



## Dismantling Racism Commission meets with First Nations group Plans training session for diocesan leadership

By Anne Clarke Brown

Members of the Diocese of Vermont Commission on Dismantling Racism devoted most of their January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to a conversation with representatives of Gedakina, a new organization based in Woodstock that uses a multigenerational approach to strengthen the cultural knowledge and identity of Eastern First Nations Peoples and to preserve traditional homelands and sacred places. Several individuals had approached commission members at last fall's Diocesan Convention to urge consideration of racism experienced by native peoples in Vermont.

Rick Pouliot, a member of Gedakina's governing council, and Stephanie Morgan, the executive director, spoke about the organization's mission, which includes plans for a year-round residential Youth Learning Center and a Land Preservation Trust as well as educational programs to raise awareness and dispel myths and stereotypes about Eastern First Nations cultures.

### Abenaki experience

A Meganticquois and Abenaki and member of the Bear Clan, Pouliot gave commission members a primer on terminology and a brief history of the Abenaki, focusing particularly on issues of identity and federal recognition. Pouliot noted that there are over 600 groups of native peoples in North America, who had historically dealt with each other and with governments as nations, hence the term, "First Nations Peoples." The US Government used the term, "tribes," because they claimed there could not be na-

tions within a nation. For Pouliot, this gives a sense of less organization and represents just one of many ways the dignity of native peoples is diminished.

"History has not been kind to [the Abenaki]," he said, "because we chose the losing side" [the French]. Unlike other First Nations peoples, the Abenaki did not receive land settlements, and they were discouraged from organizing governmental structures because bounties offered by the British at the conclusion of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century French and Indian War were never revoked. The lack of a tradition of land ownership and the inability to show history of tribal government have mitigated against federal recognition of the Abenaki, primarily a network of family bands, as a tribe.

Unlike some other Abenaki, Pouliot is opposed to federal recognition, because, he said, "it creates welfare states." In addition, he said the history of native land claims in the Northeast has not been positive. The funds granted have gone to buy the land back from "the people—the paper companies—who stole it in the first place," and the claimants are required to sign away the right to subsist on the land—a right that enables First Nations Peoples to hunt and fish on most federal lands, irrespective of prohibitions that apply to others. Neither does Pouliot see a future in casinos. "Most Indian casinos are not making profits." Rather, he said, "What native communities need is long-term economic development."

In response to a question about discrimination in Vermont schools, Pouliot said there is a "huge problem of racism in the



ACB photo

Rick Pouliot and Stephanie Morgan of Gedakina discuss their work with members of the Commission on Dismantling Racism.

state, particularly in the Northwest." Stereotyping is a big issue, and he said Gedakina is trying to identify native young people and provide them with a cultural education.

### Gedakina programs

Gedakina's programs, said Pouliot, are for "people learning about their culture and identity and not about profiting from them." The all-volunteer organization is, he said, "trying to break the cycle of wanting to get things for free. In most communities, the number one employer is tribal government. We want to create employment training for native youth," he said, "and create businesses that can employ them."

In April, Gedakina will hold Sacred Healing and Cleansing Fires throughout Vermont in conjunction with Sexual Violence Awareness Month. The fires will offer a healing space for survivors of sexual violence and bring people together in friendship and solidarity. Gedakina will also sponsor a Native American Art Show, featuring well-known, juried Native American artists, May 22-23 at the Masonic Temple in Woodstock. The weekend's activities will include artist demonstrations, children's workshops, and an evening reception.

Stephanie Morgan, who identifies as white, spoke about Gedakina's intention to develop and cultivate "ally relationships" with anti-racist white people and other people of color. She offered "some preliminary guidelines" for those who wish to be allies with First Nations Peoples and resources for learning about First Nations' issues and histories.

Commission members agreed that the conversation had been very helpful and plan to continue communication and collaboration with Gedakina.

### Dismantling Racism Training

In response to the 2000 General Convention Resolution B049 requiring anti-racism training for ordained persons, professional staff, and those in leadership positions, as well as to the Diocese of Vermont's 2002 "Resolution to Dismantle Racism," clergy and diocesan leadership will be asked by Bishop Ely to attend an all-day dismantling racism training session. The training, sponsored by the commission, will be offered on three consecutive days (April 1, 2 and 3) at different locations in the diocese. Trainers will be the Rt. Rev. Stewart Wood, Margie Zabriske, and Naima K. Wade, all of whom have received extensive training at the national level.

## Sow and grow new skills at Province One stewardship and evangelism conference

by Anne Clarke Brown

The popular Province One annual stewardship and evangelism event, scheduled this year for March 26-28, at the Wyndham Hotel in Westborough, Massachusetts, will explore the theme, "Sowing and Growing: Seeds of Change in Stewardship, Evangelism and Parish Development." Keynote speakers are the Most Rev. Michael Peers, retired Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, the Rt. Rev. Roy F. Cederholm, Jr., Bishop Suffragan of Massachusetts, and the Rev. Ben Helmer, Missioner for Rural and Small Communities Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center.

Participants will divide into four groups for Friday workshop sessions on the fundamentals of stewardship, evangelism, congregational development and planned giving, with the goal of laying the foundation for effective congregational programs.

Saturday workshops will be based on

congregation size, with separate workshops for small, medium and large congregations. Participants will examine how each size has its own unique characteristics and attributes; explore with other congregations of like size how stewardship, evangelism and congregational development are intertwined in the life of the congregation; and discover how these ministries support each other in the life and mission of the church.

Mark MacGougan, a liturgical comedian from Hartford, Connecticut, will provide entertainment at Saturday's banquet. He performs church-related stand-up comedy and has appeared at various Episcopal churches and diocesan clergy conferences.

After a second address by Archbishop Peers, the conference will conclude Sunday morning with a Eucharist celebrated by the archbishop. Angela Emerson, an attorney and now student at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in

Austin, Texas, will preach.

The reservation deadline is March 4.

Conference planners note that in just four years, attendance has grown from 160 to more than 300 participants, and last year's conference sold out.

The conference fee—before January 31 is \$150, and after, \$175—includes registration materials and meals Saturday morning through Sunday morning. The conference rate at the Wyndham Westborough Hotel is \$70 per night for a single and \$80 per night for a double. Congregations are encouraged to send teams to the conference.

For questions on conference registration contact Judith Barnes, 603-224-1914, or jbinnh@juno.com. The conference brochure may be downloaded as a PDF file (readable with Acrobat Reader) from [www.diomaine.org/province1.htm](http://www.diomaine.org/province1.htm). ❖



# Affordable housing shortage hurts people, families and communities

by the Right Reverend Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop of Vermont

"I feel like my hometown has become a Country Club and I can't afford the admission price." Those painful words from the lips of a native Vermonter go to the heart of the housing shortage crisis we face in Vermont. They are also the last words on a video presentation produced by the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign, a resource that I highly recommend to you.

I have lived in Vermont for three years now, and I am blessed with a wonderful house that has truly become home for Ann and me. Many Vermonters—and many Vermonters in our congregations—are equally fortunate, but many are not. There is an affordable housing shortage crisis in Vermont, and the good news is that plenty of folks in Vermont are trying to do something about it. I believe the Episcopal Church needs to be part of that effort. Some of us already are! My hope is that more and more of us will get involved as part of our baptismal commitment to seek and serve Christ in all persons, to strive for justice among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

Here is some information I have gleaned about the reality, especially through my contact with John Fairbanks from the Vermont Housing and Finance Agency:

- Housing costs are soaring—the median price of a home in Vermont has jumped 53% since 1996, and 10% between 2002-2003 alone. It is now \$149,000.

- The average home sales price in Vermont in 2003 was almost twice the median—\$287,000. So we aren't building "starter homes;" we're building high-end homes.

