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Communion

IN THIS ISSUE

- B** Bishop's Letter and Calendar; New on the Web
- C** Upcoming Events; AIDS Walk; National Acolyte Festival; Spiritual Companions
- D** Old Christ Church; Blessing of the Animals at St. Anne's Episcopal School

Parish Life Day, Nov. 17


It's not too late! Register for Parish Life Day, Saturday, November 17, by calling Cynde Bimbi in the bishop's office or visiting our website today!



Preludium: A Priest's Blog

As *Episcopal Life* focuses on the power of blogs, it's worth noting that Delaware's own poet and priest Mark Harris has a blog, *Preludium*, which has been featured in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Find a link to it on our website.

USO Ingathering on Veterans Day

Several churches, including St. Barnabas and St. James Mill Creek, will be collecting items for  members of our armed services on Veterans Day, Sunday, November 11. Your church can participate, too! For details, see our website.



Choir School Benefit Concert

Fortissimo: Song, Spirit, & Mind is slated for Sunday, November 11 to benefit the school's piano program. Guest pianists include Wilson Somers, Christine Delbeau, Roberta Watts, Hiroko Yamazaki, and Matthew Boatmon. Details: 654-6279 or www.CathedralChoirSchoolDE.org.

Delaware Episcopalians Continue the Legacy of Affordable, Quality Childcare



Students and teachers do the honors at the ribbon cutting ceremony for First Steps Primeros Pasos, a multi-cultural early learning center in Georgetown. Bishop Wright joined the festivities, along with board members, parents, and dignitaries from other faith communities and civic groups. Photo by Board Member Penny Deiner.

Over 100 years ago, Delaware Episcopalians saw a need for quality childcare and early childhood education for the children of Wilmington's tannery workers, and we responded by founding St. Michael's Nursery. By all accounts, it didn't happen overnight. There were doubtless years of dreaming and hard work to effect the vision. But, in the end, the people of our diocese pulled together and created an institution that has served generations of needy Delaware children and their families and has provided a premier model for other early childhood learning centers that have followed in its wake.

A few weeks ago, Father Earl Beshears was perusing some of his Georgetown parish's vestry archives, and he happened upon a report of how the women of St. Paul's had once baked cakes and taken them on the train to Wilmington to help raise funds for St. Michael's. The coincidence of finding such a story was extraordinary for Earl—both in its content and its timing. As the President of the Board for First Steps Primeros Pasos, Earl was in the process of leading yet another effort within our diocese to respond to a similarly urgent need for quality, affordable childcare and early childhood education. This time in Sussex County. This time multicultural—serving the growing population of Latino and Hispanic workers as well as their English-speaking colleagues.

continued on back cover (Page D)

One Year Later: Good Shepherd Graced With Good Stewards

by Jen Donten, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Glasgow

In the beginning of October 2006, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church began holding regular weekly worship as the 39th church of The Episcopal Diocese of Delaware. We were the first new church to be successfully "planted" by the diocese in over 45 years. A year later we are blessed to be growing—growing not just in numbers, but in spirit and sense of community, too! When we look at what we've accomplished over the last 12 months, it's easy to see how the time, treasure, and talent of our members have helped us flourish.

According to our rector, Father Jay Angerer, "We are blessed with a strong core of individuals whose volunteer service has been invaluable to our growth from a church plant to a thriving congregation." One such individual is Kathy Cavanaugh, who oversees Good Shepherd's outreach endeavors. Among the successful events she's coordinated is "Community Quench," a six-series summer program in which 22 Good Shepherd members gave out complimentary water bottles

continued on next page (Page B)



The newly-appointed Vestry Team for Good Shepherd is officially commissioned by the Rt. Reverend Wayne Wright.

