



The North Carolina DISCIPLE

THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA

My
JOYFUL
NOISE

Searching for a
BISHOP
SUFFRAGAN

Has
"CHRISTIAN"
become a BAD WORD?

Campaign Concludes

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SUMMER 2012

features

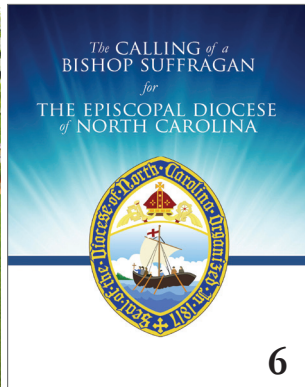
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ON THE COVER
A special thanks to St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Cary for use of their handbells. Photo by Sarah Herr.

A THANK YOU FOR SAVING LIVES FROM EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ in the Diocese of North Carolina,

Thank you for successfully leading the Diocese of North Carolina's *NetsforLife* Campaign. Your diocesan-wide *NetsforLife* campaign was a huge success because of great creativity and enthusiasm. This local, grassroots initiative generated incredible energy and funds, specifically raising over 34,966 nets or \$419,595. You also helped increase awareness about the importance of the fight against malaria and its role in our commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Diocese of North Carolina's *NetsforLife* Campaign was part of the *NetsforLife* Inspiration Fund, a church-wide campaign within the Episcopal Church to provide education, increase awareness and raise funds by uniting the church—engaging dioceses, parishes, seminaries, schools and individuals at the grassroots level.

There are a number of key individuals to thank, including Bishop Curry for his on-going partnership and support and for serving as a Co-Chair for the *NetsforLife* Inspiration Fund. Many thanks to Vice-Chairs Reid Joyner and Debra Smithdeal, members of the *NetsforLife* Steering Committee and the many parish volunteers who carried this effort forward so meaningfully.

Because of supporters like you, *NetsforLife* has delivered over 8.5 million nets in 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa since 2006, resulting in less sickness, fewer deaths and stronger communities. Combined with the community education and net monitoring work of nearly 74,000 trained Malaria Control Agents and partners on the ground, the overall malaria-related death rate fell by 45% in communities where *NetsforLife* is active. Additionally, five countries – Angola, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Zambia – have adopted aspects of *NetsforLife*'s methodology as part of their national malaria policy, and many more have solicited the program's input in country-wide strategic planning.

With your help, we are healing a hurting world and inspiring hope in Africa as we answer Jesus' call to serve those who are in need.

Yours faithfully,

Robert W. Radtke
President



The Diocesan *NetsforLife* Campaign:
34,966 nets raised.

Three more names joined the Golden Nets list (congregations that met or exceeded their nets goals):

St Timothy's, Wilson
St. Mary's, High Point
Holy Comforter, Burlington

For the complete list, visit:
<http://netsforlife.dioncmdg.org>



ABOUT The North Carolina DISCIPLE

The North Carolina Disciple is the quarterly magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. Other diocesan communication vehicles, including *Around the Diocese*, a monthly bulletin insert; *Please Note*, a weekly e-newsletter; and the Diocesan website, www.episdionc.org; are used for more time-sensitive, day-to-day news.

Contact Sarah Herr at sarah.herr@episdionc.org with any questions or feedback regarding these communications, or to submit ideas, articles and photos.



ATTENTION CHURCHES: Have you updated your member lists with the Diocesan Office? The Diocese is attempting to update the *Disciple* mailing list. Contact Scott Welborn at scott.welborn@episdionc.org for more details.

At a Glance Facts: This Magazine...

- Is printed with soy inks, which are more environmentally friendly than traditional petroleum-based inks.
- Is printed on FSC certified paper - paper certified by the Forestry Stewardship Council, an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.
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September / Fall Issue
December / Winter Issue
March / Spring Issue
June / Summer Issue

HAS

CHRISTIAN

BECOME A

BAD WORD?

Not long ago, when members of our incredible diocesan staff twisted my arm, I finally decided to join Facebook. When I did I faced a modest dilemma. In setting up the Facebook page, you have to answer questions to provide information for your wall, such as interests, marital status and religious and political views. When it came to “religious views” I almost instinctively typed “Christian,” possibly with Episcopalian in parenthesis. But I hesitated. I didn’t hesitate because I’m not a disciple of Jesus. I hesitated because, from what I can see, the word “Christian” has far too often been taken hostage by meanings that do not reflect the person of Jesus Christ or the Way of Jesus Christ I have come to know and understand.

Recently I’ve found myself in conversation and correspondence with people for whom “Christian” and “Christianity” are not positive or hope-filled words. While some of this has sprung from our recent statewide debate about Amendment One,¹ many of these conversations about Christianity transcend and predate that discussion.

One person wrote, “I didn’t know that there were Christians who were not judgmental, exclusivist and mean spirited. I don’t know if I could ever become one, but it’s nice to know that there are some.” Recently, another person who is a Wiccan wrote, “I was actually brought to tears by the fact that you are such true believers in the way of Christ. ... I am not Christian, but it is rare these days to find ones that truly walk the walk and talk the talk of the Christian beliefs.” Last January, a young pastor posted a YouTube video titled “Why I Hate Religion, but Love Jesus.” It was viewed by over 21 million people, with overwhelming positive response on the Google thumbs-up rating.

A few years ago, the Barna Group conducted

¹ For more about Amendment One, including the text of the Amendment, see pages 8-9.

nationwide surveys of young adults aged 18 to 29. The results became the basis of a book by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons titled *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity ... and Why It Matters*.

The study focused primarily on young people who have no religious affiliation (the majority in this age group) and on those of other faith traditions beside Christianity. These young people characterized Christianity as “judgmental,” “hypocritical,” “exclusive” and “homophobic.” To the authors’ surprise, however, they found that young people who have Christian affiliations also frequently shared the same perceptions of Christianity.

These are not just isolated opinions that we can dismiss as youthful skepticism or rebelliousness. Nor can we dismiss them as a matter of liberal versus conservative Christianity. These opinions point to a deeply negative perception of Christians and Christianity in our culture. And while this is a complex matter, some of this criticism, I am ashamed to say, is deserved. Many of us, myself included, must accept some responsibility for not witnessing more faithfully and effectively in our own lives to the Good News of

A stained glass church window depicting Pentecost



the profound and unswerving love of God that we have known in Jesus Christ our Lord.

This widespread view of Christianity, however, is not cause for despair. Despair is a luxury we cannot afford. It calls us, rather, to Gospel awareness and action. It calls us to live in the Spirit and to live by the teachings of Jesus. It calls us, in fact, to a new Pentecost, to a renewed Pentecost, to a Pentecostal revolution.

The Jewish feast of Shavuot, or Pentecost, originated as a celebration of the blessing of food and life in the early harvest and of God's gift of the Law, God's way of life, to Moses and the Hebrew people. The first followers of Jesus were observing Pentecost in Jerusalem when they were overtaken by the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus. As they were swept up and caught up they began to speak in languages not their own. And people of different languages, cultures, ethnicities and nationalities all were able to hear and understand the Good News of God in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:5-11).

We need a new Pentecost. We need a new Pentecost so that the Gospel of Jesus—who taught, “You shall love the Lord your God...and your neighbor as yourself... [o]n these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” — will be proclaimed and heard. We need a new Pentecost so that the Good News of Jesus — who said, “Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest” — will be proclaimed and heard. We need a new Pentecost so that the Way of Jesus — who said, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor” — will be proclaimed and heard. We need a new Pentecost.

I recently received this email from a young man I was blessed to be able to confirm a few years ago here in the Diocese of North Carolina:

“Something that has struck me since I became an Episcopalian is how few people of my generation (I am 26) know about our wonderful faith tradition and its radical welcome of all people. From my professional work to the conversations I have with my friends, I believe that today's young people are eager for the true message contained in the gospel, but they rarely hear it from the pulpit and it's even rarer they see religious figures motivated out of their love of God to take a stand for justice. I truly believe that my generation may turn their backs completely on the Christian Church if the dialogue continues to be dominated by those with a more narrow understanding of scripture.”

He concluded his letter by expressing love for the

Episcopal Church and love for those who have been or have felt excluded and unwelcome by the Church, whether intentionally or unintentionally, whether by spoken word or vocal silence. Such absence and exclusion need not continue to be the case. There is a Gospel that is indeed good news. It was Good News in the 1st century and it is Good News in the 21st century.

We need to pray for and live into a Pentecostal revolution, such that the Spirit of God that was in Jesus will sweep through us and our churches so that we live like Jesus, love like Jesus, give and forgive like Jesus — doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with our God, like Jesus. And then, maybe then, the word “Christian” won't be such a bad word. Maybe then young people, and people of any age, will come to see the Way of Jesus for what it really is — God's way of love and life.

As Peter said on that Day of Pentecost, quoting the prophet Joel, so may it be in our time:

“In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.”

(Acts 2:17-18; Joel 2:28-29)

Blessed Pentecost. Keep the faith,

+Michael

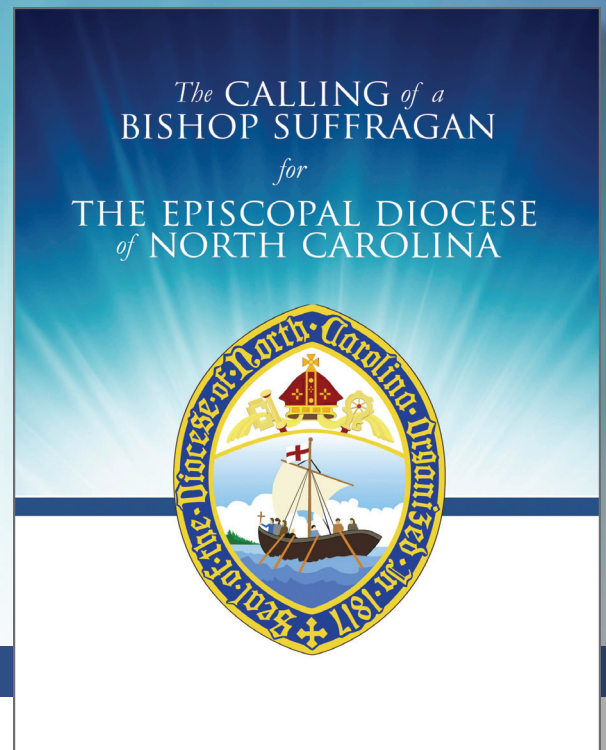
The Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry was elected 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina in 2000.



SEARCHING *for a* SUFFRAGAN

By Meg McCann

“Fill...the heart of this your servant whom you have chosen to be a bishop in your Church, with such love of you and of all the people, that *he [she]* may feed and tend the flock of Christ and exercise without reproach the high priesthood to which you have called *him [her]*...” (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 521). With this prayer, our new Bishop Suffragan will be ordained at Duke Chapel on June 15, 2013, by the Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church.



