



DIOCESAN DIGEST

for Central Pennsylvania

July 26, 2010

FROM THE DESK OF.....

BISHOP NATHAN BAXTER

Dear Friends in Christ;

During my visitations I am often asked, from which Churches or Traditions do we present persons to be Received and from which do we present persons for Confirmation. Let me first state that full membership in any Episcopal congregation is baptism, whether done in an Episcopal or other Church or Christian community. The only criteria here are material evidence of that baptism and that it has been done in the Trinitarian formula. Confirmation is a time of public affirmation of commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and formally offering one's self for ministry, all before the gathered congregation and the bishop.

Historic Recognition: In our sacramental tradition and belief a bishop, acting as chief pastor in Apostolic Succession, lays hands upon all members praying empowerment for Christian service ("Empower him/her for your service"). Implicitly confirmation is also an acknowledgement of the emphasis we place on Apostolic Succession, much as is done at ordination of clergy. This is also evident in the Book of Common Prayer which guides that the bishop, as chief pastor, would baptize if such was scheduled when he is present (otherwise other clergy would officiate) and always celebrate the Eucharist when visiting a congregation for any occasion. Churches which have held this or similar theological and historic commitments are: the Roman Catholic Church; the Orthodox Churches; the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht (Europe); the Philippine Independent Church, the Mar Thoma Church (India); and the merged Churches of North India, South India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Contemporary Recognition: Beginning in 2001, after years of conversation, prayer and study we began receiving rather than confirming persons from Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We now have what is known as "Full Communion" with the ELCA. Both churches have formally acknowledged the theological compatibility of ministries, including bishops. Going forward from 2001, newly ordained Lutheran Bishops would include the laying on of hands by Episcopal Bishops to receive that sign of historic ordination. Additionally, ordination of Lutheran pastors would generally include a Lutheran bishop (the norm in many Lutheran churches was for pastors to ordain). Lutheran bishops are also invited to lay-on hands at Episcopal consecrations. Also, the Episcopal Church, as an act of goodwill,

"grandfathered" previously ordained bishops and pastors in this period of transition to full historic ordination. For this reasons we "receive" Lutherans with material evidence of confirmation in their tradition. After much prayerful conversation and study, a similar understanding has been reached with the Moravian Church. After both their Northern and Southern Provinces confirm the final agreement (as we did at our 2009 General Convention) we will also receive persons from the Moravian Church.

Current Discussions: We are currently in relatively early conversations with the United Methodist Church, African Methodist Churches (A.M.E., A.M.E.Z. and C. M. E.), and the Presbyterian Church. Persons from these churches are not received but are confirmed. Because the theological integrity of these churches and traditions are a bit further apart from our own, the outcome of these conversations may or may not result in Full Communion. However, at the very least, we do expect a deeper understanding and respect for our distinct heritages as Christian bodies, closer ecumenical fellowship, and, most of all, commitment to specific areas of mutual mission.

Peace & Grace,

+Nathan

UPCOMING EVENTS...July-October

Jul 28 9:30am COM meeting at St. Paul's, Harrisburg
Jul 29 10am-3pm School of Christian Studies Board Retreat, St. Andrew's in the Valley, Harrisburg
Aug 2-6 BASIC children's camp at Camp Mt. Luther
Aug 5-6 Bishop visits Children's BASIC Camp
Aug 9-13 Bishop on vacation
Aug 18-25 Bishop to attend Sao Paulo Diocesan Convention
Aug 26-Sep 3 Bishop on vacation
Sep 5 Bishop visits Trinity, Jersey Shore
Sep 6 Diocesan Office closed for Labor Day
Sep 12 Bishop visits Trinity, Williamsport
Sep 14-23 Bishop at House of Bishops, Arizona
Sep 25 10am-2pm Deacons' Day with the Bishop, Harrisburg
Sep 26 Bishop visits Holy Trinity, Shamokin & St. Stephen's, Mt. Carmel
Sep 30 COM meeting (location to be confirmed)
Oct 3 morning ~ Bishop visits St. Andrew's, State College
Oct 3 evening ~ Bishop visits St. Francis, University Park
Oct 10 Bishop visits St. Matthew's, Sunbury
Oct 17 Bishop visits St. Luke's, Altoona
Oct 24 Bishop visits Christ Memorial, Danville
Oct 25 LARC Conference (details to follow)
Oct 28 Council of Trustees meeting
Oct 31 Bishop visits St. Stephen's Cathedral, Harrisburg
Oct 31 4pm Ordination of Deacons, St. Stephen's Cathedral

MAILING ADDRESS

PO Box 11937
Harrisburg, PA 17108

DIOCESAN CENTER

101 Pine Street
Harrisburg, PA

TELEPHONE

(717) 236-5959

FAX

(717) 236-6448

TOLL FREE IN

STATE OF PA

1-888-236-5959

WEBSITE

www.diocesecpa.org

EMAIL

officemailbox@diocesecpa.org

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS...

