

Anglican

an edition of *Episcopal Life*

Connections



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January
2007

Vol. 18--No. 1

— News of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan



Change is all around. The Bishop's office not only has a new occupant, but it has been remodeled to fit his needs and style. Bishop Ed was honored upon his retirement (see below) and Bishop Todd has moved in to take up his new responsibilities. The Diocesan overseas mission focus is being reconsidered (see page A7). Even the venerable United Thank Offering Ingathering will be slightly different this year (see page A6). Still we are reminded that somethings never change, such as God's grace (see page A8, Ball of Yarn).

The Edwin M. Leidel, Jr. Christian Service Award

Convocation honors our first Diocesan bishop

By Nancy Steele

Corunna—For the past three years the Flint River Valley Convocation Council, through its Christian Service Awards, has recognized volunteers who exemplify the hands, feet, eyes, ears and tongue of Christ within their parishes. This year, in recognition of the retirement of our first Bishop, Edwin M. Leidel, Jr., the Council voted to rename the awards in Bishop Ed's honor.

At a recent gathering of the Flint River Convocation, meeting at St. Jude's Episcopal Church, Fenton, three persons were honored with the 2006 Edwin M. Leidel, Jr. Christian Service Award. They are Norene Dallarrie, Jennifer Ireland, and Jo Miska.

Norene Dallarrie, a member of St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, Davison, has served her congregation in a variety of ways from sewing banners to teaching Sunday School to working on the vestry, organizing lunches and dinners, and even cleaning the church building. But her greatest passion is in serving the less fortunate.

"She has organized a food pantry, and heads the Care and Share Program at Christmas for the city of Davison providing families with food, clothing, and Christmas gifts for their loved ones," said Don Seibel, St. Dunstan's Convocation Representative.

Jennifer Ireland, a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flint, has a ministry directed toward people in need and with youth. In her parish she has served twice on the vestry; is a member of the Crossover, Downtown Outreach Ministry Board and the Christ Enrichment Center Board. She has organized the parish's Funeral Dinner Committee; developed an "eating together lunch program" which has grown from less than 10 partici-

pants to over 60 per week; connected her parish with a community food distribution program and headed up the parish's food basket program for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.

Continued on page A5

You are cordially invited to attend
one of the Investiture Services for

the Rt. Rev. S. Todd Ousley
as the Second Bishop of
the Diocese of Eastern Michigan

at either

Saturday, January 6, 3:00 PM,
St. Francis' Episcopal Church, Grayling

or

Sunday, January 7, 4:00 PM,
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flint

The Diocese of Eastern Michigan is a Diverse Community where

All are Called by Christ in One Baptism as One Body at One Table and

All are Sent in Christ to Restore all Creation to Unity with God through Grassroots Mission

KIOSK KIOSK KIOSK KIOSK KIOSK

Diocesan Calendar

January 2007

- 1 **Diocesan Center Closed**
- 2 1:30 PM, **Dean's Meeting**
4:00 PM, **Mission Council**
- 4 4:00 PM, **Diaconal Training**, St. Paul's, Flint
- 6 3:00 PM, **Bishop's Investiture**, St. Francis', Grayling
- 7 4:00 PM, **Bishop's Investiture**, St. Paul's, Flint
- 9 3:00 PM, **Partners in Mission**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
- 10 9:00 AM, **Trustees' Meeting**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
- 11 8:30 AM, **Executive Committee**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
10:00 AM, **Standing Committee**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
- 16 12:00 PM, **C.O.M.**, St. Matthew's, Saginaw
- 18 4:00 PM, **Diaconal Training**, St. Paul's, Flint
- 22 10:00 AM, **Fresh Start**
6:00 PM, **Transition Committee**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
- 25 7:00 PM, **Christian Unity Service**, St. John's, Saginaw

February 2007

- 1 4:00 PM, **Diaconal Training**, St. Paul's, Flint
- 6 1:30 PM, **Dean's Meeting**
4:00 PM, **Mission Council**
- 8 8:30 AM, **Executive Committee**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
10:00 AM, **Standing Committee**, Diocesan Center, Saginaw
- 11 4:00 PM, **Absalom Jones Celebration**, St. Paul's, Saginaw

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

January 7	For the newly baptized in our diocese	
January 14	St. Andrew's, Gaylord	Gerry Rehagen
January 21	St. Francis', Grayling	Elizabeth Chace
January 28	St. Andrew's, Harrisville	Wardens & Vestry
February 4	Calvary, Hillman	Mike Bell
February 11	St. Elizabeth's, Higgins Lake	Wardens & Vestry

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The Rt. Rev. Edwin M. Leidel, Jr.
Bishop of Eastern Michigan

Anglican Connections welcomes contributions of photo and news reports from diocesan, congregational and organizational events affiliated with the diocese. All unsolicited contributions are accepted on a space-available basis. All contributions are subject to change based on length, clarity and adherence to editorial style. The DEADLINE for submissions is the first of the month preceding the publication date.

