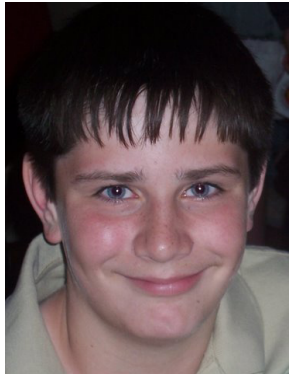


Seventh Grader Seeks 'Nebraska Youth for Locomotion'



An Open Letter to the Youth of the Diocese of Nebraska

My name is Joe Prickett, and I am an incoming 7th grader and attendee of Saint Mark's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral in Hastings. This summer, God has given me the blessing to be able to significantly change people's lives from thousands of miles away.

John 5:3 says "Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed." The key words in this verse are

Clint Schwenk, Acolyte Father at St. Mark's Pro-Cathedral and member of both St. Mark's and St. John's, Harvard, demonstrates the wheelchair is easy to use. (Photos Courtesy Dan Prickett)



Free Wheelchair Mission truck and wheelchairs help kickoff project July 6 in Hastings.

“used to,” so no more do the lame and paralyzed lie in this place. However, 100,000,000 people in third world countries do remain on the ground.

This is what Free Wheelchair Mission is trying to relieve. Free Wheelchair Mission is a non-profit organization that manufactures and ships wheelchairs to people in third world countries and developing nations. These specially-made chairs are similar to a lawn chair you would find on someone's deck. All of the components needed for a durable, comfortable wheelchair are included.

Free Wheelchair Mission was founded by Donald Schoendorfer about five years ago, and more than 340,000 chairs have been distributed so far. Learn more about the mission at the Web

site www.freewheelchairmission.org

So here I am, an ambassador for FWM. I had a kick-off event in Hastings July 6, and to date we've collected of \$3,042.75. But this is only about 1 percent of my goal. I am aiming for \$265,920, enough for 10 containers, a total of 5,500 wheelchairs.

I am not capable of reaching this goal by myself, so I plan to have a team with 20 recruited groups together, a team called, "Nebraska Youth for Locomotion."

This is where you come in. I need you to help me spread the word through the diocese and get all of our youth groups and Sunday schools involved. Together, we can reach this goal!

There are still many people without dignity, hope, independence, and mobility waiting for us to serve in Christ. Thank you for your prayers, help, and support.

Sincerely,
 Joseph Prickett

Omaha is one of five Church Center offices

The work of the Episcopal Church Center's Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations office and parts of its ministry in congregational life are now operating in the Diocese of Nebraska's offices adjacent to Trinity Cathedral in Omaha.

Bishop Christopher Epting, the Presiding Bishop's deputy for ecumenical and inter-religious relations, and Tom Ferguson, associate deputy, recently spent time in the Omaha regional office, meeting with diocesan staff, ecumenical partners at the headquarters of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Nebraska Synod, and a tri-faith group of Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Preaching at Trinity Cathedral on the text "whoever welcomes you welcomes me" from Matthew 10:40, Epting acknowledged that ecumenical and interfaith ministry is "all about hospitality" and that the Diocese of Nebraska is "fulfilling that mandate to the fullest" by welcoming the Church Center's regional office into Province VI and the Midwest.

"The amazing interfaith project your diocese is engaged in, seeking a common campus to be shared with a Jewish synagogue, an Episcopal Church, and an Islamic center," Epting said, "is a model for the country. I hope to be involved in whatever way is helpful and, even more importantly, to share your fine work with the wider church."

Linda Watt, the Episcopal Church Center's chief operating officer, said she has been "very impressed by the city of Omaha and the Diocese of Nebraska in terms of hospitality, civic pride, dynamism, and opportunities for collaborative ministry."

She thanked Diocese of Nebraska Bishop Joe G. Burnett "for his gracious welcome to us." She also thanked the Rev. Tim Anderson, diocesan canon for congregational development and a member of the Executive Council, for his "guidance and enthusiasm for

St. John's and St. Elizabeth's share computer thanks to Rural Ministries Network grant



Cathy Weber, left, the Rev. Jami Anderson, and Lauri Lawson attended a Rural Ministries Network Grant Program in Las Vegas in June. The training was for rural churches that owned no computers. Lay persons and clergy were trained in ways to use technology to enhance church ministries. At the end of the conference they were given a laptop computer to be shared between two churches. Weber is from St. Paul's, Arapahoe, and Lawson is from St. Elizabeth's, Holdrege. Anderson serves both churches. (Photo Courtesy the Rev. Jami Anderson)

(Continued on Page C)

A Day in the Life: Bishop's Journal June 2008

June 1-8. Vacation.

June 9-14. Travel to Fort Yates, N.D., for Province VI Commission on Ministry and Synod meetings. Left Fort Yates Saturday morning, June 14, and drove to Valentine.

June 15. Visitation at St. John's, Valentine, where I celebrated, confirmed one, and enjoyed the sparkling fellowship of this small but vibrant congregation. At lunch afterwards I enjoyed hearing about the latest news, and how much everyone appreciates their current interim supply priest—a certain bishop named James Krotz! Left midday after lunch heading back toward Omaha. Stopped briefly at St. Mary's, Bassett, in time to see their lovely new stained glass windows, and speak to Fr. Randy Goeke and other members just finishing Sunday lunch at the Bassett Hotel. Arrived back at home Sunday evening.

June 16. Day off.

