



Church Life!

The Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

SUMMER 2013



What's INSIDE?

- Finding Vocation in Cleveland
- Visiting the Camp and Retreat Farm
- Weaving God's Promises
- Biking to Church

ChurchLife!

The Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio

Vol. 117, No. 2, Summer 2013

The Episcopal Church



In the Anglican Communion

A global community of over 80 million members in 44 regional and national member churches.

The Most Rev. Justin Welby,
Archbishop of Canterbury

In the United States

A community of more than 2 million members in 110 dioceses in the Americas and abroad.

Established 1789.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori,
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In the Diocese of Ohio

A community of 16,000 baptized members in 86 parishes in the northern 48 counties of the State of Ohio.
Established 1817.

Bishop of Ohio

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.

ChurchLife!

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Front Cover: Members of St. Timothy's Church in Perrysburg pose with Bishop Hollingsworth for a group photo at the start of the Annual Bishop's Bike Ride.



Let me pick you up.

It's right there on our billboards. It's on our bumper stickers and refrigerator magnets, as well. All across the country we read it in village, town, and city, on familiar blue and white signs wherever we have a branch office: The Episcopal Church Welcomes You. It's been our denominational tagline for generations, since before we ever called it a tagline. The Episcopal Church Welcomes You.

To us who know what happens inside church buildings where Episcopalians gather, the phrase is a touchstone. Wherever we see it in print, wherever we hear it proclaimed, it strikes a comforting chord. It is assuring to identify ourselves as the welcoming ones. But to those who have never experienced the welcome we claim to offer, it may be just a line, undifferentiated from the countless others that seek to spark their interest every day. It may be as effective in getting them in the door as a sign-up sheet on the parish bulletin board is in engaging the help of fellow communicants, compared to a personal invitation to participate.

Most people likely need more than a printed promise that we'll welcome them if they show up, to persuade them to show up. It's not that the promise is wrong; it just may not be enough. And of greater concern is that it may in fact let us off the hook and leave us thinking we have made a sufficient effort.

The odd yard sign or bumper sticker will occasionally intrigue a stranger enough to venture in, but most people need more. They need a person-to-person introduction, not necessarily from someone they know well or even at all, but an in-the-flesh invitation from someone who takes the time and has the generosity to connect in a personal way. It does not require an apology on Christian faith or an explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity. Nor does it warrant an introduction to the Book of Common Prayer or a description of the riches of Anglican liturgy. It is simpler than all that. It demands only a genuine connection.

In a number of places in both Hebrew and Christian scripture God adjures us not to worry about what to say. "I will give you the words," was the response to Moses when he expressed his angst about how to speak in a way that others could hear. Again in Isaiah 51 God says, "I will give you the words I want you to say." To

his disciples Jesus said the same in Luke 12 and 21. And it is no different with us. The challenge is only to open ourselves to the opportunities for invitation that fill our every day; God will give us the words. And the way we become aware of those endless opportunities to invite is through prayer. Our prayer for chances to invite does not increase their number. God is providing them constantly. Rather it opens our hearts to them, makes us more aware of them, drops our defenses, and lets us recognize them.

In my own experience, the words that God provides are most often spare and comforting. They usually come out something like, "I know how that feels. It helps me to go to church. Can I pick you up?" It is a simple formulary of respectful companionship. It responds to concern about one's children, worry about aging parents, fear about an illness, despair over a loss, frustration over things beyond our control, relief over a positive outcome, gratitude for some unexpected grace, delight about an accomplishment or event, or just about anything else. "I know how that feels. Church is one place I can take that. Let me pick you up."

Not, "Here's the address," or "The services are at 8 and 10." Not even, "I'd be happy to meet you there." But, "I know how that feels. It helps me to go to church. I'll pick you up at a quarter to."

There is plenty of time and opportunity to fill in the rest of the picture—the comfort of the music, the grounding words of scripture, the strength of the preaching, the way the prayers seem to heal, the supportive fellowship, the gift of serving others—whatever it might be that ministers most to you or to them. But it begins with a word of invitation, a word from God that comes through you and speaks to the other's situation, a simple word of companionship and care.

The world needs us to be welcoming. It also needs us to be inviting. When we pray for opportunities to reach out to another, we receive them in number, along with the words to act on them. And often they are something as simple and genuine as, "I can imagine how that feels. I find church helps. Let me pick you up."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark".

The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.
Bishop of Ohio

Finding Vocation in Cleveland

by Alex Barton, Project
Developer, St. John's,
Cleveland

Cleveland, Ohio is covered in the mystique of hundred-year-old coal dust and the gray skies so often launched off Lake Erie. There are abandoned factories, potholes that could easily gobble up a car, and sports teams that could easily gobble up the faint of heart. Most people either know nothing about Cleveland or only have negative things to say about the city, and many of the naysayers are native Clevelanders. But it is in Cleveland that I have felt the strongest pull to a spot on the map. It is in Cleveland that I felt challenged and supported to find out more about just why I am on this planet.

I am in a program that focuses on vocation; a confusing word that sounds too idealistic, is something only priests do, or it means nothing at all. There is some truth to all of these critiques but they miss the beautiful essence of what vocation really is about. Its roots are in the Latin words for “a call” or “a summons.” The underlying idea within the word is that everyone, through their upbringing, passions, experiences, and education is searching for an honest expression of how they see the world. Even more inherent to the experience of understanding vocation is that it is not a process that is done alone or that



St. John's tower

ever ends; new experiences or new friends show us new things about ourselves. Thus, we are constantly reevaluating where we stand in regards to our fellow human beings, the earth, and our history.

It is a hard and vulnerable process that engages the entirety of a person; their fears and joys, their dreams and disappointments. It is what I am trying to do with my life and it is what Cleveland is doing, too. The big cities that everybody talks about as hubs of culture or finance or population or government have never had to rethink on a major scale why they are a city. When the auto industry and the American steel industry began their steady decline the cities that relied on them as the backbone of their

economy went with them, hand in hand.

