



January 2012

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Partnerships Bring Hope To Haiti Communities

By Cindy Schmehl
From *The Albany Episcopalian*
[Go to the slide show](#)

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17

Six parishes in the Diocese have formed the *Empire Haiti Coalition* (EHC) to tackle larger challenges in Haiti. This joint effort will address solar power, clean water, education and nutrition with the goal of improving the lives of thousands on the Haiti Central Plateau.

St. John’s, Troy, St. Andrew’s, Albany, St. George’s, Clifton Park, St. Paul’s, Troy and The Cathedral of All Saints are all partnering with parishes in Haiti under the careful guidance of Father Jean Milor Medela.

Father Milor’s home parish is in the city of Lascahobas and he oversees five mission churches in surrounding villages, most several hours away. Additional members of the EHC include non-profit *To Love a Child, Inc.*, *RPI-Engineers for a Sustainable World*, *AECOM* and *GE Energy*. Together this diverse but dedicated group provides mutual support and expertise to produce life-changing results in Haiti.



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“The Light of Hope” (affectionately named by the people of Haiti) shines brightly now in three of the parishes in Haiti, which also serve as schools. Lay Leaders conduct bible study and church services after dark thanks to lighting provided by solar power. Microphones, amplifiers and speakers bring the beautiful sound of music, singing and God’s word so it can be heard throughout the community drawing more and

more people to church. Solar arrays will be installed in two additional churches/schools in 2012 under the direction of Tim Schmehl, a parishioner of St. John's Church and engineer employed by GE Energy. Tim says "It is hard for us, having lived with electricity all our lives, to comprehend how life changing it is for these communities to have lights in their churches and schools. It is an amazing miracle to see how life is transformed by something we take for granted."

Clean water is high on the EHC's list of projects. The World Health Organization states that the number of cholera cases in Haiti is expected to reach 500,000 by the end of the year. In each of the EHC's partnership locations cholera is a reality and plans are underway to fight this demon head-on by providing dependable potable drinking water. A team, led by Deacon Scott Underhill from St. George's Church and a Project Engineer with AECOM, will travel to Haiti this coming January to complete the first phase of installing a water system in Corosse, the partnership parish for St. George's Church.

The plan is to install a half-mile line of flexible piping underground to transport water from a natural water seep to the school yard where a distribution station will allow students to wash hands and provide more convenient water to the residents of Corosse. The second phase of the project includes installation of a water purification system to remove bacteria from the water. Each partnership site presents different challenges that must be overcome, but upon completion this essential project, will help thousands of people on the Central Plateau.



Partners travel to Haiti together sharing great experiences. Dean of Albany's Cathedral, David Collum, recently traveled to Haiti for the first time with Cindy Schmehl, a member of St. John's Church and Executive Director of To Love a Child. Their week-long journey included visiting two orphanages and three partnership sites. For Dean Collum the trip had several goals: to learn more about Haiti, to bring back information to help the Cathedral evaluate joining the coalition, and to bring the love of Jesus Christ to those visited. For Cindy this 8th mission trip to Haiti and Rantlamouaie was focused on maternal health care. Cindy said "All too often giving birth in poor countries like Haiti is not the happiest day of a woman's life but a day filled with pain, complications and uncertainty."

To Love a Child, is taking small steps to help. By delivering pre-natal vitamins, "Bundles of Love" sterile home birthing kits and "Bundles of Joy" newborn baby kits pregnant women are given supplies they cannot afford to purchase." Upon his return from Haiti Dean Collum said, "I learned a great deal on the trip. It was an intense trip, I believe we can really help, and it is clear that the Lord is active in Haiti."

The Empire Haiti Coalition meets frequently to discuss projects and current issues facing Haiti, particularly the partnership sites under Father Milor's leadership. There is plenty of work for more members and we encourage anyone who has an interest in the partnership to check us out! "...What we are really sharing is an eternal Hope through Love. Praise God for this partnership and showing us deeper realities of the Kingdom of Heaven both present and to come" said Deacon Scott Underhill.

For more information contact: Cindy Schmehl at (518) 859-4424 or directoratTLC@aol.com

Central New York Mission Trips

From the website of Central New York and The Messenger

The Diocese of Central New York has been in companionship with the Diocese of El Salvador for a close to twenty years. Over that time hundreds – perhaps thousands – of Salvadorans have come to know us better and hundreds – perhaps thousands – of us have come to know them better.



The Companion Diocese Committee seeks to celebrate all that we are with our sisters and brothers in El Salvador. And we seek to change lives – both in El Salvador and here in Central New York. In addition to the very successful medical mission work of the Mission of Miracles, in 2010 and 2011 we have:

- Continued to support university scholarships for Salvadoran youth who would have no chance otherwise to get a college education. At the end of 2010 we sent \$1,500 from our Diocesan budget line item for this program. This should provide partial support for five student-years.