June 17. Medical appointments and tests in the morning, then to office for catch-up staff meeting midday into early afternoon. Miscellaneous office matters in the

afternoon. Headed to All Saints, Omaha, for meeting tonight of representatives from all the metro Omaha and Lincoln parishes to update all on the progress of the Tri-Faith Initiative. Canon Tim Anderson, Dean Ernesto Medina, and Chancellor Woody Bradford each contributed updated reports and discussed options for developing future plans with a "Bishop's Tri-Faith Advisory Commission."

June 18. Preparation for Lambeth in the morning. In the afternoon, went to Clarkson College to record a video interview for their fall anniversary celebration. In the late afternoon met Robin Heller at St. Augustine, Elkhorn, to record a video message for the upcoming camp sessions at Comeca, since I will be away at Lambeth and unable to attend.

June 19-20. Catching up on correspondence, etc., and reading for Lambeth. Also working on sermon for Sunday visitation, as well as a homily for this Saturday's service with the diocesan convention of the Daughters of the King.

June 21. Drove to Grand Island to be at St. Stephen's for part of the

closing session at the annual convention of the diocesan Daughters of the King. Enjoyed the opportunity to see many of these active members, and also to meet the current national president, Joan Dalrymple, who was the guest speaker at this year's convention, and welcome Phyllis Easley, the Province VI DOK president. I celebrated and preached at the closing Eucharist in the nave. Returned to Omaha arriving Saturday evening.

June 22. Drove early to St. David's, Lincoln, to prepare for celebration and blessing and rededication of their new nave addition, as well as a new planned columbarium. It was a beautiful and festive liturgy, well attended, and a bountiful pot-luck lunch followed in their spacious parish hall. Enjoyed visits with many parishioners, as well as the rector the Rev. George Benson, and also had brief visits with seminarians Joyce Scheyer and Christine Plantz, both of whom came from Omaha where they are doing Clinical Pastoral Education training this summer.

June 23. Day off.

June 24-25. Home office, miscellaneous items, Lambeth reading.

June 26-27. At Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria for two days of reading and preparation. On Friday evening, June 27, I attended the evensong and reception honoring the Rev. Eugene Sutton, a friend of some years, as he prepares to be ordained bishop of Maryland at the Washington National Cathedral tomorrow. I moved to the Cathedral College to enjoy their library and to be on hand for the weekend events.

June 28. Arose early for a breakfast meeting of some 20-plus bishops with Presiding Bishop Katharine and her Chancellor David Beers, in the Cathedral's West Tower. Joined many bishops, including almost all of the church's African-American bishops, for the service of ordination and consecration of Gene Sutton at the Cathedral. A dramatic and moving ceremony, in what was for all practical purposes a packed house! Gene will be the first African-American bishop of Maryland—and he was elected on the first ballot! The service and reception went well into the afternoon, and it was good to reconnect with many colleagues and have a chance to visit some about matters related to the upcoming Lambeth conference.

June 29. I thoroughly enjoyed a morning of worship at the National Cathedral—a place that always moves me deeply—and then a quiet afternoon at the college before returning home tomorrow.

June 30. Flew back to Omaha, arriving in the afternoon. Early evening appointment with Robert Schlismann, former Senior Warden of Holy Trinity, Lincoln, who is about to be made a postulant, and is planning to attend the School of Theology in Sewanee, Tenn., for a year's study leading toward a Diploma in Anglican Studies. Tonight I attended an open meeting of the Tri-Faith Board at All Saints. Bishop Christopher Epting and the Rev. Tom Ferguson, both of whom work in the area of interfaith and ecumenical relations for the Episcopal Church, were present to share with the group what is happening in these areas around the country. We were also joined by many of the parish representatives who attended the meeting two weeks ago. Tomorrow begins a "Countdown to Lambeth." More in an expanded journal next month!

Safeguarding God's Children

At the start-up of fall programming, remember that new teachers, nursery workers, youth leaders, anyone who drives children or youth and anyone involved in any way with children must be trained in safe practices in the church.

"Safeguarding God's Children" training is used by the Diocese of Nebraska and is mandated by the Church Insurance Company. We have 15 adults available to facilitate training throughout the diocese.

Please contact the Rev. Ruth L. Jaynes at rjaynes@episcopal-ne.org to schedule a training in your parish or region.

Nominations Correction

The Call for Nominations for the Annual Council elections for the Executive Commission was not correct as provided for the July issue. Two lay persons are needed to fill positions being completed by David Halsted and Gary Gray (not David Hendricks). Dr. Halsted is not eligible for re-election. Gary Gray is eligible for an additional three-year term.

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The Pastoral Staff



Looking Toward Lambeth: Part Three of a Series

The Rt. Rev. Joe G. Burnett

As I write these words on Thursday evening, July 10, I am finishing last minute packing in order to catch a plane tomorrow morning from Omaha via Cleveland to London, where I will travel by car to Brecon in Wales for Sunday services and a three day period "in residence."

By the time you read these words, however, the 2008 Lambeth Conference will be drawing to a close. The event concludes the afternoon of Sunday, Aug. 3. We will depart Canterbury that evening or the next morning, and then leave London for Omaha early on Aug. 6.

By the time you read this I will have, God willing, been the preacher at Brecon Cathedral on July 13, driven in England on more roundabouts than I like to think of counting, spent almost three weeks in residence in a dormitory at the University of Kent in Canterbury, and been to multiple Bible study groups, and "Indaba" group meetings (this is the name of the expanded groups of which all bishops will be a part, groups that will focus on sharing and listening to one another rather than debating), and taken in the historic ethos of Canterbury Cathedral, and the many attendant events and worship that make up the Lambeth Conference.

