

# MOUNTAIN ECHO

News of the Episcopal  
Diocese of Vermont

an edition of  
*Episcopal Life*

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"Glorify the Lord, O mountains and hills..."

May 2008

## "Vermont Day" celebrated at Washington National Cathedral



ACB photo

Bishop Thomas Ely presides at Washington National Cathedral's Vermont Day Eucharist.

by Anne Clarke Brown

Vermont Day at Washington National Cathedral served as the culmination of a pilgrimage to the nation's capital for some 25 Vermont Episcopalians the weekend of March 28-30. The Cathedral honors each state with a major observance once every four years, and this year's Vermont Day coincided with the beginning of the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the last Sunday sermon delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King spoke at the Cathedral on March 31, 1968, just days before his assassination in Memphis.

The Rt. Rev. Thomas Ely, who presided at the special 11:15 a.m. service attended by over 1,300 worshippers, said the Cathedral's focus on racial reconciliation carried special meaning for Vermont. While Vermont was the first sovereign state to outlaw slavery 231 years ago, some in the state did own slaves.

The Diocese of Vermont Commission on Dismantling Racism, led by the Rev. Nancy Voegelé and with the assistance of Canon for Ministry Development Connie Saeger-Proctor, organized the pilgrimage to focus on racial reconciliation and justice.

Over a dozen of the Vermont contingent, including Bishop Tom and Ann Ely, spent Saturday visiting the Sandy Spring Slave Museum in Maryland and the National Museum of the American Indian. Saturday evening, they were hosted for dinner and conversation by members of

the Union of Black Episcopalians at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, just a few blocks from the White House.

Vermont Day itself began with a forum in which Congressman John Lewis of Georgia, a leader of the civil rights movement of the 1960s and a continued champion of human rights and civil liberties, conversed with the Very Rev. Samuel T. Lloyd III, dean of the Cathedral, and members of the congregation. Lewis also preached at the 11:15 service. A tour of the Cathedral followed the service, and the Green Mountain College Choir and Cantorion, under the direction of James P. Cassarino, offered preludes to the Cathedral's Choral Evensong service later in the day.

### Saturday's pilgrimage

The Vermonters traveled Saturday morning to the Sandy Spring Slave Museum in Montgomery County, Maryland. The small museum was founded by a Jamaican doctor who accumulated structures and artifacts "to focus on the heritage of Blacks from their origin in Africa through the Trans-Atlantic passage, participation with the Underground Railroad, the struggle for civil rights, and their accomplishments across the African Diaspora."

Their next stop was the National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall in Washington. Established by an act of Congress in 1989, it is the first national museum dedicated to the preservation, study, and exhibition of the life, languages, literature, history, and arts of Native Ameri-

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## The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

Praying the prayer of Christ, learning the mind of Christ and doing the deeds of Christ through ministries of

Formation

Liberation

Communication

Connection

Celebration

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## Bishop Robinson discusses film with clergy, lay leaders

by Anne Clarke Brown

Responding to an interest in varying the time and location for the monthly gathering of clergy, Bishop Thomas Ely invited clergy and their spouses/partners to an April 15 supper and a showing of the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So," at St. Paul's, White River Junction. He also encouraged clergy in congregations to bring one or two lay leaders.

The film features the Rt. Rev. V. Gene Robinson, Bishop of New Hampshire, and he, accompanied by his partner, Mark Andrew, joined the group to talk about his involvement in the film and engage in conversation.

"For the Bible Tells Me So," written, directed and produced by Daniel Karlslake, shows how five families of faith, including the Robinsons, handle the realization of having a gay child, and it addresses the varying understandings of Scripture that inform their backgrounds. Through the voices of people such as Harvard's Peter Gomes, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg and the Rev. Jimmy Creech, it offers, in the words of the synopsis on the Web site ([www.forthebibletellmeso.org](http://www.forthebibletellmeso.org)), "healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of scripture and sexual identity."

Robinson told the group about the genesis of the movie for Karlslake. He had produced a segment of the PBS series, "In the Life," about the Rev. Irene Monroe, an out lesbian theologian at Harvard. The day after

its showing in 1998, he received an email from a young Iowa boy. It said, "Last week I bought the gun. Yesterday I wrote the note. But last night I happened to turn on your show and just knowing that someday I might be able to go back into my church, I threw the gun in the river. My mom never has to know." Robinson said, "He made the film for all those kids out there like this kid."

Karlslake wanted to make a film that would change hearts and minds, and he realized that focusing on the straight Christian parents of gay people would not only move people but also allow them to identify with the families. And he wanted to give people a way to get beyond the closing off of conversation when someone says homosexuality is wrong "for the Bible tells me so."

Robinson said that Karlslake had managed to "sweet talk his way into my office" at a time between General Convention and his consecration, and though he had never met him before, "a little voice in my head said, 'Trust him.'" The resulting movie "won all sorts of awards."

The people in the film, Robinson said, "have become like family to me," and he spoke about several of them. "The most common reaction of people who see the



ACB photo

Bishop Robinson responds to an audience question about the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So."

film," he said is to ask where they can get a copy, because, "I've got a parent, a friend, an aunt, a coworker, someone who really needs to see this." Robinson said, "It's doing and it's going to do a lot of good." [A DVD for private viewing can be ordered at [www.forthebibletellmeso.org](http://www.forthebibletellmeso.org) for \$18.71.]

In response to a question, Robinson spoke about the Last Supper discourse in the Gospel of John, where Jesus says, "I have more things to teach you, but you cannot bear them right now, so I will send you the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth."

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## Environmental sustainability to be focus of next Diocesan Convention by the Right Reverend Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop of Vermont

Dear people of Vermont:

In my January Mountain Echo column I spoke about entering the New Year with hope and about four matters I believed would be an important part of 2008 for me and for us as a diocese. In my last two columns I have written about two of those matters: the welcoming of the Reverend Angela Emerson as our new Minister for Stewardship Development and the upcoming Lambeth Conference, scheduled for July 16 to August 3, 2008. In this column I turn my attention to yet another of those topics – the conclusion of our 175<sup>th</sup> diocesan anniversary celebration and our upcoming Diocesan Convention.

Diocesan Convention 2008 is scheduled for November 7–8, and will be held at Trinity Church, Rutland, where Bishop John Henry Hopkins presided over his first convention as Bishop of the Diocese of Vermont. The theme, around which we will gather this November—and at the Ministry Fairs leading up to Convention—is environmental sustainability. This theme was chosen in order to build upon our commitment to a sustainable future for our planet and all people expressed in our support of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The connection between ending global poverty and environmental sustainability runs deep. The seventh of the eight Millennium Development Goals is “Ensure environmental sustainability.”

In the 2003 Pastoral Letter on the Environment issued by the bishops of Province One, that connection between poverty and the environment was highlighted with these words: *The poor, the marginalized, and the least powerful of our human neighbors are those who suffer most from illness and pollution caused by environmental degradation. Generators, incinerators, and waste disposal facilities are concentrated in impoverished neighborhoods; children*

*in our inner cities suffer alarming rates of asthma; overemphasis on the use of private vehicles deprives the poor of transportation. Exploitation of the poor is closely linked to exploitation of the earth, and our quest for social justice and economic sustainability must rest on a foundation of ecological stability. As baptized Christians, we are clearly called to care for creation, loving our neighbors as ourselves. Through prayer and action to protect the earth, we acknowledge the ongoing redemption of all creation in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:19a), and we minister to Christ himself, who particularly identifies with the outcast and suffering (Matthew 25:35-36).*

A strong program committee, under the leadership of the Reverend Anita Schell Lambert from Saint Peter's, Bennington, is hard at work in preparation for the 2008 Ministry Fairs and the Convention itself. Among other things, they are exploring tangible means of giving expression to the many ways we, as individuals and as faith communities, can take active roles in addressing our environmental commitments. They hope to shine a light on some of the best practices in which people of faith here in Vermont and beyond are already engaged. They hope to challenge all of us to be better stewards, advocates and “good neighbors” for the present and future well-being of the earth.

