

Embracing the 'three Es'

Leaders working to put mission statement in action throughout diocese

By Sharon Sheridan

Equipping congregations...

Empowering people...

Engaging the world...

... with the hope and justice of Jesus.

Following adoption of a mission statement for the Diocese of Newark, diocesan leaders are working to put that mission into action and to realign diocesan structures and programs accordingly.

"There's been a tremendous realignment from the top down," said consultant David Manting, who is guiding the diocese through the visioning process.

The Episcopal House staff reorganized to align members' responsibilities with the

focal points of the mission: equipping congregations, empowering people, engaging the world. The Rev. Gregory Jacobs, formerly canon for ministry development, now is canon to the ordinary and chief of staff for the "leadership team," which includes Director of Administration Michael Francaviglia, Communications and Technology

Director Nina Nicholson, CFO Richard Graham, Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director Kailleen Alston, Bishop's Executive Assistant Kay Lark and Resources and Training Director Kitty Kawecki.

Having spent the first 2½ years of his episcopate working more on equipping congregations and empowering people, Bishop Mark Beckwith said, the staff reorganization will free him to focus more on engaging the world, such as when he traveled recently with other bishops to meet with congressional leaders in Washington, D.C.

In September, the staff joined Diocesan Council for a retreat, where the council shifted its structure from four "work groups" – congregational vitality, outreach, inclusion and discipleship – to three "action groups"



Manting

addressing the three mission areas.

"There was a lot of energy and enthusiasm from all the members of council, and I think people rose to the occasion to readjust their interests and sense of gift to become part of one of the three new action teams," said the Rev. Joseph Harmon, priest-in-charge of Incarnation, Jersey City, who will co-chair the Engaging the World group.

On Clergy Day Sept. 24, Beckwith presented a draft of the "vision portrait" he is working on for the diocese. The Gates of Hope will be part of that vision, highlighting core values of the diocese, he said.

"The process has been first and foremost to establish a purpose, a direction. That was the mission statement," Manting explained. The vision grows out of that: "It really becomes the picture, the painting, if you would,

See "Mission focus" page 5

General Convention report

More than 50 members of the Diocese of Newark attended General Convention in Anaheim, Calif., in July. Besides the bishop, deputies and alternate deputies, diocesan attendees included delegates to the Triennial Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women, exhibitors, diocesan staff, children, youth, young adults, chaperones, spouses, visitors, members of advocacy groups, volunteers and journalists.

Newark attendees played integral roles in the business of convention, from serving on legislative committees and crafting resolutions to lobbying and helping formulate the next triennial's budget. Others registered participants, staffed exhibit booths, took photographs and volunteered in convention offices.

When it was over, most flew home, but a couple chose to drive cross-country. Notably, Deputy Martha Gardner drove the support vehicle for members of the Diocese of Ohio who cycled to New York to raise money for the NetsforLife program to combat malaria.

See pages 6-7 for a report on what happened and photos of some of the faces of Newark, past and present, at convention.



Paul Hausman photo

From left, the Revs. Ed Hasse, Cathy Deats, Diana Clark and Sandye Wilson in the House of Deputies.

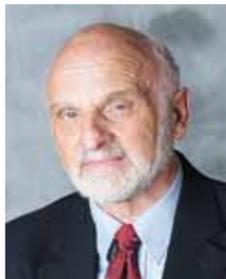
Connecting biblical texts to modern life

Scholar to lead programs for laity, clergy

By Kevin Berrigan

In programs for laity and clergy, renowned biblical scholar Walter Brueggemann will highlight connections between Old Testament texts and modern life this fall.

Brueggemann will deliver the keynote address at "Becoming Disciples – How will we create a culture of call?," a program presented by the diocese in cooperation with the Christian Formation Commission and the Commission on the Ministry's Committee on the Laity, on Oct. 25 from 4-7 p.m. at St. Andrew & Holy Communion Church in South



Brueggemann

Orange. He also will be keynote speaker for the clergy conference Oct. 26-28 at the Shawnee Inn in Shawnee-on-Delaware, Pa.

An ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, Brueggemann formerly served as professor of Old Testament at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Ga. He has received many honors and awards, including the Albert Schweitzer Memorial Award from the Committee for the Scientific Examination of Religion. His most recent published work is *Prayers for a Privileged People*.

"He's really a biblical prophet, a

See "Brueggemann," page 9

Episcopal bishops lobby congressional leaders



Lynette Wilson photo

From left, Maryland Bishop Eugene Sutton, Connecticut Bishop James Curry, Newark Bishop Mark Beckwith and Maine Bishop Stephen Lane during the bishops' Capitol Hill visit.

By Sharon Sheridan

Reflecting the diocesan mission to engage the world, Newark Bishop Mark Beckwith traveled with six other Episcopal bishops to Washington, D.C., in September to lobby congressional leaders about health care, build relationships and learn effective advocacy strategies.

Members of Bishops Working for a Just World, the seven gathered "to explore the possibility of doing relational work and community organizing," Beckwith said. "We

were seeing how we can use our office as bishops individually and together as a more effective platform to advocate for the issues that we have in common concern."

Michael Gecan of the Industrial Areas Foundation, a nonprofit and nonpartisan group that offers training for groups interested in working for social change, facilitated this. The bishops also received a briefing from the Episcopal Church's Office on Governmental Relations on General Convention resolutions – "which frame

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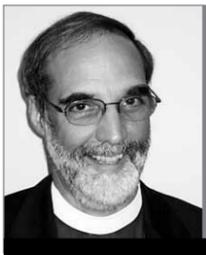
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The Bishop's Message

Mission statement a call to everyone

As a diocese, we have a new mission statement:

- Equipping congregations...
- Empowering people...
- Engaging the world...
- ... with the hope and justice of Jesus.

You will see this statement in our communications and publications. We even have it printed on T-shirts, which members of the diocesan deputation wore proudly at General Convention this past summer.

The wisdom of this mission statement is that it captures the ethos and essence of who we are – have been – and will be as faithful Christians in this wonderfully

unique portion of God's vineyard called the Diocese of Newark. The purpose of the mission statement is to serve as a modern version of a plumbline first introduced by the prophet Amos (Amos 7:8): that all our work as a diocese will be aligned with our words. And if the work, for whatever reason, is not in alignment with the mission statement, we either will revise the work – or let it go.

The introduction of the mission statement already is having an effect on those of us whose ministry is based at Episcopal House. While it always has been implicitly understood that the staff is here to equip congregations, we now are more clear and intentional about it. We offer support, guid-

ance, challenge, wisdom and vision. And the synergy of all of us working together generates the hope and justice of Jesus. We become catalysts for action.

The mission statement has framed my thinking as I begin my second round of congregational visitations. I can more clearly see that the Episcopal visit itself is an exercise in equipping congregations – and have framed our time together accordingly.

As for empowering people: I have introduced a liturgical opportunity for people in congregations to engage in some personal discernment on their own and then present themselves to the bishop during the worship service for a ritual of empowerment. The rite itself might be the renewal of baptismal vows or a variation of it (the diocesan liturgical commission will be at work at providing models).

I have done this a few times at a rector's request, and I have certainly been empowered as I witnessed people giving notice of their faith (or their struggle with their faith) to themselves, to God and to their community – and at the same time demonstrating a commitment to living out that faith in the world.

Which in turn engages the world. In the customary that outlines my intentions for an Episcopal visit, I have indicated that at some

point during the visit I will want to at least walk to the edge of the church property – if not around the neighborhood. The logistics of this will vary according to season and location, but I hope for the symbol to be clear, to the congregation and to the wider community: that the church engages the world; that our congregations are not islands in the community, but centers of hope and justice for the community.

The rite in the church – and the rite outside the church – will be woven into my visitations. Some will want to participate; some will want to ponder their level of participation or observation; and some may think that this is all a rather silly ecclesiastical enterprise. All of these responses need to be honored. But I can witness to the power of symbol – and how it gathers up our souls to be transformed by the power of Christ and then how our souls become more deeply committed to that presence and power.

My hope is that congregations will not wait two and a half years until the bishop comes to engage in these rituals, but will develop a regular symbolic practice of empowering people and engaging the world – which, in turn, releases imagination and commitment for hands-on ministry. And that can serve as a catalyst for hope – which, as defined by Christian activist and evangelist Jim Wallis, is believing in spite of the evidence and then watching the evidence change.

Mark M. Beckwith

Declaración de la misión de la Diócesis, una llamada a cada uno

Translated by the Rev. Ruben D. Jurado
Commission on Hispanic/Latino Ministry

Como Diócesis, nosotros tenemos una nueva declaración de la misión:

- Equipando las congregaciones...
- Involucrando a las personas comprometiéndose en el mundo ...con la esperanza y la justicia de Jesús.

Verán esta declaración en nuestras comunicaciones y publicaciones. La tenemos impresa en camisetas, ya los miembros diputados a la Convención Nacional las vistieron orgullosamente este verano pasado.

La sabiduría de esta declaración es que capta el carácter distintivo de quienes somos,

hemos sido y seremos como fervientes cristianos en esta maravillosa y única porción de la viña de Dios llamada la Diócesis de Newark. El propósito de esta declaración es servir como una versión moderna de una plomada de la cual hablé por primera vez el profeta Amós. (Amos 7:8): Que todo nuestro trabajo como Diócesis será alineado con nuestras palabras. Y, si el trabajo, por cualquier razón, no está alineado con la declaración de la misión; lo revisaremos o lo dejaremos ir.

La presentación de la declaración de la misión ya está teniendo un efecto en aquellos de nosotros cuyo ministerio está basado en las oficinas de la Diócesis. Mientras que siempre se ha entendido que quienes ahí trabajan están para equipar las congregaciones, ahora somos más claros e intencionados al respecto. Ofrecemos apoyo, guía, retos, sabiduría y visión. La cooperación de todos trabajando juntos produce la esperanza y justicia de Jesús. Nos convertimos en catalizadores para la acción.

La declaración de la misión ha enmarcado mi pensamiento mientras comienzo la segunda ronda de visitas a las congregaciones. Yo puedo ver más claramente que la visita del Obispo es en sí misma un ejercicio de equipar las congregaciones y, en consecuencia, ha enmarcado nuestro tiempo juntos.

En lo concerniente a involucrar a las personas: He presentado una oportunidad litúrgica para que las personas en las congregaciones se comprometan en un discernimiento propio y luego se presenten ante el obispo durante el servicio para un rito de involucrarse. El rito pudiera ser la renovación de las promesas bautismales o una variación de este (La comisión diocesana de liturgia trabajara

para proveer modelos).

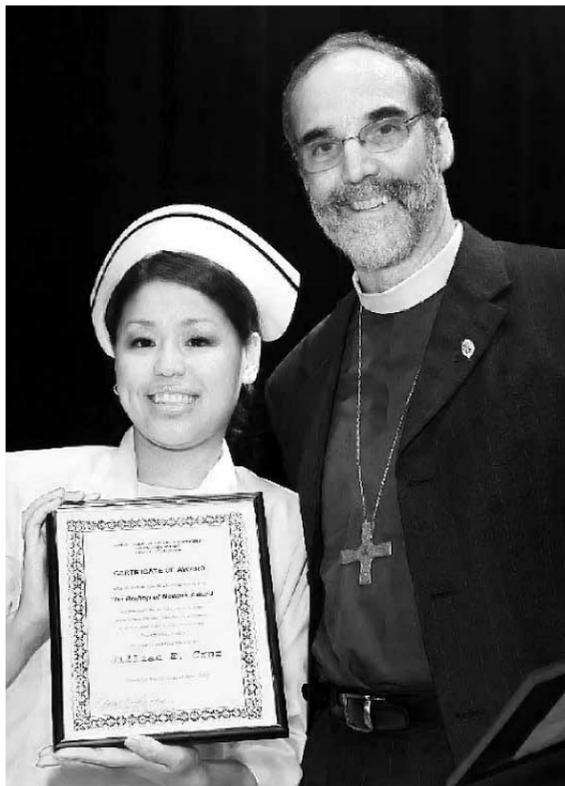
He hecho esto unas pocas veces a petición del párroco y Yo mismo ciertamente he sido involucrado al ser testigo de las personas dando razón de su fe (o de sus luchas con su fe) para con ellos mismos, para con Dios y para con sus comunidades; y, al mismo tiempo, demuestran una resolución para vivir esa fe en el mundo.