As you know, this year's Lambeth, more than some, has been hyped by the media and fraught with tension and potential controversy. Against this typical anxiety, the Archbishop of Canterbury has been wise to plan and promise a meeting filled with prayer, building of relationships, and equipping bishops (and all God's people) for mission.

I hope and pray that by the time you read this all these things will have been present and powerful themes in this unique and rare gathering of Anglican bishops.

I have been moved by the prayers of many as I have prepared for this time away as your bishop at Lambeth. Just last week I received a packet full of individual notes, filled with encouraging words and promises of prayer, from members of the Cursillo com-

munity in Colorado—what a wonderful, spiritual surprise!

I have also had many note, e-mails, letters, and personal well-wishes from so many here in Nebraska and around the church.

Everyone, no matter their perspective on the issues that divide the church, is full of hope and prayer that this Lambeth might lead us closer to reconciliation and mutual understanding. I have to say that those who express these sentiments represent a wide variety of perspectives on the matters before us in these times. Yet they all have a desire to be part of something larger than the Episcopal Church. They all want to remain as part of a historic communion of autonomous and interdependent churches.

But to a person, almost everyone who has spoken to me as I plan to attend this event wants to maintain the historic freedom that has always been part of the Anglican way. As I said last month, for more than two centuries we have found this to be a workable and faithful way of giving institutional expression to the historic Christianity we exemplify.

Upon my return I will be sharing further reflections about the conversations and community that formed at Lambeth. And I will be interested in hearing your own perspectives, your own hopes, your own dreams for the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion of the future—and, of course, your own prayers.

By the time you read this, I will already be writing those reflections and reports. And I will look forward to sharing my experiences with all who are interested in hearing about them.

God's peace be upon us, and upon the churches and people of our communion, and upon the whole human family.

Grace and peace be with you always!

Omaha hosts Church Center Office

(Continued from Page A)

this project," which she said were "instrumental in making the Omaha office a reality."

Church Center regional offices are intended to connect with various dioceses in each area as well as the host diocese.

"The Presiding Bishop felt that a presence in the Midwest for the Episcopal Church Center would enable us, on a church-wide basis, to appreciate and learn from the values of community spirit, stewardship, and discipleship that so characterize that part of the country," Watt said.

During their visit, Epting and Ferguson were welcomed at a meeting of the Tri-Faith Initiative -- a partnership of the Omaha's Temple Israel, the American Institute of Islamic Studies, and the Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska -- to discuss interreligious relations on the national level and to learn about local plans to buy property which will provide three separate spaces for worship, shared parking, and a central educational and outreach building for the three faith communities.

"This cross-fertilization between local and national efforts is exactly what the Presiding Bishop hopes can happen in and through our new regional offices," Epting observed. "We look forward to living into this new arrangement in the months and years ahead."

A side benefit of the regional office arrangement has already become clear. Epting and his wife, Susanne, who is a deacon, were recently able to attend a meeting hosted by Diocese of Iowa Bishop Alan Scarfe, diocesan staff, and parishioners for updates and planning on the church's response to recent flood damage in central and eastern Iowa.

The Omaha office space, at 109 N. 18th Street, has been provided to the Episcopal Church Center rent-free under a five-year agreement. The site joins the Church Center's new configuration of five regional offices, including Los Angeles and Washington D.C. Arrangements continue to finalize two additional offices in the southern United States and Seattle. Introduced as part of the ongoing reorganization of the Episcopal Church Center staff, the regional offices complement work based in New York City at 815 Second Avenue. (Episcopal News Service)

OSL Healing Mission in September

Two Nebraska chapters of the Order of Saint Luke will co-host the annual healing mission. The Lincoln Chapter, and the Omaha Chapter, founded last year at the Church of the Resurrection, will welcome the North American Director of OSL, the Ven. Larry Mitchell, from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. Mitchell was one of the presenters at the Lincoln Chapters's second mission held at St. Matthew's, Lincoln, and is very happy for the opportunity to come back to Nebraska.

The healing mission will be held at St. Martha's Episcopal Church, Papillion, Sept. 19-20. The Friday evening session will begin with registration at 6:00 p.m. and will end at approximately 9:00 p.m. Saturday morning session begins with registration and continental breakfast at 8:00 a.m., with morning worship at 9:00. The day will be full of teachings by Mitchell, ending with a Eucharist and healing service at 4:00 p.m. Lunch will be served and is included in the \$25.00 registration fee. This year, we are again encouraging interested people to register and to "bring a friend for \$10".

For more information, you may contact Deacon Wes Agar from St. Martha's at 402-291-6768 or e-mail at bwagar2315@sarpy.com or Verneda Kelly at 402-310-5854 or e-mail at v_joankelly@lycos.com.

If you have ever been drawn to or just curious about how Jesus heals, and the power of God moving in us, plan to attend this year's mission. Jesus healed body, mind and spirit, and sent his disciples out to do the same, giving them the ability to do more than He had done on earth. He is still calling us to do the same, Kelly said.

Parishes in Transition

Church of the Resurrection, Omaha: The vestry has formed a Search Committee and is beginning work on a parish profile.

Church of the Holy Spirit, Bellevue: The Search Committee has finished the parish profile and is now receiving candidate names.

