



Church Life!

The Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

WINTER 2011/2012



What's Inside?

- Social Media and The Episcopal Church
- Relationships Thrive with the Dioceses of Tanga and Belize
- Journey to the Center Provides Unique Education

ChurchLife!

The Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

Vol. 115, No. 4, Winter 2011/2012

The Episcopal Church



In the Anglican Communion

A global community of over 80 million members in 44 regional and national member churches.

The Most Rev. Rowan Williams,
Archbishop of Canterbury

In the United States

A community of more than 2 million members in 110 dioceses in the Americas and abroad.

Established 1789.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori,
Presiding Bishop

In the Diocese of Ohio

A community of 18,727 baptized members in 94 parishes in the northern 48 counties of the State of Ohio.
Established 1817.

Bishop of Ohio

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.

ChurchLife!

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© ChurchLife! (ISSN 8750-8613) Published four times per year in March, June, September, and December, by the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio: 2230 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-2499.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to ChurchLife!, 2230 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115

Periodicals postage paid at Cleveland, OH and at additional mailing offices.
Member of the Episcopal Communicators.

Important

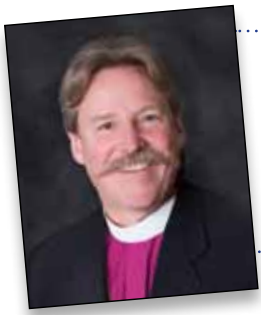
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Front Cover: Bishop Hollingsworth and Bishop Duracin at the Convention Eucharist.



A NEW VISION FOR CAMP AND CONFERENCE MINISTRY

(EXCERPTED FROM BISHOP HOLLINGSWORTH'S CONVENTION ADDRESS)

LAST SUMMER, WITH THE HELP of Katie Ong-Landini, former Senior Warden at Christ Church, Shaker Heights, I visited a number of camps, retreat centers, and other facilities, both church-related and secular, that are connected in some direct way with a sustainable farming operation. None of these is doing exactly what in last year's address I had suggested we might consider, but each had one or more elements of what was imagined. The result was a vision of a camp and retreat facility that we could lay over a range of properties in our diocese to see what such an operation might look like in northern Ohio.

We came to see that on a modest property a diocese like ours could have a camp for children and teens that can accommodate one hundred campers and the required staff, living in groups of cabins, platform tents, and yurts, participating in all aspects of farm life, food production and preparation, spiritual formation, environmental education, and, of course, recreation. It would include a central dining facility with both indoor and outdoor feeding capacity for 250 people, serviced by a licensed community kitchen in which food preparation and preservation could be taught, perhaps someday even incorporating a culinary job training program. It would need appropriate farm buildings for livestock, poultry, education, workshops, and, of course, bicycle repair.

As a retreat venue, it would need to provide simple and comfortable overnight accommodations for adults, in single and double rooms, connected or adjacent to multi-purpose meeting space. It might include a small number of individual hermitages for those on contemplative retreat, desiring to get away for study, prayer, and rest. And it would have a variety of worship venues for all seasons, both indoor and out, for varying sized groups and events.

As a place equipping us for the future, it would need to be built using such alternative and "green" resources as straw-bale and cob construction. It would need to exhibit the full range of alternative energy sources: geo-thermal heating, photovoltaic solar systems, solar hot water systems, and wind turbines. It would need to employ rainwater harvesting systems and grey-water reclamation. It would need to compost all allowable waste, including using composting bathroom facilities. It could be a showcase of green technology for northern Ohio and a destination for school fieldtrips, and set a standard for energy sustainability in our church buildings and homes. It would practice and teach sustainable farming, and perhaps on a Community Supported Agriculture model, partner with

parish food and feeding ministries to supply their fresh and preserved produce. And it could be a source of training and resources for parish gardens and urban agriculture.

Bold actions of the church do not happen because a few people think they are worthy of undertaking. They happen when the whole body gets behind them and commits to them, when the whole body begins to share a common vision and ownership, when the whole body lives into them and is transformed by them. I believe that this is one of those opportunities for bold action that can vitalize the church and provide collectively for many congregations what they struggle to provide on their own.

In six years we will gather at the 201st Convention to begin celebrating our bi-centennial, two centuries of ministry as The Episcopal Church in Ohio. In 1818, the Diocese of Ohio was formed as the first diocese beyond the original 13 colonies. It was a pioneering diocese, looking forward with bold anticipation to an unknown and unknowable future. When we gather to mark that beginning and celebrate all that God has done with us since then, I want to have embraced with you, at every level of our church, a renewed and adventurous spirit, worthy of Philander Chase and his pioneering colleagues, a spirit and commitment that equips us for a new century of our life as the body of Christ in this place. As with all of the celebrations of the church, the 200th anniversary of the Diocese must be a celebration of what is yet to come, marked by a preparedness to meet a future eagerly anticipated. I believe that an essential part of our readiness for the next century of life as the Diocese of Ohio must be a renewed vocation to camp and retreat ministry. And to meet that new century with a new piece of holy ground dedicated to the spiritual formation and leadership development of all our communicants will be a sign that we are equipped and equipping for every good work and have a vibrant hope for the future.

I invite you to join me in working to equip and invigorate the church for the next century of God's mission, with your thoughtful conversation and intentional prayer, in your parishes, your particular ministries, your peer groups, and as the elected and ordained leadership in the Diocese of Ohio. And as we venture into discernment about a camp and retreat ministry that dramatically equips us in new ways for every good work, I encourage us to be bold in our faith, bold in our hope, and bold in our action.

*Read the Bishop's address in its entirety at www.dohio.org.
Look for 195th Convention under the Governance tab.*

BISHOP DURACIN OF HAITI, REPORT ON CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER HIGHLIGHTED AT CONVENTION

THE 195TH CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF Ohio was held this year at the Marriott Cleveland East with dinner and the Convention Eucharist on Friday night at Trinity Cathedral.

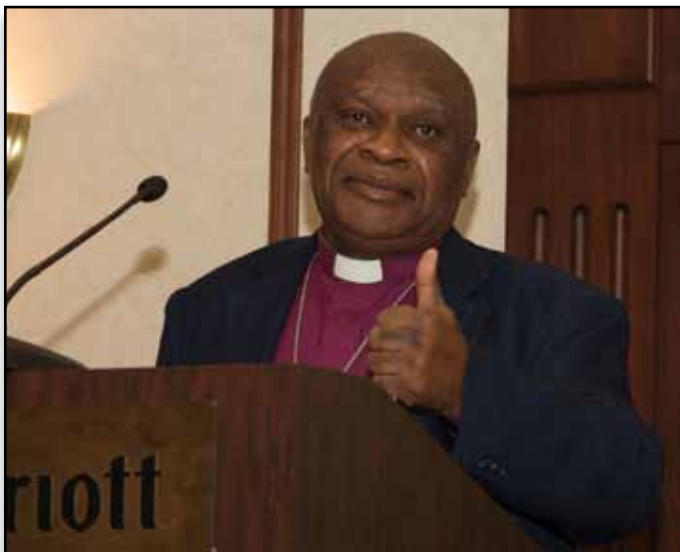
A visit from Bishop Jean-Zaché Duracin of Haiti was among the highlights. He addressed the Convention on Friday and gave the sermon at the Convention Eucharist. As Bishop Hollingsworth noted, the ongoing tragedies around the world make for a short attention span, and we don't hear as much about Haiti as we did in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake.

