Convention 2010: Complete coverage in this issue
On the cover:
A delegate to diocesan convention holds up a green card signifying a “yes” vote Oct. 9 as the diocese held its 42nd annual convention in Punta Gorda. Photo by Jim DeLa

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

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Submission deadlines for 2011 issues:

January/February: December 1, 2010
March/April: February 1
May/June 2010: April 1
July/August 2011: June 1
September/October: August 1
November/December: October 1
Together, we are answering God’s call to mission

Editor’s Note: This is Bishop Dabney Smith’s address to diocesan convention, delivered Oct. 9 in Punta Gorda:

I begin this morning by expressing our heartfelt thanks to Bishop Wayne Smith for his mission-focused preaching last night and for serving as our convention chaplain today. I also want to thank his wife, Debbie Smith, for speaking to our clergy spouses gathering today on the topic of her experiences with mission work in the Sudan.

The theme for this 42nd annual convention of the Diocese of Southwest Florida is “The Five Marks of Mission.” This is a statement of mission adopted by the meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council and addressed to the Anglican Communion. The Episcopal Church meeting in General Convention adopted them. The Five Marks of Mission are:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
2. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
3. To respond to human need by loving service;
4. To seek to transform unjust structures of society;
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

The Five Marks of Mission point to and express that the mission of the church is the mission of Christ. The problem associated with a list like this is that it may seem to omit regular features of who we are as the church, such as worship. It is, though, a useful summary statement. Helpfully, an article on the Anglican Communion website notes, “All mission is done in a particular setting – the context. So, although there is a fundamental unity to the good news, it is shaped by the great diversity of places, times and cultures in which we live, proclaim and embody it. The Five Marks should not lead us to think that there are only five ways of doing mission!” It is to our particular diocesan context that I now turn.

One of the marks of mission is “to respond to human need by loving service.” Over the past two diocesan conventions I have focused attention on the need to establish and build the Episcopal Charities Fund to aid in mission initiatives and collaborative efforts for issues and circumstances that are chronic, critical or catastrophic. This enterprise has begun to develop some muscle and was the resource that enabled us to financially assist Bishop Duracin’s family after the horrific earthquake in Haiti in January of this year.

Responding to human need is complemented by the mark of mission that seeks to transform unjust structures of society. Looking through this lens we have established a Jubilee Network of churches in this diocese to be the foundation of our future community-based charitable works. Jubilee Centers are recognized for their existing community leadership and outreach programs in response to the Jubilee ministry mandate of the Episcopal Church, which is:

“To be a ministry of joint discipleship in Christ with poor and oppressed people, wherever they are found, to meet basic human needs and to build a just society.”

Furthermore, Jubilee congregations must meet the criteria of their mission and ministry being rooted in worship and must include several programs, including at least one human rights advocacy program and one human services program. Once designated as a Jubilee Center, the congregation’s ministry must be willing to demonstrate the operation of its programs to others, maintain “how to” files and act as a resource center.

(Continued on page 15)
By Mille Harris

“Gettin’ above your raisin’” is a phrase I’ve struggled with all my life. It’s this notion that we want to change social classes, rise a step above where we came from.

On one hand, it’s the American dream, right? Sometimes it seems like we’re told that “getting above your raisin’” — or transcending the circumstances of our birth — is the main point of our existence. We don’t buy books or go see movies about virtuous poor people who stay poor; we go to see the ones who rose above. We all have hopes and dreams of becoming the next Oprah, Steve Jobs or LeBron James. This impulse to rise above is buried deep in our history. Our country was built by immigrants who came here to escape poverty and persecution with hopes and dreams of becoming rich and powerful. We live in an individualistic culture of capitalism and materialism — where “getting above your raisin’” seems to be everyone’s goal.

On the other hand, particularly in Southern culture, pretense and snobbery — or “getting above your raisin’” is seen as a less than desirable trait. There’s a sense of shame and guilt that comes with “rising above,” as if you’re forsaking your family or forgetting from where you came.

I’m originally from a tiny little town in rural Indiana — from a family of what my mom lovingly refers to as “Indiana hillbillies” — small town, working class poor. Most of them have a high school education, but no one goes to college. In fact, no one ever leaves. You marry young, have babies, get a job working in the local factory, and you stay put, with your family and friends that you’ve known since kindergarten or earlier.

I moved here when I was in the 4th grade with my mom and my stepdad. Not that Sarasota is L.A. or New York, but for a little girl from farm-town Indiana, it was a bit of a culture shock. I remember being so in awe of this place. Everyone had pools in their back yards, and I thought my friends’ houses were mansions — I mean they had gates and guards and you had to know the secret code just to get in to their neighborhoods. They all drove fancy cars and would go on cruises and take vacations to Europe. People in Indiana are lucky to go camping at the lake for the weekend.

So began my struggle. I wanted nothing more than to wear designer clothes and go to cotillion with my friends, but I knew we didn’t have the money to do such things. Furthermore, I didn’t feel like I was worthy of such fancy things. I always had this nagging feeling telling me that I didn’t belong there. So eventually, I began to resent my friends with money and class. My jealously and envy turned to disdain.

I began to be proud of what I didn’t have — it was almost like reverse arrogance.

In a gospel reading on a recent Sunday, Jesus tells a parable of a wedding feast: “When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher;’ then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Upon first reading, it sounds as though Jesus is supporting my second viewpoint — he is telling us to humble ourselves, to be careful not to “get above our raisin’.” That message is certainly there, but I think there’s more. We can humble ourselves all day long, but where’s our heart? Are we doing it because we want to be seen as being humble, because we are somehow seeking something in return? Or are we doing it because we are called to be humble servants of the Lord?

I continued to struggle with my identity and place in class through high school, college and grad school. I would vacillate from one extreme to another, never knowing quite sure where I fit in. On the one hand, I was very aware of where I came from. I was in tune with my small-town roots and values. I was proud that I knew how to change a tire, and start a fire, and that I wasn’t afraid to change social classes, rise a step above where we came from.