St. Augustine's Church, Elkhorn/Omaha: The Search Committee has finished the parish profile and is now receiving candidate names.

St. John's in Valentine and St. John's in Broken Bow continue to look for part time clergy to serve their parishes. If you know of any priest who may be interested in a part time position, please contact Canon John Schaefer at the diocesan office.

Any priest interested in applying for either or both the positions at Church of the Holy Spirit or St. Augustine's Church should contact Schaefer at the diocesan office directly.

St. Alban's Celebrates 125 Years of Ministry



A parish picnic on St. Alban's Day, June 22, kicks off Anniversary celebrations. (Photo Courtesy Marilyn Brandt)

St. Alban's, McCook, has been ministering in the community of McCook since 1883. The parish has planned a number of events during upcoming months to celebrate its 125th anniversary.

The first event was a Festive Evensong on St. Alban's Day, June 22, followed by a picnic on the church grounds.

Parishioners and friends shared stories and pictures at a scrapbooking and video taping following a potluck dinner July 20. This will help us get our history into a viewable format.

An ice cream social Aug. 24 will include an old fashioned hymn sing.

The Reverend Mary Dee Hendricks will be installed as St. Alban's Rector in September. A float from St. Alban's will be a new addition in McCook's Heritage Days Parade Sept. 27.

Recipes are being gathered for the creation of another fine Episcopal cookbook in conjunction with the Tasting Tea set for Oct. 18.

Plans are being made for a formal 125th Anniversary Banquet on All Saints Day, Nov. 1. The year-long celebration will have its grand finale with an old fashion Christmas worship Dec. 24.

The congregation of St. Alban's would be delighted to have friends from across the Diocese join them for any or all events.

Episcopalians and the Environment

Deacon Betsy Blake Bennett
Saint Stephen's, Grand Island

At last summer's conference of the North American Association for the Diaconate (NAAD), Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori challenged us deacons to get to work on environmental issues. She pointed out that the traditional diaconal concerns for the poor, the sick, and other marginalized people are directly connected to environmental concerns.

As the reality of environmental issues such as climate change has become clearer, Episcopalians have been increasingly paying attention. Resolutions about environmental stewardship and our response to global warming were passed at the 2006 General Convention; conferences have been held to discuss environmental concerns and how the Church might best respond; several dioceses and provinces have committees or commissions focused on care of creation; and many parishes throughout the Church are looking at doing ministry in ways that promote care for creation. The Millennium Development Goal

of environmental sustainability is linked closely to other goals about human health and about economic and social well-being, and some of our Episcopalian environmental work comes from our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

The challenges of a changing environment are taking all of us into new territory. We are dealing with something so different from anything humankind has faced before that we lack the language, just the right metaphors, to fully understand it. Part of the reason many people are slow to respond in a meaningful way to the environmental crisis is that it is so difficult to talk about it in a way that helps us to understand the enormity and urgency of the situation. One thing the Church has to offer at this time is experience in talking about, thinking about, and living with things that are too big for language. This is what we do every time we talk about God, every time we do liturgy, every time we pray.

Despite the difficulties of addressing something so big and complex, the promises in our baptismal covenant oblige us as Chris-

Ulrich Ordained Deacon



The Rev. Stephanie Ulrich was ordained to the Diaconate at All Saints, Omaha, on June 22. Among the participants were, first row from left to right, Deacons Mary Forsythe, Nancy Houston, Ellen Ross, Mary Sue Sturgeon, Lynne Bacon, All Saints Rector the Rev. Tom O'Dell, Ulrich, The Rt. Rev. Joe G Burnett, and Deacons Wes Agar, Betsy Bennett, Juanita Johnson and Pat Sheldon. Second row, from left, Deacon Hank Austin, the Rev. Chris Mottl, Deacon Bob Henriksen, the Rev. Mark Norris, Archdeacon Jim Visger, (peeks behind the Bishop's miter), and Deacons Robin McNutt and Kim Roberts. In the third row, from left to right, the Rev. Jay Gabb, the Rev. Paul Mottl, Deacon Rich Kelly, the Rev. Bob Bee and Deacon Phil Chapman. (Photo Courtesy the Rev. Stephanie Ulrich)

tians not only to recognize the situation, but to lead the response. In our baptismal covenant, we promise to seek and serve Christ in all persons; we cannot look away as people in the poorest nations face the gravest and most immediate consequences of the ever-increasing levels of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. We promise to strive for justice and peace; we must lead the way in ensuring the sustainability of our environment.

Following last summer's NAAD conference, I applied for and was accepted as a GreenFaith Fellow. GreenFaith is an interfaith organization based in New Jersey. The Fellowship program is designed to form religious environmental leaders throughout the United States, training us to lead our faith communities to respect and care for God's creation, and to be better stewards of the environment. GreenFaith's work revolves around the core values of spirit, justice, and stewardship, and during the eighteen months of study and training we focus on each area in turn.

In April, I attended the Healing Our Planet Earth (HOPE) conference in Seattle. This conference was sponsored by Episcopal Divinity School, the Diocese of Olympia, and Seattle-based Earth Ministry. The presenters, including both our Presiding Bishop and Bishop Steven Charleston of EDS, spoke about the urgency of the climate situation, why Christians must pay attention to it, and how we might best respond to it. Through this conference and through GreenFaith, I have been able to get acquainted with groups already at work in several dioceses and provinces, including our own Province Six group. As part of the Fellowship program, I've reflected on a mountain climb with an amazing group of people

of various faiths, I've toured toxic sites in Newark, and I've become very aware of the way our spiritual health is tied to the health of our environment.

