

Spring 2023

# Anglican Diocese of the Southwest

The Anglican Church in North America



**DIOCESAN SYNOD 2023**

PUERTO VALLARTA, JAL. MEX

Newsletter



## Anglican Diocese of the Southwest

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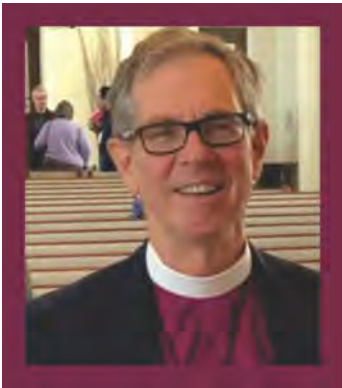
The mission of this Diocese is to support our Congregations in extending the Kingdom of God by Presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit through proclaiming the Gospel and making disciples. We seek to support each other and be unified through prayer, Bible study, education, worship, church planting, revitalization, youth ministry, and fellowship.

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## *Bishop's Corner*

**G**reetings in the mighty Name of Jesus!

This is the second of our diocesan newsletters, and I'm excited and very grateful to the One Diocese Together Team that made it happen!

In the first letter, I talked about the missionary DNA of Anglicanism, and how in the ADSW we are both inheritors of the blessing of that missionary DNA, but also God's means of propagating that DNA as we consider the huge challenge He has laid before us of reaching 100 million people, spread over 1 million square miles with the very good news of Jesus!

I want to lay the groundwork for a discussion of our mission and how we might go about accomplishing it by talking about an important tool that I introduced at Synod.

There's a good chance that by now you've seen the card or heard me teach on it. The card contains a picture of the cross, with a summary of the commands of Jesus, what I call the "five loves."

It is a way of helping us to focus on what's most important to Jesus as we seek to follow Him, disciple others, and plant churches.

Even though there are over 600 commands in the Bible, Jesus, very helpfully, summarized his commands in three places in the Bible.

They are:

### **The Great Commandment (Mark 12:29-31)**

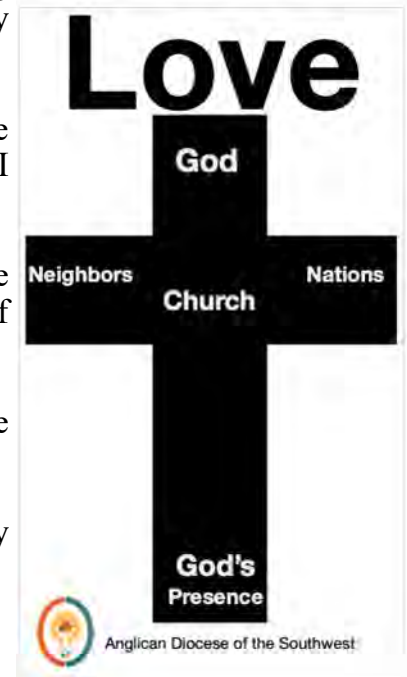
Where Jesus tells us to Love God with all our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and to Love our neighbors as ourselves.

### **The Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)**

He tells us to Go and make disciples of all nations. I've summarized this commitment to the nations as a command to Love the nations. He says that as we go out to follow His commands that He will be with us. We will be accompanied by the Presence of God.

### **The New Commandment (John 13:34)**

Jesus told his disciples that they are to Love each other the way that He loved them. I know this seems similar to the command to love our neighbors. But there is a big difference. We are commanded to treat the other people in our church better than we treat ourselves. We are commanded to Love them as Jesus loves us.





On the horizontal bar of cross, I've arranged the commands that relate to our **horizontal** relationships (the ones we have with other people): Neighbors, Church, and Nations. I've arranged the commands relating to our **vertical** relationship (that is, our relationship with God) on the vertical part of the cross.

The goal is for us to become "cross-shaped". We want to become people whose lives are marked by a profound love for God—a love that is not just abstract but can be concretely experienced in his very real presence. We want to be people who are known for our love for each other, our neighbors, and the people of other nations.