This process was set in motion in January 2012 when the Diocesan Convention approved the call from Bishop Michael Curry and the Standing Committee for the nomination and election of a Bishop Suffragan. At the same time, Bishop Curry proposed that we embark on the Galilee Initiative, saying, “The Church must go where the congregation is, not wait for the congregation to come to the Church.” We are, therefore, looking for a Bishop Suffragan who can help to implement this initiative – someone who has led innovative ministry in the community and who is excited about discerning a new way of being the Church in the World today, while still supporting the wonderful ministry of our traditional churches.

Since January, the Nominating Committee (appointed by the Standing Committee and composed of one lay person and one clergy person from each of the seven convocations, plus a youth representative) has been hard at work. They held listening sessions in each convocation to hear people’s excitement and concerns about the search

process. People across the Diocese filled out a survey, online and via paper questionnaires, to provide more details about what they think is important in a new bishop. This information, together with Bishop Curry’s ideas about the position, coalesced into *The Calling of a Bishop Suffragan for The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina* (aka the Profile), which describes our Diocese and the new Bishop Suffragan’s role.

The Nominating Committee received nominations throughout the month of May and is now prayerfully considering the candidates who have entered into this mutual discernment process. On the Feast of All Saints (November 1st), they will officially nominate at least five candidates, at least one of whom, according to the charge from the Standing Committee, “shall have had experience serving as an ordained person in the Diocese of North Carolina.” At that time, people may also nominate additional candidates via a petition process.

In early January, the people of the Diocese will have the opportunity to meet the candidates during

“walkabouts” at several locations. Delegates to Convention will then elect our new Bishop Suffragan at the Diocesan Convention held January 25-26, 2013, in Winston-Salem. The “walkabouts,” election and ordination are under the direction of the Transition Committee, which has also been appointed by the Standing Committee.

With the election of a Bishop Suffragan, we are returning to what was the typical pattern for bishops in this Diocese until a few years ago—now with a particular focus on the mission of the church in the 21st century. Since our previous suffragan’s retirement, we have been well-served by Bishops Chip Marble and William Gregg as Assisting and Assistant Bishops, respectively—both time-limited positions established to help initiate the Regional Ministry Team approach. Bishop Marble will continue (half-time) through the end of 2012 and on a more limited basis thereafter. Bishop Gregg will conclude his active ministry with us in September 2013, unless he is called to serve elsewhere prior to that time.

All individuals and congregations are urged to pray for the search process and particularly for those individuals who have offered themselves as candidates to be our new Bishop Suffragan. Everyone is also encouraged to learn more about the bishop search process by studying the material on the Diocesan webpage, especially the Profile, the “Overview and Frequently Asked Questions” and “Preparing to Elect and Welcome Our Bishop Suffragan.”



Meg McCann is a parishioner at St. Philip’s, Durham, and a member of the Nominating Committee. Contact the committee at ncsuffragan@gmail.com or Suffragan Search c/o Alice Robbins, PO Box 2135, Pinehurst, NC 28370.

TIMELINE

June 13	Completed nomination packets due by noon EST
June	Screen candidates
July 15-Aug. 15	Telephone or Skype interviews with candidates
August	Second screening; invite semifinalists to discernment retreat in the Diocese Conduct background and reference checks
Mid-September	Discernment retreat for semifinalists
November 1	Announce the slate
November 1-15	Petition period
January 2013	Walkabouts
January 25, 2013	Election
Spring 2013	Suffragan-elect comes on board
June 15, 2013	Ordination

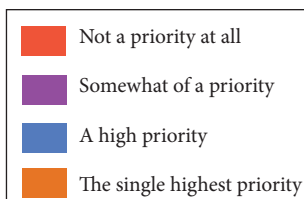
Find the latest information regarding the Bishop Suffragan Search process online at www.bishopsearch.dionc.org.



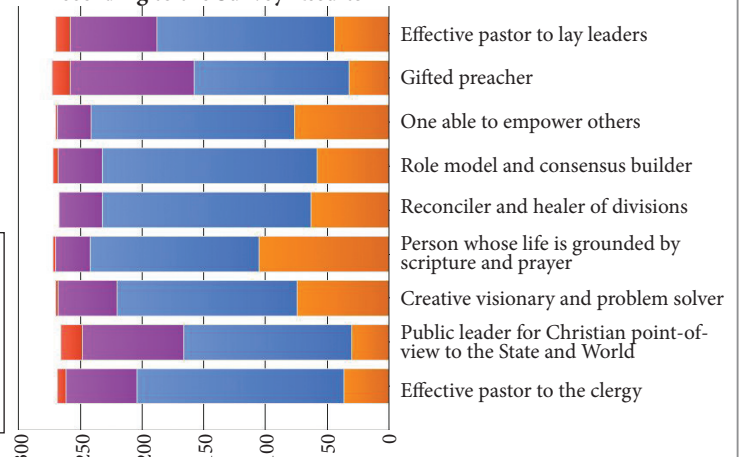
and the SURVEY SAYS

SURVEY RESULTS *at a glance*

- 76% of responders were laity
- 24% were priests and deacons
- 38% were male
- 62% were female
- 2% were 18 or younger
- 27% were 19-50
- 71% were over 50
- 52% lived in cities
- 45% lived in suburbs or towns



Priorities for the Bishop Suffragan, According to the Survey Results



*Differing views
open a way to deep
conversation and
common ground*

REFLECTIONS *on* AMENDMENT ONE

In some ways, the vote on the NC Constitutional Amendment matters very little. Same-sex partners and their children are *still* denied many basic protections in our state per existing discriminatory laws, and it remains to be seen what other safeguards will be lost and how unmarried straight people and their families will be affected. However, even without making immediate or radical changes to the daily lives of LGBTQ people, this amendment has caused a lot of hurt and division simply by being introduced into our public life. Emotionally, the amendment brings to light how we as a state, as a society, can isolate and marginalize people, sometimes quite consciously and other times without even knowing it.

Like many clergy around the Diocese, I felt called to participate in this public debate in some way. As part of a large and vocal group of faith leaders in the Triad, I decided to write a letter to the local newspaper. I was expecting a variety of responses, and so, when my letter was published, I wasn't too surprised when the phone started ringing with those who strongly disagreed with my perspective on gay marriage. What *did* surprise and hearten me was that the Holy Spirit proved stronger than the hurtful and divisive climate created by the amendment.

Though Edith¹, one woman to whom I spoke as a result of my letter to the paper, disagreed with me completely about the issues surrounding the amendment, much of our conversation focused on how this discussion made *her* feel marginalized. When people in her congregation insisted that this issue was political and had no place in church, she spoke up and argued that everyone has a responsibility to participate in public life and that they were being irresponsible by too-easily dismissing these matters as “political” and off-limits to the church. Now in her 90's, this woman admitted that she already felt pushed aside by the church's focus on younger people and shared how this discussion only marginalized her further.

I recognized in her voice the feeling of loneliness at being dismissed because I, too, have felt at times lonely and dismissed regarding this issue. I worry every time I mention my partner that people will dismiss it as an attempt to make a “political” statement rather than seeing it as a simple sharing of my life. Like Edith, I have felt that much of what matters to me most deeply gets covered over, dismissed or discussed only with great anxiety. Surprisingly, Edith and I found that this

These conversations convince me that the Spirit calls us to more than overcoming or “defeating” those who oppose us.

amendment called us into a relationship in which we talked about things that mattered to us deeply, in spite of our pain and anxiety surrounding the issue.

A phone call from Joel, who was younger and even angrier about my letter, also led to a deeper conversation about spiritual concerns. I didn't find him as easy to talk to as Edith, who spoke not only from a place of anger but also from a place of isolation and sadness. But, when Joel and I were honest with each other about where we were coming from and where our faith has led us in life, we found that we actually have a common love of God and devotion to our Lord Christ. Though the conversation was very difficult, we stuck with each other for the better part of an hour, moving beyond the question of whether same-sex relationships are as worthy, stable and deserving of state sanction as heterosexual ones. Our conversation reminded me that the Holy Spirit doesn't work through pithy quotes from Scripture but through commitment to a relationship, a willingness to tell a few stories and prayer.

These conversations convince me that the Spirit calls us to more than overcoming or “defeating” those who oppose us. What Joel and I *didn't* need was to debate about whose relationships are worthy in God's sight and whose aren't, as if this would justify us or make us better companions in the faith. We needed to show up on uncomfortable yet holy ground, to present our full selves – not watered-down versions of ourselves – for relationship, allowing the other to be himself or herself as well. We needed to be vulnerable together and discover that we are worthy together in Christ, before God.



The Rev. Audra Abt is the Assistant to the Rector at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Greensboro, and the Diocesan Grants Manager for the Jessie Ball duPont Fund. You can reach her at audra.abt@episdionc.org.

¹ These names are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of the callers.

AMENDMENT

1 On May 8, 2012, North Carolina voted to amend the state constitution to provide that marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be recognized by the state.

In the weeks leading up to the vote, the Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry signed a joint statement to clergy outlining why he and the Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel and the Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor, from the Episcopal Dioceses of East Carolina and Western North Carolina, respectively, were against the amendment.

Many congregations throughout the Diocese held public forums addressing the amendment and discussed the amendment in vestry meetings and groups. Clergy and laity throughout the Diocese participated in public discussions, writing op-eds and jointly advertising in newspapers in their respective areas.

The Episcopal Church is on record in opposition to any state or federal constitutional amendment that prohibits same-sex civil marriage or civil union (Resolution 2006-A095), and the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina reaffirmed opposition to such constitutional amendments at the 196th Annual Convention (Res. 196.9).



From left: The Rev. Canon Cathie Caimano, the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn, Bishop Curry and the Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple take a photo for the Vote Against Project: voteagainst.org.

Communities of faith were divided in their stances on the amendment, which garnered additional media attention for the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina due to the stance it took in opposition to the legislation. Bishop Curry was asked to give several interviews through Protect All NC Families, including radio, television and print mediums.

After the amendment passed, Bishop Curry recorded a final video statement, which has received over 14,000 hits on YouTube at the time this issue went to print. The statement is available in the sidebar to the right.

Find Amendment One related coverage on the Diocesan website at www.dionc.org/amenone.html.

A STATEMENT *from the* BISHOP FOLLOWING *the* PASSAGE of AMENDMENT ONE

North Carolina voters have spoken, passing an amendment to the state constitution -- called Amendment One -- which allows that "marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be recognized by the state." I, and many other bishops, clergy and laity from within the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina, and faith leaders from many traditions, opposed Amendment One. I opposed it because I believe, as the scripture says, all people are created in the image and likeness of God and that all are therefore to be accorded the rights and dignity that befit a child of God. In like manner, those who hold a very different position are also created in that image - and deserve the same respect that befits a child of God.

