

## Diocesan Council adopts mission statement Covenant receives approval, but discussion will continue

By Jerry Hames

Diocesan Council adopted a mission statement for the Diocese of Newark and a theological statement for a covenant between the diocese and congregations at its June 10 meeting in Little Falls. Then, after listening to a number of reservations and criticisms, it adopted the covenant that its creators say is designed to increase each congregation's ministry capacity and provide it with support.

There was enthusiastic support for the diocese's new mission statement: "Equipping congregations ... Empowering people ... Engaging the world ... with the hope and justice of Jesus." Committee chairs called it a "challenging and exciting" statement and said the question that must be asked now is: "What are the implications of the mission

statement for our work together?"

With little debate, the council also approved a theological statement on which the covenant is based. It states: "God is calling us as diocese and congregations to be in covenant with each other so that we may be the hands, feet and heart of Jesus Christ in the world."

The covenant was presented to the council by the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson on behalf of the council's committee on the vitality of congregations and ministry capacity, which she chairs. "We worked, we listened, we reworked, and we present it to you as we now know it," she said.

The covenant is congruent with the mission statement, she said. "We also drafted a theological statement in response to those who didn't see how [the covenant] was connected to what we are doing. We wanted to

make it accessible to persons in the pew. I ask you to adopt it ... and live into it."

The language of the covenant is an invitation to congregations, committee members said. "We want people to look at what they do well so they can offer it to others," said one. "We want it to be joyful and life-giving."

The discussion on the covenant was intense, and it was adopted only after Bishop Mark Beckwith asked for a vote to allow congregations to work with it during the summer before the council meets for a weekend retreat in mid-September, where it will be discussed again. Council members adopted the covenant, although four abstentions were recorded.

"I sense there is still some confusion about the covenant and how it plays out in the life of the diocese," Beckwith said as

the meeting concluded. "We will have to work on it."

The covenant asks members of congregations to commit themselves to:

- Regularly assess their vitality and ministry capacity, using the document *Exploring our Congregation's Vitality and Ministry Capacity*.
- Regularly review and update their ministry plan.
- Share their current plan with the bishop during visitations.
- Use the ministry plan as part of mutual ministry reviews.
- Regularly assess their viability, using the document *Characteristics of Congregational Vitality*.

The covenant commits the diocese to:

- Provide congregational growth and

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## General Convention 2009 Episcopal Church will tackle many issues at its 'family reunion'

By Sharon Sheridan

Church leaders will tackle myriad issues at General Convention, the Episcopal Church's triennial churchwide meeting, from July 8-17 in Anaheim, Calif. They'll also worship together, encounter old friends, join in a public narrative project, shop in the exhibit hall, take in local tourist sites and participate in special events in a convention many liken to an Episcopal family reunion. The Episcopal Church Women (ECW), meanwhile, will hold its Triennial Meeting concurrently in Anaheim and present the United Thank Offering ingathering at the main convention worship service on July 12.

Bishop Mark Beckwith, clergy and lay deputies elected by Diocesan Convention, volunteers and leaders of various church organizations will attend from the Diocese of Newark.

During convention, legislative committees will consider resolutions proposed by dioceses, bishops, deputies and various official church bodies and will recommend action to the House of Deputies or the House of Bishops. Resolutions must pass both legislative houses to be enacted.

### Prominent issues

In issues related to the church's ongoing debate about human sexuality, convention

See "Convention" page 3



### Biking bishop

Bishop Mark Beckwith led the second St. David's, Kinnelon, bike tour to raise money for the U.N. Millennium Development Goals. Beckwith cycled a 40-mile route as part of the event, which raised \$12,000. See page 3 to read more.



Marilyn Joyce Lehren photo

Bishop Barbara Harris, left, and the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson at the June 13 event celebrating the Women's Commission's 30th anniversary.

## Women's Commission celebrates with Bishop Barbara Harris

By Elizabeth Kaeton

She may have just begun her eighth decade of life, but she's not looking back.

On June 13, Bishop Barbara Clementine Harris joined the Diocese of Newark Women's Commission in celebrating its 30th anniversary at St. Andrew & Holy Communion Church in South Orange. Those gathered also celebrated the 35th anniversary of the founding of the national Episcopal Women's Caucus, the 35th anniversary of the ordination of women and the 20th anniversary of Harris' consecration as the first woman to be ordained bishop in the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion.

Harris celebrated her 79th birthday on June 12, which was also her 254th day without a cigarette, after 64 years of an unrequited love affair with tobacco.

Known for taking the road less traveled, Harris chose not to take her listeners on a quiet, lovely stroll down Memory Lane with Sweet Baby Jesus Meek and Mild. It was clear as soon as she took the podium that event participants were not going to dwell on their history or wander aimlessly through their memorabilia; neither were they allowed to be seduced by nostalgia or romanticized by "the way we were."

Harris spoke with her signature passion

See "Women," page 11

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# The Bishop's Message

## Radical hospitality Embracing communities as well as individuals

The more I talk about our core values, which I do at every Sunday church visitation, the more I learn about their importance in my life – and our common life – and the more I discover about their reach into the depth of our experience as people of faith. And I am often surprised by what I discover.

Take radical hospitality. Radical hospitality takes us beyond the practice of simply being welcoming, kind and gracious to those who show up. Those are all acts of hospitality, and they are critically important to the health and harmony of a community.

But radical hospitality is the commitment to seek and embrace the stranger as a brother or sister. And radical hospitality

carries even more importance, according to Jesus, who challenged his disciples to go beyond their normal practice of inviting friends and relatives to dinner and instead to invite “the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind” (Luke 14:12). Invite those who may not be able to repay the favor; God’s blessing will more than make up for it.

For nearly two years, I have thought and talked about radical hospitality as a discipline that seeks new and creative ways of opening our hearts and doors to individuals. In

## Hospitalidad radical Abrazando las comunidades como a los individuos

Cuando más yo hablo de los valores, de los cuales lo hago cada domingo en las visitas a parroquias, más aprendo de la importancia de ellos en mi vida – y nuestras vidas en común – y lo que más descubro acerca de ellos se acerca a la profundidad de nuestra experiencia como gente de fe.

Tomemos la hospitalidad radical. La hospitalidad radical nos lleva más allá de la práctica de simplicidad de dar bienvenidas, ser bondadosos y agradables a aquellos que nos visitan. Estos son actos de hospitalidad y ellos son críticamente importantes para la salud y armonía a la comunidad.

Pero la hospitalidad radical es la entrega a buscar y abrazar a los extraños como hermanas y hermanos. Y la hospitalidad radical conlleva más importancia, de acuerdo a Jesús, que reta a sus discípulos para que vayan más allá de su práctica normal de invitar amigos y familiares a cenar y en vez invitar “a los pobres, a los inválidos, a los cojos y a los ciegos” (Lucas 14:12). Invita a aquellos que no puedan pagar el favor; así las bendiciones de Dios serán muchas.

Por casi dos años, yo he pensado y hablado acerca de la hospitalidad radical como una disciplina que busca nuevas y creativos caminos para abrir nuestros corazones y puertas a los individuos.

Por mi experiencia, nosotros tenemos ocho o nueve pares de congregaciones en la diócesis que están en conversaciones serias con cada una acerca de hacer ministerio en conjunto. Algunos son programas compartidos. Otros están hablando del compartir de los cleros. Y otros están pensando en unir sus dos congregaciones en una.

Con todas estas conversaciones, Canon Greg Jacobs y yo pensamos que sería una buena idea invitar gentes de estas y otras

congregaciones para compartir su sabiduría con cada uno de nosotros. Que es lo que ellos están aprendiendo? Cuales eran sus esperanzas y miedos?

Nosotros planificamos una reunión en St. Mark’s in Mendham el 27 de Mayo. Gente de 24 congregaciones asistieron. Greg distribuyó un buen número de folletos, pero lo que más hicimos fue escuchar historias.

Y las historias eran acerca de hospitalidad radical; acerca de nuevas relaciones y de oportunidades para las misiones y ministerios entre y con las comunidades de las congregaciones. Donde quizá había competencia entre ellas y con congregaciones, yo escuche una entrega para la cooperación. Donde la diócesis podría haber sido una pila de silos separados de Iglesias Episcopales, yo escuché de la buena voluntad para arriesgar una vida en comunidad en un campo de viña abierto.

Aunque se debería decir que la economía de escasez estaba guiando la energía inicial de estas conversaciones, el mensaje que yo escuché fue de abundancia. De ahí que había mucho entusiasmo – muchas preguntas. Hubieron también momentos fuera de lugar que yo los describiría como “un protocolo de cortejo de congregaciones,” pero debajo de estas historias había una apertura para que camináramos juntos la jornada espiritual – respetando nuestros espacios, historias y modos y a la vez discerniendo

recent months, I have been introduced to radical hospitality as an enterprise that embraces whole communities.

By my count, we have eight or nine pairs of congregations in the diocese that are in serious conversation with one another about sharing ministry. Some are sharing programs. Some are talking about sharing clergy. Still others are thinking of uniting two congregations into one.

With all of these conversations going on, Canon Greg Jacobs and I thought it would be a good idea to invite people from these and other congregations to share their wisdom with one another. What were they learning? What were their hopes and fears?

We scheduled a meeting at St. Mark’s in Mendham on May 27. People from 24 congregations showed up. Greg provided a number of very helpful handouts, but mostly what we did was hear stories.

And the stories were about radical hospitality; about new relationships and opportunities for mission and ministry among, between and with communities of congregations. Where there might have

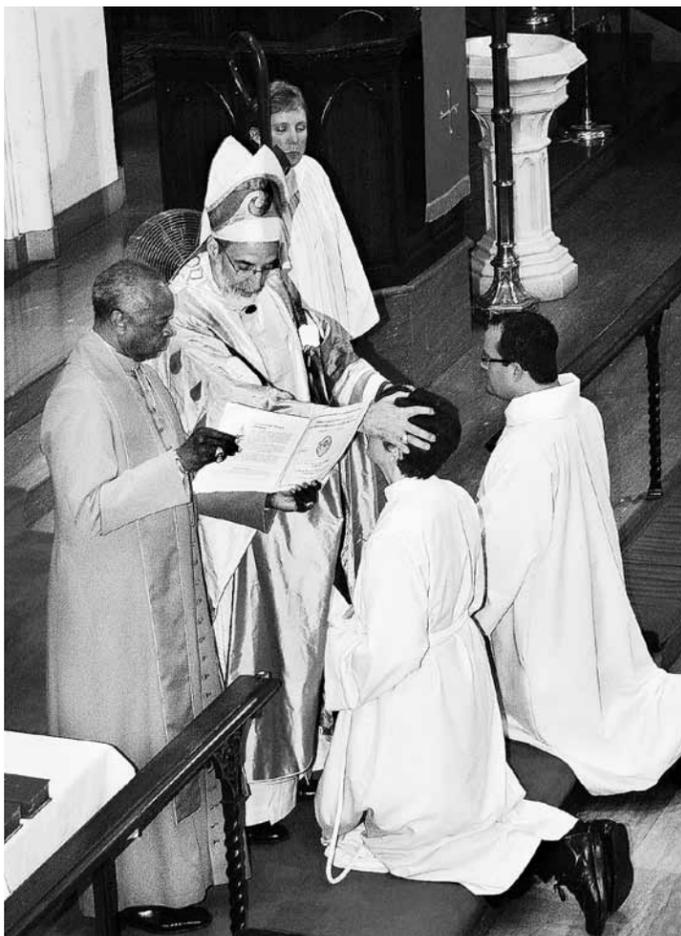
been competition among, between and with congregations, I heard a deep commitment to cooperation. Where the diocese might have been a landscape of separate silos of Episcopal churches, I heard a willingness to risk about sharing life in a more open vineyard.

