

Bishop calls on diocese to make a difference



Photo by Steven Boston

Bishop Mark Beckwith stands before symbolic Gates of Hope, decorated with ribbons bearing the aspirations of the diocese's congregations, behind the altar at the 134th Annual Convention.

By Sharon Sheridan

In his first convention address as bishop, the Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith challenged the diocese's congregations – “the gates of hope for the communities where they have been planted” – to make a difference in the world.

“It is an incredible privilege to be among you – to reclaim the holiness that has always been here and together to discover new sacred acres and opportunities,” he

said at the Jan. 25 dinner at the 134th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Newark.

Noting the existence of “turf wars” within the church, he said, “Our vision is to stand with the living Christ at the gates of hope. Our challenge is to claim God's holy ground. ... Sharing holy ground is how we will make a difference.”

We must apply “definition and dimension” to the gates of worship, justice/non-violence, radical hospitality and spiritual formation, Beckwith said. “We need pro-

ocols and a plan for the 112 gates of hope across the diocese. When these gates are not adequately defined, and there is not an adequate strategy or plan on the horizon, anxiety becomes the prevailing attitude, issues of turf take over – and hope ends up being little more than a four-letter word.”

Some have talked about consolidating congregations, “which for some is a code word for closing churches” – a move some think makes the most sense in urban areas, he said. Since 50 years ago, the number of Episcopal churches has dropped from 17 to five in Newark, 12 to three in Jersey City and five to two in Paterson.

“I suppose an argument could be made that our three largest diocesan cities were overchurched 50 years ago – but I wouldn't make that case now,” Beckwith said. “We have had enough church consolidation in our cities. Our cities are where human groaning is most easily heard, human degradation is most easily seen – and the incidence of violence and fear is hardest to avoid. Instead of dismantling gates of hope, we need to reinforce, if not redefine, the gates we now have – and consider building more.”

Steps to take

In the second part of his address, delivered Jan. 26, Beckwith outlined some specific strategies.

Noting that commissions on ministry in the diocese and across the church have for

many years “almost exclusively focused on the ordination to the priesthood,” Beckwith said he wanted to reaffirm that work. But, he said, “In the discernment process of ministry, we need to look at all orders of ministry.” This means creating a more comprehensive discernment process that includes the diaconate as well as laity seeking more guidance and support, he said. He also proposed an annual discernment weekend “to which all people who are committed to ministry can come.”

The Commission on Ministry will spend the next year discerning how to move forward. Consequently, those already in the process toward ordination will continue, but new people considering the diaconate or priesthood must wait, Beckwith said, noting such year-long breaks are common in dioceses with new bishops.

(Questions concerning this announcement may be directed to Commission on Ministry Chair Paul Shackford 201-768-6885 or pshackford@gmail.com or Diaconal Ordination Committee Chair Paul Olsson at 973-285-0884 or rectorstpaulsmp@att.net.)

Other actions Beckwith outlined include:

- The development of Newark Episcopal Ministries, a partnership of North Porch, Apostles' House, ECD, St. Philip's Academy and the Newark School of Theology, with the hope of creating similar partnerships in Jersey City.

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Interfaith assembly challenged to common action

By Robert Morris

“We've let our moderate Muslim brothers and sisters down,” Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, told a crowd of more than 400 people from eight different faith communities in northern New Jersey. He was referring to repeated declarations by mainstream Muslim groups condemning terrorism — declarations either ignored by Christians and Jews, or not given a sufficient boost by supportive distribution, he said. “By failing to do so, we reinforce the violent fringe in defining Islam for the world.”

Saperstein's audience, gathered at the Glenpointe Marriott in Teaneck on Feb. 18, was a sea of religious and cultural diversity. Black-suited Christian clergy mingled with Indian women in brightly colored saris and Sikh gentlemen in elegant turbans of black, white and orange. The occasion was the 22nd Annual Interfaith Brotherhood-Sisterhood of

See “Interfaith,” page 10

Reflecting on a journey from India to Rochester

By Sharon Sheridan

Seventeen years ago, a newly ordained young priest began a three-and-a-half-year ministry among the rural poor in India. His first assignment was a pastorate encompassing 14 congregations, which soon grew to 17.

“I was on the road all the time, going from one congregation to the other,” recalls the Rev. Prince Singh, rector of St. Alban's, Oakland. Operating in an “overseer kind of role,” he worked to build lay leadership to enable ministries in the churches. “I learned very early in my ministry that the laity was a very important part of the orders. ... I grew up, not with a clergy-laity divide as much as a shared way of monitoring our responsibility.”

Now the bishop-elect of the Diocese of Rochester, Singh says he believes those experiences may serve him well in his new role.

“In a weird way, I felt like I had come full circle when I was interviewing at Rochester. Here were these small congregations, and especially these rural churches around Rochester,” he says. He saw clusters of two or three congregations served by a single priest. “I was going, ‘Oh, my goodness, this is so familiar!’”

A native of India, Singh, 45, was elected bishop of Rochester diocese on the second ballot on Feb. 2 to succeed retiring Bishop Jack McKelvey, former suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Newark. “It's amazing to realize that I'll be following him in the episcopate there,” Singh said. “It's pretty wondrous to think of how all that could have worked.”

“I consider it a big fortune to have served in the Diocese of Newark all these years, and [I] have also developed some great friendships,” he said. “One of the highlights in the last couple of years has been serving on the Women's



Photo by Joseph Bodine

Bishop Mark Beckwith led the congregation at the Diocese of Newark's Absalom Jones Day celebration in offering a blessing for the Rev. Prince Singh, above, rector of St. Alban's, Oakland, and the new bishop-elect of the Diocese of Rochester.

Commission. ... I've really thoroughly enjoyed the experience and have learned so much from my colleagues, who have helped me understand the dynamics of what it means to be an intentionally inclusive community.”

“Being in the Diocese of Newark has just expanded my own sense of what it means to be an inclusive body of Christ, and certainly I have ... deepened my own understanding of who the outcasts are in our community and how we make them ‘other.’”

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The Bishop's Message

Observing the Sabbath – and the quest for justice

There is a growing level of excitement as the flow of social and financial capital into the city of Newark picks up speed. As you drive out of Episcopal House – which is the epicenter of new development – on the immediate right, the 10-year-old Performing Arts Center gleams with lights and packed houses; and the recently opened Prudential Center, located down the street to the left, has upended conventional wisdom by attracting a new cadre of loyal sports fans to downtown. In his Feb. 7 State of the City address, Mayor Cory Booker announced that a four-star hotel soon would break ground on one end of Mulberry Street; and a month or so ago, plans were announced, with great fanfare, for a 20-plus-story tower to be constructed on the other end – to be filled with shops, businesses and condominiums.

“Newark is on the move,” people proudly proclaim – and our diocesan offices are in the middle of it all.

Yes, but.

Drive a few blocks from downtown, and the flow of capital slows to a trickle, if it flows at all. There are large swaths of the city that remain economically challenged – and where neighborhood safety is more of a vision than a reality. And it turns out our diocese is in the middle of these parts of the city as well – offering hope and redevelopment in creative ways.

Our five Newark Episcopal churches – Trinity and St. Philip’s Cathedral, St. Andrew’s, St. Barnabas, Grace Church and House of Prayer – have been engaged with neighbors and neighborhoods for a long time. And the newly named Newark Episcopal Ministries – St. Philip’s Academy, Apostles’ House, Newark School

of Theology, North Porch and Episcopal Community Development – have offered the best ministry I have ever seen in their unique area of commitment.

It is a quick walk between NJPAC and Prudential Center on Mulberry Street in Newark, but it is a circuitous and bumpy ride for the psyche between the developing gleam of downtown and the grit of the rest of the city. The city is not a level playing field. Most communities aren’t.

Sorting things out

Outside of Newark, there are, by my count, eleven congregations that have Community Development Corporations (CDCs) as an integral part of their ministry. And there are many other parishes and missions that operate day-care centers, preschools, feeding programs, tutorials and shelters.

The genesis of these ministries is a response to the gospel mandate to be in mission; but of equal commitment is a witness to justice. And justice, as defined by Hebrew Scripture scholar Walter Brueggemann, is sorting out what belongs to whom and giving it back to them.

There is a lot of sorting out to do.

About a month ago, my wife Marilyn and I were driven from the airport in Port Au Prince, Haiti, to our relatively fancy (by Haitian standards) hotel in the foothills surrounding the capital. At first I thought it was market day in the city, because there were street vendors everywhere.

“No,” the dean of the seminary told us as he drove us along, “this is Port Au Prince. The economy is on the street.”

The economy is so fragile that people can’t afford to rent space, not to mention the

fact that there seemed to be precious few buildings solid and safe enough to house an established business, much less a fly-by-night one. Financial capital? We didn’t see evidence of any, and we were told that what little there was had been absconded with by the ruling Duvalier family during the ’60s through the ’80s. The country has no infrastructure to speak of. As a result, 65 to 80 percent of the population is unemployed. Haiti survives on international aid and the \$2 billion dollars sent home annually by the two and a half million Haitians who live abroad.

We were in Haiti because the bishop there, Zache Duracin, had invited his bishop colleagues from Province II (which are dioceses in New York and New Jersey, Haiti, the Virgin Islands and the Episcopal churches in Europe). This had been a long-standing invitation, but this was the first year that all concerned agreed that it was safe enough to go.

The Haitian diocese is the largest in the Episcopal Church, with well over 100,000 members (in only 109 congregations). Every congregation has a school. Many have clinics. The Diocese of Haiti sponsors the *only* medical institution for blind and handicapped children in the country. Incredible mission and justice work is being done – on a financial shoestring, but with a contagious abundance of passion, commitment and faith. Our visit made us proud to be Episcopalians.

Our visit to Haiti also broke my heart in new ways (given that Haiti is the least level playing field I have ever seen). But it also quickened my prayer – and a commitment to the belief that poverty is a manifestation of violence.

There is a culturally ingrained temptation to think that poverty produces violence – and that if we can stay away from poverty, we will avoid violence. It turns out that it is the other way around: Violence begets poverty. Poverty is created because someone or some group has been forgotten, ignored or pushed away – for the purpose of securing resources or opportunities.

A degree of violence is involved in the creation of every uneven playing field. Sometimes the violence is virulent, but more often than not the violence simply involves a refusal to see those who live outside the gates of hope.

Moving forward

So what do we do?

For one thing, we sort out what belongs to whom and give back what wasn’t ours in the first place. It is the work of justice. It is hard work – and it is the work that will take generations. It is the work of restoration, restitution – and the building of community.

We are challenged to give – of our time, talent and treasure. It doesn’t mean that everyone needs to become poor, but it does mean that at some level we need to account for the fact that the haves have been complicit in a not-so-subtle system of violence that creates have-nots. And it means that some giving back needs to be going on.