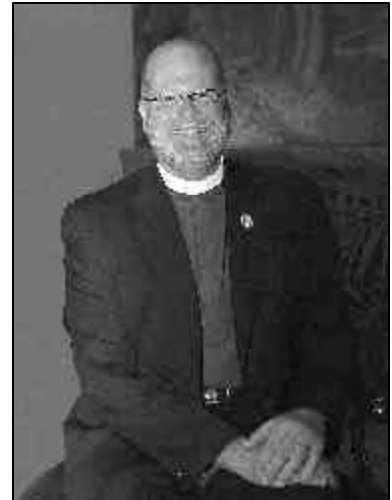
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Bishop Ousley wraps up his Listening Tour of the Diocese

By mid January Bishop Todd will have completed the first stage in a listening process that will help shape his episcopate for the coming years. Along the way he will have visited all 50 congregation, met with the four clericii and mission councils, and sat down with the various Diocesan committees and task forces.



In each place and with each group he has asked the same questions as a way of beginning the discussion.

- 1) *What is your dream for ministry and mission?*
- 2) *What do you need (individually & corporately) to realize these dreams?*
- 3) *How can the Bishop, Diocesan staff, and the Convocation assist you?*
- 4) *What are your specific expectations of me as bishop for the first two years?*
- 5) *Are there any concerns not yet expressed?*
- 6) *Anything else to share?*

Bishop Todd's Listening Tour

Thursday, Jan. 4, 12:00 PM	Saginaw Valley Clericus
Thursday, Jan. 4, 7:00 PM	Calvary, Saginaw
Friday, Jan. 5, 7:00 PM	St. Mark's, Bridgeport
Saturday, Jan. 6, 10:00 AM	St. Matthew's, Saginaw
Sunday, Jan. 7, 10:30 AM	St. Alban's, Bay City
Monday, Jan. 8, 7:00 PM	St. John's, Sand Point
Tuesday, Jan. 9, 7:00 PM	St. Paul's, Bad Axe
Thursday, Jan. 11, 7:00 PM	St. John's, Alma
Friday, Jan. 12, 7:00 PM	St. John's, Otter Lake
Saturday, Jan. 13, 10:00 AM	St. John's, Midland
Saturday, Jan. 13, 2:00 PM	St. Paul's, Saginaw
Saturday, Jan. 13, 4:00 PM	Holy Family, Midland

Communicating, continued from page A3

will even see the baited hook. I've drowned lots of worms without even a nibble. Fishing requires great patience and genuine faith.

But I know it works. When we put up a big new sign with the message "This Family has a place for you", we added three new families. They said there was something about the message that drew them, spoke to a hunger they had. It was good bait and we reeled them in. The sign cost \$4,200, but it brought three families. It's out there still. Someone else will drive by sometime with that same yearning to be part of a Family like ours and they'll be caught too; we can't know when, but sooner or later someone will see it and bite. We have patience and faith.

So bait your hook, patiently watch your bobber, and always be ready to "reel" them in.

From the Bishop

by S. Todd Ousley, Bishop of Eastern Michigan
E-mail: tousley@eastmich.org



Meeting God in the uncertainty of life

Yes or No. Black or white. Right or wrong. Male or Female. Gay or Straight. Liberal or Conservative.

I grew up in a world of certainty — a world with clear definitions and unquestioned answers. It was a world where people knew their places, boys wore blue and girls wore pink, schools remained separate and unequal, and you were either saved or unsaved. In this world, we knew that it was Coke not Pepsi, white not wheat, and creamy not crunchy.

Today, I drink Diet Coke and Diet Pepsi, prefer rye and sourdough but will eat white and wheat, and enjoy both creamy and crunchy peanut butter. I suppose this culinary comprehensiveness is merely a symptom of my thoroughgoing Anglican way of being.

In early December, 2006 Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori stated:

We live in a time and a society that is easily drawn to polarities. These departures [of churches in the Diocese of Virginia] are taking place in most mainline denominations, and are an expression of the anxiety of our times and the discomfort many people feel in trying to live in tension.

Anglicanism has always held that living in the tension of comprehensiveness is our vocation. God gives us a gift in the midst of that diversity, and we more fully know both truth and God's will for us when we are able to embrace that diversity.

The quick fix embraced in drawing lines or in departing is not going to be an ultimate solution for our discomfort.

To this I say, Amen.

In my first tentative encounter with Anglicanism at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Waco, Texas, I knew that I had somehow come home. For the first time in my life, I experienced a God that embodied both love and justice. Here was a God that met me in the uncertainty of my life and allowed me the space to struggle through the ambiguities and tensions that marked my spiritual journey. Finally, I had found a Church that allows us room to ponder, graces us with freedom to doubt, and releases us from the bondage of unquestioned certainty and spiritual arrogance.