- Eli & Betty Barahona, the bishop's younger daughter and his wife, attended our convention, and Eli preached at St. James', Skaneateles.
- We continue to support the Cristosal Foundation. Five people from CNY attended the Base Community Summit in Vermont over Memorial Day weekend. We gifted Cristosal with \$2,000.
- We received Daniella Flamenco, the Diocesan physician in October. She visited parishes and schools and was a star at the MoM fundraiser.
- A Summer Youth Pilgrimage has been organized for July 2011.
- Pilgrimage Scholarships have been granted to youth to help them in attending Youth Pilgrimages.
- Two people traveled to Santisima Trinidad in San Martin to repaint the fence in front of the church and get to know the parish and the people.
- The Companion Diocese Prayer Calendar was published once again just before convention in November. All parishes are encouraged to remember our sister and brothers weekly.
- The Mission of Miracles (supported companion program to the Companion Diocese Committee) sent about thirty people, largely nurses, nurse practitioners and students in both professions to five towns to do health assessments, health promotion and health training, including CPR and first aid. The Companion Diocese committee supported this mission with a gift of \$2,000.
- Began planning for a Base Community program in Central New York; we hope to begin meeting before fall.

As the diocese moves into 2012, a special mission trip is being planned, in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity: First Habitat For Humanity Mission Trip to El Salvador, May 26-June 3, 2012. Kip Coerper, assistant construction manager at Syracuse Habitat for Humanity, will be leading a Habitat Global Village work trip for 12 people to El Salvador on May 26 - June 3. No construction experience is necessary. Come and learn to build and make new friends! Our week will include 1 day of learning about and experiencing the culture of El Salvador and 1 day at a beach resort. Global Village trips provide an opportunity for members to learn and contribute while expanding their knowledge of unfamiliar cultures and developing their own spiritual identity. The entire trip costs will be \$1140 (tax deductible) plus airfare (scholarship money is available for some of the costs). To find out more about this mission trip go to Global Village Trips to El Salvador at Habitat.org or contact Kip at kipcoerper@yahoo.com



Through Global Mission Trips, Team members will:

- Learn about the work and witness of local faith communities
- Build relationships with area Christians, other people of faith, and with each other
- Serve with members of the local community to meet local needs
- Experience another context in which the Christian faith is practiced
- Worship with local congregations
- Reflect on the mission team experience in light of the gospel.

If you feel you just might be called to join this Habitat Mission Trip contact Kip Coerper at kipcoerper@yahoo.com.

For other mission trips to our companion diocese of El Salvador please contact Chuck Stewart at cnstewart@verizon.net or at (315) 685 8578 or 395 0053.

As good as videos and photos are, one cannot get a sense of our sisters' and brothers' lives without being in the churches, kitchens and fields, feeling the heat, smelling the pollution and walking in the dirt. As good as books are, one cannot get a sense of their history without standing behind the altar where their archbishop was shot or standing in front of the Wall of Remembrance with thirty thousand names of those adults and children who died or disappeared in the civil war. And the joy of helping a child paint a T-shirt - perhaps the first new shirt in several years - cannot be described.

To see the complete Habitat for Humanity Brochure about this Mission trip, you may download the document by visiting this link: <http://tinyurl.com/habitat-info>

There will also be a Youth Pilgrimage to El Salvador! Once again Youth from the Diocese of Central New York will be traveling to our Companion Diocese of El Salvador in July to visit, work, play, study and pray with our sisters and brothers there. For almost twenty years we have been in companionship with them, and youth have been traveling both ways since 1997.

It's an overused phrase, but it will change your life; ask any of the youth (or adults) who've had the experience. Go <http://tinyurl.com/youth-pilgrimage> for a brochure.

Friend "Companion Diocese" on Facebook for pictures and videos. Go to YouTube and see the video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjRDqJz9RmY>.

New Rector for St. Paul's Within the Walls, Rome

From the website of St. Paul's



The Rev. Austin Keith Rios has accepted the call to become the 15th Rector of St. Paul's Within the Walls Episcopal Church of Rome. For the past four and a half years, Austin has served as Diocesan Canon for Spanish speaking ministries and Rector of La Capilla de Santa Maria, a Spanish-speaking congregation in the mountains of Western North Carolina. On the diocesan level, Austin founded and chaired a diocesan group, called Beyond Borders, which helps parishes discern ways to be in ministry with Spanish speakers, and addresses justice issues around immigration. On the parochial level, the family has worked with members to increase the participation of children in worship, to

develop meaningful cross-cultural liturgical and cultural celebrations and remembrances, and to deepen our shared faith through formation, pastoral care and justice work.

St. Paul's Within the Walls was designed by George Edmund Street and built between 1873 and 1876. The mosaics on the West wall are by George Breck, those on the arches and in the apse by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. The stained glass windows show scenes from the life of St. Paul.

Austin:

We will miss many friends as we make this transition to be with you, but we thank God for the shared faith that unites us eternally in Christ's one body. At the same time, we are excited about our future together and know that St. Paul's is a dynamic community in which to serve Christ and the world. We look forward to living among you, sharing life with you, and above all growing together in faith. Each of us will now take the opportunity to say a few individual words to you. We can't wait to meet you in person!



What a blessing it is to be called to serve as your next rector. I am confident that St. Paul's is ready to enter a period of renewed energy, growth, and faithfulness, and I look forward to serving among you to embrace that future. I am blessed with a supportive family in Jill and Aja (pronounced "Asia"), and look forward to you meeting them. This will be a time of transition for us all; but with God's help, I know we will together engage in the transformative and life-giving mission entrusted to us. What a blessing, challenge, and privilege!