Bishop Duracin opened his remarks by saying that when he realized how many people supported the rebuilding of the cathedral in Haiti after the earthquake, it gives him and the people of Haiti great hope for the future.

In 2011, the Episcopal church in Haiti celebrated its 150th anniversary. As Bishop of Haiti since 1994, Duracin is only the second native Haitian bishop. The Haitian church, he said, has always tried to preach a holistic gospel, one that takes into account the social, moral, physical, and spiritual situation of the Haitian people.

The church has been an integral part of the life of Haiti, he told the group. In education, healthcare and other social programs, it has been the only institution that

Bishop Jean-Zaché Duracin of the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti addressed the convention.



Trinity Cathedral Urban Service Corps members.

has existed to help the people. The church's contributions include 254 schools in Haiti, from kindergarten through university. The cathedral itself, renowned for its murals, is a symbol of hope for all the people of Haiti, and that underscores the importance of rebuilding it, he said. His presence at the Diocese of Ohio's Annual Convention was one way to express his thanks to the Episcopal church.

"We have seen God alive in our life in Haiti... We have lost our buildings and many things, but the church is there, the community is there, faith is there," he said. "With your support, instead of becoming weaker, we will become stronger."

Service Corps Comes to Cleveland

Another highlight of convention was a report by the Trinity Cathedral Urban Service Corps, part of the Episcopal Service Corps. Members of the corps are spending a year working with various non-profit groups and ministries, including the Cleveland Leadership Center, Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries, several hunger ministries, and other organizations, and living in intentional community. The group lives together in a house and has written a rule of life for themselves.

The Episcopal Youth Event held in St. Paul, Minnesota, last summer was also highlighted. Several participants called it a life-changing experience. Said one EYE member of the people they met, "From Hawaii to Ohio,

we got to see we weren't alone."

All eight resolutions brought before Convention passed, including two on the Denominational Health Plan (R-7 and R-8). R-5, which garnered the most discussion, was a resolution Concerning High Volume, Horizontal Hydraulic Fracturing or Fracking. It passed with an amendment. Convention participants noted the urgency of acting on R-5, because fracking has already begun in northeastern Ohio. The resolutions can be viewed online at www.dohio.org/convention.

Convention also voted to enter into partnerships with the Dioceses of Belize and Tanga, and all canonical changes were approved.

Camp and Retreat Center

In his Episcopal Address, Bishop Hollingsworth reported on a year-long exploration into a new camp and retreat center in the diocese. He said:

"I believe this is the time for the Diocese of Ohio to do a bold, new thing for our youth, for our adults, for our future, for those who will

arrive long after we have departed, for the strengthening of our community as a diocese, and for a re-kindled spirit of hope. I believe that now is the time for us to build together a new camp and retreat

facility, a common and holy place to foster our spiritual and mission vocations as Christians and Episcopalians, a facility and program through which we can

be exposed and challenged to lives of spiritual growth, social justice, and environmental fidelity."

Continuing his report on the Camp and Retreat Ministry, he said,

"If we are to answer fully a calling to camp and retreat ministry, we will need to build a facility and program that prepares our young people today for the leadership responsibilities they will shoulder 25 years from now, in both the church and the world.

"We will need to build a facility and program that challenges adults to understand how the "new life" Jesus offers is often a life of radical change

lived today for the benefit of tomorrow. We will need to create a 'thin' place, a place of spiritual sensitivity and intimacy with God, where together we can develop those spiritual disciplines that connect us to God and to the world God loves and make us better fit to serve both. We

will need to develop a diocesan center for healthy living; growing and serving healthy, local foods; engaging in outdoor work and recreation; learning



Donald Sheppard, former treasurer and archivist for the diocese, received the Bishop's Medal.

modest exercise practices; and modeling a stewardship of our own bodies for a society in which two out of three adults are overweight or obese, as is one out of every five children and teens.

"I have no doubt that it is eminently possible and well within our capability to do this. Vast quantities of our diocese are in fact farmland. We have the geography for it. I have visited properties, centrally located in the diocese and accessible to air transportation and likely partner institutions such as colleges and green technology industries that are naturally conducive to just this sort of ministry and program."

Bishop Hollingsworth also announced that Bill Powel will replace the late Richard Watson as Chancellor of the Diocese. Powel is a member of St. Paul's, Cleveland Heights, and general council at Summa Health Care.

The remainder of the resolutions, canonical changes, and election results can be found online at www.dohio.org/convention.

*"We have seen
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Bishop Duracin

SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BY LINDA KINSEY

“The Episcopal Church is participating in a digital media revolution as profound as Gutenberg’s printing press—and there’s no going back.”

—from The Episcopal Church Office of Communications Social Media Guide

THE DIOCESE OF OHIO’S WEBSITE INVITES VISITORS to “Find us on Facebook” and “Follow us on Twitter.” For those not part of the social media revolution, those words may sound strange and perplexing. But for others, daily visits to Facebook and Twitter are routine and comfortable as a cozy couch.

Unlike newspapers, where news is a one-way street, social media, an online tool, allows users to comment, upload videos and photos, and interact with each other in groups. Some of the most popular social media include Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. A number of other tools exist, as well.

Whether you are one who has found a happy existence in the digital world or are reluctant to embrace it, “there is no going back,” according to a study published by The Episcopal Church.

In its report, “Social Media and The Episcopal Church: A new way to tell a 2000-year-old story,” published early last August, churches are urged to develop websites and engage in online conversations.

It acknowledges, “there are risks to engaging in online social media.” But the report points out, “there are also

opportunities for religious leaders who have the courage of their convictions.”

The delicate balance between risk and venturing into that brave new world of social media is something the corporate world has been grappling with for several years. Judging by the number of parish websites, it also is an issue that the church is tackling. The diocese itself includes regular e-mail blasts, notifying those who wish to receive them of recent events and upcoming activities.



Martha Wright, director of communications for the diocese, agrees, “social media is a great way to help spread the Gospel.

Any way we can do that is a good thing. It’s probably the best way to reach young people today.”

The diocesan Facebook page serves as an electronic billboard where events and short messages can be published in a flash and where people can conduct online conversations.

“But more important,” Wright says, “we get new ideas from others. For example, after we had developed the billboards (in a diocesan marketing campaign) and put pictures of them on our Facebook page, someone suggested that we make yard signs, bumper stickers, and door hangers to match them, which we thought was a great idea. So it allows us to have conversations that we wouldn’t necessarily have otherwise.”

Bill Joseph, technology consultant for the diocese, concurs with that: “There is a great opportunity to connect with people from around the church who might not otherwise be in contact with each other. This kind of interaction can lead to an exchange of ideas and viewpoints that can be of benefit. It provides the opportunity to exchange not only theological viewpoints but liturgics and outreach opportunities.”

To gauge whether social media is a tool that St. Paul, Cleveland Heights, wants to use, a communications survey was conducted last summer. Kim Fry, communications coordinator for the parish, says “we

are using the results to rethink the ways we communicate to various segments of our membership. For example, we noted that over 50 percent of people under 40 responded to the survey and said social media was one of the most effective ways to communicate with them, e-mail being the most effective.”

Already well engaged in social media is Forward Movement, a

non-profit agency

of the Episcopal Church whose primary role is to create compelling content for Christian living. It may be best known for its quarterly pamphlet, *Day by Day*.

Forward Movement’s executive director, the Rev.

