

Parish News

Many Gifts, One Spirit Diocesan Annual Council

Stephanie Henke

In January I had the privilege to represent St. Paul's at our Diocese's Annual Council. This was my first-time to Council; the event is an annual gathering of diocesan clergy, diocesan staff, and representatives from each of the parishes in the Diocese. There are business meetings, fellowship, and worship. Jim May was at Council, as were Stuart and Mindy Ashton — Stuart was St. Paul's alternate delegate. Attending Council was a learning experience for me; it was also a chance to network, and it was good fun.

Among many items of note from the event, in no particular order:

- Haiti-Micah Project received the Bishop's Outreach Award for 2011.
- Council's Eucharist offering was designated for the Diocese of Haiti.
- Bishop Jones announced that he will be retiring as our Bishop Suffragan, in January 2012.
- Beblon Parks, the Diocesan ECW President, asked each parish to check and make sure that we have our copy of the ECW 'Yearbook', and that it is updated with the current packet.
- Mike Kerr, Treasurer of the Diocese, recommended the financial leadership book *Remember the Future*.

I very much recommend reading Bishop Johnston's pastoral address to the Council (available online at www.thediocese.net/Governance/Annual_Council/216th_Annual_Council/Bishop_s_Pastoral_Address/). Among other items, Bishop Johnston discusses:

- Bishop Jones' pending resignation;
- recent series of Listening Sessions, faithful sexuality, and the blessing of same-gender unions;
- mission work of the Diocese;
- litigation regarding church property;
- inadequate funding for our Diocese; and
- our five priorities for mission and ministry – youth and young adults, strengthening congregations, evangelism and proclamation, multi-cultural and ethnic ministries, and mission beyond ourselves.



(A few items about finances: I understand that litigation costs are being paid thanks to a line-of-credit on unconsecrated, non-strategic property (and not pledge dollars), and the Bishop recognized that the inadequate funding for the diocese does not rest on vestry tables, but on congregants at home, and needs attention and stewardship education.)

As part of the business of Council, ten resolutions were discussed and passed, some after debate. Here's a brief description of each of the resolutions:

- asks parishes to consult with the Diocese's Stewardship of Creation Committee in caring for God's creation;
- asks Bishop Shannon to "provide a generous pastoral response" by moving forward with guidelines with regard to public blessings of same gender unions;
- encourages participation in designated "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity";
- ending bullying and living into our baptismal covenant;
- praying and acting for peace in Sudan;
- praying for civility in political processes;
- enhancing our Diocese's relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- asks the bishop to appoint a study group to examine diocesan funding based on parish giving;
- raising awareness of health ministries;
- praying for the property issues in the Diocese that are currently the subject of litigation.

For a link to Bishop Johnston's pastoral address, as well as a complete listing of results and information from Council, go to our St. Paul's website and follow the link, or follow this link directly: www.thediocese.net/Governance/Annual_Council/216th_Annual_Council/

Food Pantry

John Morris

After the great response at Christmas time I was afraid that there would be a let down but I took a large donation to Little Ark the other day, which they were most grateful for. Please keep it up. Make eating a habit.

Parish News

It's Official

The Vestry has approved official letterhead for St. Paul's Church. The letterhead should be used for all correspondence from the church. A template that can be used is available and there will also be letterhead in the church office. Please note that this letterhead is for official church business. You can contact Christine Peyton for a copy of the template if you need it.

St. Paul's on Facebook - This is a work in progress and we will be adding more to our Facebook page as time goes on. In the meantime follow the link http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Pauls-Episcopal-Church/114538505247696?v=ap_p_2309869772#!/pages/St-Pauls-EpiscopalChurch/114538505247696?v=info to see St. Paul's on Facebook.

Sexton's Report

Mike Shippee

Hot:

- Parish House office exterior doorframe rotten.

Warm:

- Scrape, caulk and paint parish hall windows and frames or replace parish hall windows with new energy efficient windows.
- Replace parish hall picture window sill... rotten.
- Spring Clean up Day

Future:

- Scrape and paint parish hall outside closet doors.
- ADA wheelchair ramp for church
- Columbarium
- Paint Parish Hall ceiling tiles and walls

I am Episcopalian

- As Episcopalians, we are followers of Jesus Christ, our Lord, and believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The Episcopal Church has members in the United States, as well as in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Haiti, Honduras, Micronesia, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, Venezuela, and the Virgin Islands.
- We strive to love our neighbors as ourselves and respect the dignity of every person.
- The Episcopal Church is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, and traces its heritage to the beginnings of Christianity.
- Our liturgy retains ancient structure and traditions, and is celebrated in many languages.
- We welcome men and women, married or celibate, to be ordained as bishops, priests, and deacons.
- We believe in amendment of life, the forgiveness of sin, and life everlasting.
- Lay people exercise a vital role in the governance and ministry of our Church.
- Holy Communion may be received by all baptized Christians, not only members of the Episcopal Church.
- We uphold the Bible and worship with the Book of Common Prayer.
- We affirm that committed relationships are lifelong and monogamous. Episcopalians also recognize that there is grace after divorce and do not deny the sacraments to those who have been divorced.
- We affirm that issues such as birth control are matters of personal informed conscience.
- We celebrate our unity in Christ while honoring our differences, always putting the work of love before uniformity of opinion.
- All are welcome to find a spiritual home in the Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal Church
welcomes you 