And we need to pray. For justice to have a chance, it needs to be yoked with holiness.

One of the biggest challenges in our rather frantic culture is to develop a discipline in observing the fourth commandment: “Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.” The temptation is to think that Sabbath is simply a day of rest. It is much more than that.

Sabbath is a day of social equality – a day when, as Walter Brueggemann again points out, we are challenged to imagine: to imagine the world as a level playing field in which resources are distributed equitably. Sabbath is a day when we are set free from the production/consumption system in order to envision one another, not as objects of interest or dis-interest, but as brothers as sisters – each bearing the image and likeness of God.

Sabbath is a counterintuitive antidote to violence. The observance of Sabbath enables the quest for justice to emerge as a possibility. A faithfully observed Sabbath restores energy and deepens commitment – to propose a future in which we can see the vision, verbally painted by the prophet Amos, of letting “justice roll down like rivers, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream” (5:24). And it is a vision that provides us with the courage to stand *against* the vassals of violence – and stand *with* the living Christ at the gates of hope.

— Mark M. Beahm

Observando el Sábado – y la búsqueda de la justicia

En la ciudad de Newark, ha medida que el flujo de capital social y financiero se acelera, existe un creciente nivel de excitación. Al salir de la Casa Episcopal – la cual se encuentra al epicentro de este crecimiento – a la derecha encontramos el Centro de Artes Dramáticas el cual resplandece con sus luces; y hacia el final de la calle a mano izquierda se encuentra el Centro Prudential que desafiando la sabiduría convencional se ha convertido en cuna de una gran cantidad de fanáticos del deporte. En su discurso sobre el Estado de la Ciudad del 7 de Febrero, el Alcalde Cory Booker anuncio que un hotel de cuatro estrellas será construido al final de la calle Mulberry; y hace tan solo un mes se habían anunciado con bombos y platillos planes para la construcción de una torre de 20 pisos la otro lado de la calle – la cual albergara tiendas, negocios y condominios.

La gente dice con orgullo “la ciudad de Newark esta en movimiento” – y las oficinas de nuestra diócesis están en el centro de todo esto.

Si, pero.

Si conducimos unos cuantos bloques desde el centro de la ciudad, el flujo de capital disminuye hasta que se convierte tan solo en gotas, si es que fluye del todo. Hay una gran cantidad de áreas de la ciudad que continúan enfrentando retos económicos – y donde vivir en un vecindario seguro es más una visión que una realidad. Y nuestra diócesis, igualmente esta al centro de estas áreas de la ciudad – ofreciendo esperanza y oportunidades para el desarrollo en formas creativas.

Las cinco iglesias Episcopales en la ciudad de Newark – La Catedral de la Santísima Trinidad y San Felipe, San Andrés, San Barnabas, Iglesia de Gracias y Casa de Oración

– han estado lijadas a los vecinos y a los vecindarios desde hace mucho tiempo. Y el recién nombrado Ministerios Episcopales de Newark – Academia de San Felipe, Casa de los Apóstoles, Escuela de Teología de Newark, Portal Norte y Desarrollo Comunitario Episcopal – han ofrecido el mejor ministerio que visto en cada una de sus áreas específicas de competencia.

No hay que caminar mucho para ir desde el Centro de Artes Dramáticas al Centro Prudencial en la calle Mulberry de Newark, pero puede resultar ser una aventura dramática y llena de baches para la mente el pasar del brillante desarrollo que se experimenta en el centro de la ciudad a la penumbra que se vive en el resto de la ciudad. La ciudad no ofrece un campo con igualdad de oportunidades. La mayor parte de las ciudades no lo hacen.

Entendiendo lo que sucede

De acuerdo a mi cálculo, existen once congregaciones que tienen Corporaciones de Desarrollo Comunitario (CDC) como parte integral de su ministerio. Y existen una gran cantidad de parroquias y misiones que operan centros de cuidado diario para infantes, preescolares, programas de nutrición, programas tutoriales y albergues.

El fundamento de estos ministerios es la respuesta al mandato del evangelio de hacer misión: de igual compromiso como testimonio de justicia. Y la justicia, tal como es definida por el erudito de las Escrituras Hebreas Walter Brueggemann, es identificar que le pertenece a quien, y dárselo de nuevo.

Tenemos mucho que identificar.

Hace cerca de un mes, mi esposa Marilyn y yo íbamos

desde el aeropuerto de Puerto Príncipe en Haití, hacia un hotel (relativamente lujoso de acuerdo a los estándares de Haití) en las colinas que rodean la capital. Al principio pensé que era un día de mercado, pues habían personas vendiendo cosas por todas partes de las calles.

“No” nos dijo el decano del seminario que nos conducía, “así es Puerto Príncipe, la economía esta en las calles.” La economía es tan débil que la gente no puede rentar espacio para sus negocios, esto sin mencionar la realidad de que apenas se podían observar unas cuantas edificaciones lo suficientemente sólidas y seguras como para albergar un negocio bien establecido, y mucho menos un negocio informal. ¿Y, qué del capital financiero? No vimos ninguna evidencia de este, y nos dijeron que lo poco que había fue saqueado por la familia Duvalier que gobernó el país desde los años 60 hasta la década de los 80. El país no tiene ningún tipo de infraestructura. Como resultado, entre el 65 y el 80 por ciento de la población esta desempleada. Haití sobrevive en base a la ayuda internacional y 2 billones de dólares que envían a la isla unos dos millones y medio de haitianos que viven en el extranjero.

Estábamos de visita en Haití, porque el obispo de ese país, Zache Duracin, había invitado a sus colegas obispos de la Provincia II (compuesta por las diócesis de Nueva York, Nueva Jersey, Haití, Las Islas Vírgenes y las Iglesias Episcopales en Europa). Esta fue una invitación que había sido extendida hace algún tiempo, pero este fue el primer año en que todos los involucrados estuvieron de acuerdo que la situación en el país era lo suficientemente segura para poder realizar la visita.

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Executive Council meets in Ecuador diocese

By Mary Frances Schjonberg

For Kim Byham, a member of All Saints', Hoboken, and one of two representatives from Province II on the Episcopal Church's Executive Council, the four days he recently spent in Quito, Ecuador, participating in the council meeting were an eye-opening experience.

Ecuador is "under the radar for most people," he said during a breakfast interview on the last day of the meeting at the Hilton Colon hotel in downtown Quito. "Most people only know Ecuador from going to the Galapagos Islands."

Byham and the rest of the council, Episcopal Church Center staff and guests got a very different view of Quito when they traveled to one of eight venues in and around the city Feb. 12 to learn about and briefly engage in the mission of the Diocese of Ecuador Central.

Byham was struck by the plight of refugees who came to Ecuador to escape the violence in neighboring Colombia. The migration is not well-known in the United States, and Byham noted the implications for care when people escape one poor country to come to another relatively poor country.

The Diocese of Ecuador Central ministers to the refugees, among many other ministries. Byham said he marveled at the "vibrancy" of the diocese.

"That so much can be done with so few resources is terrific," he said.

Recovering from the past

The diocese was devastated by Bishop Neptali Larrea Moreno, who was deposed in 2004 amid complaints of financial irregularities. Wilfrido Ramos-Orench, a member of the council and the former bishop suffragan of the Diocese of Connecticut, has been the diocese's provisional bishop since mid-2006.

"You have shown us what a diocese engaged in mission looks like," Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori told Ramos-Orench during her closing remarks to the meeting. She called the transformation of Ecuador Central "a sign of the resurrection for the whole church."

House of Deputies President Bonnie Anderson praised Ramos-Orench's "creative leadership" and his continuing efforts to empower for ministry the laity of the diocese.

That the Diocese of Ecuador Central is even part of the Episcopal Church may well be under the radar for many Episcopalians as well. It is one of eight dioceses of the Episcopal Church located outside of the United States and its territories. The others are Ecuador Litoral, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Venezuela and Taiwan. The dioceses of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are in U.S. territories (although the Virgin Islands diocese includes two islands under British jurisdiction). There is also the Convocation of American Churches in Europe, which consists of communities in



Photo by Anne C. Brown/ENS

Episcopal Church Executive Council member Kim Byham joins a traditional dancer during a Feb. 12 visit to an Episcopal community in formation in Caranqui, near the northern city of Ibarra, Ecuador.

six countries, and the Episcopal Church in Micronesia (Guam and Saipan).

The visit to Quito "humanizes the concept that we are an international church,"

Byham said.

While in Quito, the council issued a letter to the Episcopal Church saying, in part, that the transformation of the Diocese of Ecuador Central gives the members hope in light of the attempt of the leadership of the California-based Diocese of San Joaquin to transfer to another province in the Anglican Communion. The council also took steps to make good on a pledge in the letter to help Episcopalians "who want to continue as members of The Episcopal Church but now find themselves in parishes or dioceses attempting to depart."

Executive Council carries out the programs and policies adopted by the General Convention. It is composed of 38 members: 20 elected by General Convention (four bishops, four priests or deacons and 12 laity) and 18 by provincial synods (one clergy and one lay from each), plus the presiding bishop and the president of the House of Deputies.

The Rev. Mary Frances Schjonberg, a priest of the Diocese of Newark, is Episcopal Life Media correspondent for Episcopal Church governance, structure and trends, as well as news of the dioceses of Province II.

Diocesan women join global delegation

As *The Voice* went to press, more than 100 Anglican women were gathering at the Episcopal Church Center in New York to participate in the 52nd annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.

This is the fourth year for such a global delegation. The women traveled from almost every province in the Anglican Communion – from Africa, Central and South America, Asia, South East Asia and the Middle East. Ten women were attending from Canada and almost 40 from the United States.

The Rev. Maylin Biggadike, Martha Gardner, Pat Yankus and Marge Christie from the Diocese of Newark were among the U.S. delegation. They are also members of Anglican Women's Empowerment, the New York-based group that plays a major role in planning various events taking place during the two-week duration of the UNCSW, which began Feb. 22. AWE oversees hospitality, compiles resources, designs orientation and raises funds for the 100 Anglican delegates, who represent

ence, and what we hope to not have come out of that once-a-decade gathering."

He said new bishops would invite their colleagues to identify some norms of behavior and expectations for the worldwide conference. "There will be competing agendas and strategies, but our hope is to be able to hold together in spite of those differences."

The House of Bishops also will consider the second draft of an Anglican covenant, a statement of belief drafted by a commission established by the archbishop of Canterbury. In February, it received a mixed reaction from bishops, clergy and laity at the Church of England's General Synod.

