The Diocese of Lexington
Youth Board

As you read this Youth Report, please remember that ALL youth in grades 7-12 are invited to attend the Diocesan Youth programs.

We are always in need of volunteers to help staff events. If you are not able help yourself, please speak to someone from your church that you think would be a great addition to the Youth community.

The Diocesan Youth Community packed as many Diocesan youth events into 2019 as we could without interfering with the schedules of E.Y.C. for home parishes. Chris Darnall – Good Shepherd and Billy Benntt are the adults that have been serving on the 2019-2020 Youth Board. The youth representatives for 2019 are Alexis Darnall, Audrey Suit and Abbie Thomas from Flemingsburg, and Kate Grayson from Trinity Covington. The Youth Board met 2 times throughout 2019.

The youth started off 2019 with the seventh annual Electric Revival, a Lock-In sponsored by the Episcopal Youth community of Trinity Church in Covington and the DYC. The youth and volunteers enjoyed Yoga, Energizers, live music, open mic, and a very nice meal, plus late-night dancing. Thank you to Rev. Justin Gabbard and the members of Trinity for hosting an opportunity for our youth to get together during the Holiday weekend.

Happening & New Beginnings:

**New Beginnings** is a unique retreat especially designed to respond to the issues, concerns and needs of teenagers in grades 7-9. They enjoy learning through singing, skits, talks given by teens, videos, games, worship and conversation with each other, the youth discover who God is, who God is to them and who they are to God.

We hosted two New Beginning weekends in 2019. New Beginnings #25 was held the weekend of March 15-17. Madeline Queen, St. Andrew’s, Ft. Thomas served as the Junior Weekend Advisor (JWA) Audrey Suit from St. Francis, Flemingsburg served as the JWA for New Beginnings #26 held September 27-29. The JWA is the youth leader for the weekend. Thank you to the Spiritual Director’s that served the youth for the weekends. Father Jeff Queen for #25 and Father Jim Trimble for #26. For the wonderful role models Jamie and Don Bezold from St. Andrew’s Ft. Thomas that served as the Married Couple for NB’s 25 and Cindy and Andy Sigmon who served as the Married Couple for NB’s #26. New Beginnings #25 had 12 adult volunteers work with the 15 youth that led the weekend for the 18 New Beginning participants. New Beginnings #26 had 17 adults and 15 youth.

**Happening** is a Christian experience presented by youth for youth in grades 10 through 12. Happening is designed to address questions youth may have about Christ and the church. During a Happening weekend, participants experience the love of Christ as shown through prayer, worship, and the ministry of fellow students, clergy, and lay adults. Happeners are encouraged to make their renewed faith a part of their everyday lives.
In 2019 the youth community held two Happening weekends. The first weekend, Happening #58, was held March 8-10. Mason Kelley served as the Lay Rector and Abbie Thomas served as the Head Gopher. The clergy for the weekend were Justin Gabbard and Jim Trimble. Mason put together a wonderful team of 22 youth and adults to share with 27 Happeners. The weekend of November 8-10 we had Happening #59. Our Youth put together another Spirit-filled Happening. Abbie Thomas from Flemingsburg served as the lay-rector. Abbie worked with the Happening steering committee to put together a staff of 18 youth leaders and 5 adults to serve as team members. We had 25 participants for the weekend of Happening #59. Thank you to the Rev. Deacon Paula Ott for serving as the Spiritual leader for the weekend. Thank you to the Rev. Jan Cottrell for coming to celebrate the closing Eucharist. The Youth board would also like to thank Diane Bonfert, Chris Darnall, Sarah Smith, Kate Ott, Billy Bennett, Andy Sigmon & Abbey Vogel for serving as the Happening Steering Committee.

Camps & Conferences: The summer of 2019 camping season we celebrated our 106th year of ministry at The Cathedral Domain and it was a thoroughly rewarding summer. We had a total of 538 campers in ten different sessions. Senior Conference had 112 campers from grades 9 through 12. Junior Conference saw 87 campers from grades 7 and 8. In addition to Senior and Junior Conference we had Girls Camp 1 and 2, Boys camp 1 and 2 and Mini camps 1 and 2, Co-Ed 3-5, and Adventure Camp. The campers enjoyed a theme focused on a curriculum published by Inside-Out Ministries called “Peace Works!” with the teachings exploring being kind to others and to Love each other. We had insightful teachings from, The Rev. Justin Gabbard, The Rev. Jim Trimble, The Rev. Dana Lockhart, The Rev. Nancy Farley, The Rev. Jeff Queen, Rev. Deacon Rebecca Saager, The Rev. Cannon Elise Johnstone & the Rev. Aelred Dean. Each camp session was led by a team of volunteer Deans. The Deans for the camps are responsible for recruiting staff and developing program. Senior Conference was led by Butch Clements from Trinity Covington & Cindy Sigmon from Emmanuel. Junior Conference was led by Abbey Vogel and Donovan McCoy from St. Andrew’s, Ft. Thomas, and Margaret Moloney from Christ the King. The Girls Camp I was led by Sarah S. Smith from Shelbyville and Girls Camp II was led by Meg Gaither and Shelby Thompson from St. Peter’s in Paris. Both Mini Camps were led by Kat Luchtefeld of Good Shepherd, Lexington & Anne Khun of Shelbyville, KY. The leadership for Boys Camp I was Chris Darnall. Boys Camp II was led by Chris Farmer from Good Shepherd. The Co-Ed camp was led by Collin & Katie S. Berner from Winchester. Adventure Camp was led by Zack Futtrell. Eleven of the fifteen Deans were alumni of the Cathedral Domain Camps and Conferences. The staff that served with the deans were volunteer youth and young adults from across the Diocese. We are extremely proud of our camps and the quality of the programs offered.

