



CROSSROADS

Supporting Small Church Ministries

Board Meeting 2010

Rural Ministries Network, August 26-27, 2010, at Todd Hall Retreat Center, Columbia, Illinois

The August Board meeting was well-attended and productive. Convened by past president Netha Brada, the group consisted of board members David Caffrey, Sue Norton, Warren Frelund, Patsy Barham, Jimmy Martin, and John Harris. Also present were ad hoc members Bob Honeychurch (Thursday only), Jane Helmer, and Lim and Laura Parks. Ben Helmer was invited guest for board training.

Two board members were absent: Mike Maloney and Leslie Campbell. Treasurer Sandy Elledge, also unable to be with us, assisted in financial clarification via email and telephone.

Each day began with Gospel Based Discipleship. On Thursday, Sue Norton led the group in a day-long exercise beginning with 'Who we have been, Who we are, Who we are going to be.'

After a review of the ministry's history, beginning in 1924 as Rural Workers' Fellowship to the present as a network essentially for and about small congregations, the meeting looked toward the future.

Bob Honeychurch noted that the world has changed and is changing, and we need to live in the world as it

See **BOARD** on page 4



August Board meeting, from left: Jimmy Martin, John Harris, Patsy Barham, Lim Parks, David Caffrey, Sue Norton, Warren Frelund, Netha Brada, Bob Honeychurch, Ben Helmer, Jane Helmer

Tithing/Doing Outreach & Service

St. Augustine of Canterbury Church, Edinboro, PA

St. Augustine of Canterbury is a mission congregation located in rural northwestern Pennsylvania. The congregation is blessed with the services of a local priest who teaches full-time at the university. This allows us to concentrate on outreach and fellowship rather than on St Augustine's operating budget.

With an average Sunday attendance of 38, and some 20 pledging units, the congregation made a commitment to tithe the pledge income for use in outreach activities. In addition, we participate actively in numerous outreach events throughout the year.

In order to encourage the spirit of giving and to pass on that practice to the next generation, a service component is included in the confirmation program. Having but few high school students, we typically hold confirmation classes every two or three years. The High School/Confirmation class at St. Augustine's spent the past year studying the Bible, the Prayer Book, and the catechism. In addition to this "academic" learning, the class was involved in service learning and answering the call for all Christians to help each other. During the year, students took part in group and individual service projects that helped the congregation, local entities and national causes.

At the congregational level, the class took responsibility for Sunday bulletins, making sure they were folded and inserted in to the service booklets. Individual students also participated in activities as diverse as lawn mowing, cooking goodies for coffee hour, acolyting, ushering and oblation bearing.

At the local level, the class decided to tie fleece (security) blankets for children whose mothers find it

See **OUTREACH** on page 3

CHANGES FOLLOW BOARD MEETING

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Vitality in Small Congregations

The economist E.F. Schumacher published a book in 1973 entitled *Small is Beautiful*. An updated 1999 edition is available from Amazon. Considered a radical piece of writing in its time, it has come to be appreciated for its prophetic voice in an era of business mergers, agricultural mega farms and food production controlled by only five multinational corporations.

In his chapter, *A Question of Size*, Schumacher says “Even today, we are generally told that gigantic organisations (sic) are inescapably necessary; but when we look closely we can notice that as soon as great size has been created there is often a strenuous attempt to attain smallness within bigness” (p. 47, 1999 ed.)

This phenomenon is seen in mega churches where the emphasis is on small groups as the places where ministry and spiritual development are accomplished. Small church members have known all along that the single caring cell of membership (15-20 persons) is a natural environment that is comfortable for spiritual development and growth.

With over seventy per-cent of Episcopal churches in the category of small, average Sunday attendance 100 or fewer, we could simply say we don’t know how to grow. But this begs the question, why do we remain small? Research tells us most major Protestant denominations are comprised of small churches. The bulk of the membership may worship in large congregations, but there

are many more small ones that represent the denomination in suburbs, small towns and rural areas.

Some time ago I decided the best way to approach the issue of smallness was to ask, what makes this church vital? I want to know if there is a sense of mission and ministry about the place. I couldn’t care less how many folks show up on Sunday. What I want to know is if this place were to shut down would anybody care? That question needs to be answered with honesty, and an inventory of how the membership contributes to the ministry of the larger community needs to be made, including both individual and group activities.

I also have come to believe that small congregations need to stop apologizing for being small and start acting like the mature caring cells they were created to be. People need two things in their life: freedom and order (Schumacher). Small churches are uniquely equipped to offer people the freedom to become what God created them to be, and the order that contains flexibility to meet the changing and growing demands of ministry.

We have small churches engaged in every kind of ministry that exists: there are knitting groups that make prayer shawls, groups that make prayer beads for U.S. military people in combat zones, counseling and caring ministries for prisoners, people providing food for the needy and delivering it to shut-ins – the list is endless and seldom fully declared. As one woman said, “We’re just too busy to sit and write it all down!”

Schumacher says “...people can only be themselves in small comprehensible groups.” Then why do we

Our task is to look to the future and prepare for it ... by seeing that our small churches are well-run, competent institutions ready to respond

feel pressured to grow? Well, organizationally we are declining and that makes church leadership nervous. There must be some magic bullet, some program or pabulum out there that works. After all, look how big that new non-denominational church is. If I were a pastor of a large congregation I would have financial worries and staff problems to occupy my waking and sleeping hours. As a small church pastor, I can focus on the things that matter: prayer, spiritual development, communication, and relationships.