A covenant was proposed in 2004 as one way for the Anglican Communion to maintain unity amid its member churches' differing viewpoints about the ordination of women, ordination of gays and lesbians,

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THE VOICE

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Lambeth in the eyes and on the minds of bishops

By Jerry Hames

Following the actions of two dioceses that declared themselves independent from the Episcopal Church in favor of foreign Anglican oversight, the major focus of the House of Bishops, meeting March 7-13 at Camp Allen near Houston, will be this summer's worldwide Lambeth Conference of bishops.

"Lambeth will be much on our minds at the House of Bishops meeting," said Bishop Mark Beckwith of the Diocese of Newark. "We are scheduled to begin with Lambeth conversations, to be followed by a day and a half of what is being called a 'reconciliation retreat.'"

The Lambeth Conference, held every decade, brings together the diocesan bishops from the worldwide Anglican Communion to the University of Kent at Canterbury, England. The Lambeth Conference this year will be held July 16 to Aug. 3. Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has emphasized that his program will focus on enabling bishops for ministry. "The main focus I long to see at this conference is the better equipping of bishops to fulfill their task as agents and enablers of mission, as co-workers with God's mission in Jesus Christ," he said.

A crisis developed at the last Lambeth Conference in 1998 when the gathering shifted from its traditional "consultative" role among the member churches to declare that homosexuality was incompatible with Scripture and established a hard line against those churches in the worldwide communion who ordained homosexuals as priests and whose clergy blessed same-gender unions.

Beckwith said the Episcopal bishops would repeat what they did last year and "schedule an unofficial time together to express our hopes for what we want to have come out of the coming Lambeth Confer-



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Reflecting on the battle against the death penalty

By Carole Ann King

Dec. 17 was a historic day for the state when Gov. Jon Corzine signed the New Jersey Death Penalty Abolition Bill. The death penalty was re-established in New Jersey in 1982, although no executions have occurred here since 1963.

Among those in the Diocese of Newark who worked for repeal was Janet Beddoe, who serves on the executive committee of the New Jerseyans for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, and Martha Gardner, diocesan ERD coordinator and Jubilee officer and past president of the New Jersey Council of Churches, who Beddoe credited with doing much to start the movement for abolition in New Jersey. In 1998, the NJCC issued a pastoral statement calling for an end to capital punishment.

The main organizing vehicle behind the abolition was the NJADP, which Beddoe described as "a wonderfully diverse group of dedicated people, of many different faiths, or of none, but with deep moral convictions." The two people who really made this happen, she said, were Celeste Fitzgerald, the original NJADP chair and director and driving force in these last years, and Lorry Post, who founded the organization in 1999 to honor the memory of his murdered daughter. Both are inspired by their faith — she's Catholic and he's Presbyterian — Janet said, adding that Post is the national director of Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation.

The NJADP continues to function under its parent, the Trenton-based New Jersey Association on Correction, which promotes social justice and human dignity in the policies and institutions that govern offenders and victims of crime through educational, legislative and rehabilitative programs. The NJCC also continues its advocacy and will host Sister Hieln Prejean, subject of *Dead Man Walking*, as speaker at its annual dinner on April 30. (For more information, visit www.njcc.cnc.net.)

"Janet Beddoe's passion and commitment to end the death penalty have been a godsend to New Jersey," said Bishop Mark Beckwith. "She has kept religious leaders well-informed of the workings of the Legislature on this issue — and she has graciously, and persistently, urged us to make our witness known. She has guided so many of us — and the state — into a more humane way of living in community, as the death penalty is no longer an option in New Jersey."

Recently, Beddoe spoke to *The Voice* about her involvement in the anti-death penalty movement.

How long have you been involved in NJADP?

About eight years. It was a short time after it had been founded as an organization to establish a moratorium on the death penalty. At that point, it was not openly abolitionist.

What prompted you to become involved?

My involvement started with a new ministry at my church, St. Luke's, Haworth, to encourage members to raise their voices on social and justice issues seen as core to our faith. We called it Amen Corner, and we wrote letters to state and federal legislators on issues such as gun control and hate crimes. In preparing a letter on the death penalty,

“This was truly a grassroots effort, and it was inspiring to realize that each one of us can make a difference.”

— Janet Beddoe

I contacted Amnesty International and was given Lorry Post's name. I called him, and he gave me the New Jersey background information, and I prepared a letter for our church members to sign that we sent to our local legislators. Lorry later invited me to a strategy meeting at Monmouth College. I went and was hooked.

How did the diocese get involved?

There were no other Diocese of Newark members in the organization, but I remembered hearing [former Bishop] Jack Croneberger, then rector at Church of the Atonement, Tenafly, speaking passionately on the issue at Diocesan Convention. I asked him if he'd join our NJADP advisory board, and he not only said yes, but wanted to be as actively involved as possible. He was always very supportive, wrote a piece in *The Voice* and also agreed to host a joint Rutgers Law School and Newark diocese event. I wrote a piece in *The Voice* and also got other information published there. My rector and I authored a diocesan resolution on the death penalty, urging support for organizations such as NJADP.

Another year, Martha Gardner, who through the NJCC

was always a deeply committed supporter, put forward a similar resolution. I followed up with letters, signed by [Diocesan Administrator] Michael Francaviglia, to all the legislators reminding them of the resolution. One year, under the auspices of the local chapter of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship (of which I am a member), Lorry Post gave a workshop on the death penalty at our diocesan convention.

What kind of support did you receive from your church and the diocese?

My rector, Fletcher Harper, was always behind me. When our organization, through NJCC, urged all priests to preach a sermon on the death penalty, he gave a very strong and moving one, while acknowledging that some in the congregation might feel strongly in favor of the death penalty. Our interim minister, Archie Palmer, and my current rector, Dewey Brown, have also been very supportive.

For some years, St. Luke's has flown a banner and tolled our bell at 6 p.m. whenever someone is executed in the United States, as part of the national, Catholic-initiated For Whom the Bells Toll campaign. St. Mark's, Teaneck, also tolls the bell. [There were approximately 42 executions in 2007.] On several occasions following the Sunday service, I have led a letter-writing campaign to our legislators. Many of our members have written letters, although there are also many who disagree or regard this as a controversial "political" issue, despite our national and local church's longstanding resolutions. We have always tried to be respectful of these opinions.

A main argument against the death penalty is that we need to respect the dignity of all human beings, and we have been true to that feeling throughout our campaign and have been respected as a result.

Is there a moment in this journey that is particularly memorable for you?

It's difficult to pick out any one, except, of course, that magical, miraculous moment when the State Assembly voted, after a very emotional debate, voted to substitute life imprisonment without parole for the death penalty, and we realized we had succeeded after all these years. We hugged and cried and then celebrated.

This was truly a grassroots effort, and it was inspiring to realize that each one of us can make a difference, we really can.

Carole Ann King attends St. Peter's, Morristown.

Examining slavery's legacy in the diocese

By Anne Agostin

The diocesan Reparations Task Force continues to gather information on parish and diocesan history related to slavery and its legacy and will report on its findings to General Convention in 2009.

The report is in response to a resolution at the 2006 General Convention urging every diocese to "collect and document during the next triennium detailed information in its community on (a) the complicity of the Episcopal Church in the institution of slavery and in the subsequent history of segregation and discrimination and (b) the economic benefits the Episcopal Church derived from the institution of slavery." The primary focus is to understand how slavery — and the racism, segregation and discrimination that followed it — limited African-American participation in U.S. economic, political and social institutions, and to identify ways to eliminate these gaps.

Such information-gathering is an important first step, said the Rev. Allison Moore, task force co-chair. "First we have to acknowledge that there is a problem, then determine how to define the problem,

then identify how to make restitution for our part in it."

The task force had formed following passage of a 2004 diocesan resolution calling for a group to lead study and discussion on the theology, history, issues and feasibility of restitution for descendants of Africans enslaved in America. Its goals were: restoration of spiritual wholeness to the United States and to all people; reparation of the wrongs and effects of an inequitable system; and repayment for debt owed.

"There are two important aspects of the reparations process," said Bishop Mark Beckwith. "The first is about holding people and institutions accountable for any profit or gain from slavery — and much good work is being done in that area. The second aspect is about creating a safe and hospitable environment so that the story can be told — and heard. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa is a model that we would do well to learn from."

"We're working a lot on education," Moore said at Diocesan Convention, noting plans for Creative Congregations workshops.

The Diocese of Newark is working with

the Diocese of New Jersey, since the two were one diocese until 1874. Together, and sometimes with the Diocese of New York, they have provided forums for education and worship focused on reparations. Task force member Lyn Headley-Deavours also helped to develop a supplementary guide to the DVD *Traces of the Trade*, an educational program developed by Katrina Browne.

More than 30 churches from Newark diocese have responded to a task force survey about how slavery and profits from the slave trade may have contributed to their growth and development. Among them, Grace, Madison, reported it was "racially integrated at the founding (1850). The first choir was composed of black girls."

Church of the Incarnation, Jersey City, reported it first held services at the African American Women's Industrial Club in 1910. Its founding members were African Americans and African Caribbeans who were unwelcome in other Jersey City churches. Church of the Good Shepherd, Ringwood, said it was built in 1890 by Native Americans, and its founding members were Native American, Dutch and African Americans.

In preparing its report for 2009, Moore said, the task force is considering discussing local initiatives to help the impoverished help themselves; dedicating resources to explore further how early churches in the diocese may have benefited from slavery; recommending the creation of safe environments for sharing family histories as they relate to slavery; and recommending the creation of liturgies for "Days of Mourning" that acknowledge, recognize and mourn events of mass exploitation of others, including slavery.

"We don't have any easy answers," Moore told Diocesan Convention. "But we can begin to pray and think through the questions and say, 'What do we do to continue to redress injustice and racism that have been built into the after-effects of slavery?'"

"As you go through your daily life, and you look at the life of your parish," she concluded, "... pray for grace to understand: How do we become a more equal, a more whole, a more just church?"

Anne Agostin attends St. Peter's, Morristown.

"God, the history of your people is written on the land. It's written in the bricks of our churches. It's written on our hearts. You call us, God, to be people of love and justice, to be people of worship and praise. You call us to be people of honest devotion. You call us, God, to praise you, not only with our lips, but in our lives; in the way that we order our lives and in the way that we order our lives as a community; in the way that we order our lives together. We pray for the grace, dear God, to be people of truth; to be people with the courage to look at our past; to be people with the courage to look to our future. We pray, God, to be people with the courage to look to your grace, that we may walk together in love through the gates of hope. We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who loved us first. Amen."

— THE REV. MPHU TUTU

Helping Newark's journey from riots to rebirth

By Mary Frances Schjonberg

The past and future of Newark is rooted, in part, in the Episcopal Church. There is no better place to get a sense of those roots than to stand outside the back of Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in downtown Military Park.