This goal also works for our discipleship of others, whether we are working with our peers, our children, or our young people. Our goal in all of our teaching and ministry is to raise up cross-shaped followers of Jesus.

This not only applies to our discipleship, but also to our groups and ministries and churches. We want to plant churches that are cross-shaped. We want churches that are serving and caring for our neighbors, reaching out to the nations, and investing our energy in loving those within our church communities. We want to create churches that first are known for their love of God and are known as places where God's presence is manifest. We want people who walk into our meetings to be struck by how real God is among us!

To summarize, this diocesan cross, reminding us of Jesus' five loves, is a template for our own lives and the lives of our students and disciples. It is also a template for the churches we create as we strive to reach the 100 million people in our diocese with the love of Jesus.

I close by praying for you a prayer that Paul prayed for the Ephesians: (1:17-19) I pray that our God, the glorious Father might give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in order that you might know Him better, and that the eyes of your hearts might be enlightened in order that you might know: the hope to which He has called you, your glorious inheritance in the saints, and His immeasurably great power for you who believe.

Always in Jesus,  
**Steven**

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**The 12th Annual Synod**  
**September 7-9, 2023**

**Sacramento Retreat and Conference Center, Sacramento, NM**

This year's Synod will be more than just a business meeting. Come to a lively weekend of Renewal, Prayer and Fellowship (with a small smattering of business included)! The Synod is open to all members of our diocese. Looking forward to seeing you in September!

# Listening to the Master's Voice

## *A reflection on Matthew 28:16-20 and the 2022 Synod*

by Rev. Isaí Valenzuela



**A**fter many years in ministry, the wait for this significant date, November 2022, was finally over. My ordination to the priesthood was to become a reality. My joy was even greater because I was sharing this time with others. There were five of us men who were called, willing to listen to the voice of God and serve the Lord in our beloved diocese. Time and distance could not be an impediment; my family and I traveled about 3,223 km by land in order to enjoy together the Diocesan Synod 2022 in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Through three scenes I will try to reflect on "Listening to the Master's Voice":

- A) A small group of men were given a global strategy to carry the love of God to the world.
- B) Jesus still looks out over the whole world and weeps for men and women and children who do not know him.
- C) We desire to act more boldly. . . and spend less time chasing after the non-essentials.

**To listen to the Master's voice is:** *To accept the challenge given to a small group of men.*

If I had the privilege of writing a news article about the greatest events throughout the centuries, one of the most important would be the miracle of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and the manifestations of His resurrection. In that meeting held somewhere on the mountain near Galilee, a small group of men were given an overall strategy to bring God's love and forgiveness to a dying world. On that mountain, these men were given that greatest challenge ever given to mankind, by that greatest person who ever lived, whose power had never before been revealed and of course, the greatest promise ever recorded was made. I am referring to the Great Commission that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His disciples.

He said:

*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

It is this marvelous event to which Samuel Perez refers in his commentary:

The resurrection of Jesus has four great dimensions that are related:

- A) First, historical Christology
- B) Second, proper theology
- C) Third, the resurrection has a soteriological dimension, because the Lord died for our sins and rose again for our justification (Rom. 4:25)
- D) Finally, the resurrection has an eschatological dimension that makes possible and opens the future for all that God has determined. The world cannot be within the dimension of the present time and history because it has a new and perpetual projection in a new creation (2 Peter 3:5-7,13); only the Creator of all, that is Christ, in his condition of Resurrected Lord, can carry out the eternal project of God. (2009, p. 2109).

The Great Commission was given to his disciples and through them to us. In the words of our Bishop Steven Tighe, *"We are called by Jesus in the Great Commission to make disciples of the 100 million people spread over 1 million square miles of the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest."*

**To listen to the Master's voice is:** *To recognize that Jesus continues to look with eyes of love on the whole world, weeping for men, women, and children who do not know him and have never heard his voice.*

As I read the story, the biblical account, I am in awe and reflect on my thoughts: The reality is that our faith is challenged every day to glimpse the wine that the water can become and to discover the wheat that grows in the midst of the tares, but that does not mean that we have less confidence in the work of the Holy Spirit, nor less work in the extension of his Gospel.