The economics of the last three years have been very hard on congregations. Large churches have had to reduce staff and programs, often with losses in attendance because they can no longer meet everyone’s needs. The pressure on them to cut thousands of dollars from budgets has made small church concerns seem manageable by comparison.

What is ahead for us? As issues of energy use, land and resources become more focused, small churches are uniquely equipped to lead the way with best practices, wise use of resources, and an economy of size that gives us credibility. We may one day be the only non-profit institutions left in small communities. Our task is to look to the future and prepare for it, not by apologizing for our lack of size, but by seeing that our small churches are well-run, competent institutions ready to respond to the missions for which we are gifted. Like Isaiah in the year king Uzziah died, we might well offer ourselves, with less baggage and more vitality, to be sent to do the Lord’s work in a time of scarcity and grace.

Rev. Ben E. Helmer, Vicar
St James’ Episcopal Church, Eureka Springs AR

Crossroads is the quarterly Journal of the Rural Ministries Network (formerly Rural Workers Fellowship, Inc.), a community of small-church leaders: clergy and laity within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada.

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Editor: Jane Helmer, 479-363-6266

Mailing address: 16 Osage Lane,
Holiday Island, AR 72631-5050
e-mail: mjhelmer@cox.net

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Notes from all over

A Reader Suggests—

Thanks for the recent format of the journal. A suggestion: a great many articles are continued on following pages. If this is really necessary (?), then the 2nd section of the item should be headed in bold caps. I get lost ! I have been an RWF member since seminary in the 40's!

from D. Delos Wampler, early July 2010

A wonderful suggestion, Fr. Wampler.

Episcopal Disability Network Offers Consultation, Resources

The Episcopal Disability Network provides consultation to parishes wanting to make their buildings accessible, resources on disability awareness, and a free lending library for people who are print-handicapped. The library includes resources on topics such as church history, spirituality, and disabilities. For more information, call 1-888-738-3636 or email the organization at disability99@earthlink.net

The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, on-line news

12th Annual Blessing of the Animals

On Sunday, October 3, 2010, St. Patrick Episcopal Church in Brunswick will sponsor their 12th Annual Community Blessing of the Animals at North Park in Brunswick from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. More than 200 animals are expected. There will be free refreshments and free treats for your pet as well as a raffle. Display table space is available. [85]*

The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, on-line news

Confused about USDA Programs? See their "Programs at a Glance"

USDA programs can often seem enigmatic and confusing. Many farmers, rural development and conservation groups in need of financial or technical assistance are often either unaware of what USDA programs exist, or lack access to the assistance they seek.

The USDA recently published a blog called "USDA Programs at Glance" with links to memorandum outlining programs that can be used to foster local and regional food systems in four areas of USDA: Rural Development, Farm Service Agency; Agriculture Marketing Service; and Research, Education & Economics.

*National Catholic Rural Life Bulletin, August 10, 2010
Visit us at www.ncrlc.com*

Notice of CHANGE

Face-Lift for Masthead

Crossroads Masthead has a change, and we hope you noticed it in the publication heading on page 1. The ministry-defining statement indicates that RMN is about small congregations everywhere.

* Number entered in square brackets [#], above and elsewhere in Crossroads, shows size of congregation as reported in the Episcopal Church Annual, 2009, aka the Red Book.

More about St. Augustine of Canterbury

OUTREACH, from page 1

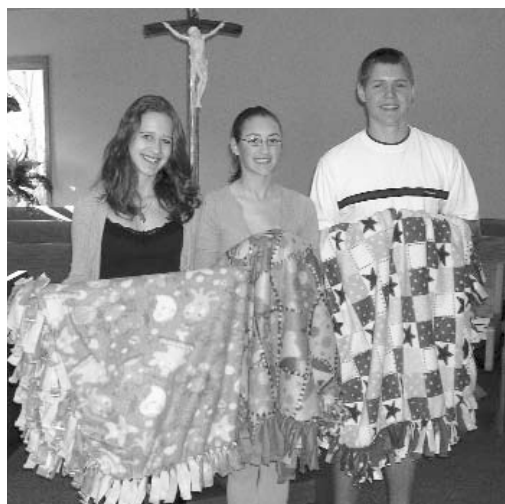
necessary to seek safety in the Women's Shelter in Union City. As the blankets were completed, they were brought to the altar for a blessing by Fr. Dave. They were then sent on their way to bring comfort to the children.

An additional project, one the entire congregation could enjoy, was apple picking. Families of the confirmation students and other members met at a local apple orchard on a beautiful fall day. They made short work of filling bushels and bushels of apples that were then donated to the local food pantry for distribution.

The class' international project was Africa 6000. This deanery project raised funds for drilling a deep well in Africa. St. A's students participated by collecting coins in plastic drinking bottles to help fund the project. A number of congregational members put loose change in more bottles and brought them to church. Confirmation class students helped sort and roll these added coins as well as those they collected themselves.

St. A's young people are surely demonstrating a knowledge of, and commitment to, Christ's call to love and serve one another.

*Sue Norton, Edinboro PA
Board Member*



Three of St. A's students, Sarah Rupert, Jordan Rhen, and Chad Kulka, display blankets made by their Confirmation class. Not pictured: Shelby Davis, Alex Hurley
Photo submitted

Notice of CHANGE

Search for new Editor

Crossroads editor, Jane Helmer, is phasing out of editorial duties and proposes to end full responsibility with the Winter 2010–2011 issue. Names are being solicited for a new editor who, it is hoped, will be in place at the very beginning of active virtual communications for this ministry.

Suggestions/names for, and offers to be considered for the new editor are invited. PLEASE SEND names to the Crossroads mailing or email address at the bottom of page 2.