- Only 6% of the new homes sold in Vermont in 2003 were within reach of a Vermont household making the state's median income.

- Since 1996, the Fair Market Rent for a modest two-bedroom apartment has

gone up 28%. It's now \$717 a month. Meanwhile, Vermonters' wages have not kept pace, increasing about 20 percent.

- Vermont's "housing wage"—the amount of money a household needs to earn to afford the fair market rent while working 40 hours a week and paying no more than 30 percent of income for housing—is up to \$13.78 per hour.

- Sixty-one percent of Vermont workers—about 156,000 people—are working in jobs whose median wages are below the "housing wage" of \$13.78 per hour. This, of course, includes a lot of people we depend on for basic goods and services, including EMTs, store clerks, childcare workers, secretaries, cooks, farm workers. I have personally seen and felt the impact of this reality as I have watched my youngest daughter struggle to make ends meet, pay the rent and still have a life, with her full time day care job (sometimes two jobs).

- As a consequence of this gap between housing costs and wages, 49% of Vermont households who rent pay more than 30% of their income for rent. This also means that thousands of Vermonters who once could have afforded a starter home now can't. And homelessness continues to plague us. Most disturbingly, the largest increase in the homeless population in Vermont is families with children, and many of these families are working. They just don't earn enough to afford to keep a roof over their heads.

The reasons why people of faith should care about this crisis are familiar ones to you, for they go to the heart of our values.

Housing is a basic need, and providing basic needs is a community responsibility. The Church and its ministry are an extension of Christ's love and concern that none are left out. Whenever we encounter the reality that some among us are lacking in basic needs, the words of Jesus ring in my ears with power and passion: "Whoever you do to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, that you do unto me."

A housing shortage hurts people and it hurts families. What's more, it hurts communities, undermining their diversity as well as their social and economic vitality. People of faith know that we are inextricably bound to one another as members of God's whole human family. "Whenever one suffers, all suffer." Justice and the dignity of every human being are values for people of faith.

Those in our state who are seeking to address this crisis need the ethical voice that people of faith bring to matters of human dignity and justice. I am trying to lend mine and I hope you will be inspired to lend yours.

Copies of the video produced by the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign were available for each of our congregations at Diocesan Convention in CD-Rom format. If your congregation did not

*"Those in our state who are seeking to address this crisis need the ethical voice that people of faith bring to matters of human dignity and justice."*



receive its copy, please call the Diocesan Office and we'll send it to you. It makes for a great discussion starter for a Sunday Adult Forum.

For more information about this matter and to connect yourself and your congregation to this important issue, please be in touch with me or visit the Vermont Housing Awareness Campaign website: [www.housingawareness.org](http://www.housingawareness.org). There you will find housing facts about your area of Vermont and many ways that you can help make a difference. You can even watch the video if you have Windows Media Player. This is a true partnership of the public and private sector and it is an effort worthy of our time, talent and treasure.

Thanks for thinking about this and for all the many ways you keep reminding me and showing me that people of faith can and do make a difference.

Faithfully,

+ Thomas

## Views from the Frontier by Martha Holden

I am bounding over the snow-covered back roads, my eyes on the scenery, the road, anywhere but the car clock. I am on my way to a noonday service, I could be late, and I am engaged in an experiment. I am testing my theory that my anxiety constricts resources and that being in the peace of God relaxes them to their natural sufficiency.

If I am constricted, I hypothesize, resources such as time become constricted. There may not be enough. If I am relaxed, however, time itself will be able to relax and there will be enough. So the theory goes. And I know myself. If I look at the clock I will get ensnared by anxiety. So I keep my eyes away from the clock and do what I can to rest in the soft sweet center of my thorax, the place where I feel God's peace and my gratitude for it, the place from which resources may relax.

I hold this theory of the elasticity of resources lightly. The on-going requirement of the experiment that I be at that center of grateful peace requires such lightness. I do not mind. I like being there. It is there that I experience the blossoming that can happen, times when grace flows like warm honey filling out and swaddling the events of my life, times when energy, time and supply billow into plenty against all

conventional logic. As the car dips toward the river valley I come to the conclusion, for not the first time, that these times may be hints of how it might be, how it could be, in the state we call the Kingdom of God. I come to the conclusion, for not the first time, that this is what Jesus was talking about, what he was and is trying to teach us.

Theorizing seduces me away from practice. As I turn into the alley to the church lot there is a slow driver ahead of me and I yowl with rage. And then lighten with joy at being so deftly humbled, so neatly called back out of my theorizing, back to the challenges of incarnation. I remember that this is not only an experiment, it is also a practice and a discipline. This business of resting gratefully, peacefully in God is like learning to walk a slack wire. Fortunately in this case the wire is only inches off the ground. When I fall nothing is hurt but my pride.

Nothing is hurt on the courthouse tells me that I am in plenty of time. Freed from anxiety about tardiness, I realize that I am at risk of seeing how many errands I can run before the service begins. O dear. I must like the buzz of adrenalin that I

Continued on Page C

### The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

The Right Reverend Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop

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## Ask Sr. Bible Person

Do you have questions about the Bible?

If so, ask Sr. Bible Person and get the answers!

[Editor's Note: Last month, Stuart Halladay from Brattleboro, asked a question about Psalm 23:5b ("Thou anointest my head with oil..." KJV). The following letter came in response to Sr. Bible Person's reply to Mr. Halladay.]

Dear Sr. Bible Person:

I think the Stuart Halladay letter is quite interesting. I read a book that supports his theory about the application of oil to the sheep's head. The book does not imply the anointing of the sheep's head with oil protected the sheep from snakes. Rather, it explained why the shepherd would anoint the sheep's head and nasal passage as a protection from scabs and the summer flies.

The book is *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, by W. Phillip Keller, published by Zondervan Publishing House ([www.zondervan.com](http://www.zondervan.com)).

The treatise covers the travels of a shepherd in the course of caring and raising sheep in Africa. It is an interesting story, one that embraces another mode of consciousness, a shepherd's life, in relation to the Twenty-Third Psalm. It is an expression of the author's love of Christ. The story is an inspiration of the power of Christ's love for all who trust him.

Arthur W. Susmann  
Rutland, Vermont

Dear Mr. Susmann:

I very much appreciate your calling our attention to the book by W. Phillip Keller. I do not own a copy of the book, but I have perused it a bit on several occasions when I have seen it in a bookstore or in a parish library. I have great respect for Mr. Keller's experiences as a shepherd and I applaud anyone who endeavors to write about their relationship with Jesus the Christ. I wish more people would try to do that.

I don't recall reading Mr. Keller's specific description of the oil that a shepherd might use to soothe a sheep's scabby skin. If you have the book, I would appreciate

it if you could copy that description and send it to me by way of the Editor. However, regardless of any shepherd's custom of using oil on sheep, I still maintain, as I did in last month's column, that Psalm 23:5-6 does **not** invoke sheep images. It seems clear to me that those two verses from the beloved 23rd Psalm invoke very human images taken from customs associated with Middle Eastern hospitality.

Maybe the same oil that a shepherd used for anointing a sheep's dry skin was also used to anoint the hot and dry skin of a dinner guest, but I find it hard to believe that a shepherd in ancient Israel would seat his/her sheep at a table and then give them drinks of water from a cup ("Thou preparest a table before...me my cup runneth over." KJV). Possibly I am too much of a skeptic on this matter, but I just don't see those shepherds from long ago engaging in this kind of Martha Stewartesque feeding custom with their animals!

You definitely have piqued my curiosity about Mr. Keller and I am looking again at the one book of his that I do own: *Rabboni* (which is Mr. Keller's imaginative description of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus). As I page through it quickly, I am especially intrigued by the chapter on Jesus' "formative years" and am impressed that Mr. Keller could write eight pages about these years, in spite of the fact that there is no historical evidence to support most of his descriptions. We may want to revisit this book in the future and see just what Mr. Keller specifically imagines.

