



Koinonia

Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia



Bishop Klusmeyer at the baptism of Patrick White, son of The Rev. Jon and Nikki White.

A Message from Bishop Klusmeyer

On the Third Sunday of Advent, we say the Collect that begins: "Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us." For quite some time, it has reminded me of a story I read when I was young and in Sunday School.

Finally, this year, I came back to my office and found the book I recalled and looked up the story. Interestingly, the chapter was not exactly as I recalled. It seems that the Collect for 'Stir up Sunday' is not quite the same as in the present Prayer Book, nor was it originally set for Advent III.

As I read the chapter, I was both amused and happy that this story still lives today:

"Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord," Prayed the Reverend Dr. Hall, Rector of Christ Church, at the family service.

Jeff looked at his father. "That's a funny way to begin a prayer," he whispered.

"Sh-sh," warned his father. "No talking during prayers."

Jeff bowed his head. He was thinking, however, that he would have a good question for his teacher when the children left for their classes.

After the service, the children of the Church School left for their classes in the parish house. Jeff ran ahead to get there first. In big letters, he printed STIR UP on the board before the class entered the room.

"Why, Jeff," said Mr. Henderson, their teacher, "you've beat me to it. I was going to write those words on the board myself to get us started today.

"Why did the prayer that Dr. Hall used start with 'stir up'?" Jeff began. "I never heard of any prayer staring that way."

"Because in Advent," answered Mr. Henderson, "we think about the coming of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. Today is the Sunday next before Advent and it is a good time to ask God to stir up our wills to do good so that we can make ourselves ready for the coming of His Son. This Sunday next before Advent is sometimes called 'Stir-Up' Sunday, because of the first words of the Collect.

"My mother stirs up the batter when she makes a cake," said Joyce. "But I never thought of having to stir up our wills."

"Every once in a while we need our wills stirred up too," said Mr. Henderson. "We are always thinking what a good thing it would be to do something for others who need our help, but often we fail to do those things."

"I guess that's right," said Helen. "Sometimes you almost have to put a firecracker under me to make me do something I know perfectly well I should do."

"Just as stirring up the batter makes the cake a better one, so stirring up our wills makes us better people, not only able to see the needs of others but to do something about them," commented Mr. Henderson.

"What needs are you talking about, Mr. Henderson?" asked Peter.

"What do you think people need in this world?" asked Mr. Henderson. "Suppose we each give our ideas and Peter can make a list on the board.

"I think the greatest need in the world is for peace," said Helen.

Continued on page 4

News from Around the Diocese

The 125th Anniversary of **Christ Church, Bluefield**, was held Sunday, September 28, 2014, followed by a delicious catered luncheon. The church was packed with 147 members, friends and alumni. The Anniversary Sunday was beautiful, with fine food, wonderful worship, excellent music, a large turnout, and smiling faces everywhere. We congratulate Christ Church as they look forward to another 125 years!



Holy Trinity, Logan, hosted several activities the week of November 9. The week started off with the baptism of Luke Cude (left), and continued with the display of fine art photography, and a well-attended Taize service on Thursday. The Taize ensemble featured parishioners from Holy Trinity, Logan; St. Paul's, Williamson; and 1st Presbyterian and Nighbert Memorial Methodist in Logan.



St. John's, Huntington, presented a Prayer Quilt to Huntington Mayor Steve Williams on November 16. The quilt was in response to the Mayor's city-wide request for prayer for Huntington's drug problem. Not only did St. John's add prayers for the addicted, the dealers, and the safety of our law enforcement to their services, but they also began praying over this beautiful handmade quilt that was made by Lynn Butler, praying for these needs as each knot was tied on the quilt. The blocks on the quilt depict the many bridges of Huntington, and their prayer is that they will be able to bridge the gaps created in the community by drug addiction. The quilt was blessed and beautifully boxed in a package created by Klara Kovacs. The Mayor plans to find an appropriate place to display the quilt.



Parishioners of **Christ Church, Clarksburg**, and **St. Barnabas Chapel** hosted several notable events recently, including their first annual Art Show, *Connecting with Creation*. They have also continued their "Backpack Blessings" ministry, which aids the Glen Elk Headstart Program in Clarksburg.





On October 12, 2014 thirty-six members of *Team Trinity of Trinity, Martinsburg*, helped to raise awareness of hunger by participating in a Countywide CROP Walk. The event raised over \$5,000.00 for world hunger. In addition, *Team Trinity* gathers food Sunday by Sunday with their "AMEN" ("All May Eat Now") wagon for the local food pantry, and their youth gather with others to pack backpacks for children who are in jeopardy of not having enough to eat. Feeding others is a corner stone of Trinity's ministry.

The Mary Snow Enrichment Program at St. Christopher



"Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.'" Matthew 19:13-15.