While it must be said that economic scarcity may be driving the initial energy for these conversations, the message I heard was of abundance. There was a lot of excitement – and a lot of questions. There were some chuckles over the awkwardness of what I would describe as “congregational dating protocol,” but beneath those stories was an openness to walk the spiritual journey together – respecting one another’s space, history and ethos while discerning each other’s unique gifts as a unique part of the body of Christ.

Many of us were inspired – which meant that we “inspired.” We took the Spirit in, which was very much in the room that evening. As these various conversations go forward, there no doubt will be moments of confusion and perhaps conflict. Hiccups and speed bumps inevitably will appear. Suitors will not always find willing partners.

But the willingness to initiate new community relationships – and to risk opportunities for self-discovery by embracing another community – is, for me, a wonderful and surprising example of radical hospitality. And it is its own blessing.

*Mark M. Beckwith*



Paul Hausman photo

### New deacons

Bishop Mark Beckwith ordained Jon M. Richardson, kneeling at right, and Sister Shane Margaret Phelan, CSJB, to the transitional diaconate at Trinity + St. Philip’s Cathedral in Newark on June 6.

los dones únicos de cada uno como parte del cuerpo de Cristo.

Muchos de nosotros fuimos inspirados – lo cual significa que nosotros estamos en el “espíritu.” Nosotros recibimos el Espíritu, que estaba manifestado en el salón esa noche. Así como estas conversaciones continúen, no habrá momentos de confusión y tal vez conflictos. Encontraremos altibajos que inevitablemente aparecerán. Algunos no siempre encontrarán acompañantes complacientes.

Pero el deseo de iniciar una nueva relación en comunidad – y de arriesgar oportunidades para el descubrimiento al abrazar otras comunidades – es, para mi, un bello y sorprendente ejemplo de hospitalidad radical. Y eso es en si su propia bendición.

*Mark M. Beckwith*

Translated by Miguel Hernandez, a member of the Commission on Hispanic Ministry and a student at General Theological Seminary in New York.

## The VOICE

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## Convention

*Continued from page 1*

is being asked to reconsider the 2006 General Convention Resolution B033 and allow people living in same-gender unions to be eligible to serve as bishops. Also, convention again faces proposals for developing an authorized liturgy for blessing such unions. And voluntary commitment to the proposed Anglican covenant is on the convention's table even though a final text of that agreement will not exist in time for convention.

Convention will be asked to approve two significant liturgical works: *Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes: Liturgies and Prayers for Healing from Loss Related to Childbearing and Childbirth* and *Holy Men, Holy Women*, an overhaul of *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*, which provides prayers and readings for commemorating saints and occasions that are not major holy days.

Concerning the church's missionary work, convention will be asked to increase funding and to switch to the term "mission partner" instead of "missionary" to help to reinvigorate this work and define more accurately its emphasis on relationship building and interdependence.

Among ecumenically oriented resolutions, convention will consider a proposal for full communion with the Moravian Church.

Leading the list of new domestic initiatives to be considered is one from the Executive Council's Jubilee Advisory Committee to establish a program to alleviate domestic poverty. Arising from Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori's May 2008 summit on domestic poverty, the resolution focuses on the poorest counties in the United States that encompass federal reservations for Native Americans. It calls on the church to develop programs with measurable goals for advocacy to federal, state and local governments to reduce poverty in these counties and to "build capacity and sustainable communities through development initiatives, working with local dioceses and tribal governments."

What happens with this and many other initiatives will be affected by passage of the church budget for 2010-2012, being crafted in a time of economic crisis and uncertainty.

## Many voices will represent Newark diocese

*By Sharon Sheridan*

Deputies and others from the Diocese of Newark will participate in General Convention in many ways.

Several deputation members will work as coaches for the public-narrative table discussions planned for convention, including Marge Christie, the Rev. Diana Clark, Louie Crew and Laura Russell. E. Kim Byham, as a member of Executive Council, has helped organize the trainers for the project, Crew noted in an e-mail.

"Those of us who attended the Province II meeting in Albany [in May] ... had an opportunity to experience the process," Clark said in an e-mail. "I have known a number of people in our deputation for many years, but through the narrative exercises came to know them in a new way, and I believe our relationships were enriched and strengthened."

"Having an opportunity to share our faith journeys in such an effective way during the course of the convention may well be quite significant in helping us work together to bridge our differences and perhaps address legislative issues with greater understanding," she said. "Perhaps, we might even be able to agree on the direction in which God is calling us to move in some sensitive issues such as sexuality and gender."

Several deputies will serve on legislative committees, including: the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson, Dispatch of Business;

### Deputy preparation

Newark's deputies are focusing on a wide range of issues, said the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson, deputation co-chair and rector of St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange. "What I love about our deputation is that we have a group of people who are extraordinarily deep in terms of the breadth of interests and passion and connection and commitment."

It's a deputation that can "effectively bring the spirit of Newark to convention," she said. "We are not a one-party team in any way, shape or form."

In preparation for convention, deputation members divided up the Blue Book – the reports and proposed resolutions of the church's various committees, commissions, agencies and boards – and wrote reflections and made presentations to inform other members, Wilson said. "We meet once a month for 3 1/2 hours or so and talk about the things that are going on in the church, the things that we wish to have an impact on."

They also have looked at ways they might join efforts with the deputations of the New York, New Jersey and Long Island dioceses, said Wilson, an eight-time deputy.

General Convention meets at a time when bishops and some members of a handful of dioceses and individual congregations have left the Episcopal Church over issues related to human sexuality, theology and biblical authority. How that affects the dynamics and actions of this convention remains to be seen.

"It's a very interesting challenge, I think, to all of us to be open to what it is," Wilson said. "There's never been a time like this before. You have no sense of what-all will be missing and what-all will be added." The challenge, she said, will be to "allow ourselves to let the Spirit do some moving." Some people, she said, "will try to hijack the Spirit and try to move it around." But deputies "need to let the Spirit move, too."

Besides Wilson, clergy representing the diocese as deputies are the Revs. Diana Clark, St. John's, Montclair; Cathy Deats, St. James', Hackettstown; and Edward Hasse, St. Paul's, Montvale; and, as alternate deputies, the Revs. Geoffrey Curtiss, All Saints', Hoboken; and

Clark, Education; The Rev. Edward Hasse, Credentials (Vice-Chair); Crew, National and International Concerns; Martha Gardner, Ministry; and Lyn Headley-Deavours, Program, Budget and Finance.

Some alternates and other volunteers will work as legislative aides to committees. Russell, for example, will serve as legislative aide to the Committee on Canons. Byham will be the legislative aide for the Pension Fund Committee.

Linda Curtiss of All Saints, Hoboken, will serve as legislative aide to the Committee on World Mission. "I am excited about being able to be at convention and about having a substantive volunteer role," she wrote via e-mail. "I attended every convention since Indianapolis [in 1994] in my role with the Church Pension Fund. I am looking forward to being of service – and to reconnecting with friends from around the world." The Rev. Mary Frances Schjonberg will cover General Convention for the Episcopal News Service in her role as ENS' national correspondent.

"I will be one of the Episcopal Women's Caucus legislative team, which means early-morning briefings to update strategies related to various resolutions affecting women," Christie reported in an e-mail. "Among those known at this moment of writing are the creation of a Standing Commission on Women (a policy body) and retaining the Commission

*See "Voices" page 4*

William Parnell, Christ Church, Hackensack.

Laity representing the diocese as deputies are Louie Crew, deputation co-chair, of Grace, Newark; Martha Gardner, St. George's, Maplewood; Lyn Headley-Deavours, St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange; and Bert Jones, Christ Church, East Orange; and, as alternate deputies, Marge Christie, Christ Church, Ridgewood; E. Kim Byham, All Saints', Hoboken; Laura Russell, All Saints', Hoboken; and Mary Sunden, Grace, Westwood.

### Bishop at convention

Beckwith will serve on the Social and Urban Concerns Committee, "which speaks to my passion," he said, noting that the diocese will host an Episcopal Church antipoverty conference in April.

The Chicago Consultation is "preparing to offer hospitality to many of the visiting primates," said Beckwith, a member of the consultation steering committee. "Our hope is to not just offer hospitality but to engage these visiting primates and to invite them to hear stories of the lives of ... LGBT people, because often it's the case that what they hear is a conceptual perspective" rather than a personal one.

On the legislative end, he said, he's "working very carefully to make sure that there's ongoing communication between the House of Deputies and House of Bishops as legislation moves through." This will let them "do the necessary organizing to re-

spond to things as they arise and to be nimble and wise as these issues come forward."

Beckwith recalled his experience in 2006, when he was a deputy from the Diocese of Western Massachusetts, and B033 passed. "The last morning, the day after having done an enormous amount of good work around issues of sexuality, the bishops came to the House of Deputies and said, 'You need to consider this as well.'"

Beyond the actual resolution, "that they undermined our work was even more troubling," he said. "That's the last memory that I carry back from that last convention. It's not a good memory at any stretch, and it wasn't done well or right, and we need to move beyond it."

The question in Anaheim, he said, will be "what feeling will be in the room and how that moves across the ... days that we are together. Hence the need for strong communication between the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. ... We don't need any more surprises."

"My other hope," he noted, "is that we can, as a church, witness to the witness of the justice work that we do and tell that story and tell it over and over and over again."

*Individual convention resolutions can be followed at <http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation/> and the business and activities of General Convention at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/elif/> or [www.episcopalchurch.org/ghub](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ghub). The Voice will include coverage of the convention and the work of diocesan members there in its next issue.*

## Bishop swaps miter for helmet Beckwith leads 165 cyclists in tour to combat hunger

*By Sondra Odian*

At 7 a.m. on May 2, the rain stopped, the clouds parted, the sun peeked out, and the stage was set for St. David's second annual Brake the Hunger Cycle bike tour, a benefit to support the U.N. Millennium Development Goals. More than 165 cyclists of all ages and skill levels participated, raising \$12,000.

Bishop Mark Beckwith led the tour, riding the 40-mile route through scenic Morris County. Also participating in the event were more than 50 riders from 10 diocesan churches and the diocesan headquarters – including the Revs. Gregory Jacobs, diocesan canon for ministry development, and Robert Griner, rector of Christ Church, Newton. Towaco's Church of the Transfiguration sent 11 riders, the most

from any church. Christ Church, Pompton Lakes, besides sending riders, collected \$1,400 in donations for the MDGs.

Bike technicians were available before the start of the tour, while rest stops along the various routes provided snacks and drinks for the riders. Returning riders were greeted by members of St. David's and offered a backyard-style barbecue. The Chester County Lawmen, a band founded 10 years ago by Pennsylvania police officers and dedicated to performing for charitable causes, provided music. A massage therapist also was available to soothe the aching limbs of riders.