Jill:

This move is bittersweet for me as our family leaves behind a beloved community at La Capilla and the larger community. But, I am excited and open to this experience changing our lives. Particularly at this point in our



family's life, I welcome the opportunity to live internationally and as part of a diverse community that is engaging the justice issues of our day. While I have lived and worked in Colombia and Mexico, it will be a new challenge for me to gracefully transition our daughter, Aja, to a new country and culture. Professionally, I have worked with environmental and social justice non-profits and teaching English to the immigrant community in North Carolina. During our first months at St. Paul's, I will be focused on getting our daughter settled into school and a new sense of "normal," supporting my husband in his new ministry, learning a new language, navigating a new city, and of course—welcoming all of you into our lives. Your suggestions and support during this time of transition will be appreciated!

Aja:

I will miss playing with my dog (who will be re-homed). I am about to turn 5 years old. I love school. Right now I go to school in Spanish. I look forward to meeting new friends! Pace e bene

Haiti – Two Years Later

January 12, 2012
Port au Prince, Haiti

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Haiti in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we transition from Advent season and welcome 2012, it is an apt time to remark new beginnings. We are pleased to be celebrating many new beginnings in the Diocese of Haiti. This year we do this while evaluating progress in light of the two-year anniversary of the devastating 2010 earthquake.

The earthquake of 2010 will be fixed in our national consciousness for decades to come and has thus been integrated into the national vernacular. When referring to events, Haitians almost always specify whether it occurred 'before or after the Twelfth'.

We are thankful this year, and always, to be a part of the World Wide Anglican Communion. The support within our Church continues to gain momentum even while the catastrophe fades out of international consideration.

On behalf of the Diocese of Haiti, I thank you for supporting the rebuilding of the Holy Trinity Cathedral. The Cathedral is the center of worship for Diocese of Haiti. We are pleased to state that the Request for Proposals to rebuild the Cathedral has been issued and the international team charged with rebuilding Holy Trinity will soon choose among the proposals a firm to design and build the new house of worship. We count on continued support to complete the project. The rebuilding of the Cathedral will be a victory for the Anglican Communion and the downtown Port au Prince renaissance. We appreciate all of you who participate.

Thank you also for your steadfast support of the Diocese of Haiti's diverse ministries. Individuals from a wide variety of backgrounds met us in Haiti and offered their gifts, talents, and resources. Many more offer their significant support from their homes. Thank you for giving of yourselves for the benefit of your brothers and sisters in Haiti. Despite the continued challenges of insecurity, limited access to clean water, and inflated prices, all Diocesan institutions are functioning albeit in temporary structures made mostly of plywood and corrugated metal. We look forward to moving all of these institutions into permanent appropriate structures. We look forward also to increasing the community development programs of the Diocese such as micro-credit loans and technical education to insure ourselves for the challenges to come. Together we are moving from the relief stage of recovery into a steady pace striding into a better future.

In March, the Diocese of Haiti welcomed a Chief Operating Officer, Mr. Sikhumbuzo Vundla. Mr. Vundla works closely with Diocesan leadership to facilitate the reconstruction process. The Diocese benefits from his knowledge and experience.

This Fall, the Diocese of Haiti elected Rev. Canon, Ogé Beauvoir as Bishop Suffragan to serve in the North. This is an important step in a plan to decentralize and reorganize. The Bishop Suffragan will share leadership duties with the Diocesan Bishop increasing the capacities of all Diocesan ministries.

The potential of what has begun in 2011 adds fuel to the fires of hope and resilience. We are elated to realize tangible advancements. We have many positive things to celebrate 'after the twelfth'. Our joy multiplies knowing that it is shared with so many brothers and sisters around the world.

God's Peace to you and your families at the commencement of a new year. Please know that each one of you is remembered in the prayers of your Haitian friends. May God bless each and every one of you in all of your endeavors this year.

In Christ,

The Right Reverend J. Zaché Duracin
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti

Are You Among the Leaders?

From the Episcopal Foundation's Haiti Appeal at <http://archive.episcopalchurch.org/HaitiAppeal/>

Thank you to the parishes, schools, organizations and dioceses that have already joined together to Rebuild Our Church in Haiti. Brick by brick, you are laying the foundation for a new beginning.