BOARD from page 1

truly is. So, like Moses, we might ask, “Where is the pillar of fire and smoke leading us?”

There followed considerable discussion about the purpose and mission of Rural Ministries Network.

Purpose(s): Filling in gaps, support; identifying dioceses in need of support/understanding; partnership—resource and advocate for small churches; networking with other para-church organizations such as Living Stones, Domestic Missionary Partners, Ministry Development Collaborative, Standing Commission on Small Churches, Older Adult Ministries, Rural Church Network (ecumenical).

Mission: Answers to this question included next steps: A page on Bob Honeychurch’s section of the ECUSA web site; and annual ‘parish’ issue of Crossroads mailed to small congregations, a clearing house, an unfilled hole needing training opportunities, maintaining a resource page on the web site.

During the afternoon the group participated in an Asset Mapping exercise as a training experience led by Warren Frelund. The group listed 36 assets that were then combined into creative ways to form [hypothetical] action plans.

Energized by this exercise, the day’s discussions ended with a summary of how the future for the ministry is starting to look:

Renewal of mission

The Board agreed that Rural Ministries Network as we knew it no longer exists. So, if we bury the past and move on with the ministry, as is the will of the board, what replaces the old, and what might continue?

- New name to be determined
- Develop and maintain a regular web presence
- Continue to publish a prayer list
- Continue some form of *Crossroads*: virtual not print
- Work on membership development
- Revise dues period
- Look at possible relationships with other para-church groups
- Continue to hold regular Board meetings

On Friday morning, the formal Board meeting took place, chaired by Netha Brada. A quorum being present, action was taken on several business items. The current financial report was accepted and the 2010 budget approved. Through unanimous ballot the following officers’ positions were filled:

President Warren Frelund;
Vice-President Sue Norton;
Secretary Patsy Barham;
Membership Chair Netha Brada

Several Board memberships and the position of Honorary President currently remain open. The presi-

More from Board meeting 2010

dent may make or recommend appointments for unfilled positions. Accordingly, Warren Frelund solicited names from the Board for his consideration.

The Board then reviewed, with action as needed, the items from yesterday’s summary (above).

1. Name Change to focus on Small nor Rural: Decision on new name tabled until next meeting, to allow time for thought and checking domain names. Ministry focus is on small churches/congregations in urban as well as in rural settings.
2. Crossroads to go Virtual
Printed and bulk-mailed Crossroads will cease at the end of this year. Beginning with the Spring issue for 2011, Crossroads will be mailed electronically in PDF format; it will also will be available on-line. In response to the editor’s resignation, the Board accepted Jane Helmer’s phase-out proposal, noting with thanks she has been Crossroads editor since 2003.
3. Membership Development and Relationships.
A committee is to work on a piece for one of the Episcopal bulletin inserts available on the ECUSA website. Other para-church groups to be approached.
4. The 2011 budget will be developed.
5. The membership (mailing) list is regularly updated and the Prayer list is to be adjusted accordingly.
6. Concern was expressed about placing e-mail addresses and postal addresses on a web site. Board policy, unanimously agreed, is to publish neither e-mail nor street addresses on the web.*
7. Annual Dues: The Board acted to change due dates. Beginning in 2011, all RMN memberships—regardless of when paid—will be for the current calendar year. Reminder notices will be sent as of January 1st and payments received will be good through December 31st rather than the anniversary of receipt (as now).
- 8 Use of Endowment Fund: Action approved the borrowing of \$5,000 from endowment to cover the meeting expense line item in the 2010 budget. Board officers will examine original documents to determine the intent and disposition of the endowment fund at its inception. Review and report requested by January 2011.

The meeting adjourned before lunch.

In the afternoon the Board reconvened with Ben Helmer as facilitator to develop a time line through 2011, and assignments for the tasks to be done.

From notes and minutes prepared by Ben Helmer, Recorder

*Each issue of Crossroads is currently posted on website <ruralministriesnetwork.org>

What approaches have helped your congregation to fulfill its vision of remaining a vital source of assistance to the community and to the world?

Crossroads goes Virtual

Crossroads will no longer appear in print after the Winter 2010-11 issue—at the end of this year.

Beginning next Spring with the first issue of 2011, Crossroads will be distributed via email and website only. Members with email access may receive the publication as an email attachment. The current issue of Crossroads, as well as previous ones, will also be available online.

On Going Paperless

Like banks, utilities and more, RMN seeks to be green as well as current. Reduced printing and mailing costs will also save more than \$2,800 each year.

The electronic, or virtual, Crossroads will be accessible to the majority of members. Please send your email address for our developing ListServe.

Please send your email address

No e-mail?

If you do not send an email address, we will assume that you plan to access Crossroads on-line, either for viewing there or to download.

Other?

For those who cannot receive or view the virtual edition, other arrangements are possible—just let us know.

Send your comments to the Editor at the address shown on page 2, lower left corner.

Friends of the Appalachian Mountains,

The Mountaintop Removal Road Show's Fall 2010 travel schedule may still have space — if you would like a volunteer presentation at your school, church, community or civic group, please email Dave Cooper at davecooper928@yahoo.com.

“We have a number of great new volunteer speakers this fall and we hope to do hundreds of informational presentations about mountaintop removal coal mining all across the Midwest and eastern United States.

Appalachia Rising

Appalachia Rising in Washington DC, September 25-27, is a national response to the poisoning of America's water supply, the destruction of Appalachia's mountains, head water source streams, and communities through mountaintop removal coal mining. It follows a long history of social action for a just and sustainable Appalachia. Appalachia Rising will unite coal-field residents, grass roots groups, individuals, and national organizations to call for the abolition of mountaintop removal coal mining and demand that America's water be protected from all forms of surface mining.