We urgently need a greater missionary emphasis that brings salt and light to the world. May God's mission no longer be paralyzed and may there no longer be resistance to obey His mission. May our ears stop being deafened by our selfishness and may there be no more sterile pessimism. We need to listen to the Master's voice when He raises His hand to give us direction. The Great Commission is still the Great Commission; it was not limited to just a corner of Galilee.

Our Bishop Steven says: *"As we make those disciples, we are called by Jesus in the Great Commandment to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength."* We can talk about God because He has talked to us and because God is still interested in us. He loves us. He is alive in our story. He is a reality in our lives. He is not an abstract God, a hypothesis; he is a God of love who came to free us from sin and make us his children. Let us speak of God today, because his love is still valid.



*"As we make those disciples, we are called by Jesus in the Great Commandment to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength."*

**To listen to the Master's voice is:** *To desire to act more boldly, with more dedication... and to dedicate less time in pursuit of the non-essentials.*

After the resurrection, He commissioned His own. After the resurrection, the Lord manifested Himself to many of His own and made Himself present: *"and when they saw Him, they worshiped Him."* It was not just a respectful and reverent greeting, but rather, the narrative leads us to a broad meaning of bowing down and paying homage. *He deserved no less than for us to surrender* to the Son of God and give Him the divine honor due Him as God. MacArthur regards Jesus as Lord "Kyrios" and us as "doulos", and talks about the implications for the Christian life:

In Roman times "the head of the family" possessed "almost total power over all members of the family, especially their children (even adult children) and slaves." As those who are part of the "family of faith and the family of God," our allegiance belongs to our Master, the "head of the household" (Mt 10:24-25), called the One to whom "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given" (Mt 28:18) (2010, p. 76). (2010, p. 76).

The dialogue between Jesus and his disciples takes place in an intimate manifestation with the eleven, with the Lord taking the initiative: *"And Jesus came and spoke to them"*. The great message of the resurrection has to do with the authority of the King: Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The kingdom could not be limited to Israel alone, but to the whole universe, comprising in it the absolute fullness of all creation, both of angels in heaven and of men on earth and, in general, the supreme Lordship over all without limitation. Nothing and no one can escape his power and sovereignty.

## Conclusion

To listen to the Master's voice is to walk in his will. The Anglican Church of North America (ACNA) and its Archbishop, Foley Beach, has accepted the challenge that is still valid today, that the Master par excellence gave 2000 years ago to a small group of men, and that challenge has extended through its Archbishop, Bishops and Priests in Canada, the United States, and Mexico.

Our Deanery of Mexico, through our Bishop Steven, witnessed that the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest has heard the Master's voice in celebrating our first Synod in Mexico. It is sowing a seed of hope and dreaming of the future that God has in Mexico. I remember the words of the song that we all sang all together and in both languages: *"Give faith and hope to my country, Enlighten Mexico, Lord; Bless her soil, her sun and her seas, her small villages, her great cities; Bless her people at every moment, her president and her rulers."*

Between times of *"koinonia"*, talks, training, prayer, and miracles, the presence of God was felt. It was a good time of refreshment and strengthening in the Lord. As a family, we fully enjoyed every detail, from planning the trip to being a part of the Synod, getting to know the city, visiting the ocean and the beach, the multiculturalism of the Church and the bilingual worship. . . we enjoyed it all to the fullest.

Thanks be to our Bishop Steven, for listening to the Master's voice for the ADSW.  
Thanks be to Archbishop Foley, for listening to the Master's voice for the ACNA.

Thanks be to God for all his blessings!



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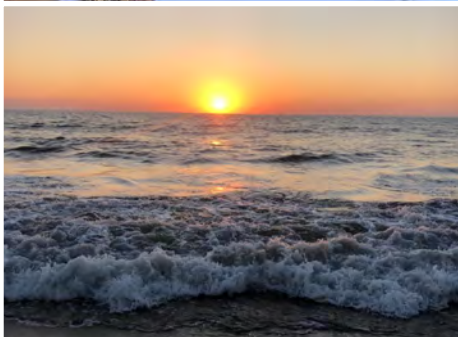
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# Christ The King Statewide Women's Retreat

By Carol Ashby



**O**n October 29, Christ the King hosted a women's retreat led by Tricia Tighe and a team from The Church of St. Clement in El Paso. The theme of the retreat was "Drawing Near to God" and it was a wonderful opportunity to do just that.