Diocese Seeks Leaders

by Rufus Miller, Bishop's Staff

As the Diocesan Nominating Committee begins its work to identify individuals for leadership roles in preparation for our 223rd Convention in April, we are fortunate and grateful to have so many people who are eager to serve the church here in Delaware. Please help us once again to find Episcopalians who will give graciously of their time and talents. Our nominating process is particularly important this year, as we will choose our representatives to the 2009 General Convention of The Episcopal Church as well as filling many diocesan offices. Please send your suggestions to Rufus Miller, Secretary of Convention, at 656-5441 or rufusmiller@DioceseofDelaware.net.

The following candidates are needed:

The Standing Committee handles matters of the clergy and ecclesiastical authority. Needed: One clergy member for a four-year term; one clergy member for a two-year term; and one lay member for a four-year term.

The Trustees of the Diocese provide financial, custodial, trust, and investment services for the diocese. Needed: One clergy or lay member for a six-year term.

The Constitution and Canons Committee deals with all matters relating to the constitution and canons of the diocese. Needed: One lay member for a five-year term.

The Trial Court deals with the adjudication of ecclesiastical matters. Needed: One clergy member for a five-year term.

The Diocesan Council is responsible for program and budget for the work and mission of the diocese. Needed: Two clergy members; two lay at-large members; one lay member from Region II (Kent County and New Castle County south of the Canal); and one lay member from Region V (Brandywine Hundred)—each for a term of three years.

General Convention Deputies represent the diocese at the Episcopal Church's triennial convention in 2009. Needed: Four clergy deputies and four clergy alternates; and four lay deputies and four lay alternates.

**BISHOP'S
CALENDAR**
November

- 4 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, St. Stephen's Church, Harrington
- 6 Tuesday:** Nominating Committee Meeting, St. Andrew's School, Middletown
- 7 Wednesday:** Bishop's Day in Georgetown
- 11 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, Christ Church, Dover
- 12 Monday:** Church Pension Fund, Medical Trust Strategy, New York
- 13 Tuesday-15 Thursday:** Church Pension Fund Board, New York
- 17 Saturday:** Parish Life Day, St. Anne's Episcopal School, Middletown
- 18 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, St. Paul's Church, Georgetown
- 19 Monday:** Day after Parish Life Day, Bishop's Office Closed
- 22 Thursday-23 Friday:** Thanksgiving Holiday, Bishop's Office Closed
- 25 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, Church of the Nativity, New Castle
- 26 Monday:** Executive Committee, Bishop's Office
- 27 Tuesday:** Continuing Education Clergy Day, Christ Church Christiana Hundred
- 27 Tuesday:** Standing Committee, St. Andrew's School, Middletown

**New & Notable
on the Web**

Bishop Wright's letter upon leaving the House of Bishop's meeting in New Orleans is available on our website.

A link to Province III's website has been added to our own.

St. Mary's, Bridgeville, has a new website, www.StMarysBridgeville.org, thanks to the efforts of Herb Quick of Hamilton Graphics. Herb is active in his parish and the diocese.

**Open Houses at
St. Anne's
School**

Tuesday morning Open Houses are underway once again at St. Anne's School in Middletown from 9:00-11:00 a.m. each week. There is also an evening Open House on Thursday, November 8, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. Please call 378-3179 for details and reservations.



by Wayne P. Wright,
Bishop of Delaware

Last month Holly and I returned to New Orleans. We were there for the national meeting of Episcopal bishops and their spouses. Many of you have asked what it was like to be back in the city where we served for twelve years and where our son, Parker, was born.

I wrote to you last month about the good meeting our bishops had with the Archbishop of Canterbury and guests from around the Anglican Communion [see the bishop's letter on the diocesan website]. I shared my hopes for continued friendships with Anglican Christians around the world. The Lambeth Conference is coming up next summer. There will be many opportunities to write concerning these important relationships. This month I would like to tell a remarkable story about the life-changing power of generosity and faith.

Before coming to Delaware, I was the rector of Grace Episcopal Church, New Orleans. Located in an older urban neighborhood, Grace Church has reinvented its ministry more than once. During the 1950s-1960s many church members moved away to the suburbs. Rather than give up on the city, Grace Church changed the focus of its ministry. The congregation opened a child care and after school program for neighborhood kids. They started a Spanish service for Latino families in the community. They sponsored a weekend ministry to teach young people music and dance. The congregation itself was not big, but it had a large presence in the community. Then Hurricane Katrina and the flood arrived.