My concern for the hurt and harm that this amendment may cause remains. That includes hurt and harm to unmarried victims of domestic violence, unmarried couples -- gay or straight, senior couples and children. This must not be the end, but a new beginning to end any form of discrimination in the constitution of our state and to build a new North Carolina, where there is equality and justice for all of God's children.

I am reminded of the words of the late Senator Ted Kennedy, speaking after his defeat for his party's nomination for the presidency: "For all those whose cares have been our concern, the work goes on. The cause endures, the hope still lives and the dream shall never die."



A video of Bishop Curry giving this statement is available at <http://youtu.be/5j8hAgzPz7Y>.

THE GALILEE COMMISSION

pursues its CHARGE

Some days, all that I hear about the Church in the news is a steady drumbeat of doom: denominational in-fighting, church buildings crumbling over the heads of diminished congregations and, apparently, crowds of people happily outside the church walls declaring themselves “spiritual, but not religious.”

The news sounds bad. It is depressing. I am not sure what to do about it, but what I keep coming back to is that the world is changing, and the church I grew up in is changing, but God is not changing. Given that, I wonder how this news might be good news. How might these confusing stories hold God’s invitation to us? Where is Jesus calling us now, and how will we, together, follow him wherever he leads?

Following his Pastoral Address at Diocesan Convention this past January, Bishop Curry asked a group of lay and ordained members of the Diocese of North Carolina to take on these questions. He gave the group a four-point charge:

1. Study the reality of the mission context we are calling Galilee and its present and likely impact on the life, work and witness of the congregations and worshipping communities of the Diocese.
2. Make recommendations for canonical policy and other changes and practices that will foster varieties of expressions of Episcopal ways of being faith communities of worship and witness.
3. Make recommendations with regard to assisting congregations through transitions of congregational life: from birth to death and new life.
4. Make other recommendations for ways that the Episcopal Church in North Carolina can faithfully and effectively witness to the Good News of Jesus in a post-Christian, post- Christendom, post-religion cultural context we are calling Galilee.

Over the next two years, the Galilee Commission will engage in discerning how we might answer God’s call in each of the areas listed above. Our work will, of necessity, begin with the first of these charges. For the rest of this year, we will actively listen, look and attempt to articulate what we mean by the Galilean mission context, work that the Diocese has already begun in our Eastertide study of Diana Butler Bass’ book, *Christianity After Religion*.

We know that the world is changing and that the



Some of the members of the Galilee Commission gather in worship. Members of the commission include the Rev. Sarah Ball-Damberg, St. Elizabeth’s, Apex, Chair; the Rev. Robert Black, St. Francis, Greensboro, Vice Chair; Sam Laurant, Church of the Advocate, Chapel Hill; the Rev. Colin Miller, St. Joseph’s, Durham; Debbie Flynn, Good Shepherd, Raleigh; Beth Morphis, St. Timothy’s, Winston-Salem; Sarah Miller, St. Paul’s, Louisburg; the Rev. Todd Dill, St. Margaret’s, Waxhaw; the Rev. Michael Pipkin, St. John’s, Charlotte; Peter Macon, St. Alban’s, Davidson; the Rev. Elizabeth Marie Melchionna, Davidson College Chaplain/St. Alban’s, Davidson; the Rev. Barbara Platt Hendren, Grace, Clayton; Chuck Till, Nativity, Raleigh, Diocesan Council; Jeff Haas, St. Mark’s, Huntersville, Diocesan Council; the Rev. Clark French, Church of the Holy Family, Chapel Hill; and Dick Ling, St. Andrew’s, Haw River. The Canons of the Diocese are also assisting with this commission.

institutional church is changing. We know that the way things have been is not the way things are likely to be, that some of the things we have taken for granted about what “Episcopal” looks like are changing, too.

What comes next? We may not know the answer to that question, but we do know that God and God’s love for us will not change. We know that the Holy Spirit who moved over the waters of Creation moves over us still. And we know that Jesus Christ into whose life, death and resurrection we are baptized continues to call us to be his Body in the world. Knowing that, we can head together into the unknown with anticipation, curiosity and joy rather than fear. For that and for all else, thanks be to God.

Your ideas, questions and especially your prayers are most welcome. Please contact The Rev. Sarah Ball-Damberg at sballdamberg@gmail.com.

Sarah Ball-Damberg is the vicar at St. Elizabeth’s, Apex, and chair of the Galilee Commission.

SNAPSHOTS



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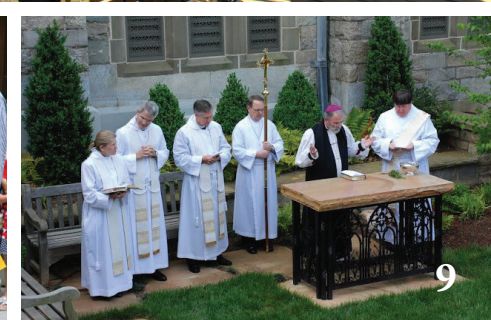
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12

1 & 2 Acolytes gather at St. John's, Charlotte, in April for the Acolyte and Verger Festival. 3. The Rev. Lorraine Ljunggren speaks at the General Convention information session. 4. The Rev. Canon Cathie Caimano applies ashes to passersby outside of the VA hospital on Good Friday. 5. The Rev. Steve Rice, Bishop Curry and the Rev. Canon Trawin Malone at St. Timothy's, Winston-Salem. 6. High school youth from Durham, Raleigh, Hillsborough and Charlotte join together to clean up a park in Rocky Mount during March's Outreach Weekend. 7 & 8 Images from Bishop Curry's May 6 visitation to Chapel of the Cross. 9. Garden Chapel Dedication at St. Paul's, Winston-Salem, with Bishop Gregg. 10. Women's spirituality day with St. Stephen's, Oxford. 11. Confirmation at Christ Church, Raleigh. 12. Christ Church, Cleveland, with the Rev. Canon Trawin Malone.

GROWING *in* G.R.A.C.E.

Program provides structure, support and love to at-risk middle school girls



By Julie Dayvault



Painting pottery during the G.R.A.C.E. Girls program.

The mission of G.R.A.C.E. is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for at-risk middle school girls. Through this program, the girls experience enrichment activities provided by volunteers and have the opportunity not only to learn new skill but also to interact positively with adults in the Lexington community.

THE PROGRAM AND ITS IMPACT

Established in 2007 by Carrie Ingram, a middle school teacher and member of Grace Episcopal Church, the Girls Receiving Afterschool Care and Enrichment (G.R.A.C.E.) program at Grace, Lexington, has been providing support to at-risk middle school girls for six years. The current program provides a safe and nurturing environment for 15 sixth-grade girls on two afternoons a week during the school year. They are exposed to new experiences and enrichment activities while interacting with caring adults who share their talent and expertise. Recent activities include yoga and spin class, knitting, baking, art, music exploration, painting pottery, sewing, drama, perfume and soap making, sign language, mosaics, painting and scrapbooking. Volunteers from the community share their talents and expertise with the girls. The program is changing the lives of these girls, the lives of the volunteers and the future of the community.

In addition to participating in twice weekly afterschool activities, the girls also travel offsite. Travel provides the girls with new experiences, lasting friendships and a broader vision of the world and of themselves. Excursions have included attending a UNC-CH women's basketball game, visiting Carowinds and watching youth theatre productions. During the summers, they have traveled to Epcot Center and the Kennedy Space Center; Appalachian State University; Washington, D.C. , where



“It has changed me because it made me have more trust in people that I didn’t even think I would talk to and [taught me] that you should always try.”



- G.R.A.C.E Girls Participant

they visited the Smithsonian Museum of American History, the Holocaust Museum, the White House and the Capitol Building; and Penn Center in St. Helena, South Carolina. A trip to the North Carolina Outer Banks is planned for the summer of 2012.

According to Lisa Timberlake, coordinator of enrichment activities and off-site trips for G.R.A.C.E. Girls, “The goal was to give the girls a safe place to go in the afternoon and provide exposure to experiences and opportunities they might not otherwise have, [but] much more is happening. I know I am changing and growing by my interactions with the girls. It has not been complicated: it’s been about slowing down, showing up, being open and reaching out.”

G.R.A.C.E. Girls has borne fruit in other ways, too. Grace Giving Back grew out of the original program as an opportunity for the graduates of G.R.A.C.E. Girls to give back to the community. They have participated in local and global projects by preparing food for the Sunday meal for the dispossessed at Grace Episcopal Church, stocking shelves at the Father’s Storehouse in Thomasville, working with other youth groups to prepare the Kiwanis Kiddie Camp in Davidson County for summer use by campers and donating funds to the Orphanage-Hope Village in Haiti.

GETTING STARTED

G.R.A.C.E. Girls began when The Social Concerns Commission at Grace determined that the needs of at-risk middle school girls were not being addressed elsewhere in the community. The commission believed that many of these girls could benefit from afternoons spent in learning new skills and in building friendships in a larger community. Carrie met with teachers, guidance counselors and the Lexington Superintendent of Schools, seeking their support and suggestions for G.R.A.C.E. Teachers, school counselors and the

Lexington Communities in Schools staff identified eligible middle school girls.

Carrie and Lisa continue to maintain a relationship with the middle school guidance counselor, who acts a liaison for transportation and communication. A member of the Advisory Board who works at the school also communicates with teachers and future G.R.A.C.E. participants. Anyone thinking of starting a similar program will benefit from identifying an advocate and liaison with the school system.

Funding for the program comes from multiple sources. The Social Concerns Commission provides for one teacher, bus transportation to and from the church and supplies. Grace, other churches in the area and the Lexington community provide additional funding. The girls themselves raise funds for their activities by holding car washes and bake sales, decorating vases and publishing a cookbook.

Jennifer Brady, a G.R.A.C.E. Girls teacher, reiterates the importance of the program: “I came in with the mindset that I would somehow bless the lives of the girls, but, in reality, I’m sure that they have blessed me more! I am amazed by their resilience, particularly knowing some of their backgrounds....I offer sincere appreciation and thanks to the leadership of Grace Episcopal for supporting G.R.A.C.E. Girls. Countless lives are affected by this ministry.”

For more information about the G.R.A.C.E. Girls or advice for starting a similar program in your own congregation, contact Grace Episcopal Church at 336-249-7211 or Lisa Timberlake at 336-357-2155. Information is also available at www.gracechurchlexington.org.



Julie Dayvault is a vestry member and parishioner at Grace, Lexington, and serves on the G.R.A.C.E. Girls Advisory Board.