I've been visiting with Bishop Burnett and others in our diocese about what we might do to be more intentional in our care for creation and our awareness of the connection between our spiritual health and the health of creation. I'm currently looking for people in our diocese who have experience working in fields related to environmentalism, or who simply have a passion for the environment and for the many social and economic issues related to the environment, and who would like to help develop environmental ministry in Nebraska. The first task for this group will be helping to prepare something to introduce Episcopalian environmentalism to others attending Annual Council in November. Meanwhile, I'll use this space the next couple of months to write about some of the strands of religious environmentalism and about some specific sorts of things we might begin doing in our diocese and in our parishes.

If you feel called to help to develop environmental ministry in our diocese, please contact me. E-mail deaconbetsy@windstream.net; 402-461-3933; or phone Saint Stephen's 308-382-4961.

You Know You're an Episcopalian if . . .

Your Junior Warden never shovels snow from the walks on Sunday mornings because he believes "The Lord Giveth, The Lord Taketh Away."

St. Andrew's Alaskan Adventure



Seven from St. Andrew's, Omaha, traveled to assist in constructing an addition to St. David's, Wasilla, Alaska. The team included, from the left, Rod Teutsch, Sharon Jones, the Rev. Tom Jones, Peter Bolay, Phil Pierce, Harold Remmenga and Tim Pierce. In the center photo, construction activities began early each morning. At the right is St. David's as it looks prior to completion of the addition. (Photographs Courtesy the Rev. Tom Jones)

(Editor's Note: St. Andrew's, Omaha, recently sponsored an eight-day mission trip to Alaska. A report of the mission team and its work was written by the Rev. Tom Jones and follows below.)

Last month a group from St. Andrew's, Omaha, headed up to Wasilla, Alaska on an eight-day mission trip to help St. David's Episcopal Church there add 3,000 square feet to their existing facility. Team members included, Peter Bolay, Rod Teutsch, Phil and Tim Pierce, Harold Remmenga, and the Rev. Tom and Sharon Jones. Arriving at St. David's they were met by the Rev. Paul Klitzke and several members of the parish. After a short welcome, they went to dinner and were then escorted to the host family homes where they were staying for the duration of their trip.

Sunday morning the team gathered with the parishioners of St. David's for worship, breakfast, and to share stories of where they came from. This was followed by a survey of the projects to be undertaken and a planning session to prioritize the work.

That afternoon, Klitzke and the Rev. Ann Whitney, deacon at St. David's, took the team on their first jaunt around Alaska to an abandoned gold mine called Independence Mine. The drive up the mountain pass was exquisite and the views were breathtaking. That is until they arrived at the summit and were met by low clouds, cool temperatures and plenty of snow on the ground. Still, the team had a great time and headed down the mountain for a superb halibut dinner with John and Lauren Orella, one of the host families.

Each day the team met for breakfast at the church and Morning Prayer before beginning its daily projects. While the team had hoped to be raising the walls of the new church addition, they found themselves performing demolition to make way for the new space. There was a lot of prep work and each day the team ticked items off the to-do list.

The team had help, too. Members of the parish stopped by and helped out where they could. Some helped with the physical work being done, others brought lunch or snacks.

Tri Faith Initiative Of Omaha Board opens meeting to visitors

The Tri-Faith Initiative Board of Directors opened their regular monthly meeting, held June 30 at All Saint's, Omaha, to interested persons from all three faith communities.

Sixteen visitors from parishes including: Holy Trinity Lincoln; Trinity Cathedral, Omaha; St. Augustine's, Elkhorn/Omaha; All Saint's; St. Mary's, Blair; St. Martha's, Papillion; St. Mary's, Nebraska City; and St. Paul's, Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Together with guests from Temple Israel, the board members listened to a presentation by the Rt. Rev. Christopher Epting and Tom Ferguson who are program officers for Ecumenical and

Interreligious Relations for the Episcopal Church. The Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations is now one of the ministries in the Episcopal Church Center's regional office housed at Trinity Cathedral. After their informative presentation, a lively discussion took place concerning how interreligious dialogues and the initiative in Omaha can make a difference in the way the world and it's major religions might better relate to one another.

The Tri-Faith Initiative brings together Christians, Jews and Moslems who have been looking for a place to construct a West Omaha campus which will include an Episcopal Church, a Temple,

Whitney took the team for pizza. The Orellas hosted us for a second dinner, Ralph and Marjie Hensley roasted turkey one night, and Wayne and Chris Curtis prepared fresh Salmon. They also gave the team a tour of Team Stomwatch Kennels where Wayne houses the dog teams he uses as a musher (dog sled racer) during the Iditarod Race.

The team worked hard each day to complete as many of the projects as they could. However, the long daylight hours and the great weather also allowed the team to take a few short sightseeing trips in and around the city of Wasilla. One day several were able to go flight-seeing and flew over Prince William Sound. Along the way they saw some excellent wildlife and inspiring landscape. The word most often used to describe their flight experience was WOW!

Another day the team visited The Native American Heritage Museum, Matanuske glacier, and on their day off, they took a guided cruise to Blackstone Bay, where they witnessed magnificent tidewater glaciers, a unique cliff hanging glacier, waterfalls, wildlife including a whale, and hiked to a salmon fishery.