I am a Christian because God's steadfast love never ceases to overwhelm me. I am an Anglican because of its unique embrace of God and truth as mystery and its ever-present acknowledgement that God's creative and reconciling action breaks into the world at the thresholds and margins of the known and comfortable. This self-knowledge sustains me in these complex, turbulent, and exciting times in which we face actions threatening the *Shalom* of God, that is "the undoing of all patterns that bind, restrict, and break down the human community, that stand against the reality of communion and reconciliation."¹

Last month was a busy time for the Church in dealing directly with actions threatening the *Shalom* of God. Eight congregations in the Diocese of Virginia joined four others and announced their decision to sever ties with the Episcopal Church and affiliate with the Anglican Church of Uganda or the Anglican Church of Nigeria by way of the Anglican District of Virginia, part of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA). While each of these congregations spent a considerable amount of time studying their situation and their options, they ultimately determined that departing was the action they must take. The reasons such actions are taken are inevitably various

Continued on page A7

Makes you wonder



Communicating

by Tom Downs, Editor, Anglican Connections
E-mail: tdowns@eastmich.org



Don't forget to bait your hook

One magic morning when I was eight years old my dad took my brother and me fishing. We dug some worms, rented a rowboat, and wetted three lines. Almost immediately we had three good-sized sunfish in the boat. We adjusted the worms (hardly nibbled) and dropped our lines in the water again. Bang! Three more fish. This went on, non-stop, until we had filled our five-gallon bucket with fish. There were more fish to catch, but we had nowhere to put them. Less than an hour's fishing and we were on the way home again. Amazing!

Ever since then I've been looking for that magical spot where the fishing is easy. Such spots are very very rare and I haven't found another like it yet.

Fishing is inherently chancy. In some places the fish seem to congregate, but you have to be there when they are hungry and you have to use the right bait. In most places the fish are far and few between, hungry or not, right bait or not.

It's the same when you go fishing for people. A few congregations seem to have a steady stream of visitors and new members; they grow fast because they happen to be located in an area where there are a lot of "hungry" people. But they also are using the right "bait", that is, they have made themselves attractive.

Most congregations see many fewer people and grow slowly if at all; that's typically because they happen to be located where there are fewer "unattached" people. But the problem is complicated when they use the wrong bait or even forget to bait the hook.

We have a businesswoman in the congregation at Holy Family, Midland, who is always after us to advertise. "I couldn't stay in business six months if I didn't use effective advertising." This year she got her way; we'll be spending more than 5% of our budget on advertising.

What will we do? Go fishing. We'll put out the most attractive "bait" we can find, and put it in as many places as we can. We'll use our imagination and spend money to, among other things, increase the size of our ad in the Yellow Pages, run weekly ads in the local paper, pump up our website, sponsor some local on-site community events, imprint our name on lots of stuff to give away, and do a direct mail campaign. There has even been some talk of renting a billboard on the expressway. But above all, we will be patient.

People tend to think of advertising as an investment; it's not, it's bait. Investments bring predictable returns. The fisherman never knows if the fish

Continued on page A2

The Pastor's Corner

Can truth be nailed down?

By Elsa Pressentin

Challenges to our assumptions about early Church history are all around. I just watched "The Gospel of Judas" on the National Geographic cable network. It was very interesting, fascinating actually. There was also an article about this archeological rediscovery in the May issue of *National Geographic*. All this follows upon the heels of last year's bestseller, *The DaVinci Code*. Have you read the book or seen the movie? The book was a good mystery tale, a "page-turner." I loved it and I look forward to seeing the movie. Currently I am reading *Misquoting Jesus*. This is another fascinating book, one that forces me to stop and think and ponder. For example, the author (Bart Ehrman) says that the King James Bible was based on corrupted and inferior manuscripts that in many cases do not accurately represent the meaning of the original text. Wow!

The controversy surrounding the Gospel of Judas and The DaVinci Code and even this book I am reading, seems to stem from the idea that if it isn't in the Bible or if it contradicts what is in the Bible, then it can't be authentic and shouldn't be considered today. I couldn't disagree more. I believe that truth cannot be nailed down. New ideas are constantly being presented to us. God gave us brains to reason and think. So much of God is a mystery. Why did the Gospel of Judas lay hidden for so many years? Is it possible that God didn't think we humans were ready for the information that this and other Gnostic writings contained? Perhaps God thinks we are ready today. Maybe God just wants us to examine what we think we know and believe and why we think and believe that way.

Developing faith, knowing for sure what we believe and why, takes time and effort. Coming to church each Sunday is a good start. Participating in a Bible study helps. Reading and thinking about the creeds, reading the catechism in the back of the Prayer Book—all this is helpful. But we need to think and reason

I thank God for the Episcopal Church, even with all its current chaos. In the Episcopal Church I am free to consider all possibilities, even to doubt sometimes.

and consider all possibilities, discuss our confusion and questions with others, and then sit with God and invite the Holy Spirit to help us sort out what is true and what is not true. Do not let others tell you what to believe. Figure it out for yourselves.

We say the Episcopal Church is built upon Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. We have wonderful liturgical traditions that we love and cherish. Scripture is our authority. God gave us the ability to reason. I thank God for the Episcopal Church, even with all its current chaos. In the Episcopal Church I am free to consider all possibilities, even to doubt sometimes. What do you think? Want to talk about it?