More upcoming events and festivals in Appalachia at (<http://www.mountainjustice.org/calendar/index.php>) I hope to see you on the road or in the mountains!”

*Dave Cooper, The Mountaintop Removal Road Show
<http://www.mountainroadshow.com/> Lexington KY*

Update* to 'More on Bathrooms' in Trenton, Missouri

Becoming more user-friendly

Before

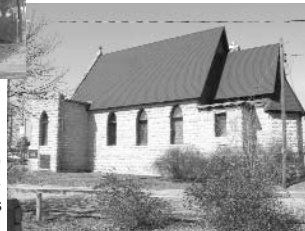
Historic St. Philip's Church on road-locked triangle, main thoroughfare at front.



Road at right has been closed and building easement permitted.

Side view across side road, now closed and torn up.

File Photos



Today (2010)

Below: St. Philip's new entrance sets well back from the main road. —Concrete (lower part of picture) is for steps and elevator shaft.



Construction photos: Harold Kost, Jamesport MO



Above: Side view of addition.

—New entrance is at right —Inside, the door into the church (far left) replaces narthex window. In the 'before' pictures above, this window can be seen on square 'tower'.

Two years ago the extension was little more than city permission and architects' drawings. There were long, dismaying delays as plans were adjusted after each review by the State Historical group. Even more dismaying were increased project costs that rose well above the original estimates.

Yet St. Philip's congregation of 35 persisted. Members were not about to let go of the project that would add so much: running water and bathroom as well as a handicapped entrance. For about 120 years the church has been located on the same triangular site—could it have been at the edge of a field?— that now is right on the main road and close to downtown Trenton in the Diocese of West Missouri. New water lines and a street closure added impetus to the congregation's long-expressed wish to expand.

Today the project is becoming a reality. The new entrance leads to indoor steps and an elevator to the church-level space (about 20' by 18'). The bathroom will be close to the narthex. To hold construction costs down, the congregation plans to finish much of the remainder of the interior with volunteer help.

J Helmer

*St. Philip's extension Crossroads, Summer 2008

WHO ARE THE HEROES? TOWN and COUNTRY HEROES—Third Quarter 2010

Prayer for heroes

We bless you, merciful Lord, for all those who have served your Church in small congregations and places throughout the land, remembering especially on this day your servant(s) *name(s)*. Grant that, inspired by this ministry, our work, prayer, and witness may share your love with all who hunger and thirst for your coming; who live and reign with the Father and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN.

Team up with WalMart to beat hunger

By Ariel Miller, Interchange contributor

Another steel plant has closed in eastern Ohio, and food is flying off the shelves at St. Paul's Outreach Center in Martins Ferry as more families struggle to find work in Belmont County's dismal job market.

But the Rev. John Brandenburg and St. Paul's pantry director Lisa Bell are swiftly re-stocking, with new aid from WalMart's Fighting Hunger Together initiative.

This spring, WalMart announced a commitment to donate more than 1 billion pounds of food over the next five years in response to the steep rise in hunger as high unemployment drags on across the U.S.

Feeding the hungry

Brandenburg came to the East Central Ohio Cluster in 2004 as missionary after a career managing food services for large institutions. Since returning to Belmont County, where he grew up, Brandenburg has helped expand emergency food capacity immensely by persuading faith-based programs to get bulk commodities at the regional food bank instead of paying retail prices.

His success in multiplying the volume of food at St. Paul's pantry persuaded other local hunger programs to merge with St. Paul's. He has fostered similar strategies in neighboring towns to cut overhead, streamline the work, and prevent volunteer burnout.

Brandenburg was asked by the MidOhio Food Bank to allocate WalMart's new food donations among a county-wide network of pantries and soup kitchens operated by everyone from Quakers to Baptists.

"I've got all these organizations on speed dial," he laughs. He's able to use the emerging county-wide network that he helped create to make sure the huge infu-

In our prayer cycle this quarter, we remember these outstanding individuals whose ministries were in small church work:

- October 3—Eva Hasell**
- October 21—Rev Samuel N Keys**
- October 28—Rev Sampson W Foster**
- November 11—Rt Rev Herman Page**
- November 12—Rt Rev Harold Jones**
- December 3—Rev Dr Richard O Comfort**
- December 10—Rev Lloyd Delaney**
- December 10—Rev John Philbrick**
- December 27—Rev. Shelby Walthall**
- December 28—Rev George A Smith**

sion of new supplies from WalMart goes where it is most needed.

On a hot summer day, Brandenburg and Bell pulled up quietly behind the St. Clairsville WalMart and met two men with a small pick-up truck.

No dumpster-diving needed: within minutes, the store's back doors flew open and smiling clerks wheeled out carts loaded with 500 pounds of food, including 128 pounds of chicken, beef and pork.

"Last Friday we received 1,440 pounds," Brandenburg said. "I wouldn't be surprised if we receive 100,000 pounds by the end of the year."

Brandenburg or Bell now come to WalMart three days a week at noon to weigh and document the donations and help volunteers pack it for delivery. There is no predicting what will come out the door on any given day, but the typical offering includes an impressive assortment of fresh produce, canned and baked goods, dairy products and meat.

"We're able to give more food to each family because of this new program," said Ken Williams, a volunteer with the St. Clairsville Food Pantry. "Usually there is a lot of produce. We got 200 pounds of strawberries last week."

WalMart also committed to giving \$250 million in grants to national, state and local hunger programs, including food banks, Meals on Wheels, and summer feeding programs for children, and to provide technical assistance to help these programs operate more efficiently and effectively in the ongoing crisis.

