

# Koinonia

Episcopal Diocese  
of West Virginia

Fall 2011



Bishop Mike at St. Thomas à Becket, Morgantown

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are a complex people. As someone once wrote, "the only thing that's constant, is change," and we live up to that. Everyone of us can look back and see that we're not the same people we were just 5 or 10 years ago. Our education and experiences shape us into a new creation.

Each year, we begin anew...having been formed and shaped from the previous year.

First, we are Advent People. We wait. We wait expectantly and hopefully for the coming of the Christ. Two thousand years ago the Messiah came the first time, and now we wait again. We are waiting people.

We are Christmas People. We are people of the Incarnation. We know that the Christ, born 2000 years ago, is the Messiah, and we gather at the manger to take in the beauty and magnificence of God Among us.

We are Epiphany People. We are called, like the Magi, not to sit at the manger and remain, but rather we are sent. Each week in our Liturgy, we are told, "Go in peace to love and serve the Lord." We are sent to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are Lenten People. We are people of God who need a time to reflect upon our lives and to see where God has been moved out of the center of our existence. We need to pause and reflect...take a spiritual inventory of where we are in this life, and make amends. Repentance is a part of who we are, as we stop and take on a new direction in life.

We are Easter People. We are People of the Resurrection. It is the Resurrection that makes all of life worthwhile and meaningful. It is a powerful message to proclaim that death is not the end, and that indeed salvation has been won for us through Christ's resurrection. The greatest act of God – to die on the Cross for each of us – culminates in the Resurrection, so that we might live...to have life and to have it abundantly.

We are Pentecost People...Pentecostal. We are People of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit enters our life at baptism, and shapes who we are, empowering us to do the work that Christ has given us to do. The Spirit makes us who we are, and throughout much of the calendar year we are to live in the world where the Spirit dwells.

We return to Advent, having been shaped and changed by the experiences of the previous year... always the same, and always different.

We are complex people...but ultimately, we are the People of God!

In Christ,

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer  
Bishop

# News From Around the Diocese



The Rev. Keith W. Butler Memorial Hall was used for the first time October 30, when **All Saints, Union, and St. James, Lewisburg, joined Church of the Incarnation, Ronceverte, and St. Thomas in White Sulphur Springs** for a "Fifth Sunday" celebration. Over 100



people came to worship and fellowship in the facility named in honor of their former priest, the Rev. Keith Butler, who died August 16, 2010. A formal dedication of Butler Hall will be held at a later date.



Members of **Grace Church, Middleway**, left church on All Saints Sunday and stepped back in time: vintage cars lined both sides of the street. As it turned out, the National Capital Antique Car Club, on a road trip to the Eastern Panhandle, had stopped to have a look around. But for a few moments, some Grace members thought that heaven had arrived on East Street!

**St. Thomas, White Sulphur Springs**, has established a Crèche for children. There are bean-bag chairs, a small table with chairs, coloring books, rocking chairs and a beautiful rug which tells the story of Noah's Ark. The idea came from Fr. Chris Thompson after his visit to England to see his daughter and her family. The churches in England have established these "crèche" for young families so that they can worship together. Fr. Thompson can provide information for designing a crèche for your parish; contact him at [cthompson5151@gmail.com](mailto:cthompson5151@gmail.com).



The St. Miriam chapter of **Junior Daughters of the King** were "kidnapped" the day of their installation (August 28) and given their new tee shirt, then taken to **Trinity, Parkersburg**, for doughnuts and juice. Nine girls were admitted to the Chapter as Junior Daughters dedicated to Prayer and Service. This is only the second Junior Daughters Chapter to be chartered in the Diocese of West Virginia. The Directresses for the St. Miriam Chapter are Liz Ramsay and Jean Jackson.

**St. Thomas à Becket, Morgantown**, had a Pet Blessing in October. In the photo on the left, some of



the dogs are shown greeting each other prior to the service. Although invited to participate in this 'fellowship time' in the parking lot, the cats that showed up preferred to not socialize. In the other photo, The Rev. Julie Murdoch is shown blessing one of the dogs during the ceremony. Those bringing their four-legged friends to be blessed were asked to make a donation to *Animal Friends of North Central West Virginia*.



## Mission Trip to Colombia an Eye-opening Experience

By Vicki Iber

Before we left for our trip to Colombia, we had so many emotions: apprehension, excitement, nervous tension, and anxiety, among others. Within a day, we were enraptured with the wonderful people of Colombia. When we walked through the doors at the airport and there was Father Alberto holding a "Bienvenidos a Colombia" sign, we knew we were in good hands. We were taken to our host families and our adventure began.

The week consisted of several visits to missions, churches, and cathedrals, with some tourist activities, too. The view from Monserrate was incredible, the Salt Cathedral was amazing, the Museum of Gold was informative, but mostly the interaction with the people doing the work 'made' the trip.

No matter what type of conditions they lived in, they were joyous. Their church services were very moving, and we couldn't help but be engaged. Some of the areas were eye-opening. Growing up in the United States sometimes makes us oblivious to the plights of other countries. Everyone needs to make a trip to a third world country. If you didn't know how blessed you were before you went, you would certainly be aware after.