National Happening Youth Event: Throughout the year, London Harper, Trinity Covington, Ben Horman, Walnut Hill and chaperone Billy Bennett from Emmanuel Winchester traveled to participate on the National Happening Team. The three were elected to serve on the National Happening Team in the summer of 2018 for a three-year term. The team meets twice a year at different locations throughout the country.
Province IV Youth Networking:  In December Kate Grayson & Anthony Mattone both from Trinity Covington and Cindy Sigmon attended the annual Province IV Youth Leadership Networking meeting. The meeting was held at Camp Gravitt in Diocese of Upper S.C. The youth presented and listened to reports about events that take place in their individual diocese. Kate & Tony were pleased to report the events that our youth participate in throughout the year and presented the report with a pride and eloquence. There was group discussion about being members of the Episcopal Community. Dr. Anne Meeks spoke to the group about growing up in the south and some of the experiences she had as a young black person. We took part in a workshop learning about the history of Racism in America. Kate and Tony brought back group games and program ideas to share at the New Year in the Spirit event and other gatherings with our youth community.

“New Year in the Spirit”:  During the week between Christmas and the New Year there is an annual event for both Junior and Senior High. “A New Year in the Spirit” is designed and hosted by volunteers within the Youth Community. This past December we had 50 youth attended with 4 adults and 16 young adults. The theme for 2019 was a continuation of the theme from the summer camps, “Peace Works!” The Rev. Nancy Farley led the inspirational teachings for the event. The youth truly appreciated Nancy taking the time to be a part of this event. She ended her time with the group on the last evening Celebrating the Eucharist. This New Year in the Spirit event included the Christmas carol relays, gingerbread house decorating competition, cookie decorating, candle decorating, games, Domain food, singing, worship and outstanding fellowship. The weekend also included a “New Year’s” dance. At midnight we shared sparkling cider while we toasted our thanksgivings for 2019 and our prayers for 2020. The Youth Board leaders did a wonderful job working to put the event together for the youth of the Diocese.

Outreach:  In addition to the time they gave serving as counselors at camp, the youth brought non-perishable items to donate to the Barnes Mountain food bank.

2020 – Trinity Church in Covington hosted our first Diocesan event in January. The eighth annual Electric Revival Lock-In was held the weekend of January 18-19. Thank you to the Rev. Justin Gabbard and the members of the youth community of Trinity for a fun and meaningful overnight event.

Happening #60 – The Happening Steering Committee chose Mackenzie Nash form Lexington to serve as the Lay rector for Happening #60. Mackenzie and the steering committee put together a devoted team of 25. The team met throughout January, February, and March. They were so excited about serving the 16 participants that were registered to attend Happening the weekend of March 13-15. Unfortunately, the weekend was canceled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Alpha Youth -Virtual Meetings - Several of the youth community leaders met one evening with Bishop Mark to talk about things we can do to get together. They were still hoping for a weekend event at the Cathedral Domain at this point. The Bishop presented the idea of a program that he had done with one of the churches he served.
The youth were very open to the idea of attending the program, ALPHA YOUTH, virtually. The program started June 17th and ran until August 19th. We met one night a week and one Saturday morning. During the program, the youth watched videos covering Life, Jesus, Confession, Faith, Prayer, Bible, Spirit, Telling Others, Healing, and Church. We had small group time and then came back together to discuss the topic. Thank you to The Rev. Cannon Helen Van Kooverying for serving as the Chaplain and to Courtney Butterbaugh for serving as our tech support. There were 22 participants in the program.

The youth community continue to meet virtually every two weeks on Sunday night. Contact Cindy Sigmon, csigmon@diolex.org if you know of youth or youth leaders that would like to join the meetings and connect with other youth across the Diocese.

We are looking forward to 2021 with great joy, enthusiasm, and excitement. Praying that we can soon come together in person as a community. Feeling blessed to be a part of Youth Commission in the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Sigmon
Youth Missioner