Above, G.R.A.C.E. Girls learn how to create fun, spooky Halloween bags, weave Gullah baskets and mix lotions

Revisiting HISTORY DAY 2012

By the Rev. N. Brooks Graebner



On Saturday, May 5, 35 attendees from 10 parishes gathered at St. Stephen's, Oxford, for diocesan "History Day"—an opportunity to look back and learn from the early history of our church in North Carolina and Virginia. The presenters, historian the Rev. Dr. Lauren Winner and restoration/preservation specialist John Wood, invited us to study closely the furnishings and buildings of earlier eras in order to see how they convey distinctive spiritual and social meaning. Lauren highlighted how much colonial Anglican religious practice centered in the home; John underscored the geographical and cultural factors that determined where church buildings were located in North Carolina and what they would look like.

Attendees also enjoyed the warm and gracious hospitality of the host parish, St. Stephen's, and the opportunity to tour two of the preserved historic properties of the Diocese: St. John's, Williamsboro, and Holy Trinity, Townsville. These church buildings are maintained by local committees which function under the auspices of the Historic Properties Commission. St. John's is the only remaining frame

colonial church building in our entire state; Holy Trinity dates to the early 20th century and is built in a style frequently called "carpenter Gothic"—an adaptation of Gothic design elements to frame buildings. John Wood accompanied us on the afternoon tour, drawing our attention to architectural details of these two buildings we might otherwise have overlooked.

We intend to make History Day an annual event and expand it to the entire state. Next year, we will be in Fayetteville, now in the Diocese of East Carolina, at one of the four founding parishes that organized





OPPOSITE PAGE: Speaker John Wood and Brooks Graebner pose outside of Holy Trinity, Townsville. St. John's, Williamsboro, sits nestled among the trees. THIS PAGE: Diocesan Archivist Lynn Hoke stands near the altar in St. John's. The old organ there is also a source of admiration. The History Day attendees rest inside Holy Trinity.



the Diocese of North Carolina back in 1817. Between now and our 2017 Bicentennial, we will focus each year on a different era of our history and travel to a site that is significant to that particular era. In Fayetteville, we will turn our attention to the very earliest years of the Diocese, 1817-1823, before we even had a bishop of our own. Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us next spring.

If you haven't already seen it, I also encourage you to view "Harsh Ground, Holy Ground," a DVD telling the early history of the Church in North Carolina, available from the Diocesan School of Ministry. Also available from the School of Ministry is a 20-minute video tour of St. John's, Williamsboro, with the Rev. Donald Lowery, Rector of the Church of the Holy Innocents, Henderson, and a certified colonial re-enactor. Don demonstrates how colonial-era worship was conducted.

The Rev. N. Brooks Graebner, Ph.D. is the Rector of St. Matthew's, Hillsborough, and the Diocesan Historiographer. Contact him at stmatclergy@embarqmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE

HISTORY DAY 2013

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE
DIOCESE: 1817-1823
SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 2013
(Tentative date)

ST. JOHN'S, FAYETTEVILLE, NC



In Botswana, over 100 people were joined by Trevor Mwamba, Bishop of Botswana, and both the US and British Ambassadors to Botswana. Photo from the Diocese of Botswana.

GETTING *to* HEARRT *of* *the* HIV/AIDS

*Young people from three Dioceses
across three continents educate,
bring awareness to HIV/AIDS*

By Dr. Sharita Womack
Photos by Beth Crow

Arising from an international gathering of youth representatives from three continents and three dioceses in July 2011, the Triad Red Ribbon Flash Mob took place on Saturday, March 31, in Greensboro. On the same day, in the Anglican Dioceses of Botswana (southern Africa) and Newcastle (Church of England), young people organized and marched to show their solidarity with those living with HIV/AIDS.

The North Carolina event was entitled “Getting to the HEARRT of HIV/AIDS: A chord of three strands is not easily broken (Eccl. 4:12).” HEARRT stands for Healthy, Educated, Active Relationships Require Teamwork. The event, which spanned several hours, included the flash mob, testimonials about living with HIV/AIDS and information and testing. Beginning at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, the flash mob covered a mile-long route, during which the



Clockwise from top left: The flash mob freezes into position to display information about HIV/AIDS. The broken heart signs highlighted some of the issues surrounding HIV/AIDS and represented the healing that can occur if everyone contributes. Attendees at the HEARRT event gather around a computer screen to talk with their friends in England and Botswana via Skype.

50-some participants (representing at least six parishes from Charlotte to Mooresville, members of the larger Greensboro community, Episcopalians from Duke and UNC and our Diocesan Bishop, Michael B. Curry) paused at various points, froze in place and displayed cards with information about HIV/AIDS and its effects on youth and young adults in North Carolina and globally. The defining image of the event was a heart; cardboard hearts broken by HIV-AIDS were brought together throughout the march as a sign of the healing that is possible when people of all types come together to support a cause. As people gathered at Redeemer, information, testing and testimonials about living with HIV/AIDS were available through an AIDS Service and healthcare organizations from both Greensboro and Winston-Salem.

In Botswana, over 100 people were joined by Trevor Mwamba, Bishop of Botswana, and both the US and British Ambassadors to Botswana. In Newcastle, some 30 people gathered to walk a route to their cathedral. There they communicated with us via Skype. Facebook posts and tweets abounded among all three groups. So successful and energizing was the event that each group is hoping to make this an annual opportunity for global advocacy and cooperation, with the goal of eradicating HIV/AIDS and helping young people to support one another in healthy relationships.



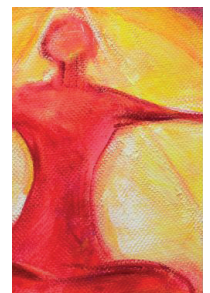
Dr. Sharita Womack is the Chairperson of the North Carolina Diocesan HIV/AIDS Links Committee.



ORGANIZERS

Dr. Sharita Womack coordinated both the conference and the walk. Ben Cowgill, Saint Timothy's, Winston-Salem; Hayley Fowler, Saint Patrick's, Mooresville; and Conor Jones, Saint Martin's, Charlotte; worked with Dr. Womack and youth from the other two dioceses in planning the event.

An Opportunity for Those Living with HIV/AIDS



For the past 21 years, Province IV Network of AIDS Ministries has offered a spiritual, inclusive, open-hearted retreat experience for persons infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS. This year's conference, "Living in Love," will take place at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina, June 8 - 10, 2012.

For information about future retreats, contact Geoff Attack at 336-707-9854.



LEFT PHOTO: Clergy and lay delegates, alternates and the Bishop gathered at Holy Comforter, Burlington, in May for an information session about General Convention. Front row, from left: Margaret (Meg) McCann, Alice Freeman, the Rev. Canon Beth Wickenberg Ely, the Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry, the Honorable Martha Alexander, the Rev. John Tampa. Back row, from left: The Rev. Lorraine Ljunggren, the Rev. Sarah Hollar, the Rev. Kevin Matthews, Joseph Ferrell and Josephine Hicks. RIGHT PHOTO: The Rev. Sarah Hollar and the Rev. Canon Beth Wickenberg Ely open the meeting.

GETTING READY *for* THE 77th GENERAL CONVENTION



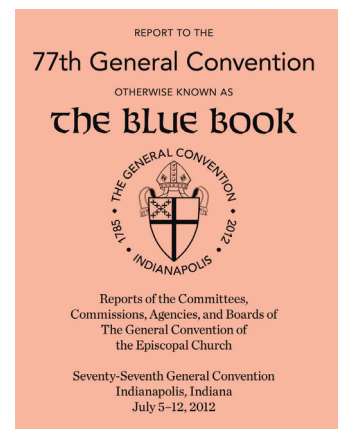
The 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church will gather July 5-12, 2012, in Indianapolis, Indiana. In preparation, the delegates from the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina held an information session about the upcoming Convention on May 1 at Holy Comforter, Burlington.

“When folk of our Diocese think about being Episcopalians, often they think about themselves on Sunday morning, sitting in pews at churches they love, hoping to hear the word of God expressed in new and compelling ways that will give them competence and courage and comfort and calm to live the life imagined for them - dreamed for them- from God,” the Rev. Sarah Hollar said, “and then every three years headlines erupt, and they are assailed in coffee bars and in lunchrooms with people asking, ‘Do you believe what your Church says is true?’”

Often, Hollar says, people are not sure how decisions are made at General Convention, and they are unaware of what issues might make headlines before they do. In order to better inform the Diocese, the deputation has compiled resources about key potential issues.

The Rev. Canon Beth Wickenberg Ely cited several past General Convention events that have had an impact on all Episcopalians, including the decision to allow women to serve as deacons and priests, the approval of the Book of Common Prayer in 197 and the approval of the various hymnals used in congregations. Although no one can predict which issues will ultimately receive the most attention, the deputation feels that the parity in healthcare, same-sex blessings and the Anglican Covenant will be among those greatly discussed.

Find video from the information session, in addition to other related General Convention resources, online at www.dionc.org/general-convention.html.



The “Blue Book” - its cover is actually salmon this year - contains reports of the committees, commissions and boards of the 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, plus the text of all resolutions to be debated at General Convention. It is a great way for those not attending to educate themselves about important doings of the national Church. It is available for download at <http://bit.ly/zoGM95>.

DIOCESAN YOUTH PRESENCE *at* GENERAL CONVENTION

Ben Cowgill Selected as Part of Official Youth Presence at General Convention

Ben Cowgill, a member of St. Timothy's, Winston-Salem, has been selected to represent Province IV during General Convention. Ben and Nora Vinas, from the Diocese of Southeast Florida, will be part of the 18 youth from nine provinces who form the Official Youth Presence during this summer's 77th General Convention in Indianapolis.

"The General Convention Official Youth Presence was established by an initial resolution in 1982," Bronwyn Skov, Episcopal Church Officer for Youth Ministries, explains. "The Official Youth Presence members have seat and voice on the floor of the House of Deputies during the legislative sessions, and that is an exciting prospect for the youth of our church."

This group of 18 young people gathered in Indianapolis the weekend after Easter for orientation and training, which included legislative education, parliamentary protocols and discussion on broader issues impacting the youth and the church. They engaged in fellowship, learned and participated in worship together as they grew into a community. They also explored leadership and their personalities and spiritual gifts.

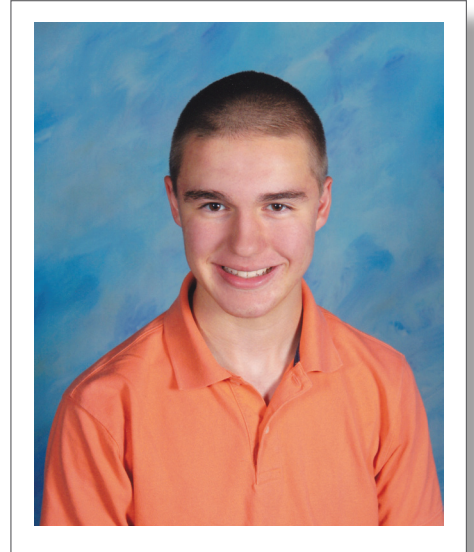
Ben feels well-prepared to navigate General Convention after serving as a youth representative at our Diocese's own Annual Convention.