After a lovely continental breakfast provided by the Daughters of the King, we began with a time of worship led by the Rev. Courtney Brown, Susie Schneider, and Julia Gockley.

The morning talks included a presentation by Tricia on "Nurturing your Relationship with the Lord", followed by Julia Beauchamp sharing her testimony of how God has worked in her life. A delicious sandwich spread at lunch prepared us for Susie Schneider's talk on "Encouragement and Ideas for Enhancing your Quiet Time" and Julia Gockley sharing her testimony.

The small groups were a great time of sharing and encouragement, and the times of worship spread through the day were as uplifting as you might imagine. We ended with Holy Communion led by Fr. Pete Falk.

We were so blessed to spend the day with the team from St. Clement. Many thanks to all who worked to make possible the day of such spiritual refreshment!



# All Saints Anglican Church, Midland, Texas

By Tola Dina

**T**he Lord has been adding to our numbers! There was a time when all the children in our congregation were grown past Sunday School age so we had no Sunday School. We started Sunday School with one child in the Fall of 2017 and now we have as many as 13 children in two classes. The children have also started acolyting and some of them are assisting in the music ministry of the church.



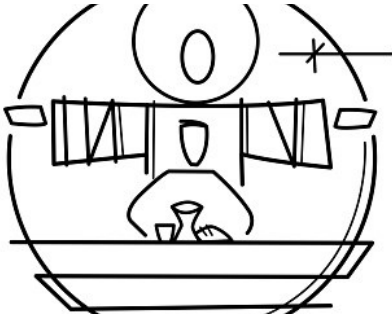
**“Every night I pray for a better world ”**

-Nathan  
(Mexico)

**H**ello! My name is Nathan and I’m 10 years old. I live in Zapopan, Jalisco, Mexico. Every night I pray for a better world because I know that God will make it better, and I finish by praying the Lord’s Prayer. In the morning when I wake up I feel full of faith, each and every day of my life.

I’d like to tell you about my business that I’ve started. I sell frog shaped chocolates. My business is going well and last Sunday morning I was able to give an offering at church. That made me feel good because I was able to contribute and help the church so that it can grow.

I send out a hug to all those who are reading this.



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## Which Part of the Worship Service is the Most Important?

By Rev. John Linebarger

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**I**f all of the components of the worship service, which is the most important? A traditional four-fold division is Gathering, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Table, and Sending. Which would get your vote?

Different traditions provide different answers to this question. A more Protestant answer might be that the sermon is the most important. In my experience it is not uncommon for people to leave right after the sermon (and quite conveniently before the offering is taken). A more Roman Catholic answer might be that the Eucharist is the most important. I well remember attending Mass at the *Catedral Metropolitana* in the heart of Mexico City, where a large swell of people arrived at the end of the homily right before the Eucharist.

What might be an Anglican answer to this question? Well, *all* of the service, of course! Here's why. Deep theology is baked both into the flow of the liturgy and the manual acts of the liturgy. With regard to the flow of the worship service, the theological truth that is underscored by a liturgy that begins with a Processional (which initiates the Gathering) and ends with a Recessional (which initiates the Sending) is that the congregation is leaving Time and entering Eternity, worshiping God both at the pulpit and at the table, and wistfully leaving Eternity to enter Time again. A memorable Anglican conceptualization of the large middle part of the service is that Christ is preached crucified at the pulpit and Christ is preached crucified at the Table. During the Eternity phase of the service, the congregation joins with saints not only around the world but also throughout history—past, present, and future—as both a reflection and an actualization of the Throne Room Worship in Revelation chapters 4-5. In fact, not only is the congregation *preparing* for Eternity, it is also *participating* in Eternity in a mysterious and deep way.