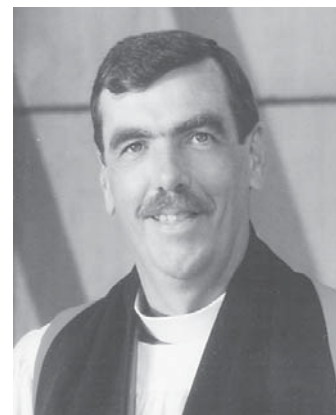
In celebrating the last 175 years of ministry, we acknowledge the past and present contributions that the people and congregations of the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont have made throughout the years and the deep faithfulness that has been a hallmark of our life as a diocese. Our

celebration so far has included, among other things, the composition of a wonderful anniversary hymn, the mounting of handsome parish shields in the foyer of the Cathedral, a new historical narrative about the journey of our diocese toward the election of its first bishop, the Rock Point School calendar project highlighting the biographies of our bishops, the use of Bishop Hopkins's crozier during my visitations to congregations, an inspiring and engaging visit from our new Presiding Bishop, and a memorable celebration of our diocese at Washington National Cathedral on Vermont Day.

The next 175 years of ministry will be filled with challenges and opportunities. Perhaps none of them is more important than our commitment to environmental stewardship. There is hope for our world and its future. We are part of that hope and are called as part of our baptismal living to respect the dignity of all God has created, and to full participation in God's mission to restore all people and all creation to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Speaking to the despair that many often feel in the face of the tremendous environmental challenges before us, the 2003 New England Bishops' Pastoral Letter on the Environment issued this faith reminder: *Let us experience despair, lest we feel the hopeless conviction that it is too late to change anything, too late to turn this around, we must root ourselves in the deepest convictions of our faith. We put our trust in a God who loves every inch of creation and whose covenant with Creation can never be broken (“I will . . . remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” Genesis 9:16). We share in Christ's crucifixion, letting ourselves feel and mourn the wounds of Creation. We share in Christ's resurrection, bearing witness to the Christ who bursts out of the tomb, who proclaims that life, not death, has the last word, and who gives us power to roll away the stone. We receive the Holy Spirit, source of all truth, who sends forth faithful stewards of God's creation. We nourish ourselves at the Eucharistic table, where Christ gives himself to us in the natural elements of bread and wine, and restores our connec-*

**“The connection between ending global poverty and environmental sustainability runs deep.”**



*tions not only with God and one another, but also with the whole web of creation.*

That same pastoral letter ended with a statement of commitment by the bishops, which we encouraged Episcopalians throughout New England to embrace. I end my column this month by recommending myself to those actions and by inviting you to do the same as we head to Convention 2008 and the next 175 years of ministry as the Episcopal Diocese of Vermont.

*As brothers and sisters in Christ, we commit ourselves and we urge every Episcopalian in every parish and diocese throughout the Province of New England:*

- To act together to honor the goodness and sacredness of God's creation;
- To acknowledge the urgency of the planetary crisis in which we now find ourselves;
- To pray and take action to restore a right relationship between humankind and creation;
- To lift up prayers in personal and public worship for environmental justice, human rights, and sustainable development;
- To repent of greed and waste, and to seek simplicity of life;
- To commit ourselves to energy conservation and the use of clean, renewable sources of energy;
- To reduce, reuse, and recycle, and as far as possible to buy products from recycled materials;
- To realize that, through participation in community, public policy, and business decision-making, we have corporate as well as individual opportunities to practice environmental stewardship and justice;
- To seek to understand and uproot the political, social, and economic causes of environmental abuse.

Faithfully,

+ Thomas

### The Episcopal Diocese of Vermont

The Right Reverend Thomas Clark Ely, Bishop

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Anne Clarke Brown, Editor

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## Celebrating the abundance of God

♪ *Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count your blessings, see what God hath done!  
Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.* ♪

Johnson Oatman, Jr.

by Angela Emerson

As I travel around the diocese visiting with both ordained and lay leaders, I continue to delight in the spirit of joy that permeates the conversations. When I ask people, "What excites you/ attracted you/ keeps you at your church?" there is energy in the answer. More and more I find myself talking to stewardship committees, rectors, and vestries about stewardship as a celebration of the abundance of God's gifts.

In every conversation, I hear about an abundance of gifts within the community. The list of gifts is endless, and the types of gifts are as varied as the congregations themselves. Without fail, when people turn their attention to naming those gifts and acknowledging those gifts as a sign of God's presence and activity in their midst, people rejoice. The people with whom I have met are practicing stewardship. They are celebrating the generosity of God.

Too often, stewardship is conceived of as just one more programmatic issue that requires volunteers, scheduling, and planning. An even more basic misconception

is that stewardship is the same thing as the pledge card or fundraising. **Wrong!** Stewardship at its most basic is a celebration. It is a celebration of the gifts of our lives, our personalities, our various talents, and a celebration of joy itself. A stewardship "program" in its essence is an opportunity to recognize gratefully, joyfully, and intentionally the enormous amount of giving of self and resources that goes on constantly in our churches. It becomes an opportunity to evaluate and improve the management and utilization of all the resources that we have. Stewardship is celebrating what God is doing in our midst.

We worship a God that gives in abundance and without expectation of return. When we grow in our image of God, we too give in abundance and in a spirit of love and joy. So consider making a benchmark of your stewardship program a celebration of all that has been entrusted to you. Celebrate the generosity of your congregation and the God we worship!

The Rev. Angela Emerson is the Diocese of Vermont's minister for stewardship development.

## Episcopal Communicators meet Mountain Echo wins Polly Bond Awards

by Anne Clarke Brown

The 35<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Episcopal Communicators, an organization for professional and volunteer communicators working in The Episcopal Church (TEC) and related Episcopal organizations, drew 120 participants to Seattle, Washington, April 8-12, to learn, worship and enjoy fellowship with their peers.

**Polly Bond Awards**

A highlight of the conference each year is the Polly Bond Awards dinner. The awards acknowledge excellence and achievement in the ministry of church communication. Members of the group submit examples of their work to be judged by non-member professional communicators. The Mountain Echo competes in a division for newspapers and periodicals with circulation below 12,000 (Echo circulation is 4,300), and Editor Anne Brown accepted awards in three categories.

The anonymously written "Ask Sr. Bible Person" column received an Award of Excellence in the humor category (November 2007 column about Luke 16:1-13, the story of the "dishonest steward").

Editor Anne Brown won an Award of Merit in the editorial/commentary category for her April 2007 editorial, "Signs of concern and signs of hope in the Anglican Communion."

The Rev. John Morris won an Award of Merit in the critical review category for "Biography of Desmond Tutu is rewarding read," which appeared in the March 2007 issue. Past issues of the Mountain Echo are available on the diocesan Web site in PDF format. Click the "back issues" link on the home page under "Mountain Echo."

Bonnie Anderson, president of TEC's House of Deputies, hosted an opening reception and spoke to communicators about the need to emphasize the bicameral nature of the church's governance. Communicators ought to educate their dioceses about the connection between the Baptismal Covenant's call to ministry and the participation of both lay and ordained people in the governance of the church, Anderson said. "Tell the story of the authority of the laity" she urged the communicators.