I continued to struggle with my identity and place in class through high school, college and grad school. I would vacillate from one extreme to another, never knowing quite sure where I fit in. On the one hand, I was very aware of where I came from. I was in tune with my small-town roots and values. I was proud that I knew how to change a tire, and start a fire, and that I wasn’t afraid to change social classes, rise a step above where we came from.

(Continued on page 18)
**In Brief**

**England trip to tour historical sites**

St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Bonita Springs is planning a trip to England May 6 –17, 2011, to visit special historic and spiritual sites.

The Rev. Michael Rowe will be leading this tour, which includes the town of Ely and its cathedral, Cambridge and the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham.

A major highlight will be Canterbury Cathedral, symbolizing the whole history of English Christianity and the Anglican Communion.

Other stops include Dover, the Leeds Castle Maze, Royal Turnbridge Wells and nearby All Saints, Tudeley, and London for three nights. The tour includes an evening concert at St. Martin’s in the Fields.

The price of the trip is $2,669 per person, based on 25 participants, double occupancy. A $200 deposit is due with application.

For a brochure, contact Cherrill Cregar at (239) 498-1925, stop by St. Mary’s Church office or visit www.worldwidepilgrimage.com/itineraries/DT11004.html.

**UTO now taking grant applications**

The application process for the 2011 United Thank Offering grants is now open and the entire process will be completed online. UTO grants are awarded for projects that address human needs and alleviate poverty.

Only one application from each diocese will be accepted by UTO. If your ministry would like to apply for a grant, please inform Jan Nothum in the bishop’s office at jnothum@episcopalswfl.org no later than Dec. 31. Once the bishop has endorsed the finalist from Southwest Florida, the final application deadline is Jan. 31, 2011.

UTO information and contact info are available at www.episcopalchurch.org/uto. The application form and instructions are available at www.episcopalchurch.org/110043_42235_ENG_HTM.htm.

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**Plans for new diocesan office building emerging**

Preliminary plans for a new diocesan office building at DaySpring Conference Center were unveiled at the Oct. 9 diocesan convention.

The architectural firm of Apex-Studio Suarez in Sarasota was selected by a subcommittee of the DaySpring Development Steering Committee, which considered seven other firms before selecting Apex-Studios unanimously.

In conceptual drawings shown at convention, the building will sit near the main entrance of the conference center off of 25th Street East.

The diocese has budgeted $568,922 for the new facility to house the bishop and diocesan staff. Plans currently provide for a increased office space, large reception area, two conference rooms, increased storage capacity, common work areas and a small kitchen.

A contractor for the project is expected to be selected in November. The project is scheduled to be completed in December 2011.

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*An architect’s rendering of the front entrance of the new diocesan office building.*
Clergy and delegates vote with green cards signifying "yes" Oct. 9 at the 42nd annual convention in Punta Gorda.
At its annual convention Oct. 9 in Punta Gorda, the diocese sets its sights squarely on mission and ministry in 2011, with the announcement of 11 parishes being named Jubilee Centers, the unveiling of a ministry resource section on the diocesan website, and earmarking more of the 2011 budget to provide support to congregations in the form of training, workshops, consulting or other assistance.

Clergy and delegates to the 42nd annual convention approved a balanced $3.23 million budget for 2011, which includes a return to the 10 percent apportionment rate for congregations, retooled diocesan staff responsibilities and funds to return the bishop’s office to a new building at DaySpring Conference Center.

The convention also held elections to fill seats on various board and committees, including who will represent the diocese at the 2012 General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

Convention also celebrated with St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, of the Lakewood Ranch section of Bradenton, as the 14-year-old congregation attained parish status (See page 8).

(Continued on page 9)
St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church in Bradenton celebrated a rite of passage at the start of convention, with 50 parishioners parading into the convention hall with bells and drums after a vote granted full parish status to the congregation.

The church, which began worshipping in a Disabled American Veterans hall in 1996, was able to comply with diocesan canon requiring they show an average Sunday attendance of at least 50 people, and be financially self-sustaining.

It later moved to its current home at 11315 Palmbrush Trail, near of State Road 70 and Lakewood Ranch Boulevard.

The Rev. Jim Hedman, the rector of St. Mary Magdalene, said the church’s nickname can generate a wealth of material for sermons.

“I sometimes abbreviate our church name in my e-mails as St. M&M,” said Hedman, who presented a large glass container of assorted M&M candies to Bishop Dabney Smith.

“As a church, we are like M&Ms,” Hedman told convention. “We are all different shapes and sizes. Some of us are nuttier than others. But all have chocolate, which is Christ. M&Ms are imprinted with a logo and so are we, with Christ’s love.”

Hedman also said M&Ms could stand for mission and ministry. “M&Ms aren’t good on the shelf. They are only good if they are sacrificed for others.”

“We feel great,” David Horrocks, a founding member, told the Bradenton Herald.

“It means we are no longer under the sponsoring churches and we are on our own. As a mission, the bishop is our minister and assigns someone to be in charge. Now, we have our own rector. We control our destiny. Our rector is our leader now.”
Diocesan convention
(Continued from page 7)

Voting clergy and delegates also tabled two resolutions urging the diocese and the larger Episcopal Church sign on to a proposed Anglican Covenant, a controversial document that has been suggested as a way for the Anglican Communion to maintain unity amid differing viewpoints, especially on human sexuality issues and biblical interpretation.

Convention events began Friday morning with a day of workshops and worship, with the diocese’s special guest, Bishop Wayne Smith of the Diocese of Missouri, who preached at Friday night’s opening Eucharist and lead Morning Prayer before Saturday’s business session.

The theme for this year’s convention was “Five Marks of Mission”:

- To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society; and
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

In his convention address, Bishop Dabney Smith said he has “high hopes” for the diocese as he announced 11 initial Jubilee Network churches that have taken the lead in sponsoring community leadership and outreach programs.