In the meantime, thank you for reminding me of this interesting book about shepherding and how one author interprets Psalm 23. Right now I am wondering if that ancient sheep oil used in the blistering heat of the Holy Land would also be useful in Vermont in cases of frostbite!

Do you have a question about the Bible? Send it in care of the editor (address below).

## Views from the Frontier

could get by seeing how much of my agenda I could load onto the time that grace has made available. I may like the adrenalin buzz, but I prefer the blossoming of grace. So I return my focus to my walk on the slack wire, grateful, peaceful, finding and feeling the presence of grace and the quality of its movement. There is enough, I know, there is always enough, and there is even plenty. But there is never a surplus. So whether I might feel that there is not enough or that there is more than enough, I want to stay balanced at the center of peaceful, grateful presence to God. I want to stay alive to the grace there and let that grace lead me.

As I get out of the car and walk prayerfully over to the bank I realize how much I enjoy this experiment and its discipline. I like unhooking from adrenalin. And I like practicing the joy of being present to God in every circumstance. And most of all I enjoy how this practice, this resting

in the circumcision of my heart, draws me through my life, hinting at the Kingdom of God. I enjoy it. I think I shall continue. Amen.

Martha Holden is associated with the Christian Meditation Center at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington.

Continued from Page B

## MOUNTAIN ECHO

News of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

Anne Clarke Brown, Editor

Contributions of news and photographs are invited and encouraged

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## Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor (300 words or fewer) and Opinion articles are welcome and encouraged on any relevant topic. Did something in an article inspire you, aggravate you, or move you in some way? Share your reactions with other readers. Letters must have a name and phone number or email address so I can check details, if necessary. Anonymous letters will not be printed, but names may be withheld upon request. Submissions may be edited for reasons of space.

Anne Clarke Brown, Editor, Mountain Echo

## Editorial

### Is there an Anglican tradition?

by Anne Clarke Brown

Precipitated by disagreements over issues of human sexuality, the worldwide Anglican Communion, a "family" of 38 autonomous geographical provinces encompassing 161 countries, with over 70 million members, today faces the danger of schism. Tensions over the authority and interpretation of scripture, the authority of bishops and institutions, the ordination of women, and cultural diversity have been simmering for many years, but the combination of the approval by a Canadian diocese of a rite for the blessing of same-gender unions and the consent by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church of an openly gay man as Bishop of New Hampshire, has led to some provinces and dioceses declaring themselves to be out of communion—or in a state of impaired communion—with other provinces, dioceses, and bishops.

[Tom Little's article, "What is the Anglican Communion?" in the January Mountain Echo ably describes the formation of the Communion, its nature, and its importance as a force for Christian unity. See the web site, [www.dioceseofvermont.org](http://www.dioceseofvermont.org).]

Within the Episcopal Church, groups calling themselves "traditionalists" have either sought affiliation with other provinces (the Anglican Mission in America) or to organize "like-minded" dioceses and congregations to change the direction of the church from within. The American Anglican Council, one of the latter, seems also to be exploring ways to take the place of the Episcopal Church as the recognized Anglican presence in the US [Page D].

While dissenting groups have varied concerns and agendas, a common theme is the claim to represent the Anglican tradition, which in turn is said to adhere to a traditional understanding of the "clear meaning of Scripture." This claim does, in my opinion, a tremendous disservice to the historic genius of Anglicanism (though the term only came into usage in the 1830s).

So is there a single Anglican tradition to which we are always called back? Only, I believe, if we understand it as a method of doing theology and being Christian com-

munity and not as a set of specific doctrines to which we must confess belief. Our forebears of the English Reformation looked to Scripture and the ecumenical councils and theologians of the first five centuries of Christianity for the foundation from which they then moved forward. The Church of England—and now the Anglican Communion—has, since then, demonstrated a remarkable capacity to discern and unite around key elements considered essential to faith and order and to live with the messiness of creative tension around the rest.

Joined in Christian community by common prayer—not common belief on all questions—Anglicans have appealed to Scripture, the traditions of the early church, and reason as authorities for theological discernment. Putting it perhaps too simply, one strand—the evangelical tradition—has emphasized the authority of Scripture, and some, but not all, among them have insisted on a more literalist reading. Another strand—the Anglo-catholic tradition—has emphasized the authority of the early church, and some, but not all, of them have not accepted subsequent development of doctrine and practice. Other strands have looked to reason, including to a greater or lesser extent, experience, to mediate Scripture and the tradition in the light of the learning of science and culture.

Thus, Anglicanism has embraced more than one strand or tradition of Christian living and believing, and those strands or traditions have remained in a lively tension, informing, enriching, and sometimes conflicting with one another. Each has had times or places in which it held greater influence than the others, but none has been able to claim that it was the tradition, exclusive of the others. We speak of "Anglican comprehensiveness," or Anglicanism as the "via media," not because we are wishy-washy or overly inclined to compromise basic principles, but because we value the ultimate goal of Christian unity and St. Paul's understanding of the Body of Christ, in which no part may say to the other, "I have no need of you."

We do need one another, no matter how difficult it is sometimes to tolerate our differences. The tragedy of today's divisiveness is that some would exclude others as failing the test of a particular strand of Anglicanism and thus no longer belonging in the Communion. They would impose a litmus test of confessional belief. But do we really want to be in a church of "like-minded"—or even like-believing—people? Do we want to be in a church that does not accept the possibility that God, working through the Holy Spirit, can do new things? As Frederica Harris Thompson says in *Living with History* (Cowley Publications, 1999, p. 14), "Who would expect a fixed or closed system from a God who promises to make all things new?" ✦

## American Anglican Council sends conflicting messages

by Jan Nunley

[Episcopal News Service] The Washington Post on January 14 disclosed a confidential memo written by one of the American Anglican Council's (AAC) chief strategists that reveals the organization's ultimate goal is to replace the Episcopal Church governed by the General Convention with its own confessionally-based jurisdiction.

"Our ultimate goal is a realignment of Anglicanism on North American soil committed to biblical faith and values, and driven by Gospel mission," said the memo, dated December 28, 2003 and signed by the Rev. Geoffrey Chapman, rector of St. Stephen's Church in Sewickley, the largest parish in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. "We believe in the end this should be a 'replacement' jurisdiction with confessional standards [and] closely aligned with the majority of world Anglicanism.... We seek to retain ownership of our property as we move into this realignment."

The memo appears to contradict recent statements by the AAC that it does not want to break away from the Episcopal Church, but to work within its canons to change decisions with which members disagree. The memo outlines a two-stage process, in which dissenting parishes would initially announce that their relationship with their diocesan bishop is "severely damaged" but not engage in legal confrontations over church property.

In the second stage, dissenters would seek "negotiated settlements" with dioceses over property. If such settlements failed, however, "faithful disobedience of canon law on a widespread basis may be necessary," Chapman wrote. "We will innovatively move around, beyond or within the canons" to achieve the group's goals."

The memo said the AAC will offer what it calls "Adequate Episcopal Oversight" to dissenting groups "under the guidance of our Bishops and the Primates." It called

Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold's offer of "Extended Episcopal Care" "unacceptable, fundamentally flawed and disingenuous."

The House of Bishops has been creating and revising a policy of "supplemental episcopal pastoral care" for clergy and parishes who are disaffected with their diocesan bishop. It will be on their agenda when they meet March 19-24 at Camp Allen in Texas.

"I was very disappointed to read the AAC's strategy statement, which seems to contemplate disobeying canons, going around bishops and seizing property," said Dan England, director of communication for the Episcopal Church. "I should think that many Episcopalians, who may well be disappointed with the election in New Hampshire, will be surprised and unhappy to see what the AAC is covertly trying to bring about.... We have said consistently, and openly, that we need all voices in the conversation about how we can best carry out the mission of the church, and that includes the people of the American Anglican Council," England concluded.

