the mountaintop that bright day when Moses and Elijah also appeared in glory witnessed by Peter, John and James. The power of that Presence undoubtedly had an incredible impact on Jesus. He had a renewed and transformed sense of God's purpose and call to mission. Presence can make the difference in our lives.

Recently, my wife and I had the opportunity to spend a few days visiting our son and his family in Virginia. We were there to help our son care for our twin grandchildren because his wife was on a weekend trip. Even though we had not seen them in some months, we both were pleasantly surprised when the two of them rushed toward us on our arrival. As the weekend began, our daughter-in-law had to catch an early plane leaving before the children awakened. The day seemed to go very well, that is, until our daughter-in-law did not come home late that afternoon. It took us a while to understand that our grandson was in a panic because his mother wasn't home, and so he began to cry what seemed like a river of tears. Almost miraculously, when my son picked up our grandchild and cradled him in his arms, the tears disappeared. Resting in the presence of his father brought up a substantive change in that little boy.

Mardi Gras provides a day of levity and enjoyment that helps pass a good time and maybe even a sense of refreshment as we return to our daily routines. As we prepare to make the transition from the season of epiphanies of which the Transfiguration of the Lord is a pivotal moment, hopefully, something of the experience of the glory of the Lord and the Presence of the Holy will give a renewed sense of Call. The realization of that Divine Presence was transformative in the life of Jesus. In different ways as we conclude the celebration of the Mardi Gras Holidays, may that other Presence that enveloped Jesus also envelop each of us as God's Church that we might confidently walk together into God's future.

World Day of Prayer event in Baton Rouge on March 1st

Annually, the World Day of Prayer is celebrated on March 1st. Events are held across the globe. We've been made aware of a Baton Rouge event:

Pastor Connie Saizon, President of the Baton Rouge Chapter of Church Women United, is inviting local residents to join in CWU's first celebration for this year: the World Day of Prayer. The activity will be held at New St. Luke Baptist Church, 538 S. Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Registration will begin at 9:00 am. A light breakfast will be available and the program begins at 10:00 am. Again, the date is this Friday, March 1st.

New law expands voting rights for convicted felons

Louisiana has 1.7 million people with criminal records. Effective March 1, 2019, a new law in Louisiana allows more people who are on parole or probation to be eligible to vote. They must meet these qualifications:

On March 1, they will have voting rights IF:

- They are off probation/parole by then, or
- They have been on parole for 5 years by then, and
- They have not been incarcerated on a probation violation by then

Note that you must register to vote at least 30 days prior to any given election. Those who meet the above qualifications may register to vote immediately in order to be eligible for voting in the March 30th elections.

49th Annual Assembly, March 11th-12th in Lafayette

We Hope to See YOU There!

The 49th Annual Assembly of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference will be held **March 11-12, 2019**, at the Immaculata Center in Lafayette, LA, with the theme: ***“The Church--Race, Migration and Immigration”***

As always, **Guests** are invited to all speaker sessions & to the evening worship service

Public Schedule: Speaker Sessions on **Monday, March 11th** will be held from **2:15 to 5:00pm** and on **Tuesday** from **9:30 to 10:45am**. **Evening worship** in the Immaculata Chapel will begin at **7:30** that **Monday evening**.

Confirmed speakers:

For Monday:



Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe

For Tuesday:



Dr. Susan Mary Weishar

The **Keynote Speaker** for the Assembly will be the **Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe**, General Secretary of the General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church. **She will present on Monday.** Dr. Henry-Crowe has served as the social justice agency’s top executive since 2014, after serving 22 years at Emory University. For 16 years, she served as a member of the United Methodist Judicial Council, the denomination’s “Supreme Court.” She was the first woman elected president of the Judicial Council, serving in that role from 2008-2012.

On Tuesday, Susan M. Weishar, Ph.D. will be our speaker. Dr. Weishar has over thirty years of experience in education and human services to JSRI, including fourteen years as Director of Immigration and Refugee Services with Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans. Earlier, she worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Samoa and as a teacher in Guatemala.



Immaculata Center (left). The chapel (right) is located behind the main building.

Evening Ecumenical Worship Service, Monday, March 11th
EVERYONE IS INVITED!

The Rev. Dr. Timothy R. Jones, President of the Louisiana Missionary Baptist State Convention will give the homily, with other clergy and lay leaders participating in the service as well. The service will include installation of new and re-

elected officers including the incoming LIC President, the Rev. Dr. Timothy R. Jones. The service is open to the public and begins at 7:30 in the Chapel behind the main building of the Immaculata Center.

REMINDER – *for those needing hotel reservations for the Assembly, the cutoff date for the LIC’s discounted room block rate is midnight on March 2nd.*

Please [contact the LIC](#) for more info.

Environmental Educational Field Day March 16th

This FREE event is open to the general public as well as the clergy, vestry and lay members of the diocese, and will be held on Saturday, March 16, 2019, from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., at St Georges Episcopal Church, 4600 St Charles Ave, New Orleans, LA 70115.