The team thanks the people of St. Andrew's who supported them through parish fund raising activities and the wonderful folks who cared for them while in Alaska. First and foremost to the host families, John and Lauren Orella, Deacon Ann Whitney, Ralph and Marjie Hensley, Alice Holinger, and Jake Anderson; second, to their Iditarod hosts Wayne and Chris Curtis; and to the Rev. Paul Klitzke and his wife Sarah who coordinated everything to make our trip both productive and enjoyable.

Finally, we want to thank the people of St. David's for being so wonderful. When the time came to return to Omaha, the team once again gathered with the people of St. David's to worship, have breakfast, share stories and say their good-byes. The whole experience is one that none of the team will ever forget. To be blessed with the beauty of untouched wilderness and to know hospitality that knows no end can only be summed up in this way - WOW God is good!

and a Mosque, along with a center for education and other communities uses.

The regular board meetings are open to anyone who is interested from all three faith communities. The next meeting will be Aug. 4 at 7:00 p.m. at Qualia Clinical Services, 10845 Harney Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

"Dress Up Tea Party" served at St. Luke's

St. Luke's, Kearney, held a "Dress Up Tea Party" July 17 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Originally planned as a "Little Girls' Tea Party," the interest from throughout the congregation resulted in opening the tea to ladies of every age.

Women participated as fit their schedule, meeting with whomever was present for tea and fellowship.

Volunteers brought dress up clothes, hats, gloves, boas, beads, etc., for little girls to wear and have their photograph taken by Janie Bower-Hansen, leader of the tea party.

Female Bishops Approved in C of E

The governing body of the Church of England has voted to approve the appointment of women as bishops.

The General Synod, meeting in the City of York, voted by comfortable margins in each of the synod's three houses, bishops, clergy, laity, to approve the consecration of female bishops.

The vote comes 16 years after the synod voted to approve the ordination of women as priests in England.

Growing Our Diocese Possible With Success of 2008 Alleluia Fund

The final results for the 2008 Alleluia Fund Offering will not be known until the end of the year, but thus far it has been a very successful offering. Each year the Alleluia Fund affords individuals in parishes all across our diocese to make a financial offering to help grow the ministries in the Diocese of Nebraska. This year, with several significant designated gifts and more than 250 undesignated gifts, the Alleluia Fund has received \$480,000. These funds have been matched by the Bishop Clarkson Episcopal Foundation as part of their matching grant challenge to the people of the diocese.

During the past three years the Alleluia Fund has provided valuable resources for the work of growing our Diocese, from helping congregations with new construction, such as St. Martha's and St. Andrew's in Omaha, to providing funds to help with major improvements in numerous parishes including St. Stephen's, Grand Island; St. Joseph's, Mullen; and St. John's, Valentine. The Fund has provided support for our Deanery Youth coordinators and various youth ministries, special revitalization programs such as Fresh Start and Natural Church Development, as well as monies to support mission projects in the Dominican Republic and the Sudan.

On behalf of Bishop Burnett, the Alleluia Fund Co-Chairs, and all those in the diocese who have benefited from this fund, we say thank you to all who gave of their financial resources this year to make this a very successful annual offering. We continue to encourage all members of the diocese to take this opportunity to give for the work of growing Christ's Church here in Nebraska.

*The Rev. Canon Tim Anderson
Canon for Development*

Stewardship Academy in October

On Oct. 17-18, the Diocese of Nebraska, in cooperation with the Bishop Clarkson Episcopal Foundation will host a Stewardship Academy to be offered by staff from the Episcopal Church Foundation. This educational opportunity will be held at St. Andrew's, Omaha, Oct. 17 and on Oct. 18 the same workshops will be offered at St. Luke's, Kearney.

The Stewardship Academy will run from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. These stewardship workshops will focus on Planned Giving and how to establish a parish Legacy Society; Vestry Leadership and the role of Stewardship Commissions; and Capital Campaigns. Plans call for the Rev. Bob Honeychurch, the officer for Small Church Development from the Episcopal Church's Omaha regional office, will provide further workshop offerings.

Please mark your calendars to attend either of these informative events. Further information and details will be available on the diocesan web site and in the September issue of "The Nebraska Episcopalian."

New Web Site Hosting Service Now Available to Each Parish in Diocese

As of Aug. 1, the Diocese of Nebraska has contracted with Digital Faith, a non-profit company whose sole business is to host and develop Web sites for dioceses. The diocesan site will have the same address: <http://www.episcopal-ne.org> and all e-mail addresses will stay the same, according to the Rev. Canon John Schaefer.

Digital Faith already hosts several Web sites of other dioceses. One of the benefits of using Digital Faith will be the ability to host parish Web sites at a very reasonable cost.

"The cost to any parish will be no more than \$50 a month with no additional set up fee," Schaefer said. "The monthly fee will be on a sliding scale with smaller

parishes paying no more than \$10 a month."

Added benefits include a "content management system" that would allow any parish to update and maintain its Web site with no technical training.

"It's as easy as using a word processor and more than one person could maintain the site from any computer that has an internet connection," Schaefer said. "Support can be either through Digital Faith or through me."

Parishes with a current Web site can keep the same domain name and complete support is given in transferring each site to the new system.

"This Web site solution is too good to pass up," he said. "Every parish, regardless of size,

Bishop's Calendar & Diocesan Events

August 2008

August 23 Western Deanery Meeting at Holy Apostles Mitchell 10:00 a.m.