But this side of Glory we live in the Already But Not Yet. So after the Eternity phase of the service, the congregation is sent back into Time to go forth to love and serve the Lord, to co-strive with God in the power of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the Great Commission and bring about God's Kingdom on Earth.

The very words of the liturgy underscore this truth, and constitute the final word: "Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the Name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest."*



# YOUTH MINISTRY

IN PUEBLA

*By Alexis Anaya*

**T**hanks be to God who has begun this youth ministry! In February we had a day of fun and Bible learning at a camp called Oasis in Valsequillo, about 20 minutes from the city of Puebla. We began by doing a devotional together, studying the Bible and starting the day in blessing. The kids did various activities, from swimming to climbing trees. At the beginning of the time they had a hard time relating to each other, but it was amazing to see how after a little while they were able to grow closer and make friends.

Something that impressed me was that Joel Fernando, a teenager from my church, had been praying for Christian friends his age and that day he said in front of everyone that his prayer had been answered in that they were all there together, forming friendships in Christ. At the end of the day, I think they were all very happy; they even made groups on social media to keep in touch with each other. We really hope that the group will continue to grow and that the youth build stronger relationships with God and with each other.

It has been a blessing and a great opportunity to help them grow in their relationship with God. Hopefully there will be more opportunities to meet with this group. Blessings to all!



# Albuquerque Deanery Gathering

By Rev. Greg Pfeifer

**O**n a warm Friday afternoon at Christ the King Anglican Church, six clergy from the Albuquerque Deanery gathered, and the coffee started brewing.

We spent some time in reflection over what Bishop Steven shared as part of God's vision for our Diocese. With 100 million people in 1 million square miles, we are called to be ambassadors of God's Kingdom. To do that work, we need to listen to the Holy Spirit and with open hands, join the work of the Father as the body of Jesus. Two messages from the Gospel of John 14:23-26 guided our afternoon together.

First, whatever our ministry contexts (whether established church ministry, church plant, house church, bi-vocational, co-vocational, or multi-congregational church ministry) God Gets. All. The. Glory. We are partnering with the living God to do the work God has given us to do that the Spirit has already started! Jesus said, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). The Triune God dwells with people in love, and keeping the word of the Lord is an act of obedience and remembrance for which we give God the glory! That act of obedience starts with a little "yes."

Secondly, loving God and participating in the expanding Realm of God on earth requires us simply to say "yes", which Bishop Steven referred to at Synod as mastering the little yes. As instruments in the hands of the Almighty, we yield ourselves, our own ambitions, our visions, and our hopes to the Master Artist, that we might play God's song, not our own.

The gathering was spent encouraging one another with the above thoughts and sharing splendid and joyous time simply sharing stories and getting to know one another better. As we shared our unscripted stories of life and ministry, the Lord was surely making a home with us. And it only made sense that we celebrated Eucharist together before going our separate ways.

The life of ministry can be isolating and daunting. Gatherings like these help remind us that we are never alone and that we share in a fellowship not simply with one another, but with the God of light and life who makes a home in our hearts and fills us with the Spirit of fellowship. We're committed to at least two more gatherings as a Deanery this ministry year, and I'm really looking forward to them! I strongly encourage you all to find ways of sharing time and life together in this Diocese of the Southwest in which we serve from one little yes to another. To God be the glory!



# Church Planting Update

By Rev. Pete Falk



**A**lways Forward, the church planting arm of the ACNA, held the Church Planting Intensive Training Jan. 30 – Feb. 2 in Greensboro, NC. Pastor Farhid Adabache, Church of the Good Shepherd, Las Cruces, NM, and Father Pete Falk, representing the diocesan church planting team, joined a lot of church planters from the Carolinas, Virginia, and West Virginia, and even from Sweden!, at Church of the Redeemer. Canon Dan Alger and Molly Ruch were the main presenters. It was very informative. The bottom line: the ACNA is committed to establish new churches and to revitalize older ones. The resources and the people are there. Check out [always-forward.com](http://always-forward.com).

