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# INTERCHANGE

December 2008  
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news from the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio | Award of General Excellence: 2006, 2007

## *The gifts of God*



## *for the people of God*

Volunteers make lunch at St. John's, Columbus, for the next day's Street Church ministry. At right, Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal elevates the cup and the host during the convention Eucharist. Photos by Julie Murray.

## *Southern Ohio* makes mission, action a priority

BY RICHELLE THOMPSON  
INTERCHANGE EDITOR

Guided by the theme, "The World in Christ," delegates for the 134th Convention of the Diocese of Southern Ohio spent Nov. 7-8 exploring how to make the love of Christ known to the world.

In addition to the traditional actions of convention – from passing resolutions and the budget to fellowship and Bible study, delegates spent a morning in mission. When the deacon entreated the congregation to "love and serve the world" at the convention Eucharist on Nov. 8, the congregation divided into about 20 groups and spent two hours in mission projects.

"To be the church is to go out into the world, to express our faith and respond to Christ's love through action," said the Rev. Lee Anne Reat, vicar of St. John's, Columbus and the coordinator of the mission activities. "Along with the worship and business that make up convention, I think that the mission activities made visible who and what we are as the church."

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## Mission: Be bold, reckless with generosity

BY RICHELLE THOMPSON  
INTERCHANGE EDITOR

In the streets of New Orleans, the people have been baptized twice, said the Rt. Rev. Charles Jenkins, bishop of the Diocese of Louisiana.

The first time, it was by clean water in churches. The second time, they were baptized by the dirty water from the flooded streets.

In a stirring keynote address to convention delegates, Bishop Jenkins shared the journey from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina to the rebuilding efforts through his diocese, mission groups and other churches.

"Hard times are the specialty of the church," he said. "It's not only, 'What would Jesus do?' But what did he do at the time of the greatest crisis in the world? What is the response of the church in a time of crisis? Will we decide that this is the time to retreat? To worry about my own congregation? Is this the time to move from an attitude of abundance to scarcity?"

Bishop Jenkins conceded that in the aftermath of Katrina and threat of failing levees, he won-

dered whether they should rebuild or leave.

"One pastor told me, 'We've demonstrated something that you need to understand. We're not going to leave. We will not leave.'"

Bishop Jenkins and others in leadership in the diocese came to the conclusion: "This is our home. The poor are here. And the church shall be here."

He invoked the spirit of ubuntu, an African phrase that means "I am because we are." Ubuntu is the theme of the 2009 General Convention and a guiding principle for the mission in the Gulf Coast.

Ubuntu offers "an invitation to be less lonely, less isolated, less insecure," he said. "Our life and our death is with our neighbor."

And lest those in Southern Ohio think that this symbiotic relationship should exist only in the muddy waters of New Orleans, Bishop Jenkins cautioned that the only difference between New Orleans and many of the inner cities is 8 feet of water.

Many inner cities are like New Orleans, burdened with oppression from centuries of racism, bad health care and purposeful eco-

nomie exclusion.

Without the church being an intimate, engaged part of these neighborhoods, "Who tells our story?" he asked.

In New Orleans, the Episcopal Church through its Jericho Project, is the only organization building homes for people who have no money. But "when you've lost everything, you learn generosity in a new way," the bishop said.

He thanked the many groups from Southern Ohio who have come to New Orleans, some for their fifth and sixth trips. In fact, a group from Calvary, Clifton, and Christ Church, Glendale, will spend Thanksgiving week on mission in New Orleans. Bishop Jenkins encouraged these groups to continue their ministry among his people – and among the people of the inner cities and impoverished communities in Southern Ohio.

"When the day is long, the demand is great and all the resources are exhausted, you were there to hold me up," Bishop Jenkins said. "Do not be afraid in this time of crisis. Be bold. Even be reckless in your generosity. And do this all in the name of Jesus Christ."

# The World in Christ:

## The Bishop's Address to the 134th Convention of the Diocese of Southern Ohio

*"O God, by your grace you have called us in this diocese to a godly fellowship of faith. Bless all who serve you here. May your Word be truly preached and truly heard, your sacraments faithfully administered and faithfully received. By your Spirit, fashion our lives according to the example of your Son, and grant that we may show the*

**BISHOP  
THOMAS E.  
BREIDENTHAL**



*power of your love to all among whom we live; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen"* (Book of Common Prayer, p. 817).

It is an honor to address the 134th Convention of the Diocese of Southern Ohio. I begin with a portion of our Bible study passage from earlier today:

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of

heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See the home of God is among mortals. . . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. . . . Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more. For the first things have passed away" (Rev. 21:1-5).

These words from Revelation are so stately, so confident, so full of hope.

Yet they clearly are addressed to Christians in a time of great distress, a time when our forbears longed for intimacy with God, and an end to violence, anxiety and grief.

We are perhaps in such a time. We have come to the end of a long political campaign, and however we voted, it is now our duty to pray earnestly for our President-Elect, who faces enormous challenges. These are challenges we cannot ignore as we gather here today and tomorrow. We may not want this heaven and earth to pass away just yet, but we yearn for a global economy that benefits all of us locally, and for a natural order that is once again self-sustaining. We don't want to escape from the world to God but want to experience a world saturated with God's presence. We don't want to retreat from the world, but we want the world to be a safe place for our children and grandchildren to walk.

My sisters and brothers, especially in hard times the Gospel calls us to redoubled hope and great-hearted joy. We must be like trees that sink their roots down deeper into the soil in times of drought. Jesus is the ground that will never fail us, the source that fills us so completely that we can spread our branches out in witness to God's trustworthiness and love.

As the world faces possible recession, I am not worried about the church. We thrive when hardship forces us to remember who we are: a community that models acceptance without passing any kind of test, and emanates a steady and calm trust in God when the rest of the world is panicking. This is the gift we can bring and should bring to the communities that surround us, rooted, as we are, in the knowledge of God's love for us in Christ, our crucified and risen Lord.

The motto for this convention is "the world in Christ." When we came up with this motto, none of us who were planning this convention dreamed we would be convening in a time of national and global crisis. Certainly, we were aware that Ohio was in trouble, and we wanted to highlight our diocesan mission to our own neighbor-



The procession at the convention Eucharist held at Trinity, Capitol Square. Photo by Julie Murray

hoods, so desperately needing to know that they stand in the embrace of Christ. But, to be honest, we did not know the extent which all of us sitting here today would so keenly feel the need of this embrace.

So let's sink our roots more deeply and look at the scriptural basis for this year's motto. It's everywhere in Paul's letters, actually, since Paul is constantly referring to our life in Christ, our salvation in Christ, our hope in Christ. But the most explicit statement that the world is in Christ is found in Ephesians 1:10: "God has gathered up all thing in Christ, things in heaven and on earth."

There is nothing that is not being surrounded and encircled by Jesus, and nothing within that circle of attention and care that is not being broken down and reformed by him. The world we are called to witness to and to serve already belongs to Christ. He is already there. He is inside it and all around it.

The hard part for us may be to believe that we are also already drawn into that embrace. One thing is for sure: if we don't believe it, we have nothing to offer to the world. If we have not, individually and collectively, found our way to the foot of the cross, if we have not, individually and collectively, been shattered and reshaped by Christ's victory over death, if we have not known the power of the Holy Spirit making us holy in ways we could never have dreamed of being holy, then it is pointless for us to talk about mission, because we bring no witness, no humility, no readiness to learn from those we seek to serve.

How shall we make our way to the foot of the cross? How shall we position ourselves to encounter the risen Christ? How shall we make ourselves open to the onrush of Holy Spirit?

It seems to me that we need to be bold on two fronts simultaneously. On the one hand, we need to step out in prayer, making ourselves ever more available to God, since it is God and God alone that bring us the cross, the risen Lord, and the event of Pentecost. On the other hand, we need to step out in action, living out in word and deed

our faith in the cross, the resurrection, and our empowerment as the baptized people of God.

In other words, economic hard times are no excuse for retrenchment. We are called to sink our roots more deeply and to stretch our branches further out. Our local communities and our state need us to thrive now, more than ever, because they need the love of Christ, as this translates into care for one another, reconciliation, and hope for the future. This means that each of us is called to give more, not less.

Boldness in hard times is central to the identity of this diocese. In the early 1930s, when the Great Depression had this whole country in its grip, Bishop Hobson, the fourth bishop of Southern Ohio, determined that the only way out of despair was to establish a community of prayer that would move forward together, day by day. Thus the Forward Movement was born.

Faced with the aftermath of World War 2, and massive starvation in Europe, the Diocese of Southern Ohio established the fund which would eventually become the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, now known as Episcopal Relief and Development.

Boldness and initiative are part of our past. Do they belong to our future? They surely do, but only if we once again respond to economic challenge and global need by first engaging more deeply in prayer, study and worship, and secondly by taking actions that demonstrate our conviction that the world is already in Christ.

We will do this by living ever more consistently into the three principles that have come to express what we most long for as a diocese and who we understand ourselves to be: transparency, shared leadership, and connection.


Transparency is not just about money. It is about the openness and clarity with which we share our spiritual journeys with one another and name the successes and

PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE


## The Episcopal Church

 In the Anglican Communion  
A global community of 70 million Anglicans in more than 160 countries

**The Most Rev. and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams**  
Archbishop of Canterbury

 In the United States  
A community of more than 2.4 million Episcopalians in 114 dioceses in the Americas and abroad.

**The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori**  
Presiding Bishop

 In the Diocese of Southern Ohio  
A community of nearly 30,000 Episcopalians in 40 counties.

**The Rt. Rev. Thomas E. Breidenthal, Bishop**

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### CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

failures that have marked the history of our congregations, our deaneries, and our diocese. Such truth-telling is often painful, but we all know it to be the necessary preamble to authentic and effective witness. Indeed, we cannot describe our experience of God's grace in our lives and in our communities unless we are willing to bring to language the difficult times when we began to understand the full measure of God's demand and God's love.

This was the spirit of transparency that marked the Lambeth Conference, allowing all of us to confess our own failings and to embrace one another as imperfect but sincere followers of Jesus Christ.

This was the spirit of transparency that moved The Episcopal Church to surface its role in the institution and practice of slavery, and to apologize publicly for this earlier this fall. I am pleased to announce that our diocesan historiographer, the Rev. Bill Gartig, has prepared a report regarding our own part in that sad history, which will be available on our website soon.

This is the spirit of transparency that will help us to bring into sharper focus the particular gifts and skills God has supplied us with, as God's grace continues to be made perfect, not in our strength, but in our weakness.

The second principle is leadership – shared leadership. I don't need to tell you that ministry is grounded in Baptism, and that all baptized persons are empowered and authorized to be Christ's ministers – his agents – in the world. But it is easier to say this than to live it. None of us can witness to the grace of Christ in our lives or act authentically in his name if we have not lived into our relationship with Jesus. It's like any relationship: we must pay attention to it, cultivate it, give time to it – if we want it to deepen and mature. Let me be very clear here: no amount of inattention on our part can destroy our relationship with Jesus. He has chosen us, we have not chosen him, and the one who died for each of us will not let any of us go. Nevertheless, the claim we have on Jesus in our baptism and in the ongoing gift of the Eucharist cannot bear fruit in ministry if we don't exercise that claim by praying, reading Scripture, engaging in holy conversation about our faith and simply spending quiet time with God.