By interacting with priests, deacons, and laity, we were able to see ways in which we can help. The idea of the companion diocese is that it is a positive experience for both areas. We can learn so much from them, as they can, hopefully, learn from us. Stay tuned for more information over the upcoming months.



Above: Bishop Duque of the Diocese of Colombia with Tina Burns, The Rev. Melanie McCarley, Carol Spears, Sarah Corra, Blanca Lucia, Matt Iber, Vicki Iber, Alberto Pinzón

## ConneXions

### Upcoming Opportunity

*ConneXions* is sponsoring a trip to **Freud's Last Session** appearing at Pittsburgh Public theatre on Mar. 9 & 10. This two-man play imagines the conversation between **Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis** on the eve of WWII. They discuss God, money, and the meaning of life. Tickets and reduced-rate hotel accommodations are \$180. If needed, transportation by van is an extra \$20. See the *ConneXions* link on the Diocesan website for more information and a registration form.

### August Workshop is "Out of this World"

*ConneXions*, our new body for Christian education and formation, presented its first offering in August. Workshop participants visited Green Bank's National Observatory for "Out of this World," an overnight retreat designed to illustrate how science and religion hang out together. Dr. F. 'Jay' Lockman, senior scientist with the Observatory; Rebecca Burch, an art teacher with Charleston Catholic High School; and the Rev. Melissa Remington, a former research scientist who is now a priest in our diocese, were the facilitators.



### Mountain Grace VIII

St. John's, Huntington hosted Mountain Grace VIII in September. The theme was "Set My People Free," showing how Christian leaders and congregations are combining faith, hope, and hard work to help their communities break free of the pressures that enslave many in Appalachia today. The conference was co-sponsored by the Diocese of Southern Ohio, the Diocese of West Virginia, Episcopal Appalachian Ministries, Disciples Net, and the Episcopal Community Services Foundation.





## THE FALLACY OF "PETERKIN MUSIC" By Canon Donald Vinson

Campers at Peterkin tend to love worship in Strider Chapel. I've even seen evaluations from kids stating that daily Eucharist was the camper's number one favorite camp activity! That is remarkable, and it certainly needs to have some attention paid to it. The campers particularly love to sing in the chapel, and they do so loudly and with energetic hand and body movements. It is participatory worship in the Anglican tradition, squared. Lives are changed at Peterkin, and there is no doubt that Strider Chapel is a key element of that reality.

Ergo—this just makes sense, right?—if we can just transfer Peterkin music back to our home congregations, the local youth and young adults will return in droves, bringing their friends. The worship of the whole congregation will be enlivened, and the Holy Spirit will descend like a very happy dove upon all present.

Not.

There are factors involved other than song selection and instruments used. Put a bunch of old people (God bless us!) into the mix, even with the words to the songs clearly projected on a screen (even if it were visible from all parts of the room, which it never is, and even if we could read it, which we never can), and even so, you still get "dud" worship. The magic is gone.

At Peterkin, the young campers make up the majority present. Even at Family Camp, Young-Campers-With-Many-Years'-Experience still make up the majority. Most of them not only know the songs, but they form a body to help carry the others who don't know the songs yet, and it is easy enough to add a new one to the mix occasionally.

Of even greater importance, music at Peterkin camps is peer-led, or close to it. The counselor staff are college students, quite responsible adults, but still, just a few years older than our older campers. They are downright glamorous. They are much-admired and respected "older siblings" to the campers. Someone said last summer, "Those counselors are 'rock stars' to these kids." O. K., imagine your favorite rock stars knowing your name and paying attention to you, as a kid! If it is true that music is crucial to the worship at Peterkin, it is also true that it matters greatly who leads that music, and who comprises the bulk of the congregation, youth and wanna-be youth.

Our kids are very open-hearted, inclusive, and non-ageist. They have no problem with the fact that the celebrant(s) at the altar is packing some years. (It could be noted, though, that many of our clergy leaders at the camp are younger clergy, and that the preachers through the week include counselors and younger staffers as well as clergy.) The celebrant doesn't do that much, anyway, and the kids have gotten to know him or her along the way. Communion is distributed by those same rock-star counselors! They don't even mind if there is a gray head in the orchestra. Nevertheless, that balance on the age scale has to be tipped toward youth for the miracle to happen.

If we want meaningful worship for young people and young-at-heart people, we can't over-simplify. If we just bring in a couple of guitars on Sunday morning at 10:30, or even at a special time later in the day, and impose Peterkin songs, projected or printed, on our regular congregation, all involved will be disappointed, and they will say so. To make it work, we have to have youth leadership, youth involvement all the way in planning and presentation, and a core body of youth to bring the thing off, even with the weight of some older, more restrained worshipers dragging on it. In most of our congregations, which have just a handful of young people to start with, unless they do some serious evangelism before beginning to secure the participation of their friends from beyond the church (or plan the worship ecumenically from the beginning), that Peterkin spirit is unlikely to happen.

We all need to provide some variety in our worship experiences, as the bishop has challenged us to do. A more contemporary style of worship, in addition to, not replacing, traditional worship, is a great place to start. We just need to be sure to lay the groundwork first, and not assume it will be an easy transfer for us.

We might do well to consider this, too: maybe God likes for the Peterkin worship experience to be special.



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