- The Diocese of Albany
The Diocese of Albany*, Albany, New York
- The Diocese of Central New York
St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Afton, New York
St. David's Episcopal Church, Barneveld, New York
St. James' Episcopal Church, Skaneateles, New York
St. John's Episcopal Church, Ithaca, New York
St. John's Episcopal Church, Oneida, New York
St. John's Episcopal Church, Whitesboro, New York
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Chenango Bridge, New York
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Port Leyden, New York
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Oxford, New York
The Diocese of Central New York, Syracuse, New York
Trinity Episcopal Church, Fayetteville, New York
Trinity Episcopal Church, Constantia, New York
Zion Episcopal Church, Greene, New York
- The Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe
American Cathedral in Paris, Paris, France
Church of Christ the King, Frankfurt, Germany
Church of Scotland, Geneva, Switzerland
Church of St. Augustine of Canterbury, Wiesbaden, Germany
Church of the Ascension, Munich, Germany
Convocation of American Churches in Europe*, Paris, France
Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Geneva, Switzerland
Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Geneva, Switzerland
Mission Saint Emmanuel de Rennes (UCAE), Rennes, France
Protestant Church of Geneva, Geneva, Switzerland
St. Germain Old Catholic Church, Geneva, Switzerland
St. James Episcopal Church, Florence, Italy
St. Michael's Church, Paris, France
- The Diocese of Long Island
Cathedral of the Incarnation, Garden City, New York
Christ Church Oyster Bay, Oyster Bay, New York
Church of St. Margaret, Plainview, New York
The Diocese of Long Island*, Garden City, New York
St. Bede's Episcopal Church, Syosset, New York
St. George's Episcopal Church, Astoria, New York
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Flatbush, Brooklyn, New York
- Diocese of Newark
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Hope, New Jersey

- The Diocese of New Jersey
 - Church of the Holy Cross, North Plainfield, New Jersey
 - The Diocese of New Jersey, Trenton, New Jersey
 - St. David's Episcopal Church, Cranbury, New Jersey
 - St. Francis Episcopal Church, Dunellen, New Jersey
 - St. James Episcopal Church, Eatontown, New Jersey
 - St. John's Episcopal Church, Maple Shade, New Jersey
 - St. John's Episcopal Church, Somerville, New Jersey
 - St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Trenton, New Jersey
 - Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Trenton, New Jersey
- The Diocese of New York
 - Church of the Incarnation, New York, New York
 - Church of the Intercession, New York, New York
 - Congregation of St. Saviour, New York, New York
 - The Diocese of New York*, New York, New York
 - Grace Episcopal Church, Millbrook, New York
 - St. James Episcopal Church, New York, New York
 - St. Mary's Church – Manhattanville, New York, New York
 - St. Philip's Episcopal Church – Harlem, New York, New York
 - Trinity Wall Street, New York, New York
- The Diocese of Rochester
 - Church of the Good Shepherd, Savona, New York
 - The Diocese of Rochester, Rochester, New York
 - St. James Episcopal Church, Hammondsport, New York
 - St. James Episcopal Church, Watkins Glen, New York
 - St. John's Episcopal Church, Honeoye Falls, New York
- The Diocese of Virgin Islands
 - The Diocese of Virgin Islands*, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
- The Diocese of Western New York
 - Calvary Episcopal Church, Williamsville, New York
 - The Diocese of Western New York*, Tonawanda, New York

Who Cares For The Caregiver?

from the website of the [Diocese of Long Island](#) and www.caringforthecaregiver.org



Caring For The Caregiver, a ministry of St. Bede's, Syosset, will hold its first Caregivers' Fair for 2012 at Winthrop Hospital on Wednesday, January 25th from 7:00-8:30 pm.

The Keynote speakers will be the Rev. Greg Johnson, Director of Care For The Family Caregiver for Emblem Health and Craig Jennings, Creator of the **Caring For The Caregiver** program. This is the first of ten new Caregivers' Fairs and Seminars planned for this year.

In over 3 of every 10 households, at least one of the members is a Caregiver. In the USA today, there are 34 million of them. Over half are women, many are children! They're looking after someone who can't fully take care of himself or herself. In some cases, it's a temporary disability. In other cases, it's a progressive disability, like Alzheimer's. In many, it is terminal. And in almost every case, the Caregiver makes a huge and commendable effort looking after the care-receiver. Caregivers are

magnificent and generous people, but they stubbornly look after themselves last, very much to their detriment.

The **Caring For The Caregiver** Program.

1. The Caregiver's Fair.

Working with local organizations and church groups, all the members of the community are invited to the Caregiver's Fair. There have been three such events over the last 3 years. Last April, there were 82 attendees at the Caregiver's Fair at St. Bede's Episcopal Church in Syosset, NY. The excitement was tremendous, the

evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, and many Caregivers left with a new awareness of their life choices, and a copy of the Caregiver's Bill of Rights.

2. The Caring Circle.

Twice a month since then, local caregivers have met in Syosset Long Island for an evening to discuss their care-giving experiences. Caregivers discover that they can discuss and be understood about issues they could express at no other place. Admission to the group is restricted to caregivers only. And even the trained facilitator must have been or be a Caregiver. At the end of the meeting, members are encouraged to consider or take an action, and report back at the next meeting. Over time, the group members move slowly from being victims of their own generosity to taking care of their own well-being while they develop skill and efficiency as Caregivers.

Caring For The Caregiver currently has 12 meetings monthly at the following locations: St. Bede's, Syosset, Grace Church, Massapequa, The Reformed Church, Massapequa, St. Thomas of Canterbury, Smithtown, Caroline Church, E. Setauket.

For meeting times and program information please call 516-921-0755; e-mail info@caringforthecaregiver.org or visit our website: www.caringforthecaregiver.org.