Such ongoing, intentional and disciplined formation is the source of all true leadership in the Church, and hence of all effective mission. It has nothing to do with being ordained. It's easy to forget that the oldest congregations in our diocese were founded and organized without the benefit of clergy. Don't get me wrong: deacons and priests and even bishops are important. But the particular work of the clergy has absolutely no basis or point apart from the willingness of the whole people of God to own the Baptismal Covenant and shoulder the responsibility for understanding it and carrying it out.

I am happy to announce that the Diocese of Southern Ohio has received a grant of \$60,000 to explore our readiness to embrace bap-

tismal ministry more intentionally in our congregational life, in the way we use and develop our beloved Procter Camp & Conference Center, and in the way we conceive our ministry to college campuses and to our young adults. Stay tuned for more news on this front soon. We will be talking a lot about baptismal – or total—ministry in the year to come.

This brings me to the last of our three central principles: connection. I continue to marvel at Southern Ohio's seemingly inexhaustible hunger for connection. We are a diocese that takes delight in coming together, and I give thanks to God for this. You've all heard me say that the diocese is the basic building-block of the church, and that's because the diocese is the smallest ecclesiastical unit in which we are sure to find fellow Christians who don't look or sound or think or act like us. Diocesan life is always a celebration of the unfamiliar, a reminder that the church is a global body full of strangers all engaged in following Jesus into a world that is stranger still.

Our ability as a diocese to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century will depend on our willingness to build on the connection we already enjoy and to increase it. Richelle Thompson has been hard at work developing a new diocesan website which will be making its debut within weeks. This site, which will be located at [www.Diosohio.org](http://www.Diosohio.org) has been designed so that any congregation or commission that wishes can nest its own website within it, and the site will include a "facebook" feature that will make it easy for all of us "diosohions" to be in conversation with one another. We are also exploring new technologies that will make it easier for commissions to hold effective meetings that don't require people to drive halfway across the state.

Of course, connection is not simply about our interactions with one another within the diocese. I have asked the Commission on National and World Mission to begin exploring the possibility of estab-

lishing a companion relationship with one or two dioceses overseas. This commission has worked hard developing a set of criteria that might guide us in this exploration. These criteria will be posted on our current website immediately following this convention, and I urge you to take a look at them and begin praying about how we can move forward on this front.

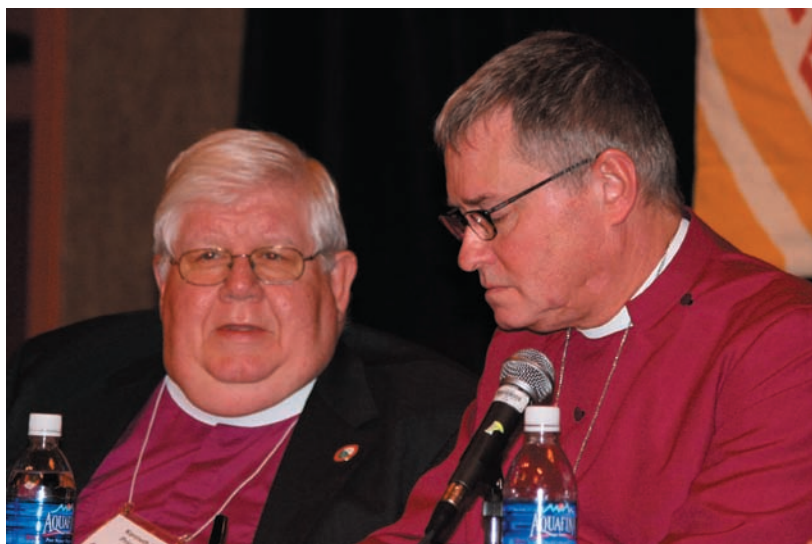
I hope most of you will be able to attend an all-day conference at the Procter Center on Saturday, February 21, which will introduce us to the many features of our new website, invite conversation about possible companion diocese relationships, and, in general, explore how we can get more and more connected. The conference will be called God's Web: Connecting in the 21st Century.

My dear friends, this may be an anxious time, but it is also an exciting and adventuresome time. In Christ everything is already new, and in him, nothing is impossible. May his peace, like a mighty river, lift us out of all our fears, out of any failure of nerve, out of any forgetfulness about graces already received, and carry us forward toward that eternal city where the celebration is already underway.



Above: Youth from the diocese lead the closing worship on Friday, Nov. 7. Below: During one of the mission activities at St. John's, Columbus, a group packs bags to be distributed to the homeless. Photos by Julie Murray





Bishop Price and Bishop Breidenthal confer during the business session of the convention.



Unconventional, a band comprised of three clergy and friends, provided the entertainment for the Friday banquet.

## CONVENTION FROM PAGE 1

The mission activities included options for a variety of skills and interests. Some delegates cooked meals for street church programs operated by two Columbus congregations. Others packed bags to be handed out to the homeless that included necessities such as candles, toilet paper and toothbrushes.

Nathan and Mari Grace Smith, delegates from All Saints, Portsmouth, stuffed socks with candy in preparation for a visit from St. Nicholas to disadvantaged children in Columbus. They also discussed child poverty issues, including health care.

"I chose to attend the session because I am a teacher and a new mother," said Mari Grace Smith. "Not only was it an enlightening experience to learn about the healthcare crisis of so many of God's children, but also it was an enriching experience because it forced me to reflect on what I could do as an individual and what we could do as Episcopalians to help make a greater impact on the lives of children."

Youth of the diocese joined delegates in a simulation of life on the streets, having to navigate the bus systems, public assistance and shelters and finding ways to make money.

Other mission activities included knitting prayer shawls, conducting an energy audit at a local church, exploring advocacy technique for public policy issues and sharing new ways to engage young adults in campus ministry.

The convention's outward focus was reinforced by addresses from Lutheran Bishop Cal Holloway of the Southern Ohio Synod and Louisiana's Bishop Charles Jenkins. Both called upon the people of Southern Ohio to continue to look beyond their own doors and forge relationships with those in need, such as in the Gulf Coast, and those in other denominations and faiths.

"We cannot let special interests and issues keep separating the people of the Word from the people of the world," said Bishop Holloway. "We should pray for the courage and the serendipity of doing something magnificent for God because it so central to God's mission in this world."

Bishop Holloway beseeched the delegates to find ways "to grab our young people by their imagination ... to find ways to express how God loves us and how we love God."

In his convention address, Southern Ohio's Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal acknowledged the fear and anxiety of an uncertain economy and the transition in national leadership. But he said, "I am not worried about the church. We thrive when hardship forces us to remember who we are: a community that models acceptance without passing any kind of test, and emanates a steady and calm trust in God when the rest of the world is panicking. This is the gift we can bring and should bring to the communities that surround us, rooted, as we are, in the knowledge of God's love for us in Christ, our crucified and risen Lord."

Delegates passed seven of eight proposed resolutions, including a measure that officially closed St. Michael and All Angels Church in the Cincinnati community of Avondale.

Before delegates discussed this resolution, Bishop Breidenthal called for a moment of prayer.

"I know this is extremely painful for the people of the congregation that is being closed," he said. "I would like for us to take moment to pray, to lift them up and let them feel the support of the diocese."

The Rev. Paula Jackson, rector of Our Saviour, Mount Auburn, said she considered

St. Michael and All Angels her home parish.

"The 40,000 people of Avondale need to know that the Episcopal Church cares for them. Our diocese needs to have a vibrant, risk-taking mission in Avondale," she said. "We keep trying to start over at St. Michael and All Angels to have a collaborative, ground-breaking ministry ... We've been fanning and puffing on that smoldering fire for years. It's time to re-cultivate the old ground with new seeds. We need a new start, and we need not wait any longer."

Other resolutions approved by delegates included the call for a commitment to local food resources, a Sunday offering for Episcopal Relief and Development and principles for just and fair health insurance.

In addition, delegates approved a \$4.05 million budget for 2009, which included the full asking to The Episcopal Church of nearly \$800,000.



Megan Murray and Anny Stevens-Gleason lead Friday's closing worship.



Esther Russell, a delegate from St. Mary's, Hillsboro, casts her ballot.



Bishop Price offers the host during the Eucharist.

Photos by Julie Murray

To view all of the actions of convention and to download Bishop Breidenthal's convention address, visit [www.episcopal-dso.org](http://www.episcopal-dso.org).

# Decisions: Convention delegates elect new leaders, approve resolutions

## Elected to leadership positions:

- Budget Committee, Class of 2011:  
John D. MacKellar, Michael Yakubusin
- Diocesan Council, Class of 2011:  
Lay: Jeff Brunson, Joan Deisler, Sally Engelbert  
Presbyters: The Rev. Trevor Babb, The Rev. Dave Halt
- Diocesan Review Committee:  
Class of 2010: The Rev. David Bailey  
Class of 2011: The Rev. Stephen Cuff
- Ecclesiastical Trial Court, Judges, Class of 2011:  
Lay: Frances E. McGee-Cromartie  
Clergy: The Rev. Anne Warrington Wilson
- Episcopal Community Services Foundation, Class of 2011  
Sr. Eleanor A. Narkis, CT., Paul Clever, Cynthia E. Sands
- Standing Committee, Class of 2011:  
Lay: C.R. Cavaliere  
Presbyter: The Rev. Stephen H. Applegate
- Trustees of the Church Foundation, Class of 2013: Stan Laughlin
- Trustees of the Diocese: Class of 2013: C.R. Cavaliere

## Adopted resolutions:

### **R08-1 A resolution dissolving the union between St. Michael's and All Angels and the Diocese of Southern Ohio**

*Passed unanimously*

### **R08-3 A Resolution Concerning Health Care**

*Passed*

### **R08-4 A resolution concerning ministries in sustainable agriculture and strengthening local food systems.**

*Passed*

### **R08-5 A resolution to adopt principles of just and environmentally sustainable community economic development.**

*Passed as amended*

**Resolved**, that the Diocese of Southern Ohio, gathered in the 134th diocesan convention, adopts the following principles of environmentally sustainable community economic development:

1) Development strategies should focus on workforce development, local small business formation, and strengthening local food systems and family farms. Strategies that depend on resource extraction are not sustainable and should be discouraged. ~~Strategies that depend on outside business attraction should not be given a priority.~~

2) Development must be accountable to the democratic process. "We the people" must have a central role in making decisions that affect our lives and livelihood. Development decisions should be made in the light of day, with transparent procedures, and public hearings. Elected officials should be responsible to the needs and concerns of constituents, especially the most vulnerable among them.

3) Development should not pose excessive risks to the environment or adversely affect the health of people and other living things.

4) Development should benefit the poorest members of affected communities and lead to shared prosperity. A living wage, fair working conditions, and the rights of labor, including the right to organize, should be respected.

5) Development decisions should pay special attention to the impact on Appalachian communities, communities of color, and other vulnerable communities, and be it further

**Resolved** that the Diocese of Southern Ohio commends the document "Just, Reasonable and Environmentally Sustainable Economic Development in the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio" as the beginning point for a developing conversation about environmentally sustainable community economic development, and be it further

**Resolved that the Social Justice and Public Policy Network assist**

## Thank you

**Eucharist offering:** Delegates and guests gave \$2,476 during the offering taken during the Saturday morning worship. The offering has been sent to Millennium Development Goals' Inspiration Fund at Episcopal Relief & Development.