The Very Rev. Elsa Pressentin is Dean of the Saginaw Valley Convocation and serves St. John's, Otter Lake and St. Paul's, Bad Axe. As they say, some people wear more than one hat; friends gave her the scooter to help her "cover all the bases".



Show me the ministry: Budgeting for the Kingdom of God

By Jerry Kabell

It is the season for annual meetings and approving parish budgets. The commonsense approach to budgeting, i.e., the world's way, has perhaps been most succinctly stated by Charles Dickens, who put the following words into the mouth of Mr. Micawber in his famous novel, *David Copperfield*:

Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen six, result happiness.

Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pound ought and six, result misery.

In other words, the budgeting process should begin by ascertaining the expected income, and then planning for expenditures which total less than that, and ideally with a safety margin so that should some of the income fail to materialize, or some unanticipated expenses occur, the net balance will remain positive.

In church budgeting, this usually becomes:

1. Project your expenditures first, based on the unstated assumption that the first priority is to maintain our present situation and then perhaps to add some additional ministries or other activities;
2. Present the proposed expenditures to the parish, and conduct a stewardship campaign;
3. Based on the pledged income (less a percentage for shrinkage), adjust the proposed expenditures to fit within it, allowing for a modest positive year-end balance.

Scripture takes a somewhat different approach. Matthew (the former tax collector, with an eye for money and its use) quotes Jesus as saying, "do not worry; do not say, 'What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?' Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these other things will be given you as well." More directly put, He tells us that the first question is not "What is our expected income," but "What is God calling us to do?"

Mother Theresa, for one, took our Lord's teaching to heart. When asked

about how she went about raising money to support her ministries, she replied, "Money, I never think of it. It always comes. The Lord sends it. We do His work. He provides the means. If He does not give us the means, that shows that He does not want the work. So why worry?"

How might this faith based attitude work for in a parish setting? It might follow these steps:

1. We, as a community, would first prayerfully discern the ministries to which God is calling our parish, and estimate the resources required;
2. We would prepare a proposed budget of expenditures, and present it to the congregation. Then we would discuss the commitment required to sustain the proposed ministries;
3. Solicit pledges as covenants between the pledger and God. Collect the pledges in sealed envelopes;
4. At an occasion of public worship, bless the covenant pledges and then burn them (still in the sealed envelopes).
5. As a congregation we would periodically review the level of pledged income, compare it with the ongoing expenditures in support of the ministries, and evaluate the progress of the various ministries in meeting the perceived needs.

Your vestry invites you to consider prayerfully what faith budgeting might mean for St. John's, and for each of us as members of this faithful ministering community.

There are, of course, other ways arrive at a parish budget, but in the end they will either follow Mr. Micawber's way or the way advocated by our Lord and practiced by Mother Theresa. It's up to you.

Jerry Kabell is a member of St. John's, Alma, and has been for many years their parish treasurer. He and wife, Cindy, will soon begin a long-term mission project in Murree, Pakistan.

Jesus tells us that the first question is not "What is our expected income," but "What is God calling us to do?"

News you can use

Connecting the congregations of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan

Surfing suggestions We recommend the following

By Suzanne and Jim Sorenson

Have you made your New Year's resolutions yet? Perhaps you would consider working on your spiritual life. There is a wealth of resources on the Internet. Why not try one or more of these three suggested by the Reverends Suzanne and Jim Sorenson?

"Sacred Space" is a daily guided-meditation produced by a community of Irish Jesuits. It takes approximately ten minutes a day and consists of guided meditation and prayer built around a scripture reading for the day. Sacred Space is found at <http://www.sacredspace.ie/>

"The Geranium Farm" is the Rev. Barbara Cawthorne Crafton (an Episcopal priest) website. She calls it "down to earth support for living." There you will find daily meditations, virtual "vigils", and much more. Here address is <http://www.geraniumfarm.org/home.cfm>

The Episcopal Diocese of Washington's website has daily meditations and readings written by a variety of authors and photo essays to inspire. It is



The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Eastern Michigan. Left to right, front--Dean Bedford, vice president; Bill McClure, president; back--Charles Reagan, Paul Dolza; Gail Vince; Shirley Seely; Frank Davenport; Anna Leigh Kubbe; Tracie Loffhagen; Judy Downey and Todd Ousley. Unavailable for the photo were Grady Holmes and Dana Howard. Elected by the Annual Convention, the Committee is responsible for the temporal affairs of the Diocese and to act as a council of advice for the Bishop. Membership is made up of equal numbers of the ordained and the unordained.

found at http://www.edow.org/spirituality/bulletinboard/meditations_readings.html.

And here's something different. Are you a member of one of our smaller churches? There is a website that offers hope, encouragement and practical suggestions just for you. Its address is <http://smallepiscopalchurch.blogspot.com>

The Reverends Sorenson are retired and living in Saginaw.