Grace Church and its surrounding neighborhood sat under six feet of water for over two weeks. The first pictures I saw were posted on the Internet just after the flood waters receded. Everything was covered with gray slime. Church pews were strewn around the nave. The organ was over on its side, totally ruined. Plaster walls were crumbling. In the corner were stacks of soggy prayer books and hymnals waiting to be thrown away.

At first the congregation worshipped under a canopy on the front lawn. Without flood insurance or the cushion of an endowment, it wasn't clear if they could ever rebuild. Slowly hope began to rekindle. A trickle of willing volunteers began to arrive. Episcopalians from dioceses across the church mobilized to help their brothers and sisters in New Orleans. The spiritual power of generosity began to focus on the task at hand. A miracle was happening.

Last month Holly and I were blessed to see what has happened at Grace Church.

Hundreds of Episcopalians have spent thousands of hours hauling debris, hanging sheetrock, and laying floors. Over \$1 million for this project alone has been donated by generous Episcopalians. The results are stunning. Renovations to the church building are almost complete. Grace Child Center is set to reopen on November 1. The power of generosity has made this possible.

Faith in Jesus Christ changes lives. Old wounds are healed. Blind eyes are opened. Life's energy and purpose is redirected. Personal generosity is the obvious and evident fruit of this transformation. The miracle at Grace Church, New Orleans is only one example of what can happen. There are stories to tell here in Delaware, too.

The day after I returned home from New Orleans, I drove to Georgetown. I was going to see something that for several years many had hoped and believed would happen. There is a very great need in our state for affordable, quality child care. Several years ago a group in Georgetown committed themselves to making something happen. A number of Episcopalians from our Sussex County churches volunteered to be leaders in this project. A piece of property was purchased across from the Perdue poultry plant. A master plan was developed. A program director was hired. What had been a dream is now a reality. The power of personal generosity has made this happen. The First Steps Primeros Pasos Education Center has opened its doors. Children and their working parents are being served. This is a miracle.

The following weekend I made my first "official" bishop's visit to Good Shepherd Episcopal Church—our newest congregation. I was there to celebrate Good Shepherd's first anniversary. Five years ago Good Shepherd was only a dream, a plan on paper. Today it is a reality. Each week the congregation gathers for worship in a school auditorium. On the Sunday of my visit we baptized one child and confirmed eight new members of the Episcopal Church. Blessed by God's grace, a new church is being born. The generosity of Episcopalians around Delaware has made this miracle happen.

This is the season of the year when each of us is asked to make a pledge to support our churches. The request to make a pledge is both an invitation and an opportunity. We are asked to step out in faith and to grow in the spirit of personal generosity. It is an opportunity for each of us to support many remarkable, life-changing ministries. When you are asked, I hope you will say "yes." As the Scriptures remind us, "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Wayne

Good Shepherd

continued from front page (Page A)



Sarah Kim and Jimmy Vennard had their baby, Sampson, baptized during the bishop's visit. The Rev. Jay Angerer is at right.

to over 1,000 walkers, bikers, and joggers at the Glasgow Park. In addition to providing a nice service, Community Quench brought in some Sunday visitors and raised awareness of the church's presence in the Glasgow area. Other events she has coordinated include Good Shepherd's participation in the AIDS Walk Delaware and a Blessing of the Animals service held at the Animal Veterinary Center in Bear.

In addition to a strong outreach program, Good Shepherd's Music Team is also growing nicely. Marc Padilla, who heads up the music program, has been able to offer live music at the last Sunday of each month. The musical component of worship has included talented guitarists and singers, with plans to add more instrumentalists and more frequent performances in the near future.

Also integral to Good Shepherd's worship is the Godly Play program. Led by Judy Shackelford and her team of eight trained instructors (some added as recently as August), the children's ministry has taught as many as 13 kids on a given Sunday. The program will offer music and more complex stories for the older children this fall. Feedback about Godly Play from Good Shepherd's children and their parents has been very favorable, and our family-friendly environment has been a real asset.