**Two-cents a meal:** Thanks to the generosity of those who attended the Convention banquet, we raised \$411. Half will go to the Ohio Hunger Network and half to the Mid-Ohio Food Bank.

## congregations in developing this conversation and report the results of their efforts to Diocesan Council.

### **R08-6 Resolution supporting debt relief of developing countries as outlined in the Jubilee Act on World Debt**

*Passed*

### **R08-7 A Resolution Establishing a Sunday in Lent as "Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday"**

*Passed as amended*

**Resolved**, that the Diocese of Southern Ohio annually dedicate, as selected by the Bishop Diocesan, ~~any of the first three Sundays~~ **the fourth Sunday in Lent** as "Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday" and that congregations and individuals be encouraged to support Episcopal Relief and Development's life-saving work through prayer and a special offering that will help heal a hurting world, and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Diocese of Southern Ohio, through its Synod Delegates submit the following resolution to be considered and adopted by Province V, and be it further

**Resolved**, that the Diocese of Southern Ohio, through its Deputation support the submission of the following resolution to the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, meeting in Anaheim, California, July 2009:

### **R08-08 A resolution concerning economic justice work in the Episcopal Church (to be submitted to the 2009 General Convention)**

*Passed as amended*

**Resolved**, that the Diocese of Southern Ohio, through its Deputation, support the submission of the following resolution to the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, meeting in Anaheim, California, July 2009:

**Resolved**, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, that the General Convention affirm and adopt the following actions as the policy and program for Economic Justice of The Episcopal Church during the next six years.

1. The Episcopal Church shall urge Episcopal congregations to continue to engage in the acts of mercy and justice in which many congregations and Jubilee Centers participate. The goal of such activities should be to find ways of ending the increasing disparity that exists between social classes in our world.

2. The Episcopal Church shall urge each Episcopal congregation to fully and wholly know its neighbors, to develop relationships with the disenfranchised in their community, knowing people by their names, and to form a local partnership with an agency that is working with people of little income or **few economic** resources.

*The entire resolution is posted online.*

## Budget

Delegates approved a \$4.05 million budget, which includes the full asking of nearly \$800,000 for The Episcopal Church.

## Resources

The complete text of the resolutions and supporting documents can be found online at [www.episcopal-dso.org](http://www.episcopal-dso.org). Additional information from convention also is posted online, including reports by the canons, treasurer and trustees.

# Ohio Benefit Bank names Sullivan Counselor of the Year

BY ARIEL MILLER  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTOR

Of the 2,700 Ohioans who have been trained to use the Benefit Bank, Nancy Sullivan of Our Saviour, Cincinnati was selected as Counselor of the Year at the first national Benefit Bank conference in Columbus on Oct. 8. She was astonished to receive the award, to the applause of almost 450 people from several states who had come together to share insights from using this breakthrough tool.

The Benefit Bank is free, web-based software used by a growing number of churches and social service agencies to help low-income people access tax credits and public benefits close the gap between wages or fixed incomes and the rising cost of living.

Sullivan, whose volunteer ministry spans many roles from GED tutoring to advocacy for temporary workers, signed up for the very first Ohio training class for Benefit Bank counselors in January of 2006. She has used the Benefit Bank ever since to help families overcome a series of challenges. One of her most dramatic successes was helping a loving but overwhelmed young mother persuade a judge to release her children from foster care back into her care because she could prove that she had applied for Medicaid and food stamps on their behalf.

Sullivan has been tireless in reaching out creatively to groups of people who face particular hardships in accessing resources for which they are eligible. She's taken a laptop to do tax returns for homeless people in soup kitchens and partnered with immigrant advocacy groups to try to help families understand and apply for food stamps or Medicaid for their American-born children.

Her impact expanded significantly when she teamed up with CAIN (Churches Active in Northside), an ecumenical emergency assistance program which shares its campus with St. Philip's Episcopal Church. CAIN provides food, rental and utility assistance to hundreds of families a month. With free food supplies falling far short of the needs, the program wanted urgently to help eligible families access the Earned Income Tax Credit and public benefits but couldn't spare the staff time for the one-on-one time it takes to organize a family's information and enter it into the online tax and application software.

Sullivan volunteered to fill the breach. She comes in for interviews set up by CAIN staff with potentially eli-



Episcopal Benefit Bank counselors Nancy Sullivan (Our Saviour, Cincinnati), Lisa Bell (St. Paul's, Martin's Ferry) and Sylvia Moore (St. Mark's, Upper Arlington) at the first national Benefit Bank conference held in Columbus Oct. 8.

gible families. Since January of this year alone, she has helped 45 households representing 68 people to access \$44,540 in tax refunds, credits, and the economic stimulus rebate. She also helped three families to apply for food stamp benefits with a combined annual value worth up to \$10,632.

This idea of matching a volunteer to a community non-profit that sees a large volume of people in need has proved so successful that the Ohio Benefit Bank has launched a matchmaking system in Columbus and hopes to expand it to other cities.

Though the suite of programs available on the Benefit Bank website is continually expanding, Sullivan soon discovered that they are just the tip of the potential. As she chats with clients about their needs and challenges, she hunts the Internet for other resources.

In a single morning at CAIN, she was able to use Internet searches to inform a woman that she was eligible to apply for worker's comp after a serious injury in a new job and connect a partially disabled man to a special emergency phone service. Another client that day told her excitedly that he had been accepted in a training program that would qualify him for a good job, but the only thing he lacked to begin it was the required state ID. Sullivan quickly found the address of the nearest motor vehicle department office and the fee. Discovering that he couldn't pay the \$8.50

## You can help!

With the recession hitting all kinds of business and the coming loss of 9,000 DHL jobs around Wilmington alone, Benefit Bank volunteers are urgently needed across Southern Ohio to help neighbors access food stamps, health insurance and prescription discounts, and home energy assistance. Many working families may not realize that their children are eligible for Medicaid, which relieves parents of the struggle of trying to pay the additional premium. A coalition of children's services advocates is planning a Medicaid outreach blitz for Epiphany (Jan. 6) and it would be great to have a strong team of Benefit Bank volunteers ready to help people fill out applications.

Tax season begins in January. You can use the Benefit Bank to e-file federal and Ohio tax returns and arrange for direct deposit of refunds and credits into families' bank accounts, reducing the seduction of high interest refund anticipatory loans from storefront tax prep firms. Training is free and quick, taking about seven hours for the public benefits class and seven hours for tax assistance. We would like to be able to match volunteers with non-profits like CAIN that see a high volume of people in need.

If you would like to be trained to use the Benefit Bank, please call the Ohio Benefit Bank at 800.648.1176 or visit the website at [www.obb.ohio.gov](http://www.obb.ohio.gov). For more information about Episcopal involvement in the program or to explore the possibilities of having your church be a site, call Ariel Miller at 513.221.0547 or email her at [ecsf@southernohio.org](mailto:ecsf@southernohio.org).

fee, she got CAIN to write a check to the BMV.

Another client requested help filling out current and back taxes. "She had to come in a number of times to get it all done, so I really got to know her," Sullivan says. This woman had worked as a caregiver before being sidelined by a heart attack. "She described her philosophy of nursing and it seemed to me that this would really fit Episcopal Retirement Homes, which looks at aides as front-line people who spend the most time with residents, and thus important sources of information about their patients' needs," Sullivan recalls. "I mentioned this possibility to her and discovered that she had worked there briefly through an agency and had loved it. I was able to help her complete ERH's online job application."

"Many of our volunteers have been around the community for a long time," she adds. "Once they are comfortable with the Benefit Bank software and don't have to focus on every word, they can spend some time talking to the people and tapping into other resources."

# Urban ministry group meets in Cincinnati

BY THE REV. JOHN PADDOCK  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTOR

Church in Metropolitan Areas (CMA) is a network of nearly 70 clergy and laity from around the United States who work with and have a concern for urban ministry. They meet semi-annually for support, Bible Study, theological reflection, worship and sharing best practices.

The group conducted their fall meeting Nov. 10-12 in Cincinnati. They met at Church of Our Saviour, Mount Auburn, and at Christ Church Cathedral where they worshipped with and shared lunch with Bishops Thomas E. Breidenthal and Kenneth L. Price along with the diocesan and cathedral staffs.

As participants gathered from far (New York, New Jersey, Iowa, Chicago) and near (Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton) they shared stories of their struggles in the crucibles of the churches and streets where they serve. They live in the daily pathos of the human struggles to eat, find shelter, work, and care for the most vulnerable. They find strength in sacraments, prayer and community. And they join with whomever they can find to make common

cause for justice, peace and human dignity.

Bible study focused on the first four chapters of the Acts of the Apostles as the first Christians learned what it meant to "wait in Jerusalem" for the Holy Spirit, for clarity of vision, organization and resources for ministry. "What forms did prayer take, what was the relationship between prayer and power, and what was the function of prayer in the Acts community?" were among the questions upon which participants reflected.

The group was inspired by representatives of Amos, a Cincinnati faith-based community organizing group, who shared their recent successes in collaboration with the construction trades unions and the NAACP to bring workforce development and more local jobs to the Banks of the Ohio Development along the riverfront in downtown Cincinnati. Organizers of the Justice for Janitors Campaign and the development of a non-profit, just, Day Laborer organization supported by the diocese and by Cincinnati Episcopal churches and ecumenical partners shared similar stories.

Michael Maloney, member of the cathedral and staff person for the Episcopal Network for Economic Justice (ENEJ), spent an evening with the group to outline

resources and strategies for economic justice ministries around the country. In addition to Maloney, other participants from Southern Ohio were Ariel Miller, Karl Ruttan, Jane Gerdson, Deniray Mueller, Paula Jackson, Rosa Brown and John Paddock.

The Rev. Christopher Johnson, Domestic Justice and Jubilee Ministries staff person from the Church Center in New York, joined the CMA group for the entire three-day meeting and has agreed to represent the group and their concerns at the national level.

CMA will hold their next meeting April 20-23 in the Diocese of Newark. They plan to spend a day at the United Nations with the Anglican Observer to the U.N. and to continue discussing some of their top priorities that include urban mission strategies and the recruitment and training of clergy and laity for inner city ministries.

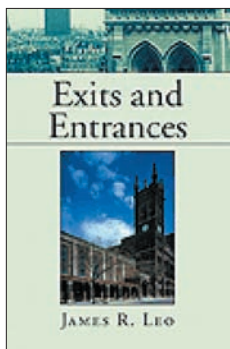
Southern Ohio Episcopalians who wish to learn more about the recent meeting are encouraged to contact one of the local participants. The Rev. Geoffrey Curtiss, rector of All Saints in Hoboken, New Jersey, is coordinator of Church in Metropolitan Areas and can be reached at [gcurtiss@allsaintshoboken.com](mailto:gcurtiss@allsaintshoboken.com)

## Book review |

## Exits and Entrances

As I continue to get to know the Diocese of Southern Ohio, I am more and more grateful for the stories people tell me about themselves, their congregation, and the ministries they have pursued. Each of these stories is a window onto who we are as the body of Christ in this place.