St. Christopher, Charleston, began this year's Mary Snow Enrichment Program with six students from Edgewood Elementary School. With the enthusiasm, cooperation and participation of the school principals, teachers and aids, St. Christopher is offering after-school tutoring in math and reading fluency two days a week. The program, helmed by Lauretha Kellum and Juanita Cook, offers participants an after school snack, homework help, tutoring/enrichment activities, arts and crafts and recreation. It is free to the children identified by their principals and teachers, and serves as one of the ways St. Christopher is making a difference in their community. The Rev. Melissa Remington, Ms. Kellum and Ms. Cook ask that you pray for the continued success of the Mary Snow Enrichment Program at St. Christopher.



The Rev. Zach Drennan and The Rev. Marjorie Bevans (**Good Shepherd, Parkersburg**) arrange items for auction to raise money for the Kenyan Educational Project, for which he is Director.

From Catherine Saxe, Children's Ministries Director

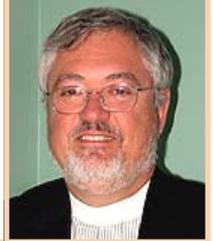
The Advent Wreath is a wonderful and participatory symbol of the season, especially for children. The modern day Advent Wreath is composed of some form of greenery, usually evergreen, formed in a circle. Four candles, representing the four Sundays of Advent, are spaced evenly around the ring. The candles are either blue or purple, both liturgically appropriate colors for Advent because they represent hope and waiting. A fifth candle, usually white, may also be placed in the middle of the ring, the Jesus candle. An Advent Wreath is an excellent way to represent the waiting and longing for Christmas to children. It is a visual reminder that we must prepare for the coming of Christ. The lighting of another candle each Sunday reminds Christians of the light Jesus is to the world. Lighting the Advent Wreath can be a meaningful way to begin the Sunday services in Advent. The Advent Wreath can also be a powerful way to reinforce the meaning of Advent in the home. The lighting of the Advent Wreath, accompanied by a family devotional, gives families the opportunity to worship together outside of the confines of the church building.





Farewell to Canon Perrizo and Canon Vinson

The New Year will see changes in the Diocesan Staff as both Canon Faith Perrizo and Canon Donald Vinson depart. Faith, who has been an important part of our Diocese for ten years, has accepted a position at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Columbus, Ohio. Donald, after serving the Diocese of West Virginia for many years as a parish priest and Diocesan staff member, is easing into retirement. We wish Faith and Donald the best as they transition into this new phase of their lives and ministries, and we thank them for the many gifts they have shared with us over the years.



Message from Bishop Klusmeyer continued...

"I think we'd all agree with you, Helen," said Mr. Henderson. "It was peace that Jesus came to bring into the world. One of the names by which He is known is 'Prince of Peace.' He came to rule the world not by a sword but by kindness and gentleness and love."

Peter printed PEACE in big letters on the board.

"Food," added Doug. "If everyone in the world had enough to eat, people would be better off."

"A decent place to live," said Dorothy.

"Better schools," said Peggy. "If there were enough schools for children all over the world, people would learn how to live better. We studied about India in school the other day, and there are many children there who don't even know what a school is."

"Good health," added Jeff. "I think that's very important. We need more doctors and nurses and hospitals in the world and more scientists to find out what causes disease and how to cure sick people."

"Churches and ministers," said Meg. "People need to know about Jesus and what He taught. There are many places in the world where people have never even heard His Name."

"May I add a word to the list?" asked Mr. Henderson. "I would like to add the word LOVE. If we all loved one another, I think we would have all those things you've listed. Love makes us reach out to another's needs."

"Now that we have all those things on the board, what are we going to do about them?" asked Peggy. "How can we make peace in the world? We're only fifth-graders."

"Peace begins right where you are," said Mr. Henderson. "If everybody would stop trying to pick fights with his neighbor, that would be the beginning of peace in the world."

"The money we put in our church envelopes and in our mite boxes will go to help build schools and send doctors and nurses and missionaries to other lands where they are needed," added Dorothy.

"We can clean up our back yards and streets so that this town will be a better and cleaner place to live," said Doug.

"Mr. Henderson said, 'I am glad you're beginning to think about your own situations. Do you know St. Luke's Hospital on Main Street? I imagine there are many needs unmet in the hospital.'"

"Billy Thompson is in the hospital right now. He broke his leg falling out of a tree."

"What do you think Billy needs?" asked Mr. Henderson.

"I think he must need someone to be friendly with him, and show him we care about him," commented Peggy. "I think we could make him something. And, I think there are other children there who need friends to show them that someone cares."

"Perhaps we could plan a party for them," suggested Joyce.

"It could be a Christmas party, with presents and a Christmas tree," added Peter.

Soon, eight excited boys and girls were busy making plans, forming committees, planning refreshments for a party at the hospital.

"I'll get my mother to stir up a cake," offered Peggy.

"Stir-up Sunday certainly has got you all stirred up," said Mr. Henderson. "But just one word of warning. All these things you are planning are making you better citizens of this town and this community as well as helping others. It is in the little things we do to show our concern for others' needs that we grow into the kinds of persons God intended us all to be. As we think of the coming season of Advent, which begins next Sunday, let us try to become the kinds of persons who are worthy and ready to receive the gift of His beloved Son." (From The Church Seasons, Morehouse-Barlow Co, 1962)

Let us all become stirred up and become who God intends us to be!