The Leidel Christian Service Award Continued from page A1

She started the parish's Youth Group and has helped children become an active part of the parish's Sunday Service.

"I have worked on many fund raising projects with Jennifer, boards, dinners and lunch programs as well as just simply helping needy individuals," said Mary Snell, Convocation Representative from St. Paul's. "Her commitment to her faith, her family and her community — and her willingness to commit her energies and time deserves recognition. Whenever Jen is involved, one always gets her whole family's support. First she prays and then she acts."

Jo Miska is a member of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church and heads up their Parish Nurse Ministry Team, with whom she shares this award.

"I was pleased to nominate Jo Miska, along with her team, for this award," said the Rev. George Cleaves, rector of St. Christopher's. "The original vision for a Parish Nurse Ministry was intended to address the needs of the seniors in our congregation. However, this program has grown into a much larger and far-reaching ministry. A regular series of blood drives — coordinated through the American Red

Cross — has brought the wider community into St. Christopher's providing the opportunity to give the gift of life. The Parish Nurses staff a monthly free blood pressure clinic."

The Parish Nurses also led a series of programs with our younger children to help reduce the spread of hand-borne bacteria. In October they sponsored a "Shoo the Flu" clinic for the congregation and the wider community.

By offering these awards, the Convocation Council hopes to hold up good examples of self-directed initiatives that could be duplicated in other congregations around the Convocation or the Diocese.

Each recipient receives a certificate and a check in the amount of \$300 that the recipient will be able to donate to the charity of her choice.

Past recipients of these awards are:

2004: Avis Christie, Annette Potereck and Lois Swartzmiller

2005: May Grumbley, Frank Jessop and Barbara Steele

Bible Study with Bishop Todd?

Looking for a spiritual focus in the upcoming Lenten season?

Walk with Bishop Ousley this Lent in a Bible Study focused on the Acts of the Apostles.

The Bible Study with the Bishop will be available online in mid-January at www.eastmich.org.

The study will be suitable for individual, small group, or congregational study.

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All are Sent in Christ to Restore all Creation to Unity with God through Grassroots Mission

Gleanings

A sampling of items from church newsletters around Eastern Michigan

- **The Carillon**, St. James' Episcopal Parish, Cheboygan: The rector reflected on what it means to be a faithful steward. "Stewardship is everything [we do] after we say 'I believe'. One good thing about [the annual pledge drive] is that we can prioritize God along with all the many things that draw on our resources, thus insuring that God does not get short end of the stick or left out completely."
- **The Messenger**, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Corunna: Thinking of a serious New Year's Resolution? They suggest inviting Jesus into your heart. "The joy and peace we will receive will last all year as we look to God for all our needs to be met."
- **St. John's Journey**, St. John's Episcopal Church, Dryden: While some in society want to focus on tragedies and negativity, the rector is counting her blessings and reminding the congregation that they too have been blessed. They are blessed with people who freely offer their time, talent and treasure. They are blessed with a freshly painted church, with a dramatic new "frontscape" that changes their profile and connects them with their community, blessed with good programs and a hunger for mission.
- **On the Sunrise Side**, Christ Episcopal Church, East Tawas: The power of one: the boys are best friends—through them their mothers meet—one mother, a member to Christ Church, asks the other, new to the area, to attend church with her. As it turns out the other "happened" to be church shopping at the time and agreed. The congregation did its part and made her feel right at home. Now she's a member too. It's simple really; one person asks another and the Church grows.
- **The Epistle**, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flint: from a note they received from someone helped by the congregation: "I just wanted to take a moment to thank you all for your prayer support. When I was hungry, you guys fed me. When I was discouraged you all encouraged me with words from your hearts. My time on the "streets" was short lived compared to most. But the results of God's work and God's people are life changing for me."
- **On Eagles Wings**, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Gaylord: In a newsletter that encouraged the parish to work for the Millennium Development Goals, the rector wrote: "If we are

to be a godly people, we will have to follow the pattern of the incarnation, risking all for love and refusing to keep our distance from the brutality of this world. I believe that our mission as Christians is to engage the evils of this world with truth and love and to work for healing and reconciliation. This is how we participate in the redeeming work of Christ."

By-the-Lake-News, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Harrisville: They have the Rite Stuff, or they soon will. This is a computer program that helps design services. It contains the entire Book of Common Prayer, all the lessons in the lectionary, the whole Hymnal, and much more. It will layout a complete service booklet or just an insert with the lessons and Collect for the Day. You can even listen to the hymns before you choose one.

Newsletter, St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, Higgins Lake: They have organized their prayer life. Each day of the week are assigned specific groups to be prayed for. Each day of the month 3-5 members of the congregation are prayed for. Every day they pray for those with special needs. The final prayer: "That God will call forth intercessors sufficient for all our prayer ministries so that the parish and its leaders and programs are under girded in prayer."