## Rural Anglican Church Plants in Colorado—An Idea for Our Diocese?

Outside of certain big cities, many parts of New Mexico, West Texas, and Mexico are rural. Very rural. In rural communities, many churches have closed. There are people in these small communities who need to know the Gospel and have a place for worship and fellowship. There is a spiritual need in our diocese and there is an answer: establish or plant new Anglican churches in rural communities.

On February 14, Christ The King, Albuquerque hosted a one-day talk about rural Anglican church planting in Colorado. The main speaker was Josh Nelson. Josh is the coordinator of rural church planting in a neighboring Anglican diocese. He was sharing on the progress to plant rural churches: two churches have been planted at a cost of \$4,000. The key is finding people, typically younger people just out of seminary who have flexible and portable fulltime jobs. They earn their living from secular jobs because the local church is way too small to support them. Is this kind of church planting transferable to the Diocese of the Southwest? With Josh's help, the church planting team is going to explore the possibilities. It starts with prayer, then prayer and planning. If you would like to learn more about church planting, please contact me: [frpete@ctkabq.org](mailto:frpete@ctkabq.org).

In Christ,

Pete Falk+

Chair, Church Planting Team

Rector, Christ The King, Albuquerque, NM





# Church of the Epiphany, Cloudfcroft, NM

By Madeleine Fazenbaker

**H**ello from the Sacramento Mountains of New Mexico. Church of the Epiphany is the only Anglican church in Otero County. Cloudfcroft is the most unique community; during the school year the population of the village is 700 and the heart of the community is the school. But during the high tourist season, which is from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the population rises to 7000 at times, with more campers and tourists than the community can sometimes accommodate! Long lines at the few local restaurants are not unusual and we can honestly say, Texans outnumber New Mexicans 9 to 1 in the summertime.

Our little church, the green cabin next to the Family Dollar store, is tucked back in the trees and is a haven for weary travelers and holiday visitors. Our congregation is consistent each summer, with regulars from Texas who come to spend the hot summer months in the cool pines and support and fellowship with longtime friends here in NM. Many of our Texas parishioners have been summer members for more than 20 years. Our year round membership is restored and refreshed with the vacationers' visits each year, and we look forward to the feeling of our full congregation in summer time.

It is not unusual for new people to find us as they glance out of the Family Dollar parking lot and see our big gnarly driftwood cross on the side of our building. Each Labor Day weekend, we host a fundraiser garage sale and sometimes the occasional bargain seeker will find us as their new holiday church. We have had music festivals on Independence Day off the back porch of the church. We have fundraised for the local senior citizens' meal site, and other various local ministries, as well as some of our church missions in Mexico.

But the glue that keeps our unique spiritual family together is Fr. Fred and Nancy Griffin. They keep our extended family praying for each other, supporting each other and encouraging each other from our mountain top to the far reaches of East Texas, South Texas and across our state. Although our congregation spans hundreds of miles, we are a tight-knit community, thanks to the Griffins being our common bond. The church environment we have on the mountain is unlike that my family has ever experienced. It is a peaceful, easy feeling, and a great place to relax, and absorb the love of God. We invite you all to come and spend some time with us. But if you enjoy the peace and quiet, you may want to opt for the low tourist season. Year round, we gladly entertain strangers, "for by this some have entertained angels unawares!" *Hebrews 13:2*





# St. Clement's Men's Retreat

By Rev. David Sheehan

Every year during the second weekend in November, the men of St. Clement set off for Sacramento Camp and Conference Center for a weekend with one another and with the Lord.

Christian retreats sometimes get a bad wrap. Some Christian retreats have been in the news recently because of the exorbitant entry fee for VIP ticket holders! What's that about? Other times they sound like the most stuffy and dull use of a weekend imaginable.

But the call for God's people to drop the tools of everyday living and strike out for new surroundings in order to be refreshed by Him is an ancient idea. Many of the feasts that God designates for his people in the Old Testament certainly had a Christian retreat feel to them. People had to get up and go, leaving fields and homes in order to attend. In Deuteronomy 14, God commands his people to take a significant amount of their money to buy food or drink, "...whatever your heart desires" and to make a feast of it before the Lord. It would have been a good time!