“Over the past two diocesan conventions I have focused attention on the need to establish and build the Episcopal Charities Fund to aid in mission initiatives and collaborative efforts for issues and circumstances that are chronic, critical or catastrophic,” Bishop Smith said. “Responding to human need is complemented by the mark of mission that seeks to transform unjust structures of society.”

The Jubilee Network of churches will be the foundation of future community-based charitable works, the bishop explained. These congregations must meet the criteria of their mission and ministry being rooted in worship and must include several programs, including at least one human rights advocacy program and one human services program. Once designat-ed as a Jubilee Center, the congregations ministry must be willing to demonstrate the operation of its programs to others, maintain “how to” files and act as a resource center.

The initial 11 Jubilee churches are:

- All Saints, Tarpon Springs
- Church of the Ascension, Clearwater
- Church of the Redeemer, Sarasota
- St. David’s, Englewood
- St. Giles, Pinellas Park
- St. Mark’s, Marco Island
- St. Mark’s, Venice
- St. Mary’s, Bonita Springs
- St. Peter’s Cathedral, St. Petersburg
- St. Augustine’s, St. Petersburg
- St. James House of Prayer, Tampa

The 2011 budget

The Diocesan Council on Aug. 21 approved a balanced $3.23 million budget proposal for 2011, which includes a return to the 10 percent apportionment rate for congregations, retooled diocesan staff responsibilities and funds for a new office building at DaySpring Conference Center (see page 5 for details).

“This budget reflects further work by Council during 2010 to overhaul the financial management structure of our financial statements,” said the diocese’s chief financial officer, Anne Vickers. She added the 11-page budget is also organized more clearly, to mirror the current life and mission of the diocese.

Other highlights of the budget include:

- Capital apportionment funds earmarked: The 2011 income from apportionment from building projects, $259,000, will be used for three projects: $100,000 to be added to the 2020 Fund, a 10-year grant stream to new churches; $100,000 for DaySpring Conference Center capital expenditures, including a new road surface, new air conditioners and improved wireless Internet coverage on the campus; and $52,000 depreciation on diocesan assets, which will be put into the capital fund for the new diocesan office at DaySpring.

- Return to a 10 percent apportionment rate: The diocese’s apportionment rate returns to 10 percent, after two years of lower rates.

Diocesan convention voted in 1999 to fix the apportionment rate at 10 percent, where each congregation gives 10 percent of its revenue, based on figures from two years prior, to the diocese to pay for programs, ministry and staff costs.

As the recession hit Florida in 2009, Diocesan Council voted to give congregations some relief by temporarily lowering the apportionment rate that year to 8 percent. It was adjusted again in 2010 to 9 percent.

During debate at convention, some clergy objected to the return to the 10 percent rate, saying the economy is still too fragile to raise rates.

The Rev. Ev Walk, rector of St. Margaret of Scotland Episcopal Church in Sarasota, asked for a year delay. “At the risk of being obstructionist, which is not my character, I need to tell you that ... I wrestle with a budget that increases apportionments to most congregations when most parishes in the diocese are stressed financially, some more than others,” he said.

“It sends a message that I believe could become counterproductive to a healthy relationship between the diocese and parishes within our diocesan community,” he warned. “The economy is not allowing our people to support financially our parishes the way they used to do in the past. A year delay will give the economy time to improve so our parishioners might not have to make the hard choice between family and church.”

Vickers countered by pointing out that dollars collected in 2011 are based on a congregation’s 2009 budget data, when the recession was deeper than it is now.

“Forty-four churches, out of our 78, will have increased apportionments,” she said, noting the average increase was $295. She also said 33 congregations will actually see their apportionment decrease in 2011 even with the higher percentage rate.

With the 10 percent apportionment rate, the 2011 budget’s bottom line will roughly be the same as last year, she said. At 10 percent, the diocese’s apportionment rate is one of the lowest in the Episcopal Church. The budget, as presented, was approved in a voice vote.

Episcopal Church asking is reduced: In 2011, the Episcopal Church will be asking for less money from its 109

(Continued on page 14)
Election results

Here are the results of balloting at the 42nd diocesan convention. The number in parenthesis indicate the number of votes needed to elect.

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Deputation to the 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church

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Diocesan Review Committee

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Ecclesiastical Trial Court

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Trustee, University of the South

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For the first time, voting clergy and delegates used cards to vote on matters such as motions and resolutions, using green to signify "yes" and red to vote "no."

The Rev. Canon Michael Durning samples the barbecue at Friday night’s dinner at Church of the Good Shepherd.

Clergy assembled for a photo after Friday’s opening Eucharist.
The diocese’s special guest, Bishop Wayne Smith of the Diocese of Missouri, preaches at Friday night’s opening Eucharist. He also led Morning Prayer before the business of the day on Saturday.
dioceses than it has in previous years. The “asking” rate is dropping from 21 percent to 20 percent in 2011 and will drop to 19 percent is 2012.

Coupled with the fact the amount is calculated based on diocesan income of 2009, when Southwest Florida collected 2 percent less from congregations, it means the diocese will give $466,615 to the national church in 2011, which is $166,000 less than in 2010.

The Rev. John Hiers of Church of the Ascension in Clearwater, sought to amend the budget to reduce that figure even more, to 10 percent. It was defeated without discussion by a vote of 143-122.

**Congregational support**

In addition to ongoing support of stewardship and evangelism efforts, as well as the Fresh Start program for new clergy, the 2011 budget includes new budgeted expense lines for congregational support. The money could include training, workshops, consulting or other expertise-based assistance. Starting in 2011, individual churches receiving support for operations are meeting with the bishop regularly to discuss progress.

**Staff changes**

In 2010, the diocesan staff was reorganized in order to more efficiently provide support and leadership for diocesan ministries and congregational life.

The diocese’s new parish administration specialist, Nora Ortiz, has expertise in benefits, audits and internal processes, and her full-time position is dedicated to supporting parish-level administration issues.