Scott Gunn, believes that “if the church wants to stay connected with those outside our buildings, it is essential that we make use of social media,” he says.

That said, he says it will take time for the Church to discover social media’s best use.

Meanwhile, Forward Movement has nearly 3,000 followers on Facebook.

“Each day we post our own meditations, as well as prayers

and other things meant to inspire our readers. We also have a chance to engage with people—to share and hear stories. Many of our authors hop on our page to engage with our readers.”

Parish websites as a cornerstone

As more and more parishes in the Diocese of Ohio ramp up their websites to include YouTube videos and Facebook pages, some are finding a whole new way of welcoming newcomers to their parish and engaging current parishioners in conversation and activities.

One of those parishes is Harcourt Parish, Gambier, which has a robust website and launched a Facebook page about a year ago.

A firm believer in the power of websites to aid parishes, the Rev. Helen Svoboda-Barber, rector at Harcourt, says, “These days, when people want to find information, they go to the web. If we want to attract new

The delicate balance between risk and venturing into that brave new world of social media is something the corporate world has been grappling with for several years.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Facebook: A social-media networking site in which users invite others to become “friends.” Users post comments, videos and photos. Individuals may have Facebook pages, but institutions such as churches and corporations may also have Facebook pages. When users create a Facebook account, they may create a personal profile.

Twitter: According to Twitter’s own website, it is a “real-time information network that connects you to the latest information about what you find interesting. Simply find the public streams you find most compelling and follow the conversations.”

Tweets: These are the bursts of information Twitter users send out. Each Tweet is limited to 140 characters in length.

YouTube: This is a video networking site in which registered users upload videos on a wide spectrum of topics. The site allows for comments, as well.

people, we must have a web presence with basic information as ways for them to learn more about our parish and the Episcopal Church before they even cross our threshold.”

Alicia Misarti handles the Harcourt Parish web page and agrees with Svoboda-Barber on the value of its presence.

“An online presence is absolutely important for parishes looking to communicate with their parishioners and, perhaps more importantly, attract new membership.

At a minimum, people want to know when your services are held and where to find you. I also believe the more active your website is, the better.

What’s happening, when and where? Is there a calendar of events? Can I ‘like’ you on Facebook? Who can I e-mail if I have a question?”

Joseph, who often assists local parishes in establishing their websites says that websites are critical to the life of the parish but offers one caveat: “Having a good team maintaining the site is important because dramatically out-of-date information on your site is arguably worse than having no site at all.”

St. Paul’s, Mount Vernon, is also one of many parishes in the diocese that maintains an up-to-date website, but its rector, the Rev. Karl Stevens, gives mixed reviews to the role of social media in the life of the Church.

On the plus side, “Websites can be used to help parishioners get to know each other better,” he says. “Their

accomplishments and moments in the spotlight can be promoted online, with their permission, of course.

“In a way, this returns churches to their old social role as places where people went to mingle and make

contacts. As a priest, I’m a little dubious about this, since I’d much rather that church be a place for spiritual growth and intent to worship.”

He admits to going “back and forth” about the advisability of social media because “I feel circum-spect about the social emphasis in church itself.” But websites, Stevens says, are “obviously crucial.” He sees parish web pages as an online

welcome mat for people

looking for a church home.

“If possible, sermons should be put up on the website, since I know of several instances of people choosing to visit a church because they liked what they heard in a sermon,” he says.

The Episcopal Church’s White Paper advises parishes to “make your website the crown jewel of your communications strategy and keep it fresh with constant updates.”

The report urges parishes to include such basic information as service times, bios on staff members, transcripts of sermons, news feeds, videos of events, and updates of fundraising projects.

To Tweet or not to Tweet

Last year, according to some media reports, a staggering 60 billion Tweets (messages posted on Twitter) were

sent out worldwide, representing a massive growth in number of users since Twitter launched six years ago.

Twitter messages are confined to 140 characters, and Twitter users “follow” organizations and individuals. Links to other sites are often included in Tweets, and in time, users build up a number of followers.

“I have to admit that Twitter is my favorite social media platform,” Stevens wrote in a piece published on his parish’s website entitled “The Online Church.” He follows a variety of media outlets and some celebrities, including Steve Martin.

“But there are also more personal relationships that grow through Twitter,” he wrote. “There are a number of avid Christians who have Twitter feeds and they’re the kind of Christians I like—quirky, creative, well-intentioned. Reading their feeds is peaceful and entertaining.”

While Stevens enjoys humor and says he follows a lot of funny people on Twitter, he came to the conclusion that it was “inauthentic for me to try to be funny on Twitter. I’m a priest, not a comedian.”

What he also discovered was that Twitter was a great place to “capture those little sparkling moments when I notice the beauty of the world and feel God’s presence coming near. So that’s what my Twitter feed is, just little poems that try to reflect the majesty of God and the created world. One can be a spiritual leader on Twitter in the same way one would try to be such a leader in any other setting.”

If leadership via social media isn’t enough to convince parishes to flock to Twitter, consider the number of Tweets posted last year; those numbers are growing—especially among the younger set.

Facing Facebook

Going where the kids are is what it’s all about, according to Paul Winter,

“[I]t’s a great tool to get the information out to your members, but if it starts taking the place of actual face-to-face contact and exchange of ideas, it lessens the church experience.”

Paul Winter, Youth Minister, St. Paul’s, Cleveland Heights

youth minister at St. Paul's, Cleveland Heights.

"I'm a firm believer that you have to announce (activities) where they are going to pay most attention. I always do a voice announcement of upcoming events and create a flier and e-mail that out, but the one thing I've had the most success with is Facebook," Winter says.

He created a Facebook group for parish youth in grades 7 through 12. "It's an easy way to get out last-minute information and allow the members to comment back and have a discussion."

One of the big advantages of Facebook, he says, is the "events" option, which gets out information regarding time and place and allows for comments. This way, he is able

to keep track of those who plan to attend the event.

"This is a great tool for planning the event, but also to talk to those who said they are not coming either to see what's going on or to use as a check-in tool."

Svoboda-Barber of Harcourt Parish says her church has had a Facebook page for a year or two and has noticed that parishioners are regular Facebook users.

"We have not used the page to it's potential," she says. "In the beginning, I posted sermons and wrote updates about upcoming events. These days, it is mostly dormant."

While the parish Facebook page may be inactive right now, she remains an active Facebook user herself and stays in touch with the parish-

ioners, who update events in their lives, which "really helps me keep in touch with them pastorally. I find great use in it."

Meanwhile, at St. Paul, Cleveland Heights, Fry says discussions have begun regarding creation of a parish Facebook page. "We will likely start one in the next few months. We think the benefits of using Facebook include reminders of parish activities, sharing breaking news and events, sharing photos of recent events. It is also a cost-effective and green way of getting our message out there."