Lo que a su vez compromete el mundo. En el proceso acostumbrado de las delineaciones generales para la visita episcopal, he indicado que en algún momento durante mi visita quisiera por lo menos caminar al borde de la propiedad de la iglesia; sino alrededor del vecindario. Los detalles de esto variarían de acuerdo con la estación y el lugar; pero espero que este símbolo sea claro para la congregación y para la comunidad: Que la iglesia se compromete con el mundo; que nuestras congregaciones no son islas en la comunidad sino centros de esperanza y justicia para la comunidad.

El rito en la iglesia y fuera de la iglesia será entrelazado durante mis visitas. Algunos querrán participar, algunos otros querrán examinar su nivel de participación o de observación y algunos pensarán que esto es más bien algo absurdo de la empresa eclesiológica. Todas estas respuestas necesitan ser respetadas. pero yo puedo dar testimonio del poder del símbolo y de como junta nuestras almas para ser transformadas por el poder de Cristo y luego como se envuelven más profundamente en esa presencia y poder.

Mi esperanza es que las congregaciones no esperaran dos años y medio hasta que el obispo venga para comprometerse en estos rituales, pero que se vuelvan una práctica regular simbólica de involucrar la gente y de comprometerse con el mundo; lo que, a su vez, pone a funcionar la imaginación para el ministerio práctico. Eso puede servir como un catalizador para la esperanza, la cual, definida por el activista y evangelista cristiano Jim Wallis, es creer a pesar de la evi-

Mark M. Beckwith



Graduation day

Bishop Mark Beckwith presented the Bishop of Newark Award to Jillian E. Cruz during commencement at the Christ Hospital School in Jersey City, which graduated 59 students in June.

The VOICE

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Pledge income lags as budget process begins

Task force considering options for congregational pledge formula

By Sharon Sheridan

As the Diocese of Newark began its 2010 budgeting process a year after financial crisis slammed the global economy, diocesan expenses were on target for the year and investments performing as projected, but congregational pledge payments were lagging, Chief Financial Officer Richard Graham reported.

It remained too soon to identify specific effects on the diocese from cuts to the overall Episcopal Church triennial budget, passed by General Convention in July, according to Graham and Bishop Mark Beckwith. The diocese, meanwhile, is up to date on 2009 monthly payments to the church and committed to paying its unpaid 2008 pledge, Graham said. A diocesan task force also is examining the current congregational pledge formula and whether it should change.

The diocese has received \$1.15 million out of \$2.29 million in projected pledges for the year, Graham said in mid-September. "Our pledges were below expectations in August, and we are down for the year overall."

"There are 13 congregations that have paid less than 25 percent [of their pledge] as of August," he said. "Overall, we're about \$370,000 below where we'd like to be for pledges for the year. Some of that is made up the following year. It clearly makes the last quarter of the year very difficult for us."

The diocese made some budget adjustments, saving about \$5,000, and overall spent less on expenses than allocated through August, Graham said. Concerning the year's \$556,000 pledge to the Episcopal Church, he said, "We've paid it every month on time, which is good news. ... The hope is that we will continue to maintain this important obligation."

"In 2008," Beckwith said, "we had a cash-flow problem that was a surprise to us, and we didn't pay what we have pledged."

The diocese still owes \$590,000 on its 2008 pledge after paying just a small portion early that year, Graham said. "Last year, we had much more of a cash-flow issue early on

... We didn't get as much receivables as we had expected from the prior year, and we had some higher expenses."

When bills came due each month, operating expenses such as payroll or required health-insurance payments had to be paid first, he explained. "We never quite had the money for [the national church payment]."

Beckwith said, "We are committed to factor into our planning going forward to pay off what we owe."

Noted Graham, "We're going to be looking to include something toward that in the 2010 budget."

Planning for 2010

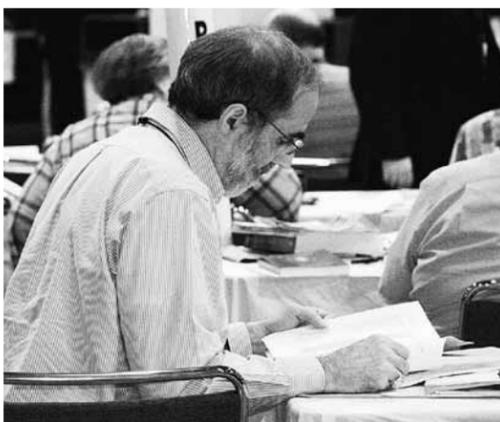
That budgeting process has begun, with diocesan departments and organizations submitting budget requests to the diocesan budget and finance committee by the end of September. "We're telling people not to ask for any more than they did last year," Graham said, noting income probably will drop a little. Those submitting budget forms were asked to describe how they would use requested funds and how that ties into the diocesan mission, he said.

The now-expanded budget and finance committee – which consists of 12 people plus Graham and Beckwith – will review the funding requests and develop a budget, presenting a draft to Diocesan Council on Nov. 11. The budget would be adopted by the council Dec. 16, presented at pre-convention meetings Jan. 5, 6 and 14, and presented to the Diocesan Convention for final approval Jan. 29, Graham said.

This year's budget process started earlier than in past years.

"We're going to try and be more analytical with the budget," Graham said. "We've left more time to be deliberative."

A challenge facing the committee, he said, is "we need to start looking at things that we have not funded because we did not have to. For example, the national church: We need to figure out how we're going to pay off [what the diocese owes on its 2008



Sharon Sheridan photo

Bishop Mark Beckwith looks over the proposed 2010-2012 Episcopal Church budget at General Convention.

pledge] over the next couple of years. We haven't funded the pension plan to the level it should be funded ... We haven't put away some of the reserves for conferences."

"If we wanted to start funding the things – not frills, but things we really needed to put back in the budget," he said, "if we assume slightly lower income and that expenses will stay the same, we're looking at a budget hole if we go down this path."

"We're trying to put together a three- to five-year [financial] strategy and budget as well," he added.

Funding formulas

As announced at Diocesan Convention in January, the congregational pledge formula also is being reevaluated.

"The process is challenging, not so much because of the financial crisis, but because there's so much exciting stuff going on in the diocese right now," said the Rev. John Mennell, co-chair of the diocesan giving task force, Diocesan Council member and rector of St. Luke's, Montclair. "We're trying to align with this great mission statement of equipping congregations, empowering people and engaging the world in the hope of justice in Christ, and how we can best align how we understand giving to the diocese in that context. Another exciting part of the

work is recognizing that whatever resources we have we can do a lot with."

"The challenging context within which we are working is an ever-shrinking diocese," he said. "Our average Sunday attendance has gone down diocesewide six consecutive years. So have the number of pledging units to the parishes. And so that trend creates a challenging context in which to work, but one that just calls us to redefine what's really important and focus on those things."

"That said, the 50-50 giving plan when it was introduced was exciting and energizing for the diocese and the world," he said. "If we're going to do something different about how we give, I would love to have it garner that kind of excitement."

Under the 50-50 giving model, congregations were asked to give half of their income to outreach, with half of that going to the diocese, he explained. The diocese, in turn, "had worked to sort of mirror that in their efforts," he said.

Since that model was introduced 25 years ago, he said, median average Sunday attendance has declined to 61, the number of pledging units has dropped and only 25 percent of churches can afford full-time clergy. The task force is looking at options including continuing the current model, introducing a straight assessment model, using a model based on the biblical tithe or adopting different percentages for different sizes of parishes, he said. "Honestly, we are not leaning at this point toward any of them. ... There's nothing even close to a consensus on any of them."

"We hope to report to convention ideas and consensus for further discernment within the diocese about where to go," he said. "Regardless of what we do with the 50-50 plan, the reality of the shrinking diocese and the shrinking contributions to the diocese means that there will be fewer resources available at the diocesan level. What's exciting is the realignment behind the mission statement and things like that, and hopefully that will continue to focus us on doing the things that are really important."

Drew hosts lectures on 'beauty and brokenness'

How do we heal and mend in ways that preserve the world's beauty and yet speak the truth about its persistent fractures? How can we release creativity to enliven the struggle for renewal? How do we piece together a world where even the most vulnerable can live?

From Oct. 20-22, the Drew Theological School's annual Tipple-Vosburgh lecture series in Madison will turn to the arts to address these questions. Scholars in theology and the arts will lead lectures and workshops on the theme Beauty and Brokenness: The Art of Repairing the World.

Keynote speakers are Danna Nolan Fewell, Drew professor of Hebrew Bible; Gary Phillips, dean and professor of religion at Wabash College in Indiana; Mark Miller, Drew Theological School director of music; poet, author and critic Alicia Ostriker, who teaches at Drew; and David Miller, retired religion professor at Syracuse University. Sloane Drayson-Knigge, adjunct for the Drew Theological School and Arts & Letters Program, will direct a play on the book of Esther from Fewell's book, *Children of Israel: Reading the Bible for the Sake of Our Children*.

The series will include an Oct. 20 reception celebrating the opening of *The Art of the Question*, featuring paintings by Samuel Bak based on his memories of growing up in Europe during the Holocaust. Worship opportunities will include Dancing the Scriptures on Oct. 21. Jeremiah Park, resident bishop of the New York United Methodist Conference and this year's Theological School Alumni/ae Association Distinguished Service Award recipient, will lead a chapel service on Oct. 22.

'We are Thankful' Potluck and Fair Trade expo to celebrate gratitude

By Jabez Van Cleef

Sometimes good ideas get hatched in improbable ways.

Director of Youth and Young

Adult Ministries Kai Alston had organized a trip to July's General Convention in Anaheim, Calif., for 13 youths, three young adults and three chaperones for six days of intensive immersion in the governance of the Episcopal Church. On the way back, she found herself having a major moment of realization: It's more productive to focus on the good things right in front of you than on the bad things that might be sneaking up behind.

"I talked it over with these kids, and we realized that you can waste an awful lot of energy on your anxiety, and at the same time you lose your focus on what you have," she said.

They decided as a group that they were pretty lucky to go to California, because not every diocese would have supported such a trip so enthusiastically. "I looked at my life, and I thought



about some of the people going broke, and I said to myself, 'My broke isn't the same as everybody's broke; I've got a lot to be thankful for,'" Alston said.

To celebrate this feeling, the group decided to stage an event that would draw together youth and adults from throughout the diocese for a huge potluck dinner, with a trade fair thrown in for good measure. They named it We Are Thankful and scheduled it for 5-8 p.m. Nov. 21, just before Thanksgiving, at the parish hall of St. Luke's in Montclair.

They set up a website for people to register what kind of potluck dish they will bring. Each dish is supposed to reflect the character of the particular youth group bringing it.

Fair Trade vendors will help attendees can get a head start on their holiday shopping. (Fair Trade promotes fair prices for farmers and other producers in developing countries.) The group also is setting aside space for various helping ministries to recruit volunteers.

Organizers include Jack Mennell, a 15-year-old St. Luke's parishioner. Although Jack attends school at Stuyvesant High in New York, he said he thinks several of his friends from Montclair will attend.

"I see myself as part of a team that brings people together," he said. "I've been contacting the Fair Trade vendors, and at the dinner I'll be waiting tables. I think a lot of the success of an event like this is being observant and finding opportunities to help."

Another organizer is Dunstanette Macauley from Newark, a 15-year-old parishioner at House of Prayer. "What I'm doing is finding people who are willing to make food and reminding them of how important it is to have enough. I think everybody will come through, but they might need to be reminded again."

The group dish registration form is available at www.youth.dioceseofnewark.org/2009Programs/09-1121-thankful-registration.pdf.

Jabez Van Cleef attends Grace, Madison.

Bergen churches expand outreach to homeless

By Sharon Sheridan

Church warden Paul Shackford still can picture the first Girl Scouts who arrived to help feed the homeless people his parish was housing overnight in Harrington Park. “They were petrified.”