The Rustbelt, though, as many are seeing is making a comeback; and, no, it is not that the auto industry is once again booming. New initiatives for more sustainable business models and environmentally friendly policies are a huge part of the new growth. Small business owners from all walks of life—opening new breweries, restaurants, and places to shop—are making Cleveland an enjoyable place to live for many. The old stalwarts from the Cleveland Orchestra to the Cleveland Museum of Art continue to support the city and make it a place where arts and culture are not just passive entertainment but also create jobs. The giant health

industry of Northeast Ohio continues to employ many people and attracts top researchers and doctors. The small neighborhood initiatives all around the city bring people together to make where they live into more of a community. The city is alive with new ideas and the commitment from those who have been around the block for many years.

What Makes Us Different

All these things are great, but they are happening almost everywhere, and our cities are competitive by nature. Every city has cool bars, many have museums, plenty have their niche in the job market, and every city has some semblance of neighborhoods. It is time we spoke honestly about Cleveland. It is the people that make this a great city and everything else is a derivative of what Clevelanders have done, are doing, and will do. Cleveland is a city of vocation.



St. John's Church Parish Hall

My own sense of where I believe the world is calling me has been challenged and equally supported by this city. Cleveland not only brings joy to my life but it has often held a mirror to my behavior and actions. I am currently working for the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio under a title we pulled out of a hat—Saint John's

Project Developer. I am in charge of finding a new purpose and use for the oldest church in the city. I go out into the neighborhood and talk with people about how they think the old church and attached parish hall could be used. I was terrified that as a member of a church group I would either scare people away or get into arguments about things I do not actually care about, such as "The God Debate." But Cleveland did not really have any time for my fear. The majority of people I met with wanted the space to be used to the greatest benefit

of the community and saw that as the church's mission, regardless of their own stance on faith.

As an organization the Episcopal Church is experiencing a loss of population similar to that of Cleveland. We have closed many parishes and others teeter on having to close because the once beautiful buildings are too expensive to keep open. And, like Cleveland, we have come to see the opportunity in what seems to be only negative. For too long we were centered on statistical growth just as a city worries about the number of available jobs. We forgot all about quality of life beyond the ability to fill pews. I do not intend to argue that empty churches are good, but it is so vital to our species to have higher intentions for each generation's brief time other than longevity for longevity's sake.

Empowering the People

The reason that urban agriculture has been so popular and well supported in the Rustbelt is first and foremost because it empowers people. What the church and the city have at the present is an amazing chance to realize that their missions are inherently centered on empowering people. We are not here to control people's lives or dictate to them the steps they will take. We are here to give people opportunities to see their lives as important and capable of offering something to someone else. The city, just like the church, is empowered by the people to remind us of the very thing

We live in community in which the majority of our actions affect other people, and we are capable of an overwhelmingly positive impact.

we often forget; we live in community in which the majority of our actions affect other people, and we are capable of an overwhelmingly positive impact.

The “come back” of Cleveland is the fight to empower more and more people to see an opportunity in what others see as a negative. We know what happens when a few decide to close shop and move out of town to the detriment of many. We know what happens when a few decide to abuse the privilege of being elected. We know when loved ones and neighbors lose their homes. Cleveland is a vocation because you stand on the edge knowing that some native Clevelanders and many out-of-towners will think you are naïve or Pollyannaish. If you are called to live here, though, you won't stop arguing for and trying to live in a community that not only stands up for your right to have health insurance or a job but also believes that your life is essential to all of ours. Cleveland is a vocation because it

is not just a place on the map or one of the many cities in the Rustbelt; it is a unique energy that stares into the harsh realities of urban decline, seeing the human face with all its pain and refuses to admit that the story is finished or out of our hands.



Alex Barton has spent two years as a member of the Episcopal Service Corps and is now working with St. John's in Ohio City and its trustees to reimagine new purposes and use for the space.

MORE PLANS FOR ST. JOHN'S

Summer time is upon us at Saint John's on Cleveland's near west side. With no heat in the winter, the space was more of a memorial than a living entity, not what we want our churches to be. In the hope of reaching out to the community and of having energy in the building we are now starting programs as well as hosting events. The end goal is a worship space that invites the entire neighborhood for a wide range of activities.

The diocese has hired two interns to help develop a community garden in the traditional flower garden between the church building and the parish hall. They are also considering converting the old parking lot into a green space. The diocesan interns have been working with a recently established beehive, building beds for produce, weeding, and building a chicken coop. But not all the work they are doing is urban farming. They meet with community members to hear their stories and invite them to be a part of Saint John's. They are also working on developing a grant to seek funding for converting the old parking lot behind the church. By the end of the summer we are hoping to have an established and sustainable garden that becomes an integrated member of the local farmer's market in which the community feels comfortably involved.

During the summer we hosted the recent LGBT delegation that traveled to El Salvador with the local Inter-Religious Task Force. While there, the group discovered that the Episcopal Church in El Salvador provided the only safe space for conversation for the LGBT community. The travelers participated in a panel discussion here about their experience and action steps in June.

On August 23, Rust Belt Chic, a local group of authors, will read from their collection of essays and poetry to raise money and awareness of the work they do. Finally, on Columbus Day weekend, the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland will be making an Underground Pilgrimage from Western Maryland to Saint John's.

We are working on becoming a stop in the neighborhood's “artwalk,” which happens the first Friday of every month, and creating an annual interactive piece of theatre with Cleveland Public Theatre on the church's history. In all that we do we are taking seriously the Bishop's Easter sermon that our church is an empty tomb. The community comes in to learn and to see the world differently in order to go out and tell others and take actions grounded in beloved community, just as the first disciples did.