Bishop Marc Andrus from the Episcopal Diocese of California will keynote and lead discussions. Professor Mark Davis from the Tulane Bywater Institute will address the changing Louisiana environment and their work in partnering with our communities in response to our changing environment. Helen Rose Patterson, from Restore the Mississippi River Delta and Liz Sheppard from Life City will share their work and offer opportunities for our churches to partner with them in support of coastal restoration, sustainable energy options and practices to reduce our carbon footprint. The Diocese will have three of their churches share their best practices on environmental stewardship, and there will be time reserved at the end of the session for Q&A and discussion on next steps.

Register here: <http://bit.ly/edola-serving-preserving>

Agenda:

- 9—9:30 a.m. Registration / meet & greet (coffee and pastries)
- 9:30—11:30 a.m. Presentations
- 11:30 a.m.—12 p.m. Q&A

Questions:

Contact Deacon Joey Clavijo, Environmental Commission Chair, at environment@edola.org.

Jacques Cousteau once said, “For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it.”

Faith & Community Toolkit on Human Trafficking



February 2019: New Release! Faith and Community Toolkit on Human Trafficking from DHS

[DHS Blue Campaign](#) and the DHS Center for Faith and Opportunity Initiatives developed the [Faith-Based and Community Toolkit](#), a human trafficking resource for the faith community. This toolkit provides tips and resources to engage houses of worship and the community to help raise awareness of human trafficking and how to be trauma responsive to the needs of victims or those vulnerable to harm. This resource equips faith leadership with the tools to recognize and respond to human trafficking and suggest ways to build stronger partnerships with social service agencies, advocacy groups and law enforcement in support of the whole community. The Toolkit is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Please download the [Faith-Based and Community Toolkit](#) and share broadly with your congregation, community and colleagues!

Learn more about other [DHS Blue Campaign Resources](#), including the [General Awareness Training Video](#).

Recently, in the Clarion Herald Newspaper, Archbishop Gregory Aymond published a commentary: “[Human Trafficking Hiding in Plain Sight](#).” In this column he stated that human trafficking is a modern form of slavery and an affront to human dignity. He gave statistics from government reports indicating that there are between 14,500 and 17,500 individuals in the U.S. who are trafficked every year. Ninety-Five percent of all active criminal trafficking cases as the federal level were sex-trafficking cases. The most recent Louisiana Department of Children and Family services report notes that **52 percent of the human trafficking victims in Louisiana were minors**, and 11 percent of them were under the age of 12.

LIC receives new grant to continue helping to reintegrate violent and sex offenders

Dr. Stephanie Gaskill will continue to work for the Louisiana Interchurch Conference under a new grant recently received. The grant purpose is listed as: *“Welcoming the Worst of the Worst”: How churches respond to members convicted of violent crimes and sex offenses.* This grant will cover an 18 month program.

Dr. Gaskill recently finished her work with “Seventy Times Seven” which was also an initiative involving such offenders. The Seventy Times Seven website remains active at: <https://www.70times7.us/>

National Workshop on Christian Unity in April

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! For the 2019 National Workshop on Christian Unity to be held in St. Louis, MO April 1-4, 2019

The workshop will include a rich program of plenaries and seminars, a banquet, off-site tours, and opportunities to join together in prayer. The theologian in residence will be Brother Emile from the Taizé Community in France. He will lead in daily prayer, reflections and study throughout the event.

[View Schedule and Plenary/Seminar Speakers here](#)

The National Workshop on Christian Unity has advanced unity and reconciliation among various Christian communities for more than 50 years. The Workshop continues to be the only gathering of its kind at a national level in the world. The annual event brings together ecumenical representatives, ecumenists, and interested members from all churches who share one faith, one baptism in Jesus Christ.

Offering thanks to our recent contributors – we couldn't make it without you all!

The majority of the LIC operating income is contributed through the leadership of our member Judicatories, whom we deeply appreciate and depend upon.

Contributions received from February 1, 2019 through February 28, 2019:

Endowment Fund for Christian Unity: First United Methodist Church of Baton Rouge; Sterling Millet; Dr. Marian Schwab; and an anonymous giver.

Thank you all!

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 Stewardship of the Environment Commission Meeting – (Thursday) February 28, 2019 (conference call)

LIC Faith and Order Commission Meeting – (Friday) March 1, 2019 (conference call)

LIC Commission on Criminal Justice meeting – (Thursday) March 21, 2019 in Baton Rouge

Annual Assembly meeting dates:

2019		March 11-12, Lafayette
2020		March 2-3, Baton Rouge – 50th Annual Assembly – don't miss it!!

Fall Board meeting dates:

2019		Sept. 23-24, Monroe
2020		Sept. 21-22, Shreveport

“To live the faith we hold in common”

*President: The Rev. Cynthia Fierro Harvey; President Elect: The Rev. Dr. Timothy Jones;
Executive Director: Fr. Dan Krutz*