One of the homeless guests at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church worked to put them at ease, asking the eighth-graders their names and joking with them. “By the time the evening was over, they felt completely different,” Shackford said. “That group came back every year until they went off to college.”

St. Andrew’s is part of a network of Episcopal churches that help to house and feed the homeless of Bergen County. Through the county’s Inter-religious Fellowship for the Homeless, St. Andrew’s and some churches shelter carefully screened homeless individuals on a rotating basis, while others provide meals and volunteer with homeless families. Christ

Church Community Development Corporation in Hackensack provides no-questions-asked overnight shelter during the coldest months for up to 41 homeless individuals. In recent months, Christ Church also took over hosting daily dinners for 90 or more homeless people, with the fellowship providing the necessary volunteers.

Those programs for the homeless are on

the verge of growing and changing, thanks to the opening of a new center for the county’s homeless, at-risk and in-crisis individuals.

“They selected us to provide the sheltering and outreach and engagement services in the building,” said Mary Sunden, Christ Church CDC executive director. Funding,



Bill Parnell photo

Volunteers from Wyckoff Reformed Church serve dinner to the homeless at Christ Church, Hackensack.

mostly from government sources, includes federal stimulus money – available Oct. 1 – primarily targeted to providing “rapid housing” for newly homeless people.

“There’s a lot of federal government money available for what are called chronically homeless people, but there’s not a lot available for newly or at-risk homeless people,” Sunden said. “Our basic goal is,

anyone who walks in, we can figure out what they need and find a match for them among the suite of services that are available.”

The new center will offer, for example, a medical and dental clinic and case-management for housing issues.

“We will be moving all of our operations into that center, and we will be able to provide the expanded version of what we do now – kind of what we’ve always wished we could do on a much broader calendar,” Sunden said. The CDC will be able to shelter people year-round instead of six months a year and will expand from offering referral services for a half-day shift four to five days a week to providing two shifts daily. The number of total beds for homeless adults in the county will be about the same, 90, but they’ll all be at one site, she said. The CDC’s \$330,000 annual budget will double next year, she said.

Churches such as St. Andrew’s, meanwhile, no longer will provide beds on a rotating daily basis for selected homeless individuals through what was called the “overflow shelter program” because the new shelter will accommodate them, said fellowship finance chair Shackford, whose church has housed 4,000 individuals total over 22 years. Now St. Andrew’s hopes to join with other fellowship members in replicating a program called Family Promise, where churches house and feed families at night

on a rotating weekly basis. The fellowship is searching for a location for a center that families can use during the day.

Adding to the need to house families is the fact that the family shelter where some fellowship congregations volunteered recently had to close following a second outbreak of bed bugs, said Marsha Mackey, fellowship executive director and a member of St. Mark’s, Teaneck. “We think it’s best that we try to look at another model for housing or temporarily sheltering our families until we can help them secure either transitional housing or permanent housing.”

Mackey estimated 65 congregations, about a quarter of them Episcopal, helped house the county’s homeless. Thousands of people volunteer, she said, including providing the meals now hosted by Christ Church that soon will move to the new county center.

The churches providing volunteers aren’t necessarily large.

At St. Andrew’s, which averages 50 to 60 congregants on a Sunday, “it’s become really the foundation of our outreach,” Shackford said. “Everything is built around homelessness for us.”

Christ Church, a founding member of the fellowship, has about 200 members, said the Rev. Bill Parnell, rector. “We’re not big, but we do big work.”

An area typically associated with high incomes and expensive housing, Bergen County may seem an odd place for so much effort to aid the homeless.

“I think that one of the issues that we see in Bergen is that there is so little affordable
See “St. Andrew’s” page 5

Teens meet for conference on homelessness

By Liz Keill

What it’s like to be homeless, to be without food or shelter, is an experience that will hit home for some area teenagers this fall. Bridges Outreach in Summit is coordinating a conference on homelessness with youth groups from area houses of worship and high schools.

Students are engaged in planning the workshops, topics and speakers for Teens Tackle Homelessness, which will occur from 3:30-7 p.m. Oct. 24 at Christ Church in Summit, said Lois Blatt, executive director of Bridges. “It’s for kids by kids.”

Bridges distributes food and clothing to the homeless in New York, Irvington and Newark. Launched 20 years ago, it makes three runs a week.

Conference planning began in late June.

“The vast majority of work is done by the students from all different communities and faith houses,” said Rabbi Ellie Miller of East Orange. “We asked the students the kinds of speakers they wanted, and they made the contacts and did the legwork.”

The Rev. Diane Riley of Apostles House in Newark, who spearheads Feed the Solution, will facilitate one panel and will encourage students to write letters to state and federal government officials.

“It’s good for the students to know they have a voice in their communities,” she said. Students will learn what brings families to shelters, the causes of homelessness and how homeless people affect a city, she added. “It’s hard not to have biases. We need to dispel some of those myths.”

She also will address issues of faith with the students: “What is my faith, and what does that mean to me? Is it our role to blame people? To judge people? Should we give somebody another chance?”

“We need to challenge those thoughts and get beyond the assumptions,” she said.

This will be the first conference on homelessness in the area, Miller said, but she anticipates it could be an annual event. “There will be panel discussions on political activism and other issues, a keynote speaker and stories from homeless friends. It promises to be an outstanding conference.”

Miller, who serves on the Board of Directors of Bridges, said she became involved six or seven years ago during a “midnight run” to New York. Her organization was looking

for homeless people when someone said to her, “Where’s your chaperone? Where’s Francis from Bridges?”

That was the first she’d heard of the nonprofit that is located at Oakes Outreach Center in Summit, she said. “It was our good fortune to find them, and they keep track of the people they see. Our youth group goes once a year.”

Many churches and temples encourage participation in Bridges through their youth groups.

Conference agenda

Kathleen DiChiara of Summit, founder of the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, will be keynote speaker for the conference. Participants can select any of four workshops:

- Professor Bilal Muhammad, an attendance counselor for the Newark public schools, will discuss “Homelessness: myths, facts, cause and consequences ... and what can you do?” Muhammad conducts training exercises to dispel preconceived beliefs and encourage a more humane outlook.
- Mayor Wayne Smith of Irvington will describe the challenges to city government and how homelessness and poverty affect a city. He has developed an Anti-Crime Partnership, rebuilt the Irvington Bus Terminal and demolished abandoned properties for redevelopment.

- Riley will speak on the topic “Take action,” finding ways to make a difference through community efforts.

- Homeless friends will share personal stories. A family-style dinner will follow.

Participants also can experience a “tent city,” lasting 24 to 36 hours for students and adult advisers. This is not sponsored by Bridges but may be done by houses of worship. It aims to help participants understand what it is like to be homeless, to lack shelter and daily comforts such as bathrooms and showers. Students will create their own living communities of boxes or tarps. Clothing, bedding and food will be donated by the community. Organizers suggest planning a tent city for Oct. 24 and 25 and including the conference on homelessness as part of the activities.

Not everyone was comfortable with the idea of tent cities, so the board decided to make the conference the focal point, with the tent city as an option for individual youth groups, said Chair Pamela Gumpot of Summit. She said Miller already had recruited 20 to 30 students for this part of the plan.

The idea came from a Paramus Catholic school several

years ago, Gumpot said. “The idea was to give kids the actual experience of homelessness by sleeping outside and having no more to eat than a street person. Then they would have to go to classes the next day.”

The conference on homelessness also will provide a training ground for future leaders, organizers said. Youth working together is one more step in providing hope to those less fortunate.

Liz Keill attends St. Peter’s, Morristown.



Birthday bounty

David Fowler, a member of St. Andrew’s, Harrington Park, asked his friends to bring a bag of food instead of a present when he celebrated his 9th birthday. Here, he helps deliver the more than 20 bags of groceries he collected to the town’s food pantry.

Mission focus

Continued from page 1

of what it looks like when this is in place, when it's operative."

The covenant developed last spring between the diocese and congregations is "very much alive," he said. "It becomes one of the first expressions of the ministry plan" for carrying out the work of the mission statement and vision.

The mission statement's impact will reach into the pews, diocesan leaders said.

"The mission statement certainly will have traction for congregations – certainly in my relationship with them, as I do my visits and so forth, but also as they focus on empowering people and engaging the world," Beckwith said.

Diocesan Council's role, Manting said, "is to conduct the business of the diocese and then assume the role of a creative body ... kind of giving life and action to the mission statement."

"They're really connecting and supporting local congregations and helping them live into this mission statement," he said. During the retreat, the groups outlined their individual identities, objectives and action plans for connecting congregations, the council and the bishop's office to give "traction and expression" to the mission statement. In October, they will revisit their identifications, 2010 objectives and action plans for achieving them, he said. "They will be accountable to each other."

"I think that's the challenge that we have before us, to bring it from being out there in the diocese to a recognition that we are all the diocese, all of us," said the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson, co-chair of the Equipping the Congregations group. "Our job now will be to incarnate it, to put flesh on the bones of the vision."

The goal is to help members of the diocese recognize "that collaboration, co-operation, is the name of what we're called to do and to be," said Wilson, rector of St. Andrew & Holy Communion, South Orange. "Our hope is that this will energize and give hope to folks who are struggling [and]

that it will energize and give hope to people who believe themselves not struggling, so that we recognize that none of us are strong unless all are strong. And so this gives us an opportunity to find our common humanity, if you will, that all of us need to be doing each of these three things in the justice of Jesus."

The "three Es" of equipping, empowering and engaging are "all intertwined in some ways," she noted. "I think that is the excitement of them, that they're intertwined and they're accessible."

Diocesan Council "clearly committed" to a process of listening to congregational leaders and hearing stories and building relationships, Beckwith said. The hope is that this will help congregations feel less isolated, he said, "that the congregations will feel that they're part of the diocese and understand how it is that we're in life together and that

the diocese is an entity that can help the congregations."

Commented Harmon, "I think every one of the action groups came away from the retreat with a goal of going out to congregations and other organizations in the diocese to listen. I know our Engaging the World group very specifically wants to do some work to train ourselves doing some active listening using the Industrial Areas Foundation model. One of our chief roles is to begin doing organizing in the diocese."

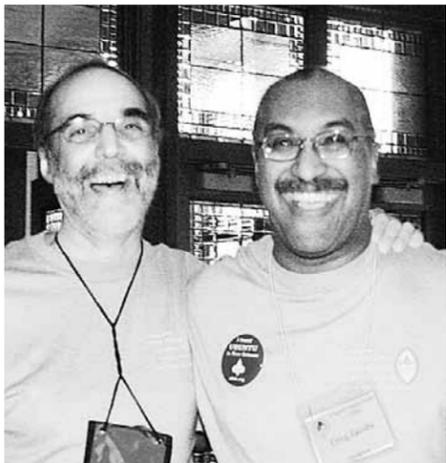
During the retreat, he said, the group articulated its identity as: We see our work as organizing for community action and change in transforming lives with the hope and justice of Jesus.

"We're talking about organizing across the spectrum, from community organizing in its usual context to a more kind of synthetic organizing within the diocese around what's actually happening," he said.

"In most dioceses," Manting concluded, "there's a real disconnect between the local congregation and the diocese. I think this is a really strong effort to break a lot of the old molds and patterns that are part of the Episcopal tradition. I think it is a real attempt to energize and refocus the diocese at all levels."

single homeless population. It's more visible in other counties."

Working with the homeless provides an education for volunteers as well as aid for the needy, Shackford said. Recalling those initially scared Girl Scouts, he said: "They learned a little bit more about homelessness, and they committed to come back every single year. For me to see them growing up through this whole process ... that's why we did it. That's why we have to find ways for young kids to get involved early and understand that they can make a difference."



Sharon Sheridan photo

Bishop Mark Beckwith, left, and Canon to the Ordinary Greg Jacobs wore T-shirts displaying the new diocesan mission statement at General Convention.

Interfaith prayer vigil seeks end to 'hateful rhetoric'

By Lynette Wilson

The character of the United States depends on how its citizens treat the most vulnerable in their midst, and in some ways that character is being tested, said Diocese of Rochester Bishop Prince Singh during a Sept. 15 prayer vigil in Washington, D.C.