Some of these stories have come in written form. One has just been published, and I commend it to you. The Very Rev. James R. Leo, retired Dean of Christ Cathedral in Cincinnati, has authored a collection of reflections and reminiscences about his life in the service of Christ, entitled *Exits and Entrances* (published this year by Xlibris). The book focuses on his ministry as the Dean of the American Cathedral in Paris and as the Rector and then Dean of Christ Church in Cincinnati. It includes a touching account of his conversion and call as a young man, and an account of life on the other side of serious illness and retirement.



This is a sometimes uncomfortably honest testament to simple Christian ministry in extraordinary times. Dean Leo does not shrink from telling us his failures or exposing the raw edges of life in the Episcopal Church. But the book is more about the moments of grace that arise unexpectedly at every turn. As Jim hears a confession in a side chapel of the cathedral in Paris, an unusual mix of sun and cloud refracts rainbow light in darting patterns everywhere. As he gives last rites to a beloved pillar of the cathedral in Cincinnati, the dying man reaches up and gives him his blessing. And anyone who knows the present rector of Calvary Church, Clifton, will delight in his father's account of how Jason humored him through a long and difficult recovery from cancer.

I was engaged by Jim's description of Herbert Thompson, whose personal presence and call to holiness set in motion Christ Church's transformation from a parish into a cathedral. Commenting on Bishop Thompson's challenge to the (then parish) vestry of Christ Church, he writes: "He knew when to stop. He blessed us, thanked us for listening, and left" (p. 79). No sooner did he leave, but the vestry voted to move ahead toward becoming a cathedral. Jim also has much to say about how Bishop Thompson ministered to him in his illness.

So, all in all, a book that tells a story not only about Jim Leo, but about our diocese. I hope you'll read it. It's a window onto who we are.

**- Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal,  
Diocese of Southern Ohio**

*Presiding Bishop to visit Redeemer*

On Dec. 13-14, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori will join Church of the Redeemer, Hyde Park, for a weekend of worship, dialogue and festivities as part of the church's year-long centennial celebration. The theme for Redeemer's centennial year is the Church – Past, Present and Future.

The Presiding Bishop will offer a workshop at Redeemer on Dec. 13, entitled "Learning from the Past, Embracing the Future." She will share her thoughts and engage in conversation about the past and future of the Episcopal Church. After her presentation, there will be a panel discussion, time for open dialogue and lunch provided by Forward Movement Publications. The Presiding Bishop also has set aside a special time on Saturday evening to spend with the youth of the diocese at the Genesis retreat at Calvary, Clifton.

On Dec. 14, the Presiding Bishop will preach at Redeemer's 9 a.m. contemporary service, the 11 a.m. traditional service and a 5 p.m. celebratory service featuring the combined choirs of Redeemer, St. Simon of Cyrene and St. Andrew's. Redeemer is located at 2944 Erie Ave. on the corner of Erie and Paxton in Hyde Park.

Everyone in the diocese is welcome to take part in this exciting weekend. Please let us know you can come by phoning the parish office 513.321.6700 or registering on the website [www.redeemer-cincy.org](http://www.redeemer-cincy.org) by Dec. 7.

Information: contact Communications Director Sharon Jenkins at [sharon@redeemer-cincy.org](mailto:sharon@redeemer-cincy.org).

*St. Cyprian's offers virtual church*

When we think of "a church," the image that comes to mind is a stone building with high stained-glass windows. Whether the image is of a modern building or a scaled-down Gothic cathedral, one constant is that it is a solid place dedicated to worship. St. Cyprian of Carthage worships in a beautiful Gothic building, but now it is also a telephone network. Because the parishioners at St. Cyprian's often work two or even three jobs, by shifts and on weekends, it can be impossible for them to attend Sunday or Thursday evening services. So the Rev. Admire Cleeve, vicar of St. Cyprian's, has set up a network to hold Morning Prayer at 6 a.m. and Noonday Prayer at noon on weekdays. On all evenings except Tuesdays, there will be a prayer service with individual prayers from 9:30 to 10 p.m., ending with Compline; on Tuesdays there will be a Bible study discussion and Compline from 9:30 to 10:15 p.m.

Prayer, whether in the stone church or by voice, is the center of worship at St. Cyprian's, but the prayers are not exclusive to parishioners. Everyone is welcome to enter by calling 309.946.5100 and then the access code, 43205, to join the community, wherever you are.

*New nursery dedicated*

All Saints, Portsmouth, recently celebrated the opening of its newly renovated nursery, dedicated in memory to Tammy Lea Newman and Hannah Katherine Smith. Murals of the story of Noah's ark grace the walls. New flooring and lighting were added, as well as new toys, crib and other furniture. The church also purchased a pager system so the nursery attendant can be in immediate touch with parents, in case of an emergency. The renovations

were sparked by the fundraising efforts of 7-year-old Madeline Queen. She decided the nursery – last renovated 30 years ago – needed work. On her own, she recruited volunteers for a bake sale, called the adults to remind them, made signs and manned the sale. She raised nearly \$500 from the sale and donations, which served as seed money for the renovations.

*Christmas on the River ministry sets "Pack Day"*

Christmas on the River is an outreach program of Ministry on the River. Gift boxes are delivered to towboat crews who typically work 28-30 days at a time, regardless of holidays. This program lets those who can't be home Christmas day know that they are not forgotten.

Gift boxes are packed at numerous locations up and down the rivers and include hand knit scarves or a small gift from Seamen's Church Institute, a devotional, and hand-made Christmas cards from children. The local Christmas On The River pack day will be Dec. 13. This year, homemade cookies will be collected at Christ Church Cathedral on Dec. 7 or may be brought to the undercroft by throughout the week until 9 a.m. on Dec. 13.

All cookies should be homemade as these are gifts of the hands and heart to those who are not able to leave their towboat during the holidays. Suggested cookies are chocolate chip, oatmeal, molasses, peanut butter or other drop cookies. Rice Krispie treats also may be included. No cut-out cookies can be accepted as they break and do not pack well.

Please do not use peanut oil in baking any cookies and use the cross-hatch pattern on peanut butter cookies so that they are easily identifiable.

Bake all cookies slightly under done to keep fresh and from crumbling. Pack cookies, six to a quart bag.

For more information, contact Priscilla Dunn at 513.871.6663 or [mdphd@zoomtown.com](mailto:mdphd@zoomtown.com)

*St. George Award presented to Dan Beebe*

At a festival Eucharist at St. James Church, Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal presented to Dan Beebe the St. George Award for his service to Episcopal youth in national programs. The St. George award is made available by the national church through the Youth Ministries Office of the Episcopal Church Center. St. George is the patron saint of knighthood and of England. His ideals describe many of the virtues demanded of leaders. This year's recipient, Dan Beebe, was chosen for the honor because of his outstanding service as director of Christian Education at St. James, his 52-year association with Boy Scouts of America (he is an Eagle Scout), and his service on the diocesan Christian Formation Commission. He has received the God and Service Adult Scouting award and is the chairman of the God and Country Academy in Zanesville. He is a member of the National Association of Episcopal Christian Education Directors and is listed in "Who's Who in Christian Leadership."

*Harvest of Blessings*

On October 5, more than 60 people feasted on a meal of beef, turkey, pasta, veggies and dessert at the Cambridge Heights Apartments. Following the meal the crowd was treated to the beautiful harmonies of the Chordials.

Cambridge Heights Apartments is a HUD-supported housing facility for lower-income seniors. Owned and managed by Episcopal Retirement Homes (ERH), this facility is expected to undergo renovations soon, which will spruce up common living areas and apartments, add a fitness center and meditation space and provide more parking for the residents.

Before dinner, Doug Spitler, chief executive office of ERH, and Kathy Ison, vice president, spoke about the growth strategies of the non-profit organization, specifically in affordable housing.

Harvest Blessings was meant to be a fund and "friend" raiser, calling attention to the special programs that provide transportation, social activities, chaplaincy and health ministry to the residents. These are subsidized by Episcopal Retirement Homes. More than \$2,000 was raised at the event from raffles and a silent auction.



# HONORING THE *Baptismal Covenant*

## NEW MINISTRY SENDS NOTES OF SUPPORT

BY RICHELLE THOMPSON  
INTERCHANGE EDITOR

### MEETING SPIRITUAL NEEDS: SOUTHERN OHIO ENGAGES IN PRISON MINISTRIES

BY KELLY KAGAMAS TOMKIES  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTOR

attended the weekend.” Doxsee says the military veterans coordinate a banquet each year that raises money for non-profit organizations like the American Red Cross.

Kairos is not the only way Good Shepherd reaches out to incarcerated people. For the past 15 years, members of the church – along with members of the local Lutheran congregation – play cards with the men at the Hocking Facility. Each month about nine volunteers go to the prison to play Euchre with about 15 men. Jan Gault, coordinator of the Kairos ministry at Good Shepherd, says that one inmate who was released and moved back to his family still writes and stays in touch with his friends from the church. “One of the men told me ‘I like to come to this group. It’s so peaceful,’” Gault says.

Deacon Craig Foster of St. John’s, Columbus has served on six Kairos teams at Marion Correctional Facility over the last 12 years. About five percent of the men who attend a Kairos weekend return for the reunion meetings, Foster says.

He considers Marion Correctional a model of a faith-based facility. Each Kairos weekend draws 42 residents and 50 to 60 volunteers who work to make the weekend run smoothly. But the need for helping inmates after their release has led many of these volunteers to create re-entry programs. One such program is Harbor on the Hill, held at Hilltop Lutheran Church in Columbus.

“On Saturday nights, the men come together. For some of them, it is their church,” Foster says. For instance, some are sex offenders and have restrictions on where they can attend. Harbor on the Hill welcomes men of all faith traditions – and even those outside of the mainstream like Wiccans have been welcomed.

“People come and feel unconditional love,” Foster says. “That this has occurred has been amazing.”

Foster emphasizes that ministries like Kairos and Harbor on the Hill are always in need of volunteers. “You have people who drop off for various reasons,” he says. “We are always looking for volunteers.” And Foster emphasized the impor-



tance of a continuing program. “Kairos works because it is ongoing,” he says. “We go back every month and encourage participants to form weekly care and share groups.”

One Community Ministries in Circleville is a satellite ministry of the local United Methodist church. They provide resources to newly released inmates from Ross Correctional Facility.

Of the 51,000 inmates in Ohio’s prison system, 60 percent of them are serving sentences of one year or less, says program coordinator Rodney Griffith. Providing ex-inmates with resources upon release can prevent them from falling back into unhealthy and unlawful ways of life. “We offer weekly Bible studies and new Christian classes,” says Griffith. The ministry also helps newly released prisoners find housing, jobs, transportation, access to social services and meet other needs, including finding them a home church in their area.

Griffith says the ministry starts by making con-

tact with soon-to-be-released prisoners in the facility. “It is best to get to know more about them and their needs,” he says. Since the program started in 2006, they have served a regular client load of about 20 people at any one time. And the program has been well-received. “The residents are glad that there is somebody out there willing to help them,” Griffith says. “Trust is not an easy thing for them. They’ve been let down so many times. Invariably when we are leaving the facility, they’ll ask, ‘See you next week?’”