"Being a youth representative at our diocesan convention is a foretaste of what this will be like.... As we went through the protocols, I recognized a lot similarities that some of the other youth had not been exposed to, having not been to their diocesan conventions before."

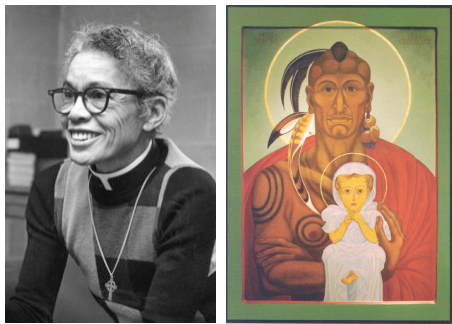
Ben is glad to have the chance to represent not only Province IV but also the Diocese of North Carolina.

"I am excited to be attending General Convention, and [I] have a strong interest in the government of the church," Ben says. "I am excited to meet people from places I would never have imagined a few years ago. I am excited for the opportunity to learn more about the church and participate [in it] instead of learning about it from a textbook (like in school). I am excited to see the democratic principles at work here, as I have learned about in Civics and US history."

Pray for Ben and the other youth as they serve the Church in this capacity.



THE SAINTS OF NORTH CAROLINA



The 77th General Convention will consider adding the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray (left) and Manteo and Virginia Dare (right) to the liturgical calendar.

This summer, General Convention will consider adding three North Carolinians to the liturgical calendar. The Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray, who grew up in Durham, became the first African-American woman ordained as an Episcopal priest. She is well-known as a scholar, activist and trailblazer. Manteo and Virginia Dare were the first two people to be baptized as Anglicans in the land that would become America.

At the last General Convention, these resolutions were on the calendar of the Convention Committee on Prayer Book Liturgy and Church Music, which faced the difficult tasks of debating same-sex blessings and the new book *Holy Women, Holy Men*, which replaced *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*. Due to a lack of time, recommendations for individual commemorations were referred to the Standing Committee on Liturgy and Music, which will recommend Pauli Murray, Virginia Dare, Manteo and eight others for addition to the calendar at this summer's General Convention.



The handbell choir at All Saints' Roanoke Rapids plays under the direction of Danita Barnes. The author is third from the right.

By Summerlee Walter

my JOYFUL noise

Music and I are not really friends. This is not to say that I don't enjoy music. I'm simply terrible at producing it. When I sing in the car, the people I'm riding with turn up the radio. At parties, I just sort of whisper the happy birthday song after people blow out their candles. Throughout my teenage years, as I sang hymns during worship services, my mother would occasionally shush me because she just couldn't take it anymore. (At least I come by it honestly. She frequently shushed my dad, too.)

The highlight of my musical career was my fourth grade year, during which I so successfully mastered my beige plastic recorder that the music teacher invited me to join my elementary school's recorder ensemble. While this might initially sound like a sign of musical prodigality—I thought it was—I quickly realized that, while everyone else in the ensemble learned to play different, fancier, sometimes outright baroque versions of the recorder (some of which were carved from materials like pear wood or cedar), I never touched anything other than my own beige plastic instrument, which began to show the sad yellowish stains that cheap plastic

sometimes develops. In retrospect, the director probably invited me to join the group because most kids instinctively understood that a recorder ensemble is not cool, but, as pictures of me from elementary school demonstrate, I did not have those instincts.

Three years ago, however, my relationship to music changed radically. I decided, somewhat on a whim, somewhat in order to fulfill a life-long dream, to sign up for the handbell choir at All Saints', Roanoke Rapids. I have loved the instrument since childhood, when performances by the handbell choir at my church were my Sunday highlight. Even then, I knew that, whenever

the Bible mentions heavenly choirs or joyful noises, it isn't referring to harps like all of the artwork depicts. It's referring to handbells. As an adult, I assumed that, since most ringers are responsible for between two and four notes (sharps and flats aside), playing handbells would be a manageable task for my musically challenged self to accomplish. Also, I wanted to play in an angel choir.

While I was incorrect about the "this will be easy" part of my decision, I was right that playing handbells is a joyful experience. It is also, for me, a deeply spiritual one. What I did not realize about ringing in a handbell choir is the tremendous amount of coordination and team work it requires. Because each ringer is responsible for only a few notes, a single melody line is spread across multiple individual musicians. Unlike in a band, orchestra or vocal choir, in which a section of the same instrument might cover an individual musician's mistake, each person in a handbell choir stands alone when it comes to her notes. Ringers must focus on the music and the director while simultaneously listening to each other in order for the music to flow and for each individual pitch to arrive at precisely the right time in relationship to the others. It is a humbling experience to be the person who turns a beautifully flowing line of music into a jarring cacophony because you forgot to switch from your C for your C#. It is also a humbling experience when the rest of the choir smiles, offers advice, resets and tries it again because everyone in the room has been in the same situation.

This is exactly how the kingdom of God is supposed to function when we all work together as the body of Christ. Remove one member from a handbell choir, and either there is a very noticeable gap in the music or everyone else must shift around, take responsibility for extra bells and try to patch the holes. Unless a choir is blessed with three-handed musicians, this is not an easy thing to do. Each ringer has her own unique task to perform, and the success of a piece of music—and of the choir—depends on each performing her task to the best of her ability. Playing to the best of her ability, however, requires a ringer to pay close attention to what the other ringers are doing and to coordinate bell switches and page turns with those on either side of her. The individual and the choir are inseparable, and each depends upon the other to succeed.

Just as in the body of Christ, in which each part has its specialized function that the other parts cannot perform, not all ringers can ring all bells, either. The bass bells are too heavy for some to play, and the smaller treble bells require ringers to master a difficult technique called four-in-hand to manipulate four bells at once. Without the bass and alto bells, there is no steady rhythm to keep the choir on track; without the treble bells, there might be no melody. Each bell—and

MAKE - or LISTEN to - A JOYFUL NOISE

The following is a list of parishes within the Diocese that currently have handbell choirs:

All Saints', Roanoke Rapids
Church of the Good Shepherd, Raleigh
Church of the Holy Comforter, Burlington (Occasional)
Church of the Holy Comforter, Charlotte
Emmanuel, Southern Pines
Nativity, Raleigh (Occasional)
St. Paul's, Cary
St. John's, Charlotte
St. Margaret's, Waxhaw
St. Martin's, Charlotte

LISTEN AND SEE

Live near a handbell choir and want to hear them play? Most parishes list the performance schedule somewhere on their websites.

JOIN OR START A NEW CHOIR

Interested in joining a handbell choir? Contact the parish's director of music. If you are a director of music who would like to explore starting a handbell choir in your own parish, contact Chip Carter, Master of Choirs of Bell and Chime at St. John's, Charlotte, at hcarter10@carolina.rr.com.

NOT ON THE LIST?

If we missed your choir on this list, please email Chip (hcarter10@carolina.rr.com). We are trying to assemble a list of all parishes with handbell choirs in order to explore arranging a handbell festival in the Diocese. If you are interested, send your handbell director's name and contact information to Chip.

each ringer—has a gift and a particular role to play, and only when each bell and each ringer works together with the others does beautiful music ring out. For a musically-challenged person like me, a handbell choir is the perfect parable for Christian community: what I most certainly cannot achieve alone, I can do with the help and support of others. And, in my own small way, I, too, contribute to our joyful noise.



Summerlee Walter is a member of the handbell choir at St. Paul's, Cary. You can contact her at summerlee.walter@episdionc.org.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

JUNE
JULY
AUGUST

June

- 2 Safe Church Training, 9:00am-12:00pm, Emmanuel, Southern Pines
- 7 Fresh Start, held regionally. Contact Canon Hunn.
- 8-10 Province IV HIV/AIDS Retreat, Kanuga
- 22-23 Deacons Retreat, St. Francis Springs Prayer Center
- 24-30 Province IV Youth Event, Haw River State Park, Browns Summit

July

- 5-12 General Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana
- 6-15 Youth Costa Rica Mission Exchange
- 9-14 HUGS, Haw River State Park, Browns Summit. Registration is ongoing.
- 18 Pauli Murray Service, St. Titus, Durham.
- 22-25 Greensboro and Winston-Salem Convocations Episcopal Outreach Camp, St. Thomas, Reidsville
- 22-25 Charlotte Episcopal Outreach Camp, Holy Comforter, Charlotte

August

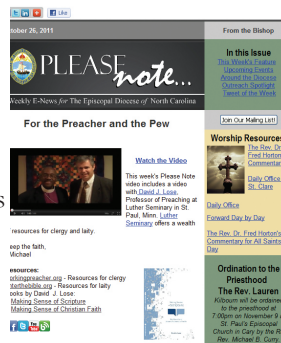
- 16-19 24th Annual Conference on Church Music in the Anglican Tradition, Trinity Center, Salter Path
- 17-19 15th Annual Youth Choir Camp, Trinity Center, Salter Path

Find the above events and more online at www.dionc.org/digital_faith/events.

Look for additional events and more detailed event information online at www.episdionc.org, or contact the Diocese at 919.834.7474, toll free 800.448.8775. Upcoming diocesan events and events from around the diocese are featured in Please Note, the Bishop's weekly e-newsletter, and in the Around the Diocese monthly bulletin insert.

PLEASE NOTE

Keep up with upcoming diocesan events and those from around the church by subscribing to Please Note, the Bishop's weekly e-newsletter. In addition to events, Please Note includes a video message from the Bishop, spiritual resources and important announcements. To subscribe, send an email to sarah.herr@episdionc.org.



STAY IN TOUCH



Keep up with the Diocese through Social Media!.

www.facebook.com/EpiscopalDioceseNC
<http://www.youtube.com/episdionc>
twitter.com/bishopcurry
<http://bishopcurry.wordpress.com>



DEACON'S RETREAT TO BE HELD AT ST. FRANCIS SPRINGS PRAYER CENTER

All deacons should make plans to attend the annual Deacons Retreat to be held June 22-23 at St. Francis Springs Prayer Center, Stoneville. The weekend's theme is "The World/The Church/St. Francis' Response." Father Louie, director of the St. Francis Springs Prayer Center, will lead the retreat, and Bishop Curry will be in attendance. Contact the Ven. William Joyner, Archdeacon, at william.joyner@src.org, to register.

4TH ANNUAL PAULI MURRAY CELEBRATION SCHEDULED FOR JULY 18



On July 18, St. Titus, Durham, will host its fourth annual service commemorating the life and works of the Rev. Dr. Anna Pauline Murray, better known as Pauli Murray. Although her life was fraught with challenges from the beginning, she forged academic, political and spiritual paths and became the first African-American woman to be ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church. See page 19 for information about a resolution before General Convention this summer that would add Pauli Murray to the calendar of the Episcopal Church.