The Rt. Rev. Don Johnson, bishop of West Tennessee and one who voted against the confirmation of the election of Bishop Gene Robinson, responded to the AAC memo by issuing a pastoral letter to the diocese. Saying that, "deceitfulness and subversive sabotage justified in the name of serving Christ cannot be overlooked," he asked clergy and congregations to disassociate from the AAC. "I do not endorse, nor will I have this diocese in any way associated with this effort," he wrote, "and I will use all the power of my office to see to it that our clergy and congregations will not be in any formal membership arrangement with this or any other such group seeking to destroy the Episcopal Church."

The Rev. Jan Nunley is deputy director of Episcopal News Service. Anne Brown contributed to this story.

## Same-sex blessing is subject of study series at Trinity, Shelburne

by Marge Sharp

Ratification of the election of a gay man who is living in a committed relationship as Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire by the Episcopal General Convention last summer has opened wide the issue of "same sex blessing" and its implications within the American Episcopal Church.

In recognition of the several opinions among parishioners, specifically within the family of Trinity Church, Shelburne, the Reverends Craig Smith and Carole Wageman, together with a "same sex blessing" study steering committee, have set up a series of four dialogues to provide an opportunity for interested persons to air their diversity of thought.

Following a slightly shortened 10:00 A.M. church service and the serving of a light lunch, the four part series will be held in the church's McClure Room. The steering committee will divide the interested parties

into small groups of five or six to provide a comfortable, informal and undisturbed setting where the issue may be discussed.

The first session was January 18. The remaining three will be February 1, 8 and 15, from 11:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Child-care will be offered for the convenience of all who participate.

Discussion in closed or informal settings is not enough for many persons who would like to delve more deeply into the question. This series presents an opportunity to get the issue out in the open and to talk and to listen to each other.

Both clergy and the steering committee have urged all who are interested to join one or all of the open-ended dialogues. Additional information is available from the church office, 802-985-2269. All are welcome.

Marge Sharp is a member of Trinity, Shelburne.

## Bishop Gayle Harris to give Absalom Jones lecture at Episcopal Divinity School

[EDS] The Episcopal Divinity School's annual Absalom Jones Celebration will feature a lecture by the Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris at 7:00 P.M. on February 11. Bishop Harris will also serve as celebrant at the Eucharist the following morning at 8:30 A.M. These events commemorate the life and ministry of Absalom Jones, the first African American priest in the Episcopal Church.

An Absalom Jones celebration is held every year at EDS to help support the Absalom Jones Scholarship Fund. Established in 1986, the fund provides scholarships for African American EDS students preparing for ordination in the Episcopal Church.

Absalom Jones was born a house slave in Delaware in 1746. At 16 he was sold to a store owner in Philadelphia, but eventually

bought his wife's freedom and his own. In 1787, black Christians organized the Free African Society, with Jones elected as one of two overseers. He was ordained deacon in the St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Pennsylvania in 1795, and priest in 1802.

The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris is the seventh bishop suffragan of the Diocese of Massachusetts, succeeding Bishop Barbara Harris, who retired in November 2002. She is the 11th woman, the second African-American woman, and the third woman of color to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church.

The lecture and Eucharist will take place in St. John's Memorial Chapel on the EDS campus. Each event will be followed by a reception in Washburn Lounge. All are free and open to the public, although reservations are required as seating is limited. The Chapel and Washburn Lounge are handicapped accessible. For more information or to reserve a space, contact Alcurtis Clark at 617-868-3450, extension 306. ❖

## New England Alpha Course leaders meet, share experiences

by Marnie Keator

The Alpha Course is alive and well in Vermont! On Saturday, January 10, Trinity Church in Rutland hosted 27 Alpha leaders from all over Southern Vermont at a meeting sponsored by Alpha New England and led by Executive Director Dick Kiernan of Manchester, NH. It was very encouraging to share our experiences of Alpha and to see how God is working through Alpha to transform lives and congregations.

The mission of the Alpha Course "is to equip and empower the local church with a successful, culturally relevant means of evangelization... so that everyone has the opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ." It is the Great Commission at work! The Course consists of 10 weekly sessions, each of which includes dinner followed by a talk on a key aspect of Christianity, such as: Christianity: Boring, Untrue, Irrelevant? Who is Jesus? Why did he die? How can I be sure of my faith? Why and how should I read the Bible? Why and how should I pray? How does God guide us? Who is the Holy Spirit? What does the Holy Spirit do? How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? How can I make the most of the rest of my life? How can I resist evil? Why and how should

I tell others? Does God heal today? What about the church?

Following the talk, small groups discuss the topic of the evening. The course, which was designed for seekers, has also served to enrich and renew those who are "fully churched." In a sense, it is everything you have ever wanted to know about Christianity but were afraid to ask because you thought you should know! It is non-threatening: no telling people what to believe; no question is too simple or too hostile. It is supportive: friendships and a sense of belonging are encouraged and a priority. It is fun: laughter is a key ingredient and the natural outcome of an Alpha evening.

Alpha Courses are running in every state in the US and in churches of every denomination. The Alpha Course is also running in such diverse settings as prisons, universities, public high schools, housing developments, coffee shops, military bases, and on deployed US Navy vessels. Churches of all denominations are using the Alpha Course, and those churches have been experiencing revitalization. Church members attending the course are renewing their faith. Lay people are excited to have a method for expressing their faith, so that

even the shy or reserved believer can play a part in the Great Commission. Furthermore, pastors like the fact that Alpha is lay led and therefore an excellent way to train up new leaders within a local church.

The Rev. Sandy Millar, Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Brompton Road in London where the course originated, likes to say that he does not know why The Alpha Course has grown so much other than that, "The Holy Spirit seems to have adopted it and is blowing it along." But what started as a gentle breeze, 200 churches running Alpha in the U.S. in 1997, is now a gale—nearly 6000 churches are currently in the Alpha Course directory. As testimonies of changed lives (and changed churches!) breeze through the Christian community, more and more church leaders are exploring Alpha. 50,000+ church leaders have now attended one of the 154 Alpha Conferences in the US in the last 5 years with another 15,000 expected this year.

For information about Alpha, contact the Rev. Marnie Keator, South Londonderry, VT at 802-824-5450, or MarnBBF@aol.com; or Call Dick Kiernan at Alpha New England in Manchester, NH at 603-641-5741; DickKiernan@alphausa.org. ❖

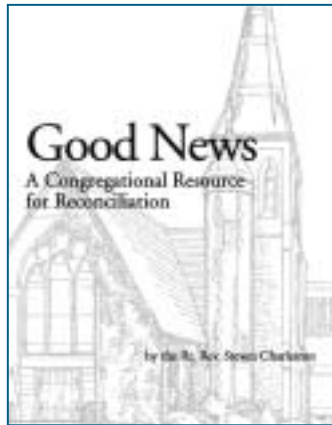
## Steven Charleston offers Vermont workshop on reconciliation

by Susan Ohlidal

The Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, President and Dean of the Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) will offer a workshop on reconciliation within congregations on Saturday, March 6, 10 A.M.–3 P.M., at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, White River Junction.

Bishop Charleston is the author of "Good News: A Congregational Resource for Reconciliation." Many Vermont congregational leaders are familiar with this new ministry resource, distributed at the 2003 Diocesan Convention, the January 2004 Clergy Day, and directly through EDS (contact Nancy Davidge at 617-868-3450, x302 or ndavidge@episdivschool.edu.).

Bishops Charleston's workshop will include the "how tos" of using the resource, but it will also go further. He said, "The workshop will be built around energizing the ministry of reconciliation within congregational life. 'Good News' will be a part of this, but there will be a broader focus on how the theology behind this resource applies to our individual vocation as disciples of Christ."