Church of Our Savior in Cincinnati has become the church home for many formerly incarcerated individuals, says the Rev. Paula Jackson. The church recognized the need to serve this population and began a residential program six years ago. The program provided job training, GED assistance and help with employment, legal and health issues. Unfortunately the program closed three years after its inception because of a lack of funding.

inspiration for one of the newest ministries at All Saints, Portsmouth, came from Curtis Sparks, the son of new member Donna Russell. Sparks’ son is serving a sentence for burglary at Ross Correctional Facility in Chillicothe and is scheduled for release in 2010.

“He wrote to me about the need, that there were a lot of people who had no family, who never received mail, and that they were pretty depressed,” said Russell, who was confirmed into the Episcopal Church in November 2007. “He gave me some names and asked if I would help these guys out.”

For about a year, Russell wrote some of the inmates. After her confirmation, she talked with her rector, the Rev. Jeff Queen, about creating a ministry at the church that would reach out to the incarcerated. With his blessing, Russell started Sts. Paul and Silas Prison Ministry. Through the ministry, Russell and others write a group of guys at least once a month and send birthday cards and other holiday greetings.

In July, the church mailed 52 packets to inmates, with stationary items and puzzle books. The response was overwhelming.

“These guys were touched that someone would take the time to consider them. They had been feeling pretty worthless, and society as a whole basically has decided not to waste their time on them,” Russell says. “I figure we’re not supposed to judge other people – that’s God’s job. We’re just supposed to take care of our fellow man – and woman.”

She cries often when she opens the letters, torn by the loneliness that rises from the pages.

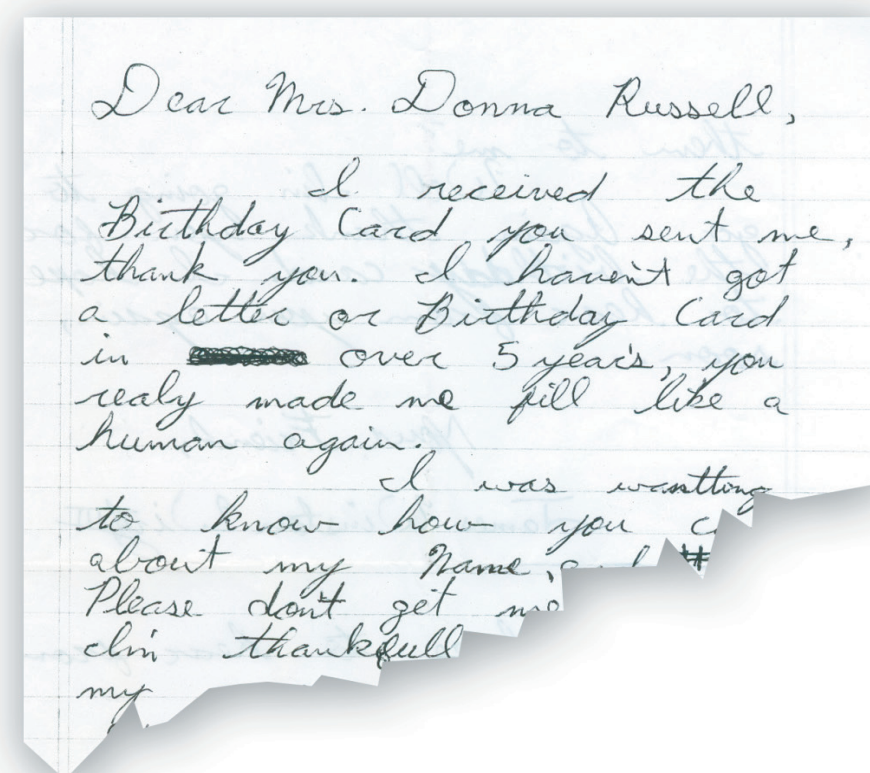
“When I got the letter from the guy who hadn’t had a letter for five years – no one had mailed him anything for five years, I just cried and cried and cried,” Russell says. “That would make anybody feel very desolate.”

Russell and the church support the ministry – and postage costs – through unique fundraising efforts. She collects recycled ink cartridges and cell phones, Nabisco cookie bags and Capri Sun drink pouches. She figures that it’s fundraising that helps twice – the environment and building connections with those in prison. The ministry also is registered under goodsearch.com and goodshop.com, sites that donate a portion of proceeds to non-profits as directed by the user.

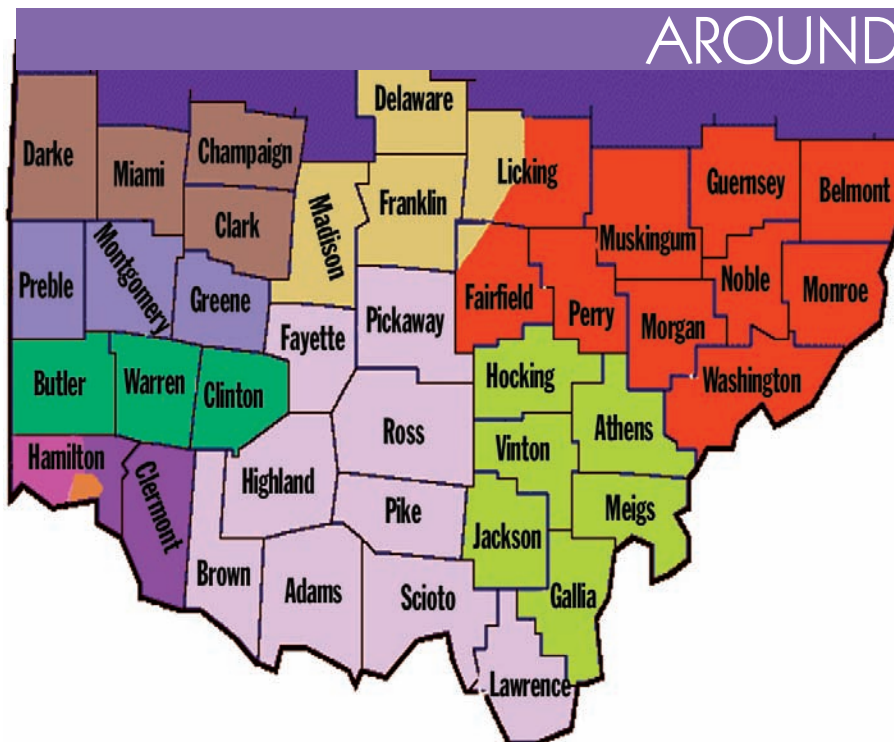
Russell spends a couple of hours every day on the ministry, writing letters, collecting supplies and praying for her new pen pals. She’s gearing up for another big mailing for Christmas – this time to twice as many inmates.

“It’s that important to me,” she says. “It has increased my awareness of the needs of other people, and it has broadened my walk of faith.”

Want to help or learn more: Contact Donna Russell at [ddkrussell@aol.com](mailto:ddkrussell@aol.com) or 740.353.8262.



# AROUND THE DIOCESE



NOTABLE

Two members of Good Shepherd, Athens, received recognition at the recent Ohio University Arts & Sciences general faculty meeting. **Kathleen Sullivan** was recognized for her promotion to Associate Professor of Political Science, and David Burton received the Outstanding Undergraduate Adviser Award. And congratulations to another member of Good Shepherd, **Dr. Marsha Dutton**, who was named vice president of the Ohio University AAUP.

**The Rev. Stephen Applegate**, rector of St. Luke, Granville, has been named adjunct Episcopal Chaplain by Denison University.

AARP Ohio recently sponsored an essay contest on “Life After Fifty—A Personal Perspective” to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of AARP. **Rex Van Alstine**, St. Stephen’s, Cincinnati, won first prize in the under-65 category. You can read his award-winning entry at [www.aarp.org/oh](http://www.aarp.org/oh) under “Read the latest Ohio news”.

**Liz Barringer-Smith**, member of St. Luke, Granville, won the Pioneer Woman Dairy contest with her recipe for Black Bean Chowder with Yogurt Cilantro Relish. You can find her winning recipe at [www.thepioneerwoman.com](http://www.thepioneerwoman.com).

Christ Church Cathedral welcomes **Nicholas Bideler** as associate director of music of the cathedral. A recent graduate of the University of Kansas, Bideler is a master of music student at the University of Cincinnati’s College-Conservatory of Music and began his two-year term with the cathedral in September.

## Cincinnati East

The Church of the Good Samaritan, Clermont County, held a family movie night on a recent rainy Friday night. Popcorn and socializing started the evening out on the right foot, and a showing of *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* kept the warm, dry crowd entertained.

## Cincinnati West

Meetings, especially at church, have to be difficult and painful to get anything done...or do they? Imagine if we knew and used proven tools and techniques for running meetings effectively—how to generate ideas, set priorities, make decisions as a group, plan action, get things done efficiently and have fun! David McCamey, an expert and trainer in organization effectiveness, strategy development and partnering developed a course specifically for **Christ Church**, Glendale, for conducting effective meetings in church settings. McCamey specifically focused on consensus decision making and managing the impact of actions across groups. All members interested in improving their leadership skills in groups and organizations were welcome to attend the training.

**St. Stephen’s** has begun candlelight Taize services offered at 7 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month. Taize music will be sung to piano & flute, along with Bible readings, prayer and meditative silence. For additional information or directions, call 513.522.8628.

## Columbus

Going green pays off at **St. Edward’s**, Whitehall. In five months, they recycled 380 pounds of aluminum cans, yielding nearly \$250. Special thanks to the delivery crew of Buddy Herron, Dorothea Rienstra and Skip Thompson and program coordinator Stacia Karathanasis.

The Dinner with Friends ministry at **St. Patrick’s**, Dublin, reports that their first Oktoberfest was a huge success! Highlights of the evening included traditional food and dress as well as the Chicken Dance led by

a giant, anonymous chicken. Lots of fun and funds raised makes it sound like Oktoberfest at St. Pat’s is destined to become an annual event.

## Dayton

The next adventure for the Yeck Children’s Art Series at **St. George’s**, Washington Township, is a trip to the Victoria Theatre to catch a matinee performance of *Riders in the Sky: Christmas the Cowboy Way* on Dec. 6. Afterward, everyone will join together to rustle up some Western-style grub. This event is planned for elementary-aged children and their families. For more information about the Yeck Children’s Art Series, call the church at 937.434.1781.

On the second Monday of each month, join other crafters at **Christ Church**, Dayton, for Craft Night. Bring a project you’re working on, a new project you’ve wanted to start or come and learn a new skill. The evening starts at 7 p.m. For more information, call the church at 937.223.2239.

## Miami River

**St. Anne’s**, West Chester, is looking to ease future economic problems with some formation today. The church offered to parents the program, “Raising Financially Aware Kids” taught by parishioner Aubrey Ramey.

Church school students at **Holy Trinity**, Oxford, are beginning a pen-pal project with a 10-year-old boy in Malawi. The kids will send him notes, drawings and pictures each month, and they hope to learn about his life and interests as he learns about theirs.