Anderson acknowledged that the church has lagged behind in terms of communications technology. The work of communications and the infrastructure needed to deliver news and information ought to be seen as a mission priority, Anderson said.

**The emerging church**

The conference theme, "Emerging Communications for an Emerging Church," provided a focus for the guest speakers, the worship and many of the workshops. Keynote speaker Diana Butler Bass, professor at Virginia Seminary and author of *The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a New Old Church* (Alban, 2004), led off at the opening plenary session.

Butler Bass told the gathering that communicators, as people who tell the story of TEC, can be the "bards" for the church. Noting that, "Our questions form who we are as a community," she suggested asking "from what are we emerging" and "toward what are we emerging." She noted that the two questions are connected because every group or individual carries the past on the journey to the future. "Like a forest," she said, "you get emergent growth from old trees."

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## Letters and Opinion

**Letters to the Editor** (300 words or fewer) and **Opinion** articles are welcome and encouraged on any relevant topic. **Letters must have a name and phone number or email address so I can check details.** 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**

To the editor:

Congratulations on receiving three Polly Bond awards at the Episcopal Communicators Annual Conference in April of this year in Seattle, Washington [see article on this page].

Episcopal Life On-line lists all the

recipients of the 28th Annual Polly Bond Awards. I am so pleased to see you and the Mountain Echo receiving some very well deserved recognition in the category of dioceses below 12,000. Congratulations.

Judy Krum  
Bennington, Vermont

## Laughter on Easter

by John Morris

[From the homily given at St. Martin's Church, Fairlee, March 30, 2008, the Second Sunday of Easter.]

There was once a wedding at a very large and fancy Episcopal church. The place was packed, and there was lots of incense in the air. The heat and the incense and the occasion were just too much for one acolyte, who fainted in front of the altar during the liturgy. As the acolyte was being carried off by two ushers, the officiant didn't miss a beat and simply said, "For those of you who are not familiar with The Episcopal Church, it is our custom to sacrifice a child at every wedding."

Assuming the acolyte recovered, we can laugh at that story. And that laughter is especially appropriate during the Easter season. I think it's always good for Episcopalians, who often take ourselves and our worship so seriously, to lighten up and bit and poke some fun at ourselves. As Garrison Keillor says, "When Episcopalians hear something funny during worship, they smile as loudly as they can!" But more profoundly, laughter on Easter is consistent with a very ancient tradition in the church. Some ancient Christian theologians wrote and preached about the Resurrection as "God's cosmic joke," and they said that God played the ultimate practical joke on the Devil by bringing life out of death. Surprise! Death is not the final word. Surprise! The power of God is stronger than the power of death. Hallelujah!

The phrase, *Risus Paschalis* (Easter laugh), was used to describe the holy humor that those theologians and preachers thought was very appropriate during the Easter season. The day after Easter was called "Holy Humor Monday" and was set aside as a holiday on which Christians were encouraged to share jokes and play tricks on each other, including throwing water on each other, in a spirit of joy and festivity.

On the Sunday after Easter this year, many churches all over the United States celebrated "Holy Humor Sunday." If you are interested, you can Google that topic and see the wide range of activities that were part of worship services, such as incorporating jokes and laughter into the liturgy and encouraging worshippers and officiants to wear funny costumes. Lots of Easter laughs. Lots of *Risus Paschalis*.

There is much to be serious about in our world, and Christians do not avoid the dark side of life. There are some types

of laughter that are simply efforts to escape from reality and pretend that tragedy and evil and injustice don't exist. That is often phony and is not Easter laughter.

The despair and grief and fear experienced by the disciples on the first Easter evening was profoundly real. Yet, in the midst of that despair, Jesus appeared and... Surprise! The joke is on Pilate and the Temple authorities and the guards at the tomb (who, according to Matthew, fainted away just like that acolyte in the wedding). The joke is on the Powers That Be, because the Resurrection shows that they have no ultimate power. The Divine Joker has the last word. Ha, ha, ha! *Risus Paschalis*. And Easter laughter echoes all across the land.

Here is a fascinating quote I recently discovered: "Humor is not the opposite of seriousness; humor is the opposite of despair."

In the serious events of the first Easter, Jesus said to the women at the tomb, "Don't be afraid." In other words, don't remain in despair. To Thomas, Jesus said, "Here I am. You thought it was the End, but it's just the beginning." I can imagine an elaboration of John's text in which Jesus could say, "Let's have a good laugh together and get on with a new way of living and a new way of dying." And Thomas could answer, "O.K. Let's do it!" And off they go, arm in arm, sharing a good laugh.

On the wall next to the computer in our parish office, I have a small copy of the painting entitled "Jesus Laughing." It shows a healthy and hearty Jesus, head thrown back, mouth open in a boisterous laugh. A man of sorrows? Of course. A person of joy? Absolutely. Both aspects are true for Jesus and I hope are part of our vocation. We are serious about pain and suffering and injustice, but we see all those realities through the lens of the Resurrection, so we can join the Psalmist and say, "O God, you will not abandon me to the grave." That means we can stare death in the face and live in hope. "Ha, ha, ha, Death. The joke is on you."

In a local bookstore recently, I browsed through a newly published book entitled *Cancer on \$5 a Day*, by Robert Schimmel, who is a professional comedian. At the age of 50, he found himself in the hospital, waiting for a diagnosis. The doctor came in and said, "You have non-Hodgkins lymphoma." Schimmel immediately replied, "Just my luck. I get the one not named after the guy!" The doctor then said,

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## Give It 4 Good Campaign: choose “compassion over consumption”

A new campaign launched this month by Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation ([www.e4gr.org](http://www.e4gr.org)) urges Americans to give all or part of the “economic stimulus checks” to be sent to taxpayers beginning in May toward organizations working to alleviate global poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The government expects the “economic stimulus checks” to be spent on consumer goods to bolster a stagnant economy. According to Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation (EGR), the call to consume more is indefensible economically, environmentally and morally.

The purpose of Give It 4 Good is to foster a conversation about how to follow Christ in a culture of over-consumption—and to give people a chance to put their treasure where their heart is,” said a press release from EGR.

The Rev. Mike Kinman, EGR executive director, adds that the Give It 4 Good Campaign suggests “choosing compassion over consumption. It’s recognizing the link between our everyday consumer decisions and the economic systems that produce and sustain extreme poverty. Like everything else,” said Kinman, “it’s about wrestling with the question, ‘What would Jesus do?’”

The campaign has the full support of Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD). ERD President Robert W. Radtke said in a press release that he is excited about EGR’s challenge to raise the church’s consciousness about the global distribution of wealth.

## UCC, NCC call for preach-in about race

by J. Bennett Guess

As a proactive response to the heightened interest surrounding Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago (home congregation of Senator Barack Obama), national and regional UCC leaders, joined by the National Council of Churches (NCC), have called for a nationwide “sacred conversation” about race in the United States.

The Rev. John H. Thomas, the UCC’s general minister and president, called upon the UCC’s 10,000 active and retired clergy to purposefully preach on the issue of race on May 18—Trinity Sunday—and to begin important race-related conversations in each of the denomination’s congregations, seminaries and other ministry settings. He said the UCC’s national offices in Cleveland are preparing resource materials that will assist pastors with preparations for May 18 and beyond ([www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)).

“The members of Trinity UCC are going through a very difficult time right now,” Thomas said. “The intersection of politics, religion and race has heightened our awareness of how easy it is for conversations about race to be anything but sacred. That’s why we are calling for sacred conversations, and for the respect for sacred space, to begin right here and right now.”