If your church is part of a hunger ministry and there is a WalMart super store in your area, call the store manager to see if they are participating in this program.

Interchange, News from the Diocese of Southern Ohio August 2010 Volume XXXVIII, No. 7 www.diosohio.org



The Rev. John Brandenburg goes over the weight of donated items loaded up in Wal-Mart's back alley by volunteers Lisa Bell of St. Paul's Food pantry and Ken Williams and John Woodland of the St. Clairsville Food Pantry.

+ + RMN PRAYER CYCLE + + +
Fourth Quarter, 2010

Italics indicates New Friends/Members

* indicates new address (see note below)

Bold type indicates Town and Country Heroes

^B indicates new board member

October 1

^B Rev David Caffrey, Redlands CA

October 2

^B Rev John Harris, Gridley CA

October 3—Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

^B Mr James Martin, Ft McKavett TX

Eva Hasell (d. unknown) in the 1920s organized a ministry to isolated persons in western Canada, inspiring some 31 similar programs in Canada and later mobile ministries in the U.S.

October 4

Rev Ben and Mrs Jane Helmer, Holiday Island AR

October 5

* Rev Richard E Helmer, Corte Madera CA

October 6

Ms Lillie Henderson, Montezuma Creek UT

October 7

Rt Rev Rayford B High Jr., Tyler TX

October 8

Rev Canon Sandra Holmburg, Detroit Lakes MN

October 9

Rev Russell M Johnson, Hilo HI

October 10—Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Jim Jordan, Gualala CA

October 11

Mr Andrew Kerr, Casper WY

October 12

Rev Marcia Kilpatrick, Park City UT

October 13

Myra H King, Staples MN

October 14

Rev Kirkland W Knight, Shreveport LA

October 15

* Rev Charles Kunene, Swaziland, Southern Africa

October 16

Ms Lauri Lawson, Holdrege NE

October 17—Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

Rev Jodi Lediard, Virginia City NV

October 18—St Luke

Revs Richard H and Sarah V Lewis, New Hartford NY

October 19

Rt Rev Gordon Light, 100 Mile House BC CANADA

October 20

LTC Sarah D Lopez, Hawkeye IA

October 21

Rev James Lowery, Old Lyme CT

Rev Samuel N Keys (d 10/21/1984) Rural pastor and leader in Province 5 Town and Country Seminars.

October 22

Rev Donald & Carolyn Maddux, Shelton WA

Note: Street addresses intentionally omitted, in accordance with Board policy (page 4) respecting personal privacy on website.

Prayer for members/friends

Almighty God, bless we pray you, the work and witness of the Rural Ministries Network, and of each member, especially your servant(s) *name(s)*, whom we remember before you this day. Grant that by our work, prayers and witness, your Church's ministry in towns, country and small cities may be strengthened and extended to your praise and glory. AMEN

October 23—St. James of Jerusalem

Rev Irene Maliaman, Saipan MP

October 24—Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

Mr Michael Maloney, Cincinnati OH

October 25

Rev Irene Martin, Skamokawa WA

October 26

Very Rev Hugh Matheson, Kenora ON CANADA

October 27

Rev John E Matheson Regina SK CANADA

October 28—St. Simon and St. Jude

Joseph E Mazza, Sturgeon Bay WI

Rev Sampson W Foster (d 10/28/1985) African American Priest served in Mississippi for over 50 years.

October 29

Mr Charles McCray, Carson City NV

October 30

Rev Richard H McGinnis, River Falls WI

October 31—Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

Canon Alan R & Joan McLeod, Williams Lake BC CANADA

November 1—All Saints' Day

Rev Richard Mendez, Randlett UT

November 2

Rev Susanna E Metz, Sewanee TN

November 3

Rev John Sloan Miller, Baton Rouge LA

November 4

Rt Rev Steven A Miller, Milwaukee WI

November 5

Rev James Moore, Tamuning GU

November 6

Janet & Richard Moriarty, Cheneyville LA

November 7—Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev Warren Murphy, Cody WY

November 8

Mr Werner Noesner, Cody WY

November 9

Sue Norton, Edinboro PA

November 10

Rev Herman Page, Topeka KS

Nov 11

Rev Sue Palmer Albia IA

Rt Rev Herman Page (d 11/11/1977) Bishop of Northern Michigan and leader in ministry to the isolated.

November 12

Rev Lisa Pang, Tamuning GU

Rt Rev Harold Jones (d 11/12/2002) As Suffragan Bishop of South Dakota he was first Native American elected Bishop.

November 13

Dr Grace Parker, New Braunfels TX

November 14—Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Rev Limuel Parks, Batesville AR

November 15

Most Rev Michael A Peers Toronto ON CANADA

November 16

Helen Philbrick, Duxbury MA

November 17

Rev & Mrs Gordon S Price, Dayton OH

November 18

Rev Sue Ann Raymond, Independence IA

November 19

Rev Thomas N Rightmyer, Asheville NC

November 20

Rev S Paul Rowles, Edinburg VA

November 21—Last Sunday after Pentecost

Rev Derek S Salter, Okanagan Falls BC CANADA

November 22

* Rev Holladay Sanderson, Boise ID

November 23

Rt Rev Alan Scarfe, Des Moines IA

November 24

Rev Stephen Schaitberger, Mesa AZ

November 25—Thanksgiving Day

Most Rev Katharine Jefferts Schori, New York NY

November 26

Rt Rev Gordon Scruton Jr Springfield MA

November 27

Rev Stephen Sedgwick, Lorain OH

November 28—First Sunday of Advent

Rt Rev Ronald Shepherd, Salt Spring Island BC CANADA

November 29

Rev Robert A Smith, Dowagiac MI

November 30—St Andrew

Rev Roger S Smith, Manchester ME

December 1

* Rev Frederick Smyithe, Bemidji MN

December 2

Rev Paul M Sneve, Rapid City SD

December 3

Joan Stein, Las Vegas NV

Rev Dr Richard O Comfort (d 12/3/2002) Ecumenical Presbyterian hero—friend and advisor of Town & Country leader Rev Clifford Samuelson.