The Men's Retreat is a good time, but it's also a thoroughly manly pursuit of faithfulness in the Christian life. It's not a veneer of manhood, but rather a biblical expression of it:

- ◆ The topics are thoughtful and pertinent. Last year's theme was "Living in Troubled Times", and we explored the lives of Daniel and his friends in Babylon in order to examine how to live when our culture doesn't fear or honor God.
- ◆ The music is technically sound with a selection of songs that teach true doctrine while connecting our hearts to God.
- ◆ The food is very good, but even better is the pace of meals...slow, with plenty of time to ask good questions of those present at the table, listen well, laugh, and then leave at your leisure.
- ◆ There is time to recreate, to exercise, to be alone, to pray, to study and to think.



Don't those sound like excellent habits for a biblical man to practice?

For several years during planning meetings for the Men's Retreat, leaders have expressed a desire to invite and connect with other Anglican men from around our diocese at the retreat. We'd like to increase the volume of our invitation to you to join us this year! Good retreats can be hard to find, so please join us! We'd like to grow in discipleship and relationship with you, wherever you are in the ADSW. Please mark your calendars for **November 10-12, 2023.**

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# GOD IS REAL: A STORY OF HIS FAITHFULNESS

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By José Manuel “Buga” Moreno



*“Buga” participating in  
Worship during the Synod*

**A**t the end of the Synod, we went to a beach on our way home. When we were about to leave, my friends and I decided to go back into the water one more time. There was a wave coming and I tried to dive under it, but it pushed me hard and my head hit the sand. My body was instantly paralyzed. I could no longer move, and I was drowning. I felt desperate to get to the surface so I could breathe. Suddenly, I felt calm, at peace. And I let go. When I closed my eyes, in the distance I saw a white light and a hand coming out of it. I heard a voice telling me that I was not alone and that He would never leave me. I reached out my hand to grasp God's hand, and when I touched it, I felt as if I were being pulled. I realized that a

human hand was pulling me up and then I saw my friend, Alan. He was the one who pulled me out.

He and another friend took me to the sand and laid me down. The people there said it was just a cramp and that it would soon go away. That's what happened and I was able to move again. We got in the bus and returned to Fresnillo, about 10 hours from Puerto Vallarta.

When we got back to Fresnillo, I walked about 10 minutes to my house, where I went up to my room to rest. I had only slept for about half an hour when I was awakened by a cramp in my legs. My parents took me to the hospital and by the time we got there, I had very little mobility. I was put in a neck brace and laid in a hospital bed. They did several tests, but since my neck was swollen, the doctors couldn't see what was wrong. An orthopedic surgeon reviewed the tests and told me that I was not going to be able to walk again. I remember thinking that if this was for and because of God, it was okay.

I spent almost two weeks in the hospital. The last two nights I was there, I could no longer eat anything, I was nauseous and vomiting, and I was hemorrhaging blood. My last night there a screw from my hospital bed broke and I fell. The next day my family took me out of that hospital and brought me to a surgical center in another city, an hour from Fresnillo, when a neurosurgeon operated on me.



*“I spent almost two weeks  
in the hospital.”*

After the operation, the doctor told me that I had a malformation in my spine. It was a condition I had had all my life, one in which I have no discs in my spinal cord. So the only two discs I did have were the ones that were damaged in the accident. The doctor said it was a miracle that I was there, and that God was giving me a second chance.



For the first two months after surgery, I had hardly any feeling in the top half of my body because the vertebrae in my neck and two veins were compressed. Even with all that, a few days later I started to walk. About a month and a half after the operation I began going to rehab. Little by little I started to regain strength and sensitivity in my arms, and a little while after that, I could walk without having to wear my neck brace. Now I can even run, and the physical therapist tells me that I need to start exercising again. I am almost fully healed!

I have seen how God has done many things in these four months, from the day of the accident until today. I have learned that I was never really alone. God does not leave us. He has given me peace and tranquility in these last few months.