The redefined canon for Christian formation position, filled by the Rev. Jim Williamson, plans to provide seamless leadership from youth programs through adulthood through the School for Ministry Development.

The Rev. Chris Gray also joins the staff in a part-time capacity as the diocesan development officer. His position, funded partly through the DaySpring budget, will work to fulfill the vision for the Episcopal Charities Fund and DaySpring, as well as serving as a resource in planned giving and stewardship for parishes.

The budget also allows for the possibility of involving the work of two retired bishops who plan to retire in Southwest Florida in the fall of 2011.

You can view and download the entire budget presentation at www.episcopalswfl.org/diocesan_convention.

**Covenant resolutions tabled**

The two resolutions seeking endorsement of an Anglican Covenant were tabled in favor of encouraging churches to study the latest version of the document, released several months ago.

The idea for a covenant was first introduced in 2004 and has been suggested as a way for the 38 provinces around the world that make up the Anglican Communion to maintain unity amid differing viewpoints, especially on human sexuality issues and biblical interpretation.

A Covenant Design Group has been meeting since January 2007 and has produced three drafts of the Anglican covenant to date.

“… Conflict within the Episcopal Church continues to trouble the consciences of many, causing the Church a loss of members, and impeding the Mission of the Church. The Rector, Wardens, and Vestry of the Church of the Redeemer believe that a positive course of action to ease consciences, to refocus on the Mission of the Church, and to move the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion toward reconciliation and greater unity, is given in the Ridley Cambridge Draft of the Anglican Communion Covenant,” the resolution noted.

During discussion of the resolution, several noted that very few people have even read the latest draft of the Covenant, much less studied it.

“I ask that we not vote for this because the study materials have just now been published,” said the Rev. Robert Hennagin of St. Hilary’s Episcopal Church in Naples. “I would be willing to wager that the majority of us have not read the entire document. How can we say now whether we want to be identified as a diocese that commends it or not?”

The Rev. Tara McGraw of St. Paul’s, Naples, agreed. “This Covenant does change the essence of what the Anglican Communion is. We don’t have a structure within the international level of the Communion that tells us what we are to believe and not believe theologically. This is a huge change and not to be voted on until we have really done our homework.”

The Rev. Fred Robinson of Church of the Redeemer conceded the point that the Covenant changes the Communion but believes it’s necessary.

“We have had some unprecedented crisis in the Communion that caused the Communion to be in danger of breaking apart,” he said. The Archbishop of Canterbury has crafted this as an instrument to deal with that crisis, Robinson said. “We have to make some kind of decision about whether or not we’re going to use that instrument.”

Navita Cummings James, a delegate from St. James House of Prayer in Tampa and a 2012 General Convention deputy, also said it was too early to make such a commitment. “It [the Covenant] makes a significant change in our relationship within the Communion,” she said. James also urged the diocese to make time and materials available for lay people to study the document.

The Episcopal Church’s Executive Council has said that only General Convention, which next meets in 2012, can formally endorse the Anglican Covenant and predicted that such approval could not come until at least 2015 should its endorsement require changes to the Episcopal Church’s constitution.

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**Covenant study guide available**

The latest Anglican Covenant study guide is available at http://generalconvention.org/ec.

Smartphone users can scan this code to view this information.
From the Bishop
(Continued from page 3)

I am pleased to announce that our initial Jubilee Network churches are:

- All Saints, Tarpon Springs
- Church of the Ascension, Clearwater
- Church of the Redeemer, Sarasota
- St. David’s, Englewood
- St. Giles, Pinellas Park
- St. Mark’s, Marco Island
- St. Mark’s, Venice
- St. Mary’s, Bonita Springs
- St. Peter’s Cathedral, St. Petersburg
- St. Augustine’s, St. Petersburg
- St. James House of Prayer, Tampa

As we celebrate this particular recognition of these congregations, I also want to thank the rest of the diocese for the multiple congregational efforts in outreach ministry. The evidence is overwhelming and compelling. There are efforts in our diocese that deal with the scourge of human trafficking, feeding programs, pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, prison ministry, health care, children and family ministries, elderly assistance, homeless ministry, migrant ministry, and more.

I strongly encourage you to open the Congregational Life tab on the diocesan website and explore the “Ministries in Southwest Florida” section within the diocesan pages. You will discover an immense amount of information regarding the hundreds of ministries active in our diocese on this outreach ministry database. I particularly want to thank Archdeacon Dennis McMannis, the canon for outreach, and Mr. Jim DeLa, the director of communications, for making this information available to us. This database will prove to be an invaluable resource for generating ideas and creating helpful networks for congregational mission endeavors. The congregations, within the framework of the diocese, work together to be the people of God’s mission.

Last year at this time we had a congregation absent from our convention. I do not need to dwell on the regrettable realities regarding the congregation of St. Dunstan’s, Largo, but I do want to publicly thank Fr. Norman Howard for his healing leadership work there and heartily welcome the delegate members of this convention from St. Dunstan’s: Nancy Campbell, Larry Crisp, Richard Auger, alternate Barbara Sherman and Fr. Stuart Swann. I thank them for their boundless energy. The line item for mission and aided congregation support is larger for 2011 so as to assist in their journey towards restoration and recovery. I would be remiss if I did not also thank the congregation of St. Alban’s in St. Pete Beach for their partnership with St. Dunstan’s in this recovery. The congregations, within the framework of the diocese, work together to be the people of God’s mission.

I repeat, the congregations, within the framework of the diocese, work together to be the people of God’s mission. This diocesan gathering today includes the further joyful celebration of the achievement of parish status for St. Mary Magdalene.

In 1996 a presentation was made to Diocesan Council for a Manasota Deanery mission. The new mission organized and began meeting in 1997 with its first vicar, Fr. Jack Kline, with a proposal to construct facilities in 1998. The second vicar, Fr. Jim Williamson, further developed the congregation for the next six years. Before I was even consecrated as a bishop, the first service of installation I presided over was for Fr. Jim Hedman in February of 2007. His leadership has ushered in an era of maturation at St. Mary Magdalene. He, the wardens — Mr. Robert Douglass and Mr. Chuck Binkley — the vestry and people are to be commended and congratulated this day.