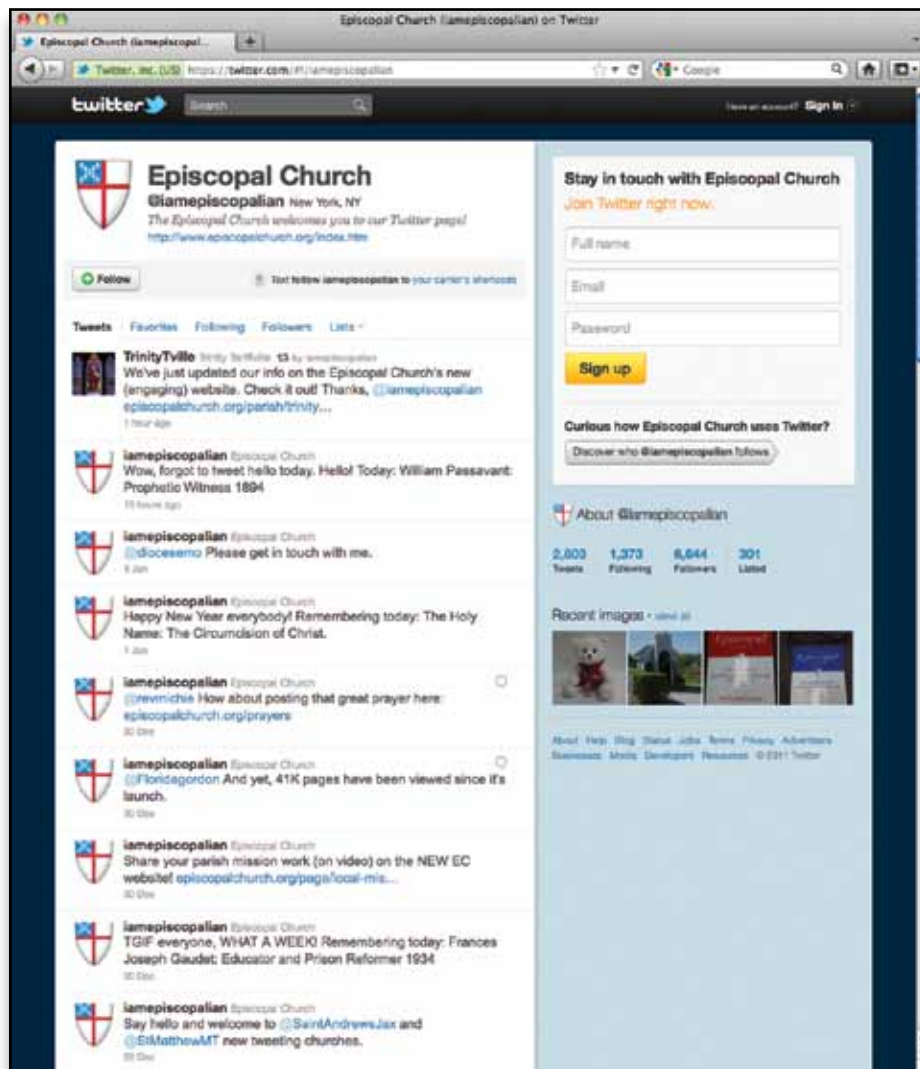
She says that social media, which is already on the parish radar screen, will definitely play a "larger role as we continue to reshape our communications strategy at St. Paul's."

A perfect brave new world?

While the need for robust parish websites and some interaction through social media such as Facebook and Twitter may prove to be valuable, not everyone is convinced that a headlong plunge into social media is the way to proceed.

Wright, for one, is concerned for churches with older congregations. "When we forget that everyone isn't using social media, we are leaving out the very people who have been loyal and extremely valuable members of our community. So I don't think we're ready to go all electronic yet. The other concern for individual parishes and for their clergy and lay workers is that social media is a very public and traceable means of communication."

Those who work in the church, she says, need to "think carefully before they Tweet a blast or rant that may haunt them forever. We all say things privately to our friends or family members that we wouldn't say as representatives of the church, and sometimes the sheer pervasiveness of social media blurs the line between public and private."



Misarti of Harcourt Parish says she is “wary” of Twitter. “There has been a lot written and discussed about the need to monitor Twitter accounts closely as they have become a forum for airing grievances.”

She thinks that Twitter may be more useful for larger parishes with more staff members to keep watch on the Tweets.

Joseph, too, believes caution should be used when parishes think about using Twitter. “Using Twitter limits the amount of interaction to 140 characters, and it can be difficult to fully flesh out a point in that amount of space. Facebook is a little better as there is the opportunity to reply in a threaded conversation with most space restrictions removed. Either way, social media is not a substitute for face-to-face communication and coming together as a community of worship.”

Winter, youth minister at St. Paul’s, Cleveland Heights, acknowledges that social media is already playing a role in the life of the Church. “I think the important thing is to not let it take over the whole church experience. Personally, I feel that it’s a great tool to get the information out to your members, but if it starts taking the place of actual face-to-face contact and exchange of ideas, it lessens the church experience.”

Stevens of St. Paul’s, Mount Vernon, isn’t sure whether his church should be involved in social media at all.

In his web page-published piece, “The Online Church,” he writes that “if we’re doing it just to do it, or because we’re afraid that if we don’t we’ll lose relevance in a changing world, then I don’t think that those are compelling enough reasons.

“A church will always be relevant to the people who come together to worship Christ regardless of whether or not that church has an online profile.”

GUIDELINES FOR USING SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CHURCH

BY LINDA KINSEY

WHILE NO FORMAL POLICY EXISTS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA WITHIN THE Diocese of Ohio, The Episcopal Church has created a set of guidelines for suggested use.

Published in August of 2011, “Social Media and The Episcopal Church: A new way to tell a 2,000-year-old story” is available for free download at www.episcopalchurch.org.

The report outlines six primary points, as a set of best practices for church websites:

1. “Know Thyself.” The report recommends that parishes list the top five programs that make their congregations unique and then create Facebook pages and Twitter accounts for each program.
2. “Make your website the crown jewel of your communications strategy and keep it fresh with constant updates.” The updates should include basic information, such as service schedules, directions to the church, bios of church leaders, and other basic “about us” information. Sermon transcripts should be published, the report says, as well as blogs, news feeds, videos of events and status updates of church fundraising projects.
3. “Make it a two-way conversation.” E-mail addresses of people central to the church should be included and posted in the church website of its Facebook page, enabling feedback forms so people can type in their reactions to what they’ve just seen or read.”
4. “Put someone in charge of your online strategy.” The report is clear about the importance of communications: “Treat your online communications as an essential part of your church’s operations. Write a job description—even if the ‘job’ is a volunteer position—that specifies precisely how often the website will be updated, how many Facebook updates will be posted every week and how many Tweets will be sent out a day.”
5. “Don’t be too controlling.” While offering guidelines is advisable, the report says, it cautions not to be “overly strict.” Good manners and polite discourse should be encouraged, but “don’t censor messages that simply express disagreement with prevailing congregational attitudes.”
6. “Don’t reinvent the wheel.” The report encourages churches to research products and services that may already exist before trying

to build something themselves. “It is very likely that someone has already created what you need.”

Additionally, the Rev. Helen Svoboda-Barber, rector of Harcourt Parish, Gambier, believes that parishes should create a policy on social media interaction with minors. “Do consider that anything you write can and may be shared broadly—with folks way beyond your intended audience.”

Martha Wright, communications officer for the Diocese of Ohio, says some guidelines should be implemented but not necessarily from the top down: “I do think we should have some guidelines, although they might work better if parishes or particular groups came up with their own, rather than something diocesan-wide. The social media of youth ministries will be very different from those of more established congregations, I imagine.”

The Rev. Scott Gunn, executive director of Forward Movement, says some common sense cautions should be applied to the use of social media by clergy: “Social media pose precisely the same challenges as ‘real’ relationships. Clergy have to think about what they share, about who they share it with and how to react to what they learn on Facebook.