Visiting the Camp and Retreat Farm

by Katie Ong-Landini, Consultant for Camp and Retreat Ministry

ON JULY 4th, MEMBERS of the Diocese of Ohio had another chance to spend the afternoon in Wakeman Township at the proposed site of a new camp and retreat center. The property, known locally as Hostile Valley Park, was a pleasant setting for the second annual Diocesan Picnic, which ran from 12 noon to 3 pm. Participants in the 8th Annual Bishop's Bike Ride also stopped at the park for an afternoon break to eat, swim and explore the site before heading down the road to St. Paul's, Norwalk.

For other picnic participants, Bishop Hollingsworth offered a tour of the property, explaining where features in the master plan would sit on the site. The tour included exploring the summer camp area on the southern portion of the upper fields, as well as the adult retreat dwelling sites on the northern end. In addition, he explained how the Diocese could renovate the property and structures near the original farmhouse to use them for youth and adult programs. The planned site for the dining and meeting hall would be the heart of

the center, in keeping with the farm theme of the property.

Since the last project update in the Winter 2012/2013 edition of *ChurchLife*, the camp and retreat ministry team has focused on several initiatives in response to information discerned from the campaign planning study. The first activity, reaching out to parishes and other church groups to communicate why having a new center will help our mission as a diocese, has already provided constructive feedback, and the outreach to parishes will continue through the summer and into the fall.

The reasoning behind this proposal for the camp and retreat farm includes:

- the desire to build a strong youth presence in our parishes by creating a substantial diocesan youth ministry that connects our young people throughout the diocese in formation, mission, and fellowship.
- the need to offer facilities conducive to adult retreats, so that parishes develop among their members the practice of spiritual retreat as essential to their faith development.
- the opportunity to create a model for sustainable living that rejuvenates us and reconciles us to all of God's creation, providing knowledge and tools for use in our home, church, school, and work communities.
- a goal to enhance mission-based ministries in our parishes and as a diocese.

A second and crucial task in our discernment is to construct and carefully document a business plan for the new ministry—to demonstrate that the center can operate in a financially sustainable way. In conjunction with that, the team is refining the Master Plan, first presented at last year's Diocesan Convention. Although neither plan is finished yet, they are expected to detail the following components in a new facility:

- Summer camp facilities for 96 children – The program (seven week-long sessions) would be co-ed and all ages represented, although the cabins would be grouped by age and gender. There would be shared bathroom facilities with solar-heated hot water, greywater collection and composting toilets.



A small apple orchard exists along State Route 60 near the existing farmhouse

In addition, there would be family camp sessions.

- Adult retreat facilities with private baths that can be single or double occupancy – The number of rooms would accommodate multiple retreat groups simultaneously. These facilities would also be designed for use during the program year for youth ministry events.
- Dining and meeting facilities that can accommodate larger groups – The outdoor dining area would be large enough to accommodate everyone in the summer camp program and could be used to augment the indoor dining capacity in the warmer seasons.
- Kitchen facilities – These facilities would help provide three meals a day for participants and staff.
- The existing farm facilities, located at the property frontage on Route 60 – These consist of the original farmhouse and two barns, which would be used for staff housing, equipment storage, classroom space, and camp activities.
- Programming that focuses on the development of new ministries in our parishes – It would include education, collaboration, support, and networking for ministry leaders and volunteers. In addition, the center could further develop diocesan-wide ministries, serving as the base for pilot programs and services to targeted populations.
- Partnerships with area schools, colleges, industries and other institutions – For example, the site would fall within the 20,000 acre footprint of The Oberlin Project, a public-private partnership “to revitalize the local economy, eliminate carbon emissions, restore local agriculture, food supply and forestry, and create a new, sustainable base for economic and



Part of the existing farm site

community development,” as stated on the organization’s website.

While documenting how facilities and infrastructure will enable the delivery of programs and services, the master plan will also elucidate a sensitivity to the various ecosystems the Wakeman property encompasses: woodlands, wetlands, stream banks, fields and meadows, a swimming pond, and farm fields. This will allow us to offer a full spectrum of programs around the theme of sustainable living.

The business plan will detail important features like staffing and training, program and service offerings, pricing and income projections. The team has already collected market research and pertinent information about other camps and retreat centers to guide them in the process. They also expect to develop a survey to gather additional information from members of the diocese and other potential users during the summer. More details will be available on the project website in the coming weeks.

As the project team works on plans and meets with people throughout the diocese, they are also engaged in a few additional and important tasks:

- Preparing a project video that describes the goals and opportunities a new camp and retreat center will offer.
- Meeting with potential supporters to provide greater details about



Proposed cabins offer meditative views

the proposed project and explore their commitment to investing in this ministry.

- Developing a resolution for the 197th Diocesan Convention by which we as a diocese can decide whether and how to proceed.

The video will explain what this new center could mean for youth and adult formation ministries, and the project team will coordinate a showing this fall in all of our parishes so that everyone in the diocese has a chance to watch the video and provide feedback about the proposal well before Convention. Members will also have a chance to hear further details about the plans and the corresponding resolution during the pre-convention gatherings with the Mission Area Councils.

For those who have not had the opportunity to visit the proposed site, the owners welcome members of the diocese at any time. The address is 4655 State Route 60, Wakeman, Ohio 44889, and visitors should look for the Hostile Valley Park sign. Stop at the brick house at the end of the drive,



Swimming pond

and let the owners know that you are there. (Tell them the Bishop sent you.) If you plan to use the recreation facilities or the campsite (on weekends and holidays), please pay the required fees. For fee information, you can check out the park's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/hostilevalleypark.

For more details about the project, contact Katie Ong-Landini at kong-landini@dohio.org or 216-774-0454. You can also view photos and follow the progress of the project at <http://dohiocampandretreatfarm.com>. From the Diocese of Ohio website (www.dohio.org), access the link to the project site by clicking the "Summer Camp" button on the home page.