ANNUAL YOUTH AND ADULT CHOIR CAMPS at BEAUTIFUL



Each year, the Dioceses of North Carolina and East Carolina team up to host choir camps for youth and adults at beautiful, beachy Trinity Center in Salter Path. At the 15th Annual Youth Choir Camp, clinician Ginger Wyrick will lead rising 4th-9th graders in three days of music and fun August 17-19. At 24th Annual Conference on Church Music in the Anglican Tradition, clinician Dr. David Hurd will work with adult choristers August 16-19. Participants at the youth and adult conferences will present music rehearsed during the weekend at the Eucharist on Sunday at St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church. The Rt. Rev. Clifton Daniel, III, bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina, will preside.

The registration deadline for both events is August 1. Registration forms are available for download online at <http://bit.ly/KLe4Wt> (adults) or <http://bit.ly/IVAfqj> (youth).

just **ONE** thing OFF TO A FAST START

Online campaign strives to ensure every graduating high school senior has a spiritual home next year

Just One Thing – the Commission on Ministry in Higher Education’s web-based program to ensure that every graduating high school student in the Diocese is referred to a campus or young adult ministry – is off to a great start!

St. Mark’s, Gastonia – yes, in the Western Diocese – became the first church to refer all of its graduating high school students to campus ministries. Polly Redd, director of Christian Formation at St. Mark’s and long-time active member of the Diocese of North Carolina, reports that the referral process is an easy one. On the Just One Thing website, affiliated adults – parents, youth ministers or other adults from the parish – provide contact and background information on graduating high school students. They also identify the appropriate campus for each student. A large majority of students graduating from North Carolina high schools choose North Carolina universities, but referrals to out-of-state campuses are made as well. Young adults who are not enrolling in post-secondary programs will be referred to young adult ministries in their areas.

Making intentional referrals of your congregation’s

graduating high school students to other ministries can have a profound effect on their lives. Students entering college experience what is typically the most transformational period of their lives, mentally and intellectually, socially and emotionally. God is part of that transformation, and the church should be, too.

Ensure that your child, your friends’ or neighbors’ children and the graduating students in your congregation are referred to a campus or young adult ministry. Go to <http://www.justonething.dionc.org/> to make it happen!



Beth Hardin is the chair of the Commission on Ministry in Higher Education. You can contact her at eahardin@mindspring.com.

CLERGY CHANGES

As of May 8, 2012

The Rev. Mike Bradshaw, from Candidate for Holy Orders, to Vocational Deacon, St. Paul’s, Winston-Salem, February 18, 2012.

The Rev. Amanda Kucik, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of Virginia, to Diocese of North Carolina.

The Rev. Colin Douglas Miller, from Candidate for Holy Orders, to Transitional Deacon, February 18, 2012.

The Rev. Wilberforce Mundia, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of Kenya, to Diocese of North Carolina.

The Rev. Kathleen Pfister, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of North Carolina, to Diocese of Texas.

The Rev. Ty Smithdeal, from Deacon, St. Martin’s, Charlotte, to Deacon, St. Mark’s, Huntersville.

The Rev. William David Lynch, from Candidate for Holy Orders, to Vocational Deacon, Church of the Nativity, Raleigh, February 18, 2012.

The Rev. Nancy Johnson Vaders, from Candidate for Holy Orders, to Vocational Deacon, St. Anne’s, Winston-Salem, February 18, 2012.

The Rev. Arianne Weeks, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of North Carolina, to Diocese of Maryland.

The Rev. Mary Kroohs, from Deacon, St. Timothy’s, Winston-Salem, to Non-Parochial.

The Rev. Maggie Silton, from Deacon, Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, to Non-Parochial.

The Rev. William Maddox, from Non-Parochial, to Priest-in-Charge, St. Matthias, Louisburg.

The Rev. Courtney Davis-Shoemaker, from Non-Parochial, to Vicar, St. Andrew’s, Haw River.

The Rev. Michael Battle, from Non-Parochial, to Interim Rector, Calvary, Tarboro, and Interim Vicar, St. Luke’s, Tarboro.

The Rev. Courtney Davis-Shoemaker, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of Massachusetts, to Diocese of North Carolina.

The Rev. Martha Brimm, from Transitional Deacon, to Priest, St. Joseph’s, Durham, April 28, 2012.

The Rev. Jennifer Durant, from Transitional Deacon, to Priest, Diocese of Virginia, April 15, 2012.

The Rev. Kimberley D. Lucas, Letters of Dimissory, from Diocese of North Carolina, to Diocese of Washington.

The Rev. Michelle Robertshaw, from Assistant Rector, Holy Family, Chapel Hill, to Rector, Diocese of Southwest Florida.

The Reverend Robert Kosie-Williams, Deceased, Jan. 24, 2012.

HARVESTING GOD'S GARDEN

By Christine Bradish

Gardening isn't just about playing in the dirt. It's about getting in touch with who we are: beings created in relationship with God, the earth and one another.

Gardening is therapeutic. There's something about digging, pulling weeds, planting and being able to visually (or tastily!) enjoy the fruits of your labor that makes it appealing to such a vast number of people. Because we as people are naturally attracted to nature, tending to plants is instinctively alluring, whether it is done in a large landscape, a window box or a potted houseplant in our dorm room.

Have you thought lately about how God fits into the garden? By getting down in the dirt, we are reminded that "we are but dust, and to dust we shall return." Cultivating the soil goes back to our roots, to the mythical Garden of Eden, and reminds us that God created the earth, each plant and animal on it and ourselves. The therapeutic nature of gardening can also be meditative, prayer-like, our connection to God through nature. Gardening is very tangible, almost like an earthly, rudimentary sacrament, reminding us to ponder and give thanks for the beauty of the earth.

In case you don't know me personally, a few years ago God made it very clear to me that my vocation was in horticulture, particularly plant breeding. I am very driven by a higher calling to solve world hunger through the understanding and improvement of plants on a physiological and physical level, and I also love that this calls me to "dig in the dirt" for a living. Since I get to play in the garden a little more often than the average person, I guess you could say I truly do celebrate the spirituality of the enterprise and embrace it as a prayerful, graceful experience. It feels natural, like God has meant for it to happen, like I was always supposed to be here.

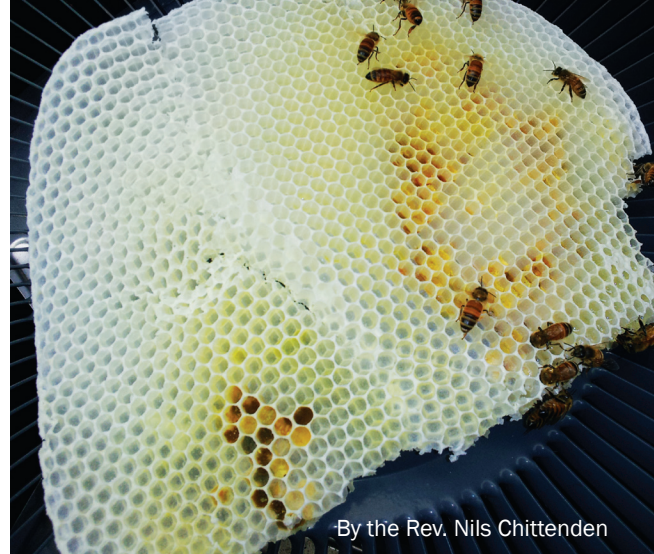
There is also a part of my job that's sociological. When going out on extension trips, I see and interact with the very farm workers and migrant laborers who we support in our ministries. Days I am working in the fields, my back aches and I am exhausted by the end of the day. These people toil like this on a daily basis, and they do it without complaining. Many take the jobs that other Americans do not want, and will not do, and, by being in community with them, I am reminded of how much we owe them for our food supply. I am given a token of grace, because no matter the toil and unfairness that life has set in front of them, they have a positive attitude with faith guiding them. I am reminded that God is full of grace, and that He blesses those that provide "daily bread" to the masses.

I would consider myself extremely blessed for the days I get to work in the fields, and I am grateful to God for leading me to a vocation that involves such deep connections to the Earth and the feeding of many, body and soul. The therapy of digging in the dirt is holy. There is something very spiritual about standing in an open field and surveying a landscape surrounded by peach



orchards or vineyards or just open farmland. It is the gift of agriculture from God that sustains us and the beauty of intelligence in plant breeding that has granted us such an elaborate variety of exquisite fruits and vegetables. So, the next time you "dig in" - to your plate or your flower bed - think a moment about God's creation, the connection to all of God's people that you have through plants, food and dirt, and the spiritual experience that we are granted through this beautiful Earth.

Christine Bradish is pursuing a Doctorate in Plant Breeding and Genetics (Horticultural Science) at NC State University and is a member of Raleigh Episcopal Campus Ministry at the Cheshire House.



By the Rev. Nils Chittenden

From left: Amber Noel, the Episcopal Center's beekeeper, inspects the hives. The bees are already producing honey and wax in earnest inside their combs.

RECLAIMING *the* LAND: a BEE-AUTIFUL PROSPECT

The Episcopal Center at Duke has a great site on Duke's central campus, but our front yard had, over the years, become more and more eroded, to the point that it was nothing more than a patch of scrubby, sandy earth with nothing at all to commend it. Apart from the fact that the lawn looked bad, and we wanted to improve the lot for everyone who uses the Center, we also wanted to be good neighbors and good stewards of our natural resources. The time was ripe for some action.

Once we'd decided that we wanted to replant and re-green the area, we drew up our wish list of what our plants would need to be and do. In this respect, we were both cheap and demanding: we needed it to look good, to bind the soil together to prevent future erosion and to be cost-effective, low-maintenance and eco-friendly. To our surprise, we found something that would fulfill all of these demands: white clover.

One evening over dinner, I was talking with my wife, Kelly, about this project, and she said "If you're going to have clover, why not have some bees, too?"

"What a great idea!" I thought, "Bees love clover."

From that point on, the idea began to take shape. As I delved deeper into the world of beekeeping, I realized how great this would be on so many levels: we would be helping our students to reconnect with food production, we'd be teaching new craft skills, we'd be enhancing and servicing our local environment through bee-pollinating and we'd be playing our (albeit small) part in combatting bee colony collapse disorder. I shared the ideas for the clover and the bees with Province IV environmental ministries, and they awarded us a grant for \$600 which enabled us to cover around half the cost of the project.

So it was that at the end of April, having persuaded our Custodian, Amber Noel, to become our beekeeper, that we took delivery first of two beehives and equipment and then 2,000 honey bees. Amber had been able to attend a bee-keeping course in Asheville a month or so beforehand and, with the help of

Jamie Kennedy, an amateur beekeeper from St Joseph's Episcopal Church in Durham, as her mentor, she installed the bees in their new homes, gave them a starter food supply of sugar syrup and hoped that they would both accept their queen and start to build their new communities.