“It’s no different,” Gunn says, than a church coffee hour, but adds that “the new form may trick us into making some mistakes. But if one is thoughtful and careful, there aren’t great dangers.”

Kim Fry, communications coordinator for St. Paul’s, Cleveland Heights, says a set of “best practices” for social media is in order. “I have collected some of the social media policies of other parishes and I have seen the White Paper from The Episcopal Church. St. Paul’s will

definitely use those resources to help set policy for the use of its Facebook page before the page is launched. It will be important to post items regularly but not excessively, and the page will need to convey a consistent message in a consistent form.”

Bill Joseph, technology consultant for the diocese, says he believes that the parish communications team should be made up of individuals who are “well-versed in that particular application (of social media). They need to be able to monitor and add to the conversation, and to respond quickly to questions and comments.”

Beyond that, Joseph says parishes should adopt a set of guidelines for using social media because messages sent through social media channels represent the parish and “therefore carry some weight. While guidelines may not be necessary, the vestry, the rector and the communications team should have a discussion about what information gets posted, how often and by whom.”

Meanwhile, The Episcopal Church is not the only denomination to wrestle with social media guidelines. The Orthodox Church in America came up with a detailed report issued in October 2011, aimed primarily at clergy.

In its report, “Guidelines for Clergy Use of Online Social Networking,” the OCA advises clergy to set “very stringent” privacy settings on any social networking profile to shield adult and youth members from viewing content that may be “inappropriate.”

Additionally, the report urges clergy who wish to engage in social media with parishioners do so through a group account that all members of the parish may join. Clergy also are told to consider the consequences of “declining a ‘friend’

request” from parishioners.

An extensive set of guidelines is also outlined for social networking with youth.

The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut looked to the Connecticut Conference of United Church of Christ for its set of guidelines in developing its own report.

The Diocese of Connecticut report addresses such key issues as recommended practices and guidelines for interactions with children and youth, recommended practices and guidelines for interactions with adults, and general recommendations for “digital communications and contact.”

A portion of the report is devoted to “behavioral covenants,” which addresses such thorny issues as removing members from social media networking groups. “Consider how and when members will be removed from the group due to moving away, leaving the faith community, becoming too old for youth group, clergy leaving to minister to another parish or excluding from ministry positions for other reasons.”

A Christian Experience Happening

February 24–26, 2012
Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland

For young people in grades 9-12.

For more information contact
Canon Vincent Black at
vblack@dohio.org or 216-774-0453.

RELATIONSHIPS THRIVE IN DIOCESES OF OHIO, TANGA, AND BELIZE

BY FLORENCE D'EMILIA

IN A MUD BRICK CHURCH SEVEN TIME ZONES AWAY, children dressed in brightly colored cotton clothing sat on plastic tarps spread-out on a dirt floor. Adults sat on simple wooden benches. Parishioners of an Anglican Church in Tanzania, Africa, gathered to welcome visitors from the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio.

“Every time one of us stood to speak,” recalls Patty Peacock, a member of Christ Church, Oberlin, “Joyce Mhando would begin the Mama Song. The words are ‘Mama Mama! Here she is! We love her!’”

Relationships between the people of the Diocese of Ohio and people of Tanga and Belize are thriving. Two resolutions passed at the 195th Convention of the Diocese of Ohio affirming companionships with the Diocese of Tanga, Province of Tanzania and the Anglican Diocese of Belize, Province of West Indies. The resolutions empower the Commission on Global and Domestic Mission to oversee the relationships by encouraging and supporting the participation of persons and congregations in the Diocese of Ohio.

Travel in Tanga

The warm response of the people gathered in a church in Tanga was repeated many times as seven laypersons and one priest traveled across the diocese to parishes, hospitals and schools during August 2011. The ten-day relationship-building visit expanded the groundwork laid by Brendan Knoblauch (St. Paul’s, Cleveland Heights). Three years ago, Bishop Hollingsworth asked Knoblauch to spend 18 months in the Diocese of Tanga, building relationships and discerning projects that the two dioceses might engage in for mutual benefit. After returning to the United States, Knoblauch visited

“We gain so much more when we enter into relationships as peers, despite our wealth.”

The Rev. Daniel Orr



Brendan Knoblauch, Joe Bridges, Anne Schwan, Sarah Schendel, Dr. Mary Bower, Patty Peacock, Linda Heitger, and the Rev. Daniel Orr in Dar Es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania.

parishes in the Diocese of Ohio, and people generously responded to requests for help and involvement.

The Ohio contingent was tasked with three jobs: plant the seeds of parish-to-parish relationships; work with the medical staff of St. Raphael’s Hospital; and build relationships with the Diocese of Tanga’s head office and standing committee. The group arrived in Tanzania after traveling 24 hours. They spent one night in Dar es Salaam and one in Korogwe, and then the three teams went their various ways as they embarked on different tasks.

Joseph Bridges (New Life, Uniontown) and the Rev. Daniel Orr, rector of St. Paul’s, Fremont, met with diocesan leaders, talking about how to foster a companion relationship and identify projects. In the past, relationships with third-world countries were too often paternalistic. Relationships are now characterized by much more give and take.

Parish-to-Parish

Peacock and the other ambassadors on the parish-to-parish team, Sarah Schendel (St. Michael’s, Toledo) and Ann Schwan (Church of Saviour, Akron), traveled three hours by safari vehicle to the city of Handeni where their

guest house had western toilets but no running water.

"We visited six parishes in three days," Peacock recalled. "At every stop, we were greeted by members of the congregation with songs and clapping. We were treated as dignitaries and were seated in front of the altar with our escorts and members of the clergy." The choirs ranged from a small tribal group singing call-and-response acapella to full electricity-driven rock bands. Peacock made videos of several of the choirs which can be viewed on

YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkfWDlwF1cI>

At each of the parishes, the ambassadors introduced themselves and heard reports from individuals and groups including the senior warden, the head of the Mother's Union, the Youth Wing and community leaders. With the help of translators, a dialog ensued. Tanzanians asked about issues and concerns including Christian/Muslim relations in the United States, how to get or keep youth involved in spiritual growth, Episcopalians as the "frozen chosen," sustainable agriculture in the developed and developing world, and personal histories with the church.

Medical Team Connects with St. Raphael's Hospital

When Mary Bower, MD, of St. Paul's, Fremont, and Linda Heitger, a nurse and member of New Life, Uniontown, arrived at St. Raphael's Hospital they discovered a com-

pound of buildings built on a hill. The sixty-bed hospital provides in-patient adult and pediatric care, assists with sixty to eighty deliveries a month, and sees approximately one hundred outpatients every day in the prenatal, immunization,

and HIV clinics. In addition, St. Raphael's has educational programs offering certificates in volunteer nursing, a distance-learning program in nursing and midwifery, and is in the process of establishing a traditional school of nursing.

The hospital provides these services despite challenges. A well at the bottom of the hill provides water that is hand carried to the hospital. A local power company provides electricity, which fluctuates frequently. A recently built incinerator disposes of dry waste but an outside burning-pit is used for wet waste. Sixteen of the fifty-four employees are paid by the government, but the others are paid by the Diocese of Tanga when funds are available.

As Bower and Heitger worked with the board and staff of St. Raphael's, they were impressed by their sense of service and

The Rev. Daniel Orr greets Anglican Sisters in Tanga City.

professionalism. Continuing to work with St. Raphael's will assist the Diocese of Ohio in addressing three of the eight Millennium Development Goals: reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and fighting HIV/AIDS, malaria and disease.