Additional pictures may be found at [www.HungerCycleTour.com](http://www.HungerCycleTour.com).

*Sondra Odian attends St. David's, Kinnelon.*



*The Rev. David DeSmith sprinkles holy water and prays for a safe biking season during a blessing of the bicycles – and tricycles, skates and skateboards – at St. David's, Kinnelon, a week before the Brake the Hunger Cycle Tour.*

# Churches share joint-ministry stories

By Sharon Sheridan

More than 60 members of two dozen congregations shared ideas and resources for joint ministries at a May 27 meeting hosted by St. Mark's, Mendham.

"Over the past six months or so, we've had conversations with many of you because you've been engaged in conversations with other congregations in exploring shared ministry," Bishop Mark Beckwith told the group. "This is an opportunity to learn from one another. This is a phenomenon that we want to pay attention to and support."

The Rev. Greg Jacobs, canon for ministry development, agreed. "I believe that the best way for us to learn is to learn from one another and share our stories."

Leaders of three different types of shared ministry described their experiences, then led break-out sessions before the group rejoined to summarize the evening's lessons. Deacon Erik Soldwedel of St. John the Divine, Hasbrouck Heights, first described efforts at joint partnerships or collaboration, where congregations share programs or mission work, in District 7.

St. John the Divine, Trinity Church, Kearny, and St. Martin's, Maywood, celebrated Holy Week together, with one service at each church, he said. He and Deacon Deborah Drake have visited seven of the district's 11 churches to discuss issues such as preaching. And six congregations celebrated Ascension together, he said. "We celebrated our diversity, our cultural heritage."

St. John the Divine and St. Martin's also currently share a priest and have moved service times and held some joint services to make the arrangement work, he said.

## Yoked parishes

Warden Dean Witty of Church of the Transfiguration, Towaco, and Warden Peter Katzenbach of St. Andrew's, Lincoln Park, who also share clergy, told the gathering how their cluster or yoked ministry came about

and the joys and challenges they'd faced so far. Located about three miles apart, the churches recently called a new rector, the Rev. David Cabush, to lead them.

"It took a lot of time," said Katzenbach, describing how St. Andrew's initially searched for a new priest to replace its departing rector before realizing it didn't have the financial resources to pay for full-time clergy.

"The hardest part was the discussion of dividing up services times," he said. But that adjustment was important to allow the priest and shared choir director time to move between churches on Sunday mornings.

"What's really going to be important to me is to have time before and after the service with the congregation," Cabush noted. "Sunday is the time for any of those people to have contact with their priest and vice versa. Working out that schedule is really important. Otherwise you always feel like you're sacrificing one for the other."

The churches have done some things together, such as a joint youth trip to New Orleans and combined Maundy Thursday and Easter Vigil services.

"The commonality of what we're involved with is stronger than anything that separates us, and that guides me every day," Witty noted. There's a strong sense of church identity, he said, "but we're all Episcopalians."

When launching a yoked ministry, Jacobs said, it's important to continue the conversation within each congregation. "There must be continuous conversation with your 'own people' throughout this process."

And congregations considering partnering need to do things together and see what happens, he said. "There's no secret. What it takes is a commitment to continue to be involved in dialogue with each other."

## Becoming one

Moving beyond yoked ministries, some congregations decide to unify into a single new church. Warden Joan Zanotti of Church of the Good Shepherd, Midland Park, and

Warden Bernie Milano of Church of the Epiphany, Allendale, described the process that recently led to a letter of agreement between the parishes, with a date for full unification set for Jan. 1.

When church leaders began considering combining the two congregations, "we started engaging our parishes immediately," Milano said. Those leading the effort wanted to be sure both vestries approved. They see the endeavor not as a corporate-style merger but as a unification, forming one parish from two, he said.

The churches wanted to be sure to maintain both communities and a strong sense of their traditions, he said. "We wanted to maintain a strong sense of identity. People had to really feel as if nothing had been taken away."

Noted Zanotti, "It was all about not panicking, and it was all about communication."

"We want people to feel that they own it," she said. "It seemed like every potential barrier that came up solved itself right in front of us."

"The choir rehearsals together were awesome," she added.

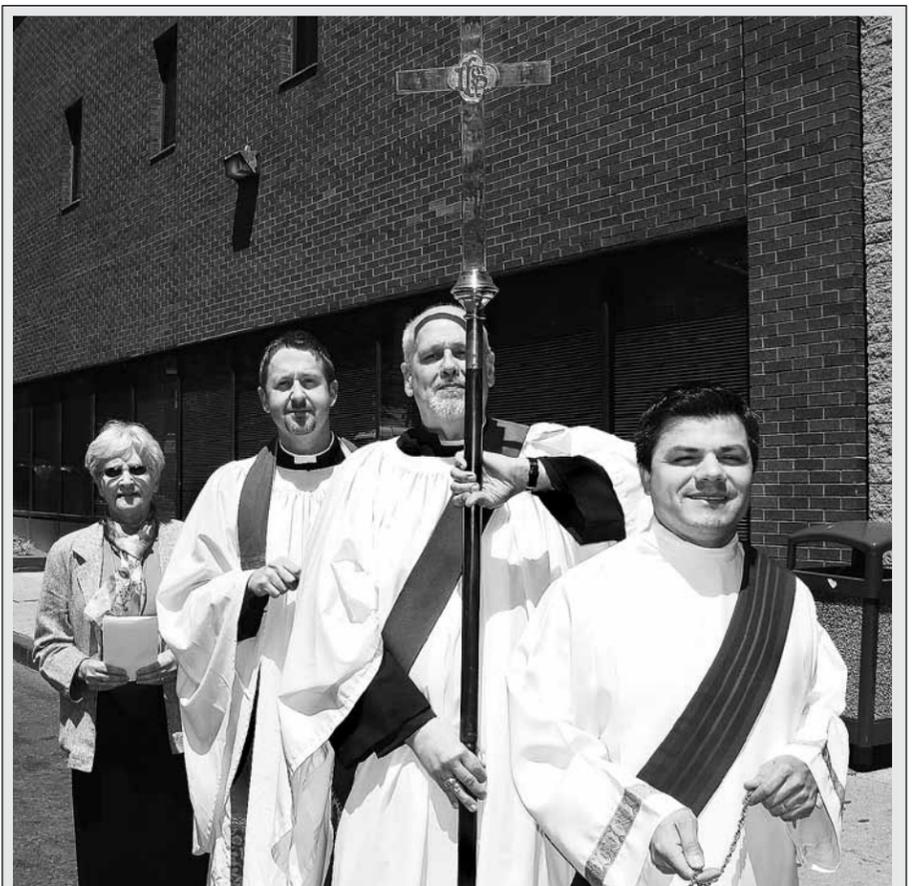
"One of the things that we're so excited about," Milano said, "is how vibrant our outreach can be now that we have more folks."

Toward the end of the meeting, Beckwith commented, "It seems all these conversations have been initiated by lay people, and the energy for it has come from lay people. I am humbled if not stunned by the level of commitment from all of you who are here."

"One size does not fit all," he noted, adding, "If it's suggested from 31 Mulberry St. in Newark, then it has zero or less chance of working. It needs to be self-generated."

However, Jacobs said, "The diocese is here to support the ministry that you want to undertake, the ministry that you want to explore."

Some resources for joint ministry will be posted on the diocesan website at [www.dioceseofnewark.org](http://www.dioceseofnewark.org), and the group agreed to meet again in the fall to continue sharing stories.



## Rogation commemoration

The Department of Pastoral Care at Christ Hospital held a Rogation Day Procession on May 19 to ask for God's blessings on the hospital and the community it serves. Leading the procession, from left, are: Sister Nancy Craig; the Rev. Kevin Morris, director of pastoral care; Deacon Erik Soldwedel; and Chaplain Raul Pamplona. The procession ended with a prayer circle near the entrance to the hospital on Palisade Avenue in Jersey City.

# Deacons demonstrate servanthood in many ways

By James Murphy

Deacons have been part of the church since its earliest days. The first deacons were witnessed in the Acts of the Apostles, of whom St. Stephen is also remembered as the first Christian martyr. Famous deacons throughout history have included saints Vincent, Laurence and Francis of Assisi, and even 19th-century author Lewis Carroll.

Many Episcopalians, however, are confused or not well informed about this order of ministry.

The church has four orders of ministry. The laity is the primary and largest order, out of which some women and men are "set apart" to perform specific functions and roles. According to the *Book of Common Prayer*, bishops serve as "one with the apostles ... to guard the faith, unity and discipline of the church." A priest serves as a pastor, preaching, declaring God's forgiveness, pronouncing God's blessing and administering the sacraments. A deacon's role is to interpret the needs of the world to the church and to focus her or his ministry on those in need. A deacon's service to the needy is clear from the Scriptures as well the



Trenton Catholic Academy students pose with bagged breakfasts assembled by children from Grace, Madison, and the Bridges Outreach Organization. Feed the Solution, an Apostles House program, coordinated the distribution of the breakfasts with statistics on the bags to state legislators to educate them about the school breakfast program and how it can be improved, explained deacon Diane Riley of Apostles House.

original Greek word, *diakonos*, which means servant or minister.

There are two types of deacons. Those who will be ordained as priests are first ordained as transitional deacons for six months to a year. Other deacons—commonly referred to as "vocational" or "permanent"—remain deacons and often earn their livings in other vocations. Deacons always have existed in the Anglican Communion, but certain dioceses had reduced or stopped ordaining all but transitional deacons. This was true in the Diocese of Newark for many years,

See "Deacons" page 5

## Voices

Continued from page 3

on the Status of Women (a program body)."

Christie said she submitted a resolution calling for a standing commission "to act as a think tank on issues affecting women and girls that most people are more or less unaware of— including what I see as our responsibilities as citizens of this country to the women and girls around the world where conditions are in many cases horrific."

"In addition," she said, "I will be attending nightly meetings of the Consultation as one of its steering committee. Founded in 1985, it, too, is a body concerned with strategy, but specifically in support of issues affecting all 13 of its peace-and-justice member caucuses."

The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton, rector of St. Paul's in Chatham, will attend as president of the national Episcopal Women's Caucus. She holds press credentials for the caucus and the Consultation and also will work on the caucus and IntegrityUSA legislative teams.

Deacon Jon Richardson, director of

youth and family ministries of St. Peter's, Morristown, also will work with Integrity at convention. "Along with Jan Adams, I will be co-leading Integrity's team of volunteers for legislative strategy and resolution tracking," he said via e-mail. "We'll be working closely with our allies in the Consultation and the Chicago Consultation to ensure that the Episcopal Church is a place where all the sacraments are available to all the baptized."

The Chicago Consultation, composed of bishops, clergy and laity, supports the full inclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people in the Episcopal Church and the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Wilson said she would meet nightly with a group of other deputies of color at convention. She also will be involved with the Chicago Consultation and represent the Union of Black Episcopalians on the Consultation and on the steering committee of Claiming the Blessing, a coalition of Episcopal organizations and individuals advocating for full inclusion of all the baptized in all sacraments of the church.