### Make an online pledge

EGR is encouraging people to make a Give It 4 Good pledge, which takes about two minutes to make online at [www.giveit4good.org](http://www.giveit4good.org). Several levels of giving are offered—from 100% to 10% (a tithe) to as little as 0.7%. Those whose income is too high to receive checks are asked to determine what their check would be if they qualified (based on marital status and number of dependent children) and give all or part of that amount.

The campaign provides an excellent opportunity to meet the commitment urged by the 2006 Diocesan Convention to give at least 0.7% of one’s income to groups working to achieve the MDGs.

ERD hopes people will give at least part of their pledge to the MDGs Inspiration Fund, which was launched to promote health and fight disease by working to achieve MDGs 4, 5 and 6. (Give at [www.er-d.org](http://www.er-d.org), or call 1-800-334-7626, ext. 5129.) Congregations and members of the Diocese of Vermont gave over \$34,000 to the fund at the 2007 Diocesan Convention Eucharist.

The Give It 4 Good Campaign’s Web site shows who has given, the total pledged and the organizations that are benefiting. There are also related advocacy actions, materials for personal and congregational study and Sunday bulletin inserts linking the campaign to lectionary readings.

[Sources for this story are *Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation*, *Episcopal Relief and Development*, and *Episcopal News Service*.]

The Rev. Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, said the NCC has historically been deeply involved in the struggle for civil rights. “But in recent years our efforts have lagged,” he said. “I commit myself to make this a priority of my own leadership at the NCC and to invite all of our churches into this sacred conversation.”

J. Bennett Guess serves in the Office of General Ministries of the UCC.

## Laughter on Easter

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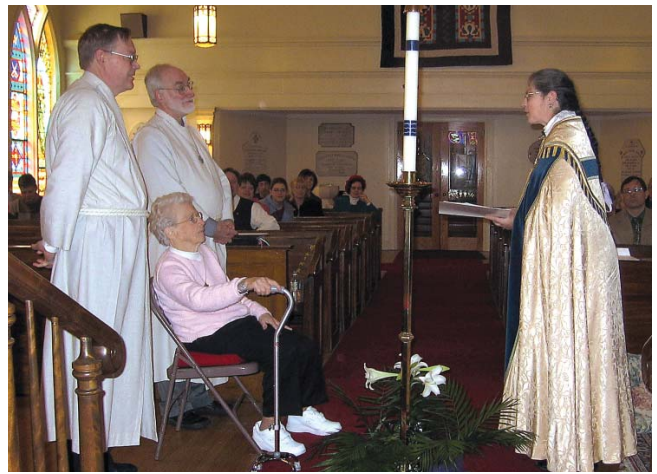
“Well, if you can find something funny at this moment, you’re going to be o.k.”

Schimmel’s joke is not a real thigh-slapper, and his recovery was more complicated than just telling a few jokes, but his reply to the doctor seems to have a hint of *Risus Paschalis*. And how appropriate that it comes from a Jewish comedian.

We don’t make light of suffering and pain, but we do have the power of God to sustain us in the midst of despair. Which means we can lift up our hearts, give thanks to God, and sometimes share some good laughs. Hallelujah!

The Rev. John C. Morris is rector at St. Martin’s, Fairlee.

## Saint Mary’s celebrates Phoebe Denny’s 95th birthday



James W. Proctor photo

During the Easter service on March 23, 2008, Saint Mary’s, Northfield, honored Phoebe Denny, who was born 95 years ago on Easter Sunday. She has waited all her life for her birthday to again fall on Easter. Family and friends gathered to pay tribute to Denny, who has been a member of Saint Mary’s since 1939. Both the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori and the Bishop of Vermont, the Rt. Rev. Thomas C. Ely, wrote letters of congratulation and prayers for Denny that were read during the service by Saint Mary’s rector, the Rev. Lee Alison Crawford.

Denny was joined by two other parishioners, Peter Bartram and Brett Murphy, who shared the Easter birthday with Denny. Crawford gave all three a special birthday blessing.

## Grants available to congregations for MDG efforts

The diocesan Global Reconciliation Committee has approved an application form and set a timetable for awarding grants to congregations who wish to support programs aimed at realizing the Millennium Development Goals. The awards will come from funds allocated in the diocesan budget to meet a commitment of giving a percentage of budgeted operating income to international development programs. \$6,000 is available for these awards in 2008.

A congregation can apply for funds to defray the up-front costs of a fundraising project, or a congregation can apply for matching funds—\$1 of diocesan money to match \$2 raised by the congregation—for a specific international project or program.

Applications are due on June 1, and September 1. Application forms may be downloaded from the diocesan Web site by clicking on the “Diocesan Organizations” button on the left side of the home page and then on “Global Reconciliation Committee.” Or, call or email Jackie Connaway at the diocesan office: 800-286-3437; [adminasst@dioceseofvermont.org](mailto:adminasst@dioceseofvermont.org).

Note that vestry approval is required for an application to be considered, so plan accordingly. For more information, contact Lee Alison Crawford, 802-485-6011; [lacinv94@aol.com](mailto:lacinv94@aol.com).

## Robinson discusses film Continued from Page A

Robinson said, “I ask the question, ‘Could it be that this is yet another instance of the Holy Spirit leading us into the kind of truth that no one could bear 2000 years ago, or a thousand years ago, or fifty years ago?’ And then I say, ‘How exciting is it to worship the living God who is still interacting with us and didn’t lock everything up in Scripture 2000 years ago and, sort of over his shoulder, is going off on vacation and saying, ‘I hope this works out for you. I’m outta here.’ That seems to resonate with people.”

Responding to a question about criticisms that he is neglecting his diocese, Robinson said, “June 7 will be the fifth anniversary of my election. This five years is just what God I think has in mind for me right now, and it is a part of my ministry. 90% of my ministry is in New Hampshire, and it’s what keeps me sane, because there,” he said, “I am just a bishop. Nobody cares about this

other stuff. That keeps me grounded, and I love it more than life itself. It’s so amazing to get to do what you feel God has called you to do. There is just nothing like that.” He continued, “I’ve had to come to some certain peace about the fact that God has also called me to this other ministry. And my diocese has had to come to that understanding as well.” He added, “I think what they feel is that this is part of their ministry to the world through me.”

In conclusion, Robinson said, “I am finally unapologetic about speaking up about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people in places where there is no voice for them. I don’t know why God chose now. I certainly don’t know why God chose me, but I am going to try to be as good a steward of that opportunity and that privilege as I can be.” ❖

## Vermont Day Continued from Page A

cans. The Rev. Linda Maloney said, "Instead of following the crowds to the Tidal Basin to view the cherry blossoms, we went indoors to look at the gigantic displays of guns and Bibles, both instruments of destruction visited upon our native peoples."

Saturday concluded with a visit to St. Luke's Church, the nation's first black Episcopal parish not founded as a mission of a white church. Their hosts led them in a series of exercises focused on racial and social justice and spoke about the challenges facing their aging congregation in a changing neighborhood.

### Cathedral Forum

Cathedral Dean Lloyd moderated a Sunday morning conversation with Congressman Lewis, who described his childhood, his involvement in the civil rights movement and his friendship with Dr. King. He said, "I saw my involvement in the civil rights movement as an extension of my faith."

Asked about how he maintains non-violence and the capacity to forgive in the face of the sort of brutality he witnessed, Lewis spoke about the power of God, of the Holy Spirit and of the way of Jesus. He said, "I accepted non-violence as a way of life, not as a tactic. The best thing is the way of love, to love everybody."