Singh, other faith leaders, members of Congress and others gathered in prayer "to call for an end to hateful rhetoric in immigration debate" in the vigil organized by the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, of which the Episcopal Church is a member.

"It is a call for us as people of faith to come together in some sense of how we will reflect that character because we are a nation of immigrants," said Singh, formerly rector of St. Alban's, Oakland. He, along with Newark Bishop Mark Beckwith, was among a group of Episcopal bishops, Bishops Working for a Just World, in Washington, D.C., at the time to lobby on Capitol Hill in support of health-care reform.

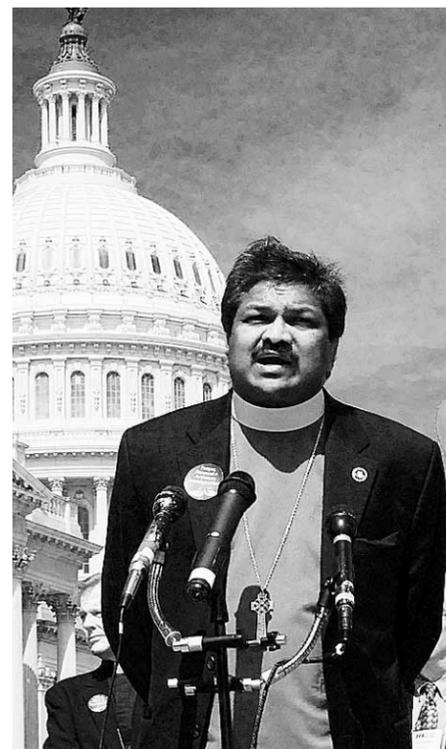
The vigil was organized in response to the Federation for American Immigration Reform's annual talk radio rally and lobby days Sept. 14-16. The Southern Poverty Law Center, a Montgomery, Alabama-based international civil rights organization, has labeled FAIR a "hate group," based on its historical connection to white supremacist groups.

"Immigrants both undocumented and documented are part of the backbone of what makes American great," said Rep. Jared Polis (D-Col.) during the vigil. "And there should be no misconceptions [about the] people ... who are lobbying today ... FAIR makes no distinction between documented and undocumented [immigrants]."

Polis stressed the need for comprehensive immigration reform, citing a recent proposal in the Senate that would make it more difficult for immigrants to gain access to health care. (In 1996, Congress established a five-year waiting period for immigrants seeking health coverage through Medicare and Medicaid.)

When President Barack Obama said during his Sept. 9 address to Congress and the nation that illegal immigrants wouldn't be given access to coverage under the current plan for health-care reform, Sen. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.) called him a liar.

"Anti-immigration groups and those in opposition to health-care reform have brought immigrants into the debate to further their agenda," said Ana White, immigration



Lynette Wilson photo

Rochester Bishop Prince Singh speaks at an interfaith vigil on immigration in Washington, D.C.

and refugee policy analyst in the Episcopal Church's Washington, D.C.-based Office of Government Relations.

The Episcopal Church, through resolutions passed at General Convention and Executive Council, works to improve the status of documented and undocumented immigrants by lobbying for the rights of immigrants and their families.

In July, General Convention adopted a resolution calling for comprehensive immigration reform that would allow millions of undocumented immigrants who have established roots in the United States, including parents and spouses of legal immigrants, to have a "pathway to legalization and to full social and economic integration into the United States."

Singh and Polis were joined at the vigil by Bishop John Wester of the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City, chair of the Committee on Migration for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Bishop Minerva Carcaño of the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church; Dale Schwartz of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society; and Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (D-Ill.).

Lynette Wilson is a staff writer for Episcopal Life Media.

St. Andrew's

Continued from page 4

housing available and that the jobs that a lot of our families are doing are very low-paying jobs," Mackey said, reflecting on the plight of homeless families.

"They're not making enough money to really be able to afford market-value housing. But you don't see them. They're considered the invisible homeless. If they're not sheltered, they're staying with family or with friends. They're sofa-surfing. They're just not out on the street, as you see with the

Clergy comings and goings

Since the last issue of *The Voice*, the following clergy have begun new ministries in the diocese:

- The Rev. **Jon M. Richardson**, interim missionary for youth and young families, St. Paul's, Chatham;
- The Rev. **Jason Haddox**, priest-in-residence, St. Peter's, Mt. Arlington; and
- The Rev. **Gregory Perez**, priest-in-charge, Trinity, Bayonne.

Also, the Rev. **Dewey Brown** departed as rector of St. Luke's, Haworth, effective Sept. 13.

Washington

Continued from page 1

their agenda," Beckwith said.

The OGR staff made appointments for the bishops to talk to representatives and senators from their respective districts and accompanied them on the visits, Beckwith said. He visited New Jersey's Sen. Frank Lautenberg, Rep. Donald Payne and the staffs of Sen. Robert Menendez and Reps. Rodney Frelinghuysen and William Pascrell.

"I think in most of our cases we were building relationships and also talking as much as we could about health care," he said. The bishops' message, he said, was that "there's a moral imperative to provide universal access to health care."

Beckwith also noted concern about the "lack of civility in the conversation [about health-care reform] and that we in the religious world can speak to that and witness to a model of behavior that affords better

listening but also can speak to hopes as opposed to the purveyors of fear – and there are lots of those around."

Besides Beckwith, Bishops Prince Singh of the Diocese of Rochester, Stephen Lane of Maine, Mark Andrus of California, James Curry of Connecticut, John Chane of Washington and Eugene Sutton of Maryland visited Capitol Hill Sept. 14-16. Close to half of the Episcopal Church's bishops are part of the Bishops Working for a Just World effort, Beckwith said.

Having completed their visit, Beckwith said, "We want to continue the conversation. We made a commitment for all of us to do this again in the spring and to invite others into the conversation as well to build up a level of awareness and, through that, identify issues that we can advocate for that are of common concern."

Visit Bishop Mark Beckwith's blog at <http://forgatesofhope.blogspot.com/> to read more about his visit to Washington, D.C.

Joy and tears

Diocesan representatives share General Convention memories

By Sharon Sheridan

Budget challenges. Legislative accomplishments and frustrations. A more cordial tone than in years past. Inspiring worship.

These were among the experiences of General Convention that Diocese of Newark participants reported back in an informational meeting July 23 at St. Agnes, Little Falls.

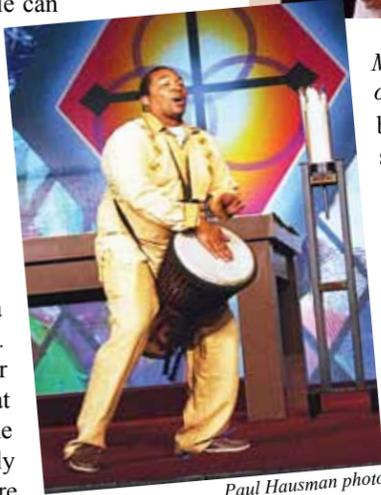
"It was particularly a joy to work with this deputation," said six-time Deputy Louie Crew, deputation co-chair. "I think our collaboration was as fine as it's been in my time there."

"I went to General Convention hoping that I might learn something about how the church governs itself. And I did," said Elizabeth Dalton, a youth participant from St. Luke's, Montclair. "I saw it in action in the House of Deputies. ... The fact that 800 opinionated people can sit quietly and listen to each other says a lot."

Several people remarked on the different spirit at this convention.

"The theme was *ubuntu* – I am because we are – and that whole theme set a tone for convention that was different than any others," said the Rev. Canon Sandye Wilson, deputation co-chair, who has served as a deputy from five dioceses since 1985.

Marge Christie, a 12-time member of the deputation who also served at two Triennial Meetings, agreed. "The atmosphere this time was so incredibly peaceful. The acrimony that was there last time was just nonexistent."



Paul Hausman photo
Drumming during daily worship.

Legislation

Bishop Mark Beckwith and several deputies served on legislative committees, while other members of the diocese followed convention resolutions as advocates for various church organizations.

Convention considered more than 400 resolutions during the July 8-17 convention and completed 325 of them – the most ever – Wilson said. Among them, convention passed a mandatory lay pension plan and a mandatory health plan for all clergy, she noted. The church also advocated humane treatment for undocumented immigrants and called on church members to work for universal health-care coverage, she said.

Crew, who chaired the Israel and Palestine subcommittee of the National and International Concerns Committee, recalled one legislative disappointment, when the bishops defeated a resolution the House of Deputies had passed on the Middle East. "I was very disappointed that we did not show any solidarity with those who are suffering in Palestine," he said.

Two resolutions garnering the most attention inside and outside convention were C056, which calls for collecting and developing theological resources for blessing same-gender unions and allows bishops to provide "a generous pastoral response to meet the needs of members of this church," and D025, which affirms "that God has called and may call" gay and lesbian people "to any ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church." D025 was seen as a response to B033, adopted by General Convention 2006, which called on standing committees and bishops with jurisdiction "to exercise restraint by not consenting to the consecration of any candidate to the episcopate whose manner of life presents a challenge to the wider church and will lead to further strains on the communion," which was assumed to pertain mainly to homosexual priests living openly in committed relationships.

Beckwith, besides serving on the Social and Urban Affairs Committee, was an active participant in the Chicago Consultation, which has worked for full inclusion of gays and lesbians in the life of the church. Consultation members met daily at convention, working to move "the movable middle," he said. "I think there was an effort to build as big a tent as possible, make it as high as possible, so as many people could walk underneath as possible."

Following passage by the deputies, D025 passed in the House of Bishops by a 2-1 margin, Beckwith said. When C056 then came up for discussion, he said, "the resistance to what we had done the day before surfaced, which was to



Sharon Sheridan photo

Members of the Newark deputation and Bishop Mark Beckwith, third from right, take time out for a photo on the floor of the House of Deputies.

be expected. People felt marginalized. ... And so we got stuck."

Beckwith and some of the other bishops met in a private session that night and again the next morning, modeling it after the *indaba* meetings of the 2008 international Lambeth Conference of bishops. "We were able to talk to each other and share our thoughts and not be antagonistic to one another," he said. "What we did in our talking is come up with a small group of five of us who took everything that was said and tried to incorporate it into a resolution. That resolution passed 3 to 1. ... There was an honoring of one another

that people who've been at this longer than I have said has not been in play before."

"I think that in moving beyond B033, we found our way back into the *via media*," said the Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton, who attended as president of the national Episcopal Women's Caucus and as a member of the steering committee of the Consultation, which advocates on justice issues. "We've been so entrenched in our sides in our own camps ... that we've forgotten that our life comes out of that middle way. I think the Episcopal Church took real leadership in getting us back on the middle way of tolerance."

Budget

One sobering part of convention was the presentation of the 2010-2012 budget, which is \$23 million smaller than the current triennial plan and has led to the elimination of approximately 40 staff positions out of 192 in the Episcopal Church's New York and regional offices.

Deputy Lyn Headley-Deavours chaired the mission section of the budget committee. "Frankly, this convention was heartbreaking ... because that's where the biggest hits were felt," she said, noting \$14 million was cut from the mission and program portion of the budget. "Actually, it's quite emotional. I couldn't tell you how much crying there was at General Convention."

While they kept in mind the mission priorities approved at the beginning of convention, she said, "we had to use a different screen than usual for making decisions about cuts." Primarily, that meant looking at "subsidiarity."

"Essentially, it means that activities should be done at the most local level that they can be done," she explained.

Among other things, the budget provided major funding for Latino/Hispanic ministries and growth and reinstated the 0.7 percent line item for the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, she said. "We funded Native Americans. We looked to fund those with the least and those with greatest need."

She delivered a two-fold message to the diocese.

"Dioceses must meet their asking. We changed the funding formula to make it ... a little bit easier," she said.

"When we approve the budget, we're approving our part of paying into that budget."

And, she said, "dioceses must step up and do those pieces that cannot be done at the [national] level that need to be done."

Christie said she particularly was dismayed by the loss of the church center's women's ministries office. "We need that shepherding and that entrée that a staff person gives."

