118th Annual Diocesan Convention

A vision that draws our whole self

Meeting at St. Stephen’s, Escanaba, for the 118th diocesan convention, delegates and visitors from around the UP joined together in exploring visions to revitalize our mission and ministry here in this region. Tom Brackett, who calls himself “cheer-leader and resource for new ministries and redeveloping ministries in the Episcopal Church” guided some of the discussions.

Gathering on Friday afternoon, October 4, delegates from around the diocese participated in a conversation that challenged us to remember and focus on mission. Using a story called “The Parable of the Crude Little Lifesaving Station”, Brackett invited reflection on how we sometimes lose track of why we gather together in churches, and of those who hunger for God yet remain outside our spiritual communities.

On Saturday morning, using a process called “World Café” he led the group in asking one another “What is the vision of the church that would compel you to offer your whole self, your best self?” People gathered at small tables in groups of 4 or 5, to listen and speak with one another, with a host at each table to help draw out the conversation. After some time at one table, participants moved to a new table with different people, to continue the conversation. After three rounds, Brackett helped to draw together the conversations from the separate tables into the larger forum, while three people wrote down the insights on newsprint.

As the process developed, the group was reminded that we can get caught up in naming the current reality, all the activities that are part of church communities, and some of the tiredness that comes from doing. Brackett encouraged the conversation to go deeper, into the longings that draw us forward. “What is the Yes,” he asked. “What are the dreams in your heart?”

Convention also took care of the business of the yearly gathering, electing members for Council and General Convention, among others (see page 4D) Convention next year will be held in Marquette, October 17-19, 2014.

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Haiti Scholarships –
Two Friends, Now Schoolmates

Burt Purrington

Sometimes one picture says it all. The photo in this article was taken two years ago and shows Louisa Dorelian and her neighbors and playmates Magdalène Mersier and her little brother Enél.

Louisa’s family lives in the commune of Crochu in a village called Marre Rouge on a high ridge overlooking the Bay of Port-au-Prince to the west. The view from the ridge is spectacular, and I suspect that the name Marre Rouge, which means “Red Sea” in Haitian Creole, may come from the spectacular sunsets one often sees over the bay. In the U. S. people would pay a lot for property like this because of the gorgeous views. But in one of the many ironies one sees in Haiti, the people of Marre Rouge are among the poorest of the poor because the land is steep, rocky and difficult to farm; most of the trees have been cut; gardens are often washed away by torrential rains; springs are two or three hours away over steep, rocky trails; and medical care is six to eight hours distant.

Louisa’s parents are farmers and very poor. None of her three older sisters and brothers has been to school because their parents cannot afford to send them, and the schools, including St. Alban’s Episcopal school, are two or three hours hike away.

Because Louisa’s family is so poor her uncle, Louis-Jacques Dorelian, offered to take her into his home. Louis-Jacques is the lay leader and a teacher at St. Albans and the community health worker for the Lespwa Timoun (Hope for Children) children’s nutrition program in Crochu. His wife Tazia Veitinel is a master seamstress and head of the Kay Kouti (sewing house) women’s sewing co-op that our diocese has assisted for the past four years.

The extended family is still very strong in Haiti and it is quite common for a family that has some income to take in one or more children of a sister, brother or cousin who cannot afford to provide for all of their children. Since 2008, when I began staying in Tazia and Louis-Jacques’ home while working in Crochu, they have had one to four nieces or nephews living with them. They raised Magdala Paul, one of our scholarship students, who was profiled in the June Hiawathaland, since she was two years old after her mother, Tazia’s sister, and father both died.

So in the fall of 2011, Louisa, who was five years old at the time, came to live with Louis-Jacques and Tazia. Immediately, Tazia sewed a red and white checked kindergarten uniform for Louisa, and she started school at St. Albans, which is only 45 minutes down the mountain from Tazia and Louis-Jacques’ home. That year she received a small scholarship from St. Paul’s, Marquette, to help her buy a backpack, shoes, books and school supplies. Her scholarship was renewed for the 2012-2013 school year and again this year. She always breaks out in a big smile when asked about school and says she loves it.

The photo of Louisa and her friends is particularly poignant because at the time it was taken Louisa had just learned that with the support of some good people in Ozéntazini (the US) she would become the first child in her family to go to school. But her neighbors and playmates, Magdalène and Enél, were not so fortunate. They also come from a very poor household that had never had the means to send them to school.