While Anglicans worshipped in Newark from the late 1600s, the city's relationship with what is now the Episcopal Church has roots in a theological and agricultural dispute. On a fall Sunday in 1733, Newark native Josiah Ogden harvested his wheat to save it from drenching rains, thus violating a prohibition against working on Sundays. First Presbyterian Church of Newark disciplined him, and he left the congregation. Ogden reportedly connected with Anglican missionaries and helped found a church.

That group in 1742 laid the cornerstone

to the building in Military Park, defying and infuriating the Puritan religious establishment. Parts of that first church building are incorporated in the current cathedral (the nave was damaged by British troops during the Revolution and was torn down and rebuilt in 1810).

Directly across the street from the cathedral is the Robert Treat Hotel, opened in 1916 and named after the Puritan patriarch who founded Newark in 1666. Directly behind is the building housing the diocese's offices.

To the left, across Sarah Vaughan Boulevard, is the New Jersey Performing Art Center, a sign of hope and commitment to the city when it opened in 1998. Bishop Mark Beckwith, who spoke passionately before his election about his commitment to the city, was ordained and consecrated in NJPAC's Prudential Hall on Jan. 27, 2007.

'Witness for peace'

"I think that the church's witness for peace, reconciliation and hope are vital to the health and development of the city," Beckwith told *Episcopal Life*. "I think church communities both stabilize and empower neighborhoods, and assist in building networks and partnerships."

To the right, looming over the intervening buildings with its flashing 4,800-square-foot LED television screen, is the Prudential Center. The long-contested \$375 million sports arena opened in October to house the New Jersey Devils National Hockey League team and other local sports teams and to host other entertainment. It is envisioned as part of a longed-for downtown revitalization, although city and state residents strenuously debated the plan to invest money in such a project at a time when Newark's unemployment rate hovered around 5 percent, one-third of its children lived in poverty, its median income was half the state average and the police department had a list of about 3,600 suspect gang members, most younger than 25.

"It's a story of contrasts, and it's a story of where our priorities were for a long time," said Sandy Accomando, chief executive

officer of Apostles' House, which provides social services to homeless and at-risk families, mostly headed by women. The arena has employed some Newarkers, and nonprofit agencies run its concession stands for a share of the proceeds, she added.

Changing fortunes

Once a sophisticated industrial and banking giant that rivaled New York, Newark hit the bottom of a downward spiral in July 1967, when a rumor that police had beaten cabdriver John Smith to death sparked five days of riots and looting that left 26 people dead and \$10 million in damage.

Scholars have come to view the 1960s civil disturbances as the result of more than 100 years of local, state and national policy decisions about urban planning, housing and transportation that devastated inner cities, *The Star-Ledger* wrote in July 2007. The newspaper called the riots "the inevitable conclusion to a long series of choices by those who were in power and the frustration it created among those who weren't."

Add to this a heavy layer of politi-

See "Helping Newark," page 9

Diocese affirms support of immigrants

By Liz Keill

In a resolution at the 134 Annual Convention, the Diocese of Newark expressed strong support for immigrants and condemned workplace raids conducted as part of current U.S. immigration enforcement policy that lead to detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants. The resolution urges assistance for those seeking protection from detention and deportation and encourages holding educational events, establishing a commission on immigration and exploring legal means to assist immigrants.

"The issue is still so volatile and continues to be a concern," said the Rev. Joseph Harmon, rector of Incarnation, Jersey City, and a member of the Diocesan Council Inclusion Workgroup that sponsored the resolution. "Education is key. People don't know the difference between immigrants and undocumented workers ... and there is a difference."

Congregations and communities are split on the issue, he said. "Should they be engaged? People experience fear. They don't know if some immigrants are legitimately here."

"When people hear the word 'immigrant,'" said the Rev. Susan Saucedo Sica, "they automatically put the word 'illegal' in front of it.

"We're in such a rush to criminalize people for not having the correct papers. But from a civil point of view and the Bill of Rights, there are no legal or illegal individuals," said Sica, vicar of St. Gregory's, Parsippany.

Supporting information for the resolution notes that this country relies on undocumented immigrant labor and makes it almost impossible for an immigrant to achieve legal status, preventing family cohesion or reunification.

Day laborers are "invisible in terms of what we get," Sica said, asking, "Can we function without them?" On the other hand, she observed, immigrants receive health care

and education. "We cannot say that one is not related to the other. For the church, there are no quick, easy and elegant solutions. Our baptismal covenant supports the dignity of each individual. This is an opportunity to find the Christian way to respond to a moral problem."

The Rev. Stephanie Wethered, rector of St. Peter's, Essex Fells, offered a dramatic example of the need for church intervention when she spoke in support of the resolution at convention.

"Our sexton [who is from Columbia] was dragged away and put in detention in a windowless room for a week," she said. "He was given two sandwiches a day. He was called an al Qaeda operative. It took us many legal bills to clear his good name. He is here legally. My brothers and sisters, we are living in a police state, and we have to take this courageous stand."

The workgroup is developing ways to collaborate with other religious communities in New Jersey, Harmon said. "We share and support one another."

Members also work with the Union County Detention Center in Elizabeth regarding improper treatment of immigrants. "There are very creative people all across the board engaged in this issue," Harmon said. He credited the Rev. Margaret Gat, recently retired as rector of St. John's, Dover, as a primary player in the immigration issue.

The detention centers are "outside the prison system," Sica said. "You have no rights. It's a private enterprise. Once you fall in, there's no way to get out. We don't believe we have these things here, but we do."

She also described numerous working conditions in factories with low-paying jobs as "the underbelly of how this country operates.

"People are risking life and limb, trying so hard not to make waves because they know they can be deported," she said. "Criminalizing the person doesn't help solve the problem."

Liz Keill attends St. Peter's, Morristown.



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Scenes from Convention

“God, you’ve put the resources of life, of labor, of money and of all assets in our hands to use for the good and the building up of your church and to use for the good of your people. We ask that our decisions and deliberations may be holy, that our stewardship may be to your praise and honor and glory. In the name of Jesus Christ, who loved us first, we pray.”

– The Rev. Mpho Tutu



On right from top: Green means “yes;” Bishop Mark Beckwith celebrates the Eucharist; a young convention visitor relaxes; and Beckwith wears a cope presented to him by members of All Saints’, Orange, before the church was decommissioned. Above, clockwise from top left, the Rev. Mpho Tutu serves as chaplain; the Rev. Paul Olsson celebrates Communion at his table; musical entertainment concludes the convention dinner; Heather Elkins discusses “Dressing for the Wilderness” at the Women’s Commission breakfast; members of St. James’, Hackettstown, present a “ministry minute;” and youth march in the procession at the opening Eucharist.

Photos by Steven Boston, unless otherwise noted.

Resolutions address a variety of issues

By Sharon Sheridan

Diocesan Convention approved resolutions on a range of issues, including encouraging inclusive language, advocating penalties for hanging a noose as a hate crime, providing interpreters for the deaf at diocesan events, supporting immigrants and dissenting from General Convention Resolution B033.

Among the resolutions generating the most floor discussion was one urging inclusive language in all diocesan communications. As passed, it urges the bishop, diocesan staff, Liturgy and Music Commission and committees and commissions to “be sensitive to ways in which inclusive language can be incorporated in all diocesan communications and materials” and directs Diocesan Council to identify and disseminate information about educational resources to enable learning “about the influence of inclusive language and imagery in shaping and communicating our biblical and theological traditions.”

Initially, the resolution also urged the use of inclusive language in all diocesan worship services. The Rev. Pamela Bakal, rector of Grace, Nutley, expressed concern that the resolution “ostensibly rules out the *Book of Common Prayer*” because of noninclusive language in, for example, Rite I Communion, thus eliminating an important “common sign of unity” for the church.

“I don’t think that rules out the *Book of Common Prayer*,” said the Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton, rector of St. Paul’s, Chatham. “It means we modify the language that we use.”

Louie Crew of Grace, Newark, opposed the resolution, advocating the value of directly dealing with difficult language and Scripture passages. “We won’t be able to remain ... as a place that’s safe to raise questions if we cut off the questions before we raise them.”

Bakal also noted the passage of a resolution adopting a standard of inclusive language at the 124th Diocesan Convention. Paul Olsson, rector of St. Paul’s, Morris Plains, proposed deleting the reference to worship services because that had been dealt with previously but described the amended resolution as going a step further in making the diocese “mindful of inclusive language in all communication.” The amended resolution passed.

Other resolutions passed by the convention:

- Dissented from General Convention Resolution B033, which urged standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction not to consent “to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church.”
- Urged General Convention to affirm that standing committees and bishops “cannot be bound by an extra-canonical restraints when considering consents” and that “there are no restrictions on a diocesan bishop’s authorization of the

liturgical blessing of committed relationships between same-sex partners.”

- Proposed adding the Rev. Pauli Murray, the first African-American woman ordained as an Episcopal priest, and former Chief Justice John Jay to the church calendar.
- Condemned hanging a noose as an act of intimidation and terrorist threat and urged the state Legislature to establish a penalty for such actions as an indictable offense.
- Condemned workplace raids leading to detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants, and encouraged education about immigration, the appointment of a diocesan commission and exploring legal support for “those seeking protection from detention and deportation.” (See related article, page 5.)
- Committed to providing interpreters for the deaf at diocesan events.
- Recommended that lay employees working at least 20 hours a week participate in the State Unemployment Insurance Plan and the Group Term Life Insurance Program administered by the Church Life Insurance Program.
- Set minimum salary rates for clergy and supply clergy.
- Established a canon defining the role of the Trustees of the Episcopal Fund and Diocesan Properties as set forth in N.J. statutes.
- Changed the *Constitution* to synchronize the procedure for creating a roll of clergy eligible to vote at convention.



Photo by Steven Boston

Above, Bishop Mark Beckwith joins the singing during a Eucharist at the convention. Right, participants conclude the second day's Eucharist dancing to Siyahamba.



Photo by Sharon Sheridan

Budget adds funds for new programs, assisting bishop

By Sharon Sheridan

Diocesan Convention approved a nearly \$3 million budget for 2008 that includes funding for new program support and a part-time assisting bishop and raises the diocesan pledge to the Episcopal Church to 22 percent.

"I want to stress that this is a year of transition," said Mary Sunden, Diocesan Council Budget Committee vice chair, noting that the committee was committed to transparency, clarity and communication. "We want to hear from you."

To help clarify the budget, the committee's report added footnotes for each line item and introduced pie charts outlining the breakdown and allocation of income and expenses. Group categories also were eliminated, Sunden said. "There are more line items, so you can see exactly what everything is, no matter how tiny."