With the staff cuts, the "institutional memory" at the church center has been compromised such that "initiatives need to come from the local level," Beckwith said. "The energy of the church is really at the grassroots. It's in the congregations. The national church will help facilitate it. The diocese will certainly help facilitate it. But the real energy comes from congregations."

Worship

Eucharist was celebrated every morning at convention, with preachers ranging from Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori to PBS senior news correspondent Ray Suarez.

"Wonderful services, great music, terrific sermons," summarized Clergy Deputy Bill Parnell of Christ Church, Hackensack.

Dalton recounted being a chalice bearer. "Giving Communion to Episcopalians from all over the world ... was incredible and empowering," she said, adding that she was "one foot away" from giving Communion to Jefferts Schori.

Several people remarked on the Integrity Eucharist, where Bishop Barbara Harris, the Anglican Communion's first female bishop, preached.

"It was so good: The music, the chorus, the sermon, the Gospel acclamation," said Dunstanette Macauley, a youth participant from House of Prayer, Newark. "It really touched me."

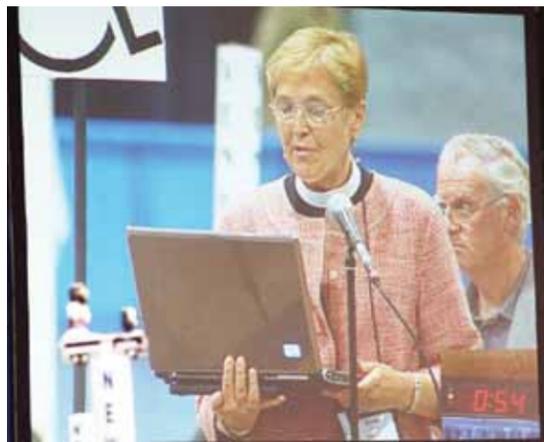
"It was particularly meaningful for me to attend the Integrity Eucharist," said Crew, Integrity's founder, who read the invocation. "It was one of the most moving of the worship experiences that we had."

The service captured the spirit of *ubuntu*, Kaeton said. She described the Gospel procession, led by a Los Angeles

priest originally from South Africa playing a drum. The procession wove in and out of the aisles around the large ballroom while the congregation joined him in chanting and Bishop Gene Robinson sprinkled holy water on the worshippers.

"As the Gospel book came around, people were encouraged to touch it," she said. "People were reaching over each other to try and touch the Gospel book, and I thought, you know, this was a moment of healing for me: that the very book which has been used as a club against gay and lesbian people had not been turned into a poison for us. ... It's the book of life for us and for everybody."

"It was the presence of Jesus," she said. "And I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be there and to be part of the Newark representation."

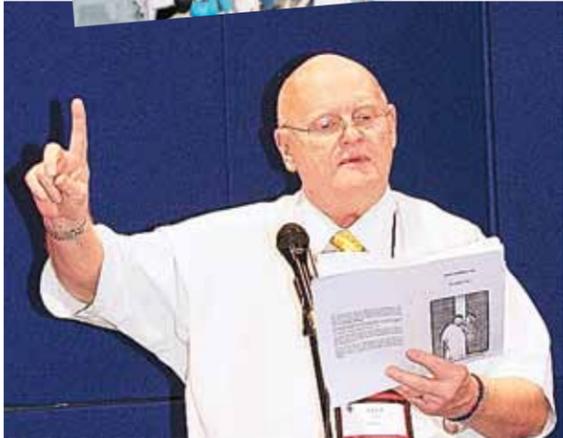


Sharon Sheridan photo

Seen on a large projection screen in the House of Deputies, the Rev. Diana Clark speaks to a resolution.



Faces of Newark at General Convention



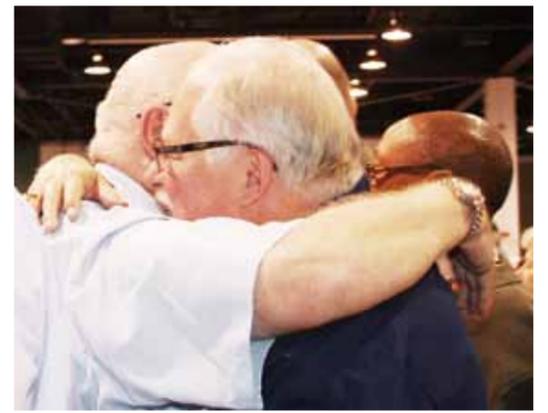
Sharon Sheridan photo

Deputy Louie Crew performs during a "poetry slam."



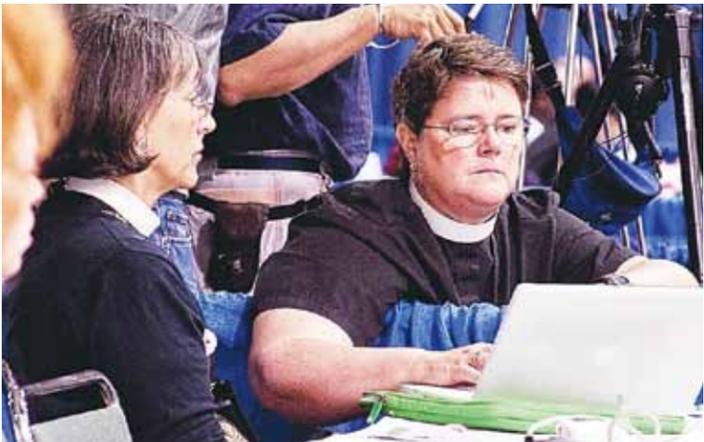
Paul Hausman photo

The Rev. Ed Hasse helps out at the registration desk.



Sharon Sheridan photo

Former Newark Bishop Jack Croneberger, right, greets Louie Crew.



Jim DeLa photo

The Rev. Elizabeth Kaeton, rector of St. Paul's, Chatham, left, and the Rev. Cynthia Black of Michigan, formerly a priest in the Diocese of Newark, in the press area of the House of Deputies.



Sharon Sheridan photo

The Rev. Donovan Cain, rector of St. Peter's in Paris, Ky., and the Rev. Megan Sanders, port chaplain at the Seamen's Church Institute in Port Newark.



Sharon Sheridan photo

The Rev. Eleanor Francis Reynolds of the Community of St. John Baptist, Mendham, and the Rev. David Bryan Hoopes of the Order of the Holy Cross.



Sharon Sheridan photos



Paul Hausman photo

Left, Youth chaperone Tim Wong of St. Paul's, Chatham, and teen Esther Abreu from St. Paul's, Paterson. Center, Youth and Young Adult Ministries Director Kai Alston, left, with Sue Cromer, canon for youth and young adult ministries for the Diocese of Chicago, and Bill Slocum, assistant director of the Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers organization. Right, Bert Jones, Kim Byham and the Rev. Geoff Curtis on "Newark Night" at convention.

The Rev. Jon Richardson served with Integrity's legislative team.

A partial roundup of General Convention legislation

Below is an unofficial, unaudited, abbreviated summary of resolutions passed by both the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies at General Convention. Episcopal News Service staff culled it from the General Convention Office's searchable legislative tracking website <http://gc2009.org/ViewLegislation>.

Anglican Communion/Covenant

Commend the proposed Anglican covenant to dioceses for study and comment with dioceses reporting to Executive Council; call for the council to report to the next convention with draft legislation concerning the church's response to a covenant (D020).

Acknowledge that the baptized membership of the church includes same-sex couples living in lifelong committed relationships; recognize that gay and lesbian people in such relationships respond to God's call to ministry including ordained ministry and that this call is a mystery the church attempts to discern through the discernment processes in accordance with the *Constitution and Canons*; acknowledge that Christians disagree about some of these matters (D025).

Budget

Reaffirm commitment to the U.N. Millennium Development Goals as a primary mission priority through 2015 (D019).

Adopt as 2010-2012 budget/mission priorities: networking the members of the body of Christ, alleviating poverty and injustice, claiming our identity, growing congregations and the next generations of faith, strengthening governance and foundations for ministry (D052).

Adopt unified 2010-2012 budget of \$141,271,984 (D067).

Canons/Constitution

Amend Canon 1.20 to state that the Episcopal Church has a relationship of full communion with the Northern and Southern provinces of the Moravian Church in America (A073).

Establish a mandatory lay employee pension plan (A138).

Establish a denominational health insurance plan (A177).

Christian Formation

Adopt the *Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation* and encourage dioceses to formulate a strategy for lifelong Christian formation (A082, A083).

Church Calendar

Approve commemorations of Harriet Bedell, James Theodore Holly, Óscar Romero and the Martyrs of El Salvador, Tikhon, Vida Dutton Scudder and Frances Joseph Gaudet to be entered in the Calendar of the Church Year and in future revisions of *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints* (A095).

Approve for trial use the revised and additional commemorations and propers in *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints* (A096, A097).

Call upon the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) to add Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall to the church calendar (B020).

Evangelism/Church Planting

Direct the Center for Evangelism and Congregational Life to create a toolkit to equip congregations and dioceses to engage in culturally appropriate evangelism and mission (A066).

Affirm Executive Council's and the House of Bishop's commitment to implement "The Episcopal Church's Strategic Vision for Reaching Latinos/Hispanics in the United States" (D038).

Health Care

Urge passage of federal legislation establishing a "single payer" universal health-care program; call for a federal law by the end of 2009 guaranteeing adequate health care and insurance for every citizen (D048, D088).

Immigration

Advocate for, among other immigration issues, a return of congressional consideration and implementation of comprehensive reform (B006).

Assure fairness in immigration and specifically provide immigration equality for same-gender couples (D076).

International Concerns

Urge continued advocacy and prayer for peace with justice in Sudan and for an end to the U.S. embargo against Cuba (A033, A034, D007).

Urge all to pray, especially in Advent and during the Christmas season, for the wall around Bethlehem and all other barriers to come down (A037).

Urge dioceses to support Anglican Communion dioceses struggling with gang activities; urge the U.S. government and United Nations

See "Legislation" page 8

Share and share alike in District 8

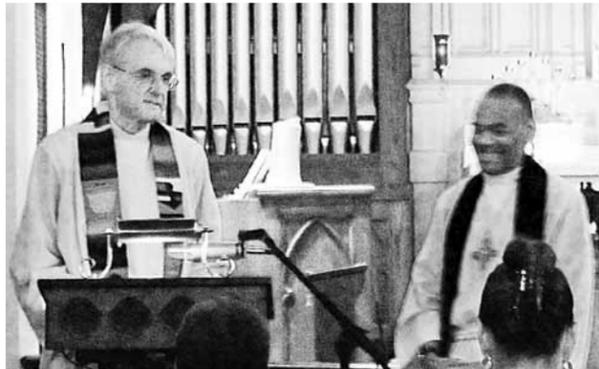
by Bill McColl

Gillian Newell, warden at Good Shepherd Church in Fort Lee, was frenetically bouncing around the parish hall, smiling and hugging parishioners after the 10 a.m. service Aug. 30.

"This is a first step," she said. "People were very excited about it."

Newell was referring to her church hosting this summer's shared-ministry program with District 8 neighbors All Saints in Leonia and Trinity in Cliffside Park. The program was devised earlier this year by the clergy of the three churches and presented to the wardens as a way to get the congregations to know each other better, with the added benefit of helping each church "cover" during clergy vacations.

More than 50 members of the three parishes gathered at



Shawn Condon photos

The Rev. Dean Weber of All Saints, Leonia, and the Rev. Willie Smith of Trinity, Cliffside Park, at the service at Good Shepherd, Fort Lee.

Good Shepherd, with the Rev. Dean Weber of All Saints and the Rev. Willie Smith of Trinity leading the service while Good Shepherd's rector, the Rev. Allison Moore, was away. A similar number turned out at All Saints on July 19 when the program kicked off during Weber's month-long retreat. A third service is scheduled for Trinity in October.

"I thoroughly enjoyed both services and thought them a great success so far," Newell said.

As part of the "shared" aspect of the program, members of the visiting congregations participate in the readings and Communion.

Along with being in a new venue, congregants of the two other churches get to worship in different ways. Good Shepherd embraces more inclusive language, Trinity uses incense, and All Saints' parishioners hold hands during the *Lord's Prayer*, Smith noted. "This is an educational experience."