Special Convention to Continue Focus on Mission in the Diocese of Newark

based on the information on the Diocese of [Newark's website](http://www.newarkdiocese.org)



With The Episcopal Church's senior officer for ministry redevelopment as guest preacher at the opening Eucharist, the 138th Annual Diocesan Convention will launch a diocese-wide focus on mission issues under the theme *Living Into Christ's Mission*. The Rev. Thomas L. Brackett, Officer for Church Planting and Ministry Redevelopment at the Episcopal Church Center in Manhattan, will be the guest preacher at the opening Eucharist. Brackett has been a passionate advocate of lively communities of faith for his 27 years of ordained life.

The regularly scheduled annual convention will not allow for enough time to focus on mission as well as on the usual business. Thus, a Special Convention on June 9, 2012 will continue the work started at the January Annual Convention, providing an opportunity to take a closer look at how the diocese and congregations are structured for mission. The health insurance mandate is among the items to be discussed.

Two new groups to report on mission issues

At the Annual Convention in January, Bishop Beckwith will introduce two new groups tasked with focusing on issues of mission strategy and stewardship.

One is the **Mission Strategy team**, whose members will be trained to work with churches as congregational coaches on mission strategy by the Rev. Thomas L. Brackett, Officer for Church Planting and Ministry Redevelopment at the Episcopal Church Center in Manhattan.

The second is a **subcommittee of the Budget and Finance Committee**, which will consider what resources are necessary and available to fund our common mission over the next three years.

Each of these groups will make an interim presentation at the June Special Convention.

March conversations planned to prepare for health insurance mandate

Among the mission-related stewardship issues to be discussed will be compliance with Resolution A177, known as the Denominational Health Plan. Adopted at General Convention 2009 with an implementation deadline of January 1, 2013, A177 requires parity of health insurance benefits provided to all clergy and lay employees who work 1500 hours per year in our congregations and Episcopal organizations.

Although Resolution A177 applies to all congregations and diocesan offices, each diocese has the flexibility to determine if associated entities such as preschools and CDCs must comply, as well as the minimum benefit to be provided by all eligible employers.

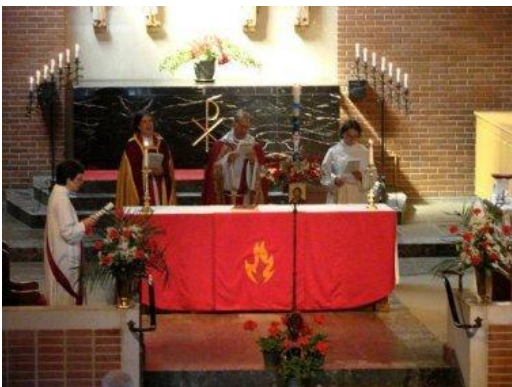
According to Linda Curtiss, chair of the Bishop's Human Resources Advisory Committee, "Our dilemma is to develop a policy which is fair to all – clergy, lay employees, and congregations – and which is affordable and sustainable – a difficult goal in the area of health insurance today."

In an effort to develop a recommendation for the diocese to consider at its June Convention, the committee is working on proposals to be discussed with clergy, lay employees, and congregational leaders during the month of March. Dates for these conversations will be announced shortly.

A related resolution, A138, requires all churches, dioceses, and other Episcopal organizations to provide retirement benefits to lay employees who work 1000 hours in a year, also by January 1, 2013. This simply codifies into canon law a provision that has been mandatory since 1993 and will be discussed at the January Convention.

Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mercerville, NJ Featured in ECF Vital Practices

from the ECF website and Susan Richardson, Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mercerville, NJ



A Parish Video Invites Relationship

Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Mercerville, NJ, in the Diocese of NJ, welcomed people on the website by sharing their stories and inviting new ones. But how to do that in a few sound bytes? When they decided to create a video welcoming seekers who came to the website, they decided the best way was to get straight to the point: Members would say "I am...." and then add one or two words that suggested the real life, and the real life of faith, that lay behind the words. Halfway through the video, we switch to "You are....," suggesting the range of inclusivity embraced by the parish, and leaving it open for the seeker to come along and "fill in their own blank." The nicest part? - finding the wonderful music of Tara Ward,

Church of the Beloved in Washington State, using her version of "Amazing Grace" to pick up on the theme of grace, in the church's name and in the people there.

Check out Grace-St.Paul's website at <http://www.gracestpaul.org>. See the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIV1kAegeb4&feature=youtu.be>

The Episcopal Church Foundation, ECF, is an independent, lay-led organization that helps congregations and other Episcopal groups develop leadership and raise resources for ministry.



Some of their ministries include Vital Practices, the Fellowship Partners Program, The Vestry Resource Guide, Annual Giving & Stewardship Services, Capital Campaign Services, Planned Giving, and Endowment Management Services.

ECF Vital Practices offers vestry members and other people of faith, resources and tools to respond to the changing needs of the Church. Building upon the spiritually grounded, practical Vestry Papers articles that have inspired and informed vestry members since 1995, Vital Practices uses the Internet to both expand its offering and its audience.