# Garden programs sprout in diocese

The seeds of several new gardening programs have been planted this spring in the Diocese of Newark.

In Mendham, the Sisters of St. John Baptist started a community garden on their property sponsored by the Interchurch Committee of the Mendhams to grow vegetables for the Morris County Food Pantry. They have received help from local churches, the Brookside (Mendham Township) Garden Club, the Boy Scouts and others for the Garden of Hope.

Several Master Gardeners from the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service of Morris County donated their

services, and representatives from the food pantry have volunteered their time. During the summer, volunteers will come regularly to care for the garden, harvest and deliver the produce. Organizers hope this effort will benefit needy families who otherwise might be unable to afford fresh vegetables.

In Parsippany, residents can grow their own vegetables at the new community garden sponsored by Saint Gregory's.

"With the economy so bad, we wanted to give people an enjoyable and affordable way to supplement their food budgets," said St. Gregory's member and Garden Director Jeanne Stevens. "We also hope that working side by side will help people get to know some of their neighbors better."

Gardeners are asked to make a \$20 donation and a contribution of any excess produce, which will be donated to the Parsippany Food Pantry. The garden has at least 17 10-foot-by-10-foot plots available for cultivation, which can be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis by calling 973-887-5879. Participants are responsible for their own plantings, fertilizer and fencing. Saint Gregory's will provide access to water throughout the summer. The garden will be accessible daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

In Tenafly, church school children at Church of the Atonement took part in an annual Earth Day gardening event by sowing flower bulbs and vegetable seeds, whose fruits will be shared with the homeless at harvest time.



St. Gregory's, Parsippany, members clear brush to make way for a community garden.



Children from Church of the Atonement, Tenafly, plant bulbs and seeds in an Earth Day project.



Sisters Donna Martha and Barbara Jean look over the new plants in the community garden at the Convent of St. John Baptist in Mendham.

## Deacons

Continued from page 4

but the ordination process for vocational deacons was reintroduced under Bishop Jack Croneberger. In 2004, the first class in decades was ordained.

Deacons don't seek to replace lay leaders in the church's mission to serve the world.

"Deacons rally and ready the laity of the church for the work that Jesus started," said former diocesan Archdeacon Nancy Read. "Deacons are the powerful link that connects the secular with the sacred most especially during those 'other' six days of the week."

The diocese has 24 deacons, said Bishop Mark Beckwith. "My hope is that we can have 24 more deacons in the next five years."

Three archdeacons assist in overseeing the community of deacons: the Rev. Liz Ostuni of Good Shepherd, Wantage; the Rev. Peter Jackson, archdeacon for deployment, from St. John's, Montclair; and the Rev. Deborah Drake, archdeacon for community formation, who recently moved from St. Peter's, Clifton, to St. Agnes, Little Falls.

### Many roles

Beckwith said he consults with the archdeacons in placing deacons in their diverse ministries throughout the diocese. Besides working with individual congregations, deacons work with feeding and advocacy programs such as Apostle's House, as chaplains or with various church-related or government organizations such as St. Peter's Haven in Clifton and the N.J. Department of Youth and Family Services.

The Rev. Lynn Czarniecki, who previously specialized as a pediatric nurse in the care of children with HIV/AIDS, conducts her diaconal ministry as a full-time hospice chaplain in addition to her ministry at St. Stephen's, Millburn. She ministers to dying patients and their families but often finds herself

also ministering to the staff in hospitals and nursing homes to support them in their work.

"Deacons are the church's messengers in the world," she said. "We are the ones to bring Jesus' unconditional love to those whom society has shunted aside ... We are in many ways prophets. The church is not just about personal salvation or having supportive community; it is about social justice and action. Everything Jesus did was about putting love into action."

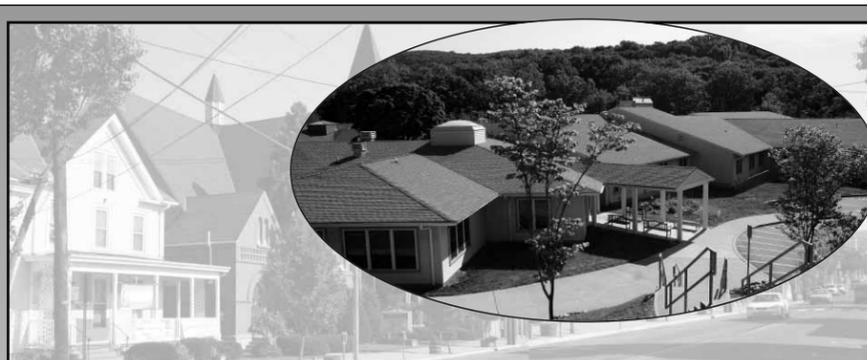
Until June 28, Drake worked with St. Peter's Haven and St. Peter's Church in Clifton. Drake also may be known in the diocese for her work as convener of District 7 and its 11 parishes, as well as her many presentations on the work of deacons and on behalf of St. Peter's Haven's food pantry, shelter and English as a Second Language programs.

Speaking about her why she felt called to be a deacon, she recounted happily the ordination process, which includes a process of discernment with one's home parish and the diocese's Commission on Ministry. Deacons then receive theological education, a nine-month field placement and Clinical Pastoral Education at a certified program in a hospital or similar institution.

"A person must have compassion for and be ready and willing to commit themselves to the ministry of the Episcopal Church," she said. "This preparation also shows the world that the deacon has been well prepared to go out into the world."

"The deacons we have," Beckwith said, "offer incredible service and wisdom to parishes and non-parish-related ministries. My hope and prayer is that more people across the diocese will feel a call to this important order of ministry - so that more of our parishes can benefit from their gifts."

*James Murphy is associate program director of planned giving and endowment management at the Episcopal Church Foundation.*



**Beal Moore**, Chief Engineer, retired. Fellow, American Society of Mechanical Engineers International.



**Millie Eppedio**, retired banker. Formerly from New York, relocated to be closer to children in Basking Ridge.



**Bob Peterson**, born in Mt. Arlington, NJ. Retired Conductor, New Jersey Transit.

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# 'What about us?'

## Parishes serve developmentally disabled

By Anne Agostin

Two parishes in the diocese are embodying the spirit of radical hospitality by supporting ministries that provide opportunities, services and assistance to adults with developmental disabilities. Trinity Parish, Bayonne, established the Windmill Alliance program in 1985, and St. David's Church, Kinnelon, instituted the Willing Hands program in 1986.

The nonprofit Windmill Alliance began under the leadership of the Rev. Gerard A. Pisani in response to an inquiry into how the parish might serve the community in an active

ministry when a congregant who has developmental disabilities stood and asked, "What about us? What are you going to do for us?" That question led to the program that now encompasses the Windmill Center Day Program; HIGHWAYS (Helping Individuals Gain Hope Will Always Yield Success), which is a thrift store; and a Supervised Apartments Program.

The alliance operates in partnership with several other community organizations, including the Bayonne Coalition of Food Pantries, Bayonne City Hall and the Bayonne Community Mental Health Center, and is supported by volunteers from local churches and temples. Its services for the developmentally disabled range from residential care to job training and emergency assistance for the poor.

The WINDMILL Center Day Program (Where Independence Nourishes Dignity Mid Inspired Light-hearted Labor) was the original ministry of the alliance.



A client at work at the Willing Hands program.

"We encourage our participants to become productive members of our community, so that they too can make a difference," said the Rev. Gregory Perez, associate rector of Trinity and director of staff at the alliance. "The community benefits by interacting with persons with disabilities in everyday settings – to help eliminate stereotypes and overcome prejudices."

HIGHWAYS is much more than a thrift store. It is a venue for N.J. Work First participants to learn new job skills while working alongside 50 volunteers who keep the store running. Numerous services are provided within the structure of the thrift shop, including counseling and supportive employment, emergency assistance to homeless individuals and families, an emergency food bank, and crisis intervention. Referrals and advocacy are offered to anyone seeking help, which often includes people facing homelessness, seeking employment or suffering from domestic abuse.

The Supervised Apartments Program provides the "necessary structure, training and support to ensure the safety and well-being of the residents," said Perez. The residents are supervised 24 hours a day by trained staff and are assisted with self-help skills, developing independence and community-living skills. There are eight shared apartments and a community room for group activities and recreation. The parishioner who inspired the creation of the Windmill Alliance with his question almost 25 years



Nina Nicholson photos

This month, The Voice highlights ministries from the Gate of Radical Hospitality, symbolized by an angel on the Gates of Hope vestments created by Colleen Hintz.

ago became a resident of the apartments program in 2007.

Trinity supports the alliance in various ways. The rector, wardens and vestry are the trustees of the Windmill Alliance Inc. Community members constitute the Advisory Board, and congregation members serve as volunteers in the thrift store and in leading fundraising efforts.

Most funding comes through the state's Department of Developmental Disabilities. Due to the current economic crisis, the alliance is downsizing its day program, which is not considered an entitlement by the state the way the residential program is. Several organizations, foundations and individuals, however, have continued to offer financial support.

Joann Tassone-Dost, director of social services for the Windmill Alliance, described a young, single mother who

was abandoned by her husband and faced with the task of raising and supporting three young children. The HIGHWAYS program assisted her with food and clothing while she worked two and sometimes three jobs to support her family. Most importantly, she received the encouragement and emotional support she needed to make a new life for herself and her family.

After several months of not hearing from this young woman, Tassone-Dost said, she walked into the HIGHWAYS office late



Residents at the Windmill Alliance supervised apartments in Bayonne celebrate Halloween.

See "Disabled," page 9

# Different parishes, same mission

## Essex Fells and East Orange churches bridge differences to serve the needy

By Marie Panton

On a snowy January night more than a year ago, the Rev. Stephanie Wethered, rector of St. Peter's Church, Essex Fells, reluctantly attended a preconvention meeting at Christ Church, East Orange. "I was tired and, frankly, did not want to go," she said. "When I got there, a friendly woman showed me a seat and sat down next to me. We started to chat, and I was deeply moved by the woman's faith and commitment to the church. As it turned out, she was a member of the vestry at Christ Church. I went home spiritually warmed by the exchange with the woman."

That encounter led to a new relationship between two parishes different in culture, race and socioeconomic status, yet similar as members of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Newark. Asked to cite a Bible verse to reflect their work together, the Rev. William Guthrie, Christ Church rector, East Orange, shared Galatians 6:10: "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

When Wethered first visited Christ Church that winter night, "The Scriptures for the coming Sunday were for the Epiphany," she said. "My study revealed that the Wise Men thought that the manifestation of God had to be in Jerusalem, where all important things happen and where the temple was. [So] they went to inquire about the Christ child and [were] told that, no, the prophesy that was foretold said that

the child would be born in Bethlehem, nine miles away.

"I MapQuested the distance between Essex Fells and East Orange, and the hairs on my arms stood up," said Wethered. "There is exactly nine miles between the two towns. I felt the Spirit was telling me something again that I found out that recent snowy night ... that I encountered the Christ not in Essex Fells, but in East Orange.

"I felt that the Spirit was directing us to come together to break down the walls of culture and race and socioeconomic backgrounds that divide us and enslave us," she said.