Newell agreed. "We all learn a lot from different services from different churches."

Weber and Smith each said they were pleasantly surprised at how positive the response had been, crediting the clergy and lay leaders of each parish for presenting the program in a way that eased any fears.

"Folks don't make changes unless they have faith in their leaders," Smith said. "And the leaders helped make a difference."

"We're doing this as a shared ministry," added Weber. "We're not doing this with an eye towards a merger."



Parishioners from three parishes mingle at the shared ministry service at Good Shepherd, Fort Lee, on Aug. 30.

Like Newell, Weber is excited about where these initial steps will take them.

"Seeds have been planted," he explained. "We will continue to meet and discuss what further might be accomplished."

Smith is also optimistic.

"It takes us from 'mine' to 'ours,'" he said. "What's next, we don't know. That's the exciting thing."

And Smith and Weber spoke in unison when asked what advice they had for other congregations considering whether to explore the possibility of shared ministry: "Do not be afraid."

To read more about shared ministries, see *The Canon's Comments*, page 11.

Bill McColl attends All Saints, Leonia.

Diocesan roundup

Planned-giving seminars

Jim Murphy of the Episcopal Church Foundation will facilitate seminars on planned giving for clergy and lay leaders interested in taking the mystery out of planned giving for their congregations. Participants will learn how planned giving differs from annual stewardship and capital campaigns and how a congregation can build endowment funds.

Upcoming dates are Oct. 20, 7:30 p.m., at St. Agnes, Little Falls, and Nov. 3, 7:30 p.m. (evening prayer at 7 p.m.), at Messiah, Chester. RSVP to Murphy at jmurphy@episcopalfoundation.org or 800-697-2858 by one week before the session.

Cathedral Evensong

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark will present its first Women's Day Evensong at 3 p.m. Oct. 11. The service will celebrate the first female bishop in the Anglican Communion, Barbara Harris, and cathedral Dean Susan Keller, the first African-American female dean in the Episcopal Church. Harris, retired suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts, will preach.

DIT changes

Diocesan Investment Trust Vice President Bill DuBose has retired after serving more than 25 years on the DIT Board. Mark Dadd, a long-time board member and retired chief economist of AT&T, is the new DIT vice president.

Mailing updates

Congregations are reminded to update their *Voice* mailing lists, recently sent from Redmond Press, so that all members of the diocese can receive the diocesan newspaper regularly and without delay. This also will help the diocese, as papers returned because of faulty addresses are costly.

Interfaith forum

Atonement, Tenafly, will host *Stories of Faith: Living in the Present with the Wisdom of the Past*, a Christian-Muslim forum, at 7 p.m. Nov. 4. Christian and

Muslim presenters will talk about how stories, especially those of the saints, inspire faithful people in their daily lives. Time for both Muslim and Christian evening prayers, questions, socializing and refreshments will follow the presentations.

The Diocese of Newark has been a co-sponsor of the North Jersey Christian-Muslim Project since 1998. The project presents at least two forums each year, one in the fall at a Christian place of worship and one in the spring at the Islamic Center of Passaic in Paterson, as well as an annual teen forum. For more information, contact the Rev. Lynne Bleich Weber, diocesan ecumenical and inter-religious officer, at lynne.weber@verizon.net.

North Porch

The North Porch Women and Infants' Center will host its annual Tea and Toy Fest from 2:30-4:30 p.m. on Nov. 22 at Episcopal House in Newark.

Children's Sabbath

Oct. 16-18 marks this year's Children's Sabbath weekend, whose theme is *Create Change for Children Today: Bring Hope and a Better Tomorrow*. A resource manual is available for download at www.childrensdefense.org under "child advocacy resources." It contains prayers, readings, sermon resources, a sample multi-faith service, reproducible bulletin inserts, a reproducible seven-day booklet for reflection and prayer, discussion guides and lesson plans, planning suggestions, ideas for promoting Children's Sabbath weekend activities and a primer on children's concerns to help members of a faith community better understand the problems facing children and what they can do about them. For more information, contact Kitty Kawecki, diocesan director of resources and training, at 973-430-9902 or kkawecki@dioceseofnewark.org.

Christophany

Sixth- through eighth-graders are invited to attend the next Christophany

program Oct. 23-25 at St. Luke's, Montclair. Registration costs \$60 (scholarships are available upon request). Deadline is Oct. 9. For details, visit <http://youth.dioceseofnewark.org/> or contact Kaileen Alston, director of youth and young adult ministries, at 973-430-9991 or kalston@dioceseofnewark.org.

Teacher training

A teacher training day, *Equipping the Saints - Sunday School has Started... Now What?*, will be held at Episcopal House in Newark from 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Nov. 14. The event will include workshops and a chance to visit the Bishop Anand Resource Center. Registration is required and costs \$10 per person. Contact Kitty Kawecki at kkawecki@dioceseofnewark.org or 973-430-9902 for more information.

Care packages

Churches are asked to send mailing addresses of college students from their congregations and of anyone they know who is serving in the military to Kaileen Alston, director of youth and young adult ministries, so she may send them care packages and cards prepared by the youth ministry. Contact her at 973-430-9991 or kalston@dioceseofnewark.org.

Oasis forum

The Oasis will present an adult forum on marriage equality - *A Not-So-Civil Union: Why Civil Unions Are Not Working in New Jersey* - from 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Oct. 25 at St. David's, Kinnelon. The program will begin with a short DVD from Garden State Equality about civil union inequality. Keynote speaker will be Matthew Piermatti, Esq. An open discussion will follow.

Vocare

Those aged 19 to 30-something are invited to attend *Vocare 6*, a renewal weekend, Jan. 8-10 at Christ Church, Short Hills. Registration fee is \$45, with scholarships available. Forms are available at www.vocarenewarknj.com/register.

Legislation

Continued from page 7

to extend international refugee conventions and national immigration norms to victims (A043).

Ask for specific actions for reconciliation in Honduras (B031).

Support legislation that extends cancellation of debt to heavily indebted impoverished countries that have not qualified under existing international agreements (D017).

Express solidarity with the Church of Pakistan and the whole Christian community in Pakistan; facilitate a visit to the United States of one or more Pakistani Christians (D084*).

Liturgy

Authorize use of *Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes* with changes (A088).

Authorize new commons for inclusion in *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints (Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2009)* (A099).

Encourage dioceses, congregations and individuals to remember and support Episcopal Relief and Development during Lent through prayer and a special offering (A178).

Direct SCLM, in consultation with the House of Bishops, to collect and develop theological and liturgical resources for same-gender blessings and report to the next convention (C056).

Direct SCLM to develop liturgical resources to observe the loss of a companion animal and report to the next convention (C078).

Poverty/Economic Justice

Establish a community-development initiative in Native people's communities and identify key advocacy issues with Executive Council to report to the next convention a strategic plan for establishing domestic development programs; plan to address domestic economic-justice issues (A155, C049).

Reconciliation

Urge continued participation in formal reconciliation training (A068).

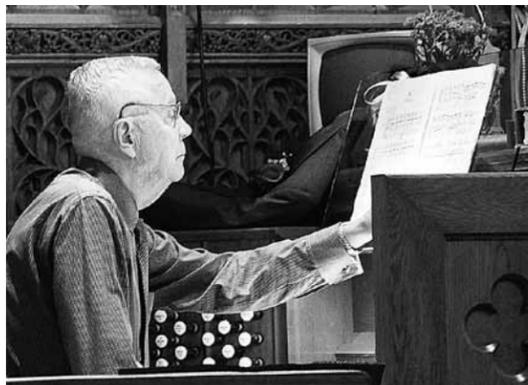
Invite the church to use Lent 2010 for penitential reflection on the brokenness of the global economic order and its reformation (D018).

Youth

Encourage congregations to include on vestries or bishop's committees a seat for people ages 16-18 with voice and vote except as prohibited by civil law (D065).

* The 2010-2012 budget does not include funding for this resolution.

Musical anniversary



On Sept. 20, St. Luke's, Montclair, celebrated the 40th anniversary of Music Director Charles Hunter, shown at left. Nearly 50 voices joined the choir that day, made up of former and current choir members. Below, from left, the Rev. John Mennell, St. Luke's rector, and Bishop Herbert Donovan, rector emeritis, congratulate Hunter.

Photos by Harry D. Mayo III



Obituary

The Rev. Daniel Kilmer Sullivan, 81, of Bear Creek, Pa., former rector of Grace Church, Nutley, died Sept. 3 of a staph infection at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital in New London, Conn., where he had been visiting relatives.

He was rector at Grace Church from 1966 to 1972. During his years in the Diocese of Newark, he was also a chaplain at Clara Maass Hospital in Belleville and served on the diocesan Department of Urban Work.

Sullivan is survived by his wife of 52 years, Adele Olmstead Sullivan; a son, Mark; daughters Louise and Andrea; and a brother. Memorial donations may be made to Reach Inc., St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 35 S. Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701.

Brueggemann

Continued from page 1

modern-day prophet," said Bishop Mark Beckwith.

On Oct. 25, Brueggemann will outline how lessons in the Old Testament can be relevant to people's lives today. At the clergy conference – an annual gathering of all clergy working in the diocese for continuing education and strengthening the bonds of collegiality – he will reflect on biblical texts dealing with the return from exile and their connection to our contemporary situation.

For the clergy, Beckwith said, "There's a sense that, coming out of the recession ... how do we comport ourselves as religious communities, and what can the texts teach us?" For the laity, he said, Brueggemann will discuss texts to discern the "giftedness" of who we are and how to engage in communities in the church and where we live.

The Oct. 25 event came about as a result of the new diocesan mission and developing vision and the recently created "covenant" between individual congregations and the diocese, said Kitty Kawecki, director of resources and training for the diocese. The covenant challenges all diocesan congregations to be vibrant, life-giving faith communities that proclaim the gospel and make it relevant to their unique environments, she said.

Discernment will be a key theme of Brueggemann's discussion.

"We need to develop ways to identify how we are being called to minister, not just as individuals, but as a community," said Kawecki. "Discernment is a method for us to get to the core of what we are called to do and to be. For the diocese and congregations to support one another and live into our covenant, we [the community] need to know who we are and to recognize our strengths and our weaknesses."

The diocesan mission statement on

discernment includes these tenets:

- We must discern ways to use our individual and congregational gifts.
- If we have a gift, let us share it with others to empower them.
- When people are empowered and work to enhance and strengthen their congregation/community, suddenly the congregation is equipped with tools that allow it to move beyond the physical walls of the church.
- When a congregation is engaged beyond its immediate community, it begins to engage the world.

"Discernment is exploring and hopefully discovering how God is at work in your life and the life of your congregation and community," said Kawecki. "It is how you listen and respond to the call as well as how to let go of preconceived ideas and old models so that you can be open to new possibilities."

Following the keynote address, individuals will be encouraged to stay for dinner and participate in a guided table conversation. The guided conversation will center on two points:

1. Explore ways individuals can begin to create a culture of call in their congregations.
2. Share ways congregants may begin to live into the diocesan covenant.

At the conclusion of dinner, a synopsis of the table conversations will be shared with all attendees to identify workshop themes that will help to stimulate the planning of a Day of Discernment for the spring.

All diocesan congregants are welcome; 125 guests can be accommodated for dinner. Registration is required. The registration form is accessible from the diocesan website scroll (www.dioceseofnewark.org) or by contacting Kitty Kawecki at 973-430-9902 or kkawecki@dioceseofnewark.org.

To read more about the work of the Commission on Ministry, visit www.dioceseofnewark.org/am/voxonline.shtml.

Nominees sought for diocesan offices

The 136th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Newark will be held on Jan. 29 and 30 at the Robert Treat Hotel, Newark. Information on registration, deadlines for resolutions and matters of business, and other details can be found at www.dioceseofnewark.org/convention/.

Elections will be held for a variety of diocesan offices. The following committees are seeking qualified candidates.

A qualified candidate is a communicant in good standing who for the previous year has been faithful in corporate worship (unless prevented for good cause) and in working, praying and giving for the spread of the kingdom of God. Qualified candidates also have completed or arranged to complete anti-racism training as approved by the bishop after consultation with the Mission to Dismantle Racism.