## Northeast

The great bell in the tower of **St. James**, Zanesville, has broken its silence after many years. Thanks to the generosity of some faithful members and the efforts of Tim Linn, the bell has been restored to its original beauty and place in the worship life of St. James. The bell was a gift to the church in 1878, but it had been several years since the bell was in working order. St. James is developing a customary for when and how to ring the bells. The restoration

of the bell is another sign of the renewal of the spirit and liturgical traditions at St. James.

## Northwest

The Knitters Guild at **Trinity**, Troy, is knitting items for patients the Harborside Care Center. Shoulder shawls, lap covers, pillows and bed socks are just a few of the items they are creating as Christmas gifts, as well as providing these items as needed through the year.

## Ohio River

**Church of the Redeemer**, Hyde Park, was honored with a People Working Cooperatively’s (PWC) “Friends of PWC” award at the organization’s recognition luncheon in October. Redeemer was honored for its financial and volunteer support of PWC, particularly the recent funding and construction work for their Modifications for Mobility project. Particularly praised were parishioner Keenan Beauchamp and his crews for their dedication and skill in building wheelchair ramps for the program. Over the past year, more than 70 Redeemer volunteers have given their time and talent to PWC by raking leaves, cleaning gutters, installing hand rails, performing minor repairs and building wheelchair ramps. They have contributed more than 600 hours of service to the community this year alone through this organization. Congratulations to Redeemer for this well deserved recognition!

## Scioto River

**St. Mary’s**, Hillsboro, will host a free musical event in memory of John and Jean Carson on Dec. 14 at 3 p.m. A program will be presented by the Southern State Singers, directed by John Glaze and Cheryl Porter. Jennie Harner will provide additional piano and flute accompaniment. There will also be selections by the St. Mary’s Choir and by John Glaze on the organ. In addition to being a musical Christmas celebration, the event is also a kick-off to fundraising efforts toward rebuilding the church’s historic organ console. A festive reception will be held in the parish hall following the concert. For more information, call the church at 937.393.2043.


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**Around the  
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Anglican

# Fort Worth delegates align with Southern Cone province

BY PAT McCAUGHAN  
EPISCOPAL LIFE ONLINE

Delegates attending the 26th annual convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth on November 15 overwhelmingly approved realignment with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone.

It was the fourth time within 12 months that members of a diocese severed ties to the Episcopal Church, which has a total of 110 dioceses.

With little debate or emotion, about 200 delegates, meeting at St. Vincent's Episcopal Cathedral School, voted 73 for, 20 against in the clergy order, and 98-28 among laity to realign with the Argentina-based province.

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori said after the vote: "The Episcopal Church grieves the departures of a number of persons from the Diocese of Fort Worth. We remind those former Episcopalians that the door is open if they wish to return.

"We will work with Episcopalians in the Diocese of Fort Worth to elect new leadership and continue the work of the gospel in that part of Texas. The gospel work to which Jesus calls us demands the best efforts of faithful people from many theological and social perspectives, and the Episcopal Church will continue to welcome that diversity."

Diocesan bishop Jack Iker said nothing will change in the day-to-day operations of the diocese.

With the realignment of Fort Worth "now there are no dioceses who cannot, out of conscience, ordain women," he said. He said that convention's action effectively joined the entire diocese to the Southern Cone immediately and those clergy and congregations opting to remain with TEC would have to inform him of their decision. He also said he hopes both sides can work together to avoid protracted litigation over property and assets.

Meanwhile, plans to reconstitute the diocese are already underway, according to the Rev. Canon Courtland Moore, a co-chair of the ten-member governing board of the Steering Committee North Texas Episcopalians.

"Though the bishop and his colleagues are departing TEC today, many Episcopalians in the diocese will not, and the remaining Episcopal laity, clergy and congregations will move soon to reorganize the diocese as a fully involved entity of the Episcopal Church in union with its General Convention," according to a statement released by the steering committee.

Noting an "open arms" posture to everyone, including those who may have already left the church or who in the future may return, the statement acknowledged Jefferts Schori's authority and added that TEC's "work of Christian ministry and evangelization will go forward as Episcopalians worship and work together within the context of the church's historical faith, creeds, and Holy Scriptures."

## Piecing lives together: Donated sewing machines assist Katrina victims

BY ANN BALL  
OFFICE OF DISASTER RESPONSE  
DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA

Three years and three months ago, Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region. While governmental agencies were slow to respond, social service and church agencies sprang into action. Millions of aid dollars have been sent and thousands of volunteers have come to help in the rebuilding effort.

Local case managers sponsored by the Episcopal Church have been instrumental in helping hundreds of people return to their homes. Case managers work with clients to develop a long-term recovery plan that addresses their particular problems whether rebuilding, refurbishing, helping with health needs, children's needs, or other concerns.

Social service agencies assist with basic needs. Church agencies have more leeway to provide unique needs that might otherwise go unmet. One such need has been revealed over this period of time.

Many New Orleans women – and men – lost their sewing machines in Katrina. Sewing machines are not considered "essential" household items by social service agencies so those agencies don't supply replacement machines as a matter of course.

But sewing machines are essential for poorer households since these folks not only make clothes for their children, but also they make Mardi Gras costumes, or do tailoring for other people. Sewing machines, it turns out,

### Gifts that give twice:

>> Provide a week's worth of tutoring or groceries for a family of three. Or give the gift of health with a donation that covers a month's worth of prescriptions. Visit [www.esfcsouthernohio.org](http://www.esfcsouthernohio.org) to learn more about the Gifts of the Spirit sponsored by Southern Ohio's Episcopal Community Services Foundation.

>> For Christmas this year, considering giving a goat. Or a flock of chickens. Or medical care for infants, or education for AIDS orphans, or a well to provide clean water for an entire village. Episcopal Relief and Development offers the "Gifts for Life" program. Church members and others can provide a wide variety of animals, supplies and tools – and the training needed to use them – to people in areas plagued by drought, war, famine or poverty. [www.er-d.org](http://www.er-d.org)

are essential for them.

A dedicated woman in Wisconsin has made seven trips to New Orleans since Katrina bringing used but still functional sewing machines to give away. She distributes them for free from Grace Church in mid-city New Orleans. She has brought more than 300 machines thus far, and there is still a waiting list at Grace for future machines.

As a case manager, I am discovering clients who are grieving over the loss of their machines. They simply cannot replace their sewing machines now because they have too many other needs for their money: increased rents, increased utilities, furniture, school uniforms, household supplies, etc. Two such women have said their mental health has been affected. They not only used their machines to generate income but also their sewing time also gave them peace of mind and tranquility.

Anyone who has a sewing machine still in working order that you care to donate is welcome to ship them to New Orleans. The machines will find worthy new homes. Send them to:

Ann Ball, case manager  
St. Paul's Homecoming Center  
6268 Vicksburg St.  
New Orleans, LA 70124.

That address is good until the end of 2008. St. Paul's Homecoming Center will be moving from Lakeview, which is rebounding nicely, to Gentilly in the Ninth Ward, which still has a great deal of work ahead. Contact Ann Ball at [annball@bellsouth.net](mailto:annball@bellsouth.net).

**Special note:** Already at least one sewing machine from Southern Ohio is on its way to New Orleans. Mariann Price and Margaret Breidenthal made a special appeal during the clergy spouse/partner luncheon at convention. Please let us know if you're able to send a sewing machine. Send an e-mail to [richelle\\_thompson@episcopal-dso.org](mailto:richelle_thompson@episcopal-dso.org)

# CALENDAR

## December

- 5 – Deadline for January *Interchange*. Contact: Richelle Thompson at 800.582.1712.
- 5 – Ordination of William McCleery to the priesthood. 6 p.m., St. Paul's, Main & Culver Sts., Logan.
- 5-6 – Episcopal Community Services Foundation planning retreat at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Dave Halt at 513.661.1031.
- 5-7 – Deacons school at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: Kay Sturm at 800.582.1712.
- 6 – Commission on Ministry meets at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust at 800.582.1712.
- 9 – Executive staff meets at Diocesan House, 10 a.m.
- 10 – Commission on Congregational Life meets at Procter Camp & Conference Center, 10 a.m. Contact: Pat Ellertson at 740.826.4720.
- 12-13 – Diocesan Council overnight at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Rob Baldwin at 937.773.1241.
- 12-14 – Genesis VI at Calvary Church, 3766 Clifton Ave., Cincinnati. Contact: Rob Konkol at 800.582.1712.
- 18 – Full diocesan staff meets at Diocesan House, 10 a.m. Diocesan offices closed.
- 19-20 – Young adult retreat at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: Rob Konkol at 800.582.1712.
- 19-26 – Diocesan offices closed for Christmas holiday. Contact staff members by e-mail, if needed.
- 31 – Anti-Racism training at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Anti-racism training consists of four parts: reading to be done prior to training, the training day at Procter Camp & Conference Center, work to be completed after training day and a follow-up meeting that will be scheduled on training day. This is an anti-racism workshop and not a diversity or multi-cultural workshop. Cost is \$10 for lunch. The registration deadline is January 22. For more information, contact Debbie Stokes at 614.933.8715.

## January

- 1-2 – Diocesan offices closed for New Year's holiday
- 2 – Deacon/priest canonical exams at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust at 800.582.1712.
- 2-3 – Retreat for postulants and candidates at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust at 800.582.1712.
- 8 – Interns meeting at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust at 800.582.1712
- 16-18 – Deacons school at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: Kay Sturm at 800.582.1712.
- 21 – Commission on Congregational Life meets at Procter Camp & Conference Center, 10 a.m. Contact: Pat Ellertson at 740.826.4720.
- 23-25 – SOLLI weekend at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: Kay Sturm at 800.582.1712.
- 24 – Ministry Day at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust at 800.582.1712.

## Mark it down!

- Feb 13-15** – Exodus VI at Church of Our Saviour, Cincinnati. Contact: Rob Konkol at 800.582.1712.
- Feb 21** – God's Web: Connecting in the 21st Century at Procter Camp & Conference Center. Contact: Richelle Thompson at 800.582.1712.
- Feb 28** – Hobson Lecture Series: Faith in Life hosts "Discerning God's Delight: A Theological Life of Spiritual Discernment." Speaker is the Rev. Mark A. McIntosh, an author, longtime chaplain to the House of Bishops and in 2009, professor at Durham Cathedral and University in the United Kingdom.
- March 28** – Stewardship Conference

## CLERGY

**The Rev. Derrick Fetz** has been called as vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, Maineville and priest developer at Good Samaritan, Clermont County. He begins his ministry there on Jan. 1. He had been serving the East Central Ohio Cluster as part of his residency after his ordination to the priesthood in 2007.

## REST IN PEACE

**Fanella Smith**, the mother of the Rev. Theorphlis M. Borden, deacon at Ascension & Holy Trinity, Wyoming, died Nov. 13 at the age of 97. She is also survived by daughter, Dr. Robbie Smith Johnson, five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. The Rev. Trevor Babb officiated at the service on Nov. 17 at St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights.