Bees are utterly wonderful creatures. Industrious, intelligent and cooperative, they have a lot to teach us humans about society. We discovered that their soubriquet "busy bees" was well-justified. Within ten days, they had produced enough surplus beeswax for us to make a candle. In the fullness of time, we hope to have altar candles made from our very own beeswax and, eventually, our own brand of honey.

If you get the chance, please come visit our bees. We'll be glad to show them to you, and maybe you might consider starting your own hives at church and at home. And one final benefit our bees have to offer: just watching them go about their daily business is a great catharsis in the midst of our crazily busy lives. Bees: good for the body, good for the soul.



The Rev. Nils P Chittenden is the chaplain at the Episcopal Center at Duke and the Diocesan Missioner for Young Adult Ministry. Contact him at nils.chittenden@episdionc.org.



my MEDICINE
is more POTENT

*Christ's body and blood -
God's healing medicine - offers not
only solace, but strength; not only
pardon, but renewal.*

My father loves telling me to be careful. And I say this not meaning that he actually takes pleasure out of reminding me not to get in a bike wreck or fall down a mountain slope while hiking or get hurt in any other way. I say this meaning he does this quite often. One might call him a worrier; but I think his cautions stem from a sense of compassion.

When I was a sophomore in college, I underwent hip surgery. I was on a tennis scholarship and had played through enough pain that, when the surgeon stuck the arthroscopic needle and camera into my hip socket, he could not believe that I had even walked into the hospital that morning; the damage I had done was that severe. The top of my femur had grown too flat, so instead of being shaped like a ball and fitting snugly into its socket, the square edges wore away at the cartilage, soft tissues, and bone in my hip. Pieces of all three were floating around in the socket, causing me a great deal of pain.

Thankfully, I had a good surgeon; he was able to repair my faulty hip, and I was back playing tennis within eight months. But ever since then, my father has told me to be careful every time I do something, wishing me not to re-injure my hip. Sometimes he's fairly passive about this,

just reminding me to be nice to my body; but other times, he gives me that look, that fatherly look that bids just a bit more gravitas, almost as if there were some anger at my refusal to take his precautions seriously - especially when I brush him off and do it anyway.

Yet, I do not think that his sometimes-stern looks are directed at me, per se, but are directed at my hip. He is angry at the pain he watched me go through, and he wishes not to see me go through it again. He is angry at the pain that kept me from living and running and playing with the joy he loves seeing. As my father warns me not to take part in certain risky adventures, he does not wish to limit my activity but takes issue with the pain that might re-occur and limit me from living fully in the future. In our Gospel reading today, we come across a similar attitude in that of Jesus. Let me re-read the beginning of this lesson in a different translation: "And a man with scale-disease came up to him, pleading with him and saying, 'If you want to, you are able to cleanse me.' And he, becoming incensed, stretched out his hand and touched him and said, 'I *do* want to; be cleansed!' And immediately the scale-disease left him and he was cleansed."¹

When I first came across this translation, I was taken

aback by the harsh tone attributed to Jesus - for I thought Jesus was incensed with the diseased man for asking for healing. I much preferred the translation in the NRSV, which says Jesus has "compassion" on the man - Jesus was "moved with pity." One rendering portrays Jesus as more enraged, while the other shows Jesus acting on his sense of empathy.

While I understand the beauty of the idea that Jesus has empathy for the man and wishes to heal him, I feel that the first, more striking, interpretation has something important to say. And I must also say, that these translations may not be mutually exclusive.

To understand fully the significance of Jesus' anger here, we must look to the object of such emotion. Jesus becomes incensed not with the *man*, but with his *disease*. Jesus becomes enraged not at the man who comes to him, beseeching and kneeling, asking for healing, but at the disease that distances the man from society, from health, from wholeness, from peace, from purity. Jesus is angry at the sickness for what it does to this person, not at the person for what he asks. Jesus angers out of his nature of compassion for one of his creation, and he puts it to right.

This man's ailment was seen as a danger to the purity of the temple and of the community that worships there. As seen in Leviticus and other manuscripts, sufferers of this disease "were regarded as, in effect, corpses, and physical contact with them produced the same sort of defilement as touching dead bodies."² As Leviticus states: "The person with scale-disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head be disheveled; and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, 'Unclean, unclean.' He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean. He shall live alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp."³

So here Jesus takes issue with the sickness that keeps the man from living fully. The man must live on the outside, ostracized and seen as dead. He is unwelcome. He is impure. He has no value. He is not a part of the community. Most literally, therefore, Jesus becomes enraged and bends down to touch this man's disease - *his death* - and gives him life.

In the season of Epiphany, when we look at God's revealing of God's-self to the world in the person of Jesus. Here we see a glimpse into the nature of God and God's action in the world. God has come to rid the world of death- and its various manifestations in society. God has come down to the world and touches our death, our situations, our sin-diseased bodies, to bring us to life. He has come with passion, even anger, to cast out sickness, intolerance, unwelcome, social barriers, economic injustices, disunity, war and all forms of

violence against the poor, hungry, and lonely. He has come to earth, to Galilee, to cleanse us of our impurity - from death - to give us life, to heal the broken, to welcome all, to cure prejudices, to lift the poor, to give peace and to give shelter to those in need.

And here is the most gracious part of all - he does all of this because he wants to. The diseased man kneels before Jesus, saying, "If you want to, you are able to cleanse me." And Jesus responds, "I do want to; be cleansed!" He wants to heal, he wants to save, he wants to bring us into unity with each other and with our God. He wants to. And he can. And he does.

Weekly, we come to this table to take part in the Eucharist. At this table, we participate in the flesh of Christ, who, as we consume the bread and wine, consumes us into his life-giving, cleansing body and blood. He consumes us into his life, life itself.⁴ And we, in turn, become a people who give witness to this life, who likewise become enraged at social diseases, who reach out to those who are left out by the prejudice of "social norms" and welcome them in and who show them the life-giving grace of our Lord.

St. Augustine gives us this prayer of the healing power of Christ: "Before you he makes us sons (and daughters) instead of servants by being born of you and being servant to us. With good reason my firm hope is in him.

"Most literally, therefore, Jesus becomes enraged and bends down to touch this man's disease - his death - and gives him life."

For you will cure all my diseases through him who sits at your right hand and intercedes with you for us. Otherwise I would be in despair. Many and great are those diseases, many and great indeed. But your medicine is still more potent... See, Lord, 'I cast my anxiety on you that I may live'... You know my inexperience and weakness. "Teach me and heal me."⁵

Christ's body and blood - God's healing medicine - offers not only solace, but strength; not only pardon, but renewal.⁶ This table offers us a viewpoint from which we see social constructs, power structures and all peoples of the world. It teaches us that death, even its various manifestations, has been altered forever. At this table we kneel and say, "Lord, if you want to, you are able to cleanse me." And let us be bold to say that our Lord will respond to us with this, "I do want to; be cleansed. For I know your diseases are many, but my medicine is still more potent."

¹Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8, Anchor Bible Series (Doubleday, 2000)*, 205.

²Marcus, 208

³NRSV as quoted by Marcus, 208.

⁴See William Cavanaugh, *Being Consumed (Eerdmans, 2008)*.

⁵St. Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford, 1991), 220.

⁶Adapted from *Eucharistic Prayer C, BCP*.



Daniel Reeves is the Chaplaincy Assistant at the Episcopal Center at Duke.

A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

Statements by the Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry and the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn to the House Select Committee on the State's Role in Immigration

The Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry and the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn spoke during a public forum in front of the House Select Committee on the State's Role in Immigration in Raleigh, NC, on Wednesday, March 28, as lawmakers consider how to handle illegal immigration in the state. Listen to their statements online at <http://bit.ly/Kz6azV>. The following are excerpts.

Langston Hughes, long ago in the last century, composed a poem from the perspective of being one disenfranchised as an African-American. The first sentence of that poem was "I, too, sing America."

I stand here to sing America, proud of her heritage, proud of her honor, proud that this is a nation who opens her arms and declares, "Bring me your tired, your hungry, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free." This is a nation of immigrants, a nation of people who have come seeking only to sing America.

I call on you as members of this committee to back only legislation that reflects the best of this nation, one nation under God. I implore you, please listen to facts, and not myths, not stereotypes. Listen to the facts of the contribution of immigrants to this country to this very day.

The next time you eat a salad, remember an immigrant picked the lettuce. The next time you dine, the next time your grass is cut, the next time someone reaches out in welcome, even in another language, remember, I, too, sing America.

I, too, believe in the rule of law. I stand before you as a Christian, as a Bishop of the Episcopal Church, a church that has in successive conventions called for comprehensive immigration reform, but I, too, believe in the rule of law, but it is the rule of a higher law. We are one nation under God, a God who, for me, came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who said on that great judgment day we will not be judged by our Church, but we will be judged by whether we fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the prisoners, showed compassion.

"For as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family," said Jesus of Nazareth, "you have done it unto me."

I, too, sing America, and I implore you, please sing America in all that you do.

*-The Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry,
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina*

¹ Ben Daniel, *Neighbor: Christian encounters with "illegal" immigration, Westminster 2010 wrestles with immigration from a Christian perspective.*

THE BIBLE: FULL OF STORIES *about* IMMIGRANTS

The Holy Bible is full of stories of immigrants, exiles and refugees. From the first pages of Genesis, when Adam and Eve are exiled from the Garden of Eden, until the final pages of the book of Revelation, which describes the Kingdom of God as a City with gates which never shut into which all the nations pour, God is almost without exception on the side of the immigrant, the exile and the refugee.

Abraham and Sarah were undocumented immigrants, first in Canaan and then in Egypt and then in Canaan again. They sent their sons back to their mother country to take wives, and they brought those wives back to Canaan.

Jacob's son, Joseph, was sold into slavery by his brothers and was taken to Egypt by human traffickers, where he was a slave first in Potiphar's house and then in Pharaoh's. His story is the story of an exile whose economic success allows his family to survive. Jacob and his sons, you will remember, leave their homeland in the midst of famine, immigrating to Egypt seeking better economic prospects.

Moses, you will recall, was a Hebrew born illegally in Egypt, whose mother floated him down a river because she feared for his life. But Pharaoh's daughter raised him as her own, hiding his undocumented identity, until he could hide no longer and he stood up for the fair treatment of his people.

After fleeing Egypt, the Hebrew people were exiles who wandered in the wilderness until they immigrated into the land of Promise, seeking economic security and freedom from oppression. And one of the the divinely inspired laws they wrote reads as follows....

"When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God." Lev. 19:34

My lord and savior Jesus of Nazareth was born to an immigrant mother traveling to Bethlehem, where he was born in a stable. He and his family then fled to Egypt, as refugees, fleeing persecution from the government.

By the Rev. Canon Michael Buerkel Hunn

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

Resources from the online Eastertide book study with Diana Butler Bass are still available for individual and parish use.