The next scheduled sessions of the Anti-Racism Dialogues are Nov. 21-22 and June 26-27.

ACTS/VIM Board: 2 lay and 1 clergy members to attend 4 meetings a year and make 2 or 3 site visits to grant requesters.

Constitutions and Canons Committee: 10 members, lay or clergy, to review the diocesan *Constitutions and Canons* and recommend amendments and/or report on amendments proposed by others. This committee also reviews resolutions for canonical consistency and legality.

Diocesan Review Committee: 1 lay and 1 clergy members to oversee matters of clergy discipline under Title IV of the canons of the Episcopal Church.

Ecclesiastical Court: 1 clergy member for the Class of 2014 and 1 lay and 1 clergy member for the Class of 2013 to serve as judges in the event of a trial of this court, which functions at the time of presentment and trial of a priest or deacon in the diocese as described in Canons 17 and 18.

Standing Committee: 1 lay and 1 clergy member for the Class of 2014 and 1 clergy member for the Class of 2012. The

committee is the bishop's council of advice and the ecclesiastical authority when no bishop is in charge. It also oversees the approval of leasing and sale decisions of parish properties; votes on ordination candidates; and votes to approve the election of bishops in other dioceses.

Trinity & St. Philip's Cathedral Chapter: 1 lay and 1 clergy members to assist with regulating, managing and administering temporal affairs of the cathedral.

Trustees of the Episcopal Fund & Diocesan Properties: 1 member, lay or clergy. The trustees hold title to and administer the funds and real estate for the benefit of the diocese. The trustees administer all real and personal property and endowment funds of aided parishes and incorporated missions. Candidates must live within the diocese.

Secretary of Convention: a communicant in good standing. The secretary also serves as a secretary of Diocesan Council, gives notice of all conventions, takes minutes of convention proceedings, preserves convention journals and records, attests to the public acts of the convention and performs other services as prescribed by the canons or the convention.

Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer: communicants in good standing to submit a statement of diocesan accounts to each annual convention. The assistant performs duties as assigned by the treasurer.

Additional nomination information and forms are available on the website or by contacting Nominations Chair Naomi Horsky at 973-827-5085 or horskyn@wpunj.edu or Vice Chair Ibbie Cherevko at 862-226-2350 or issiecher@yahoo.com or Secretary of Convention Michael Francaviglia at 973-430-9919 or mfrancaviglia@dioceseofnewark.org.

The committee seeks diversity in the slates of candidates with regard to race, age (16+), gender, sexual orientation, physical disabilities, economic backgrounds and theological viewpoints.

Communications director to help tell church's story

Nina Nicholson of Maplewood joined the diocesan leadership team at Episcopal House as director of communications and technology on Sept. 1.

She will work to communicate the diocesan mission, including developing a media strategy for the bishop, diocese and congregations; creating a "brand" consistency that will be reflected in diocesan Internet and regular communications; and implementing new technologies such as blogs, Facebook, webcasts and video for the diocese and its commissions and congregations. She also will be responsible for computer operations at Episcopal House in Newark and will assist the staff in developing best practices in the use of technology.

The creation of the new position followed discussion among the bishop, diocesan staff and consultant David Manting after Canon Carter Echols left the diocese to work for Bread for the World at the end of 2008. They decided to commit to develop communications further both within and beyond the diocese, with an emphasis on utilizing evolving technologies.

A communications director can help



Nicholson

congregations and individuals as well as the diocese tell their stories "to each other within the Episcopal Church but, more importantly, to tell our story to people who are not in the Episcopal Church about who we are and why we're here and where we're headed and the work that we do and the ministry that we

do," said Bishop Mark Beckwith.

Previously, Nicholson served five years as parish administrator at Grace Church in Madison. She is a long-time member of St. George's in Maplewood, where she has designed and managed the website and reinvigorated the communications committee. She also is a member of the Diocesan Technology Committee and has helped several parishes across the diocese design their own websites.

"There are many great things happening in this diocese," she said, "and I'm thrilled to have a chance to take our light out from under the bushel."

Nicholson can be contacted at nnicholson@dioceseofnewark.org or 973-430-9907.

Youth reflect on General Convention experiences

By Elizabeth Dalton and Caroline Christie

At 6:30 a.m. on July 9, 13 high school students, three adults and three college students met at Newark International Airport. We were tired, but those awake enough were teeming with excitement. Our destination was Anaheim, Calif., for the 76th General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Kai Alston – St. Paul’s, Englewood, member and diocesan director of youth and young adult ministries – planned and led this adventure as Tim Wong of St. Paul’s, Chatham, and the Rev. Tom Mathews of St. Luke’s, Phillipsburg, chaperoned. We went with Brienna Borsi, Jack Mennell and Zach DeWalt (St. Luke’s, Montclair); Lexia Matlock (St. Luke’s, Phillipsburg); Dunstanette and Dolores Macauley (House of Prayer, Newark); Esther Abreu, Alicia Wignall and

Vanessa Ramos (St. Paul’s, Paterson); Gibson Oakley (St. Paul’s, Chatham); and Erin Smythe (St. James, Upper Montclair). Our group also included college students Amasi Kumeh (House of Prayer, Newark), Janelle Grant (St. Paul’s, Paterson) and Russell Taliaferro (St. Luke’s, Montclair), who attended the Young Adult Festival in Anaheim.

We went to General Convention hoping that we might learn something about how the church governs itself or hear from the deputies what was going on. We did so much more than just learning or hearing about it. We saw it in action.

We spent time in the House of Bishops, the House of Deputies and the exhibit hall. We sat in the House of Deputies while they were discussing various issues including B033 [a controversial resolution from the last convention]. And we sat in the House

of Bishops and heard young people from the official youth presence attest to the importance of youth involvement in all levels of the church and encourage bishops to advocate for the youth of the church.

In the exhibit hall, we got to see all the groups and funds of the Episcopal Church and learned about some of the great programs that exist. We learned

what the church was doing about AIDS and more about the U.N. Millennium Development Goals and what Episcopalians are doing to bring those goals into fruition, including NetsforLife and Bread for the World. We went to multiple hearings, including discussions on education, reparations and the resolutions intending to move beyond B033.

Between spending time at each of the houses, we still had an opportunity to learn many new things about the Episcopal Church that many of us had not known before. We learned about many of the canons, such as canons on ministry and canons on the constitution.

We often got to choose which house we wanted to listen in on. Some of the youth found the House of Deputies more fascinating than the House of Bishops. One youth said, “I liked the House of Deputies because there was more going on and there was a wider

range of opinions.” Others better enjoyed the House of Bishops because it was more intimate and relaxed.

Throughout the convention, as a group we had many opportunities to interact with other youth and the adults from our diocese as well as adults from other dioceses. Many times we would be talking, as a group, to clergy and lay deputies regarding the resolutions on discussion in the houses.

We went to the daily worship services, where the services included many languages in the Gospel readings. Everyone at convention had the opportunity to serve as a chalice bearer or communicant. Many in our group seized this rare opportunity.

The highlight of the trip for many was the service held by Integrity, which advocates the full inclusion in the church for everyone. The whole experience of General Convention taught us about the inner workings of the Episcopal Church.

Caroline Christie and Elizabeth Dalton attend St. Luke’s, Montclair.



From left, Elizabeth Dalton of St. Luke’s, Montclair, and Gibson Oakley of St. Paul’s, Chatham, chat with Doris Mardirosian of St. Mark’s, Teaneck, in the bishop’s suite at General Convention.



The group took time out for a visit to Disneyland while they were in Anaheim, Calif.

From the editor:

Some of my favorite people at General Convention never attended legislative hearings, didn’t vote on resolutions and in many cases probably couldn’t name their home diocese. They were the children of convention.

I’ve worked as a reporter at the last five General Conventions, and I’ve viewed the last four through parental eyes. I was seven months pregnant in Denver in 2000 and now often give church folks my son’s age in conventions, as in, he is now three General Conventions old.

Carl missed the 2006 convention in Columbus, Ohio, because kindergarten was still in session. One of my most enjoyable reporting days that year occurred when I hung out in “Narnia” with the youngsters in the convention children’s program, so I eagerly anticipated enrolling him in this year’s adventures, including a trip to a nearby science museum.

Beyond the cute smiles and fun activities, the children of convention display spiritual depth and curiosity. My son surprised me when he eschewed coloring during a daily worship service to listen to House of Deputies President Bonnie Anderson preach. Afterward, I asked what the sermon was about.

“She seemed to think that unity was inviting people to come and become part of a community, and a community is only a wise community when it’s ready for people to join,” he told me. “She also seemed to think that when Jesus did a miracle, he brought in the outcasts into the crowd.”

One of his tablemates did draw, choosing the *ubuntu* symbol from the convention logo as his subject. “It means caring, sharing and loving,” he explained.

A girl from Michigan, also three

General Conventions old, told me she learned about the paten and chalice during the children’s program. Taking Communion, she said, “feels good inside, that we know that God is always a part of us.”

Not all the lessons stuck as intended. One afternoon, the children learned about bishops and tried on episcopal attire. “Bishop Kelly,” someone remarked as a 7-year-old girl marched past in the exhibit hall wearing a full-size white bishop’s cope, with a 6-year-old girl carrying the end of the vestment like a train.

“She’s a princess!” the 6-year-old protested.

The church’s teens and young adults also played a visible role at convention. Above, you’ll find a column about the experiences of our diocesan youth there. The deputation of our neighboring Diocese of New Jersey included two women in their early 20s, one serving for a second time.

Elsewhere at convention, members of the “official youth presence” tracked legislation, testified at hearings and shared their views with older conventiongoers,



Paul Hausman photo

Interviewing some of General Convention’s youngest participants during one of the daily worship services.

including Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams. Two young ladies who were part of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship young adult presence composed and posted daily haikus online that captured the spirit of convention, such as:

Registration dude
Tells us we must wait ’til nine.
We stand, smoldering.

Archbishop sighting -
Photo opportunity!
Look Mom, I’m famous!

Latino outreach:
Fastest growth in the whole Church.
Why don’t we fund it?

That B033
Puts us all in a bad mood.
Let’s reconsider.

Children and youth are not just the future of our church, but part of our present.
The church is in good hands.

– Sharon Sheridan

Voicing our thanks

Thank you to all of our readers who contributed funds to help us continue to provide news and information about the ministries of our diocese and to help us to print a fifth issue this year.

Your generosity supports our work in giving voice to the voices of the Diocese of Newark, as we seek to fulfill our part of the diocesan mission to equip congregations, empower people and engage the world.

Anyone who still wishes to contribute may send checks payable to *The Voice* to Episcopal Diocese of Newark, attn.: *The Voice*, 31 Mulberry St., Newark, NJ 07102.

Shared ministry: What is it?



On May 27, the bishop and I met at St. Mark's, Mendham, with more than 60 members from two dozen congregations to hear stories about shared ministry. You could feel the energy and excitement as the participants entered into wide-open conversation about the possibilities of collaborating with neighboring congregations. At that time, eight congregations were in various stages of exploring shared ministry. That number since has nearly doubled. While the idea of shared ministry is not new, it has taken on renewed importance in light of the financial challenges facing many of our congregations.

What is Shared Ministry?

The traditional model for ministry in our church has been "one altar, one priest," with each congregation staffed by at least one full-time priest regardless of its circumstances or ability to pay the priest. Dioceses often supported this ministry model by providing funds to financially challenged congregations. Faced with dwindling financial resources, however, dioceses often have been forced to close churches. In turn, many congregations, determined to stay open, reduced clergy ministry to part-time and curtailed or eliminated programs and mission.

Asking what God might be calling their faith communities to be and to do in the face of dwindling time, talent and treasure, some congregations began to consider collaborating with neighboring churches. This concept of shared ministry (sometimes called "collaborative" or "joint" ministry) took on many expressions, adapting to the circumstances of the congregations involved.

Beyond addressing budget realities, these congregations discovered that sharing ministry addressed not having the "critical mass" to sustain parochial programs and provided the opportunity to discern gifts for ministry while inviting new leadership to play a meaningful role in an expanded community of the faithful.