Newsletter, Calvary Episcopal Church, Hillman: Their junior warden, Tom Rea, is a canoe builder. He's put his gift to work for the parish and is building a canoe to raffle for the support of parish programs. Check out their website: www.calvaryhillman.org

The Messenger, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Marine City: They printed the sermon our Presiding Bishop preached at her investiture service. "Augustine said that as Christians, we are prisoners of hope—a ridiculously assertive hope, a hope that has the audacity to join Jesus in saying, 'today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' That scripture is fulfilled each time we reach beyond our narrow self-interest to call another home. That scripture is fulfilled... whenever we seek the good of the other, for our own good and final homecoming is wrapped up in that."

The Interim Report, Hope St. John's Parish, Oscoda: At year end the rector is counting blessings. Among those blessings is the opportunity "to glorify God as faithful servants of Christ." But this blended Lutheran and Episcopal congregation has a unique opportunity—to witness to the unity and growing understanding between denominations. Moreover, what other congregation is

"a time to share stories of how God has been at work in our lives and the world around us."

UTO moves to single, Fall-only, Ingathering

SAGINAW--By tradition there have been a Fall and a Spring Ingatherings of the United Thank Offering. That will be changing in 2007 to a single ingathering, the Sunday after Ascension Day. Mark your calendars.

Each year a national UTO committee awards all of the thank offerings received (plus accrued interest) to applicants from around the Church. Each Diocese may have as many as two grants per year. In 2006, UTO awarded 112 grants totaling \$2,419,628.54.

UTO is very different from other grant making groups. First of all it's not about fundraising, nor is it about collecting contributions or donations. Secondly it's not a once a year campaign, but a year-round discipline. The United Thank Offering is about prayer and thanksgiving, about our relationship with God. Coins and bills dropped in Blue Boxes become the tangible thanks we offer God for the blessings we have received. That makes the money an offering, not a donation.

The power of the Blue Box is unlimited. Your prayers and offerings have built churches and schools, made needed renovations, fed the hungry, clothed the poor, provided shelter for the homeless and supported those with physical, mental and emotional challenges.

The Diocesan UTO Coordinator, Phyllis Seitz (seitzp@centurytel.net) is asking each congregation to designate a contact person who will promote the UTO offerings throughout the year. Please contact her.



able to "officially draw on two church judicatories for help and support"?

The Epistle, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Port Huron: Their deacon, the Rev. Sherry Young, has been appointed to the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission For Ministry Development. One of fourteen national commissions, this group will conduct studies and draft relevant legislation to be address at the General Convention in 2009.

The Mustard Seed, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Rose City: This, the smallest congregation in the Diocese, has just published a cookbook, titled *Heavenly Creations*. It contains 250 easy to prepare recipes along with a host of helpful hints. You may have a copy for \$9.00 if you call 989-685-8095.

The Open Line, Calvary Memorial Episcopal Church: Many congregations contributed to the Bishop's retirement gift, some contributed squares for the beautiful quilt Nancy Steele made, others made special gifts, but only one congregation contributed a cookie. Mike Sherman, the parish's official cookie man, made a decorated cookie shaped like a full-sized miter.

The Messenger, St. John's Episcopal Church, Saginaw: Some congregations found it tough to get folks to attend Sunday morning services, December 24th, Christmas Eve. This congregation went

to rather extreme links to encourage attendance. Somehow they managed to have the Rev. Charles Stuart, their former rector, ordained 50 years ago (December 23rd), just so they could hold a celebration in his honor on, you guessed it, Christmas Eve morning. Food, fun and lots of love; could there be a better way to spend a Christmas Eve morning?

Your Connection, Grace Episcopal Church, Standish: This parish, one of the Diocese's smaller congregations, has a vision that encompasses the world. Their rector is the new Co-Chair of the Partners in Global Mission Task Force. The parish and the task force are exploring ways to enter a dialogue, and eventual partnership, with a diocese in a desperately impoverished part of the world.

The Song of Trinity, Trinity Episcopal Church, West Branch: They have Noon Day Prayers every Friday and then follow it with a Bible study and bag lunch. This traditional service from the Book of Common Prayer is familiar to most clergy, but not often practiced in congregations. Incidentally, the staff of the Diocesan Center (and anyone else who happens to be around) read Noon Day Prayers Monday through Friday. On Thursday the noon time service is often a Eucharist.

To be included in Gleanings, make sure your parish newsletter or regular news updates are sent to Anglican Connections, 924 N. Niagara St., Saginaw, Mich. 48602

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Forging Partnerships in mission around the world

MISSION MISSION MISSION MISSION

SAGINAW—As the Diocese of Eastern Michigan ends its companion relationship with the Diocese of Kinkiizi and begins consideration of a possible new partnership, it makes sense to consider what a partnership in mission might look like.

Most fundamentally it is an ongoing process by which two dioceses contribute to each other's local mission. They share from their resources such as experience of poverty and weakness, acting for justice, spirituality and prayer, friendship, enthusiasm, patterns of development, liturgy, dance and song, people and money. In so doing all participate in God's mission in the world.

This idea of mutual responsibility and interdependence in the body of Christ for the purpose of fulfilling the great commission is at the heart of New Testament missiology and practice.