This Eastertide, in the six weeks between April 8 and May 22, the Diocese and the Swindell Speakers Fund conducted an online book study with Diana Butler Bass of her new book *Christianity after Religion: The end of church and the birth of a new spiritual awakening*. Each week, participants accessed a video interview with Dr. Bass, in which she set the stage for the week's discussion, and then met with her in cyberspace on Wednesday evening to discuss a few chapters. The project was truly a diocesan-wide effort; members of the Swindell committee facilitated each online forum, and, when Dr. Bass was unavailable during week five's forum, Bishop Curry stepped in to lead the discussion.



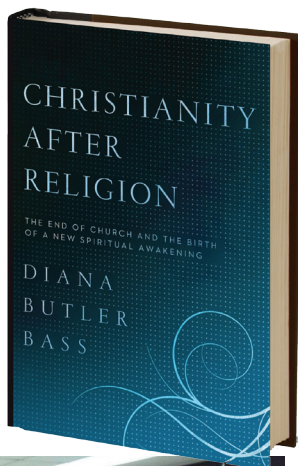
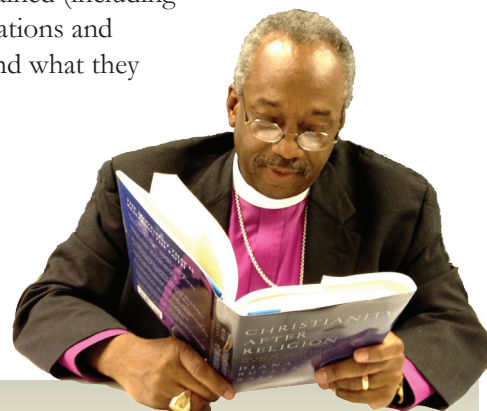
Diana Butler Bass

at Bennett College in Greensboro and Thompson Child & Family Focus in Charlotte. None of the venues were churches, a decision that reflects our diocesan commitment to meet people where they are outside of the church doors.

Send questions or comments about the online book study to Ayliffe Mumford, Director of the School of Ministry, at ayliffe.mumford@episdionc.org.

People throughout the Diocese and beyond, lay and ordained (including some from other denominations) followed Dr. Bass' explorations and discoveries, making connections between what she found and what they know is true in their own front yards. Some did so through the online forums, while others participated in parish book study groups or used the available book study resources on their own.

Over the weekend of May 17-19, Dr. Bass also visited three different places in the Diocese: the Brier Creek Community Center in Raleigh, The Center for Global Learning



RESOURCES *from the* BOOK STUDY *are still* AVAILABLE ONLINE

Dr. Bass' videos, transcripts of each week's online forum and the discussion and reflection guide are all available at <http://bit.ly/Kt2wcc>. A description of each week's discussion follows.

Week 1 (April 8-14): Opening (Introduction)

Week 2 (April 15-21): The Bad News (Chapters 1, 2 & 3)
- Why people claim to be "spiritual but not religious"

Week 3 (April 22-28): Believing (Chapter 4)
- Doctrine as "healing teaching"

Week 4 (April 29-May 5): Behavior (Chapter 5)
- The shift from thinking about behavior as a list of rules to a thoughtful consideration of what our callings are

Week 5 (May 6-12): Belonging (Chapter 6)
- How we experience God and our neighbors

Week 6 (May 13-19): Awakening (Chapters 7, 8 & 9)
- Hearing God anew



Parishioners at St. Joseph's, Durham, gather to discuss Diana Butler Bass' book.

BE *a* FRIEND *of* ST. AUGUSTINE THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL *in* BOTSWANA



The Anglican Diocese of Botswana is in dire need of well-trained priests and lay ministers to meet the needs of an ever-growing church and the expectations of people in the 21st century. After lengthy consultations within the Diocese and with our Partners in Mission outside, it was resolved that there is an urgent need to set up a House of Study that can facilitate the training of clergy and lay ministers locally without taking people away from their jobs.

To address this need, on February 26, 2012, the Diocese launched, for the first time in its history, a theological training program under the name of one of the



most famous Bishops and renowned theologians in the early Church in North Africa, Aurelius Augustinus. The School is located in the capital, Gaborone, next to St. Francis Church

You can help expand the Anglican Church in Botswana by being a Friend of St. Augustine Theological School, through your daily prayers and public worship and by sending donations of money and supplies. A complete list of needed supplies, plus information about making donations, is available online at <http://bit.ly/L1eOEn>.

THERE ARE NO LONE RANGERS *in* GALILEE

Excerpts from the sermon by the Rev. Stephen Elkins-Williams at the ordination of Martha Brimm

When Martha began her internship, she was a lot like the author of our first reading: she had a glimpse of the awe-inspiring God and felt an unexplainable compulsion to serve this God; but just as strong was a sense of unworthiness and a reluctance to believe that God could really be sending her. “Woe is me!” she would say to me. “For I am lost; I am a woman of unclean lips,” – or words to that effect! Others staff members and I grasped that beneath this self-doubt, she was made of much sterner stuff, which would well serve the Church and the community. But in her final interviews with the Commission on Ministry, what was below the surface did not shine through. It probably did not help that the day before, she broke her foot and hopped into this discernment conversation with a large walking cast! She later reflected, “I wonder now if that was a literal manifestation that I could not walk the path as I wanted and expected to right then, but rather there was more for me to learn.” Indeed there was.

Although she was redirected by Bishop Curry and encouraged to consider seriously God’s call to lay ministry, Martha could not deny the compelling inner call to priesthood that she continued to experience. In a later letter to the Bishop, she wrote:

“A month after meeting with the COM, I had the opportunity to hear Sr. Helen Prejean speak.... It was a rich experience.... She spoke about her own metanoia, her awakening, which changed the trajectory of her spiritual journey. I believe that Sr. Helen’s words may have served that function for me. As she talked about her ministry with persons on death row, my tears began to flow and did not stop. What she was saying was calling to me. She said justice was “just us,” that begins small, and that the working of the Holy Spirit is very organic, unfolding like a rose. Yes, I thought, and every step I have taken has brought me to this place where I hear her saying, “as you do true work, the gifts in you blossom and words come from your heart; the commitment of heart happens first, then put life where commitment is and you will come into community--there are no ‘lone rangers.’”

“My experiences working with women at Metro State Wom-

en’s Prison in Atlanta flooded my thoughts as I listened to Sr. Helen.... I found myself yearning to serve the persons in this parish within prison walls: to celebrate Eucharist with them, offering the meal of God’s abundance to those who find themselves marginalized and spiritually starving. Because I came to realize that especially for the imprisoned, healing and growth cannot take place until they experience forgiveness and reconciliation, I longed to absolve penitent hearts. I cannot shake the conviction that I am called to a sacramental ministry, but one in an unconventional parish. All of this came into focus as I listened to Sr. Helen, and I began to understand my call as ministry to a parish defined by razor wire and steel gates. I want to minister fully to the needs of this parish, but I also want to bring it into the embrace of an unbound parish: to let people in the “free world” know their imprisoned sisters and brothers need their prayers, actions, and mindfulness....”



I do hope, however, that all of you heard what Martha wrote to the bishop. There are no “lone rangers.” This service is not just about an individual. We are not just commissioning someone to go out and do ministry the rest of us are relieved not to have to do! This celebration is about the Church and the call of all of us to do ministry with those most in need of it and strengthening one another to carry out that call together. While Martha feels a deep call to sacramental ministry within the “parish defined by razor wire and steel gates,” notice that she also desires to “bring it into the embrace of an unbound parish: to let people in the ‘free world’ know their imprisoned sisters and brothers need their prayers, actions, and mindfulness.”

Read the rest of the sermon at <http://bit.ly/JI7mQN>.



Flo Viverette taught writing and literature in the University of Tennessee, the University of Maryland, UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Colorado, Winston Salem State University and North Carolina State University. She has lived in Penick Village since 1994.

“—I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse: therefore choose life —”

Deuteronomy 30:19

choose LIFE

By Flo Viverette
Reprinted with permission
from Penick Village

The bookshelves in the room where I spend many hours contains some of the great minds of our world: Plato, Dante, Shakespeare, Carl Jung. Among them are the poets whose words and sentiments have inspired me since my youth. As I have learned to appreciate and to love them, they have become part of my soul. These artists have created a silent sanctuary where I contemplate some of the eternal perspectives: truth, love, justice. With them I know the bliss of solitude.

Along with love for my family, the great passions of my life are life-long learning and social justice. Now in old age I choose to continue the learning that began long years ago.

I choose to try to learn how my life can be made whole, my days bound together from youth through the later years. I want to be aware that any value in my life is the continuity of love, the love that has been given to me, that moves through me to other lives.

I choose to concentrate on thoughts that are beyond me, to develop the power to praise. I want to strengthen my reverence for words and wisdom.

The superior minds who guide my learning are still drawing me toward being what I was meant to be. They offer me the joy of elevated thought. They remind me that in old age I can find fulfillment, as the Psalmist promised. The last years can reveal what the early years were made for.

I choose to continue to grow in consciousness, in learning, in love. I choose not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of my mind.

I choose life.



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BISHOPS' VISITATIONS

3-Jun-12	Christ Church, Charlotte Afternoon: St. John's, Charlotte	St. Timothy's, Wilson	Area 5 St. Matthew's, Salisbury Sa/Su San Mateo, Salisbury Good Shepherd, Cooleemee
10-Jun-12	Holy Trinity, Greensboro	Good Shepherd, Raleigh	
17-Jun-12	St. Clement's, Clemmons	St. Ambrose, Raleigh	St. Joseph's, Durham
24-Jun-12	St. Paul's/St.Mathias, Louisburg	Holy Comforter, Burlington	
1-Jul-12	No Visitations during summer		
8-Jul-12	General Convention, Indianapolis	General Convention, Indianapolis	General Convention, Indianapolis
9-Sep-12	St. Cyprian's, Oxford	Epiphany, Eden	Episcopal Center at Duke St. Matthew's, Hillsborough
16-Sep-12	Area 1 All Saints, Hamlet; Sa/Su St. Davids, Laurinburg; Chapel of the Transfiguration, Penick Village		
23-Sep-12	St. Barnabas, Greensboro	St. Mark's, Raleigh	
30-Sep-12		St. Matthew's, Kernersville	Trinity, Fuquay-Varina
7-Oct-12	St. Thomas, Reidsville	St. Paul's, Thomasville	Ascension, Fork
14-Oct-12	Nativity, Raleigh	Good Shepherd, Asheboro	
21-Oct-12	St. Philip's, Durham	Good Shepherd, Rocky Mt	St. Paul's, Smithfield
28-Oct-12	All Saints', Roanoke Rapids	St. Peter's, Charlotte	

Bishops' visitations are subject to change. To confirm a specific date, please contact the Bishop's office at 919.834.7474 or email Margo Acomb at margo.acomb@episdionc.org.