Pledges account for the vast majority of diocesan income – 84 percent. "Obviously, all are making a commitment to the diocese and to the work of the central diocesan office," said Richard Graham, interim chief financial officer. "We rely on pledges and timely payment of those pledges to fund the programs that you will see in the budget. That remains a challenge."

"Every parish has pledged so far for '08," he noted. Forty-seven percent raised their pledges, and 34 percent remained the same. "That's really something to be very proud of, and it shows a lot of initiative go-

ing forward."

The committee budgeted income at the same amount as at the end of 2007, Sunden said. "We do have pledges in hand for slightly more than that, but we don't always get everything that you think you're going to be able to give us, and we understand that."

A surplus from 2007 was added to the 2008 budget – a practice that won't be policy going forward, Graham said, noting another surplus isn't anticipated.

Staff and pension costs, at more than \$1.2 million, form the largest part of the budget and are in line with expectations for such an organization, Graham said. Two employee positions were eliminated through reorganization, and \$50,000 was budgeted for a part-time assistant bishop.

The budget increases the amount for lay pensions, which auditors said had been underfunded, Graham said. "We are trying to come back into balance."

Outreach accounts for nearly \$810,000 of the budget and includes a new \$25,000 line item to support new and growing programs within the diocese by providing seed money or additional money to further such programs. Combined with mission and program, outreach forms the second largest budget area, or 34 percent of expenditures, Graham said.

This year's pledge to the Episcopal Church rose from 21.5 to 22 percent, with a goal of increasing to 25 percent over the next three years.

Bishop

Continued from page 1

- The launch of a pilot peer-coaching program involving 30 clergy.
- The appointment of four chaplains to assist Beckwith in providing pastoral support to clergy and their families: the Revs. Diana Clark, Laurie Matarazzo, Robert Morris and Willie Smith.
- Moving forward on the safe church initiative and on developing the infrastructure for the new Title IV protocol.
- Holding confirmations at the cathedral.
- Developing a process to create quantitative benchmarks for congregational vitality.
- Developing a process of support and challenge for congregations to fulfill their pledges.
- Hiring a part-time assisting bishop to help with parish visitations and confirmations, and moving toward adding a second canon to the diocesan staff.
- Examining the diocese's 243 separate endowments to clarify their origins and restrictions and to consolidate them.
- Planning for a capital campaign.

The gates of hope provided a theme throughout the two-day convention, with physical gates displayed in the ballroom of the Parsippany Hilton where the convention met and colorful ribbons representing congregational aspirations hung on gates behind the altar. Convention paused several times for "ministry minutes," presentations high-

lighting congregational ministries related to the four gates.

During worship, Communion was celebrated at each table. In lieu of a sermon each day, Beckwith and the Rev. Mpho Tutu, convention chaplain and the founder and executive director of the Tutu Institute for Prayer and Pilgrimage in Virginia, each delivered meditations, then invited table discussions.

On the first day, worshipers discussed the pros and cons of, and tensions between, the more individual-centered Western model of thinking and the decision-making model of *ubuntu*, which Tutu explained translates as "a person is a person through other persons."

On the second day, worshipers considered which "gate" was most meaningful in their congregation or community, as well as the gates where they acted as "gatekeeper" – deciding consciously or unconsciously who has access to Jesus – and the ones where they best could act as "usher," helping people find their way to Jesus.

Tutu also offered prayers throughout the convention, including ones offering thanks for All Saints', Orange, as it was decommissioned; for the work of the Title IV task force; and for good stewardship of our resources.

"[W]e thank you for the work that you have set before us," Tutu prayed. "May we do all our work in the spirit of the loving God. And we pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who loved us first."

Elected at the 2008 convention

ACTS/VIM BOARD – clergy

William Parnell, Christ, Hackensack – class of 2011
Laurie Wurm, St. John's, Boonton – class of 2009

ACTS/VIM BOARD – lay

Cathie Studwell, St. John's, Hasbrouck Heights – class of 2011
Martha Wolf, St. Paul's, Paterson – class of 2011
Issie Cherevko, St. Paul's, Englewood – class of 2009

CONSTITUTION AND CANONS COMMITTEE – class of 2009

Mr. Thomas Bisdale, Grace, Westwood
Mr. T. Donald Cairns, St. Clement's, Hawthorne
Ms. Marge Christie, Christ Church, Ridgewood
The Rev. John Donnelly, St. Michael's, Wayne
Mr. John C. Garde, St. Thomas', Lyndhurst
The Rev. Joseph Harmon, Incarnation, Jersey City
Mr. George Mackey, St. Elizabeth's, Ridgewood
The Rev. John Mitchell, Grace, Westwood
The Rev. Paul Walker, Christ, Belleville
The Rev. Dean Weber, All Saints', Leonia

DIOCESAN REVIEW COMMITTEE – clergy

Willie Smith, Trinity, Cliffs Park – class of 2012
S. Elizabeth Searles, Christ, Ridgewood – appointed to class of 2009 until convention

DIOCESAN REVIEW COMMITTEE – lay

Laura Russell, All Saints', Hoboken – class of 2011

ECCLESIASTICAL COURT – clergy

John Mitchell, Grace, Westwood – class of 2012
Dewey Brown Jr., St. Luke's, Haworth – class of 2011

ECCLESIASTICAL COURT – lay

Thomas Bisdale, Grace Westwood – class of 2011

GENERAL CONVENTION DEPUTIES & ALTERNATES – clergy

Sandye Wilson, St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange – 1st deputy
Diana Clark, St. John's, Montclair – 2nd deputy
Cathy Deats, St. James', Hackettstown – 3rd deputy
Edward Hasse, St. Paul's, Montvale – 4th deputy*
Geoffrey Curtiss, All Saints', Hoboken – 1st alternate
William Parnell, Christ Church, Hackensack – 2nd alternate
Kim Capwell, St. Peter's, Mt. Arlington – 3rd alternate
**Prince Singh, St. Alban's, Oakland, was elected 4th deputy but replaced by the next-highest vote-getter after he was elected bishop of the Diocese of Rochester. The other elected candidates each moved up one place; consequently, there is no 4th clergy alternate.*

GENERAL CONVENTION DEPUTIES & ALTERNATES – lay

Louie Crew, Grace, Newark – 1st deputy
Martha Gardner, St. George's, Maplewood – 2nd deputy
Lyn Headley-Deavours, St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange – 3rd deputy
Bert Jones, Christ Church, East Orange – 4th deputy
Marge Christie, Christ Church, Ridgewood – 1st alternate
E. Kim Byham, All Saints', Hoboken – 2nd alternate
Laura Russell, All Saints', Hoboken – 3rd alternate
(A 4th alternate will be elected at convention 2009 from remaining lay candidates)

THE STANDING COMMITTEE – clergy

Beverly Huck, The Saviour, Denville – class of 2012
J. Carr Holland, Grace, Newark – class of 2009

THE STANDING COMMITTEE – lay

Patricia Yankus, St. Paul's, Paterson – class of 2012

TRINITY & ST. PHILIP'S CATHEDRAL CHAPTER – clergy

Sandye Wilson, St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange – class of 2011

TRINITY & ST. PHILIP'S CATHEDRAL CHAPTER – lay

Bert Jones, Christ, East Orange – class of 2011
George Hayman, Grace, Madison – appointed to class of 2011
Joan Mebane, Christ, Short Hills – appointed to class of 2010

TRUSTEES OF THE EPISCOPAL FUND & DIOCESAN PROPERTIES

Ms. Bernice Mayes, Trinity + St. Philip's, Newark – elected to life term (or until resignation)

SECRETARY OF CONVENTION (one-year term)

Mr. Michael Francaviglia, St. George's, Maplewood

TREASURER OF CONVENTION (one-year term)

Mr. Richard Graham, Christ Church, Ridgewood

ASSISTANT TREASURER OF CONVENTION (one-year term)

Mr. Laurence Taber, Grace, Madison

REFLECTION: The strength of two or three gathered

By Carol Harrison-Arnold and Bill Potter

When two or three are gathered it is powerful ... when twos and threes are gathered, it is phenomenal.

The Episcopal Church, under the leadership of the Rev. Suzanne Watson of the Mission Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life, sponsored a conference Jan. 24-26 in New Orleans for teams from 27 congregations selected for an 18-month pilot project, When Two or Three Are Gathered. Members of eight Diocese of Newark parishes participated, chosen from well over 100 churches across the country who applied. The pilot is limited to congregations with an average Sunday attendance of 70 or fewer who seek to nourish the unmet spiritual needs of people in their wider community.

"I am deeply grateful that so many of our congregations were selected for this project and that so many of the leaders of those congregations are taking advantage of this exciting opportunity," said Bishop Mark Beckwith, whose Diocesan Convention remarks highlighted the values of worship and radical hospitality.

The long-distance prize for attending this awesome event went to our brothers and sisters from Hawaii. We came to New Orleans to share in developing new styles of worship services or gatherings to augment our existing ones so that more people throughout our communities might experience and know the power of God's transformative love. And so began our collective journey.

The presenters, including Dr. Charles Arn of Church Growth, the Rev. Eric Elnes of the Scottsdale Congregational U.C.C. Church and the Rev. Rob Norris-Weber of the Spirit Garage in Minneapolis, were excellent. Most participants shared the sentiment that it was the best conference they ever attended. The topics and content were relevant, the speakers engaging, insightful and informative, and the break-out sessions practical yet sometimes profound in helping to prepare us for the road ahead. And then there was the sharing: In our sessions ... at breakfast, lunch and dinner ... in elevators, bathrooms and the lobby, we buzzed with excitement.

We had embarked on a journey to discover a new frontier for most Episcopalians: taking a slice of what has been loosely defined as the "emerging church" and making it our own. How do we make this "church thing" more meaningful? We must meet people where they are, both spiritually and physically.

Eliminating barriers is not for the weak. We learned the answers were in understanding that reaching the "unchurched" requires imagination, creativity, commitment and quality planning. We are challenged to release traditions we hold dear while discovering the essence of what the church experience can be for others. It must matter, to both the newcomers we are trying to reach and us.

We believe the worship services that we will be developing under this pilot program will be of enormous value to our diocese. To learn more, contact any of the participat-

ing parishes: Trinity, Bayonne; Messiah, Chester; St. Luke's, Haworth; Holy Trinity, Hillsdale; St. Luke's, Hope; Incarnation, Jersey City; and St. John's, Union City.

The hope is that we will build a bridge and connect with the secular community in

new ways so that more people will know the joy of being one who follows Christ. And it is exciting!

Carol Harrison-Arnold is warden at Incarnation, Jersey City. The Rev. Bill Potter is rector of St. Luke's, Hope.

Reflecting

Continued from page 1

A call to serve

Singh's early priesthood addressed issues of inclusivity and justice across economic and caste lines in India. He was finishing graduate school at Madras Christian College and already had a teaching job offer there when he spent a week and a half visiting a friend working in an impoverished village of day laborers - Dalits, or "untouchables," although Singh didn't realize it at the time.