Before the accident I felt alone. Since the beginning of the pandemic, negative thoughts started running around my head. I just kept asking God where He was and why I was feeling this way. I started to lose my faith and I began to forget everything I had learned during my 17 years of life about God and about the Christian faith. A few months before the accident happened, I didn't want to even think about religion, and I just kept looking up at the sky and wondering where God was. If He was really there, I wanted Him to give me a sign, anything. I feel that my accident was an answer to that cry, to that longing I had in my heart.

Now I still feel alone, but I know that God has not left me. I don't feel far from God. He has been giving me answers to many questions about things that were going on in my life. I think what happened to me is a wake-up call for me, and not only for me, but also for the young people in my church and for other young Christians. We often say with our lips that we are Christians, but we are not always true believers.

God is real, not a philosophy. We have to trust God and believe that after times of tribulation, there comes peace. With it comes reward.



***“We have to trust God and believe that after times of tribulation, there comes peace.”***

Please visit <https://anglicanchurch.net/thanksgiving-in-mexico/> to read a brief article and watch a short video about Buga's story. The story was recorded by Ernie Didot back in January.

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# NEW CONFIRMATIONS IN MEXICO!

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January 2023



**PUEBLA, PUEBLA**





**XALAPA, VERACRUZ**

## **ADSW CONGREGATIONS / CONGREGACIONES DE LA DIÓCESIS ANGLICANA DEL SUROESTE**

### **West Texas Deanery / Decanato de Texas**

All Saints Anglican Church	Midland, TX	Rev. Tom Finnie
Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd	San Angelo, TX	Rev. Hal Scott
St. Paul's Anglican Church	Midland, TX	Rev. Tom Finnie
St. James' Anglican Church	Dalhart, TX	Rev. Phil Ray

### **Albuquerque Deanery / Decanato de Albuquerque**

Christ Church Four Corners	Farmington, NM	Rev. Carl Brenner
Christ the King Anglican Church	Albuquerque, NM	Rev. Pete Falk
Church of Our Lord	Albuquerque, NM	Rev. Harold Trott
Emmaus Anglican Church	Albuquerque, NM	Rev. Greg Pfeifer
Light of Life Ministries	Albuquerque, NM	Rev. Ruth Morgan
Sangre de Cristo Anglican Fellowship	Raton, NM	Rev. John Price
St. Philip the Evangelist Anglican Church	Cortez, CO	Rev. Carl Brenner
St. Stephen's Anglican Church	Roswell, NM	Rev. Bob Tally

### **El Paso Deanery / Decanato de El Paso**

Church of St. Clement	El Paso, TX	Rev. Bill Cobb
Church of the Epiphany	Cloudcroft, NM	Rev. Fred Griffin
Church of the Good Shepherd at Hill	Las Cruces, NM	Rev. Farhid Adabache
Iglesia Rey de Paz	El Paso, TX	Rev. Ken Hanna
St. Augustine Anglican Church	Deming, NM	Rev. Thomas Guerra

### **Mexico Deanery / Decanato de México**

Comunidad de Fe, Rey de Justicia	Ciudad Juárez, CHI	Rev. Isaí Valenzuela
Iglesia Anglicana Comunidad de Gracia	Xalapa, VER	Rev. Alexis González
Iglesia Anglicana Puerto Vallarta	Puerto Vallarta, JAL	Rev. Jack Wehrs
Iglesia de La Trinidad	Zapopan, JAL	Miguel Merino
Iglesia del Gran Pastor	Fresnillo, ZAC	Rev. Elías Rosales
Iglesia Jesús es la Resurrección	Aguascalientes, AGU	Rev. Elías Rosales
Iglesia Piedra Angular	Ciudad Juárez, CHI	Rev. Heber Gil
Iglesia Anglicana San Pablo del Suroeste	Puebla, PUE	Rev. Joel González



This newsletter is for everyone in the diocese, lay people and clergy alike. We invite you to join us in this effort! If you would like to share something in a future newsletter, please contact us! : [odttsw@gmail.com](mailto:odttsw@gmail.com)