Is shared ministry for you? Some congregations are not ready or interested in considering this alternative form of ministry. Among those congregations that have chosen to explore shared ministry, common motivations they have identified include:

- We want to thrive, not just survive.
- We believe God is calling us to be in community with other congregations to discover and experience collective abundance — an opportunity to do "life-giving" ministry.
- We want to share our resources and ministries with other congregations but maintain our own "uniqueness."
- We want to know the joy and fellowship of having "critical mass" to worship and do our ministries.
- We want to expand the ministry of the laity, freeing clergy to do creative things.
- We realize that we no longer can afford full-time clergy and seek creative ways to use our resources better to support our clergy.

- We recognize the high costs of church maintenance and want to explore alternative uses for our buildings and property.

Shared Ministry Options

Exploring shared-ministry options begins best in the individual congregation. When the community of the faithful recognizes and claims its unique identity, calling and resources — when it acknowledges the relationship between its hopes and its realities — it is better able to choose and commit to a model of shared ministry that works. So, while the diocese may suggest shared ministry to our congregations, there can be no "forced marriages." Shared ministry does not work well when congregations feel resentful at being "forced" to collaborate.

Depending upon its circumstances and how it sees itself in collaboration with others, a congregation might consider:

Informal Collaboration. An agreed-upon sharing of fellowship activities, educational programs, outreach/mission projects or worship.

Formal Agreement. A written agreement to share in a specific kind of ministry (e.g., children's/youth ministry), which may require budgeting and disbursing funds jointly or creating a joint entity (e.g., a community development corporation) that can receive and expend funds through a jointly administered budget.

Yoking (Cluster) Ministry. A formal covenant between two or more congregations that provides for sharing clergy services and creating a structure to manage, budget and administer the work of the shared ministry. Each congregation maintains its own life, identity, budget and property. A joint vestry and budget manage shared aspects of the ministry. The yoked congregations may search for a new priest or enter into a new agreement with the current priest(s).

Unification (Consolidation, Merger). A formal covenant in which two or more congregations agree to become one congregation, creating a new ministry and mission. The congregations' properties are deeded over to the new church entity while staff, administration and ministries consolidate. The new congregation may search for a new priest.

Starting on the Journey

Considering the possibility of shared ministry is in itself a major challenge for many congregations. Anxiety about loss of our congregational identity, fear of losing our church building and uncertainty about the future are among the formidable hurdles that we face whenever alternatives to the "way we have always done things" are raised.

Step 1 Conversation with your congregation. We recommend that, at the outset and throughout the process, the leadership (clergy, wardens and vestry) commit to open, honest and transparent dialogue with the congregation, recognizing that members' hopes, fears and discomfort must be addressed continually. Particularly as plans progress and conversations are undertaken with other congregations, members must be kept informed and given the opportunity to provide meaningful input. The need for congregational "buy-in" cannot be over-

emphasized.

Therefore, preliminary work with your congregation might include assessing:

- **Identity:** "Who are we as God's people?"
- **Vocation:** "What is God calling us to be?"
- **Mission:** "How do we intend to carry out God's plan for us?"
- **Assets and gifts:** "What gifts do we have/do we need to be faithful to our mission?"

Useful resources at this stage are our diocese's congregational growth-and-development tool, "Exploring Our Congregation's Vitality and Ministry Capacity," and our congregational consultants.

Step 2 Notify the bishop's office. Once your congregation has decided to explore shared ministry, the vestry should notify the bishop's office. A diocesan facilitator will work with the congregation as it seeks to understand and work through its shared-ministry discernment. The parish leadership, using the facilitator as a resource and guide, will lead a congregational discussion of why shared ministry should be considered, including the various options.

Step 3 Explore shared ministry. If the congregation affirms the decision to explore the possibility of shared ministry, a group of clergy, vestry members and other interested members meets with the diocesan facilitator and the exploratory group(s) from other congregations interested in considering shared ministry.

Step 4 Plan shared events and activities. Plan events to encourage members of the congregations to meet and get to know one

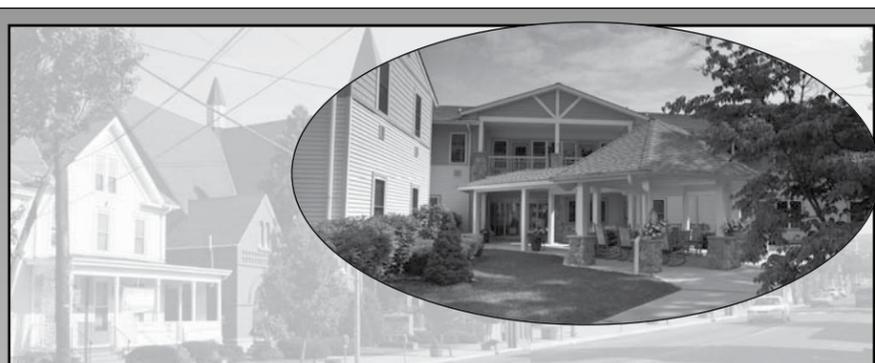
another. These can include shared worship, youth events, joint outreach projects and education/Christian formation programs.

Step 5 Reflect, evaluate and commit. The exploratory groups meet with the leadership of each congregation and the diocesan facilitator to assess what has happened thus far. Feedback from the congregations is crucial to this conversation, allowing for meaningful discernment about a mutually agreed-upon level of commitment to shared ministry and appropriate next steps.

Step 6 Create an action plan. If the leadership discerns that some form of shared ministry should be pursued, that decision should be shared first with the bishop's office, then with the congregations pursuant to a mutually agreed-upon timetable. A shared-ministry committee then oversees the process, leading to a formal (or informal) implementation of the joint action plan.

I encourage any congregation wishing to experience what shared ministry might "feel like" to begin by sharing worship or inviting participation in ongoing outreach or fundraising activities with your neighboring congregations. Shared ministry must be lived into to be truly understood and appreciated — seen as part of an evolutionary process in our church as we discover the wonderful opportunity that cooperative ministry can present. At work is the power of the Holy Spirit that teaches us that by coming together we can accomplish infinitely more to build up the body of Christ and the world than we can accomplish by ourselves.

The Rev. Gregory Jacobs is diocesan canon to the ordinary.



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



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



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

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Letters are welcome

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.

Cross Roads camp will have new retreat center

By Solange De Santis

Adults who attend retreats next year at Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center in Port Murray won't necessarily have to climb into the top bunk at bedtime since a new conference facility, Christ Center, is expected to provide more comfortable accommodation.

"[Offering] year-round retreats grew out of the camping program," said Marie Skweir, co-executive director of Cross Roads. "The [camping] facilities were retro-fitted, but we only have dorm-style facilities. There has been a huge growth in the number of adults looking for retreats, and they don't necessarily want to sleep in bunk beds and share bathrooms."

The Diocese of Newark and the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church jointly operate Cross Roads, and the development of Christ Center also reflects that partnership. Skweir and husband Andrew Molnar, who ran a Lutheran camp in Ohio before arriving at Cross Roads in 2004, are the on-site executive directors.

A significant portion of the \$1.3 million construction budget was raised by Christ Lutheran Church in Ridgefield Park, which closed, sold its property and donated \$400,000.



Lutheran Bishop Roy Riley, left, and Bishop Mark Beckwith break ground for the new retreat center.

"This is their church's ministry living on in a very real form," said Skweir, who noted that the center's name honors that church.

The Rev. Scott Schantzenbach, synod assistant to the bishop, said the camp had been "a place of some importance" to the Christ Church congregation, whose members had gone on church picnics, retreats and camping outings there. The donation helped boost the synod's capital campaign for the construction costs, he said, and was an opportunity for Christ Church to create a legacy and "really stay engaged in mission."

Ground was broken on the new center July 30, and completion is expected by mid-2010, Skweir said. "We're not actually doing bookings yet, but we have a waiting list of people interested." The center will have 16 bedrooms with private baths, three meeting rooms and a kitchen.

The weak economy affected Cross Roads' summer season, with attendance down about 15 percent, Skweir said. "We gave a lot of scholarships out; our policy is never to turn people away."

Earlier in the year, the Episcopal diocese halved its contribution to Cross Roads to \$22,500 for 2009, and the Lutheran synod cut its allocation in half, also. The 2009 operating budget, which reflects the cuts, is about \$500,000. Most of the construction costs for Christ Center have been raised, but the camp is looking for donors to sponsor furnishings for the bedrooms, Skweir said.

There are 106 Episcopal Church camps and conference centers, according to Associate Director Bill Slocumb of the Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers organization. Within the last 10 years, 13 camps closed and six new ones opened. Cross Roads is the only camp jointly operated by an Episcopal diocese and another denomination. The Diocese of Michigan contributes financial support to camps operated by the Lutheran church's Living Water Ministries and Episcopalians pay the same camp rates as Lutherans. The Diocese of Oregon has a similar arrangement with six camps in the Oregon-Idaho Methodist Conference.

Cross Roads' partnership between two denominations sometimes raises eyebrows, Skweir said. Typical



Youngsters enjoy their time at summer camp.

comments include: "How do you do Eucharist together? Lutherans and Episcopalians are different," she said. Camp programs usually don't get into theological differences, she said, but a progressive spirit has been part of Cross Roads from the beginning.

Founded in 1933 during the Great Depression, the facility was called Wo-Ch-Ca, for Workers' Children's Camp, and welcomed Christians, Jews, blacks and whites in a multicultural atmosphere. Its leftist politics – activist actor/musician Paul Robeson was on the board of trustees – contributed to its closing in 1952 in the midst of heightened fear about communism. A polio outbreak at the same time was also a contributing factor.

The Lutheran Church bought the facility, named it Camp Beisler and reopened it in 1953. In 1999, amid a renewed ecumenical movement, the Episcopal diocese joined the Lutherans in partnership, and the camp acquired its current name.

The progressive spirit exists today, Skweir said. "We certainly don't ask, but we do hire staff who happen to be gay and we do have kids [in the camping programs] who have two dads or two moms. We're still a 'radical' place."

Most people come to Cross Roads seeking the beauty and peace of hundreds of scenic acres – "rising in the morning and seeing the mist on the lake" – especially as a retreat from the busy cities of Newark and New York, Skweir said.

Information about Cross Roads Center can be found at www.crossroadsretreat.com.

Solange De Santis is a New York-based writer.



The Rev. Matt Cimorelli, pastor of Living Waters Lutheran Church in Flemington, leads a song at a service celebrating groundbreaking for the Christ Center at Cross Roads.

St. Philip's students cook what they grow

St. Philip's Academy students are trading in their uniforms for aprons to cook in Newark's first teaching kitchen of its kind, which will be unveiled on Oct. 8.

Founded in 1988, St. Philip's Academy provides urban students with strong academic and moral skills regardless of their families' ability to pay tuition. This year, as part of its EcoSPACES program, the academy is replacing traditional home economics with a sustainable teaching kitchen in its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver-designed building.

"Anyone expecting to lead a healthy and productive life in this country needs to understand the food they put into their bodies," said Miguel Brito, head of school. "The teaching kitchen allows every St. Philip's student to understand the chemistry of food, while developing lifelong skills for preparing food in wholesome and nourishing ways. EcoSPACES continues to develop new programs that change the way children live and eat."

The teaching kitchen, sponsored in part by IKEA, will give students the chance to transform foods grown in the academy's rooftop garden beds into healthy snacks.

"This kitchen has given us the expansion needed to go the extra mile when teaching," said Jen Kotkin, EcoSPACES coordinator and seventh-grade science teacher. "Not only are we reading about Native Americans in history, but we are able to sample their culinary world by cooking as Native Americans would. The opportunities are endless, and we are looking forward to the ideas sparked by the teaching kitchen."

For its opening, the teaching kitchen will feature student sous chefs, who will make hors d'oeuvres and showcase their culinary skills for invited guests.



Students at St. Philip's Academy practice their culinary skills in the school's dining hall kitchen. Soon, they'll be preparing some of the foods grown on the academy's roof as part of the school's EcoSPACES program.