**The Rev. Walter J. Mycoff Sr.**, the father of the Rev. Walter Mycoff Jr., a retired priest of Southern Ohio, died Nov. 13 at the age of 88. Ordained to the priesthood in 1953, Mycoff spent his entire ministry in the Diocese of West Virginia, including serving as rector of St. Matthew's, Charleston for nearly 27 years. He also served the diocese in several capacities, as a dean, convention secretary, chaplain and canon to the ordinary. He also was General Convention deputy and was delegate to the first meeting of the Anglican Congress, at which the institutional Anglican Communion was formally founded.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Marguerite Metzger Mycoff. Survivors include two other children, Joyce Mycoff Egnor of Summersville and Dr. David A. Mycoff of Asheville, N.C.; two brothers; five grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

## IN THE NEWS

**Deacon Joan Maynard** of St. Mark's, Upper Arlington, was featured in the Ohio State *Alumni Magazine*. She's a chaplain at the Medical Center, dealing primarily with pregnancy complications and loss.

**The Waffle Shop at Christ Church, Dayton**, got a good plug from *Dayton Daily News* columnist Dale Huffman. The column talked with Tom Schaefer, chair of the Waffle Shop.

Episcopalcafe, a popular blog for Episcopal and church commentary, carried a reflection by **the Rev. Bill Carroll**, rector of Good Shepherd, Athens. His blog explored "Prayer in a time of anxiety" and used Bishop Breidenthal's convention address as a foundation for reflection.

**The Rev. Ernestine Flemister, Yvonne Allen-Smith** and **the Rev. Canon Vicki Zust** were pictured in the November issue of *Episcopal Life Monthly* as they worshipped at St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in Philadelphia for the Service of Repentance for the Episcopal Church's participation in slavery.



## VISITATIONS

### Dec

7	Bishop Breidenthal	St. James, Clintonville
	Bishop Price	St. Stephen, Cincinnati
14	Bishop Breidenthal	Ascension, Middletown
	Bishop Price	St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights
21	Bishop Breidenthal	St. Philip, Columbus
	Bishop Price	Christ Church, Dayton
28	Bishop Breidenthal	Calvary, Clifton

### Jan

4	Bishop Breidenthal	Grace Church, College Hill
	Bishop Price	Epiphany, Urbana
11	Bishop Breidenthal	St. Andrew, Cincinnati
	Bishop Price	St. Peter, Delaware
18	Bishop Breidenthal	St. Francis, Springboro
	Bishop Price	All Saints, New Albany
25	Bishop Breidenthal	St. Patrick's, Lebanon
	Bishop Price	Trinity, Columbus

# Couple trains "Guardians of Health"

BY BRUCE AND JANE ERGOOD  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTORS

Why do most "Norte Americanos" go to Honduras? To visit the major Mayan site at Copan Ruinas. Why do most Episcopalians go to Honduras? To visit the nearest and largest Episcopal Diocese in Latin America.

There are more than 150 Episcopal congregations in this small Central American nation (only Haiti is poorer), which is only two hours by air from either Houston or Miami. Many folks from the Diocese of Southern Ohio have contributed their sweat as well as their time and dollars to assist these active and deeply spiritual Episcopalians and their churches.

For the past 10 years, some members of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, have been involved in a variety of ministries in Honduras. Involvement began when the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) asked Bruce Ergood (a fluent Spanish-speaking sociologist and a member of Good Shepherd) to assess the damage that Hurricane Mitch had done to Episcopal parishes, with a view to directing aid offered by fellow Episcopalians. During three weeks in Honduras, he became acquainted with clergy and congregations in over 25 churches. Two years later, Good Shepherd sent a work team to help construct an addition to a church near Siguatepeque.

Within the next four years, Bruce and his wife, Jane, were asked to substitute for SAMS missionaries who were on leave from Siguatepeque and from the Deanery of El Paraiso. During this period, they coordinated projects with visiting U.S. construction and medical teams.



Members of the latest class of Guardians of Health in Honduras. However, this experience demonstrated that some real and continuing health care needs were not being met. For example, when a volunteer broke her ankle and needed crutches, there were none in the deanery, an area larger than a county. Medical brigades making annual visits to mountain villages are wonderful, but the villagers need permanent, resident health-care givers. In Honduras, we call the workers, "Guardians of Health" (Guardianas de Salud).

In 2005, the Ergoods attended a seminar in which they learned about international training materials for rural health workers. Beginning in the spring of 2006, three five-day training workshops were held. Since then, more than 50 members of village churches have received training and diplomas as Guardianas de Salud.

The workshop staff includes Honduran nurses and volunteers as well as the Ergoods. A World Health Organization curriculum was adapted to the local situation, and a medical kit, including a stethoscope, thermometer, blood pressure cuff, ace bandage, ointment and scissors, was supplied to each graduate, as well as the widely used handbook, "Donde

no hay doctor" (Where there is no doctor).

Funds from the Diocese of Southern Ohio have been the main source of support for this program. Good Shepherd, Athens, has included the project in its annual budget, and some have dug deeply into their own pockets. But cooperation with the local churches in Honduras has gone a long way to meet some of the Millennium Development Goals. With relatively little money, we've been able to improve primary health care and nutrition education for women and children in more than 15 villages. We've also been able to improve sanitation in coordination with local public medical facilities and provide support and follow-up for medical team clinics.

The major issue now is sustainability. We are partnering with a long-time medical team from Texas. They are currently replenishing medical kits and supplying continual education on an annual basis. However the Guardianas need money to buy replacement items for their medical kits. They also need money for transportation to the bi-monthly workshops that they are expected to attend. But, like most of the villagers, they have little money. So we are initiating an "Episcopal Chickens" project. We hope to provide selected Guardianas with chicks, materials for fencing and coop and some feed. Ultimately, through the sale of eggs and/or the chickens, the Guardianas will be able to earn the money they need to carry on in their roles as health workers.

We have felt the leading of the Holy Spirit in this work, and we rejoice in it, as do the Guardianas de Salud in Honduras. Demos Gracias a Dios.

Jane and Bruce Ergood are members of Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens. Jane holds a masters degree in nursing and a doctorate in psychology. Bruce has a masters in religion and a doctorate in sociology. Contact them at 740.592.5210.

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PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 2 of 3)

# Gift of presence at the heart of Advent, Christmas

These are trying times for us all. The presidential campaign focused on all of the ills facing our nation. I do not need to list them. Each of us knows them well. We live with them daily.

Nor can we escape trying times in our church as well. Although I maintain (and will say again and again), that we are very blessed in the Diocese of Southern Ohio, we are still touched by the turmoil that is taking a toll in the Anglican Communion. When any part of the body hurts, it affects the whole body.

This is the reality we face as we move into Advent and count down toward Christmas. It is interesting to see that stores are restoring the layaway plan for Christmas gifts. People simply have less money to spend and need to budget it more carefully. Nearly everyone I have spoken to has commented that he or she is "cutting back" on Christmas gifts this year. Merchants already predict this will be one of the least profitable seasons in recent memory. Unemployment, higher prices for necessities and medical care, and shrinking assets are taking their toll on everyone and affecting our congregations as well. Budgets for 2009 will be leaner.

It may sound like I am sitting here brooding over a half-empty glass. But those of you who know me know that is not so. Rather, let's concentrate a bit on the part of the glass that is still full.

When I was a child, it was war time. Money was tight, and so a lot of our Christmas gifts were handmade. I remember spending time with my parents making gifts, being careful so that one might not see what the other was helping me make so each could be "surprised" on Christmas morning. Those gifts have long ago bitten the dust, but the time I spent is still etched in my memory. Parents and grandparents are gone, but that time spent in those "secret" gift-making endeavors remain cherished memories.

When my own children were young, it was cookie making that took the place of gift making. The hours spent with my daughter mixing, baking, cut-

THE RT. REV.  
KENNETH L.  
PRICE JR.



opportunity to recapture the most precious blessing we have – time spent with each other.

The world today is far more spread out than it was in my day, and many do not have families as close by, so we need to seek those moments of personal encounter in other ways. Church is – of course – a prime place to seek those moments of personal encounter. Most churches have special Advent and Christmas programs. Often we are just "too busy" to partake. Maybe this year, doing so might be more possible. The needs of the world are more keen than ever. Food pantries, soup kitchens and nursing homes need people who are willing to share the most precious gift of all – themselves. We live in an age in which communication by e-mail has become so commonplace that "reaching out and touching someone" has lost its meaning. Maybe this year might be the time to send a handwritten note or drop by with a homemade goodie. In past years it has been a bit easier to write a check to charities and know our generosity has made a difference. This year, instead of a check, giving an afternoon or a day to be with another may be the way to go.

When the going gets tough, it changes our lives. There

ting and decorating cookies far exceed any material gift that was exchanged. Recently I transferred this activity to my grandson. As he and Mariann and I worked in his California kitchen, we suddenly fell into spontaneous flour-tossing. The laughter and willingness to forget the rules for a moment and experience sheer joy were worth every extra effort it took to clean up the kitchen.

This year, with money tighter and perhaps even work hours cut back, there might be an



Papa Price and grandson Sage bake cookies – and spend precious time together.

are two ways we can react. We can dwell on how tough things are and lament what is lost, or we can look for ways to redirect our energy that will bring us peace and satisfaction. It could be that Advent and Christmas 2008, although full of bad news for the economy, provides an opportunity for us to recapture some of the things that may not cost a lot but will last a lifetime.

When we were baptized, the greatest gift we received had no monetary value and will never be found up for re-sale on ebay. It is the gift of the Holy Spirit. That gift never wears out. It is the spark within us to use the life we have been given to make Jesus Christ present in the world, particularly when that world is hurting. Perhaps this year is just such a time. May the Spirit of God – which always burns brightly – be especially evident this Advent. If it is, then as we move through this season, taking the time to share the gift of ourselves, we may just find that this year, we have created the very best Christmas ever!

Contact Bishop Price at [bishop\\_price@episcopal-dso.org](mailto:bishop_price@episcopal-dso.org).

## Diocese offers formation opportunities

**Genesis:** This Christian formation event is for 6-9 graders and partners mental and physical challenges with spiritual practices to teach foundational realities of Christianity. It is an emotionally and physically safe environment where students are challenged to reach beyond their comfort zones and find renewed interest in their faith lives.

The retreat is offered Dec. 12-14 at Calvary, Clifton, and will include a special time with Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori. Registration begins at 7 p.m. on Dec. 12, and families are encouraged to celebrate the 10 a.m. service on Dec. 14 with the Genesis participants at Calvary, 3766 Clifton Ave. Cost: \$30 per person. Contact: Rob Konkol, director of youth ministries, at 800.582.1712 or [youth@episcopal-dso.org](mailto:youth@episcopal-dso.org)

To register, go to: [www.dsoyouth.org/Genesis](http://www.dsoyouth.org/Genesis)

**Young Adult Retreat:** Come to Procter Camp & Conference Center Dec. 19-20 for an overnight for young adults age 18-25 (you must have graduated high school in 2008 or earlier). We will be having a discussion with Bishop Thomas E. Breidenthal, two worship services, a campfire and fellowship time. The retreat runs from 5 p.m. Friday to 5 p.m. Saturday.

The event is free to all participants, but you must register with Maggie Foster at [foster.463@osu.edu](mailto:foster.463@osu.edu) or Paul Hardin at [pghardin@owu.edu](mailto:pghardin@owu.edu) by Dec. 13.