Seeking to do just that, members of both parishes have been coming together for more than a year to provide a nutritious meal for Christ Church's Saturday morning soup kitchen. St. Peter's members also have brought boxes of non-perishable food for distribution in the weekly food pantry and donated clothing and toys for a clothing drive.

### Coming together

"These activities helped to cement a budding relationship between members of these two congregations and enabled us to move upward to a higher level," said Guthrie.

Recently, the parishes conducted an exchange of pulpits, altars, choirs and organists.

Christ Church Junior Warden and Jackie King recounted her most moving experience volunteering in the soup kitchen. One very cold Saturday, more than 50 people came for lunch, and one lady was celebrating her birthday.

"We have a piano in the parish hall and one of the men, it was discovered, plays the piano very well," King said. "We all came together around the piano and sang *Happy Birthday* ... We had some pastries, and it became a party of sorts with the gentleman taking song requests.

"For a few hours we had great fellowship, and they all expressed their enjoyment that day, and the woman felt really special."



Dean Mohammed photo

Choir members from St. Peter's, Essex Fells, join the procession at Christ Church, East Orange, during the churches' pulpit and choir exchange.

Meanwhile, efforts grew to clothe as well as feed bodies. St. Peter's has a long-running Op Shop, a clothing resale consignment program, said Warden David Cowell. When he discovered that Christ Church was running a clothing ministry on Saturday mornings, Cowell enlisted the consignment shop in bringing clothing, and later children's things, for donation to the ministry.

"I took on the task of getting the clothing down to Christ Church," said Cowell. "It was that simple. We have been delivering clothes weekly since November."

Cowell said he was moved one day by Christ Church's decision to turn off the heat in the church for a two-hour meeting of the wardens and rectors about the outreach ministries so that they could afford to heat the church for the Saturday morning clothing and food ministries. "The reality of that decision was dramatically present when we met in the freezing church and all of us tried our best to stay focused and cheerful."

The outreach ministries are strengthening Christ Church, King said. "It helps the parish because it breathes life and promotes action to the teaching and preaching we receive in our worship by providing an avenue to perform God's mandate to us all: to go forth and serve the Lord by tending to his flock."

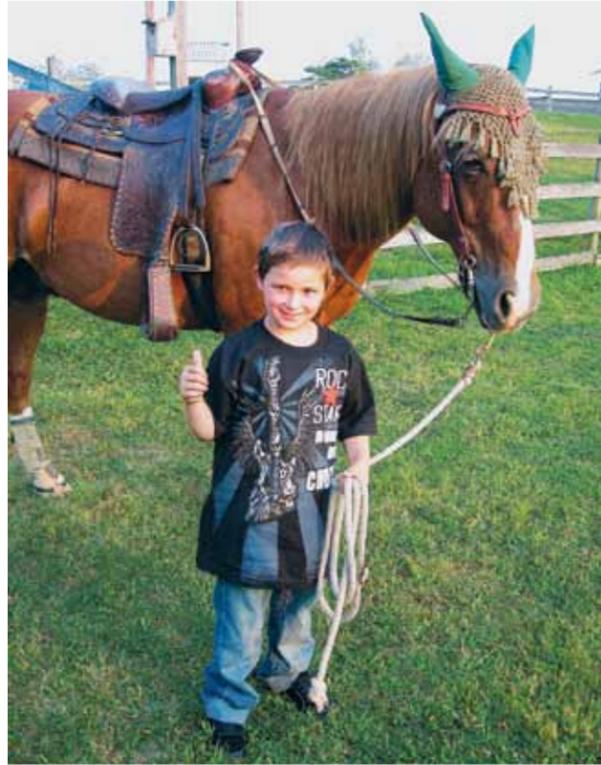
Former Faithworks editor of Episcopal Life, Marie Panton now works for the McGraw-Hill Companies.

# ACTS/VIM funds ministries throughout diocese

By Cathie Studwell

When youth gather to share meals or study the Bible at Grace Episcopal Church in Union City, they do so thanks partly to funding for the church's Youth Outreach program from the diocesan ACTS/VIM Foundation.

"We feed 70 teens every Friday night," said the Rev. David S. Veale, Grace's rector. "We want to encourage fellowship around a healthy meal. ACTS/VIM resources also



A youngster in the Haven of Hope for Kids program makes friends with a horse. The Haven's pilot program was funded by ACTS/VIM.

support our youth Bible Study. We started with donations from our congregation, but as our program grew, so did our expenses. ACTS/VIM has been a Godsend!"

ACTS/VIM, standing for A Commitment To Serve/Venture In Mission, is the result of two separate committees coming together during Bishop Jack Spong's time in the Diocese of Newark. The foundation has provided financial support for programs and projects that encourage congregational development and community outreach for many years. It endeavors to increase the activity of the Episcopal Church in the diocese as it expresses Jesus' vision for God's people.

Chaired by Laura Russell, a legal-aid attorney for New York and member of All Saints in Hoboken, the foundation's board consists of 12 members, both lay and clergy, who can serve two three-year terms. With help from Diocesan Administrator Michael Francaviglia, the board reviews grant applications submitted by individual churches, multiple congregation initiatives and district initiatives each February and September. Board members then have the opportunity to observe the programs that would receive funds and discuss the vision, activity and challenges of the programs with their directors.

To complete the process, applicants attend an ACTS/VIM board meeting to present a small review of their program or project to the entire board.

Many groups have received funding over the years. "So many funders and corporations have stopped or greatly reduced their funding during these difficult financial times," said Sandra Accomando, executive director of Apostles' House. "ACTS/VIM funding is critical for our food pantry and Feed the Solution advocacy program. The numbers of people requesting food have tripled recently. We would not be able to continue serving food without the help of ACTS/VIM."

Haven of Hope for Kids, a country retreat and network of support for New Jersey and New York area families caring for children with life-threatening illnesses, is extremely



Children in the Haven of Hope for Kids program, and a country retreat and support network for families caring for children with life-threatening illnesses, check out a tractor.

grateful to the ACTS/VIM board, especially for funding the pilot of this successful project in 2004, said Executive Director Pamela Faris. "Vital small nonprofits are often overlooked because big foundations and corporations want to put their name on doors or on furniture in buildings. Also, many secular foundations will not support the work of church-based programs. ACTS/VIM realizes the important work that Haven of Hope and other programs do."

Other programs that have received funding over the years include the community development corporation of Christ Church, Hackensack, for its Next Step Initiative homeless program; Church of the Messiah, Chester, for its Senior Resource Program; St. Paul's, Paterson, for its City Serve Summer Youth Program; Church of the Good Shepherd, Fort Lee, for its Friends For Life HIV/AIDS support program; All Saints, Hoboken, for its Jubilee Children's Program; and Trinity, Kearny, for its English Language Education Project.

ACTS/VIM funding applications can be found on the diocesan website, [www.dioceseofnewark.org](http://www.dioceseofnewark.org). Board members are available to assist in developing a comprehensive application. For more information, call Michael Francaviglia at 973-430-9900.

Cathie Studwell attends St. John the Divine, Hasbrouck Heights, and is a member of the ACTS/VIM board.

## Diocese meets seniors' needs in many ways

By Kevin Berrigan

As many Americans continue to live longer and require more specialized physical, socialization and educational activities to enjoy their quality of life in their latter years, the Diocese of Newark and some of its individual organizations and churches are addressing these issues with ministries to meet elders' physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

The diocese offers educational programs for seniors on hospice care, driving for seniors, health and health insurance and caregiving. One program in much demand is the diocese's advanced directives program, which outlines important information about legal documents, living wills, power of attorney and how to deal with terminal illnesses from an individual, family member and caregiver perspective, said the Rev. Oscar Mockridge, 72, chair of senior ministries for the diocese.

"Many of the individuals within our diocese are living longer, and through our services we are trying to improve the quality of that extended life," Mockridge said.

The diocese also provides educational programs on health-related issues concerning Alzheimer's disease, depression in seniors, support systems (family, church, groups) personal and health (nutrition, health and physical fitness), the aging process (physical, social and psychological) and retirement planning.

In June, 52 seniors received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the diocese at their Evensong program at the Christ Church in East Orange in recognition of their special ministries in their churches that serve their congregations and their community at large.

The awards are given in memory of the Rev. David Hegg, the former rector of St.

Peter's, Morristown, and later employee of the Church Pension Fund who founded the diocese's senior ministries program more than a decade ago.

The offering from the Evensong will benefit the Senior Resource Center at Messiah, Chester, which provides support programs in education training and referral programs for seniors and their caregivers, and Shepherd's Haven in Pompton Lakes, which administers an adult day-care program providing safe, stimulating and health-promoting activities for elders.

### Housing options

Seniors can find several specialized housing options in the diocese, including two continuing-care retirement communities - Heath Village and House of the Good Shepherd in Hackettstown, each just outside Hackettstown, and - Canterbury Village, an assisted-living facility in West Orange.

Good Shepherd, for example, provides residential and treatment services for 180 residents age 65 or older in three distinct populations. Apartment-style dwellings are available for individuals who want to live independently while remaining close to friends their own age and giving family members the comfort of knowing that 24-hour medical care is nearby, said James McCracken, executive director.

"We also have an assisted-living arrangement where an individual may have one or two specific health issues that need frequent attention," he said. "We also provide three balanced meals a day and medication-administration assistance."

The third option is living inside the

community's skilled nursing center, which provides sub-acute rehabilitation services such as physical, occupational and speech therapies for patients who are treated and then discharged. Long-term care is also available for those who require more intensive health care, including 24-hour care.

Spiritual resources are a significant component of the community's offerings, McCracken said. A chaplain is on site 20 hours a week to coordinate spiritual care for the community. Besides regular church



Retired math teacher MaryDell Morrison, 81, remains very active while living at Heath Village, a continuing-care retirement community outside Hackettstown. In 2008, she joined a bike journey from Pittsburgh to Washington, D.C., where each cyclist rode between 150 and 180 miles. In 1999, she completed a more than 2,900-mile bike excursion.

services, this can include one-on-one counseling and activities such as Bible study, choir and pet therapy.

### Church-based programs

Among congregation-based senior min-

istries, the Grace Senior Center for Health Living in Jersey City is part of Grace Church Van Vorst Community Services and under the umbrella of Grace Church Van Vorst. One of the center's greatest challenges is attempting to provide a comprehensive program that not only addresses the seniors physical well-being but also their psychological nourishment, said Rev. Nick Lannon, church curate.

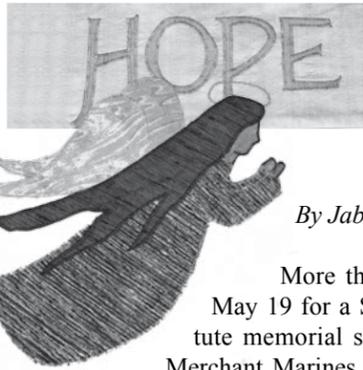
"What we are attempting to do is to continue to provide and maintain a community and social structure that the seniors have become accustomed to their whole lives," Lannon said. "We have a ready-made community here for the seniors and a single place where they can meet and interact, not out of necessity, but in comfort."

The senior center enlists the help of consultants who provide programs in exercise, quilting, yoga, line dancing and art. A discounted lunch program provides a nutritious meal on weekdays.