Relationship Building in Belize

When they vacationed in Belize, Dick and Cindy Shaffer (Grace Church, Defiance) always sought out Anglican churches for Sunday worship. During one vacation, there was no church nearby, so they visited the local Anglican school and subsequently became volunteers at Holy Cross Anglican School.

In Belize, Anglican schools play a valuable role in the formation of children and the church, according to the Rev. Marie Phillips, canon for mission on the diocesan staff and interim rector in Hudson. Education is compulsory to age fourteen in Belize. Beyond primary, all education is self-pay with only one-half of primary school graduates continuing on to secondary school, and a small elite receiving any form of higher education.

As the Shaffers became more committed to the people of Belize, the parishioners of Grace Church, Defiance, became involved as well.

"It's exciting to see our young people's idea of Church and their relationship with God expanding through these friendships."

The Rev. Jeffrey Baker





Teenagers from Belize joined local youth at Camp Cedar Hills over the summer.

“Grace Church has been involved as long as we have,” said Cindy Shaffer. In 2007, the Shaffers spent three months volunteering at Holy Cross. Additional relationships were established with the staffs and children of schools in the villages of St. Agnes and La Democracia when a mission team from St. Peter’s, Ashtabula, went to Belize in January 2011. Back home, parishioners in Ashtabula continue to support the schools in many ways including sewing uniforms for the students.

Cedar Hills Experiment

In recognition of how much can be gained from a companion partnership, a group of Belizean youths and adults traveled to Ohio this summer. The teenagers joined local youths at Camp Cedar Hills where they lived together sharing camp life. The teenagers got to know one another through hiking, canoeing, archery, and leadership building activities. Then the visitors enjoyed the hospitality of Ohio families who introduced them to fellow parishioners and took them to popular sites such as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and local amusement parks. The Rev. Jeff Baker, whose

fourteen and sixteen-year-old daughters hosted two of the Belizean youths, has noted that the friendships continue to grow as the girls stay connected through social networking such as Facebook.

“It’s exciting to see our young people’s idea of Church and their relationship with God expanding through these friendships,” said Baker.

Conversations with the Rt. Rev. Philip Wright, Bishop of Belize, affirmed that service to children through education will be a priority. A computer literacy project is scheduled to take place in March 2012. Two computer science professors from Mount Vernon Nazarene University will lead a team of ten to 20 people installing computer labs and providing computer seminars to teachers and school administrators at Anglican Schools in Belize. Each school will be asked to raise a percentage of the associated costs for building the labs. Costs are kept low by purchasing and refurbishing late model, off lease, high-end laptops, at a typical final cost of about \$200 per unit. Dur-

ing the mission trip, the team will prepare a secure lab room at the school, perhaps painting, building desks, wiring, and enhancing security. Seminars and one-on-one tutoring will prepare teachers and school administrators to use the labs. Although it will be useful if some members are knowledgeable in computer system hardware setup and software installation and configuration, other participants are needed to paint, clean or provide light construction.

Speaking of both partnerships Orr noted, “We gain so much more when we enter into relationships as peers, despite our wealth. We can grow from each other, developing spiritually even as we give materially.”

If you’d like more information about or would like to become involved with the Dioceses of Tanga or Belize, please contact the Rev. Marie Phillips, 216-774-0474 or mphilips@dohio.org; Brendan Knoblauch at 216-816-8861 or bknoblauch@dohio.org or Eugene Stacy at 419-447-8447 or gene.stacy@gmail.com.

The friendships made between the teenagers from Belize and local youth continues through social networking sites such as Facebook.



JOURNEY TO THE CENTER PROVIDES UNIQUE EDUCATION

BY LORNA JORDAN

WHEN THE RT. REV. MARK HOLLINGSWORTH, Jr. visited St. Peter's, Lakewood, on November 13th for baptism and confirmation, he encountered a uniquely educated group of people. They had been through a specially designed program put together by the Rev. G. Keith Owen, II, rector of St. Peter's. Designed by Owen, *Journey to the Center* "is a basic introduction to Christianity Episcopal style."

This year, at St. Peter's, Bishop Hollingsworth performed the rite of reaffirmation for six teens and four adults. The participants vary in their journey with Christ. The group started with 17, but seven people dropped out at the midpoint. Owen notes, "That is not unusual. Many people use the program to enrich their spiritual life. Usually, a significant portion of the group will attend the first 12 sessions, and then opt out of the rest. They may not be interested in going all the way to reaffirmation before the bishop, but just want to go along for the 'informational' first portion of the course." During his tenure at Saint Peter's,

Owen says there have been as few as six people reaffirm their commitment and as many as 18. The largest group he ever led was 25 one year when he was rector of St. Paul's, Albany, New York.

The projects done together by the companions and candidates are the fodder for the faith conversations.

Variety of Ways to Convey Information

The class spans a six-month curriculum that is based on the Baptismal covenant from the *Book of Common Prayer*. Owen uses a variety of ways to convey information, invite reflection, and build community. The program begins in a dramatic fashion with a 25-foot visual timeline of the story of the faith from Abraham down to today. Then, he says "we spend several weeks reflecting upon Holy Scripture "from 30,000 feet."



The Rev. G. Keith Owen, II, Bob Olander (sponsor), Gordon Taylor (confirmand), Martha Taylor (sponsor), Robbie Taylor (confirmand), and Bishop Hollingsworth.

Part one of the six-month program begins a week or two before the Lenten season and concludes on Pentecost Sunday. All together, there are twelve sessions, each of which lasts two hours. Owen says, "within each session, there is an opening time of prayer, a 35- to 45-minute talk, 30 minutes in small group discussion, and about 30 minutes of participant driven "question time." The second part begins on Pentecost Sunday and concludes a few weeks before the bishop's visit.

Each participant picks a sponsor who is a practicing Christian and, in some cases, they may not even be Episcopalians. Teens, in particular, often choose their Godparents, which according to Owen "is the ideal." Older candidates choose family members or friends. The sponsors take up their role in the second portion of the class. As part of the class structure, the companions commit to three things: to pray for their candidate regularly; to spend time in conversation about the life of faith; and to present the candidate to the bishop. The projects done together by the companions and candidates are the fodder for the faith conversations.

St. Peter's parishioner Jim Ford has been a confirmand and a sponsor. He says, "When I was taking *Journey to the Center* as a confirmand, Father Keith told us to start



The Rev. G. Keith Owen, II, Melody Lindquist, and Bishop Hollingsworth.

looking for a sponsor, someone with whom we'd be comfortable spending several months going through the course together and having chats. I knew I was looking for someone who would be good at gentle conversation." He emphasizes that his sponsor, the late Phyllis Mucha, was the best. She acted as a friend and guide, and really listened carefully when we had one-on-one discussions. Acting as a sponsor, Ford said, "I wanted the process to be thought-provoking for confirmand Tom Baker. I suppose the difference was this: as confirmand, I felt like 'the guest.' As sponsor, I felt like 'the host.'"

"The two experiences felt quite different, but there was a common element to both. And that was the easy-going tone that Father Keith set. During the course, our discussions felt deep, intellectually stimulating, and interesting. But they also felt safe, and zero-pressure. And I think that's a tribute to Father Keith."