CLERGY CHANGES

The Rev. Larry C. Minter has ended his time as Interim Rector at St. Timothy's, Perrysburg, and will begin as Interim Rector at Christ Church, Hudson, on August 1.

The Rev. Christopher A. Coughlin has ended his time as Priest-in-Charge at St. John the Baptist, Bowling Green.

The Rev. Stephen Sedgwick will end his time as Interim Rector at Christ Church, Hudson, as of July 31.

The Rev. Patricia Hanen retired as Rector, New Life, Uniontown, as of August 15.

The Rev. Elaine McCoy has retired as Priest-in-Charge at Church of the Ascension, Lakewood.

The Rev. Elizabeth Frank is now Deacon-in-Charge at New Life, Uniontown.

The Rev. M. Alton Plummer has ended his time as Rector at Grace Church, Willoughby.

The Rev. Michael Weichers has ended his time as Rector at St. Thomas, Port Clinton.

The Rev. Deborah Rankin has retired as Rector, St. John's, Cuyahoga Falls.

Weaving God's Promises Provides Exceptional Introduction to The Episcopal Church

By Mary Ann Semple, Diocesan Resource Center

Parishes wanting to use the popular *Weaving God's Promises* program, a 3-year thematic Episcopal curriculum for children ages 3 to 11, can now obtain a diocesan license from the Diocesan Resource Center in the Office of Congregations and Christian Formation. Several parishes in the Diocese of Ohio are already using the program, which covers three areas:

- Holy Scripture: The stories of the Bible and the life of Jesus
- The Church: Including the history, seasons, Book of Common Prayer, Episcopal traditions, and the Sacraments
- Christian Living: Applying Christian principles to our lives to enrich our faith and grow in relationship with Christ by reaching out to others

Weaving God's Promises uses easy-to-follow lesson plans that are very flexible. There are between 36 and 47 lesson plans for each of the three years, allowing for choices in lessons and activities. Episcopal tradition is built into each lesson as the Eucharistic Liturgy is modeled each week. The order of the sessions follows the Eucharistic Liturgy of gathering together, telling the sacred story, praying, sharing and dismissal. This provides a level of comfort and familiarity when children do participate with their parents and congregations in the Holy Eucharist.

Although *Weaving God's Promises* is a thematic curriculum, there are lessons that have been correlated with the lectionary and can be used to supplement many of the Gospel and Old Testament lessons, adding to the versatility of the curriculum.

The curriculum is a downloadable resource. Once a church has established its login, teachers will have access to the lessons for all three years, all day, every day, from any computer with Internet access. This makes it easy for teachers and Christian Formation Leaders to plan lessons. A hard copy of the curriculum is also available for preview in the Resource Center in the Diocesan Offices at Trinity Commons.

A Pilot Program

We are one of a handful of dioceses to pilot the feasibility of a diocesan license, working with Church Publishing and Cokesbury on the cost and details with the hope of providing this program at no cost to parishes. We began exploring the possibility back in October 2012 and surveyed our Christian Formation leaders this spring about its desirability. We received an overwhelmingly positive response to the program and made the decision to purchase the diocesan license for one year. This takes the financial burden off already stretched parish budgets, while ensuring the availability of quality programming.

The license will be coordinated through the Diocesan Resource Center. Any parish that is interested should contact Mary Ann Semple at resourcelibrary@dohio.org or 216-774-0492; or Vincent Black at vblack@dohio.org or 216-774-0453. The license runs from May 15, 2013, to May 15, 2014. Parishes unfamiliar with the curriculum have time to preview it and plan for the fall. Next spring we will re-evaluate based on feedback and availability of funds, before deciding on a renewal. We

[The program] takes the financial burden off already stretched parish budgets, while ensuring the availability of quality programming.

have several parishes already signed up with the new license, and we receive new requests every week.

Further Study

For middle school children ages 12 to 14 (or grades 6 to 8): *Weaving God's Promises for Youth, Year One* is now available for purchase, as well. Year one of the program, *Weaving Our Faith*, shares the theme that God loves us and stays with us, no matter what. It focuses on the Gospel of Matthew.

Episcopal tradition is built into each lesson as the Eucharistic Liturgy is modeled each week.

Year Two, *Weaving Together The Family of God*, moves from who we are individually to who we are as a family of God. The Gospel of John is the focus during this year. Year Three is *Weaving God's Beloved Community*, moving from us as a family to us as God's beloved community, to live as one body in Christ. The Gospel focus is Luke. *Weaving God's Promises for Youth* is based on the elements of worship, education and service, all of which are part of a full Christian life. Each lesson has some of each of these elements. This youth curriculum is not covered under the diocesan license, and the cost is based on your Average Sunday Worship Attendance. More information

can be found on the *Weaving God's Promises* website.

According to the Christian Education Curriculum Survey conducted by Church Publishing in October 2010, 9% of the 291 churches who responded used *Weaving God's Promises for Children*. In May 2013 this number increased to 16% (340 churches responding). Most churches responding in both surveys were Episcopalian.