Alice McNutt continues treatment for colitis and a non-cancerous tumor in her pancreas.

Maddie Letsche, Acolyte at St. Luke's, Altoona, as she undergoes treatment for both thyroid cancer and Image Negative Transverse Myelitis.

Deacon Kerry Walters, who continues treatment for heart problems.

The Rev. Erica Wood, (Retired) Rector of St. Luke's, Mt. Joy, as she continues chemotherapy.

Bob Rose, who continues his cancer battle.

HELP TO IDENTIFY EPISCOPALIAN STUDENTS

Canon Daniel Selvage, Episcopal Chaplain at Penn State, reminds us that the university does not provide campus ministry groups with the names of incoming or returning students ... even when students have self-identified as members of a particular faith group. Accordingly, he is asking that you contact him with the name(s) of any students from your parish that will be attending the main campus of PennState this fall.

Additional information including the student's email address, phone number, home and/or campus address, etc., would be greatly appreciated.

Cn. Selvage may be reached by email at: dls87@psu.edu or by phone at: (814) 867-3397.

GODLY PLAY TRAINING

Thursday, August 26 5:30 - 9:00pm

Friday, August 27 8:30am - 5:00pm

Saturday August 28 8:30am - 4:00pm

St. John's Episcopal Church

1 North Hanover St., Carlisle

Godly Play core training ~ Certificates awarded

Fee: \$295 for registration before August 15th

\$360 for registration after August 15th

Scholarships up to \$150 are available

No refunds for cancellations after August 15th

For more information, contact

The Rev. Robyn Szoke

rszoke@stjohnscarlisle.org or 717-243-4220

Information for area hotels & restaurants available

Brochure and information letter attached with this

Digest and available at www.diocesecpa.org



"SPEAK THE TRUTH"

ECW 15TH ANNUAL FALL WEEKEND RETREAT

Cape May ~ September 24-26, 2010

Led by The Rev. Jane Miron

Gather for a time of God's truth as we seek, search and explore the truths in our own lives.

Deadline to Register is August 31, 2010

Conference Registration Form attached with Digest and available at www.diocesecpa.org

Send form and check payable to
Diocese of Central PA ECW to

543 Mockingbird Dr., Columbia PA 17512

For more information contact Beth Runkle at
brunkle@state.pa.us

Lodging: Marquis de Lafayette Hotel

Deadline to receive group rate is August 27, 2010

Call 800-257-0432, ext. 101 (ask for ECW rate)

Help Support our Diocesan Mission Congregation ~ With a Chance to Win!

St. Benedict's, the Diocese's mission congregation in Southern York County, is holding a special **Beach House Raffle** to help to raise funds for the church:

How about a week at the beach in the off-season? The off-season is a time for ultimate relaxation. The sparse crowds and traffic, the quiet towns, provide an escape from summer's hectic pace. It's a great time to actually unwind and "recharge" your batteries. As a fundraiser for our General Budget, St. Benedict's will raffle a *free week at a 6 Bedroom House in Bethany Beach, DE and a 1 Bedroom Condo in North Ocean City, MD.*

The winners of these two drawings will take any one week of their choice between the months of October and March. The first ticket drawn will choose the House or Condo, the second ticket drawn will be offered the other one. Tickets are **on sale now**. One ticket costs \$5, but you can maximize your chances by buying 3 tickets for \$10, or 7 tickets for \$20.

The drawing will be held on Sunday, September 26.

You do not have to be present to win.

Contact St. Benedict's Senior Warden, Charlie Bowen at cbjeannie@yahoo.com for more details about purchasing tickets.

COMMISSION ON HIV/AIDS MEETING

August 24, 2010, 5:30pm

Church of the Nativity, Newport

If you have any questions, please contact

Jim Taylor 814-644-6997 or jtaylor11360@hotmail.com