That visit made him question his sense of purpose, he says. "I started to hear a deep sense of call to ministry."

After meeting with his priest and undergoing a difficult time of soul-searching, Singh entered seminary. He was ordained a deacon in 1989, a priest in 1990. He married his wife Roja in 1991 - a not uncontroversial match, since her ancestry was Dalit and his was of the Nadar caste.

"Some of my relatives were not happy about it, but because it was in the city, it didn't matter too much," he says. "If we were in the village, it could have been pretty disastrous, actually." Such cross-caste pairings in rural areas often lead to violence, he says.

The couple and their young son, Nived, now 15, came to the United States in 1993 to pursue further graduate studies. In the Diocese of Newark, Singh served at St. Peter's, Morristown, as interim associate and then associate rector from 1996 to 2000, when he became rector at St. Alban's. The Singhs since have had a second son, Eklan, 6.

Accepting the possibility of a call to the episcopate wasn't easy.

"Roja's made the biggest sacrifice in all of this," Singh says. "Right at the start, when I was nominated, Roja and I spent some time together and said, 'Is this something

we want to pursue?' She was the one who looked at me and said, 'If this is what God wants us to do, we need to be available for it. So let's go for it.'"

"It was the most generous thing that anybody could do," he says, noting Roja would be up for tenure teaching at William Paterson College next year. "She's hoping that she can actually turn this challenge to an opportunity and finish her book" based upon her dissertation research.

Looking ahead

The bishop-elect's last Sunday at St. Alban's will be March 30, when Bishop Mark Beckwith will celebrate at a 5 p.m. commissioning service for the Singhs. Singh anticipates being consecrated on May 31.

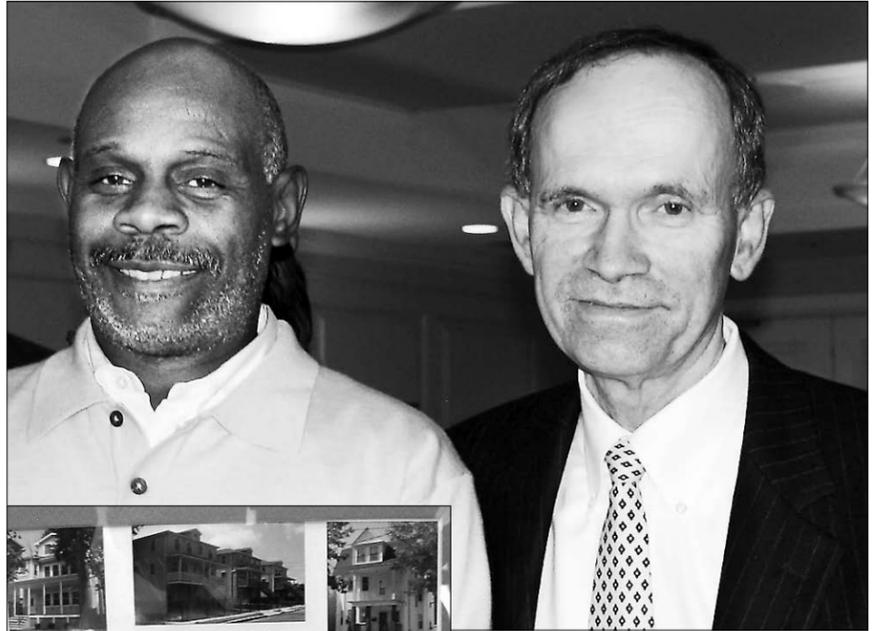
He describes his initial role as one of listening and then fostering bridge-building in a diocese with many small congregations, including rural, urban and suburban churches. "My primary goal is to be pastoral, at least in the initial stages; to do a lot of observing and listening and engaging conversation as well as asking questions during visitations," he says. "I like to get into situations and not just go with is on the script in terms of data ... but to really hear stories."

He says he sees many opportunities for building bridges and relationships among congregations. "There's all kinds of companionship that could evolve over the years."

"One of my passions, like our current bishop [Beckwith], is hospitality," he adds. "That's something I intend to bring to the conversations."

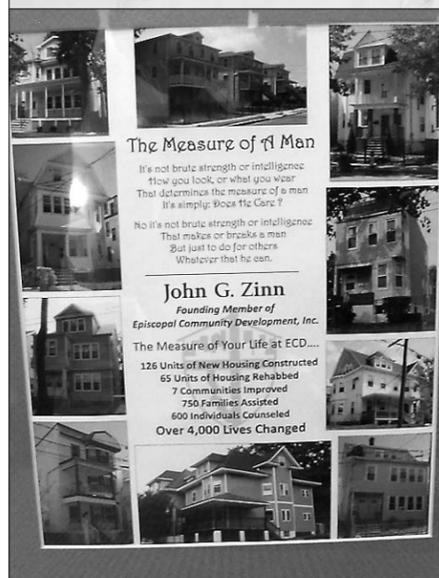
"Both Roja and I are filled with a sense of hope," he concludes. "These are going to be very challenging times, especially with declining membership and that sort of thing. It's really an opportunity for us to be available to see how God's spirit leads us through this, to see some sense of resurrection spirit in the diocese."

Retirement party



Photos by Pat Hawkins

Members of the diocese met at the New Jersey Historical Society in Newark in celebration of the ministry of John Zinn, who retired at the end of 2007 as diocesan CFO and treasurer after more than 25 years. Among the many Episcopal House colleagues who attended the celebration were Cecil Broner, the building sexton, pictured above on the left with Zinn.



Diocesan Women

Continued from page 3

dozens of cultures and experiences.

The 2008 UNCSW themes come partially from the 1995 *Beijing Platform for Action* and partially from the 2000 Millennium Development Goals. The major theme is "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." For review from 2004 is "Women's Equal Participation in Conflict Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post Conflict Peace Building." An emerging theme is "A Gender Perspective on Climate Change."

The themes are addressed at interactive, high-level round tables - generally during morning sessions. The delegates listen attentively, looking for opportunities to intervene in the discussions taking place during caucus gatherings in the afternoons. Almost 6,000 delegates were registered this year from more than 160 nongovernmental organizations, of which the Anglican Consultative Council is one. The Anglican delegates were chosen by their primates for this expression of ministry.

One major event planned by AWE members was a March 1 public hearing at Trinity Church, Wall Street. A panel of four diverse experts were scheduled to address "The Intersection of Faith and Politics - Financing for Gender Equity": Bishop Probal Kanto Dutta from North India; ethics professor Bill Danaher of General Theological Seminary in New York; Dana Dakin, founder of micro-credit efforts in Ghana; and Biggadike, author of *A Christian Ethical Response to Poverty*.

Lambeth

Continued from page 3

and same-gender blessings. The text of the second draft is available at <http://www.aco.org/commission/covenant/index.cfm>.

"There will be some time at the end of the conference to address the recently issued Anglican covenant," Beckwith said.

"In our plenary session, we will be asked to act on the presentment brought against John-David Schofield [bishop of the Diocese of San Joaquin in California], who has been disciplined by the presiding bishop for the 'abandonment of communion.'"

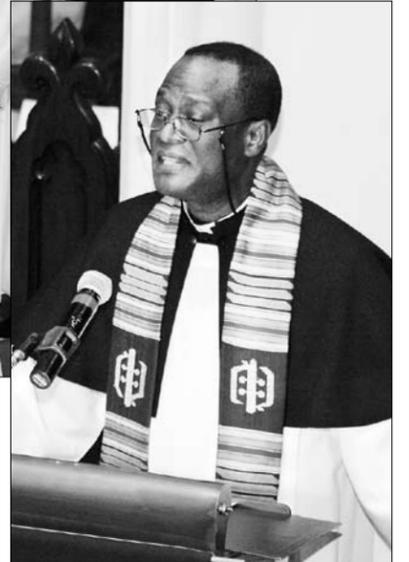
At Schofield's urging, the convention of the Diocese of San Joaquin voted in December to leave the Episcopal Church and to align with the Argentina-based Anglican Province of the Southern Cone.

At its first meeting after Lambeth, the House of Bishops will confront a similar situation. Pittsburgh's diocesan convention in November gave the first of two approvals needed to enact constitutional changes to remove language in its constitution that the diocese accedes to the national church's *Constitution and Canons*.

Bishop Robert Duncan of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, however, denied in January that he has abandoned the communion. "Few bishops have been more loyal to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church," he said. "I have not abandoned the communion of this church."

Jerry Hames is former editor of Episcopal Life.

Absalom Jones service



The diocese celebrated the life and ministry of the Rev. Absalom Jones, the Episcopal Church's first African-American priest, on Feb. 10 at Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark. At right, the Rev. C. John Thompson-Quartey, rector of St. Mary's-by-the-Sea, Point Pleasant Beach, delivers the sermon. Above, liturgical dancers from four diocesan churches perform They Sing Praise, an offertory anthem composed by Dee Jackson Field (center of photo). At left, Deacon Kathleen Ballard received an award in honor of her service to the Newark Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians and the diocese. The annual award honors the memory of Clara Horsley, an active and dedicated member of the UBE.

Photos by Joseph Bodine

Helping Newark

Continued from page 5

cal corruption that distracts attention and money, and Newark's problems can seem insurmountable. Yet those who work with the diocese's two major social-service agencies, Apostles' House and Episcopal Community Development Corp, have found focus.

ECD, in operation for 16 years, rehabilitates existing housing stock, builds new houses and apartments, helps people learn how to become and remain homeowners, and works in community organizing and neighborhood planning. Much of the new construction is done in partnership with YouthBuild Newark, part of a nationwide program in which low-income 16- to 24-year-olds work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas while learning job skills by building affordable housing for homeless and low-income people.

Apostles' House, founded by urban and suburban Episcopal congregations 25 years ago, offers an emergency shelter for families, transitional housing, housing relocation, a rooming house for men, multi-generational teen-mother housing, a food pantry, a food-security advocacy program, family-preservation programs and case-management services.

Housing is critical

"You can really boil it down to housing," Accomando said.

Combine a home-ownership rate that hovers in the low 20 percent range with the fact that less than half of Newark's high school students graduate and "it's not a formula for success," said Jackie Ross, diocesan development director.

Accomando agreed. Children without a good, safe place to live "feel vulnerable, they're scared – and it's hard to learn when you're scared," she said.

The diocese has provided 400 units of affordable housing in Newark in the last 15 years, Ross said. When possible, the homes come two to a building, with the owner occupying one unit and earning income from renting the other.

However, "it's not just the numbers," Ross said; it's the way homes change lives.