"Martin Luther King," said Lewis, "felt he had a calling. He never put his finger in the

air to see which way the wind was blowing." If he were alive today, Lewis said, "I believe he would tell us to take care of the poor, to provide for the homeless, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and to bring an end to war."

Bishop Ely told Lewis that he was there with the chair of the Vermont Dismantling Racism Commission and that a group of Vermonters concerned about issues of racial justice was also present. He asked Lewis, "What message can we take back to Vermont, which is one of the whitest states in the union?"

Lewis responded, "'One of the things you can do is travel through some of the areas where there happen to be people of another race and get to know those people, and invite some of the members of the African-American community to Vermont.' Reflecting later on the exchange, Bishop Ely said that by that measure, Vermont seems to be on the right track.

### Vermont Day Eucharist

Other Vermont clergy who participated in the service with Ely included Vogele of St. Paul's, White River Junction; Maloney of St. Matthew's, Enosburg Falls; the Rev. Lisa Ransom of St. Dunstan's, Waitsfield; and the Rev. Sandy Zabriskie of St. James', Essex Junction. In addition, Maddie Baughman of St. Dunstan's carried the state flag in



Photo courtesy of Nancy Vogele

Vermont Day pilgrims and guide, Laura Wright (center), at the Sandy Spring Slave Museum.

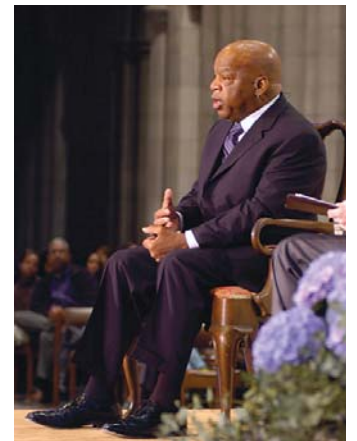
the service's grand opening procession, and Mark Hutchins and Grace Willingham of St. Michael's, Brattleboro, and Jodi Gonyaw Worth and Cara Worth of Christ Church, Island Pond, served as oblation bearers.

In his sermon, Lewis said, "We may no longer have a leader like Martin Luther King, Jr., but his legacy lives. He is gone and now it is up to all of us to do our part to help build this tabernacle of God. We all have the power to lead a revolution of values, a revolution of ideas and not just in America but around the globe."

Lewis concluded, "I say to you this morning, if you use your power to love and not to hate, to build and not to tear down, heal and not to kill, if you would continue to pursue a standard of excellence in your daily lives, in your homes, in your communities, your work, in your hearts, if you hold on to this dream, this manifestation of faith and keep your eyes on the prize, then a Beloved Community a tabernacle of God is yours to build.

"So I say to you, walk with the wind and let the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and let the spirit of love, the spirit of peace, and the Holy Spirit of God Almighty be your guide. Peace be with you."

Ely said of the sermon, "Lewis did a great job of bringing us back to the themes Dr. King preached on over 40 years ago." Reactions from other Vermonters to the sermon, as well as to the whole weekend, were similarly positive. In her sermon the following Sunday, Maloney said, "With the eyes and ears that had been opened by all



ACB photo

Georgia Congressman John Lewis responds to a question from Bishop Tom Ely.

that had happened on Saturday, the seeing and the hearing, the breaking of bread and the sharing, we recognized the risen Lord. We got up from that celebration, from the breaking of the word and the bread in the soaring nave of the Cathedral, and we returned to Vermont to gather you and our other congregations together and to tell you: 'The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Martin, and to John, and to all of us.'"

Photos, Lewis's sermon and more on Vermont Day can be found on the diocesan Web site (link on the home page) and at [www.cathedral.org/cathedral/programs/vt08/1.shtml](http://www.cathedral.org/cathedral/programs/vt08/1.shtml). ❖



ACB photo

Trinity, Rutland, music director Jim Cassarino leads the Green Mountain College Choir. They performed preludes for the March 30 Evensong at Washington National Cathedral.

## Episcopal communicators explore themes of the emerging church Continued from Page C

Butler Bass sees The Episcopal Church emerging from "a place of cultural prominence," from the liberal theology of the previous century, and from the top-down structure of the church as imaged in a corporate model.

From its former cultural prominence, the church can carry its knowledge of how systems of power work to be able to bring about change in people's lives. The church can keep its passion for questions as it moves toward a "more generous theological space in which theology can be re-enchanting." And the church knows how to structure religious work as it becomes more networked than top-down—in Thomas Friedman's terms, a more flattened community (*The World is Flat*, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2005).

Butler Bass suggested that the form into which the church is emerging can be imaged as three interconnected circles of "practice, wisdom and tradition." Emerging congregations, she said, are "flattened communities"

in which tradition and the search for meaning are linked to the practice of hospitality and justice.

The Rt. Rev. Gregory Rickel, Bishop of Olympia, spoke at the opening banquet, about the rapidity of contemporary communications, about new generations who value authenticity above loyalty to institutions, about the challenge to find creative forms of leadership that go beyond the mere exercise of authority, and about the need to put as much intentional energy into the church at the edge—the emerging church—as into the establishment church at the center.

Rickel challenged his audience to "be the prophets you can be," to be "more than spectators" and "teach the church." He asked them to be mindful of language and code terms that exclude those not already on the inside. He concluded, "We have become a generation that peers suspiciously at one another and is afraid of the truth and that

generation has become the Church, it has become the center. We must travel to the edges. You can take us there, you can help us hear it and see it."

David Domke, head of the Journalism Department in the School of Communications at the University of Washington and author of *The God Strategy: How Religion Became a Political Weapon*, told conference participants that politics in the United States today "is defined by a calculated, deliberate and political use of faith that is unprecedented in American history."

After describing how he believes this came about, Domke argued that, "It is a political dynamic that is potentially fatal for democracy and faith," and that it is a dynamic that can and must be changed so that the founders' vision of the separation of church and state can be restored.

The Rev. Matthew Moretz, who is known for his church-related YouTube "webisodes" ([www.youtube.com/user/FatherMatthew](http://www.youtube.com/user/FatherMatthew)),

told the communicators that they can help TEC embrace what he called "the new social world" of the internet in ways that "incarnate the Gospel in this virtual space."

Venues such as YouTube create "radical accessibility and thus a new chance to tell our story, albeit in segments," Moretz said. Online video content is "decidedly short-form. Sermons don't work because they are created for a different context," he said. His goal is to "point to *koinonia* in Christ."

A rich menu of informative workshops and worship services hosted by Seattle's Church of the Apostles rounded out the conference. Church of the Apostles ([www.apostleschurch.org](http://www.apostleschurch.org)), led by the Rev. Karen Ward, describes itself as "a future church with an ancient faith." Their purpose is to "help God change everything" by participating in God's future within today's culture in their own local context.

[Mary Frances Schjonberg of *Episcopal News Service* contributed to this story.]

## Northwest Deanery 1

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Members of the Deanery participated in a trip to Montreal organized by Holy Trinity, Swanton, April 13. It included a trip to the Musée des Beaux-Arts to participate in family day with Inuit and African mask-making workshops, the Cathedral for Evensong at 4, and a stop for supper at the Newport Buffet.

HOLY TRINITY, Swanton, resumes hosting the Open Door Dinners. The schedule for the current quarter includes: Fridays, April 25, May 30, June 27, all from 5:30–7 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Summer Music at GRACE, Sheldon, opens with Mark Sustic and Friends' 6th annual Farewell Reunion concert. For details visit [www.gracechurchsheldon.org](http://www.gracechurchsheldon.org).