The sponsors and candidates are assigned a set of reflection and ministry projects to do together. The entire group gets together every 4 to 6 weeks to report on the projects. A full and intentional observance of Holy Week falls in the middle of the course. In the later weeks, they focus on the ministries of prayer, worship, evange-

lism in word and deed, and living the Christian life. Finally, they focus on vocation. Each participant is provided with a guided journal to use at home and to share with his or her small group at sessions.

visit. This is a quiet morning to reflect together upon the commitments and promises of the Baptismal covenant. The bishop attends and offers his own reflections on the Baptismal covenant."

Talking Openly About God

Ford says, "Being able to think aloud about what or who God is, and how he manifests himself was helpful. [I was glad to be] able to talk about this openly, and without judgment. This is not something I do every day of the week, so having the opportunity to reflect and share ideas with others was the best. Now that I'm a member of St. Peter's, I've noticed that often our conversations with each other are about what we've done during the week, or who's in the hospital, or who we need to do a reading during service, and so on. You know... the day-to-day stuff. *Journey to the Center* went deeper, much deeper. Interestingly,

the group discussions in *Journey to the Center* never felt 'faked,' or like people were trying to 'sound Christian' or 'sound religious.' They were just being themselves, and, in turn, being heard by others."

The program spends a lot of time exploring the *Book of Common Prayer* and the Catechism within it, so it is rooted in the Episcopal Church. However, Owen, emphasizes, "it would be very easy to swap out the Episcopal stuff and replace it with denominationally appropriate material. *Journey* is also rooted in a non-dogmatic hermeneutic of Holy Scripture."

Owen started developing *Journey to the Center* in the late 1980s in Newport News, Virginia, when he was an assistant priest to then-Rector Ted Gulick (now, retired Bishop of Kentucky). He continued the work as the rector of St. Paul's, Albany. Owen notes, "Over the years, many people have encouraged me to publish *Journey*, but I have concluded this is impractical." Owen is planning, over

the next few years to put this program up on the web as an interactive website. "It would be available to anyone to use, abuse, or adapt as seems best to them. More importantly, I hope a community of people could grow up around it, improving, adding, and augmenting the stuff I have assembled. Perhaps

it could become a kind of mini-Wikipedia for catechumenal leaders." However, Owen, said, "at this moment that is a good bit beyond my competence level!"

"Interestingly, the group discussions in Journey to the Center never felt 'faked,' or like people were trying to 'sound Christian' or 'sound religious.'"

Jim Ford

WRITING A MEANINGFUL WILL TAKES WILL POWER

BY LAEL CARTER, DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS TELL US IT ALL BEGINS with a will—a document that tells advisors and family how to spend your estate and dispose of your property.

Not exactly true! In reality it all begins with will power—will power to believe in and act on the transformative power of Christ with us. Will power to bring change and make a difference. Then writing a will and planning how to distribute your assets ensures that you will make a difference to your parish, to those you love, and to the community your heirs will inherit.

Without the will and commitment to plan ahead you will not control what happens to your possessions, your family, those you love, and your community after your death.

Churches too are obligated to plan for the future, to use gifts and bequests with wisdom and forethought. Christ Church, Shaker Heights, created the White Spire Fund to receive gifts and bequests. Because it is a fund invested for the future, the percent to be spent is thoughtfully allocated according to established guidelines and procedures. The White Spire Fund holds the hopes and dreams of Christ Church members over many years, so that expenditures from the Fund are a symbol of God's ever renewing presence through its past and future members.

After the Rev. Peter Faass joined Christ Church as rector he wanted to contribute to The White Spire Fund. Faass chose a gift commitment that will allow him to retain income during his lifetime; upon his death the remainder of the property becomes a gift to the White Spire Fund. He also wanted to defer receiving payments until he reaches retirement age, so he established a deferred charitable gift annuity. By deferring payments for several years, Faass also substantially increases the annual income payments he will receive.

The payments he receives each year will be based on his age and other factors at the time he made the gift, and the amount will not change over time. A tax deduction

was allowed at the time he made the gift and a portion of the income he receives will also be tax-free.

Wide Range of Annuities

The Diocese of Ohio has a number of ways to help with your gift and estate planning. Gift plans such as Faass's provide a donor income now and a gift to one's parish upon his or her death. Your dollar commitment to begin a charitable gift annuity may be as small as \$5,000 and as large as \$50,000.

In addition to the charitable gift annuity program, the Diocesan Planned Giving Council supports parishes as well as individuals with all kinds of gift planning. For example, the council offers workshops for mission area councils and parishes. Examples include workshops about:

- writing wills and estate plans, including imparting to loved ones and family the values that have formed you as a Christian;
- planning a funeral; and
- medical decisions and directions that will help doctors and family know and follow your end-of-life wishes.

Possessions and how we use them have a way of defining who we are. In the Episcopal Church we believe that estate plans should reflect our life values. Often thoughtful donors voice the opinion that estate planning only applies to people with a lot of money. But all individuals have a legacy to impart to future generations. And most of us end up leaving some stuff behind; planning for its wise and beneficial partition is kind to family. Your will power now can help to avoid hurt feelings in the future, and it will reflect the values by which you have lived.

Without the will and commitment to plan ahead you will not control what happens to your possessions, your family, those you love, and your community after your death.

CLERGY NOTES

The Rev. J. Jeffrey Baker has begun his ministry as long-term supply priest at Christ Church, Warren.

The Rev. Kelly A. O'Connell has concluded her ministry as rector of St. Mark's, Toledo.



ECW NEWS NOTES

As 2011 draws to a close it seems appropriate to look back and bring you updates on some of the items that have been covered in “News Notes” over the year.

OUTREACH

In the summer issue of *ChurchLife!* there was an article on the gardening projects that were undertaken by several of our parishes. St. Andrew’s on East 49th Street in Cleveland wrote to let us know that they have had a Community Garden for the last two years. The first year was a try out but this year they were able to grow enough vegetables to use in their Hunger Feeding Program that drew compliments from the guests who enjoyed home cooked vegetables.

An unusual aspect of their program is the collaborative program, initiated this year with the George Washington Carver Elementary School, which is located next door to St. Andrews. Students were invited to the garden to learn about planting, harvesting, soil testing and composting. Next year, they hope to add food preparation. The Church is also participating in a recycling program and they hope to expand upon this ministry.

St. Andrew’s is celebrating 120 years of existence and is setting a wonderful example of practical outreach or, as the letter said “a hard working church and the ECW members consistently contributing to make life better for those less fortunate”.

UNITED THANK OFFERING

The UTO Fall Ingathering was recently held, and I thought you might be interested in how the money was used this year. Fifty-nine grants were made for 2011 totaling \$1,634,526, 19 for the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. The grants were awarded to projects in 39 Episcopal Church dioceses, eight companion diocese relationships, and 12 international provinces.

Known worldwide as UTO, the United Thank Offering grants are awarded for projects that address human needs and help alleviate poverty, both domestically and internationally. Most of the grants focused on assistance to food ministries, health clinics, refugee needs, young adults and the construction of classrooms and program space.