At last year’s convention I reported “the process of planning has begun for the return of the major operational aspects of the diocesan office to DaySpring.” I added that I thought it “essential that we proceed with an approach that is thoughtful and responsible….I want the decisions to make sense for us and for generations to come.” “We need to be intentional about program development, asset improvement and diocesan operational presence.” The DaySpring Development Steering Committee was then established to pursue this course of action.

The members are: Chair, Mr. Michael Kline from Church of the Ascension, Mr. Kyle Jones also from Church

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From the Bishop
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of the Ascension, Mr. Peter Hayes from St. Boniface, Mr. Phil Beau-
champ from Calvary Church, Mr. Ted Tripp from St Hilary’s, Mrs. Sarah Hill from St. Peter’s Cathedral, Ms. Sheree Graves from St. Peter’s Cathedral, Fr. Ed Henley from St. Mark’s Tampa, Fr. Fred Robinson from Church of the Redeemer, Mother Kathy Schirriff from St Monica’s, Fr. Michael Basden from Trinity-by-the-Cove, Mrs. Carla Odell, Executive Director of DaySpring, Mrs. Anne Vickers, CFO, and Ms. Jan Nothum, executive assistant to the bishop.

The DaySpring Development Steering Committee has functioned by dividing into subcommittees and reporting in stages to Diocesan Council. It has completed a civil engineering proposed site study that included a tree survey and selected the architectural firm of Apex-Studio Suarez. I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Steering Committee for their energy and efforts.

In August, the Diocesan Council received a summary report of completed decisions and actions with a schedule for the future. The October 2010 item in this summary report included the intention to offer an update of progress and plans to the Diocesan Convention. What you are now going to see are the conceptual plans from the detailed conversations with the architect. Please note that these are conceptual and not final blueprint-style decisions. They show the footprint on the DaySpring property and the conceptual layout. Further design decisions need to be finalized under the leadership of the Diocesan Council.

The next stage of work the DaySpring Steering Committee will pursue will be the DaySpring program assessment. The approach will be to conduct a form of assessment to receive input from multiple stakeholders who are important to the diocese and to DaySpring through qualitative research that provides rich data from targeted research subjects. The thoughtful decision making and intentional process approach will continue in terms of DaySpring’s program development and asset improvement. The diocese will be kept informed.

I stated at the recent Fall Convocation that the systems within the diocese are functioning well. The Congregation Development Committee, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan Council, the Commission on Ministry and the chancellor and vice-chancellors have all labored intensively this past year. I want to thank Canon Michael Durning for his capable administrative stewardship. I also want to thank, in particular, our CFO, Anne Vickers, for helping to usher in such clarity, transparency and organization in diocesan finances. In addition, this diocese is blessed to have such a wonderful, talented corp of clergy who bring multiple gifts, talents and skill sets to our congregations. Furthermore all of the members of the diocesan staff are superb. They continue to live into a servant-hearted mindset and attitude.

This is my fourth diocesan convention. There were dimensions about being bishop that I didn’t know early on, and I have learned many important lessons over the past several years. For example, I did not realize the slower pace that the machinery of the diocese takes in terms of canonical revisions and financial reorganization. Having said that, as I have matured into the office, I remain so blessed and grateful to be the bishop of Southwest Florida.

I have high hopes for the Diocese of Southwest Florida. The last year witnessed so much diocesan staff and Diocesan Council energy in the management of last year’s adopted Canon II. This is the diocesan canon having to do with our Convention, congregational arrearages, and voice and vote. In the coming year there will be mission-focused conversations with the diocesan staff, the Congregation Development Committee, the Commission on Ministry, and the Diocesan Council on targeted revitalization efforts in existing congregations and on proceeding towards the planting of a new congregation. I am not announcing anything specific beyond saying that we should now use our energies to think strategically to initiate opportunities by using the resources we have and continuing to build more resources for the future.

We will also need to establish a diocesan task force on the canonical lay pension plan and denominational health plan. The DaySpring Steering Committee will continue its tasks and reports for Diocesan Council decision-making. I also want to encourage you to utilize the Development Officer for the diocese, the Rev. Chris Gray. He is a diocesan resource for you in dealing with stewardship programs, planned giving and endowment planning. Finally, the Episcopal Charities Fund of the Diocese of Southwest Florida is now in the position of being able to provide assistance and financial support as we live into the diocesan desire to have Mercy in Mission. I am asking the Council on Deacons to function as the body that makes recommendations to Diocesan Council for the use of Episcopal Charities financial grants.

I recognize that I did not elaborate on the fullness of the Five Marks of Mission. Please know that I encourage each congregation to use them as a tool for congregational life evaluation purposes. I will close by touching on the mark of “to teach, baptize and nurture new believers.”

I was talking with one of our 13-year-old youth members recently. She started the conversation by saying to me, “Remember me, you confirmed me last year!” She then informed me of some difficult moments she has experienced in school. Those moments could only be characterized as times when she was uncomfortably ridiculed for being a Christian believer. She told me that when she was ridiculed she just walked away saying to herself, “God bless them.” I would say she has been taught very well into living baptismally as a believer.

Our congregations are doing good and holy work. You are a joy to work with in the Lord’s service. We can all, though, seek to do more excellent service. Use the Five Marks of Mission to re-energize your congregational and individual perspectives and approaches. Jesus Christ sends us, just like our 13-year-old youth member, into the world every day. And remember, the congregations, within the framework of the diocese, work together to be the people of God’s mission.
For the love of animals

Many churches around the diocese invited the community and their pets in early October for the annual Blessing of the Animals, in honor of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals and the environment.

Many congregations turned the blessings into full-fledged community events, inviting local Humane Society chapters and other nonprofit groups to participate.

"Bowie" gets a blessing from the Rev. Doug Zimmerman at St. Wilfred’s, Sarasota.

