

Koinonia

Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia

May / June 2007



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This past month has been a rather hectic and busy month. In about the last 30 days, I have: been to a wedding of a nephew; participated in two consecrations of bishops; attended the funeral for Bishop Kelsey; presided at the ordination service for two priests; and presided at the 'routine' Eucharists, Baptisms and Confirmations within the Diocese and Pittsburgh.

In fact, I believe that I have participated, at one level or another, in all seven sacraments (funerals are not sacraments, or sacramental acts) – a rather interesting feat, I believe.

During the times of the different liturgies, I have had the opportunity to pray, meditate, reflect and listen to the words printed and the words spoken. Preachers have worked to unfold the mysteries we were celebrating, and to give sense to the things that make no sense.

The words that have popped out, more than the others in these various liturgies, are: Mission; Renewal – 'things which were cast down are being raised up'; and Mystery.

The first and foremost aspect of who we are and what we do is to 'do' God's mission. That is why we exist. It is not about 'holding our own,' or about protecting what we hold. Rather it is ultimately about giving ourselves away for the building of Christ's Kingdom. In so doing, we are called and challenged to 'give it all away' so that we may die, and that Christ may live in us.

Challenging words – and tough to live by – but words that so often get lost in our busy-ness of life.

We are called together for renewal. Renewal of vows and promises – made by us, or made by others on our behalf – before God and the gathered Body of Christ in the congregations assembled in Church on Sunday.

Recently, a friend was speaking of someone he had encountered, who had stated that they had been baptized (and re-baptized) about 5 or 6 times. Each time they believed that they were 'starting over,' having slipped from their spiritual life of the past. My friend said he commented to this person that their fingers were getting 'pruny' from being immersed so many times.

As we know, we acknowledge one baptism as sufficient. We do not have to re-do our baptisms over and over again. But we DO renew the promises made – each time we pray with the newly baptized, the newly confirmed, the newly ordained or the newly married (grant that all married persons may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed.)

And then we find that we are reminded that so much is incomprehensible. How do these prayers and participations in these various liturgies make us 'right with God?' How are we made 'at one' with God, again and again – having failed so often?

The answer is – "It's a mystery." It's a mystery of God's love and grace.

With so much at stake, and so much that is unknown, we are able to rely upon that one thing – that somehow, and for some reason, God has acted for our salvation – and this is the mystery of life.

Let us celebrate this mystery as we renew our promises and work for the Mission of God.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Michie Klusmeyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer
Bishop of West Virginia

News Around the Diocese

Newsmakers and Events

The diocese is sponsoring a trip to **Cedar Point** on August 8. Tickets are available at a substantially reduced price, and a bus has been chartered to provide transportation to and from Cedar Point. Brochures were recently mailed to all churches and can be downloaded from our website at www.wvdiocese.org/brochures.

Administration Workshops have been scheduled around the Diocese for the remainder of the year, with the first being at St. John's, Charleston, on Saturday, June 30. The workshops will cover a variety of topics including the roles and responsibilities of vestry members, stewardship, accounting requirements and clergy compensation. Please see the enclosed flyer for details.

Mountain Grace is sponsored by Disciples Net and the Diocese of Southern Ohio. It is a one day workshop about Appalachian culture and how it affects the church. It will be held in the Wheeling area on September 8. More information will be available soon.

Current Rates for Supply Clergy

Stipend: \$125 for one service per day; \$150 for two services per day.

Reimbursement for travel expenses to and from church per current IRS rate (\$.485/mile).

If the distance to be traveled is greater than 100miles, or if there is a threat of adverse travel conditions, the congregation shall offer mutually agreeable overnight accommodations and dinner and breakfast.

A **Daughters of the King** Diocesan Assembly will be held Saturday, July 28, from 10:00 - 2:00. It will be hosted jointly by the Sisters of the Shepherd Chapter and Monnica Chapter. For more info, please call 304-375-6239 or email mgm52@verizon.net.

"Our Jamestown Heritage," a pamphlet written by the Rev. Tony Clavier of St. Thomas à Becket, Morgantown, is available for just \$.50. You can order it at www.episcopalbookstore.org or by calling 800-903-5544.

January 26 and 27, 2008 has been declared WV Major State Day at the **Washington National Cathedral**. For more information, contact Hollie Mitchell at 304-776-8315 or wmitch8315@aol.com.

St. John's, Harper's Ferry, has unveiled their new website, www.stjohnsharpersferry.org, and they invite you to visit their site. The website was designed by Katie Gaulding, their treasurer and Sunday School director. Most of the photos are courtesy of Bob DuBose, and the text was written by the Rev. Georgia DuBose and Ms. Gaulding.

Events at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Beckley

St. Stephen's Social Committee recently planned a bowling outing at Leisure Lanes in Beckley. As you can see from this photo, it was quite a success with the children.



Other recent activities included a Parish Breakfast, clean-up week, the Walking Group meeting for exercise and fellowship, and aiding an international outreach campaign by purchasing children's books.

Easter Art at Olde St. John's

The children of Olde St. John's, Colliers, made the Easter crosses in these photos with their handprints.

Photo at left: Jessica Scott, Zoe Smith, Zachary Corso and Caitlyn Shorts

Photo at right: Allura Starr, Olivia Welch, Cole Wagner, Kelaen Welch, and Morgan Wagner holding Madison Starr.