Magdalène and Enél’s family situation is even more complicated than Louisa’s. They live with their grandmother and her disabled sister in a very small clay-walled home with packed earth floors. Their great uncle, who had supported the family by farming and hand-weaving macoutes (carrying bags made of palm thatch) died of a stroke three years ago, and the children’s mother is away from home much of the time earning a few dollars here and there in Port-au-Prince.

Continued on page 3C...

Left to right, Louisa Dorelian and her neighbors and playmates Magdalène Mersier and her little brother Enél smile at the thought of going to school. (Photo: Burt Purrington)
**Resources for Advent**

As we begin to see the forecasts for snow, can Advent be far behind? Advent I is December 1 this year, and as they say, timing is everything. In this holy time and space preceding the birth of Jesus, we wait... and we prepare, readying ourselves for Christ’s coming with our daily spiritual practice.

Each morning during the season of Advent and Christmas, you can incorporate the insight and inspiration of Barbara Cawthorne Crafton into your spiritual life by means of text and audio versions of her newly re-released book. Let Every Heart Prepare: Meditations for Advent and Christmas. The six-week audio series will be emailed to subscribers daily and available as a podcast series from www.episcopalcredo.com.

Each of Crafton’s short daily readings is anchored by a few lines of a hymn from The Hymnal 1982. The audio versions feature an organ rendition of the hymn as a musical coda concluding the meditation and allowing time for reflection.

Crafton weaves together themes of loneliness and new life at Epiphany. Every meditation holds surprise.

The six-week series, which runs from the First Sunday in Advent to the Feast of the Epiphany, also features Crafton reading her Sunday reflections on video. The short readings and the hymn on each of the six Sundays create an easy-to-lead study series for use at individual churches.

Credo provides a facilitator’s guide to anyone who subscribes.

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As The Church in Hiawathaland was going to press, most Advent resources had not yet been released. Please check the www.upepiscopal.org for updated resources.

**Deadline for the December issue of the Church in Hiawathaland**

*November 8, 2013*

There will be no January issue, so if you have events to publicize for early 2014, please get them in early.

To submit news or subscription changes, contact Rise Thew Forrester, editor risetf@gmail.com
Grace Church, Menominee members Azalia Holliday and Nova Armbruster have taken on the job of Greeters and offering bearers.

Sunday, October 6 was the day for Blessing of the Animals in several congregations around the diocese. Here pictured is St. Mark’s, Crystal Falls, where it is held in cooperation with Northwoods Animal Shelter and representatives from the shelter always attend.

All Saints, Newberry is beginning their second year of Saturday morning services while the summer congregation migrates south for the winter. They have found that Saturdays at 11 am is a better time for them to gather for worship from November to May.

The ecumenical knitting ministry at Trinity Church, Mackinac Island continues to needle their way along, creating hats and other warming items for people in need.

Elections at Convention

**Diocesan Treasurer:** Dick Graybill (Ishpeming)

**Standing Committee:** George Cowell (Menominee), Karen Ettenhofer (Escanaba), Sandra Purrington (Marquette)

**Diocesan Council:** Thelma Clarage (Gladstone), Diane Darlington (Ishpeming)

**Trust Association:** Jack Lenten (Negaunee), Patricia Micklow (Marquette)

**2015 General Convention Deputies:**

**Non-Ordained:** Jane Cisluycis (Marquette), Arlene Gordanier (Marquette), Peg Lippart (Escanaba), Burt Purrington (Marquette).

Jere Fritsche (Iron River), alternate

**Ordained:** Dick Graybill (Ishpeming), Marion Luckey (Munising), Sandra Purrington (Marquette), Bonnie Turner (Menominee).

Janet Fritsche (Iron River), Jim Martindale (Negaunee), alternates.

**Commission on Ministry** (affirmed by Council after Convention): Jeannie Manning (Ontonagon), Jim Martindale (Negaunee), Sue Ray (Gladstone)

**Youth News!**

**Mark your calendars for these important events:**

**WINTER CAMP 2013**
December 26-27-28

**SUMMER CAMP 2014**
June 15-20

**Episcopal Youth Event**
July 9-16
Villanova University, Philadelphia
A national youth event