## Otter Creek Deanery 2

A huge thank you to Donna Abramov, who is retiring after many years of faithfully reporting Otter Creek Deanery News. I would welcome a volunteer. Call me at 802-672-5250 or email, [abrown@dioceseofvermont.org](mailto:abrown@dioceseofvermont.org).

ST. THOMAS & GRACE, Brandon/Forestdale, held an April 12 memorial service for the Rev. Arthur Parker, rector of the congregations from 1977–1986. The congregation, which has been served by Interim Rector Lee Ferry since early 2007, anticipates calling a priest-in-partnership sometime this summer.

ST. STEPHEN'S, Middlebury, will hold their annual Parish Weekend at Rock Point, May 2–4. Eight members went on a mission trip to Honduras in February, where they worked on projects at the LAMB Institute. Devon Jersild's report to the parish describes her interaction with an eight year-old boy named Elias, who taught her Spanish and told of his gratitude for being at the LAMB home for abandoned and abused children: "I like it here," he said. "Before, I couldn't play. I had no toys. I never played, *nunca*, never. Now I play." Jersild writes, "Where I saw poverty, Elias saw plenty. Where I was seeing deficits, he was feeling gratitude." She continues, "Elias's gratitude allows him now to study and imagine himself

### Changes at Grace, Sheldon

Grace Church will bid a very fond farewell to long-time "supply" priest, the Reverend David Walters at the Trinity Sunday service, May 18. The congregation is "everlastingly grateful to Father David for his years of devoted service." All are invited to a celebration during and following the service. The installation of a generous gift of new carpeting in the chancel will also be celebrated.

Grace Church welcomes the Reverend Janet Brown, who has accepted a call to be priest-in-partnership at Grace Church beginning in June.

# ❖ deanery doings ❖

## News of Parishes and People in the Diocese of Vermont

compiled and reported by the Mountain Echo "Deanery Bureau Chiefs"

into a future of helping others. And that change in his heart is his biggest treasure, a treasure he offers to me."

St. Stephen's Outreach Committee has identified fighting hunger in Addison County as an outreach priority for the parish for the coming year. In May, they will assemble newborn kits for Mothers Without Borders, with a goal of 30 kits. Last year's kits went to Children's Village in Zambia.

TRINITY, Rutland, welcomed the Rev. Don Morris on April 6. He will serve in an interim capacity until a priest-in-partnership is called. The Women of Trinity held a very successful rummage sale April 12. All proceeds are given to local outreach projects.

## Southwest Deanery 3

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The Eco-justice Team at ST. PETER'S, Bennington, under the new leadership of Jordan Schell-Lambert, resumed meeting on Tuesday evenings in April to discuss issues about food through the lenses of sustainability and social justice. The focus is both local and global.

## Southeast Deanery 4

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ST. MICHAEL'S, Brattleboro, is providing office space to CHABHA (Children Affected by HIV/AIDS), which supports projects in Africa that serve children made vulnerable by the illness or death of their parents. Rector Thomas Brown joined parishioners Susanna Grannis (CHABHA founder) and Dolly Glennon in a visit to CHABHA projects in South Africa and Rwanda in April.

A group from St. Michael's traveled to El Salvador in March, where they worked at the community of El Maisal. They are planning more trips in November of this year and February and perhaps June 2009. And yet another group returned to the Gulf Coast in April to do Katrina relief work, with plans to finish building a house.

ST. LUKE'S, Chester, will offer a choral evensong on Trinity Sunday, May 18, at 4 p.m., followed by a reception.

Two members of ST. MARY'S IN THE MOUNTAINS, Wilmington, joined the members of St. Michael's on their April trip to help build a house on the Gulf Coast. The congregation took up two special offerings to help fund the trip. Evan Johnson, a member working toward his Eagle Scout status, is raising funds to make the Brattleboro Music Center building handicap accessible.

## Three Rivers Deanery 5

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OUR SAVIOUR, Killington, invited members of the community to join them in collecting backpacks and supplies for students at the New Sudan Education Initiative's new school in Southern Sudan.

ST. BARNABAS', Norwich, is participating in the Upper Valley Interfaith Project, a federation of congregations and other groups that have agreed to work together to build a stronger community, develop new leaders and tackle the issues that impede justice and a good quality of life in the region.

## Central Vermont Deanery 6

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Thanks to Stephen Whiteley, who has volunteered to gather deanery news. Please share your congregation's news with him.

ST. JOHN'S IN THE MOUNTAINS, Stowe, celebrated the ordination of the Rev. Regina Christianson to the sacred order of priests on April 12 [see Page H].

## Northeast Deanery 7

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ST. MARK'S, Newport, has begun a new season of Music for a Sunday Afternoon [see Page G]. Liam Bailey-Rowe, seven year-old son of Gwen and John Bailey-Rowe, celebrated his birthday by requesting food donations for the church's food pantry instead of presents for himself. During the offertory, gift bags of food—Liam's birthday gifts—were presented. At announcement time, someone said, "Who can top that?"

## Champlain Deanery 8

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Betsy Yung, Bureau Chief

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The COTSWALK is Sunday May 4; sign up to walk or support a walker to raise funds for the Committee on Temporary Shelter programs to aid the homeless. A second Dismas House for men and women coming out of corrections will open in Winooski in May. Volunteers are needed to serve as cooks for an evening meal or to adopt one of the ten bedrooms. Contact Carol Snow 655-0300. Their An-

nual Dinner/Auction will be May 3; tickets are \$40. Reservations 655-0300.

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, Burlington's weekly meditation group will add a daytime meeting on Wednesdays from 10:30–noon. There will be quiet music, a short teaching, 30 minutes of silent meditation, followed by questions and answers, reading and prayer. Contact Ken Poppe 864-0471 x 17 or [kpope@stpaulscathedralvt.org](mailto:kpope@stpaulscathedralvt.org). The church school children provided support to ERD through fundraisers and then voted to purchase a latrine, smokeless stove, and mosquito nets. At their February discussion they agreed to donate \$100 for prenatal care for 2 infants and school costs for a child orphaned by AIDS.

ST. ANDREW'S, Colchester, is looking for 4 additional Sunday school teachers next year, beginning fall 2009; contact Diane Casey. Plans are to include the middle school youth in the liturgy once a month.

ST. JAMES', Essex Junction, has received a \$1000 challenge grant for matching funds to benefit COTS. The Religious Education Committee is sponsoring workshops around the theme of Health Care Planning May 10. Call 802-878-4014 for information.

TRINITY, Shelburne, holds a Mens' Fellowship Breakfast on the second Saturday of the month, 8–9:30 a.m. The next Senior Community Luncheon will be May 12; donations of \$4–\$6 are appreciated. Barbara Hibbitts will play the piano for a sing-along.

AT ALL SAINTS, South Burlington, Joshua Cheney will lead three forums on Sundays at 9 a.m. in May exploring the practice of our Christian faith. May 3 is a Gardening Day to complete plantings in the memorial garden. Essex High School athletic director Ed Hockenbury will speak at the men's breakfast on May 3.

CALVARY, Underhill will hold a rummage sale May 9–10 [see Page G]. ❖

## Enter your chili at St. Peter's Tongues of Fire Celebration

by Judy Krum

On Sunday, May 11, the Tongues of Fire Chili Cook-Off will be held in St. Peter's Parish Hall, 200 Pleasant St., Bennington, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. With categories ranging from Mild to Inferno, all entries will be evaluated and judged by a panel of connoisseurs and restaurateurs. Chili entries are invited from all—parishioners, people in the community, and members of the diocese. There is no entry fee, but please register by May 7; forms are available at [www.stpetersbenningtonvt.org](http://www.stpetersbenningtonvt.org) or from the church office (802-442-2911). Prizes will be awarded.