Guided by a covenant that honors a variety of opinions, "Good News" seeks to fulfill three goals: promoting a fair and respectful dialogue, providing a context of reflection on the shared values of the Gospel, and encouraging a process of reconciliation within the life of the community.

Sponsored by the Pastoral Enrichment Project, the workshop is free and open to all in the Diocese of Vermont. Bring your own lunch. Coffee and tea will be available in the morning. For more information, please contact Susan Ohlidal, Pastoral Enrichment Coordinator, sohlidal@dioceseofvermont.org; 802-748-8755.



## More Coming Events

**Arts at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul**  
2 Cherry Street, Burlington, Vermont

**Art Shows in the Church Nave**

**February 2-24:** "The Lord is My Shepherd," sculpture by Melinda White.  
**February 25-April 9:** Richard Clark's Stations of the Cross.

The Cathedral is open 9 A.M.–5 P.M., Monday through Friday, and between services on Sunday. Call for other times (802-864-0471).

**Dinner with the Saints**

**St. Valentine's Day Fundraiser**

**Friday, February 13, 2004**

**Cathedral Church of St. Paul**

**2 Cherry Street, Burlington, Vermont**

Bring your friends for an evening of fine dining and a lively silent auction to support the Cathedral's mission and ministry. Caterer Barbara Bardin of Let's Pretend will offer a choice of Misty Knoll Stalter Chicken Breast with Apple Cider and Fennel Demi-glace or Vegetable Napoleon.

Tickets are \$45.00 per person if ordered by February 1, or \$50.00 if ordered February 2-6. To order tickets or to donate items, services or art for the auction, contact St. Paul's Cathedral, 802-864-0471, or twallace@stpaulscathedralvt.org.

**"Daniel"**

**by the All Saints' Players**

**Saturday, February 14 and Sunday, February 15, 2004**

**All Saints' Episcopal Church**

**1250 Spear Street, South Burlington, Vermont**

Author and co-director Mary Lou Sutherland is assisted by Pat Halverson and an engaging, energetic cast. For times and reservations, call All Saints', 802-862-9750.

**"Jesus and Judaism: Why the Connections Matter More Than Ever"**

**Wednesday, February 18, 2004, 5-7 P.M.**

**St. John's Memorial Chapel, Episcopal Divinity School**

**99 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

A lecture by noted New Testament scholar, Amy-Jill Levine, director of the Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality at the Divinity School at Vanderbilt University. The program is free and open to the public.

## Peter MacLean to lead Lenten retreat

by Mary Lou Ashton

The annual Lenten Retreat is planned for March 5-7, 2004 at the Bishop Booth Conference and Retreat Center, Rock Point, Burlington. The retreat leader will be the Rev. Peter D. MacLean, retired, who currently lives in Colchester with his wife Margaret.

MacLean has chosen "The Mystery of Freedom" as the title for this year's retreat. The freedom that he has in mind is the freedom to change direction without the necessity of undergoing a radical conversion or total reconstruction. He believes that even small shifts in direction and knowledge can have enormous consequences for the spiritual life over time and that one of the barriers to change and transformation in our culture is that we are frustrated because we expect instant results.

He plans to share some of the personal experiences that initiated minor but significant changes in his own life and to create a mood of thanksgiving for the persons and events that were the igniting sparks. Because music and the spoken word of others has often been the kindling moment, those who attend will be asked to listen to several pieces of music that have given him the courage to change.

Peter MacLean is also a believer in story telling and modern parables, so he plans not only to tell a few of them but also to make written copies available that they can be the subject of some spiritual fretting during the times of silence. However, he warns us that there is no guarantee whatsoever that the experiences that helped initiate the freedom to change in his own life and ministry can be transferred to others. Ultimately he says, "We have to find our own prompts for those who inspire freedom in our hearts

and minds. The real purpose of this retreat is that those who attend may cast a wider net in their search for freedom."

A graduate of General Theological Seminary in 1955, Peter MacLean was ordained in November 1955. From 1954 until 2003, he has served as: a deacon and priest in charge, rector, USMC chaplain on active duty, director of personnel, industrial counselor, vicar, interim priest, and finally supply priest and vicar. He has done these things in New York, Maine, Vietnam, North Carolina, and Vermont. MacLean retired in September 1993, and continued his ministry in Vermont, most recently as vicar at St. Luke's, Alburg.

In the Diocese of Long Island, Peter MacLean served as President of the Eastern Long Island Hospital Board of Trustees and as a member of the Anglican Foundation, the Episcopal Charities Board, and the Stewardship Department. In Vermont he has served as an elected member of the Oversight and Audit Committee and, with Margaret, was co-coordinator of the United Thank Offering.

The Lay Chaplain for the Lenten Retreat is Mr. Michael Hechmer, a member of the Pastoral Care Department at Fletcher Allen Hospital. Michael attends Saint James' Episcopal Church in Essex Junction.

The cost of the retreat has increased to \$130 for a shared room, or \$150 for a private room (if available). To reserve a place for this retreat, send a \$50.00 non-refundable deposit, made out to the Diocese of Vermont, to John King, 433 Bean Road, Colchester, VT 05446. Questions: call John at 802-862-6834.

Mary Lou Ashton is a member of St. Andrew's, Colchester.

## Bishop Ely inaugurates services for Springfield prison

by Dave Shuffleburg

The first regular Sunday church service sponsored by the Association of Springfield Area Churches was held at the new Southern State Correctional Facility in Springfield on Sunday afternoon, December 14, despite a raging snowstorm, a temperamental metal detector, and the birthday of one of the participants. These services will be done on a rotational basis by most of Springfield's churches.

Bishop Thomas Ely, who had just finished his visitation at Immanuel Church, Bellows Falls, graciously agreed to be the celebrant for the Eucharist. The inmates were awestruck that a bishop would take the time to be with them. One said, "We never thought that someone like you would

visit people like us." The Rev. Charlie Mansfield, newly ordained deacon from Immanuel, assisted Bishop Ely. Janet and Rick Hunter and Richard Griffith with his banjo represented St. Mark's, Springfield. With their fantastic gifts, they provided not only a great musical setting but much valuable input with the inmates. Dave Shuffleburg, also from St. Mark's, rounded out the Episcopal complement.

It was a moving afternoon, and not all eyes were dry. Mansfield and Shuffleburg (and hopefully others) will be returning on a regular basis to offer services and other events that are not sponsored by the ASAC.

Dave Shuffleburg is a member of Diocesan Council.

## Next Safer Church Training session is April 24

A Safer Church Training session will be offered at Zion Church, Manchester, on April 24, 8:45 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. Please register in advance with Anne Brown (802-672-5250, or abrown@vermontel.net) so we will be sure to have enough materials available. Either bring lunch, or plan to get a quick take-out nearby. In order to finish by 3:30, we will take just 30 minutes for lunch.

The training is required for clergy, church employees, lay eucharistic ministers, all who work with children and youth (except unpaid church school teachers who teach in a public place on Sunday morning), spiritual directors, and those who make pastoral visits in homes, hospitals and nursing homes. It is highly recommended for wardens, treasurers, vestry members and church school teachers.

## Northwest Deanery 1

**Beth Crane**, Bureau Chief  
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Thirty-two pilgrims from the Northwest Deanery traveled together by bus to attend the Epiphany service of lessons and carols at Christ Church Cathedral in Montreal on Jan. 4. This was the fourth consecutive year that members of the deanery's parishes have made the trip during Advent, Christmas, or Epiphany. Five congregations were represented.