Ross described how a man ran down

Newark's Mapes Avenue to thank the diocese for rehabilitating an eyesore of a home and thus improving the whole neighborhood. She recalled a single mother and her daughter who never had taken a bath because their previous homes only had showers. The way the two maintained their new home made it "just exude warmth and self-respect," she said, adding that neighbors improved their homes in response.

Projects such as ECD's Samaritan Housing Program, which guts and rehabs dilapidated homes for sale to first-time homebuyers, yield a "many-fold benefit," said Executive Director Gerard Haizel. The buildings return to usefulness, the physical fabric of neighborhoods is restored, and the stock of affordable housing increases.

Yet providing housing and helping people buy it is becoming harder and harder, Haizel said. ECD's biggest challenge is that the housing boom in Newark made affordable lots and buildings "very expensive and very scarce," as is money to subsidize buyers, he said.

That crunch and the city's push for market-rate housing to bring people back to Newark pressures the poor, Accomando said. "They're pricing people out. I like to say that my ladies are all dressed up with no place to go." These women have worked to overcome addictions and mental-health issues, and some even have part-time jobs, but "they can't find an apartment they can afford," she said.

Dwindling financial resources for housing and all social services and the need for coordination prompted Beckwith to help pull groups founded by Episcopalians under one umbrella – Newark Episcopal Ministries. Apostles' House and ECD will partner with the Newark School of Theology (an accredited and ecumenical school), North Porch (which aids women and children) and St. Philip's Academy, an independent K-8 school founded in 1988 by Dillard Robinson, then dean of the cathedral, to give children in Newark access to excellent education. Together with Newark's five Episcopal congregations, he said, "we intend to make an important – and abiding – witness."

This article first appeared in the February 2008 issue of Episcopal Life.

THANK YOU from *The Voice*

Last fall, we asked readers to support us in our efforts to give voice to the voices of the Diocese of Newark. And our readers responded generously, contributing \$8,743 to help cover our publication costs.

The Voice wishes to thank the more than 370 contributors who made their voices heard on behalf of our diocesan newspaper.

Anyone still wishing to make a contribution may send a check payable to *The Voice* to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, attn.: *The Voice*, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

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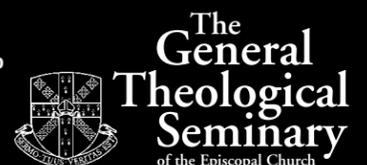
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Fund raising in cyberspace: A tale of two blogs

By Elizabeth Kaeton

Fund raising. It's the bane of many in parochial ministry, a harsh necessity to provide financial support for particular social-justice programs or organizations, some of which are missions of the church, above and beyond (and often in addition to) the regular stewardship campaign.

Technology has been an enormous help. Information is more easily available, and almost anyone has the ability to produce promotional information that is effective and looks professional. Communication by e-mail is often more efficient than a telephone call or "snail mail." When inevitable problems or glitches arise, a group e-mail can settle the problem in a matter of hours.

Fund raising in cyberspace? Get out! No way!

Yes way. Not only do I know it exists, I've seen it happen.

From Dec. 1, 2007, to Jan. 6, 2008, I was privileged to be part of an international effort that raised more than \$10,000 in cyberspace for a special ministry of Cristo Rei (Christ the King) Episcopal Anglican Church in Cidade de Deus (City of God), the poorest section of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. To know how we did that is to know the story of two blogs and the power of the Internet as a highly influential post-modern medium of message.

Across the ocean

Jonathan Hagger, an Anglican priest at St. Francis, Newcastle Upon Tyne, in the United Kingdom, has a blog "Of Course I Could Be Wrong," where his alter-ego, "MadPriest," is the virtual mayor of an international "neighbourhood" where absolutely everyone is invited and no holds are barred.

In preparation for General Convention 2006, Randy Johnson, the parish administrator at St. Paul's, set up a blog for me as a place where I could keep my wardens, vestry



Photo by Sharon Sheridan

The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton writes thank-you notes to contributors.

and parish members informed of my perceptions of General Convention. I called it "Telling Secrets," a blog that, in my naiveté, I thought only they would read.

I'm embarrassed to admit it now, but I had no clue that blogs were such a vastly public place or that anyone else would find my reflections of any interest. Almost 170,000 visitors later, it has become an unintended hobby where I post reflective essays about various topics that interest or confound me as well as various news items concerning events in the worldwide Anglican Communion in general and the Episcopal Church in particular.

Luiz Coehlo is a frequent commenter on both blogs, with a few blogs of his own. He is a seminarian who did an internship in Cidade de Deus, often telling us what he witnessed in his ministry among the children there and sometimes sending us pictures or videos.

Jonathan contacted me by phone one mid-November morning, and together we hatched a simple plan to raise money for "Luiz's kids." It would be a Christmas appeal to the readership of our blogs. We

thought we might be able to raise, oh, perhaps, a couple thousand dollars. Maybe buy some Christmas presents for the kiddos. We had no idea!

Exceeding expectations

There were 134 contributors to the appeal: 122 from the United States, six from the United Kingdom, three from Canada, one from Sweden and two from Australia. More than a handful of contributions were in the amount of \$5 and one in the amount of \$500; most were in the range of \$25-\$75. Approximately 10 people contributed more than once – several contributed several times in small amounts of \$5 and large amounts of \$100. There was one challenge donation of \$200 and an appeal to sacrifice our "Starbucks fix" for one week and contribute that amount to the appeal.

Laura Weinbrom, our parish financial coordinator, set up a PayPal account through St. Paul's, Chatham, as well as a checking account designated for this specific purpose. Contributors were told that they could donate either by credit card through PayPal or check to St. Paul's.

Jonathan and I "launched" the campaign on the first of December on our blogs. We provided updates every couple of days. Jonathan was a particularly effective fundraiser, sometimes using outrageous humor to promote generous giving. We rejoice to have been able to wire \$10,180 to the church's account in a Rio bank.

I should say that, while PayPal provided the most efficient and most-often-used means for contributions, it was not the easiest administratively. They do charge a hefty surcharge of 30 percent, and their requirements were sometimes daunting for a small

tax-exempt organization. I think we learned a great deal from this experience, and we'll be ready for it next time.

Yes, there will be a next time. We already provide automatic monthly cash withdrawal for those who pledge at St. Paul's. My finance committee and I are in conversation with my wardens and vestry about how we might use credit cards and/or PayPal and the Internet for specific fund-raising efforts. Might we "partner" with a "sister" parish in a "companion" diocese? Might there be people who do not claim membership in a particular church or denomination who, nevertheless, might want to support a good work of ministry?

In these days of financial constraint and concern, it behooves us, I think, to apply our imagination to ways we might use technology creatively to assist us in raising the funds needed to do the work of Christ's mission in the world.

After all, Jesus used the web of the technology of his day – sandals. He sent his disciples out two by two to create webs of information and community, which eventually (and very effectively) became international in their composition.

I am happy to share the particulars of our experience with anyone who wishes to give this a try. I would love to learn about your experiences. The best way to reach me is either on my cell phone or by e-mail – but, of course!

For information about Cristo Rei, visit <http://cristorei.anglicanarj.org/home-en.html>; about Cidade de Deus, visit http://cristorei.anglicanarj.org/cidade_deus-en.html.

The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton is rector of St. Paul's, Chatham.

Has your congregation held an innovative fund raiser, or used technology in a creative way to further your ministries? Tell us about your experiences by e-mailing sharon@sharonsheridan.com or writing to *The Voice*, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

Observando

Continued from page 2

La diócesis de Haití es la más grande de la Iglesia Episcopal, con más de 100,000 miembros (en tan solo 109 congregaciones). Todas las congregaciones tienen una escuela. Muchas tienen clínicas. La Diócesis de Haití patrocina la *única* institución médica para niños ciegos y discapacitados del país. Una increíble misión y justicia se están llevando a cabo – con pocos recursos financieros, pero con una abundancia contagiosa de pasión, compromiso y fe. Nuestra visita nos hizo sentir orgullosos de ser Episcopales.

Nuestra visita a Haití también rompió mi corazón en nuevas formas (pues Haití es donde mayor desigualdad he visto en mi vida). Pero también fortaleció mi oración – y mi compromiso de creer que la pobreza es una manifestación de la violencia.

Existe una tentación plantada en nuestras culturas que nos lleva a pensar que la pobreza produce violencia – y que si podemos evitar la pobreza, entonces evitaremos violencia. Pero resulta que es al revés. La violencia genera pobreza. La pobreza surge porque alguien o algún grupo ha sido olvidado, ignorado, empujado al margen o ignorado – con el propósito de asegurar recursos y oportunidades.

Cierto grado de violencia está envuelto en la creación de desigualdad. En ocasiones la violencia es virulenta, pero casi siempre la violencia simplemente implica el negarse a ver a quienes viven fuera de las puertas de la esperanza.

Caminando hacia el futuro

Entonces, ¿qué hacemos?

Por un lado, identificamos lo que le pertenece a cada quien y devolvemos lo que no era nuestro en primer lugar. Eso es el trabajo de la justicia. Es un trabajo duro – y es una tarea que va tomando generaciones. Es el trabajo de restauración y restitución – y la construcción de comunidades. Enfrentamos el reto de dar – nuestro tiempo, talento y

tesoro. Esto no significa que todos deben volverse pobres, pero sí significa que hasta cierto nivel debemos entender que el medio-tener es un sistema no muy sutil de violencia que genera como consecuencia el no-tener. Y significa que debe existir alguna forma de dar de vuelta. Y necesitamos rezar. Para que la justicia tenga una oportunidad, necesita ser emparejada con la santidad. Uno de los más grandes retos en nuestra desenfadada cultura es el desarrollar una disciplina para cumplir con el cuarto mandamiento: "Guarda el Sábado y mantenlo santo." La tentación es pensar que el Sábado es simplemente un día de descanso. Pero es mucho más que eso. El Sábado es un día de igualdad social – un día, que Walter Brueggemann describe como el día en que necesitamos imaginar: el mundo como un mundo de igualdades en el que los recursos se distribuyen equitativamente. El Sábado es un día en el que somos liberados del sistema de producir/consumir con la finalidad de que podamos vernos los unos a los otros, no como objetos de interés o desinterés, sino como hermanas y hermanos – cada uno reflejando la imagen y semejanza de Dios.

El Sábado es un antídoto natural contra la violencia. El guardar el Sábado permite que la búsqueda de justicia se convierta en una posibilidad real. Un Sábado guardado fielmente restaura nuestra energía y aumenta nuestro compromiso – para proponer un futuro en el que podemos ver la visión pintada verbalmente por el profeta Amos, de dejar "que corra como agua el derecho y la justicia como arroyo inagotable" (5:24). Y es una visión que nos brinda la fuerza para levantarnos *en contra* de los vasallos de la violencia – y plantarnos con el Cristo vivo, en las puertas de la esperanza.