After the judging, everyone is invited to enjoy the variety of the chili flavors along with cornbread, salad, beverages, and chili-pepper cookies.

The Tongues of Fire Chili Cook-Off is the next-to-last event of St. Peter's Cornerstone Centennial Year of Celebration. May 11 is Mother's Day as well as Pentecost, and everyone is invited to bring their mothers to this fun event.

Judy Krum is a member of St. Peter's, Bennington.

## More Coming Events

### Cathedral Arts

Cathedral Church of St. Paul, 2 Cherry Street, Burlington

#### Piano Potpourri

Sunday, June 1, 3:00 p.m.

Members of Greenfield Piano Associates perform music of Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Ravel, Fauré, Gershwin and Ginastera. Admission: Donation to GPAScholarship fund.

### Essex Children's Choir, celebrating Wayne Hobbs

Sunday, June 8, 4:30 p.m.

A musical tour presenting highlights of operatic works from the beginnings to the twentieth century. This journey of music and drama unfolds through arias and excerpted choruses of early Italian and baroque opera to classical and 19th century Italian opera. The tour continues with national styles of the twentieth century and sounds of American opera. This concert is a celebration of Wayne Hobbs' debut at La Scala Opera House in May 2008. General admission \$15; seniors & students, \$13; age 15 and younger, \$6.

### Tuesdays Noon to One

A free, informal noontime concert series. Bring lunch. Coffee and tea provided.

**May 6, How Can We Keep from Singing?** Voice students of Jill Levis perform a potpourri of songs and arias.

**May 20, Songs for a While.** Voice students of Margot Button perform beloved art songs and arias.

### Annual Spring Rummage Sale

Friday, May 9, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. and Saturday, May 10, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Calvary Episcopal Church, Route 15, Underhill

The sale will feature clothing, books, toys, housewares, miscellaneous items, and some great bargains. Questions, call 899-2326.

### Stone Church Arts

Immanuel Episcopal Church, 20 Church Street, Bellows Falls

Tickets for most Stone Church Arts concerts are \$15 and \$10 (seniors and children under 12). Call 802-463-3100 for information, or visit [www.immanuelepiscopal.org](http://www.immanuelepiscopal.org).

### Elizabeth Reian Bennett, Shakuhachi flute

Friday, May 16, 7:30 p.m.

Elizabeth Reian Bennett is the first woman to be certified a Grand Master of the shakuhachi and one of only a handful of western players trained in traditional Japanese music. She has studied and performed with Living National Treasure Aoki Reibo, recognized as Japan's foremost shakuhachi instrumentalist, for 25 years. She has performed frequently in Japan and worldwide with a repertoire that encompasses the ancient wandering monk solos, classical Japanese chamber music, east-west contemporary compositions and works of her own improvisation. She is active in the Boston area. (Underwriting by The Framery and The Queen's Maids.)

### Music for a Sunday Afternoon

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 44 Second Street, Newport

For information on the full fourth season of the Sunday concert series, visit [www.musicforasundayafternoon.com](http://www.musicforasundayafternoon.com).

### Constitution Brass Quintet

Sunday, May 18, 4:00 p.m.

The Constitution Brass Quintet was founded in 1983, has appeared extensively throughout New England and has been a featured group at First Night Burlington since 1991. In July 1995, the group performed at the National Governors' Conference. The quintet's extensive repertoire spans over four centuries of music composition, from the 16th Century to the present—literally "Renaissance to ragtime and beyond." Added program features include historical and musical commentary, humorous anecdotes, and members of the quintet performing in the midst of the audience.

Vermont composer Gwyneth Walker says, "The Constitution Brass Quintet are fine musicians who also understand the value of entertaining their audiences. Their concerts are well-crafted, well-played and, quite simply, a lot of fun!"

### Weekend Silent Retreat

Friday, June 6, through Sunday, June 8, 2008.

Sisters of St. Margaret Bertram Conference Center  
Harden Hill Road, South Duxbury, Massachusetts

The Society of Saint Margaret, an Episcopal community of women based in Boston, will offer a silent retreat titled, "A Palace in Time: an exploration of the meaning of Sabbath," at their seaside property in South Duxbury. Arrive between 3 and 5:30 p.m. The retreat will open with a 5:45 p.m. introduction/orientation session, and end with lunch at Noon on Sunday. The cost is \$180.00, with \$90 as a deposit when registering. For more information, or to register, contact the Reservation Desk at the Boston Convent at 617-445-8961 x127. Hurry, as this retreat fills up very quickly! To learn about the Society of Saint Margaret, visit [www.smbos.com](http://www.smbos.com).

## New ECVA-VT art show is up and ready for visitors

by Judith McManis

The latest show, "Resurrection," by Vermont artists associated with Episcopal congregations has been mounted at St. Paul's Cathedral, Burlington. ECVA-VT is the Vermont chapter of Episcopal Church and Visual Arts, an on-line exhibition/educational opportunity for artists in the Episcopal Church. For information about ECVA ministries, visit [www.ecva.org](http://www.ecva.org).

As with last year's exhibit, a wide variety of concepts and interpretations is represented in works by painters, sculptors, photographers, printers, iconographers, fabric artists and more.

The show is open Tuesdays through Fridays, 9:30–4:30. Call ahead Saturdays (802-864-0471). Sunday visitors may see the show after services (8:00, 9:15 or 11:15).

An official opening reception will be held on Friday, May 2 from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m., coordinating with the Burlington area ArtWalk. Most of the exhibiting artists plan to be present for this event so it is a great time to get to meet them and learn more about their creations.

"Resurrection" will remain on exhibit at St. Paul's through the end of May.

Judith McManis is a member of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington.

## St. Mark's, Newport, to host "Shielding our Money" stewardship retreat

St. Mark's, Newport, will host "Shielding Our Money," a retreat about stewardship, Saturday, June 7, beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending mid-afternoon. The Rev. Angela Emerson, diocesan minister for stewardship development, and Scott Perry, a member of St. Mark's, will each lead small group and plenary sessions.

In the morning sessions, Perry will talk about "Stewardship: the whole work of the church" and "Stewardship in Scripture."

Emerson will address the vestry role in stewardship, the yearlong aspect of stewardship and "The title and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Emerson will lead the afternoon session, "How to organize and carry out an annual giving campaign."

The retreat is open to all, and St. Mark's will provide lunch. Please pre-register by contacting the church at 802-334-7365 (Monday–Thursday). For more information, contact Scott Perry at 802-754-8580.

## Episcopal Church Vergers' Guild to meet in Burlington

by Carol Walters

Among the many visitors to Vermont during fall foliage season in October will be the members of the Vergers' Guild of The Episcopal Church (VGEC). They will come from all over the United States and Canada to attend the Guild's 2008 meeting in Burlington, hosted by the Vergers' Guild of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul.

The work of the verger is a lay ministry of the church in support of those ordained and lay who participate in worship and liturgy. Their work chiefly involves relieving "...the clergy of the burden of liturgical detail so that they can concentrate on their priestly duties..."

The Guild was founded in this country in 1989, with the mission of supporting and nurturing the office and ministry of verger in The Episcopal Church. There is evidence, however, that the office of verger existed as far back as the 16<sup>th</sup> century when vergers were responsible for the order and upkeep of the house of worship, the conduct of the

laity, and grave-digging. Today vergers are often seen leading processions carrying the traditional verge or wand.