**MVERN:** The Miami Valley Episcopal Russian Network is sending St. Nicholas into most of the consortium's churches in December on a mission to share the blessings of the ministry of the Bishop of Myra. Using different actors in similar costumes, the story of the real St. Nicholas will be told on Sundays between Nov. 30 and Dec. 14, in Greenville at St. Paul's; in Dayton at St. Margaret's, Christ Church, St. George's, St. Paul's, St. Mark's, and St. Paul the Apostle Orthodox; in Fairborn at St. Christopher's; in Springboro at St. Francis; and in Cincinnati at St. James.

MVERN sponsors a very active youth exchange program with St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Sablino, Russia, and seeks funds to support this international outreach mission. To that end, the youth in each parish where St. Nicholas visits will be selling small bags of gold chocolate coins to help fund the travel of the young people participating in the exchanges both to and from Sablino.

If you would like more information about the St.



Nicholas, Bishop of Myra project, please contact Joey Thiele, project coordinator, at [jthiele8@aol.com](mailto:jthiele8@aol.com) or call her at 937.299.8685.

# Love Song : A Christmas letter

**Dear Brother +Thomas,**

Before we get through the 12 days of Christmas, and past your feast day – the day of your death – December 29, I have something to say about your candle.

My wife and I visited Canterbury and your cathedral a couple of weeks before All Saints' Day. Did you know there's a pub named The Thomas Becket? It was our favorite. There's another pub nearby called The Bishop's Finger. We don't know why.

**This is a 21st century priest's letter to St. Thomas Becket, who died in 1170.**

The cathedral is a grand building, considerably changed since your murder there in 1170. We knew about the struggle between you and King Henry II on the division of powers of church and state, and that the king, formerly your good friend, had first appointed you his chancellor and later saw to it that you were made Archbishop of Canterbury. He assumed you would be his toady. Then,

when you made it clear that you were first God's man, the king was furious and said, "Who will rid me of this low-born priest?" Four barons took this as a command, rode to Canterbury, forced their way into the cathedral while the monks were singing Vespers, and hacked and stabbed you to death when you came to meet them. Your last words were recorded: "Willingly I die for the name of Jesus and in the defense of the Church."

Not a happy Christmas story, but neither are those of St. Stephen or the Holy Innocents. It did make a heck of a good movie, called "Becket." Richard Burton played you, and Peter O'Toole was Henry II.

The older stones in the floor and the steps of the

**THE REV.  
BOB HORINE**



cathedral are much worn in places by the feet, and the knees, of countless pilgrims who began coming there to pray and sometimes to seek healing by being near your body. Many miracles were attributed to you.

Every school child from my generation was forced to make a stab at reading Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales," a collection of stories told by fictional pilgrims. We were supposed to read it in the English of your time. Might as well be in Dutch. Usually teachers were satisfied if we managed the opening words, "Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote/The droghte of Marche hath perced to the roote..." You may know all these things. We in this world can only speculate about what you in your world know about us.

The church won the test of wills with Henry II. He was made to come to your tomb and be beaten with a stick by 80-some monks as a penance for causing your death.

Later English monarchs continued to scrap over religion and politics. Henry VIII thought he would end the whole business by declaring himself head of the Church of England. That didn't really take. His daughter, Queen Mary, wasn't known as Bloody Mary for nothing. Mary's successor, Elizabeth, after killing her share of dissidents, did bring the beginnings of a sort of peace.

Now I turn toward your candle. My wife and I visited

every part of the cathedral that we were able, and I took photos wherever it was allowed. Except in the northwest transept, a place sanctified by your death. I returned twice, but never took a picture. A good thing happened there some years ago; the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury, spiritual leaders whose churches have been separated more than 400 years, knelt together and prayed where you died.

Closer to your candle now. Thinking of your martyrdom, I remembered something. Queen Mary's burning of two bishops in Oxford -- Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley. Latimer's last words were, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England as (I trust) shall never be put out."

We had almost finished our cathedral tour and were in the north aisle beyond the choir when the guide suggested we look to the right. In the center of the floor of Trinity Chapel was a single candle. It marks the place where your body lies, and it burns by day and by night it shines in the great darkness of the silent cathedral.

All the world's darkness can't put out the light of one small candle. I won't forget your candle, Thomas, for I know what its flame represents, and what light it keeps. St. John's Gospel, which we read during Christmas, telling of God's Word made flesh, says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

**Robert+**

The Rev. Bob Horine is a retired priest in the Diocese of Lexington and a former senior editor of Forward Movement Publications.

## Lay theologian: Messiah

When I was in college, I had a live radio show at our very low wattage campus station, KHDX. I called it "Classical Conditioning." The show was on Sunday evenings. I used it to project sophistication, to myself at least. I was somewhat anxious that I was a garden variety yokel among beautiful people.

Each year, as the fall quarter was winding down and final exams were approaching, I ran my two-hour show long and played Handel's "Messiah." During my freshman year, I had lost all confidence in my Southern Baptist worldview. I had become convinced that, since that worldview was no longer plausible, neither God nor truth itself existed. But somehow, nonetheless, I found "Messiah" deeply appealing.

I now have "Messiah" on my iPod. I listen to it each year during Advent. It lasts almost three hours, which is longer than I spend doing just about anything. The full version contains some parts I don't care for much these days, actually.

I'd rather not think about the refiner's fire, since I'm not at all confident I will indeed be able to stand when he appeareth. I'd also just as soon not be reminded about his giving his back to the smiters and his cheek to those that plucked off the hair. These parts ruin the good feeling I want. They are not beautiful.

I have created a "playlist" version of "Messiah" in iTunes that includes only my favorite parts. It lasts just under 30 minutes and fits into my schedule better. It includes the opening "Sinfonia" and seven of my favor-

**DR. DON REED**



ite Choruses. It's great. It gives the feeling I want and is much more convenient.

I learned as a child that the Messiah came to save me from my sins. I thought a lot about sin back then. Now I tend to think more about all the things I have to do. I teach my classes, of course, but that is the fun part. I also must get ready for all the meetings I have to attend. I need to get the leaves

done again before the final leaf pick up in Springfield. I need to write some thank you notes and to get some stationary for that matter. There are so many things that I have to write them down.

I keep a running list on my Palm Pilot. It's very convenient. You just "type" them in and you get a daily reminder of what absolutely has to be done by when. Unfortunately, the list gets so long sometimes that it hurts to think about all I have to do. So I ignore the list. My Palm goes for days without a look.

I think sometimes that I need salvation, not from sins but from my "to do" list. As a make-shift, since I'm not looking at my official "to do" list, I write lists of the most immediate items that I can remember on little Post-it notes and put them in places where I'll look at them. Sometimes this works. Not always.

Occasionally I get the vague feeling that I'm missing something. But really, who has time for everything?

The "Messiah" has three parts, dividing the biblical texts in the libretto into prophecy and nativity, passion and resurrection. Handel's original production was for Lent rather than Advent. If you listen only to Part One, you get the Advent/Christmas portions and finish in just under an hour. You never make it to the famous Hallelujah Chorus, which closes Part Two, but maybe you could just skip to that from the end of Part One anyway. Part One ends with "His yoke is easy, his burthen is light," and you definitely don't want to omit that.

Why, in my younger days, did I find the full-length saga appealing? There are so many ups and downs in the full length version, so many uncomfortable parts mixed in with the uplifting parts. On the other hand, there is something fine about the arrangement as a whole. It's a question of beauty, but there's more to it. What is the nativity without the prophecy, the resurrection without the passion?

I need to look at my Palm again. I'll make a Post-it to do that. I want nonetheless to be saved from my "to do" list. Something has to give.

Still, I wonder what I've been missing.

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# Because We Care: Parishes launch joint hunger ministry

BY ARIEL MILLER  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTOR

More than 100 guests flocked to the first community dinner hosted by St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights, and Ascension & Holy Trinity, Wyoming, on Oct. 28. The idea was the inspiration of the Rev. Trevor Babb, rector of St. Simon and the Rev. Pat Merchant, interim rector of Ascension & Holy Trinity, who saw an opportunity for their congregations to respond practically and pastorally to this year's economic downturn.

"The need for emergency food in our area has doubled in recent months," says Merchant. "It's bound to get even worse by winter. The most basic thing that people want to do together is to share a meal, and the most basic form of Christian hospitality is to invite people into your house of worship to share a meal together."

Both congregations are in the same zip code. One is predominantly white, while the other is a historic black parish.

"This is a way to respond to the call of our bishop to build transparency, leadership and connection," Babb says. "Pat has a wonderful vision of feeding people. It's a good way to get our churches together across geography and

social lines. Here is a way we can be connected as churches doing Kingdom work."

These congregations on Cincinnati's north-west side share a vibrant history of collaboration dating back to the 1980s, which has borne fruit in an array of projects from Habitat construction to a Discover Bible Study course.

Both Babb and Merchant bring great creativity in building partnerships between their churches and other community institutions in ways that affirm and draw on the talents of the laity.

"Our two parishes are close, and we wanted to share a ministry project again, especially one with an evangelism angle," says Merchant.

The priests found champions for the new initiative in St. Simon's Darlene Gray and Sheryl Felner of Ascension & Holy Trinity, who recruited an enthusiastic, multi-generational team of 17 volunteers to cook the inaugural Because We Care dinner. Two community newspapers ran articles and pictures highlighting the spirituality and Episcopal hospitality of the event, held at St. Simon's. The volunteers were delighted by the huge turnout and hearty appetites of the guests, and promptly planned the second meal held at Ascension & Holy Trinity in Wyoming on Nov. 18.



Above: Young diners share a secret at the first Because We Care community dinner held at St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights.

Left: The Rev. Trevor Babb, rector of St. Simon of Cyrene, and the Rev. Pat Merchant, interim rector of Ascension & Holy Trinity, Wyoming, serve up dinner.

# Trunk-or-treat event draws 150

BY THE REV. KIAH WEBSTER  
INTERCHANGE CONTRIBUTOR

On Oct. 31, St. Francis, Springboro, found itself awash in princesses, pirates and pumpkins as nearly 150 community members gathered together to celebrate the parish's first-ever Trunk-or-Treat event.

This event, co-sponsored by St. Francis and St. George, Washington Twp., was widely publicized throughout the Dayton area as a family-friendly All Hallows Eve tailgate party free and open to the public.

After a meal prepared by St. Francis' chapter of the Daughters of the King in the parish hall, families gathered outside to enjoy face-painting, apple bobbing, balloon entertainment, pumpkin decorating, a bonfire managed by local Boy Scouts Troop 50, and tractor rides around the parish property.



Kids - and adults - dressed up for the evening.

As the sun set, children grabbed their trick-or-treat baskets and made their way to each of the 20 "costumed" cars, trucks, and minivans that were decorated for the occasion, shouting "Trunk or Treat!" and receiving toys and candy in return.

After parents and children alike had eaten their fill of sugary treats, all were invited to close the evening by gathering together in the church to celebrate a special "Haunted Eucharist", a Rite III communion service adapted from the Service for All Hallows Eve from the Book of Occasional Services of the Episcopal Church.

A successful-community building event for St. Francis, this event also proved a successful outreach to the local community, as well, drawing in 70+ families and children from outside St. Francis and St. George's parishes.



Apple-bobbing was a popular activity at the Trunk-or-treat program at St. Francis, Springboro. Below, the cars and vans are decorated for the community program.



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