Once or twice a month, guest speakers discuss topics such as how to cook a healthy meal at home, heart issues and how to prevent identity theft. The center also schedules monthly trips to museums, movies, musicals, sporting events and other locations. Many of the seniors also volunteer to assist during the Grace Church Van Vorst Breakfast Plus program, which provides breakfast to the homeless on weekends.

"The socialization is probably the most important part of our events," said Joyce Davison, coordinator of the senior program. "It allows our seniors to get out of the house and meet and mingle with people rather than remaining alone and inactive."

Freelance writer Kevin Berrigan lives in Edison.



# A day of remembrance for mariners

By Jabez Van Cleef

More than 50 people gathered May 19 for a Seamen's Church Institute memorial service in honor of the Merchant Marines who died in service to their country. The Edwin J. O'Hara and Dennis A. Roland chapters of the American Merchant Marine Veterans were among those attending at the American Merchant Mariners' Memorial in Battery Park, New York.

The sun shone brightly as the U.S. Coast Guard Sector New York presented colors. Two port chaplains from the Diocese of Newark, the Revs. Megan Sanders and Jacques Girard, presided at the service. Sanders also is SCI tri-state church coordinator and chaplain of the O'Hara chapter. SCI staff members Tami Kurtz and Jeanette DeVita read sacred texts; Jena Tumbleson led the *National Anthem*; and Glen Oxtou played the bugle as the Rev. David M. Rider, SCI's executive director, laid the memorial wreath on the water in honor of the fallen veterans.

After the service, SCI served lunch to more than 90 guests on the top deck of its Water Street building. Captain Robert O'Brien, commander of the N.Y. Coast Guard sector, and Rear Adm. Allen B. Worley, superintendent of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, addressed the group, reaffirming the support that SCI and Coast Guard seek to offer the Merchant Marine community. They spoke about what it means to serve the mariner on all levels and in all contexts.

Such service has been the focus of the Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey for well over a century. SCI advocates for the

personal, professional and spiritual well-being of merchant mariners around the world. It promotes safety, dignity and improved working and living conditions for millions of men and women serving in the maritime workplace. Founded in 1834, the institute is a voluntary, ecumenical agency affiliated with the Episcopal Church.



The Rev. Megan Sanders with Coast Guard and Merchant Marine officers at the memorial service.

As part of its 365-days-a-year, 24-hours-a-day ministry, SCI maintains a staff of professional chaplains with interfaith and cross-cultural backgrounds. Chaplains assist thousands of mariners each year, offering friendship and pastoral care. They also provide practical services such as wire transfers, calling cards and cell phones to connect with loved ones at home.

For nearly five decades, SCI's International Seafarers' Center in Newark has provided such hospitality to mariners, truckers and port workers with a chapel, restaurant, conference rooms, telephones, Internet, recreation lounge, basketball courts and soccer field. Like a proud ship in need of dry dock, however, the facility is now undergoing a multi-million-dollar renovation.

New technology will provide more Internet and phone access; upgraded recreation areas will enhance relaxation and community; refurbished meeting rooms will offer gathering spaces for large and small port groups; and a new fitness center, including indoor exercise equipment and showers, will enable a welcome respite from the rigors of the job. SCI began construction in 2008.

SCI keeps up with current issues as well as new technologies. On June 11, SCI gave its first Courage at Sea Award to Captain Richard Phillips, who U.S. Navy Seals rescued from captivity among Somali pirates on Easter. SCI is collaborating with New York's Mt. Sinai School of Medicine Disaster Psychiatry Outreach and the New York Psychoanalytic Institute to study extensively traumatic stress issues relating to merchant mariners held in captivity by pirates.

The study seeks to create best-practice models for use by the maritime industry to provide immediate and ongoing treatment for mariners and their families during and after captivity, Rider said. He and Douglas B. Stevenson, SCI director of the Center for Seafarers' Rights and International Christian Maritime Association chair, will lead a public presentation, The Church and Pi-



Retired merchant mariners salute during the singing of the National Anthem at the SCI-sponsored remembrance service in Battery Park.

racy: Social Justice and Reconciliation on the High Seas, at General Convention in Anaheim, Calif., in July.

Jabez Van Cleef attends *Grace, Madison*. The Rev. Megan Sanders contributed to this report. To host a presentation about SCI and its activities, contact her at [msanders@seamenschurch.org](mailto:msanders@seamenschurch.org).

## Some facts and figures about SCI's ministry in Port Newark

**2,424** ships visited in the Port of New York and New Jersey in 2008

**33,596** seafarers visited onboard those ships

**17,078** seafarers, truckers and port workers used Seafarers' Center (currently under construction; SCI continued to serve mariners during renovation with a smaller, transitory space in the back part of the center)

**25,545** seafarers transported by SCI vans

**18,246** books and magazines placed aboard ships in port

**2,990** money transfers/wire transactions made

**583** seafarers sought personal, pastoral and vocational counseling

**93** religious services held onboard vessels

**0** ships not allowing chaplains to visit

# Helping immigrants become citizens

By Anthony Birritteri

In a city of many immigrants, Trinity Church in Kearny is working to help foreign-born residents navigate their new country and the increasingly difficult road to citizenship.

The federal government changed the naturalization test for immigrants last October, which some say made it harder and more expensive for those who dream of becoming American citizens. While the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services says the test is more standardized and fair, with "an emphasis on the fundamental concepts of America democracy and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship," others say that people with lower-level English skills are at a disadvantage. The application fee for the test also more than doubled, from \$330 to \$675 — translating into a longer time to accumulate the necessary money for many low-wage immigrant workers.

To pass the test, says Trinity's rector, the Rev. Rose Hassan, "you need to speak, read and write on an intermediate English level: as if you were in a second-year college language course. In the past, one could memorize an answer to a test question; today, it's more free-form writing, which is extremely difficult."

To help immigrants in Kearny study for the citizenship test, Trinity this year began offering a citizenship training class, held every Thursday evening. Only one student is enrolled. But this is not because of a lack of students (of Kearny's population of 37,295,



The Rev. Rose Hassan and ESL student Eusebio Huerta, who hopes to take the citizenship class.

some 15,475 residents are foreign-born). It's because the test is so much harder, and many students will be spending extra years in the church's English as a Second Language classes to enhance their speaking and writing skills.

"We had a lot of people wanting to take the citizenship class, but they could barely speak English. So now they are all in our ESL classes," Hassan explains. "That's the starting point."

Until this October, people can choose whether to take the old or new test. After that, the new test will be mandatory.

People interested in taking the citizenship test still study from a pool of 100 ques-

tions. At the actual test, they must answer correctly at least six of 10 questions posed. The \$675 fee allows an immigrant one retake if he or she fails.

Topic questions are similar to those on the old test but require more in-depth responses. For example, one old question was: "Name the amendments [in the Constitution] that guarantee or address voting rights." The new question taking its place is: "There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them."

## Working toward citizenship

The citizenship class at Trinity is free except for the \$12.95 cost of a training manual. Some instructors are professional teachers, and all volunteer their services. Like in its ESL classes, Trinity will cap the citizenship class at 10 students.

Eusebio Huerta, 57, an ESL student and one of the two wardens at Trinity, is waiting to take the citizenship class. He came to the United States in 2004 when he lost his job in his native Peru. At the time, he was paying for his daughter to attend a university there. He came to the United States to find work and send money back home. He settled in Kearny, eventually finding work a few miles north at Integrated Distribution Services in Secaucus.

Eusebio wants to become a U.S. citizen, but the test currently is beyond his academic reach. He also says it's "very expensive." He's been enrolled at Trinity's ESL class for four years, attending every Thursday night

while working daily at IDS.

When he started at IDS, Eusebio worked on the factory floor. After a few years of ESL classes, he was promoted to the billing department.

"To improve my position in the company," he says with a Peruvian accent, "I needed to learn English. That is why ESL has been so important to me. And I will enroll in the citizenship class when I am ready."

Kearny, considered a suburb of Newark, lies two miles southeast of New Jersey's largest city. Over the centuries, the 10.2 square-mile township has seen waves of immigrants. First it was the English, then the Scots. The Italians and Polish soon arrived, followed by the Portuguese and Brazilians. "Now, it's the Hispanics who have started to move to the town these past 20 years," says Hassan.

With a minority population of between 45 and 50 percent of a total congregation of 90, Trinity Church began offering a Spanish service four years ago. The students enrolled in the ESL classes include Hispanics, Asians and Arabs. Many are like Eusebio, adults who work full-time during the day.

"Learning English is definitely harder for the adult students," Hassan says.

Asked how she feels about helping this varied immigrant group, Hassan responds, "I think it's wonderful to help people learn to navigate this country and be able to achieve citizenship."

Anthony Birritteri is editor of New Jersey Business Magazine.

## A shorter reach for outreach

by Bill McColl

"We're going to ask you to tell us who you are and where you're from and take five to seven minutes to tell us anything you want about your application ..."

It was a little after 1 p.m., and for the 10th time that day Mary Sunden had repeated that phrase to someone requesting funds from the Diocesan Council's Outreach Grant Committee. With short-cropped silver hair and wire-rimmed glasses, Sunden is the no-nonsense yet sympathetic chair of the eight-person panel who guided the members through a whirlwind day of presentations – 20 domestic and two international. It's the third year in the chair's seat for Sunden, who both loves the work and is pained by it.

"We don't have enough money," she lamented.

The committee meets one day each year to decide where the funds will go. This gathering on March 14 was to hand out \$83,581, a significant decline from 2008 because of diocesan budget cuts. And it was only about half of the more than \$157,000 requested.

"What's frustrating," Sunden said, "is we have much less money than last year."

The committee's work began early in the year, when various organizations submitted applications. Then representatives from each group were invited to appear before the panel this day to present their case. After hearing all the presentations, the committee members met privately to determine how to parcel out the money.

Sunden's right-hand man on the panel, the Rev. Stuart Smith, was responsible for explaining the process to applicants. Sporting a salt-and-pepper beard and booming voice, Smith often let his glasses slide down his nose during the interviews, leading him to speak to the applicants with his head down as his eyes glanced upward over the top of the

frames. At the end of his comments, though, he would lift his head up, look directly at the applicant across the table and ask: "What happens if you don't get the money?"

"It's a hard question to ask," Smith said. "They usually said they would just have to adjust their programs or seek funding elsewhere."

Along with sharing Sunden's frustration about the committee's cash limitations, Smith said he also worried many churchgoers just weren't aware of all the good that comes from the outreach program.

"Folks in our diocese don't know what we're doing or what these folks [the charities] are doing," he said. "I love standing in front of my congregation the next day and saying, 'You just gave away \$100,000.'"

Sunden agreed. "What we do is very important to the people in the pews and the people elected to Diocesan Council."

It's also very important to Susan Milan. She chairs the Supportive Housing and Social Services for the Jersey City Community Development Corporation, a regular applicant for Newark's outreach funds. This year, Milan requested \$15,000 to pay for the homeless services the group provides. (The committee granted \$5,500.)

"The funding helps a lot," she said. "Money from private foundations is drying up. What you can apply for gets smaller every year. So this is very nice."