For those considering entering into such a relationship the Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group of the Anglican Communion offers these *Ten Principles of Partnership*:

1. **Local initiative** The responsibility for mission in any place belongs primarily to the church in that place. Partnership therefore implies respect for the authority of the local church.
2. **Mutuality** This is found in a deep sense of open and joint accountability. To be open to one another as friends on the basis of common commitment, mutual trust, confession and forgiveness, keeping one another informed of all plans and programs and submitting

ourselves to mutual accountability and correction. In decision making, mutuality means sharing power.

3. **Responsible stewardship** The giving, receiving and use of resources must be controlled by judiciousness, selflessness, maturity and responsibility.
4. **Interdependence** In a partnership there are no absolute donors, or absolute recipients, but all have needs to be met and gifts to give.
5. **Cross fertilization** This is found in the willingness to learn from one another. It produces an enrichment that results from being open to one another's ideas, experiences and respecting one another's cultural and contextual peculiarities in a process of give and take.
6. **Integrity** This implies a commitment to be real and honest. We do not always have to say 'yes' to everything the other partner says for fear of offending or out of a false sense of guilt.
7. **Transparency** Information needs to be fully shared with one another; not only information connected with our specific relationship with one another but information about all of our relationships. Full disclosure of financial information to one another is one of the marks of a transparent relationship.
8. **Solidarity** We are committed to one another in



The diocesan Partners in Global Mission Task Force met in December to reflect on the uncertainty in continuing mission projects in Uganda and Tanzania. Nonetheless, they reaffirmed their intention to facilitate a mission relationship with a diocese in the developing world. They will also continue to advise the Standing Committee on its use of the 1% Fund, and work to educate the Diocese about the Millennium Development Goals and the Episcopal Church's commitment to them.

Christ's body. What touches one member touches the others.

9. **Meeting together** The concept of mutual responsibility and interdependence in the Body of Christ implies that the Church in every place should find a forum for periodic evaluation, self assessment and cross-cultural fertilization.

10. **Acting ecumenically** Our mission relationships as Anglicans must be seen as part of the wider mission relationships of all Christians.



From the Bishop, continued from page A3 Living with uncertainty

and complex, therefore we must not rush to judgment. However, let us be clear that walking away does not further our conversations or our mandate to reconcile. Likewise, precipitous acts on the part of General Convention or elected leaders of the Church tear at the fabric of our common life. Regardless of our positions on various issues or actions, God calls all of us to be reconcilers. Without exception.

Closer to home, your own diocesan leadership has faced its own difficult decisions. A regular part of the work of the Standing Committee is to consider consents to the election of bishops. In the normal course of events, these are routine decisions with consents readily being given. However, on occasion a situation arises which is not quite so routine. Such was the case with the request for consent to the election of the Rev. Mark Lawrence of the Diocese of San Joaquin as the new Bishop of South Carolina. Much controversy has surrounded his election since both the Dioceses of South Carolina and San Joaquin have requested a relationship with a primate of the Anglican Communion other than the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, citing 2003 and 2006 General Convention actions.

The Standing Committee of this diocese spent a month reviewing information regard-

ing the Rev. Lawrence's stated positions and most recently his letter addressed to bishops and standing committees, responding to concerns about his suitability to become a bishop given his stance on the future of the Episcopal Church.² At their December meeting, following a thorough discussion of the situation, the Standing Committee voted 10-1 to withhold consent for the Rev. Mark Lawrence's election in South Carolina. This action was not taken lightly, but in full recognition of the complexities facing the Church. Let us pray for Mark and the people of South Carolina.

And finally, both the Anglican Church of Uganda and the Anglican Church of Tanzania have recently issued new and stronger statements regarding 'impaired communion' with The Episcopal Church. These developments only further complicate our ability to share in ministry with the Diocese of Kinkiizi and the Diocese of Tabora. Reconciling conversations continue in the midst of harsh rhetoric and cultural differences that appear to divide more than reconcile. Keep us in your prayers.

In the midst of all the talk, the complexity that we wish to reduce to simplicity, and our blindness to the Spirit in one another, I am both comforted and challenged by the prayer

of my hero in the faith, the late John E. Hines, former Presiding Bishop:

We pray, O God, that your Word may invade our words, that it may make the complex simple and the weak strong; that by it the blind may lead the blind without both falling into the ditch; that through it the desperate may find hope and a whisper scarcely strong enough to reach those in the farthest pew may give purpose and power to life. Amen.

In this season of light and life in the Incarnate Word let us find words that heal, acts that reconcile and a glimpse of the Shalom of God.

Peace,

+ Todd

¹ Frank T. Griswold, quoted in *Waging Reconciliation*, edited by Ian T. Douglas (New York: Church Publishing, 2002)

² Additional information regarding developments in The Episcopal Church and within the Anglican Communion can be found at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/ens/>

ON THE OTHER HAND ON THE OTHER HAND ON THE OTHER HAND



Photo courtesy of Vause Carlsen

It's just an afghan. Crafted out of yarn and imagination, it nonetheless represents the gradual transformation by God's grace of a human being.