Vital Practices explores new ways of supporting congregations by building online communities of Episcopalians who share their stories, experiences, and best practices, who learn from one another, and who discover support to help sustain their leadership and their ministries. It includes articles by experts and peers, blogs for sharing ideas about faith and leadership, stories about real life lessons of change and leadership, tools for stewardship, communications, and opportunities for you to share your stories and examples.

Episcopal Charities Celebrates 15 Years

from the website of the [Diocese of New York](#) and [Episcopal Charities](#)

Episcopal Charities, the outreach arm of the Diocese of New York, provides funding and support to parish-based programs serving children and adults in need on a non-sectarian basis.

In December 1996 Episcopal Charities was incorporated to begin its work as the outreach arm of the Diocese of New York. December 2011 marks the beginning of a year of celebration of this organization and the programs it funds. On a rainy day in October 2011, several leaders of Episcopal Charities gathered to remember the beginnings of the organization, and dream about its future.



In 2011, 42 outreach programs received a total of \$383,500 in support. An average grant was \$9,130. These outreach programs address a wide range of needs throughout the Diocese.

Cognizant of the impact that the struggling economy continues to have on those most in need, the programs that Episcopal Charities supports in this grant cycle emphasize the provision of direct services addressing essential life services, and include the following emphases: addiction/recovery, aging/eldercare, English as a second language, adult literacy and immigrant services, feeding, HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and community re-integration and re-entry assistance for the formerly incarcerated.

Addiction and Recovery: Recovery from alcohol and drug addiction is an ongoing process. Once a person has stopped using a particular substance, the process of learning to cope with life's daily stresses and developing strategies to deal with the challenges that arise is important in maintaining recovery and preventing relapse. A support system during this time is critical.

Aging and Eldercare: Home delivered meals and adequate medical follow up has grown in importance over the past decade in helping more seniors live at home while recovering from illness and when impaired by chronic conditions threatening their independence. Adequate and appropriate diets are an essential component of preventing and fighting many illnesses and chronic diseases and conditions, many which are among the leading causes of death and disability of seniors. Seniors suffering from heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and osteoporosis are among those chronic illnesses and conditions associated with nutrition and frequently recognized as high risks when diets are inadequate or routine medical appointments are not kept.

English as Second Language and Immigrant Services: The purpose of providing instruction in English as a second language is to allow those who speak little or no English, such as new immigrants to the Diocese, to enhance their quality of life. The goal of these programs is to improve the work environment and the student's participation in basic ordinary situations such as communicating more effectively during visits to health appointments, government agencies, and other work and social situations. Providing immigrants with referrals to government services as well as assistance with job applications and placement is related to the welcome we offer those new to our country.

Feeding: The increasing cost of food and the overall economic decline has only exacerbated the experience of those living with food insecurity. The Hunger Action Network of New York State reports that the number of families in New York participating in the federal food stamp program was 2,874,189 in August 2010, up 14.5% since August 2009. In 2009 one in eight households in New York State was classified as "food insecure," meaning that these households could not afford an adequate supply of food, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics (collected every three years). This is a 26.5% increase from the average rate of food insecurity in 2006.

The feeding programs receiving financial support from Episcopal Charities have demonstrated their commitment to providing food and services to the growing numbers of those lining up their doors for assistance. They continued to address the root causes of poverty by offering various services in addition to food; these services range from provision of a referral list to social service providers, entitlement counseling for community resources, and basic medical check-ups and referral assistance as well as shower facilities for guests attending a meal program.

HIV and AIDS: People living with HIV/AIDS live with the virus—and require support services—for extended periods of time. Several parish outreach programs provide informed, sensitive and compassionate responses to those affected by the disease, as well as providing the necessities of daily life or educating at-risk populations about prevention.

Homelessness: The hardships faced by those living on the streets or in constant search for shelter are overwhelming. This year, Episcopal Charities supports a program bringing shelter, clothing and necessities to the homeless of New York City, as well as a program that provides rental assistance to those who otherwise might lose their homes.

Prison Community re-integration and re-entry assistance: Many prisoners released in New York leave prison with little more than the clothes on their backs and a box full of legal papers. Those with no family to welcome them home have many needs that compete for their limited resources including housing, clothing, food, and job-seeking expenses. Even those with family members waiting for their return face the stresses of reintegration into family life and society.

About two-thirds of former inmates from state prisons are re-arrested within three years and most of those are rearrested in the first year. Success rates dramatically increase for former inmates who have positive support systems. Providing prisoners with pre-release support, and ex-prisoners with guidance and support immediately after their release is critical.

A Well for Kongogo

A Project started by The Rev. Dahn Gandell, St. John's Episcopal Church, Diocese of Rochester

Kongogo is a village in Tanzania with 6,000 people, 4,000 cows and goats and no clean water source.



Water4Kongogo <<http://www.water4kongogo.com/>> has a mission to provide the village of Kongogo with a well that will give the people living there a long-term source of fresh water. It will cost \$25,000 to drill a well in Kongogo.