The Rev. Bob Wagenseil blesses a pup at Calvary Church in Indian Rocks Beach.

Two Boston Terriers wait their turn at St. John’s, Clearwater.
Reflections (Continued from page 4)

of a little bit of dirt. On the other hand, the more educated I became, the more I began to rise up, not necessarily by choice, but by default. People began to assume that I had come from affluence because of the way I spoke and the things I had been able to attain for myself. I was the first person in my family to go to college, let alone grad school — and at some point even my own family began to look at me differently.

So here I am: I have a new car, I’ve been on two cruises, and although I’ve yet to go to Europe, I’ve traveled a lot of this country and have gotten to go to Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador. So, what does that make me? Which class am I? Did I “rise above my raisin’”?

Jesus continues in the gospel by giving advice to the host of the party, “When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

In this parable, Jesus is not just telling us to act in a certain way so that we will be repaid or exalted. In fact it’s about the opposite. It’s about doing it “because they cannot repay you.” It’s about how we see ourselves in relation to others, and it is about motive.

I’ve been working with underprivileged and at-risk youth since 2004, first as a teacher in rural North Carolina and now as a therapist at a residential wilderness institute for adjudicated boys. One thing I learned early on — is they will never listen to me if I go in thinking I have something to give. In fact, in the beginning, they resent me because, they assume, like many others, that I come from money and class and could not possibly understand their point of view. Minus the money and class part, they’re right. I may have endured similar struggles, but that does not mean I can know or understand theirs. Sure, I have a master’s degree and a certification and a fair amount of life experience, but I must humble myself and meet them where they are.

In doing this, I have learned that those who have the least often have the most to give. I have learned the true meaning of faith and grace not from inside the walls of a sparkly church, but from the streets of the barrios in the Dominican Republic, the falling-down homes of my students in North Carolina, and the cleansing tears of those who sit in my office day after day and bless me with their pain.

I no longer worry about where I fit in or whether I’m “risin’ above my raisin’.” In this story, Jesus does not call us to lower ourselves, or even stay where we are, he simply asks us to wait until we are called. It was never about me, or where I fit in, or what I have. And it’s not about paying back, or even about paying forward, it’s about being who we’re called to be and doing so with a gracious and humble heart. It’s about how we see ourselves in relation to others, and it is about motive.

ER-D sets goal of 10,000 Nets for Life

A new fund drive within the diocese seeks to collect funds to buy 10,000 mosquito nets to protect up to 30,000 people from malaria in sub-Saharan Africa through Episcopal Relief and Development’s Nets for Life program.

One $12 long-lasting, insect repellent-treated mosquito net can cover three people.

The diocesan Episcopal Charities Fund will collect the donations made by parishioners and churches. Each month a deanery representative for Episcopal Relief and Development will be in touch with your parish to offer assistance and support for this project, helping to locate resources and report the level of response.

Look for resources at www.er-d.org/NetsForLifeInspirationFund/ and video clips are available at www.netsforlifeafrica.org

All checks should be sent to the Diocese of Southwest Florida, 7313 Merchant Court, Sarasota, FL 34240 and clearly marked for EPISCOPAL CHARITIES, NETS. Be sure to indicate the name of the parish and city on each check.

Give now. Through Nov. 30, any donation made to Episcopal Relief and Development will be matched dollar-for-dollar up to $500,000 so the diocesan fund drive can have twice the impact.

How creative can your church be? Please send your fundraising ideas and photos to Maureen Belote, diocesan co-coordinator for Episcopal Relief and Development, at genimo@verizon.net or (727) 736-6466.
Praise through painting

Artist and Romanian Orthodox nun Sister Eliseea Papacioc was in Sarasota recently to install a five-foot by 30-foot icon at Church of the Redeemer, which she painted on three large pieces of canvas that took a year to create.

Papacioc travels to the U.S. about once a year, to display her work and lecture at Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches and colleges.

She is modest about her work, giving all credit to God. “I ask Him to help me because without Him I can’t draw a line,” she said. “I never sign my work because I consider that God paints this through my hands.”

The icon is a memorial for longtime parishioners George and Mary Ann Bloodworth.

See more images and video interviews with Papacioc at http://images.acswebnetworks.com/1/371/InFocusIcon.pdf
Fires hit VTS, California offices

Episcopal News Service

Virginia Theological Seminary and the Diocese of Northern California, hit by devastating fires in late October, grappled with the lengthy process of moving forward.

Although the VTS wooden chapel, built in 1881, was heavily damaged in the Oct. 22 fire, “some stained glass windows appear to have survived,” according to an e-mail circulated Oct. 25 to alumni and friends by the Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, VTS dean.

While contemplating rebuilding, Markham added, “In due course, you will hear about the semi-permanent measures we will put in place to guarantee the centrality of worship in our common life.”

The Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which typically investigates church fires, ruled the fire was accidental.

Some 2,700 miles westward, in mid-town Sacramento, the River City Food Bank, a ministry of the Diocese of Northern California, resumed food and other aid to the local hungry from temporary offices across the street from its charred headquarters.

The diocesan headquarters, including the office of the bishop, also sustained heavy fire, smoke and water damage, according to communications director Keri Lopez.

The diocese’s centennial convention, planned for Nov. 11–13 and themed “Remember, Rejoice and Renew,” will proceed as planned, Lopez said. But, she added, after the Oct. 21 fire that destroyed two buildings, “we could add ‘rebuild’ in there now, too.”

The Rev. Canon Britt Olson, diocesan canon to the ordinary, said that temporary office space “has been procured for our office manager, accounting, administration and finance functions so they may do essential tasks.”

In the interim, other staff, including communications, youth and young adult ministries as well as Bishop Barry Beisner, will work remotely, communicate electronically and gather for periodic staff meetings.

The cause of the Oct. 21 fire is still under investigation. A second fire the same day, rekindled by smoking ash, resulted in additional smoke, water and physical damage to the buildings. The financial losses have yet to be calculated.