September 2008

Sept. 1 Happening Eucharist, St. Luke's, Kearney
Sept. 2 Bishop and Chairs, COM and Standing Comm, St. Augustine's, Elkhorn/Omaha

Sept. 5 Executive Commission Meeting, Holy Trinity, Lincoln, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sept. 7 Bishop's Visitation, St. Francis, Scottsbluff
Sept. 10 Celebration of New Ministry for the Rev. Mary Hendricks, St. Alban's, McCook

Sept. 14 Bishop's Visitation, Christ Church, Beatrice, St. Luke's, Wymore

Sept. 16-19 House of Bishops' Called Meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah

Sept. 19-21 Deacons' Retreat, Benedictine Center, Schuyler

Sept 19-20 Order of St. Luke's Healing Mission at St. Martha's Papillion Time TBA

Sept. 21 Bishop's Visitation, St. Andrew's, Seward

Sept. 22-24 Midwest Bishops, St. Louis

Sept. 26-28 Anglican Theological Review Board, Seabury Western, Evanston, IL

Sept. 30 Bishop and Trustees, Clarkson Center

October 2008

Oct. 5 Bishop's Visitation, Oregon Trail Trinity Cluster, Ogallala, Oshkosh, Bridgeport

Oct. 12 Bishop's Visitation, Holy Apostles, Mitchell, and Calvary, Hyannis

Oct. 19 Bishop's Visitation, St. Luke's, Plattsmouth

Oct. 26 Bishop's Visitation, St. Luke's, Kearney

November 2008

Nov. 2 Bishop's Visitation, Grace Church, Chadron
Nov. 7-9 Annual Council, Gering Convention Center, Gering

Nov. 16 Bishop's Visitation, St. Matthew's, Lincoln

Nov. 23 Bishop's Visitation, Our Savior, North Platte

Nov. 30 Bishop's Visitation, St. Martin's, Omaha

December 2008

Dec. 2 Bishop and Trustees, Clarkson Center

Dec. 7 Bishop's Visitation, Holy Trinity, Lincoln

Dec. 8-10 House of Bishops' Theology Committee, Washington National Cathedral

Dec. 14 Bishop's Visitation, St. Augustine's, DeWitt

Dec. 21 Bishop's Visitation, St. James, Fremont

Dec. 24 Bishop in Residence, Trinity Cathedral, Omaha

should have a Web site. It is the primary vehicle that people today use to look for and find out about churches."

This Web site solution will allow each parish to maintain a well-designed site that is easy to update and maintain at a very reasonable cost. It is available to all parishes and organizations within the diocese. For more information, please contact Schaefer at the diocesan office.

You Know You're an Episcopalian if . . .

During the recitation of the creed you hear your child say "I believe in Jesus Christ, the only forgotten Son of God."

Your family can make it to the Sunday buffet before any of the other churches are out.

Women's Ministries Summer Conference

In light of the environmental challenges of floods, tornadoes, drought, and devastating weather causing loss of life and property in this part of the country, many are asking how to face these losses. In other words, "What do you do when life's falling apart?"

A Women's Ministries Summer Conference at St. Augustine's, 285 S 208th St, Elkhorn/Omaha, will explore answers to this question on Aug. 16.

Come spend a day to examine how to cope with these challenges as Christian women led by the Rev. Lynn Orville. She will lead participants in a day of examination of this important life challenge using both scripture and rabbinic literature.

Orville graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1998, served in Erie, Penn., and then returned to Nebraska for about four years to serve churches in Chadron and Rushville. She served two years at a small church in the Diocese of Minnesota and left for health reasons. She is a cancer survivor and now does supply work, serves on diocesan commissions and is a retreat leader.

St Augustine's Daughters of the King chapter is planning this event and hopes women from throughout the diocese will join them. Participants will have an opportunity to visit St. Augustine's Quiet Garden.

This summer conference is free of charge, but registration is requested for those who want to have lunch. For information, contact Sandra Squires at sksquires@cox.net, call 402-397-4059 or see the registration form in this issue of "The Nebraska Episcopalian." The first 25 pre-registrants will receive a free gift at check-in. Pre-registration is requested by Aug. 11.

Women's Ministries Summer Event August 16, 2008

**St. Augustine's Church, 285 S 208th
Street,
Omaha (Elkhorn) NE 68022**

Theme: What Do You Do When Your Life Is Falling Apart

9:00-10:00 Registration
10:00-12:30 Workshop: The Rev. Lynn Orville
12:30-1:15 Lunch, time to visit the Quiet Garden
1:15-3:00 Workshop continued
3:00-4:00 Closing Eucharist

Cost: Free, but registration is requested if you want to be guaranteed lunch.

The first 25 pre-registrants will receive a free gift.

Registration Deadline Aug. 11

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Telephone (Area Code) _____

E-mail address for confirmation _____

Send to: Sandra Squires, 681 S. 86th Street, Omaha, NE 68114-4205. sksquires@cox.net or 402-397-4059.

Women's Retreat

Oct. 3 - 5

Sponsored By

**St. Mary's Holly Episcopal Church, Rushville,
And**

Women's Ministries of the Diocese of Nebraska

**Retreat Leader : The Rev. Canon Judy Yeates
Canon to the Ordinary
Music: Ruby Tiensvold**

**Retreat Theme: Befriending Each Other in God--
The Gift of Spiritual Friendships**

Norwesca Camp and Retreat Center, 79 Norwesca Road, Chadron, Neb. 69337

Meals Served: Friday Supper through Sunday Breakfast.