A well will change lives by:

- Reducing illness and increasing lifespans
- Increasing food supplies with water for farming
- Providing a separate source of water for people and livestock
- Improving sanitary conditions and reduce poverty

The Rev. Dahn Gandell, Rector at [St. John's Episcopal Church](#) in Honeoye Falls, NY, was inspired to launch the Water4Kongogo

after a recent visit to the Tanzanian village. She was there in support of [Carpenter's Kids](#), a program that brings education to kids who have been orphaned by the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

When she returned, Mother Dahn's heart was heavy with the need for a well in Kongogo. On a tour of the village she saw shallow water holes that served as a water source for people and livestock. It was terrible to think of the young lives that had been cut short over the years without a source of clean water.



Within a few short months Mother Dahn had initiated a [groundwater survey](#) to find a location to dig a borehole well in Kongogo. A location was found and now she's on a mission to raise the \$25,000 needed to dig the well. It is hoped that construction can be started soon in 2012 and that the well will be running by Mother Dahn's visit, which is planned for July of 2012.



You can read more about Mother Dahn and her Tanzanian projects at http://www.water4kongogo.com/uploads/Kongogo_Needs_a_Well.pdf

Worship Where It Is Warm

with help from Wikipedia and the Diocese of the VI website

Most of Province II is in the northeast region of the continental US. This is the time of year when we see temperatures like the ones today – Trenton, NJ, 40° and foggy, Buffalo, NY, 42° and raining, Albany, NY, 33° and raining, Syracuse, NY, 47° and cloudy, New York, NY 39° and foggy, Geneva, Switzerland, 46° and cloudy, Frankfurt, Germany 34° and clear. Even Rome is only 57°. But St. Croix and St. Thomas, VI are both enjoying 75° weather and it is 84° in Port au Prince, Haiti. If you are lucky enough to be able to take a trip to the Virgin Islands to enjoy the warmth while the north is cold, enjoy the hospitality of the Province II churches in the islands.

In 1917 when the United States bought the Danish West Indies from Denmark, the three Anglican parishes and one mission on the islands were under the Anglican Bishop of Antigua who was part of the Diocese of Barbados.



The Presiding Bishop appointed the Bishop of Puerto Rico as bishop-in-charge of the new mission district. In 1962 the Right Rev. Cedric Mills was appointed Bishop of the Virgin Islands by the House of Bishops. He arrived in 1963 and assumed jurisdiction over all Anglican and Episcopal churches in the Virgin Islands. In 1972, the diocese was able to elect its own bishop. The Rt. Rev. Ambrose Gumbs, elected in 2005, is the fifth bishop of the

diocese.

Tortola in the British Virgin Islands has two Episcopal Churches, St. George's in Road Town and St. Paul's in Sea Cows Bay. [St. Mary the Virgin](#) is Virgin Gorda's congregation.



On the Island of St. Thomas is the Cathedral of All Saints, along with the school and the diocesan offices. In addition to the Cathedral, there are five other congregations around the island: St. Andrew's, St. Luke's, The Church of the Holy Spirit, [Nazareth by the Sea](#), and St. Ursula's. All of these worshipping congregations welcome the visitors from the north!



St. Croix also has five congregations. St. Peter's and St. John's are in Christiansted, [St. Paul's](#) is in Friedriksted, while Holy Cross and the San Francisco Mission are in the middle of the island.

Several of these congregations have a rich history. St. Paul's in Friedriksted has been worshipping as a community of faith at previous locations since the mid-1770s. The current location was deeded to them in 1812 by the colonial Danish Crown. The Rev. Ed Thompson, Secretary of Province II, is the rector at St. Paul's. Their website says:

Whether you are a "snow bird" coming down here and would like to find a place to worship, or you are a local looking for a spiritual home, it would be our honor and privilege to have you worship with us this Sunday.

Nazareth by the Sea, on the other hand, is an emerging congregation that had its beginnings in 2005, less than a decade ago!

When you plan your trip to the warm weather, be sure to check the diocesan website for locations and contact information for the churches in the islands: <http://www.episcopalvi.org/> .

Western New York's Blogging Bishop



The Rt. Rev. R. William Franklin, the eleventh bishop of the Diocese of Western New York, made the news when the *Buffalo News* ran a story entitled "Buffalo's Blogging Bishop", written by staff reporter, Anne Neville. Bishop Franklin is embracing the use of technology and social media, which is news today when established churches are often equated with museums.

Bishop Franklin has 894 Facebook friends, as well as a personal website, rwilliamfranklin.org. His longer pieces and video chats appear in jerusalem-crossing.com, a blog named after his pectoral cross.

The bishop was quoted as saying:

"My mission has been to break out of the academic environment and connect the richness of scholarship to people's needs," says Franklin. And in this he sees ancient inspiration. "Jesus used the latest methods of communication, he talked to people, he was on the road, he was constantly trying to spread his message. I'm very inspired by Jesus' model."

Read the whole article and find out about the short film in which he is the star! Go to

<http://www.buffalonews.com/city/article708288.ece>

Provincial Synod –Thursday and Friday, May 3 & 4, 2012

The Province II Synod meeting will be held at the Wolf Road Holiday Inn, Albany, NY. The plans will be finalized during the next two weeks and the February issue of the *In Prov 2* will be a focus issue devoted to the coming Synod meeting. All of the information will also be posted on the Province II website <http://www.province2.org>. The list of convention deputies and the tentative synod agenda are on the website now.