Diocesan grants, along with funding from other sources, are key to her group raising enough money to qualify for federal HUD matching funds, Milan noted. "All the little bits count."

It was an exhausting and long Saturday for the committee, but in the end all the money was spent and all the applicants received something. Still, the members recognized that, while what they did will make a difference, much more is necessary, especially in such tough economic times.

"It's very difficult to not be able to give them all they want," said the Rev. Erik Soldwedel, a committee member. "Their needs are so much greater than what they're asking for."

Bill McColl attends All Saints, Leonia.

### Diocese applies for stimulus funds

Diocesan Council gave the go-ahead to a coalition of individuals from outreach agencies in the diocese to apply for a two-year, \$1 million grant from federal stimulus money available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 - Strengthening Communities Fund, Nonprofit Capacity Building Program. If received, the grant would fit with the diocese's new mission statement of equipping congregations, empowering people and engaging the world, Deacons Diane Riley and Chris McCLOUD, coalition members, said at June's council meeting.

Under the government program, grants will be awarded for new cooperative agreements to experienced organizations to partner with nonprofit organizations and provide them with capacity-building training, technical assistance and competitive financial aid. The goal is to build these organizations' capacity to address the broad economic-recovery issues present in their communities, including helping low-income individuals secure and retain employment, earn higher wages, obtain better-quality jobs and gain greater access to state and federal benefits and tax credits.

The diocese was asked to be the lead organizer for the requested grant, which would assist organizations – which could be faith-based – with annual budgets of less than \$500,000. The diocese would commit \$125,000 annually, which would include in-kind and existing staff costs.

## Disabled

Continued from page 6

one December afternoon to let the staff there know that she had been promoted at her job, no longer had to work more than one job and had enrolled in community college to pursue a long-abandoned dream of earning a degree.

"For the staff at HIGHWAYS, this was a true Christmas miracle," Tassone-Dost said.

### Willing Hands

Willing Hands is modeled on the Windmill Alliance. It started when a parishioner at St. David's, Roberta Keenan, was researching programs for her developmentally disabled son, who was soon to finish high school. She learned of the Windmill Alliance and invited Pisani to speak at St. David's about his program. From this meeting came the Willing Hands program, launched in 1986 for a small group of clients including Jimmy Keenan.

Willing Hands is a non-profit sheltered workshop and activity center for adults with developmental disabilities. Clients come from Passaic, Morris, Bergen, Sussex and Essex counties and work primarily on labeling and assembling kits for local companies. Two major supporters are Middle Atlantic Inc. of Fairfield, which uses Willing Hands to assemble its parts kits; and Eco Lawn of Sussex, for whom the clients prepare yearly mailings.

Besides the workshop, clients experience music therapy, arts and crafts, and various field trips. They receive lessons related to the seasons and help with personal hygiene and cooking. Director Eve Perini currently is working with a senior Girl Scout to develop a computer-skills workshop to add to the program.

"Clients, by working together, share interests and ideas and learn to cope with new situations that arise," said Caroline Mossip, junior warden at St. David's and a Willing Hands board member. "They learn to make

the most of their day at Willing Hands, which brings rewards in spiritual, emotional and intellectual growth."

Willing Hands is housed in the church hall at St. David's and pays a modest monthly rent. Many volunteers in the program are parishioners at St. David's, as are several members of the Board of Directors, including the president and vice president.

Tuition is paid by the state through Real Life Choices for about one-third of the participants. The rest pay privately. There is concern about possible cuts in the state program if the economic downturn continues, but thus far funding for Willing Hands has remained stable.

Mossip shared a story about one client, a developmentally disabled woman in her 30s who had lived with her mother for her entire life. Her sister located the Willing Hands program after their mother died but was unable



A group at work at Willing Hands, a sheltered workshop and activity center for adults with developmental disabilities.

to afford the tuition. Willing Hands searched for a sponsor for this young woman and found one through the TriBoro Rotary Club.

At first, the woman did not interact or speak with others due to her limited prior exposure to social situations. Gradually, with the love and support of the staff members, volunteers and fellow clients, she became an active participant in the program. She began to speak and interact with others and eventually was able to move into a group home, where she now lives.

Anne Agostin attends St. Peter's, Morristown.



### North Porch shower

Marge Christie, center, attended a "baby shower" hosted by the Saint Martha's Guild at Grace, Westwood, for the North Porch Women's and Infants Center and gave a talk about the ministry's history, growth and the growing need for its assistance to mothers and their babies. Holding some of the collected shower gifts are guild member Daisy Toppin, left, and guild Vice President Theresa Peter.

## Clergy comings and goings

The following clergy transitions have been announced since the last issue of *The Voice*.

### Calls

The Rev. Julian Eibin of the Diocese of Ohio as rector, St. John's Memorial Church, Ramsey (starting Aug. 1)

### Appointments

The Rev. Melissa Hall as interim, Church of the Redeemer, Morristown (June 14)

The Rev. Robert Shearer as priest-in-charge, St. Paul's Church, Englewood (July 1)

The Rev. David Cabush as priest-in-charge, St. Andrew's, Lincoln Park/Church of the Transfiguration, Towacco (Sept. 1)

### Departures

The Rev. William Coats, interim, Church of the Epiphany, Orange

The Rev. Jim Warnke, interim, St. Paul's Church, Englewood

The Rev. Beverly Huck, rector, Church of the Saviour, Denville

The Rev. Jason Haddox, assistant, St. Peter's Church, Morristown

The Rev. Nathaniel Le Rud, curate, Christ Church, Ridgewood

The Rev. Gerard Pisani, rector, Trinity, Bayonne

The Rev. Ellen Sloan, chaplain, General Theological Seminary, New York

### Retirement

Interim Canon Denise Haines concluded her work at Episcopal House a month early due to unforeseen medical issues. She is at home in Summit and welcomes e-mails at dhaines3@comcast.net.

**Council**

*Continued from page 1*

development tools and resources.

- Provide assessment teams to assist congregations
- Provide support for training for clergy and lay leaders, strategic ministry planning, outreach ministry, property maintenance and revitalization, congregational growth and new ministry initiatives
- Provide opportunities to be part of congregational learning communities in such areas as congregational development, black ministries, industrial settings and alternative worship.
- Encourage cooperative ministries and partnerships with other Episcopal and Lutheran congregations.

Debate among council members centered mostly on the participation by congregations – will they be asked to approve it at the diocesan convention; will they individually vote to approve it; what are the consequences if a parish doesn't approve it.

These questions remain.

**Listening and responding**

A first draft of the covenant was distributed to congregations at Diocesan Convention in January. It asked each congregation to assess its call and gifts for ministry, review itself in light of ministry-capacity warning signs, and develop, review and update a congregational ministry plan. The diocese, in turn, would pledge to provide tools and resources to help congregations carry out their ministries and increase their ministry capacities, including training, planning, financial support and assessment teams to help congregations explore issues raised by reviewing the warning signs.

Subsequently, congregations were invited to comment on the proposed covenant at four forums and on a dedicated blog. At the final forum in Denville in April, participants received a new version of the covenant, revised based upon input received at the previous meetings and online. They also heard about the development of an accompanying theological statement and the ongoing process of developing a diocesan mission statement and vision under the guidance of consultant David Manting.

Feedback on the covenant included comments that the process was too business-oriented and lacked a faith statement, Beckwith told the Denville forum. He also heard concerns about the covenant's context: "What is the diocese's vision?" people were asking in various ways, "and how do people in the congregations fit in with that vision?"

What he discovered through the first three forums, he said, was that the covenant really was the third step in the process. "Step one would be an articulation of the relationship we have with each other and the living Christ. The second step is the mission and the vision: What is the mission of the diocese, and what is the vision coming out of the mission?"

Beckwith said the vision of how we live into the mission would unfold in the months following introduction of the mission statement.

A mission articulates what God has called you to do,

Manting told the final forum. As the vision then takes form, you create a compelling image of where the diocese is going. "Out of that, you begin to make plans," he said. "The covenant becomes one of the ministry plans, but it comes out of a particular direction and vision."

The goal is to align everything, so diocesan and congregational programs reflect the mission and vision, he said. "I hope we continue to see this coming together so that we are one body, moving together."

Based on feedback on the first draft, the revised covenant reflected people's desire for it to be more "positive and life-giving," Wilson told the final forum. Instead of "warning signs," for example, congregations are asked to assess themselves in light of congregational vitality characteristics: the "fundamental responsibilities of a congregation as part of the diocese," she said. A correlating list shows how the diocese will support the development of congregational health in those areas, she said. "It's mutual accountability."

The final document, Beckwith said in a June interview, "will be part of our life."

"My hope is, this becomes part of our culture. It indicates how we're all in this together."

During the process, he said, "There was a level of anxiety expressed in all sorts of ways: Either the diocese was saying this is how it should be ... or the diocese has an ulterior motive. I think as we went through these four meetings, people came away with the notion, no, we're all in this together and want to have a statement that's right, and we need to live into greater accountability with one another because that makes our ministry more effective and more grounded in what we're called to do."

The hope is that the covenant will provide "measurable and manageable ways" for congregations to describe themselves and that vestries will use it partly as a planning tool, Wilson said in an interview before the Diocesan Council meeting. "It's not a thing that the top down is doing to kind of inspect and find out things from people. It really is a tool to encourage us to do the work collectively as the bodies of Christ in which we find ourselves to bring life and vitality and also for us to recognize that we have gifts and that other congregations have gifts" that can be used collaboratively.

"Our sense when we met as a Congregational Vitality Committee is that we've probably had three-quarters or more of the congregations participate" in the covenant process, Wilson said. "It's been very exciting to see the breadth of people willing to be a part of [the process] and to weigh in. The feedback that I got from people is that they felt free to discuss it and they were excited that we were willing to listen and to listen carefully and that we were willing to change."

Beckwith agreed.

"I think people have been appreciative of the listening that has gone into this," he said. "Because our ultimate hope and indeed expectation was that this ... would be embraced by people across the diocese."

*Jerry Hames is editor emeritus of Episcopal Life. Voice Editor Sharon Sheridan contributed to this report.*

**Diocesan roundup**

**New pediatric unit**

Christ Hospital, Jersey City, dedicated a new state-of-the-art pediatrics unit on April 7. The hospital's Department of Pediatrics has 57 physicians, with specialties including neonatology, cardiology and allergy care, and is the largest in Hudson County.

Besides amenities such as private rooms, new furniture and a playroom, the unit offers on-site pediatric coverage 24/7 to insure that the children always have access to a physician. Certified pediatric nurses staff the unit, which includes a treatment room to facilitate diagnoses and a state-of-the-art security system. Within the Emergency Department, a pediatric triage area has been established to ensure a continuum of care for all children – both inpatients and outpatients.

**Provincial elections**

In May, the Synod of Province II elected **Michael Rehill** president of the province, the **Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson** the province's clergy representative to Executive Council and **Martha Gardner** the province's lay representative to Executive Council.

**Benefit cruise**

A 2½-hour "sunset cruise" aboard the A.J. Meerwald, a former oyster schooner, will be held July 5 to benefit St. Paul's Community Development Corporation, Paterson. Participants go on board the ship at 5:30 p.m. at Liberty State Park, Jersey City. Tickets cost \$55. For information or reservations, call Mary Ann Gloriande at 973-279-2864.