Want to Help with a U2charist?

A U2charist is an Episcopal Eucharist service that features the music of the rock band U2 and a message about God's call to rally around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The music and message of U2 is about global reconciliation, justice for the poor and oppressed, and the importance of caring for your neighbor. Led by the global MDG ambassador, Bono, U2 is calling people worldwide to a deeper faith and engagement with God's mission. This is a great opportunity to reach out to the people in your congregation and larger community, especially young people. Data shows that 12,000 people have attended U2 Eucharists around the world, raising over \$97,000 to fight extreme poverty. A U2charist is being planned for the greater Charleston area, and musicians and other assistance is welcome. Please contact the Rev. Joyce Wilkinson, 304-395-5344, or joycemwil@yahoo.com.

Millennium Development Goals are a mission priority of the Episcopal Church this triennial. They are:

- * Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- * Promote gender equality and empower women
- * Improve maternal health
- * Ensure environmental sustainability
- * Achieve universal primary education
- * Reduce child mortality
- * Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria & other diseases
- * Create a global partnership for development with targets for aid, trade and debt relief

If the Millennium Development Goals have not been addressed in your church for congregational and individual support, the time is now. General Convention 2006 urged each diocese, congregation and parishioner to commit to 0.7% giving toward these goals by July 7, 2007. This date is being used as the halfway point in the global effort to challenge our leaders to keep their promise to halve absolute global poverty by 2015. Resources are available at the websites of ONE Episcopalian, Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation (EGR), and Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD).

Tips and Statistics from the Health Ministries' Committee

Many of us will be exercising more than usual with the season of planting our gardens and playing golf having arrived. As we go into our yards and gardens to plant we may very well end up suffering from low back pain, muscle pain and other aches. One of the things we must remember before we start, is to do our stretching exercises. Some to consider are knee raises and knee-to-chest lifts. Consult your doctor for more information.

- 79% of Americans think of faith as important to health
- 76% think faith has helped them
- 63% think doctors should talk to them about spirit; only 10% say doctors do
- 82% believe in healing with prayer
- 67% think doctors should pray, if asked
- 96% believe in God and 52% pray daily

(Public Opinion about Health and Spirituality—
Time Magazine and Gallop Polls)

Spotlight On...

Diocesan Convention, September 27-29, 2007

"This Little Light of Mine"

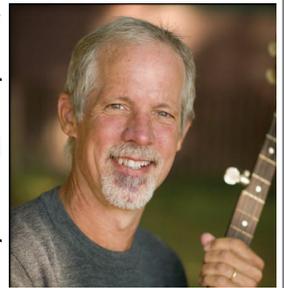


We are all called to share the light of Christ, but how do you offer that light to children? This year's Convention offers ways to share that light with the littlest of God's family. Storytelling, relationships, intentionality, and the traditions of our faith will be offered to help us engage children in church. Friday morning sessions are scheduled in 90 minute presentations from a variety of speakers. Forums are free and open to everyone.



The Rev. Canon Anne Kitch is a teacher, conference leader, author and preacher. She will speak to us about "Holy Households: Faith Formation in the Home." Canon Kitch believes that worship is not just for church buildings. If we wish to raise our children in the faith, we need to be faithful at home. What people absorb in an hour a week at church cannot compare to what is lived and breathed in the home. It is in the household that children are formed by the values and practices of those around them. This workshop will explore prayer, family ritual, story telling and sacred space in the home and will offer concrete practices and resources to nurture children's faith. By being mindful of God's presence in our daily life, we can begin to envision the possibility that our households can be holy.

Bill Gordh is Director of Expressive Arts at the Episcopal School in the city of New York and an adjunct professor at General Theological Seminary. A storyteller, banjoist, songwriter, and author, Bill has made an art out of meaningful chapel for services for the very young. He will be hosting a forum called "Creating a Meaningful Children's Chapel." It will explore effective structuring of a childhood chapel gathering. The use of storytelling and music in the retelling of Bible stories will be demonstrated, and the making of simplified, rather than simplistic, Bible tales will be examined. Storytelling tips, sing-along songs, and a question and answer period will be included. Bill will also provide a Family Concert on Friday evening.



Andrea Leslie earned her M.A. in Family and Consumer Sciences with an emphasis on Family and Child Development from Marshall University Graduate College. A lifelong Episcopalian at St. Timothy's, Hurricane, Andrea has extensive experience in both attending and instructing children's programs. Her forum will focus on "Enhancing Relationships with Children." Topics will include our role in working with children, which addresses teaching skills and dispositions, as well as our responsibility to children; principles of interacting with children, which provides information about developmental characteristics and appealing to various learning modalities; child guidance techniques, which involves reframing children's behavior, active listening, supervision, negotiation, setting limits, affirmations, modifying the environment and inclusion of Diocesan policies.

Marc Harshman, having taught grade school for many years, left teaching to concentrate on writing children's books and poetry. His 11th children's title is forthcoming from Dutton/Penguin in October 2007. Marc is a member of St. Matthew's, Wheeling, and the Church Commission for Children. His topic at Convention will be "The Story Table," an examination of the role story telling has in family rituals and how it can be used to provide the religious anchor to healthy family life. As a centerpiece to his development as an author, Marc identifies his family table where stories and gossip were shared. There will be time during his forum for participants to reflect upon the 'story tables' in our own lives.