Northwest Deanery members met on Jan. 6 for an Epiphany Eucharist celebrated by **Bishop Ely**, with the Rev. **Janette Tweedy** as preacher. Following the service, participants gathered for a soup supper and a meeting to continue the discussion on shared ministry. Congregational representatives shared ways in which they currently participate in mutual ministry, shared ministry, and community outreach. Questions of how to handle parish transitions, evangelize, and rebuild a diminished congregation emerged as critical needs for many, along with a desire to share resources. Area growth (the population of Franklin and Grand Isle counties is increasing at a great rate) along with the proximity of Anglicans across the border offer opportunities for new growth and outreach.

The Deanery Council will meet on Sunday, Feb. 29, 2 P.M., at Holy Trinity Church in Swanton. The council meetings are open to all. Contact **Edith Hawksworth** of St. Matthew's, Enosburg, for more information.

The Rev. **Ralph Lord Roy**, a noted civil rights activist and St. Albans native, spoke at ST. LUKE'S, St. Albans, on Martin Luther King's birthday. The Rev. Roy, a United Methodist minister, participated with Dr. King in the civil rights movement, including the Freedom Ride in 1961. St. Luke's began its Alpha Course on Jan. 22. This program will take place over 10 consecutive Thursdays, starting at 7 P.M. in the parish hall. Contact St. Luke's office, 524-6212, for information.

The Rev. **Peter MacLean** has completed his time as vicar of ST. LUKE'S, Alburg. The Rev. Canon **Howard Van Dine** is supplying eucharistic ministry to St. Luke's on the first and third Sundays of the month. On other Sundays, the congregation meets for Morning Prayer and lay preaching.

## Otter Creek Deanery 2

**Donna Abramov**, Bureau Chief  
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ST. STEPHEN'S, Middlebury, has called the Rev. **Geoffrey T. Robbins** as interim rector [See article, page G]. January Sunday Morning Forums included a presentation on religious and other customs and traditions of Kyrgyzstan by **Aliya Suvanova**, an exchange student living with the **De Graf family**.

The women of TRINITY, Rutland, held a gala, catered dinner and silent auction Jan. 24, and funds raised were donated to local charities. Trinity has the only Vermont chapter of Daughters

# ❖ deanery doings ❖

News of Parishes and People in the Diocese of Vermont  
compiled and reported by the Mountain Echo "Deanery Bureau Chiefs"

of the King, an order devoted to prayer, evangelism, and service to the church. If you are interested in finding out more or want to start a chapter in your church, please call **Donna Abramov** at 802-483-6150. The Rev. **Hugh Tudor-Foley** will lead Lent discussions on prayer, possibly using *Praying With C. S. Lewis*. **Joanne Williamson** will hold a Lent workshop on the making of prayer beads. She and her husband **Tom** have made prayer beads they sell as a fundraiser for Trinity.

ST. PAUL'S, Vergennes, will, for the first time, observe the Triduum (the three day period that includes Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday) by following the monastic Liturgy of the Hours, with prayer services four times a day (Matins, Diurnun, Vespers and Compline). Adult education between the services on the Sundays of Lent will be "The Episcopal Church 101." This introduction to the Episcopal Church will cover church history, the Book of Common Prayer, scripture, and more. It is an ideal way for newcomers to learn about the church, but is also a great opportunity for "veterans" to refresh their understanding of the church.

## Southwest Deanery 3

**Sarah Smith**, Bureau Chief  
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ST. JAMES', Arlington, hosted the community-wide Santa Lucia Festival of Lights on Dec. 13. The program included a pageant and carol singing and was followed by a fund-raising spaghetti dinner. On Dec. 21, parish children joined with children from the Federated Church in a living creche set up on the lawn. Many people stopped by to see the nativity scene. On Dec. 28, St. James had its first annual Messiah Sing-Along program. There were four gifted soloists and fourteen talented musicians under the direction of **Linda Hueckel** of the Arlington Chorale. Most of the 140 church and community members participated in singing or humming the chorus portions of the program. An outstanding success! To be repeated next year!

St. James' held its annual community Twelfth Night Christmas tree bonfire at the Arlington Rec Park Jan. 10. The community was also invited to a stimulating, if not fractious, discussion of *The DaVinci Code* on Jan. 30.

ST PETER'S, Bennington, celebrated the Feast of Lights (Epiphany) with lessons and carols and sharing light with those present.

## Southeast Deanery 4

**David Shuffleburg**, Bureau Chief  
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shuff@mymailstation.com

To help improve their common worship and educational programs, a survey

was recently mailed to all parishioners of ST. MICHAEL'S, Brattleboro. A 100% response is hoped for in order to create a "shared future" for all. Their "Green Team" started meeting monthly in January. They want to create an environmental action plan as well as offer classes, outings, and education for all ages.

Seven folks from IMMANUEL CHURCH, Bellow Falls, and a similar number from ST. PAUL'S, White River Junction, recently returned after spending 10 days near Tegucigalpa, Honduras. This "Mission Team" not only installed a septic system but also built the first floor of a two-story church/community building. In six months the Bellows Falls group, whose ages ranged from the teens to the 60's, raised over \$15,000 to finance the trip. They will be making an educational piece to help share and spread their excitement for the program, which is spearheaded by the Rev. **Diana Collins**.

During the gathering of the rather slim news for this month's column, our regional free weekly newspaper arrived in the mail. What to my wondering eyes should appear but a large, 4-color photo of **Mary Pill** of ST. LUKE'S, Chester, in her Antique Shop in Grafton. Both she and her husband **Peter** were quoted in the accompanying article. Nothing can bring a smile quicker than a friendly face on a cold winter day. The regular Saturday Night Public Suppers continue with some newcomers to the parish helping plan the schedule. We trust they will be using their new kitchen stove recently authorized by the vestry.

A recent report from GETHSEMANE, Proctorsville, listed their results from the Community Holiday Fair as over \$1200. Wow! These folks are also holding an Epiphany Bible Study on the Gospel readings for the period and on the manifestations of Jesus as the Son of God.

ST. MARK'S, Springfield, along with friends from ST. LUKE'S, Charlestown, New Hampshire, had an absolutely fantastic Feast of the Epiphany celebration. It started with a lay-led service of Evening Prayer in the church, progressed to *hors d'oeuvres* and liquid refreshment in the Fowler Room, followed by an exquisite dinner in the Parish Hall, and ended with a hilarious "Yankee Swap" of recycled Christmas gifts.

On Christmas Eve, an anonymous Santa Claus slid down the chimney of ST. MARY'S IN-THE-MOUNTAINS, Wilmington, and left huge filled Christmas stockings for each and every person present—even the visitors! Yea Virginia—there is a Santa Claus. The Rev. **Laura White** and her husband **Alex** recently moved to Wilmington, and on Dec. 30, their son **Gavin** was born. Welcome to them all (and don't forget the new tax deduction). St. Mary's is also looking for some "comfy," padded, reasonably priced folding chairs. Is there anyone else out there who might know of a good source or looking for the same thing? Perhaps you could "team" up and get a price break (contact the Rev. **Thad Bennett**, 802-874-7086).

The Rev. **Al Cramer** has extended his stay at ST. PAUL'S, Windsor, as supply priest for the foreseeable future. **Janet Cramer** has been working with organist **Suzette Cyr** "fine tuning" the choir as well as establishing both adult and children's bell ringing groups. Over Christmas they performed at the new correctional facility in Springfield as well as the Mt. Ascutney Hospital and nursing homes in the Windsor area.

## Three Rivers Deanery 5

**Genie Rayner**, Bureau Chief  
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Life Skills for Women, housed at and serving from CHRIST CHURCH, Bethel, since its founding in 1992 by then-rector the Rev. **Jean Jersey**, is an organization centered on providing opportunities, programs, skills and support for under-served women to gain confidence and become self-reliant. Director **Millie Reynolds** is pastor of the East Bethel Community Church.