Here are some things people are saying about *Weaving God's Promises*:

"I love the Episcopal slant of WGP and the easy web access." —Boykin Bell (Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, SC)

"Weaving God's Promises works well as a pick-up program. A plus is that the projects use ordinary craft supplies, photocopies, and stuff you might have around the house. I've found that once my teachers were comfortable with the organization, they could usually read the lesson the night before." —Charlotte Greeson (from the FORMA list serv)

"I found this curriculum easy to use as a new teacher because the games, songs and activities were all planned, and supplies are easy to gather each week. The children always have something to take home and bridge between church school and home. As a new teacher, I like the structured base, but I enjoy the flexibility in the activities each week." —Liz Irwin (St. Matthew's Brecksville)

"We have been using it and it is fantastic. Lots and lots of options for different age groups for each lesson, so it works especially well with our one-room schoolhouse approach and gives our teacher scope to pick out whatever options he feels will work best with the exact mix of kids we have, and with his own interest and skills." —The Rev. Julie Fisher (Christ Church, Kent)

"...this is a great resource." —The Rev. Aaron Gerlach (Sydney)

Contact the Office of Congregations and Christian Formation to take advantage of this license.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information on this Episcopal curriculum for children, please see the overview video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqDsqr4tK48>. You can also go to www.youtube.com and search for *Weaving God's Promises*, an Episcopal curriculum for children. Sample lesson plans for each of the three years can be found by going to www.weavinggodspromises.org, clicking on 'Learn More' on the bottom left of the page and then clicking on Year1, Year2 or Year 3 at the top of the next page.

<http://www.weavinggodspromises.org/Program/Year-1/>

<http://www.weavinggodspromises.org/Program/Year-2/>

<http://www.weavinggodspromises.org/Program/Year-3/>

Biking to Church

by Martha Wright

I have learned many lessons about *being* the church in the seven years I've worked on the Bishop's staff for the Diocese of Ohio—most of them good, a few discouraging, but none more unexpected than what I have learned from the Bishop's Bike Ride. I picked up ownership of the event in its fourth year, not because it belongs in the Office of Communications, but because after reading the blogs of the eight people who rode cross-country in 2009 from Anaheim to New York, my imagination was captured by the sheer accomplishment of their trip and the inspired writing of one of the cyclists who published a blog in such a “you-are-there” style that I felt as if I were enduring the heat of the desert, climbing the Rocky Mountains, and battling the winds of the Great Plains right along with him. The story was published in *ChurchLife* (Fall 2009).



A rainy day for a ride

The trip and resulting blog inspired me to re-learn how to ride a bike and how to ride one for long distances. I told Bishop Mark how much I wanted to participate in the Bishop's Bike Ride, but, did I want to take a week of vacation with my boss, whom I saw every week of the year? His solution: I organize the bike ride, and it won't be my vacation, but my job. Susan McDonald, who had run the bike ride previously, had just left the staff, and I jumped in.

Never having done such a thing before (I'd organized a few meetings and conferences, but never an athletic event), I stumbled in blindly. Fortunately, I had the help of many people who were seasoned riders, SAG (Support and Gear) drivers, and route planners. I made huge mistakes the first year—in planning, organizing SAG drivers, and giving correct and updated information to the churches that hosted us. I also had knee problems that took a couple of years to solve.

But I came back the next year with a better sense of the bike ride and how it's meant to work. Each year has its own personality, each ride its joys and miseries, and of course, the roster changes from year to year, although not substantially. The repeat riders and SAG drivers far outnumber the new ones, which says we must be doing something right to bring them back. But it also says that it's time to learn to invite new people in.

The repeat riders and SAG drivers far outnumber the new ones, which says we must be doing something right to bring them back, [and] it's time to learn to invite new people in.



A group photo in front of Grace, Sandusky, before the day's start to the ride

This summer is the year I discovered how big the church could really be, and it has hit home in a very personal way. In my fourth year with the bike ride, I have a good idea of how to organize the event. Like the church can sometimes be, I've gotten set in my ways. In my head, I know what works, and what doesn't. I know what has been accomplished, what's been a bust, and how to keep everyone safe.

Shattering Expectation

But this is the year that all my expectations were shattered, my small minded thinking was challenged, and I finally realized that I, the bike ride, and mostly God are always bigger than we ever think possible.

For three years we've had seasoned riders show up, and even though there are SAG drivers for the hurt, the lame, the not-quite ready (often me), I could count on this group of riders to know what they were doing. They are not amateurs. This year was my biggest

challenge because the ride was during the week of the fourth of July—many people who would normally host us were on vacation, priests from host churches had planned their own vacations or sabbaticals, and the ride was covering a lot of the same territory. We were riding through the central part of the diocese once again, asking the same people to host us.

About a month before the start of the ride, I received a call from a man named Peter in Cincinnati who told me he was the helper to Ken, who has a medical condition similar to cerebral palsy. Each could ride his own bike, he assured me, but Ken would need certain accommodations: a bed near Peter and on the same floor as a bathroom, and a kitchen where his food could be prepared. I thought about the logistics for a while, called the host churches to see if they could work with Peter and Ken and decided it was worth a try. Peter told me they had been in training for this ride for some time. It's hard for me to turn down a person who tells me

he's been working toward a goal; I don't want to squash that hope. So, we got it organized the best we could.

Then, just days before the ride began, in the midst of the time of my highest anxiety, comes another call from the spokesperson for four women who told me that they too had been hoping to ride, but they were not experienced. They weren't sure they could ride more than 10 miles in any one day, and they just wanted to stick to the bike trails, if possible. I almost said no: I gave them a short lecture about letting me know more in advance, and told them I didn't think I could work with them. Who would watch out for them? How could I spare a SAG driver to be solely dedicated to them? The ride is much too difficult for someone who rides no more than 10 miles a day, even though it was a flat route, and I couldn't plan for people who rode only bike trails. The next day (the Saturday before the ride started) I decided I should at least apologize for my rudeness and get more

details on what the four were trying to do. I called the woman back, and said, tell me again what it is you want to do. She explained that four women from St. Paul's, Fremont, known as Team Fremont, under the leadership of parishioner Bridget Berkey, had decided they wanted to participate in as much of the Bishops Bike Ride as they could. They planned to watch out for each other, SAG for each other, and make sure they made it from beginning to end each day, whether on bikes or in their own truck. They would not need accommodations and would go home each night to their own beds. And she said the magic words. "We've been training for this for a long time. We've already raised a lot of money for youth mission trips."