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Portuguese congregation takes root in Pompano

About 40 people gathered at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church in Pompano Beach Oct. 17 to celebrate the first Eucharist in Portuguese in the Diocese of Southeast Florida.

After a year of preparation, the diocese has launched a regular schedule of worship in Portuguese. The fledgling Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) congregation is believed to be the first Episcopal Portuguese language ministry in the U.S.

“The reality is that the largest Brazilian population in the U.S. resides in our diocese — in fact, the three towns in the United States with the largest populations of Brazilians are in ... Broward County,” said Bishop Leo Frade.

Leading the services is the Rev. Jose de Jesus Sanchez, a former Roman Catholic priest who is fluent in Portuguese. Sanchez is currently in the process of being received as an Episcopal priest; meanwhile he is licensed to preach and perform all the functions of a lay pastor.

First female priest ordained in Quincy

The Rev. Margaret Lee on Oct. 16 became the first woman to be ordained a priest in the 133-year history of the Peoria, Illinois-based Episcopal Diocese of Quincy.

Lee has served for 14 years as a deacon in the Quad Cities, where she currently serves the congregation at All Saints Church in Moline.

In November 2008, a majority of the diocesan synod voted to leave the Episcopal Church and to realign with the Anglican Province of the Southern Cone, citing theological differences. The diocese has since reorganized, and about 20 clergy have remained canonically resident since the realignment.

Charities get boost from All Soles Sunday

There were no signs saying “No Shoes, No Service” Sept. 26 at St. Elizabeth’s Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, Fla.

The Rev. Michael D. Moore invited churchgoers to leave their shoes at home and bring a pair to donate. “Barefoot Sunday” was designed to show how millions around the world live without shoes on a daily basis.

Estimates reveal that 300 million children around the world don’t own a pair of shoes, the release said, adding that it was “a sad irony ... that Americans threw away the same number of shoes into landfills last year alone.”

The parish decided to partner with Soles4Souls, a Nashville-based charity and two local charities to offer shoes to people in Jacksonville and around the world.

Some 275 pairs of shoes were collected, representing six pairs of shoes for every adult who participated in the service.

“Not wearing shoes in church was a first for me, but it made me stop and think of those without,” Altar Guild chair Linda Hargraves said.

Diocese supports end to gay marriage ban

Defeating Proposition 8, the California voter-approved ban on gay marriage, is more than a legal issue, it’s also a matter of faith, Bishop J. Jon Bruno of the Diocese of Los Angeles told an Oct. 20 gathering of interfaith leaders at the Cathedral Center of St. Paul.

Bruno urged congregations to support a California Faith for Equality amicus brief to be filed Oct. 25, affirming an earlier court ruling that invalidated Proposition 8.

In that ruling, U.S. District Chief Judge Vaughn R. Walker said that Proposition 8, passed by voters in 2008, violated the federal constitutional rights of gays and lesbians to marry the partners of their choice.

His decision was appealed to the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, where a three-judge panel will hear oral arguments in the case in December.

Executive Council
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of the Episcopal Church. The resolution said that the borrowing authority is also meant “to provide continuing working capital and liquidity.”

The resolution requires that any refinancing agreements include a mandatory repayment schedule for the $37 million at a fixed interest rate. FFM chair Del Glover told his committee earlier in the meeting that because of past budget decisions, only about $500,000 of the principal has been paid off.

“To the extent that we are not paying debt, we are borrowing money to do the ministry of the church,” he said.

In other business, council:

- Authorized a letter to be sent to the Episcopal Forum of South Carolina, which had asked the council and the House of Bishops to investigate actions which it said “are accelerating the process of alienation and disassociation” of the diocese from the Episcopal Church. The letter says that the council and the presiding bishop are “committed to doing what we can to help the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina continue to participate fully in the life, work and mission of the Episcopal Church,” but notes that “there are canonical limits to how her office and the Executive Council can intervene.”

- Elected Fredrica Harris Thomsett, a retired historical theology professor at Episcopal Divinity School, to succeed Scott Evenbeck of Indianapolis, who resigned from the council in June. Evenbeck said his appointment as the founding president of a new community college would take up much of his time. Harris Thomsett will serve until the end of the next meeting of General Convention in 2012.

- Heard that it will be asked in February to give its consent to a site for the 2015 meeting of General Convention. The three finalists (Atlanta, Philadelphia and Salt Lake City) will be narrowed to one.

You’ve chosen the godparents, dressed the baby in yards of white and headed to church for the christening. Now what? What does the sacrament of baptism mean in your child’s life, and in your life?

In Taking the Plunge, parents explore how the Baptismal Covenant helps to shape the experience of raising children. What are you promising when you baptize your child? Why are “please” and “thank you” theological words, not simply polite things to say? Anne Kitch writes with a light touch and includes plenty of real-life stories.

Each chapter concludes with a “Getting Your Feet Wet” section. It includes a list of things to think about, and a list of suggestions.

Grace on the Go: 101 Quick Ways to Pray, by Barbara Bartocci, from Morehouse Publishing Co., 112 pages, paperback, $10.

These days, everyone seems to race through the day multi-tasking at break-neck speed, with no time for quiet prayer. Author Barbara Bartocci was frustrated by this fact until she realized an important truth: Every single task is potentially holy if we do it with a holy intent. And that’s the premise of Grace on the Go. This book offers quick, imaginative ways to help busy people make prayer an integral part of their days.

Once you pick up this little book you have no excuses. Bartocci peppers every minute of our day, every action, as a time to pray. For some we use words. For others we use our actions. The intent remains clear: communication with God.

This, as is each book in this series, is a handy small size that fits easily in a pocket or purse. It measures 4 inches wide by 6 inches tall and just about ¼ inch thick.


If you listen closely enough to teenagers, you’ll hear their deep yearning to connect with God, and a powerful instinct to belong. And you’ll find out right away the one thing they really hate: being preached to.