December 4

David A Storm, Seattle WA

December 5—Second Sunday of Advent

Rev William C Tapley, Midland TX

December 6

Rev Francis Tatem Jr, Harrisonburg VA

December 7

Rev Carol Tookey, Farmington NM

December 8

Rev John Scott Trotter, Bon Secour AL

December 9

Garrick Valarde, Bloomfield NM

December 10

Mrs Nancy Viggers, Prairie City OR

Rev Lloyd Delaney (d 12/10/2002) A recognized leader in the Canadian Anglican Church nationally and provincially.

Rev John Philbrick (d 12/10/1984) He and his wife Helen were innovators in homestead movement for clergy.

December 11

Rev Roy C Walworth, Evanston WY

December 12—Third Sunday of Advent

Rev D Delos Wampler, Schenectady NY

December 13

Ven Michael Watkins, Kamloops BC CANADA

December 14

Rev Suzanne Watson, New York NY

December 15

Ms Cathy Weber, Arapahoe NE

December 16

Rev Gail Wheatley, Port Angeles WA

December 17

Dave & Alice Williams, Kimberling City MO

December 18

Rev Jim Wilson, Louisville KY

December 19—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Ms LaDonna Wind, Louisville KY

December 20

Rev Daniel O Worthington Jr, Gloucester VA

December 21—St. Thomas

Mrs Elizabeth York, Westerville OH

December 22

Chaplain Jim Adams, Pineville LA

December 23

Rev Jerry Adinolfi, Coffeerville KS

December 24—Christmas Eve

* Rev Jami Anderson, Pinedale WY

December 25—The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Rev Paul E Baker, Eagle Bridge NY

December 26—First Sunday after Christmas

Rev Richard Bamforth, Augusta ME

December 27—St Stephen (Tr)

Charles H Bardenwerper DDS, Fort Atkinson WI

Rev Shelby Walthall (d 12/27/2002) Early leader in 20th century rural/small town church revival as Episcopal Church sought to strengthen work in these areas.

December 28—St. John (Tr)

Rev Patsy G Barham, Henderson TX

Rev George A Smith (d 12/28/2005) Native American, faithful priest for 63 years in northern Minnesota, congregations in small town, rural, and Ojibwe reservation settings.

December 29

Ms Jennifer Bartos, Waubun MN

December 30

Rev Chris Beebe, Paragould AR

December 31

Rev James Benbrook, Ruston IA

Staying Healthy, Finding Insurance

Healthcare.Gov and more

For many families and small businesses, finding the right insurance plan has meant spending hours on the phone deciphering confusing insurance company lingo and reading way too much fine print. Today finding health insurance just got easier with the launch of HealthCare.gov, at

<http://www.healthcare.gov/>

FIND OUT

— What works for you

— What are the options? — What's available where?

The new website developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services helps you understand all the health insurance options available in your local area for you and your family. After answering just a few basic questions, the website's insurance finder will identify public and private coverage options that might be right for you.

— What's new in healthcare

You can receive updates on the implementation of the new law and, as the website grows, you will be able to research health plan quality ratings, learn about disease prevention, and compare health plan prices all in one place.

— About health insurance companies

The website represents an important step in implementation and allows us all to take health care into our own hands. *HealthCare.gov* represents an important step as we move forward to end the insurance company's stranglehold over the American health care system. We hope that this resource will move us closer to the peace of mind promised by the new law.

— About insurance for high risk individuals

If you or someone you know is uninsured due to a pre-existing condition, check out the new high risk insurance pools. Search for "high risk" on the home page of www.healthcare.gov/

Modified from item forwarded by Dave Ruesink, Rural Church Network, July 2010

Source: hcan@healthcareforamericanow.org

Notice of CHANGE

Prayer Cycle Adjustment

The Prayer Cycle lists a current member *every* day, with Town and Country Heroes added on their anniversaries. This arrangement allows as many members as possible to be listed each quarter.

Street addresses have been omitted in accordance with the Board's statement on **privacy** (see meeting report). Therefore the added listings have not altered the 2-page format, liked by so many for easy access and clip-ability.

Episcopal, Lutheran congregations team up for community fundraiser

By Pat McCaughan

The combined teamwork of Grace Episcopal [80] and Bethany Lutheran congregations in Rice Lake, Wisconsin will help create a safe place for local homeless residents.

It might also be the start of future joint ministry projects, said the Very Rev. Scott H. Kirby, who serves Grace's congregation. "It's the first time an Episcopal congregation and a Lutheran congregation got together here to work and support a local charity."

After an early morning worship service at which Kirby officiated, teams from the two congregations kicked off a fundraiser at "Art in the Park," an annual event showcasing the work of local artists in the lake-side community of about 9,000.

Sales of more than 125 pies and more than 100 pounds of donated "Cheboygan brats" and other meat helped raise \$5,000 for two local charities: Benjamin's House Emergency Shelter and the Heart Island Family Enrichment Center, according to Mary Marsh, who organized the Grace Church team.

"It was a great partnership," she said.