So we all jumped in: Team Fremont, Peter and Ken, my assistants Karyn and Kelly, and the many route planners, SAG drivers, host families and host churches. What I discovered was how small my world has been.

It only accommodates the people who fit into the proper places I've given them. Not only did everything work out (though not everything worked smoothly), but new people joined.

We Can Accommodate Much More

We learned we can accommodate so much more than we ever dreamed possible. And mostly as I watched the other riders, I saw the care they took with each other to make sure everyone was pulled along with them, that no one was left behind, that the slowest was as valuable as the fastest. They were patient with one another and always willing to help. All

of this happened during a week in which it rained most of the time.

It's a journey, the Bishop's Bike Ride, and I don't mean just from point A to point B. It's a journey of the mind, the body, and sometimes the soul. It is what I think is a small piece of the way God's kingdom works.

We learned we can accommodate so much more than we ever dreamed possible.



Team Fremont: John Berkey, Stan Johnson, Beth Hackenburg, Sande Corfman-Johnson, Denise Sanchez, and Bridget Berkey (not pictured: The Rev. Daniel Orr)

We don't need to think about who is welcome—everyone is. This year more than any other, I felt the welcome, the good will, and the desire to see that everyone arrived at the same place. I think our churches strive for the same results. Sometimes we make it, often we don't. But for this particular bike ride—during a holiday week, in bad weather, and with riders who don't fit the mold—it was the best bike ride I've ever experienced. I won't try to speak for everyone, as I'm sure some people didn't have a wonderful time, some things were overlooked, some people were upset or angry and felt ill taken care of. But most people said it was the best ride so far. We journey together, we take care of one another, we try not to lose our tempers and slow down, not just to bike speed, but to God speed, where we can look around, calm down and realize that we're not really in a hurry to go anywhere. For my last ride as a member of the bishop's staff before retiring, I couldn't have asked for a better parting lesson in how the church and God work—subtly, joyfully, and always unexpectedly.

I'd like to thank particularly the people who helped with the Bishop's Bike Ride: some for the first time, many year after year. They are Karyn Calaway, Kelly Aughenbaugh, the Rev. Brian Wilbert, the Rev. Steve Sedgwick, Pat and Ray Squire, Clair Reiner, Stan Johnson, Gene Stacy, the Rev. Daniel Orr, Ginger Brown, Yoriki Encalada, Katie Ong-Landini, the clergy and members of St. Timothy's, Perrysburg; St. Paul's, Fremont; Grace Church, Sandusky, St. Paul's, Norwalk, Trinity, Findlay, and of course, Bishop Mark Hollingsworth. None of this would happen without them. As the now discredited Lance Armstrong said, "It's not about the bike." I agree. It's about the community and the people of God.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

By Stephen Huba. Reprinted with permission, The Review, East Liverpool, Ohio. July 21, 2013.

Linda Williams' roots in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church go back to 1923, when her grandfather moved to East Liverpool and wrote letters to his wife and sons still living in England.

"He'd say, 'Don't forget to tithe. Even if you only have a quarter, you need to tithe,'" Williams said.

Frank Thornberry's roots go back even further, to 1892, when his grandfather and grandmother came to East Liverpool from England. Like so many other immigrants who found work in the potteries, Edward and Maud Chetwin found a home at St. Stephen's by simply seeking out the local Episcopal church.

To people like Jack P. Eccleston, Williams' grandfather, it would have been unthinkable to skip church in his adoptive homeland. "He went immediately to church - and he joined the choir," Williams said.

Eccleston became the first of four generations of his family to sing in the St. Stephen's choir, which at one time, was renowned as an exclusively boys' and men's choir.

Williams, 74, of East Liverpool, started singing in the choir at age 10, and she and her sister, Judy Culp, still sing on Sunday. The choir isn't all-male anymore, and the pews aren't as full as they used to be, but St. Stephen's remains a viable parish in East Liverpool through its committed members and outreach programs.

This past week, the church held a joint Vacation Bible School with its neighbor, First United Methodist Church. On the fourth Saturday of each month, St. Stephen's Good Shepherd Lunch attracts hundreds of needy people for a nutritious meal. The annual Harvest Home Festival in October also remains a big draw.

Perhaps more than anything else, the festival keeps St. Stephen's in touch with its English roots. The parish, 220 W. Fourth St., traces its origins to at least 1834, making it one of East Liverpool's oldest churches.

Early parishoners managed to erect a simple frame structure on the property of the present building and called it home until 1877, when it was replaced by a brick building. The latter was destroyed by fire in 1899, leaving only the bell tower standing. Members decided to rebuild almost immediately, and they dedicated their new stone structure on Dec. 26 - the feast day of St. Stephen - 1900.

A parish hall with a basketball court was dedicated in 1923. "We had a big group of kids," Thornberry recalled. "We had dances. We had dinners. We played basketball."

The Gothic-style building has now been in use for 113 years. Its wealth of wood-work includes pews of oak and arches made of cypress, according to a parish history. Nineteen memorial windows depict the life of Christ. Five stained-glass windows above the altar show the four Gospel writers, with St. Stephen, the church's patron, in the middle.

Williams said being in church always gives her the feeling of "God putting his arms around you."

"That whole church, when you walk in, it has such a special feeling. It's kind of like a hidden beauty that you don't expect from just looking at the outside. ... You know God's there," she said.

Williams was baptized, confirmed and married at St. Stephen's. "I hope to be buried at St. Stephen's," she said.

What keeps her coming back, she said, are the people. "As beautiful as the church is. ... I love the people, and I feel like they love me and that I'm accepted," she said.

Williams stays involved through the Harvest Home Festival, Episcopal Church Women and the choir. In addition to her grandfather, other family members who sang in the choir were her father, John M. Eccleston, and her nephew, Joshua Culp.