In this volume, teenagers learn all about the Christian faith they’ve been baptized into and the Episcopal Church that offers them a spiritual home. With writing that’s informative and never condescending, the book gives them all the basics they need to know to understand their faith and claim it as their own.

Closely linked to the Book of Common Prayer, My Faith, My Life covers everything from scripture, church history and sacraments, to the meaning of prayer and ministry in the lives of real teens today.

The reading is broken into small, easy to manage sections. Diagrams and some photos are included that use another part of the brain other than reading. On every page there are break-out boxes with additional information or suggestions.

Welcome To The Episcopal Church — An Introduction to Its History, Faith and Worship, by Christopher Webber, from Morehouse Publishing Co., 133 pages, paperback, $14.

Excellent for inquirers and new members, this book is also a good book for long-standing Episcopal Church members unfamiliar with some of the church’s history, beliefs and practices. This introduction to the history, polity, spirituality, worship and outreach of the Episcopal Church is written in an easy-to-read, conversational tone.

There are study questions at the end of each chapter, making it an excellent resource for adult education.


“Threshold is a sacred thing,” goes the traditional saying of ancient wisdom.

In some corners of the earth, in some traditional cultures and in monastic life, this is still remembered. But in our fast-paced modern world, this wisdom is often lost on us.

It is important for us to remember the significance of the threshold. While it is certainly true that thresholds mark the end of one thing and the beginning of another, they also act as borders — the places in between, the points of transition. These can be physical, such as the geographical borders of a country; others, such as the spiritual border between the inner and outer world — between ourselves and others — are intangible.

In this little book (measuring 4 by 6 inches), Esther de Waal looks at what it is like to live in actual “border country,” the Welsh countryside, with its “slower rhythms” and “earth-linked textures,” and explores the importance of opening up and being receptive to one’s surroundings, whatever they may be.


This volume is a guide to painting icons and using them in prayer. Written with warmth and energy, it describes the history of icons and examines why they have been a spiritual tool for so many centuries. Written from a uniquely Western perspective, the book guides artists — from novices to professionals — through the process of icon painting, using traditional techniques but employing contemporary materials. Included are eight full-color plates of the artist’s icons.
Special Events

**Taize and Carillon Together.** Nov. 21 at 5 p.m. at Episcopal Church of the Ascension, 701 Orange Ave., Clearwater. 5 p.m. Contemplative Eucharist with Taize chants; 6:15 p.m. carillon recital, Lee Cobb, carillonneur. Seasonal music including familiar favorites. Refreshments offered. For more information, visit www.churchofascension.org.

**Bach Festival of Central Florida.** Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Episcopal Church of the Ascension, 701 Orange Ave., Clearwater. For more information, visit www.churchofascension.org.

**Handel’s “Messiah”.** Dec. 12, 9 p.m. at St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 380 Gilchrist Ave., Boca Grande. Handel’s “Messiah,” featuring Lorraine Murphy, lyric soprano; Amy Jo Connours, mezzo soprano; Robert Lischetti, tenor; Lothar BerGeest, bass; with strings and harpsichord. For more information, call the church at (941) 964-2257; or contact Carol Beauchamp Forrester by e-mail at carolbforrester@aol.com.

**Christmas Eve at the Cathedral.** Dec. 24, 5 p.m. at St. Peter’s Cathedral, 140 4th St. N, St. Petersburg. Christmas pageant and Holy Eucharist by the Cathedral Treble Choir with carols, beginning at 5 p.m. At 10 p.m., Christmas Eve Prelude with the Cathedral Choir and Cathedral Brass, featuring Daniel Pinkham Christmas Cantata. Holy Eucharist begins at 10:30 p.m. For more information, contact Dwight Thomas at (727) 822-4173 or dthomas@spcathedral.com.

**Meetings**

**Standing Committee.** Nov. 16 at 10 a.m. at the diocesan office, 7313 Merchant Court, Sarasota. Regularly scheduled meeting of the committee.

**Commission on Ministry.** Nov. 16 at 1 p.m. at the diocesan office, 7313 Merchant Court, Sarasota. Regularly scheduled meeting.

**Diocesan Council.** Nov. 20, 9 a.m. at DaySpring Conference Center in Parrish. Regularly scheduled meeting.

Training/Workshops/Retreats

**Healing School Basic Training Level I.** Nov. 14–17 at DaySpring Conference Center in Parrish. An opportunity for training in inner healing prayer ministry. Teaching, small group ministry and mentoring will be part of this course. Each participant will receive a course book to work through and a certificate of completion. The cost of $300 covers all lodging, meals and instructional materials. Maximum enrollment of 40. Contact Pastor Sharon Lewis at pastorsharon@amazinglovehealing.com. For more information on this training go to www.amazinglovehealing.com.

**Fresh Start Meeting (Clergy and Lay).** Dec. 4 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at DaySpring Conference Center, 8411 25th Street East in Parrish. This workshop will explore the factors to consider in determining how decisions should be made and who should be involved to analyze the decision-making style of the congregation and explore its consequences, and to look at the impact of culture on decision-making styles. Contact Tana Sembiante at (941) 556-0315, ext. 271.

**A Vision for Life Men’s Conference.** Jan. 21-22 at Church of the Nativity, 5900 N. Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota. A retreat opportunity for the men of your church that is affordable, accessible and compelling, hosted by Church of the Nativity in Sarasota. Speakers will include the Rev. Michael Durning, the diocesan canon to the ordinary; the Rev. Jim Hedman of St. Mary Magdalene, Sarasota; and the Rev. Jon Roberts of Good Shepherd, Venice. Cost is $25, which includes three meals, materials and small-group follow-up study. To register, call (941) 957-1271 or visit disciplemakingswfl.com.

If your group or congregation is planning an upcoming event of interest to the rest of the diocese, please send the information to:

The Southern Cross Calendar
7313 Merchant Court
Sarasota, FL 34240
or e-mail it to jdela@episcopalswfl.org

The diocesan events calendar is also available on our website:

www.episcopalswfl.org