Benjamin's House is set to open this fall. Thanks to the joint church fundraiser, "we will now be able to complete renovations to an old convent and hire a director," Marsh said.

"There is currently no homeless shelter in Barrion County. There are neighboring shelters in other counties, but they are usually filled to capacity and they have to turn down people from Barrion County."

With a population of about 44,000, Barrion County has an estimated 50 homeless people, said Jodi Bunnell of Bethany Lutheran church, and Benjamin's House board member. "Unfortunately, most of us go about our daily business without even realizing there's a need."

Planning for Benjamin's House began in January 2009 when a coalition of about 30 people from a variety of local organization began to address issues of homelessness. At the time homeless families were given motel vouchers for 1- to 2--night stays "and that's all that was available," said Marsh, a retired school-teacher who also serves on the board of Benjamin's House. The group raised \$17,000, acquired nonprofit status and began renovations on a former convent in nearby Heart Island, she said. The convent will house both the shelter and the enrichment center, which is already located at the site.

"People will be able to stay at Benjamin's House up to 90 days," Marsh said. "They will have a case manager and a plan in place for getting out of the shelter. We will tie them into other agencies [for further help]."

"It's exciting that renovations to all of the bedrooms

See **BENJAMIN'S HOUSE** on page 11

Born of Water, Born of Spirit:

Supporting the Ministry of the Baptized in Small Congregations

by Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook, Fredrica Harris Thompsett
ISBN# 978-1-56699-400-2 Alban No. AL400 paper, 193 pages, 2010 The Alban Institute www.alban.org/book-store.aspx email Orders@Alban.org (703) 964-2700 (800) 486-1318 \$18.00 (\$14.40 for members)

Publisher: What does the church look like if we take the ministry of the baptized—the priesthood of all believers—seriously? How are congregations transformed when the church supports and affirms the ministry of all the baptized, particularly in small congregations without the means to hire a seminary-trained pastor? And what ecclesial structures and educational models need to emerge in the next decades to assist these small congregations in the recovery of baptismal living—and their own vitality?

The authors explore these questions as well as the variety of ways people in small congregations—many with no more than fifty members—are living out their baptism and the impact their actions are having on their congregations, judicatories, and communities, and the institutions that educate clergy. The authors argue that just because a community cannot pay a seminary-trained minister ... it does not mean that there is no ministry there. It does mean that we need to look at ministry and the church in a more expansive way.

The stories of the congregations in this book serve to inspire about what is possible when we live intentionally as the reconciling presence of the body of Christ in the world. They also educate us about what will be needed in the years to come to lift up still more

small congregations for their work in the larger community.

Reviews:

“Written with theological acumen and practical savvy, *Born of Water, Born of Spirit* demonstrates how the ministry of the baptized can revitalize small congregations and lead us all into deeper understandings of the Church’s mission.”

Malcolm Warford, Director, The Lexington Seminar: Theological Teaching for the Church’s Ministries

“This book is a fine addition to the conversation about empowering the whole people of God in their vocations, in—and outside of—the congregation.”

Rev. Dr. Mark Wilhelms, Director for Colleges and Universities and Associate Director for Educational Partnerships and Institutions, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

“Impatient with a model of church that imprisons the gifts of ministry in only a few persons, the authors introduce us to congregations in which many ministries are affirmed, set free, and make possible imaginative participation in God’s mission.”

Gordon Light, Retired Bishop for the Anglican Parishes of the Central Interior (British Columbia)

“By telling these stories of ministry rooted in baptism, the authors show the way for small congregations to be vitally engaged in God’s mission in the world.”

Ruth Meyers, Hodges-Haynes Professor of Liturgics, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, California

Membership—recent PATRON reNEWals received for

The Rt. Rev. Stephen Miller, Milwaukee
The Rev. Lisa Pang, Episcopal Church in Micronesia, Guam

Appointment

Thomas Ferguson named ecumenical and interreligious relations officer

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Ferguson has been named as ecumenical and interreligious relations officer for the Episcopal Church, according to a June 23 announcement from the Office of Public Affairs.

Ferguson will develop strategies and actions supporting Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori’s ministry as chief ecumenical officer of the Episcopal Church, the release said. He had served as associate deputy for ecumenical and interreligious relations since 2001 and as interim ecumenical officer following Bishop Christopher Epting’s retirement at the end of 2009.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to continue to serve the presiding bishop and the Episcopal Church,” Ferguson said, according to the release. “Given many of the changes we are facing in society, our ecumenical and interreligious engagement is of critical importance to the life of the church.”

Ferguson has served as theological consultant

for the Episcopal Church’s bilateral theological dialogues with the United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Orthodox Church and Roman Catholic Church.

Ferguson was ordained to the priesthood December 2009. He has served as the interim chaplain at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at posts at Emmanuel Church, Boston; Miriam Hospital, Providence, Rhode Island; and St. Thomas Church in New Haven, Connecticut.

He holds a PhD from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and is a graduate of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Yale Divinity School and Wesleyan University.

Ferguson will be a member of the Episcopal Church’s global partnerships team. He will be based in Madison, Wisconsin.

From Episcopal News Service. June 23, 2010



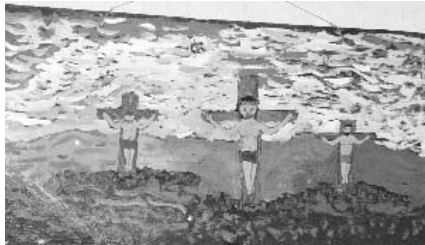
Trinity, Muscatine members transform old roof slates into art

By Cynthia Beaudette

When the slate shingles covering the roof of Muscatine, Iowa's 154-year-old Trinity Episcopal Church [75] wore out, it didn't signal the end of their usefulness. They became canvases for artwork depicting the 14 Stations of the Cross.