Thornberry, 78, of East Liverpool, also was baptized at St. Stephen's. Confirmed by the Rt. Rev. Beverly D. Tucker, the former bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, he remained a regular attendee until shift work at Crucible



St. Stephen's, built of stone in 1900, remains a fixture of downtown East Liverpool. Photo by Stephen Huba.

Steel in Midland, Pa, made that difficult.

Growing up at St. Stephen's, Thornberry was influenced by the faithfulness of his mother, Grace Chetwin Thornberry, who was known as "the lady of the hat." Women in those days were expected to have their heads covered in church. "If you were a woman and you didn't have a hat on, she'd put a Kleenex on your head," he said.

As a youngster, Thornberry remembers how the women of the church always made sure that the robes and large black bow ties of the younger choir members were properly arranged - sometimes to the point of being too tight.

"It used to be all English," Thornberry said. "All those old guys, they would sit there, and they'd get to gabbing to one another, and they'd be talking in that old English style. ... The church was packed. It was standing-room-only sometimes."

Today, despite the empty spaces, Thornberry likes to look out over the congregation when he's in the altar area. "It's just like walking into the Waldorf Astoria for some people. I appreciate everything about it. I just love it," he said.

St. Stephen's, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, currently is served by the Rev. Mary Vidmar.

Around the Diocese

MEDIEVAL FAIRE COMES TO CHRIST CHURCH, WARREN

Build it and they will come. . . and they did. They came to experience the excitement and adventure of the middle ages, with battling knights,



royal archery, hatchet and knife throwing, Queen's horsemen, artisans, vendors, food and much more.

On June 15, Christ Church hosted its very own medieval faire, complete with rogues and royalty. All came together for a full weekend of frolic and fights. The day began with a gala parade through the medieval market place and around the church's 12 acres. The parade included archers, a detachment of medieval horse cavalry, troubadours, clergy and common folk. There was an event every hour on the hour; no matter what your interest, there was something to suit your tastes.

Following the parade there were three performances of Puss in Boots, mounted archery at the Field of Honor, thrown weapons demonstration, a medieval dance troupe, and mounted combat. As the day progressed, each event got bigger and better. The day ended with a medieval dinner with fare fit for a king and a madrigal performance

by Tapestries of Ohio in the Great Hall. The weekend ended with a Rite One Eucharist Sunday morning in the Great Church that included bagpipes, bells and incense. Some dressed in medieval costume, some came as they were. It truly was a special day the Medieval Way!

ST. ANDREW'S, TOLEDO, LAUNCHES MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

St. Andrew's, Toledo, has started a mobile food pantry, providing supplemental groceries every month to those who are in need. The food pantry will operate from 4:00-6:00 pm on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the church, located at 2770 West Central Avenue in Toledo. Please bring a valid ID and dependents' social security numbers. For more information, contact the church office at 419-473-1367.

FOOD *for* THOUGHT **MOBILE FOOD PANTRY**

Providing

SUPPLEMENTAL GROCERIES

Every Month

2nd Wednesday • 4-6 pm

**St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church
2770 West Central Avenue**

OUTREACH FAIR AND MIXER

Save the date for the Outreach Fair and Mixer, scheduled for Saturday, October 19, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Anyone involved in parochial outreach ministries (lay or clergy) will want to attend. Sponsored by the Diocese of Ohio, the event will take place at Church of Our Saviour, 47 Crosby Street, Akron. Additional information will be posted on the diocesan web site at www.dohio.org soon.

ST. PAUL'S, MEDINA, CONSTRUCTION

St. Paul's, Medina, is in the process of expanding the parish hall and remodeling the front of the center portion of the church. There is a link to live, streaming video at www.dohio.org so you can watch the process! For more information, please contact the church office at 330-725-4131.

DIOCESAN YOUTH EVENTS

Mark your calendars now for several opportunities for youth to get involved:

- DYE 2013 (Diocesan Youth Event for youth in grades 7-12)
*October 25-27, 2013
Cedar Hills*
- Happening (for youth in grades 9-12)
*March 7-9, 2014
Christ Church, Hudson
(Happening Staff Weekend is
January 24-26)*
- Spring Youth Gathering (for those completing grades 9-12)
May 2-4, 2014



by Hilary Nerby

Why do we have meetings? These days, finding time to go to meetings is a challenge for many of us, irrespective of our age, but it's not the only issue. Sometimes it's the physical effort involved or the need to make care arrangements for a loved one or children. For others, it's transportation and, as in all things, money. According to recently published studies, almost every type of organization is experiencing this same decline. It's easy to blame technology for providing us with alternative ways to pass on information, but how many of your e-mails or postings on various sites do you really read?

We can watch television or our computer screen to see our favorite performers, but look how much money is spent to see them perform in person! Others line up for hours to get into presidential debates, to see the Rose Bowl Parade or watch the Kentucky Derby because there is something about the energy that surrounds these occasions and the ability to form our own impressions that gives it an impact that will be remembered. Unless it's something extraordinary (landing on the moon, for example) technology rarely leaves us with that same memory. At the ECW Annual Meeting we had two very different guest speakers who definitely left us with memories we wouldn't have had from a video presentation.

The Reverend Debora Jennings from the Diocese of Oklahoma was our dinner speaker on Friday

night and presented a workshop with a difference on Saturday morning.

Using superb photographs she took primarily in the Pacific Northwest, Jennings invited us to look at the "Earth, Sky and Water" as "The Voices of Creation". As we looked at the photographs in a spiritual context we saw beauty but we also learned something about the lessons to be learned from the world around us. We came away from the presentation with questions to ponder – ones that many of us found added a new dimension in guiding us as we deal with everyday life as well as our faith life.