Total Registration Cost:

Double Occupancy \$80.00 Per Person

Single Occupancy \$110.00 Per Person

(Full Linens Provided.)

Send Registration and check made out to St Mary's Holly Episcopal Church Retreat, P.O. Box 71, Rushville NE, 69360 by Sept. 1.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

A check is enclosed for: Double _____ Single _____

Preferred roommate _____

Special Needs:

Dietary _____

Mobility _____

Maps/Directions Needed _____

Spirituality and Medicine Conference in October

The Nebraska Medical Center Departments of Pastoral Care Services and Clinical Pastoral Education will host a conference on "Spirituality and Medicine." The conference will be held Friday, Oct. 24, in the Clarkson Tower, Lower Storz Pavilion, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Dr. Keith Meador, Co-Director of the Center of Spirituality, Theology and Health, Duke University, will be the presenter. He will speak from a theological and

psychiatric perspective on the value of engaging people's faith in the midst of practicing medicine. This event is for an audience of clergy, lay people, physician, nurse, church leaders and others interested in serious engagement in learning more about "that place where western medicine meets faith."

For further information, contact the Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha.

Church of the Holy Spirit, Bellevue, Conducts Vacation Bible School



Church of the Holy Spirit, Bellevue, welcomed 30 children to Vacation Bible School June 23-26. The theme of "Creation" was augmented by the hymn "All Things Bright and Beautiful." The Rev. Ruth Jaynes, Interim Rector, told Godly Play stories related to the Creation each day to two groups of about 14 children ages 3 years to 5th grade. The art response each day was related to the story as were the crafts and the feast. Each child decorated their own T-shirt to have as a reminder, the older children tie-dyeing theirs and the younger children using special crayons. Kristi Smith, director of Christian Education, and Lynda Wyant organized the VBS and five teenagers and 10 adults helped make the week a success.



Lucy Gray used storybooks to tell the story related to the Godly Play lesson each day of the VBS at Holy Spirit, Bellevue. At the 10:30 service on the following Sunday, the children sang songs they learned at VBS. (Photos Courtesy Alan Wyant)

The You in Youth Noelle Ptomey, Central Deanery Youth Coordinator

As I write this article my own house is being invaded by four 10-year-olds and a 5-year-old tag-along brother. This invasion has become common place as summer vacation stretches on. And on. And on. The same group of boys show up day after day. Friend's of my oldest son. Boys who all have parents that work and therefore are not home during the day. Boys who always "show up" at lunch time.

So they come. I feed them. They hang out in the kitchen in between rounds of play and it's clear from our conversations that they want someone to talk to them, someone to listen to them. Even though they are surrounded by friends they want an adult to talk to. They want someone to care about them and what is going on in their lives. It's not that their parents don't or can't do this, but sometimes children need people outside their own families to connect with.

The Rev. Ellie Thober from Church of Our Savior, North Platte, once told me how important it was for her, that her own children had adult youth leaders who could teach her children the things she believed in; that there were other people who could care about her children and their faith formation. As anyone with a teenager can tell you, sometimes they DON'T want to hear it from their parents.

And it struck me that this daily invasion of kids is a bit like church. I don't mean to sound like coming to my house is a religious experience, but these kids clearly feel welcome here. They experience fellowship and community and they are fed. I think the church has a sacred place in young people's lives.

A central way in which the church becomes tangible is through relationship with one another. As adult members of the Episcopal Church we are called to not merely keep the faith, but

'Giving' is VBS theme at Trinity Memorial



Children at Trinity Memorial, Crete, learned about 'giving' while attending Vacation Bible School.



Anne, Claire and Kathryn Holling, and Ellie, Emily and Zack Binder visit Mrs. Osterhout at Garden Square Assisted Living as part of their Vacation Bible School giving project. (Photos Courtesy Jody Kerssenbrock)

Trinity Memorial, Crete, held a Vacation Bible School June 16-18 from 5-7 p.m. beginning with a prayer and a shared meal. The theme was "Giving."

The Rev. Ruth Jaynes, Christian Formation leader for the Diocese of Nebraska, participated the first day. Sharon and Jim Crouse gave a slide presentation and spoke about the physical gifts they gave and the spiritual gifts they received on the Crete United Church of Christ mission trip to Mexico this past winter. Anne Holling of Trinity Memorial repeated the giving theme with a story. The youngsters drew pictures and decorated wooden crosses as an art response.

Tuesday, participants discussed giving and the various kinds of gifts each has to give. They decorated and planted flower pots with marigolds for each of the 38 residents of Garden Square Assisted Living and two homebound parishioners. Some of the children wrote notes and drew pictures to give with the marigolds.

Wednesday evening they took flowers and pictures to the "grandmas and grandpas" at Garden Square. They stopped and visited with these elders and left smiles and flowers with them.

to pass it on. Passing it on isn't an optional thing. But it is an intentional thing.

We must make the effort to be involved with our youth. We must form those relationships. It's those connections that are the very backbone of youth ministry.

The great thing about youth ministry is that anyone can do it. It's not rocket science. You don't need an advanced degree in theology. All you need is an open,

caring heart and the will to carry out this ministry. Opportunities abound in your church and diocesan programs. They may even exist in your neighborhoods or your very own home.

Remember the scripture: "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:20.

The youth are here. Jesus is here. Where are you?