**Anniversary marked**

St. Paul's Community Development Corporation celebrated the 25th Anniversary of its emergency men's shelter on June 18 in Paterson. Honorees included former Senior Warden Alan William Bowen Sr.; Eva's Village, a founding partner agency; Robert E. Briggs; Anthony "Sal" Della Sala, director of operations from 2000-2009; and former resident Elias Kotea.

**Pride parade**

The Oasis will march with the Episcopal Diocese of New York and Integrity NYC in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride March in New York on June 28. Marchers will meet on 54th Street between Fifth and Madison avenues in Section 6 at 11:30 am. A Street Eucharist will be celebrated at noon. Choral Evensong will follow the march at St. Luke-in-the-Fields at 6:30 p.m. For those unable to march the entire route, a minibus will be available, but reservations are required by e-mailing [lgblife@stlukeinthefields.org](mailto:lgblife@stlukeinthefields.org). For more information, e-mail [pride@lgbt.diocesenyn.org](mailto:pride@lgbt.diocesenyn.org) or call or 212-627-8419.

**North Porch meetings**

The North Porch Women and Infants' Center Board will meet at 10 a.m. July 21 at Episcopal House in Newark and Sept. 10 at St. Peter's, Clifton.

**Voice your support!**

In each issue, *The Voice* reports on the news and ministries of our diocese – and our connections with the wider church. We chronicle the actions of Diocesan Convention, church leaders and diocesan committees and commissions. This year, we will report on the work of our leaders at the churchwide General Convention in Anaheim, Calif., as well. We spread the word about the many activities of our congregations, large and small, and their faithful members. We provide a forum for listening to diverse voices across the diocese.

In short, our mission is to give voice to the voices of the Diocese of Newark.

But *The Voice* needs your support. In these challenging economic times, our current diocesan budget provides for printing four editions of the newspaper, which costs more than \$8,000 per issue. With contributions from readers, as well as support from our advertisers, we hope to print a fifth issue for Advent.

If you value *The Voice* as an important resource, make your voice heard. Please make a contribution in the envelope provided, or send a check payable to *The Voice* to Episcopal Diocese of Newark, attn: *The Voice*, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.



**Centennial celebration**

*Martha Brinkman (wearing white hat) celebrated her 100th birthday with more than 100 family and friends, including the Rev. Jacob and Shanta David, as well as current and past members of St. Paul's & Resurrection Parish in Wood-Ridge, where she was secretary for more than 20 years.*

# Tough times call for radical hospitality

By William Guthrie

These are the “best of times and the worst of times” for engaging in the ministry of radical hospitality, given the state in which our nation finds itself. On one hand, people who have lost their jobs or who have had the only homes they ever lived in foreclosed or who have had the only cars they ever drove confiscated know what is like to need hospitality. On the other hand, human and financial resources are becoming more and more limited and charitable fatigue is beginning to settle in for the long haul.

Yet, as Christians, we are called to a ministry of hospitality in the very circumstances in which the United States of America finds itself today. As the numbers of people coming to our soup kitchen, food pantry and clothing bank increase week by week, we cannot help but think of our Lord’s injunction: “Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me.” We must not only share our goods, we must share ourselves as well.

The Judeo-Christian Scriptures provide us with lots of examples about the nature and practice of radical hospitality. I am reminded of the patriarch Abraham providing food and water for his three guests,

angels in disguise, who gave him a blessing in return. The entire story may be read in the Book of Genesis 18:1-15. To this day, the people of the Middle East are known for their hospitable ways and their care for strangers and travelers passing through their villages and towns.

The Epistle to the Hebrews 13:2 in the New Testament tells us plainly to “practice hospitality, for thereby some of you may have entertained angels unawares.” It was a common belief then and it is a common belief now in many simple societies that, in providing hospitality for strangers and travelers, we may be entertaining spiritual beings in disguise and in some cases ministering to God himself. I have known and experienced many cultures, albeit in foreign lands, where you do not have to be known personally in order to receive whatever food and lodging may be appropriate.

But it is the teaching of Jesus (St. Matthew 25:31-46) on this subject that most clearly calls us and points us in the direction of radical hospitality. Jesus indicates that we are judged by our response to him as he meets us in the guise of the downtrodden and the dispossessed. “For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me; I was naked and you

clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to my help.”

This is in direct correlation to his charter for ministry as expressed in St. Luke 4:18-19, echoing the words of the prophet Isaiah 61:1-2. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” The message of Jesus is reinforced and reiterated for your benefit and mine.

From our journey through Lent, we also are mindful of Isaiah’s words in 58:6-7: “Is not this the fast

that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?”

Over and over again, these passages of Scripture challenge us to work faithfully for the upliftment and empowerment of those less fortunate than ourselves.

Our country finds itself, like many nations the world over, is desperate economic straits, with rising unemployment meaning that millions of residents and citizens find themselves without jobs and with all the other misfortunes resulting from such a ca-

lamity. What can we do as followers of the risen Jesus? What should we do as disciples of the risen Christ?

The passages I have quoted give us our marching orders. They provide us with the biblical, theological and philosophical rationale for our ministry of hospitality. We have only to ask for the grace and strength that God provides and reach out to someone in distress who may in deed and in truth be our Savior in disguise.

*The Rev. William A. Guthrie is the rector of Christ Church, East Orange. He is the author of Bartica – Gateway to the Interior of Guyana, a memoir about growing up in a nation whose motto is: “One people, one nation, one destiny.”*



Mary Gupton photo

*The Rev. William Guthrie preaches at St. Peter’s, Essex Fells, during a recent pulpit exchange.*



Marilyn Joyce Lehren photo

*The Rev. Anne Bolles-Beaven, right, priest associate at St. Andrew & Holy Communion, celebrated Communion at the anniversary event in South Orange.*

## Women

*Continued from page 1*

and intelligence about the difference between a movement and an organization – specifically, the “Jesus Movement” and organized religion.

She cautioned her listeners that, as long as we are more concerned with preserving the Organization, we never can be true to the movement that Jesus began. She repeated the question several times to her attentive audience, “Whose movement are you with?” Then she added: “And, what side will you be on?”

Women’s Commission Co-chairs Ellen Sloan and Martha Gardner said they were delighted with the turnout for the event.

“This is a wonderful celebration of our history and the promise of our future,” said the Rev. Sloan, who is leaving the diocese and her position as chaplain at General Theological Seminary in New York to become rector of St. Michael and All Angels Church in Sanibel, Fla.

The Women’s Commission also honored the Rev. Beverly Huck, who is leaving the diocese after 25 years of service

and leadership as rector of the Church of the Saviour, Denville, to relocate to North Carolina with her family.

As the event came to an end, Sloan and Gardner read two poems by the Rev. Alla Bozarth, one of the 11 women “irregularly” ordained July 29, 1974, at the Church of the Advocate, Philadelphia. Host Rector Sandye Wilson reminded the gathering that Harris was then a member of the vestry and served as crucifer for that historic service.

A “Litany of Saints” – names of women and men who were activists in the struggle for the ordination of women, which event participants had worn as nametags – was called out in prayers of remembrance and thanksgiving. The event ended with a rousing rendition of one of the call-and-response hymns of the Civil Rights Movement, *Ain’t gonna let nobody turn me around*.

Harris was also the preacher the next day, as part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the founding of Saint Andrew & Holy Communion Church.

*The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton is president of the Episcopal Women’s Caucus and rector of St. Paul’s, Chatham.*

## Letters to the editor

*The Voice* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words and will be edited for clarity and brevity. Please include your name, address, congregation, phone number and e-mail (if you have one) with your submission. Send letters to [sharon@sharonsheridan.com](mailto:sharon@sharonsheridan.com) or *The Voice*, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

Dear Editor:

I did not attend the Diocesan Convention and did not hear the debate on the marriage-canon changes, or Bishop [Mark] Beckwith’s promise to work for marriage equality in New Jersey. In view of the increased interest in this subject, I am moved to share the experience I had during my years in Mexico.

In Mexico, all marriages must submit to the civil ceremony in which an official of the state presides over the legalization of the union and thereby considers the couple married. After the prerequisite civil ceremony, the couple may apply [to] its religious authority for a blessing on their marriage. While I presided over several weddings while in Mexico, I never represented the state as is still required in the state of New Jersey.

If the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, etc., religious authorities petitioned the Legislature in Trenton to pass a law requiring all unions, be they heterosexual or homosexual, to submit to a civil ceremony in which all legalities are attended to so that

the state considers them legally united, the couple could then apply to its religious authority for a blessing [of] its union, and the religious authority could respond in accordance with its canon laws.

This would relieve the clergy from being involved in the legalization of the union and attend to what the couple really wants from them, namely a blessing on their union.

Also, by way of a prerequisite civil ceremony, it would relieve young couples not interested, or active, in any religious group to view their union as fully legal and recognized by the state. This would also relieve the clergy from the hypocrisy of going through the motions of a wedding doubting that, after the ceremony, they’ll ever see the couple in church again. From my 63 years’ experiences, I am fully aware of that “hope” but also cognizant of the fact of the matter in many cases.

Yours truly,  
The Rev. Harry Brant  
Bordentown

# Holy Week and Easter around the diocese



Right, celebrating Palm Sunday at St. Paul's, Paterson.

Below, youngsters participate in foot washing during the children's Maundy Thursday chapel service at All Saints', Bergenfield.

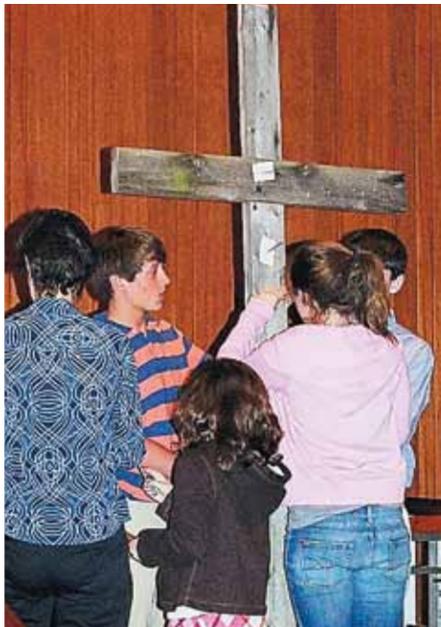
Left, a Palm Sunday cross at Grace, Nutley.



Right, Chelsea Greene of St. Andrew & Holy Communion portrays Jesus on Palm Sunday in South Orange.

Marilyn Lehren photo

Below, a young parishioner exhibits Easter joy at St. Paul's, Paterson.



Above, youth participate in the Stations of the Cross at St. Paul's, Chatham.

Right, St. Peter's, Washington, congregants joined with local Methodists and Presbyterians in marching through Washington Borough on Palm Sunday

Doris McFadden photo.



Clockwise from right, Christ Church Bloomfield/Glen Ridge members prepared more than 150 Easter bags for the sick and shut-ins, including residents of two area nursing homes and a local group home; children examine a crown of thorns during a Family Way of the Cross service at St. Peter's, Livingston; the altar and Easter flowers at St. Michael's, Wayne; and the ladies of Calvary, Bayonne, display their Easter bonnets.