A Ball of Yarn and the Grace of God

By Vause Carlsen

"You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts...and to clothe yourselves...according to the likeness of God." Ephesians 4:22-24

He is an inmate in a state prison. Why is he there? These are matters of public record. But who he is now and what he is becoming is something else again. His old self and his former way of life are leaving thanks to the grace of God—the grace of God mediated through the prison chaplain, through a ball of yarn, and through the stories of cancer patients he's helping.

In his hands balls of donated yarn and crochet hooks become caps to warm the heads of chemo patients. He finds himself praying for that unknown, to him, patient who will be wearing the cap that emerges from his crocheting.

He hears of how cold and desolate the patients can feel. He and other men in the prison crochet group make Comfort Covers for Flint's Hurley Medical Center's cancer patients. He knows those covers go home to keep the patients wrapped not only in physical warmth but also in the warmth of God's love.

But our particular crocheter feels that he needs to do more. So a design for an afghan begins to grow in his heart and mind. He sits down with yarn in shades of ivory, gold, green and purple, and without a pattern, an afghan is formed with a gold fleur de lis cross, green leaves and vines, and purple grapes on an ivory field. He then asks, through the prison chaplain, that the afghan be used to raise money for Hurley cancer patients with special needs they cannot meet. A special fund has now been established, thanks to donations from Hurley staff, friends and community church members.

We see the Lord helping him to put away his former way of life. It's too soon to know what his new life will look like. Looking at a ball of yarn and a crochet hook won't tell you what an afghan will look like either. But if he keeps at it perhaps he will indeed clothe himself "according to the likeness of God. Praise God!

The Rev. Carlsen serves at St. Christopher's, Grand Blanc, and Trinity, Flushing.

Christianity's slippery slope

By Charles Curtis

What's at the bottom of the slippery slope?

I was recently browsing the Internet and came to www.AnglicansOnline.org. It is not an official website, but is run by individuals who obviously love their Church. On the site is a section on World Anglicanism. That area is divided in two: churches "In the Communion", and churches "Not in the Communion."

This latter is a listing of church bodies that identify themselves in some way or another as "Anglican," but they are not in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury (ABC). It took a whole page of criteria and disclaimers just to tell who/what was on that list. A very diverse group, about the only thing they actually had in common was that they were not in communion with the ABC. Most of them are not in communion with each other either. Some were old (such as the Reformed Episcopal Church, from the 1870s), a fair number from the 1970s (anti-"new" prayer book or women priests), most were from the US and England, some were composed of a single congregations (like Mariners Church, Detroit), some were Anglo-catholic while others were evangelical or charismatic, etc., etc., etc. Their names often made small distinctions (one was the Anglican Church IN America, another was the Anglican Church OF America). There are a wide variety of expressions of "Anglicanism", but each had one or more reasons not to be in communion with someone. Before I had the sense to check the length of this list, I had hit the Print button and was rewarded with 12 pages of print out.

When we start down the slippery slope of defining ourselves by some particular trait we think is "Anglican" rather than by our relationship with the Archbishop of Canterbury (i.e.: more catholic, more evangelical, more

Bible-based, more traditional, more liberal, more pure, etc., etc.), we wind up on this list of people cut off from their fellow-believers around the world. So many little groups all crowded together, but nobody talks to each other. It is like a really bad coffee hour.

If I am going to break bread with other Christians, I am bound to break bread with people I with whom I disagree (superficially and/or fundamentally). If I break bread only with people I agree with, the group just keeps getting smaller and inward focused (like an astronomical black hole).

A wise bishop once reminded us (in the throes of admitting unconfirmed children to Communion) that Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of me," not "Understand this...." Perhaps today he might remind us that Jesus said "Do this in remembrance of me," rather than "Do this only with people you agree with."

I'm glad I'm an Anglican in the "communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury" sense of the word, because God calls me to share his life and his fellowship with all people who call Jesus their Lord. Some of them no doubt understand what this means in ways different from my own, and, who knows, maybe their understanding is more the way God wants it understood. I will have to talk with them to find that out. That sounds a whole lot better to me than joining a bad coffee hour waiting at the bottom of a slippery slope.

See you in Church (and talk with me, please)

The Rev. Charles Curtis is interim rector at Trinity Episcopal Church, Flushing.

Veni, Veni

Swarming sailors on the billowing wind,
shadowed, sooty moon of smoky autumn.
The linden tree has shed its leaves.
Now, Belgian lace of branch is stretched against a somber sky.
Lake and sky blend seamlessly
as the world winds down into the monochrome season.
Drowsy, we drift in dreadful dreams of doom and death.
Meanwhile, on the dark side of the moon several continents away,
three wise men bearing the wearying weight of worldly crowns,
slog through desert sands,
faithfully following a star
to what strange, distant destination?
a manger suffused with reflected radiance
from an infant King of Kings,
the joyful end to all earth's wanderings.

Sylvia Bargiel

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