Experimenting with a different use of the Doxology, parishioners of ST. MARTIN'S, Fairlee, used the opportunity to reflect on their spiritual lives. Instead of singing the familiar hymn at the offertory, **Matt Wienecke** and the Rev. **John Morris** suggested that after the Gospel might be a more appropriate place, and, after "study and experimentation," this is what they did for the Advent and Christmas seasons. As John Morris writes, this "meant the Doxology could still be used in an important way (to praise God for the blessing of the Gospel), but would make the Great Thanksgiving the liturgical climax of the Eucharist."

Music from the singing and instrumental group **Northern Harmony** filled the nave at CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR, Killington, on Jan. 22. Veteran professionals collaborate with graduates of the "associated Village Harmony" teen group, all providing a varied repertoire of powerful sound. The group spent the week at Heminway House, the Mission Farm guest house, and rehearsed daily in the church for the Thursday evening concert.

The folks at ST. PAUL'S, White River Junction, are making time for fellowship, warmth and faith development through viewing documentaries that "translate into our communities, homes, and hearts." The first film was *Home to Tibet* in January; others will follow once a month through April. High school parishioners **Emily Smith** and **Emily Higgins** had featured acting and dancing roles, respectively, in holiday dance and community theatre performances, both to rave reviews.

Following up on the very successful St. James' Fair in the summer of 2003, the Women of ST. JAMES', Woodstock, are supporting 22 different organizations from the proceeds! Representing community, national, international, and some of their own parochial outreach needs, these funds support such groups as Woodstock Visiting Nurses, Habitat for Humanity, Episcopal Relief and Development, teenage breakfasts, and Vermont Children's Aid. Thank you for your "stupendous" generosity! In Advent, the Sunday School explored God through the senses in

Continued on Page G

# St. Stephen's calls interim pastor Joins other congregations in transition

by Anne Clarke Brown

The Rev. Geoffrey T. Robbins will join the congregation of St. Stephen's, Middlebury, on February 8, for his first service as interim pastor. He succeeds the Rev. Catherine Nichols, who left in October after serving twelve years as rector.

Geoff Robbins and his wife Marci will move to Middlebury from Maine, where he has been for the last 24 years. He is a graduate of Colby College and the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University. Early in his career, he served as a rector, college chaplain, and pastoral counselor. In 1988, he founded Sojourn International ([www.sojourninternational.com](http://www.sojourninternational.com)), a program for international and American students in transition or attending school a long way from home. He continues as its director. He also has served six Maine congregations as a part-time interim pastor and consultant.

## Other congregations in transition

A third of the congregations in the Diocese of Vermont that support full-time clergy are in a process of calling new clergy leadership. Trinity Church, Rutland, with the Rev. Hugh Tudor-Foley as interim, and Trinity Church, Swanton, with the Rev. Don Morris as interim, are interviewing candidates for rector. The Rev. Timothy Raasch joined St. Barnabas', Norwich, as interim pastor in September 2003, and the Rev. Robert Miner started in mid-October as interim pastor at St. Peter's, Bennington. St.

James', Essex Junction, will call an interim in May.

Seven other congregations are seeking to call part-time clergy: St. Luke's, Alburg; Good Shepherd, Barre; St. Matthew's, Enosburg Falls; St. Peter's, Lyndonville; Gethsemane, Proctorsville; St. Mark's, Springfield; and St. Paul's, Windsor. ❖

## Parochial Reports Due

March 1, 2004 is the due date for each congregation to submit to the diocesan office the following:

- A copy of the national church annual Parochial Report. The report must also be filed with the national church electronically by May 1.
- 2003 year-end financial statement.
- List of congregational leaders for 2004. This information is used to compile the Diocesan Handbook, so timely submission is key to completing the 2004 edition.
- The certificate of lay delegates elected to represent the congregation at the 2004 Diocesan Convention.

Contact Valerie Hennessey at the diocesan office with questions: 800-286-3437; 802-863-3431; [vhennessey@dioceseofvermont.org](mailto:vhennessey@dioceseofvermont.org).



Dick Mansfield photo

## St. John's parishioner honored on 94<sup>th</sup> birthday

A contingent from St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe, took flowers and a birthday cake to Phoebe Sakash to honor her on her 94th birthday. Phoebe was a leader in the diocese when she was younger and is St. John's oldest parishioner. She wrote a history of the parish some time ago that is a treasure. [Her father, the Rev. Flint, was at one time the rector at Christ Church, Montpelier.]

Phoebe Sakash is joined by Barbara Baraw (seated), Duncan Tingle, Deacon Elise Braun, Rector Mary Mansfield, and George Spear.

## deanery doings

Continued from Page F

"Sensing the Divine" to see how God is manifested in the world. Seems like their singing, cooking, painting, and more, are just as appropriate for Epiphany, too!

### Central Vermont Deanery 6

**Marty Roberts**, Bureau Chief  
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At CHRIST CHURCH, Montpelier, there is excitement and anticipation in the organization of a new youth group. The adult education group has been having a good time with the new book, *The Heart of Christianity*, by Marcus Borg. A new discussion group centered on social concerns will meet monthly to discuss insights opened by the book, and options for Christian response. The first book to be discussed is *Nickel and Dime* by Barbara Ehrenreich.

The traditional Shrove Tuesday Eucharist (5:15 P.M.) and pancake supper (6 P.M.) is planned for Feb. 24. After the supper, the young people of the parish will make the Alleluia banner, which will be hidden in the church until it is rediscovered on Easter morning. Imposition of ashes will be at 10:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. on Ash Wednesday.

On Feb. 8, the congregation of ST. MARY'S, Northfield, and their rector, the Rev. **Lee Alison Crawford**, will commend each other to God's care during their February-May sabbatical. The church school children are writing

a psalm for the day, and, in a commissioning service, the rector and sabbatical committee (on behalf of the congregation) will exchange candles that will be lit every Sunday during the sabbatical period. Lee Crawford will spend five weeks in El Salvador, working with a congregation and serving for five-days as an international observer to the Salvadoran presidential election. In a separate trip, she will walk the medieval pilgrimage route of Saint James of Compostela, Spain.

ST. JOHN'S IN THE MOUNTAINS, Stowe, was blessed with a lovely Festival of Lessons and Carols on the fourth Sunday of Advent and a very moving Christmas pageant with the part of Baby Jesus taken by tiny **Elijah Baraw**, **Barbara Baraw's** grandson, who was born the day after Thanksgiving. And no crying he made! **Audrey Coty** and several young musicians provided music to support the carol singing.

During Advent and Christmas, the parish generously supported the following: the Dove tree, which put needed gifts into the hands of local children and provided two scholarships for the Stowe Summer Recreation Program; the Waterbury Hospital Gift Lift, which gives the patients an opportunity to choose gifts for their friends and family; and the Tree of Lights in the middle of the Village of Stowe.

**Duncan Tingle** is the facilitator for an adult study group that is focusing on the history of the Episcopal Church as well as the history of the Diocese of Vermont. The discussion has been lively and enlightening.

### Northeast Deanery 7

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Members of the Northeast Deanery will meet on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 1 P.M. at Christ Church, Island Pond, for a slide presentation and conversation about last summer's General Convention with Vermont Deputy **Anne Brown**.

### Champlain Deanery 8

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**Betsy Yung**, Bureau Chief  
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Our preparation for Easter begins with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 25. Check your parish newsletter for the times of services. Fill your boxes for ERD, Episcopal Relief and Development, which provides emergency relief in times of natural disasters such as the recent quake in Iran.