The earth is in a constant state of upheaval and such turmoil leaves scars on the land just as turmoil does in our lives. The flaws in nature are often things of beauty, providing us with surprises and hidden treasures. When the flaws are our own, it's often harder to find the positives. Think about walking through one of our State Parks and coming upon a waterfall or coming out of the trees to see a wooded valley below. These surprises were formed by nature and, while they can bring danger, they also bring pleasure. The same holds true for bodies of water that can be ferocious in their power and yet a few hours later provide us a sense of peace and tranquility. I find sunrises and sunsets to be one of God's greatest gifts, not only in their beauty but in the promise they bring of a future and the gift of another day well lived.

It wasn't hard to draw parallels between nature and our inner lives. Perhaps that is one of God's gifts to us!

Elizabeth Mavoa Kamote was a wonderful surprise addition to our meeting since it was not certain that she would be able to make the trip until shortly before it was to begin. Elizabeth is typical of today's women – she wears multiple hats. In Tanga, she's the Accountant for the District Court, the mother of two daughters ages 3 and 7, and the wife of a parish priest. During the course of the meeting she had the opportunity to meet with people from across the diocese and we learned that, although our countries might have many differences in wealth and resources, our challenges, both personal and professional, are very similar – time, resources and money are short but needs are great.



Ms. Elizabeth Mavoa Kamote and the Rev. Debora Jennings spoke at the annual meeting

A large number of the women in the parish are single parents without significant education or skills. Their children attend the local government school, which has very large classes, but the mothers lack the education to give their children the additional help that they need. Mrs. Kamote has two objectives. The first is to teach the mothers skills so that they might earn money. Among the ideas that have been explored for the mothers are soap and candle making and batik printing. For the children she wants to explore programs that prepare the children for school, and the ultimate goal would be to provide educational support for those in school.

Elizabeth brought some local jewelry with her to the meeting and purchasers made a free will donation for the items they bought. The normal procedure is for all monies to go through our diocesan offices to their counterpart in Tanga but an exception was made, with permission, and the money is already being used to pay a teacher and buy supplies so the ladies of the Mothers' Union can learn to make soap and candles. There is enough left to pay for the batik teacher and the supplies as soon as she is available. Elizabeth has promised to send us photographs of the classes –you'll see them in an upcoming *ChurchLife*.

Why do I go to meetings? So I can hear the speaker, see the speaker, and speak to the speaker, face to face. I've met some really interesting people and learned so much. At my age, that's a wonderful thing. Please consider joining us next year: We can promise you a very special program!

ECW PRESIDENT'S REPORT – JUNE 2013

BARBARA JOHANSEN, ECW PRESIDENT

This has really been a good year, with much accomplished and much begun. There have been several important meetings that have been attended by various members of the ECW. The largest, and most important, was the Triennial in Indianapolis in July. Earlier this year, we attended the Province V Annual Meeting in Missouri and ended with our own, well attended, annual meeting in May. At all the meetings we were able to meet with people from all over the Church (no problems are unique!) and listen to wonderful and inspiring speakers.

Thanks to Bishop Hollingsworth, we have begun the dialogues needed to offer support to the Mothers' Union in our two Companion Dioceses, Tanga and Belize. As you know, we had the pleasure of hearing from two representatives from Belize at Winter Convocation and many of you were able to meet and speak with them. A welcome surprise at our annual meeting was the arrival of a representative from the Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Tanga (read more about that below). These are long-term projects, and we will be working with them to identify where and how we can be of most help to them. We will continue to work on this during the summer months and hope to have more concrete plans in place by the fall. As these relationships (for all groups involved) are governed by guidelines established by the involved dioceses, the programs we propose will be coordinated with the Commission on Global and Domestic Mission (CDGM), of whom several members are very active in ECW.

Our Yearbook/Directory has finally become a reality but, like anything involving computers, is still a work in progress. Please continue to send any changes to our Secretary Susan Quill.

The following officers were elected at the annual meeting: Vice President and President Elect: Hilary Nerby; Worship Chair Mary Anthony and Secretary Susan Quill were re-elected to new terms in their current positions. Welcome ladies!

Today, I received the best news. Sixteen ladies from Grace Church in Mansfield, along with their rector, held their first ECW Meeting. They have put together an interesting and diverse program for the coming year that recognizes the need for versatility in their activities to accommodate their members. We wish them a long future as they break new ground and hope that they will share their experiences with others in the South Central Mission Area and the Diocesan Board.

ChurchLife!

Trinity Commons
2230 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44115-2499

calendar HIGHLIGHTS

September 21
**Vestry and Lay Leadership
Conference**
St. Barnabas, Bay Village.

October 1
Clergy Day

October 19
Ministry Discernment Day

October 25-26
Lay Preaching Conference

October 25-27
Diocesan Youth Event
Cedar Hills.

November 8-9
Annual Diocesan Convention
Toledo.

November 14-16
BACAM
Cedar Hills.

November 26
Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland.

Bishops' Visitations

September
8 St. Paul's, Marion
(Hollingsworth)

8 St. Mark's, Wadsworth
(Williams)

15 St. Paul's, Medina
(Hollingsworth)

15 St. Augustine's, Youngstown
(Williams)

29 St. Paul's, Canton
(Hollingsworth)

October
6 St. Paul's, Fremont
(Hollingsworth)

6 Christ Church, Huron
(Bowman)

13 St. Andrew's, Akron
(Williams)

13 Grace, Mansfield
(Hollingsworth)

20 Trinity, Toledo
(Persell)

27 All Saints, Toledo
(Bowman)

November
3 Christ Church, Hudson
(Hollingsworth)

3 St. Paul's, Oregon
(Williams)

3 Christ Church, Warren
(Bowman)

17 Christ Church, Kent
(Williams)

17 Old Trinity, Tiffin
(Bowman)

17 St. Matthew's, Toledo
(Hollingsworth)

24 St. Andrew's, Cleveland
(Williams)

24 St. Paul's, Cleveland Heights
(Hollingsworth)

24 Grace, Defiance
(Persell)

For the complete
calendar of events visit
www.dohio.org