The plans include four workshops which will be presented twice, allowing all attendees to attend two:

- Denominational Health Plan - Presenters: Rose Lawson & Michael Macdonald
- Anglican Covenant - Presenter: Rosalie Ballentine
- Title IV - Presenter: Diane Sammons
- Same-Sex Blessing Issues – SCLM – Presenters: Sandye Wilson, Michael Hopkins & Mary Catherine Young

Ways of ministering to college students away from home

How does your parish church connect with college students away from home? Here are a few suggestions:

- 1) Start by taking notice of young adults (or their absence after high school) and keep a list of their names and contact information. Task a person to maintain this list and coordinate ministry. Include their names in the Prayers of the People.
- 2) Reach out and contact students on a regular basis by phone, letter, and e-mail. Send a care package. Take an interest in their lives and how they are living out their faith on campus - encourage them spiritually!
- 3) Add their school address to the mailing list for the parish newsletter: a decisive turning point for one young adult known to me was opening her school mailbox and reading the lead message in the parish newsletter from the rector. She then became involved in the Episcopal campus ministry at her state university, and is now in discernment for the priesthood!
- 4) Connect students to the chaplaincies serving their campus: For a list of Episcopal campus ministries in Province II (includes diocese in NJ and NY): <http://www.province2.org/campusministry.html>. Chaplains depend on referrals for names and contact information - they will gladly take the next step in reaching out their hands in invitation and welcome based on your referral.

What has worked in your church or in the lives of young adults known to you? Please share with us your suggestions for connecting with college students.

The Reverend Gregory Bezilla+
 Coordinator, Province 2 Higher Education Ministries Network
 Chaplain, The Episcopal Campus Ministry at Rutgers
 Canterbury House
 5 Mine St.
 New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1111
 Web: episcopal.rutgers.edu
 Office phone: 732.932.1278
 E-mail: bezilla@rci.rutgers.edu

Campus ministry is a visible witness for Christ and the face of the Episcopal Church

Also of Interest

From ENS: As we all get back into the swing of things this new year, I just want to remind you that ENS is here to help you get your copy in front of a larger audience. If you have news and or feature stories appropriate for the Top Stories or Churchwide sections, or well-written, thoughtful commentary pieces, please submit them to me at lwilson@episcopalchurch.org.

Also, keep in mind, now we have "Featured Jobs and Calls" and "Featured Events" boxes on the ENS homepage, where you can promote events or jobs/calls.

Lynette Wilson
 Editor/reporter
 Episcopal News Service
 815 Second Avenue
 New York, NY 10017
 Tel: [\(212\) 716-6166](tel:(212)716-6166)
 Mobile: [\(917\) 698-4772](tel:(917)698-4772)
 Email: lwilson@episcopalchurch.org

Noted authors Alan Jones and Margaret Guenther to lead conference on spirituality for life's second half

Feb. 27-29 event at Kanuga to explore aging as a time of joy and fruition

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. --- The second half of life is a time to wake up to what has been true all along: life with all of its ups and downs is a sheer gift.

The Very Rev. Dr. Alan Jones and the Rev. Margaret Guenther will explore that gift Feb. 27-29 when they keynote "[Encore! Spirituality for Life's Second Act](#)" at Kanuga Conferences.

A major Christian thinker and writer, Jones was the dean of Grace Cathedral in San Francisco from 1985 until 2009. Previously, he served as the Stephen F. Bayne Professor of Ascetical Theology and director and founder of the Center for Christian Spirituality at General Theological Seminary in New York. He is the author of many books on spirituality, including *Reimagining Christianity*, *Seasons of Grace* and *Soul-Making: The Desert Way of Spirituality*.

Guenther is a noted retreat leader, lecturer and author whose books include *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*, *Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life*, *At Home in the World: A Rule of Life for the Rest of Us* and her most recent book, *Walking Home: From Eden to Emmaus*. She serves as associate rector at St. Columba's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C., and is a professor emerita of ascetical theology at General Theological Seminary in New York, where she served for many years as director of the Center for Christian Spirituality.

The conference will focus on "living into the second half of life and living into all the challenges and the mysteries of it with joy and with some confidence," Guenther said.

"It excites me that we are becoming more and more aware of the spiritual aspects of the aging process," she said. "I am delighted to see this part of our life being looked at from the perspective of people of faith and people who are open to new insights and can see this as possibly a time of joy and fruition, not just diminishment."

The Rev. Jane Sigloh of Charlottesville, Va., author of *Like Trees Walking*, a book about the journey into the second half of life, will serve as chaplain. The conference is coordinated by the Rev. Dr. Joe Bowden, a retired doctor who volunteers as the part-time assisting priest at Church of the Holy Comforter in Martinez, Ga.

Affiliated with the Episcopal Church since 1928, Kanuga is a 1,400-acre camp and conference center in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Hendersonville, N.C. Financial aid and discounted rates for commuters are available. For more information, visit www.kanuga.org or call [828-692-9136](tel:828-692-9136).

Contact: Harmony Johnson, Communications Director
harmony.johnson@kanuga.org
[828-692-0077](tel:828-692-0077), ext. 265