The four-day event will begin on Thursday evening with Evensong and a welcoming reception. The Friday schedule includes workshops, and a trip to Rock Point for lunch at the Bishop's Residence and a tour of Rock Point. In the afternoon, there will be a tour of the Shelburne Museum followed by Evening Prayer at Trinity Church in Shelburne. After a business meeting on Saturday morning and a free afternoon, the group will attend a banquet on the *Spirit of Ethan Allen* as it cruises Lake Champlain. The conference will conclude on Sunday with Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul.

For more information, contact Carol Walters at 658-3390.

[Some material in this article is from [www.vergers.org](http://www.vergers.org).]

Carol Walters is a member of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Burlington.



Members of the Vergers Guild of Episcopal Church at a recent annual meeting.

## Diocesan Calendar

### May 2008

- 4 Bishop's Visitation, Trinity, Rutland
- 6 Fresh Start for Clergy, Good Shepherd, Barre, 9:30 am–2:30 pm
- 7 Administrative Group, Diocesan Office, 10 am
- 8 Ministry Development Group, 9:30 am–4:30 pm
- 9 **Deadline, May Mountain Echo**
- 10 Diocesan Council, Trinity, Rutland, 10 am–2 pm
- 11 Bishop's Visitation, St. Paul's, White River Junction
- 13 Taizé Service, BBCC Chapel, 6:00 pm
- 18 Bishop's Visitation, Trinity, Shelburne
- 18 175th Anniversary Planning Committee, Trinity, Rutland, 3–5 pm
- 20 Dispatch of Business, Trinity, Rutland, 10 am
- 25 Bishop's Visitation, St. Luke's, Alburgh
- 29-31 Annual Clergy, Spouses and Partners Conference

### June 2008

- 1 Bishop's Visitation, St. Luke's, Chester
- 3 Fresh Start for Clergy, Location to be determined, 9:30 am–2:30 pm
- 7 Stewardship Retreat, St. Mark's, Newport, 8 am
- 8 Bishop's Visitation, St. Thomas & Grace, Brandon
- 9 **Deadline, July/August Mountain Echo**
- 10 Taizé Service, BBCC Chapel, 6:00 pm
- 12 Ministry Development Group, 9:30 am–4:30 pm
- 15 Bishop's Visitation, Jerusalem Gathering, Bristol
- 22 Bishop's Visitation, St. Paul's, Windsor
- 28 Diocesan Council, 10 am–2 pm
- 29 Bishop's Visitation, Good Shepherd, Barre

## Call to Artists!!

### One-day Outdoor Art Show at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church

27 State Street, Windsor

Flag Day, Saturday, June 14, 2008  
from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

(Rain date June 21, 2008)

10' x 10' lots are \$25.

No commission taken.

Artists must provide own tent and displays.

Original artwork only: painting, sculpture, pottery, graphic art, weaving, photography  
Amenities ~ coffee and bathroom facilities

The show will be well-advertised in area media.

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

#### Funds Available for Parish Use As of February 1, 2008

Initiative I		
The Bishop Butterfield Revolving Loan Fund	\$	585,897
Initiative II		
The Talent and Resource Network	\$	20,278
Initiative III		
The Congregation Renewal and Emergency Assistance Fund	\$	5,303
Initiative IV		
The Diocesan Outreach Fund	\$	9,352
<b>Walter P. Irish Fund</b>		
Assistance for churches in small communities	\$	34,193

Appropriate uses for each fund, application forms and requirements may be found in the Diocesan Handbook. For further information, call the Diocesan Office, or go to [www.dioceseofvermont.org/Orgs/Congsupport.html](http://www.dioceseofvermont.org/Orgs/Congsupport.html).

## Regina Christianson ordained priest



Dick Mansfield photo

The Rev. Regina Christianson (center) kneels as the congregation chants the *Veni creator spiritus*.

by Anne Clarke Brown

St. John's in the Mountains, Stowe, was filled April 12, for a festive service at which the Rt. Rev. Thomas Ely ordained the Rev. Regina Lee Christianson to the Sacred Order of Priests. She had been ordained a deacon November 29, 2006, at St. Mary's, Northfield, where she served as deacon until the summer of 2007. She currently serves as a mental health chaplain at Fletcher Allen Health Care.

Christianson, an accomplished musician and harpist, ensured that the service offered a rich variety of music, including anthems in Latin for which she provided "fun translations," and an offertory hymn by Christopher Smart set to her own composition. Christianson's husband, Stephen Whiteley, served as litaniist, cantor and choir director. Other participants in the service included the Rev. Dr. David Hamilton as preacher, Deacon Jacqueline Arbuckle, Master of Ceremonies Stan Baker, and many others.

In his sermon, Hamilton, who is director of spiritual care and supervisor of Clinical Pastoral Education at Fletcher Allen Health Care, focused his reflections on 2 Corinthians 4:7, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves!" Noting that each earthen vessel eventually develops crazes and cracks, he said, "Companionship others, not in spite of our crazes and cracks, but because of them, is the paradoxical nature of the ministry of spiritual care of we earthen vessels. The light which radiates from within each of us at our beginning is only a small spark, a mere pinpoint of potential, waiting for ignition. How does it become energized?

Because," Hamilton said, "someone stops along the journey of the rag-tag human parade long enough to say a word, give a caring touch and see into our pain. In that moment hope begins to be enkindled within us."

"What does all this say about priesthood?" Hamilton asked. "First, someone truly called to ordination as a priest is an earthen vessel in whom the transformative power of God has been at work, precisely because of the changes and chances of life which have fragmented them. It is the nature of priesthood that one then bears the healing light of Christ to the broken and suffering."

Hamilton told the congregation, "Regina is no stranger to struggle. She has had her wounds and she has also had moments of intense enlightenment in which the flame of the holy has shown brightly. She is no hot-house plant, but a weathered tree who bears much fruit and from whose branches emanate song."

Hamilton continued, "All of this has made Regina uniquely suited to the challenging ministry of mental health chaplain... Regina sees past a 'dia-gnosis' to a true gnosis of the precious being sitting across from her. She sees into the darkness of their confusion and pain and deeply honors their striving to find the light of the Holy One."

In concluding his charge to the new priest, Hamilton said, "Your music has proven to be a wonderful adjunct to your relational skills in pastoral situations. I need not encourage you to continue your music. No one could imagine you without it." ❖

## Rock Point Summer Camp Schedule

### RESIDENT CAMP

Grades 10–12 June 22–27

Counselor-in-Training (CIT) Camp  
(Ages 15–18) June 29–July 4

Grades 7–9 June 29–July 4

Grades 4–6 July 6–11

Performing & Creative Arts Camp  
Grades 5–12 July 20–25

Explore your gifts & talents and celebrate God's creation through singing, acting, dancing, photography, drawing, painting...

All Ages Camp July 20–25

An intergenerational experience for families and friends. Play, rest, sing and worship together in God's creation.

### NEW THIS YEAR!

Grades 2–3 Mini-Camp

Sign up for one or both

Session One July 13–15

July 15 is Parent Visiting Day!

Session Two July 15–18

### DAY CAMP

Entering Grades 1–6

Session One July 7–11

Session Two July 14–18

Session Three July 21–25

The 2008 brochure and registration forms are available at [www.dioceseofvermont.org](http://www.dioceseofvermont.org), or by contacting Director Betsy Brown at [bishopbooth@dioceseofvermont.org](mailto:bishopbooth@dioceseofvermont.org) or 802-658-6233.