The Rev. Cathi Bencken of Trinity Episcopal said the stations are significant events in the final days of the life of Jesus Christ, beginning with his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and ending with his placement in the tomb. Those events are recalled through Bible scripture and prayer during the 40 days of Lent.

The artwork was completed by parishioners of all ages, with the youngest being 9. The tiles are displayed throughout the church, where they provide additional illustration for the celebration of



Holy Week through Easter Sunday. The artwork offers a unique visual for parishioners as they read scripture and pray in recognition of each Station of the Cross during the Friday Lenten services.

Bencken doesn't know how old the tiles are that were used for the artwork because the roof has been worked on at different times through the years. Slate shingles are more expensive than those used on many homes and buildings, but Trinity Episcopal member Devin Pettit said slate is used in keeping with the original design of the Gothic-Revival building.

The slate roof has also been proven to be a safer choice, said Pettit. In 1945, Muscatine's Grand Opera House, located just several feet from the church, burned down, but the church wasn't affected. Pettit said the church's slate shingles kept it from catching fire.

The Stations of the Cross tiles were removed after Easter and will be used again next year. One parishioner used her carpentry skills to create a large wooden box with wheels to store the tiles throughout the rest of the year, said Bencken. "It's pretty amazing, they took something ordinary and turned it into something beautiful," she said.

From article that originally appeared in the Muscatine Journal online Friday, March 26, 2010 at 10:30 am.

Notice of CHANGE

Annual Dues for Calendar Year, starts 2011

Through a motion discussed and passed by the Board, all RMN memberships—regardless of when paid—are good for the current calendar year. Beginning in 2011, reminder notices will be set out January 1st and payments received will be good through December 31 rather than the anniversary of receipt (as now).

More on Episcopal & Lutheran congregations' **BENJAMNIN'S HOUSE**, from page 7 teamwork

in the former convent have been promised by different churches in the county," said Marsh. "They'll furnish and maintain them. And the plan is to have five evening meals a week, on weeknights, supplied by churches and civic groups in the county."

The family enrichment center, which is about five years old, offers family activities, parenting skills classes, educational and other programs for children, a food pantry and a clothing closet for job interviewees.

The June 20 all-day event was filled Serving Christ together with the spirit of fellowship, service and collaboration, good-natured fun and even a friendly pie competition. Altogether, about 125 lemon meringue, coconut cream, banana cream, strawberry, rhubarb and cherry pies were among those sold. Despite the friendly competition Bunnell said she believes the gathering will "certainly lead to future projects."

"Our mission for the day was serving Christ together," added Bunnell. Volunteers wore aprons and created a banner bearing that theme along with the names of both congregations.

"It was gratifying to work with other people in the community for the sole purpose of serving the Lord. It didn't matter what the name of the church" she said, "we're all serving the same God and we can all do his work." she said.

From Episcopal News Service, July 22, 2010

The Rev. Pat McCaughan is a national correspondent for the Episcopal News Service. She is based in Los Angeles.

Sign me up, please!

Membership application/renewal

Yes! Add me as a new member of the Rural Ministries Network, which includes the quarterly Crossroads and the RMN Website at www.ruralministriesnetwork.org

Please **RENEW** my RMN [formerly RWF] membership

Membership was **already renewed** on ___/___(mo/yr)

(name) _____

(address) _____

(e-mail) _____

Enclosed is Annual Membership \$40

Annual Patronship \$100

In the United States, mail form and dues to
RMN Membership Chairperson Netha Brada
345 Lincoln Avenue, Iowa Falls, IA 50126-1936

In Canada, mail form & dues (*US or Canadian Funds*)
to **Mike Watkins**, P.O. Box 1486, Kamloops,
British Columbia V2C 6L8, Canada

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Coming events—2010

October 8–9

Mountain Grace VII: 'Building the Body of Christ through Community in Appalachia' Conference on Appalachian Ministry, Washington State Community Col, Marietta OH

October 10

Global Work Party, wherever you are! Join citizens the world over for the biggest work party our Earth home has ever seen. The Episcopal Church's Environmental, Young Adult & Campus Ministries and Youth Officers are working on resources to help your group embrace the effort!

Visit <http://www.350.org/>

November 14–17

Nuevo Amanecer: Nuestra Visión, Nuestra Misión en Acción, at Kanuga Conference Center, Hendersonville, NC Contact: The Rev. Anthony Guillén

Email: aguillen@episcopalchurch.org
Registration and more information at <http://www.kanuga.org/conferences/2010/latino-eng.shtml>
En Español, visite: <http://www.kanuga.org/conferences/2010/latino-esp.shtml>

December 1–4

Youth Worker Summit at Disney Coronado Springs Resort, Lake Buena Vista, FL More information at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/events>

Small Congregations, Local Food

St. Paul's Episcopal Church [congregation 58] in Norwalk, kicked off the first Open Air Market of 2010 in early July. The market, which runs all summer long, takes place every Saturday on the green in front of the church from 9 a.m. to noon and features all-local vendors selling fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables, farm eggs, fresh herbs, homemade jams and jellies, crafts, baked goods, and more.

The number of vendors and what they offer varies from week to week, depending on what's in season, but every single market will feature last summer's big hit: fair trade coffee! And in response to popular demand, this year the market is also offering fair trade tea and bars of fair trade chocolate.

A portion of the proceeds from the market go to benefit the Norwalk Food Bank.

Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, on-line news



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