+ Mark M. Beehew

Interfaith

Continued from page 1

Bergen County Breakfast, the major event of a coalition representing the Bahai, Catholic, Protestant, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities.

The Rev. Lynne Bleich Weber, chair of the Diocese of Newark's Ecumenical and Interfaith Commission, gave the opening invocation. She is a key figure in the group's activities, which are designed to foster dialogue and mutual respect. Prayer vigils, educational forums and intercongregational visits throughout the year supplement the annual breakfast.

Saperstein outlined the importance of moving from dialogue to cooperative action on areas of common social concern. For him, we are at a crucial moment in the remarkable rise of interfaith dialogue – "a moment unimaginable 50 years ago." In the face of religious violence and secular disdain for religion, the mainstream faith communities must make their voices heard against religious radicalism and about the great challenges before the world, he said.

Citing the multireligious coalition to "Save Darfur" as an example, he listed a host of issues that touch into the heart of religious values: human rights abuses around the globe (including the curtailment of religious rights in countries from China to the United States), hate crimes, debt relief for poor nations (who must curtail education and business development to pay interest) and, most urgently, global climate change.

The morning ended with a prayer from each faith-community. Hindu intonations in Sanskrit, Muslim chant in Arabic, Sikh verses in Punjabi and Jain supplications in Prakrit joined Christian prayer, Jewish blessing and Bahai affirmation. People of all faiths were able to say a common "Amen."

The Rev. Robert Morris is director of *Interweave in Summit*.

Through a looking glass

Church must deal with reality revealed on Environmental Justice Tour

By Fletcher Harper

"Heavy truck traffic, congested highways, garbage incineration, toxic Superfund sites, constant airplane traffic and various other environmental threats riddle the area, and the cumulative impact of this threatens the health and safety of the community."

U.S. EPA description of Newark

When you ask people what first comes into their minds when they hear the word "environment," words like "forests," "the ocean" and "mountains" are the most common responses. Very few people use words that describe urban settings – a shame, since many of the most serious environmental dangers exist in cities around New Jersey and beyond.

Twice each year, GreenFaith organizes an environmental health and justice tour to introduce religious leaders to issues of urban environmental health and justice. We visit contaminated sites, inviting local environmental activists to describe their struggles.

Our most recent tour took place on a Saturday in mid-February, when 140 people gathered at First Hopewell Baptist Church in Newark. There were African-American clergy and lay leaders, and synagogue members whose Sabbath observance permitted a Saturday tour. Adults from Pompton Lakes Catholic Church joined a youth group from Christ Church, Ridgewood, and students from Princeton University, Drew Theological School, Bergen County Community College and Islamic schools from Paterson and Teaneck.

It was a mixed group. People drank coffee and ate doughnuts in the church hall before walking through the bright, crisp day to board their bus.

First stop was the Pabst Brewery, visible from the Garden State Parkway on Newark's western border. The facility is massive, half demolished, with three derricks dwarfed by the size of the remaining building shell.

Over the past decade, while developers and politicians have sought to dismantle and rebuild at a profit, the community has been exposed to 300,000 square feet of lead paint and tons of asbestos. These toxins have been pulverized

and spread around the community. Local leaders such as Paradise Baptist Church's Pastor Jethro James have fought, with some success, to protect the community's health.

The next several stops were in Newark's Ironbound section, a vibrant community home to immigrants – primarily Portuguese and Spanish-speaking – from 54 different nationalities. The array of contaminated sites is stunning. Athletic Field B was built in 1999 to provide much-needed recreation space for the community. In 2007, the state ordered the field closed because the artificial turf had deteriorated and released dangerous amounts of lead, endangering thousands of children.

Nearby, the Tidewater Baling site – a facility abandoned in the 1990s – contains high levels of PCBs and other toxins. The EPA recently agreed to remove some of the area's most toxic soil. The site is being considered for the location of a future school.

Several blocks away is the former Hoechst Celanese plastics manufacturing plant, now the location of a community pool and recreation center. Construction of the pool began in the 1980s. When serious contamination was found, the site was placed on the Superfund list. Twenty years later, the cleanup partially completed, the pool was built on stilts, suspended above soil still too poisonous to be safe. As part of their responsibility for the cleanup, Hoechst Celanese pays for a groundwater treatment system that pumps polluted water from the ground through a treatment system and re-injects it into the earth. The pool is adjacent to the former Ironbound High School football field. This field was closed because its soil, also, was contaminated.

One of our final stops was at the Ironbound incinerator, the state's largest garbage incinerator. Located within a half mile of two low-income housing projects, it is one of New Jersey's largest legal emitters of mercury, a potent neuro-toxin. GreenFaith and the Ironbound Community Corporation have entered negotiations with the incinerator's owner, seeking to reduce these emissions.

Less than a mile away is the Diamond Alkali Superfund site, one of the most toxic concentrations of dioxin in the world. Much of the Agent Orange used in Vietnam was manu-



Photo by Fletcher Harper

The Rev. Jethro James speaks to participants in GreenFaith's Environmental Justice Tour about toxic contamination from the Pabst Brewery site, in the background.

factured at this site. Now, the poisonous remains sit underneath a concrete mound on the banks of the Passaic River.

Almost everyone finds these tours to be an introduction to an alien reality. Yet this dimension of reality is something with which the church must grapple if it is to become a leader in efforts to restore creation.

Loving wilderness and open space is important. It is not enough. We must learn to love creation in its broken places – in places we have broken. Seeing this can be a first step.

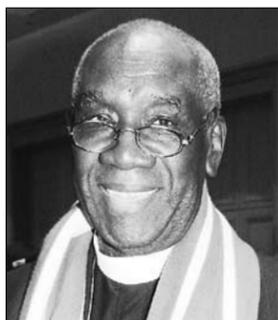
Join us for our next tour. You will not forget what you see.

This column was prepared with information provided by the Ironbound Community Corporation. For more information about GreenFaith and future tours, visit www.greenfaith.org or contact Harper at revfharper@greenfaith.org or 732-565-7740.

The Rev. Fletcher Harper is executive director of GreenFaith, whose mission is to inspire, educate and mobilize people from diverse religious backgrounds to deepen their relationship with the sacred in nature and to take action for the earth.

Cathedral's Dean Williams bids a fond farewell

On Feb. 2, 2000, two months after the millennium prediction of the "Doom of the Earth," I stepped into the office of dean/rector of Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral. I came here from a wonderful parish in Bedstuy Brooklyn (St. George's), where a grieving population of African-American, West Indian and Caribbean congregants wondered how the parish would get along without their "good priest."



The Very Rev. C. David Williams

It is still there and doing well!

In the ensuing years here in the Diocese of Newark, I have sought to enliven my vision of an extension (building) that would be an annex to our cathedral ... encompassing community programs (showers for the homeless) and the cathedral offices. I envisioned an Elite Sports Program for youngsters that included everything from fencing to race car driving (hoping to entice youngsters who break into cars at night and race around the city streets). I proposed a mentorship program and a program on spirituality ... both of which would be in concert and in partnership with two of our

rural parishes, thus making a partnership with other parishes possible.

Alas, none of these things came to pass – not for lack of initiative or desire, but for lack of funding.

I leave this cathedral, comforted by the assurance that life here will continue and that money will not always be the impediment to its success. Priests come and priests go ...

and the sky doesn't fall, and millennium predictions remain just predictions.

I will be taking on more duties as the president of the Union of Black Episcopalians. I will be directing my efforts in that wise to increasing the membership, securing a financial base for UBE and preaching a message to America that the struggle for civil rights is *not* over! I believe, as MLK Jr. did, "that justice delayed is justice denied."

On Feb. 2, 2008, just eight years after the millennium year, all is well with the church and with me. I love Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral and its people ... I love the Diocese of Newark and its people.

I bid both a fond and earnest farewell.

—The Very Rev. C. David Williams

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 or The Voice, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

Pilgrimage to Rome, Florence, and Assisi



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Sharing the good news of ministry in Cameroon

After more than a decade with the Emmanuel Sisters in Cameroon, Sister Jane Mankaa felt God calling her to do something more. Moved by the sight of homeless children on the streets of the capital, she dreamed of starting an orphanage.

She came to the United States in the late 1990s, armed with travel money and a letter of introduction from a British monk she met in her home country. Her journey ultimately brought her to Mendham and the Community of St. John Baptist – and then to connections with an increasing number of churches and others who support her dream.

Today, the Good Shepherd Home – named after a Lutheran church in Parsippany – houses more than 50 children, recounts Sister Mary Lynne Pfitzinger of the Mendham convent. A New York philanthropist is building an orphanage for 80 more. Grace Bakery – named after Grace, Madison – supplies food, jobs and income. Calvary, Summit, provided money for land. Redeemer, Morristown, provided funds for piping in water and launching a primary school. Money is being raised for a secondary school. Other diocesan supporters include St. Peter's, Essex Fells, and St. Peter's, Livingston.

"God is blessing this ministry. It's just incredible," Pfitzinger says. "It's a much wider ministry than just the orphanage."

Mankaa, now an Episcopalian, is visiting the diocese through April, staying at



Children smile for the camera at the Good Shepherd home in Bamenda, Cameroon. At left, a youngster holds one of the rabbits on a farm that is part of the orphanage's growing ministry in West Africa.



the convent and spreading the word about her ministry. By early May, she will return home with Pfitzinger, who says she spends about two months each year helping with the ministry in Cameroon.

Mankaa will visit St. Peter's, Essex Fells, on March 9; St. Peter's, Livingston, on April 6; and Messiah, Chester, on April 27. Anyone wishing to attend these programs, schedule a visit to their church or learn more about this ministry can contact the convent at csjb@csjb.org or 973-543-4641.

Clergy comings and goings

Three diocesan clergy will celebrate the last Sunday at their cures on March 30.

The Rev. **Prince Singh**, rector of St. Alban's, Oakland, is now bishop-elect for the Diocese of Rochester. He expects to be consecrated on May 31. The Rev. **David Gable**, rector of Grace Church, Rutherford, is retiring to Long Island. The Very Rev. **C. David Williams** is retiring as dean of Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral, Newark. He will continue his service as president of the national Union of Black Episcopalians.

The Rev. **Michael Sniffen**, who was ordained a transitional deacon in September, is now curate at St. John's, Lattingtown, in the Diocese of Long Island. The Rev. **Melissa Hall** is now associate rector at Redeemer, Morristown.

Two interim clergy transitions not previously reported in *The Voice* are: The Rev. **Susan Butler**, serving at St. Peter's, Mountain Lakes, and the Rev. **John Negrotto** now at St. Paul's, Jersey City.

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