The Christian Meditation Center at the CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, Burlington, offers times for meditation in the St. Francis Chapel on Wednesdays, 1-1:30 P.M. and Fridays, 8:00-8:30 A.M. In addition, the weekly meditation group meets Tuesday evening in the Commons Room at 7 P.M. Contact Dean Ken Poppe, 864-0471 ext 17, for more information. On Friday, Feb. 13, St. Valentine's Day

will be celebrated with a catered dinner and a lively silent auction [see Page D]. Once again, the St. Paul's Youth Group hosts a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Feb. 24 from 5:30-6:30 P.M. The proceeds will fund a youth trip to New York City. For information contact **Mary Harwood**, [mharwood@pshift.com](mailto:mharwood@pshift.com), or call the church office.

ST. JAMES', Essex Junction, will have a parish weekend at Rock Point, Jan. 30-Feb 1. The monthly Women's Meeting will be Feb. 2, at 7 P.M. There is a video tape of the "Un-Talented" show held in November available in the church library. The event, including a silent auction, raised \$2000.

The TRINITY, Shelburne, youth group held a family night on Jan. 4; youth prepared lasagna and baked dozens of cookies to donate to the Shelburne Food Shelf. The Annual Pancake Supper will take place Tues, Feb 17 from 5-7 P.M. The Senior Community Luncheon will be Feb. 23. Contact **Barbara Richart**, 985-2669, if you can help. The Rev. **Craig Smith** will hold monthly teachings on Christian Meditation on Mondays from 10-11 A.M.

The All Saints' Players will present "Daniel" on Feb. 14 and 15 at ALL SAINTS', South Burlington. For reservations, call 802-862-9750. Author and co-director **Mary Lou Sutherland** is assisted by **Pat Halverson** and an engaging, energetic cast. On Jan. 3, All Saints' celebrated the life of **Harold "Woody" Woodaman**, who died Christmas day. Three former rectors he assisted were in attendance.

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## Diocesan Calendar

### February 2004

- 1 Bishop's visitation, St. James', Woodstock
- 2 **Deadline, March Mountain Echo**
- 8 Bishop's visitation, Trinity Church, Rutland
- 11 Fresh Start, 9:30 AM-2:30 PM
- 17 Clergy Day, St. John's, Randolph, 10 AM-2 PM
- 17 Standing Committee, St. John's, Randolph, 2 PM
- 17 Blessings Task Force, St. John's, Randolph, 4-6 PM
- 21 Diocesan Study Program, St. Paul's, White River
- 25 Ash Wednesday

### March 2004

- 2 Interim's Network, Burlington, 11 AM-3 PM
- 6 Diocesan Study Program, Mission Farm, Killington
- 10 **Deadline, April Mountain Echo**
- 10 Fresh Start, 9:30 AM-2:30 PM
- 13 Diocesan Council, 10 AM-4 PM
- 16 Clergy Day, St. John's, Randolph, 10 AM-2 PM
- 16 Standing Committee, St. John's, Randolph, 2 PM
- 16 Blessings Task Force, St. John's, Randolph, 4-6 PM
- 17 Dispatch of Business, Diocesan Center, 1-3 PM
- 20 Diocesan Study Program, St. Paul's, White River

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## Diocesan Youth Committee Calendar

For more information about the activities of the Diocesan Youth Committee, contact Keri & Alden Franzoni  
1491 Vermont Route 108  
Jeffersonville, VT 05464  
802-644-8989

- Jan. 31-Feb. 1 Senior High Event Planning Meeting
- Mar. 12-13 Senior High Event, BBCC
- Mar. 26-27 Vermont Watch, St. Paul's Cathedral

## Rock Point Summer Conference dates and camp theme to be posted on web site

The Rock Point Summer Conferences Committee will meet in late January—after this issue of the Echo goes to press—to finalize a theme for the 2004 summer and set dates for the various conferences. All will be posted on the diocesan web site in early February: [www.dioceseofvermont.org](http://www.dioceseofvermont.org). Scroll down the home page to the Rock Point Summer Conferences link.

### The J. Warren and Lois McClure Discipleship-Discovery 2000 Fund

#### Funds Available for Parish Use As of January 1, 2004

<b>Total Pledged</b>	<b>\$1,600,000</b>
<b>Pledges Received (92%)</b>	<b>\$1,464,545</b>
<b>Funds available:</b>	
Initiative I	
The Bishop Butterfield Revolving Loan Fund	\$ 204,674
Initiative II	
The Talent and Resource Network	\$ 15,084
Initiative III	
The Congregation Renewal and Emergency Assistance Fund	\$ 7,905
Initiative IV	
The Diocesan Outreach Fund	\$ 14,237

Appropriate uses for each initiative, application forms and requirements may be found in the Diocesan Handbook. For further information, please call the Diocesan Office.

## Thinking about volunteering at Rock Point Summer Conferences?

### Learn more at Camp Volunteer Ministry Fair

by **Connie Saeger-Proctor**

Do you have a heart for young people? Do you feel connected to God in nature? Do you believe young people desire and need relationships with caring adults who can help nurture Christian community? Can you empower the leadership abilities in young people? Do you have the ability to provide a safe place for young people to experience God in new and different ways? Do you feel it is important that young people are acclimated into the life of our congregations?

If one or more of these statements resonates with you, you may be interested in finding out how you can volunteer at the diocesan summer camp, known as the Rock Point Summer Conferences (RPSC). The Program and Training Sub-committee of the RPSC Committee invites you to learn more about volunteering at camp by attending a Camp Volunteer Ministry Fair on Saturday, February 28, at St. Paul's Church in White River Junction.

The Summer Conferences traditionally have welcomed volunteer teams from around the diocese to support and participate in leadership by preparing and leading the spiritual components, including worship, for camp. The volunteer teams, responsible primarily for the morning portion of camp programs, work with the director and camp counselors to provide unified leadership for campers. In addition, volunteers can support the staff by assisting with afternoon interest groups and evening programs. There is also time for volunteers to enjoy nature and the beautiful tranquil surroundings at Rock Point. While campers and counselors reside in the cabins, the volunteer staff take up residency in the Van Dyke building.

The camp schedule is organized by age groups, allowing campers completing grades three through twelve to enjoy a one-week camp experience with

others in their age group. The division of ages offers volunteers a wide range of opportunities to work with the various ages. Volunteers bring diverse gifts, including talents in music, listening to children, leading programs, identifying strengths in the young people, leading workshops, arts, or crafts. Ordained and lay people are welcome and encouraged to volunteer.

#### Programs focus on a camp theme

This year's camp theme will be announced in the beginning of February, and resources around the theme will be available to help teams build programming. The Canon for Youth Ministry, with the Program and Training Sub-committee of the RPSC Committee, will provide assistance to those desiring additional help developing their programs. A volunteer orientation and training day is set for all volunteers on May 8. A mid-state location will be announced.

The training day will include a time for each team to share their plans for their camp program, attend workshops on spiritual, emotional and physical developmental stages of young people, and handling conflict. It will also be a time to build community and worship with members of other teams and members of the RPSC Committee and residential staff who are available to attend.

Those interested in learning more about the volunteer opportunities for the Rock Point Summer Conferences are encouraged to attend the Camp Volunteer Ministry Fair on Saturday, February 28. It will run from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. at St. Paul's, White River Junction. A light lunch will be provided, so please register if you plan on attending. To register, or with questions, please contact Connie Saeger-Proctor, Canon for Youth Ministry at 802-479-1246 or [clsproctor@dioceseofvermont.org](mailto:clsproctor@dioceseofvermont.org).



Lee Alison Crawford photo

## Wise people from Saint Mary's follow the star...

Saint Mary's Church School, under the guidance of Melissa Maglione, provided the town of Northfield with a "Live Nativity" on the Feast of the Epiphany.

Despite steady snow, the children gathered in the center of town and then processed, singing Christmas carols, to the front porch of the church, where they paid homage to the waiting "Joseph, Mary and Jesus."

The congregation then celebrated Epiphany with a Eucharist in the church.