Examples of the grants made are:

- Diocese of Minnesota - \$15,725 for a First Nations’ kitchen renovation and community garden project, a ministry of All Saints’ Episcopal Indian Mission in Minneapolis.
- Diocese of Newark - \$7,547 for the Learning Through Literacy program at St. Paul’s in Paterson.
- Diocese of Western North Carolina - \$1,039.70 to develop a web seminar and facilitating contact with small isolated congregations, a project of the Diocese Christian Resources Center and the Canon for Small Churches.
- Thirteen grants totaled \$50,000 or more, with the largest at \$9,500 to the Anglican Church in the Province of West Africa toward the cost of construction of a church building in the Diocese of Tamale, Ghana.
- Diocese of Milwaukee - \$11,576 toward medical equipment for the maternity ward at St. Michael’s Health Center in its companion Diocese of Newala, Tanzania.
- Diocese of South Dakota - \$40,000 toward construction of a primary healthcare unit for the Panyang Community in the companion Diocese of Twic East in South Sudan, Africa.
- The Episcopal Church in the Philippines - \$50,000 toward construction of a two-story multipurpose center for women.
- The Anglican Church of Central America Region - \$35,000 for reconstruction of the Diocese of El Salvador pastoral and retreat center and, of special interest to those in the Diocese of Ohio, a \$14,943 grant towards the cost of a vehicle to replace the one destroyed during an assassination attempt on Bishop Barahona’ life.

SUMMIT MISSION AREAS

The Mission Area ECW Board have two projects for the 2011–12 Program Year, both of them are to help those recovering from surgery.

Bras: Did you know that many women can’t afford

a bra? The staff in an Akron doctor's office noticed that many of the women coming in for care did not have a bra. As the doctor sees many patients who will undergo breast surgery, this was of particular concern. Filling this need is the first of the Mission Areas projects. They are collecting new or gently used bras, all sizes, that will be sanitized and then given to the patients in need, especially those who have undergone major surgery.

Pillows: Those who have undergone either breast or heart surgery know how uncomfortable it is to ride in a car. The seat belt can be very uncomfortable as can anything that places pressure on the surgery site. The answer is a small pillow, about 8" x 5" stuffed with soft filling and with a washable case. If you'd like more details please e-mail me at: hmerby@roadrunner.com and I'll forward the specific details.

One of the dedicated knitters for the Christmas at Sea program has come up with an additional use for the Seaman's Beanie pattern. A member of her parish is a teacher in an inner city school where many children need clothing. She put the two ideas together, and many Cleveland children will be receiving warm beanies to protect them against a projected harsh winter.

DRESSES FOR HAITI

The 40 lbs. of dresses and shorts collected at the ECW Diocesan Annual Meeting have made it to Haiti and the Rev. Kasner Ajax has sent us pictures of a few of the children all dressed up.

If you'd like to help the people of Haiti but don't know how, here are some things they need:

- Women & Children: T-shirts to go under their dresses, as well as dresses, especially for women, hair accessories, scarves, underwear and bucket hats;
- Boy's shorts and t-shirts (cotton) without possibly offensive or militaristic graphics (no camouflage), underwear and baseball caps;
- Everyone can use flipflops; old fashioned tennis shoes, babies or children's blankets.

Betty Diemer of Grace Church in Mansfield is our expert on this program and she said it's ok to shop for used clothing—just ask yourself if the clothes would be fine on someone in your family.

If you want to put your name on anything you send, either as an individual or as a group, please do so. It makes it seem more like a gift.

SEEKING GOD'S WILL: CORPORATE DISCERNMENT IN THE CHURCH

WINTER CONVOCATION 2012

HOW DO WE KNOW GOD'S WILL FOR OUR CONGREGATIONS, vestries, committees, and ministries? How do we move beyond a prayer at the beginning of a meeting and then Robert's Rules of Order? These questions lie at the heart of our work together.

In addition to a slate of best-practice workshops from within our diocese, Fred Schmidt, director of Spiritual Formation and Anglican Studies and associate professor of Christian Spirituality at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, will lead us in examining how our churches can better recognize the difference between God's will and our own, deepen our ability to hear God's voice, and sharpen our powers of discernment.

This year's Winter Convocation will be held February 10–11, 2012, at the Sheraton Inn Suites in Cuyahoga Falls.

Workshops include *Welcoming the Stranger in Liturgy*; *Celebrating Great Small Churches*; *Leading Effective Small Groups*; *Fearless Finances*; *General Convention 101*; *Preparing for Confirmation*; *Mission Areas*; *Merging into New Ministry*; and *Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality*.

Childcare for infants through pre-K will be provided Friday from 7 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. and Saturday from 8:30 A.M. to 3 P.M. A children's program for K through 6th grade will be provided Friday from 7 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. and Saturday from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. A safety process for dropping off and picking up children will be used without exception and at least one parent must have a cell phone set to vibrate so they can be contacted during the conference quickly without disturbing others.

For more information, contact the Office for Congregations and Christian Formation: The Rev. Brad Purdom, Canon for Congregations, bpurdom@dohio.org, 216-774-0452 or 800-551-4815 ext. 452; the Rev. Vincent Black, Canon for Christian Formation, vblack@dohio.org, 216-774-0453 or 800-551-4815 ext. 453; or Antoinette Taylor, Assistant for Congregations and Christian Formation, ataylor@dohio.org, 216-774-0476 or 800-551-4815 ext. 476.

ChurchLife!

Trinity Commons
2230 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2499

calendar highlights

February 4

Ministry Discernment Day

February 10-11

Diocesan Winter Convocation

Sheraton Suites, Cuyahoga Falls. Register online by going to winterconvo2012.eventbrite.com. Contact Antoinette Taylor for more information, 216-774-0476 or ataylor@dohio.org.

February 24-26

Happening

Trinity Cathedral. A retreat for 9th-12th graders presented by teenagers with the assistance of adult leaders. Contact the Rev. Vincent Black, 216-774-0453 or vblack@dohio.org for information.

March 3

Deacons' Retreat

March 10-11

Middle School Pilgrimage

An overnight for youth in grades 6-8 at Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland. Contact the Rev. Sahra Harding at 216-774-0409 or sharding@dohio.org.

April 6

Diocesan Offices Closed

Good Friday holiday.

April 20-22

Spring Youth Gathering

St. Paul's, Mount Vernon. An event for

7th-12th graders. Contact the Rev. Vincent Black, 216-774-0453 or vblack@dohio.org for more information.

May 4-5

Diocesan ECW Annual Meeting

Ramada Hotel, Toledo. Bishop Michael Bruce Curry is the Honored Guest and Keynote Speaker.

May 19

Bishop's Easter Retreat

May 22-24

Clergy Conference

Sawmill Creek Resort, Huron, Ohio.

May 25-28

Youth Leaders' Training

Cedar Hills, Painesville. This is an event to train youth from around the diocese in Christian leadership.

June 14-17

Ohio Celebration at Kenyon

Presenter: Tom Brackett.

Bishops' Visitations

February

12 St. John's Church, Youngstown

(Hollingsworth)

19 St. Mark's Church, Wadsworth

(Hollingsworth)

19 St. Paul's Church, Fremont

(Williams)

March

4 Christ Church, Huron

(Hollingsworth)

4 Grace Church, Mansfield

(Persell)

11 All Saints Church, Toledo

(Hollingsworth)

11 Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland

(Bowman)

25 Harcourt Parish, Gambier

(Williams)

April

15 St. Augustine's, Youngstown

(Hollingsworth)

15 St. James Church, Painesville

(Persell)

15 St. Matthew's Church, Toledo

(Williams)

22 St. Thomas Church, Berea

(Bowman)

29 St. Andrew's Church, Akron

(Hollingsworth)

29 St. Paul's Church, Oregon

(Persell)

29 New Life Church, Uniontown

(Williams)

For the complete
calendar of events visit
www.dohio.org