Of course the growth of the church community and its programs and events would not be possible without financial support. In addition to the contributions of the diocese, Randy Shackelford, the leader of Good Shepherd's finance team, points to the positive results of the "Grow One Step" program. Used each fall as part of an ongoing stewardship campaign, this program encourages people to go up one "step" (a range of income percentage) each year. As a whole, from 2006 to 2007 the congregation saw a 36% increase in membership and an astonishing 160% increase in financial giving.

Father Jay notes that there are many other people and factors that contribute to Good Shepherd's success. Whether it be the members of the newly-appointed vestry team, those who usher and greet at weekly service, those who help set-up for worship, or those who give generous financial support, all are helping to build a strong foundation for our future. Please pray for our continued success and join us anytime for worship or one of our special events. We look forward to what lies ahead as we continue brightening lives, nourishing souls, and connecting to God.

Visit the Communion page of the diocesan website for more pictures!

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Hear What the Spirit is Saying to the Churches:

Spiritual Companions Support Delaware Parishes

by Barbara Tucker, Christ Church
Christiana Hundred, Greenville

On those Sundays when I am in Lewes, I attend St. Peter's Church. Following the scripture the reader says, "Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches," and the congregation is given a moment for silent reflection. Father Bill Field at Christ Church recently addressed this practice, saying, "Since we come together to offer our prayers to God, should we not set aside time just to listen to him and what he may have to say to our innermost hearts? Is noise—even 'holy' noise—a help or a hindrance to God's desire to touch us in ways only he can?"

Has our intimacy with God and others suffered because we have fallen prey to the distractions and noise surrounding us? In the busyness of our days and our church communities, do

we take the opportunity to "Be still and know that I am God" and to listen? Mother Teresa said, "It is in the silence of the heart that God speaks to us; for it is not what we say but what God says to us and through us that matters."

The pressure of modern life is driving many people to seek opportunities to connect with the spiritual self and to nourish the soul. In response, some churches have revived ancient spiritual practices that deepen the life of prayer and give people a chance for renewal and guidance. Some of these practices include spiritual retreats, contemplative prayer in worship services, centering prayer groups, labyrinths, and days for quiet reflection.

Vestries, altar guilds, stewardship committees, and pastoral care groups

need time to reflect on the challenges and blessings of their ministries. A guided retreat or workshop offers time to focus, to seek direction, and to call upon the Holy Spirit. Liturgists, musicians, and Sunday school teachers are creative people who need time to reflect, to listen for new ideas, and to find new focus. Scheduling time for prayerful listening is like going back to the well of the Great Creator.

There is a ministry encouraged and supported by the diocese called the Spiritual Companions of the Diocese of Delaware. The Spiritual Companions are a group of people who are open to God's will through the Holy Spirit and to companion individuals and groups on their spiritual journeys. An important aspect of our ministry is to be actively open and looking for the movement of the Spirit both in our own lives and our faith communities. Our hope is for each parish to include at least one individual who feels called by the Spirit to enter into this ministry.

This group provides resource persons willing to assist parishes in developing and enriching their own contemplative practices. When requested, Spiritual Companions are available to work with you or your group in deepening the spirituality of your parish's present activities. If you would like to know more about this group and/or are interested in being part of this ministry, contact Barbara Tucker (571-9457, tuckerb15@comcast.net) or Phillip Stephens (656-5443 ext. 109, pstephens@dioceseofdelaware.net).

A Banner Day at the National Acolyte Festival

by the Rev. Sarah Brockmann



Thirty-six youth and adult chaperones from six parishes in the diocese spent the afternoon on a bus headed for Washington, DC on October 5. Their mission: to have a good time at a nice hotel on Friday night and to attend the National Acolyte Festival on Saturday. By the end of the day on Saturday, it was agreed that the mission had been well accomplished!

The journey began with a send-off from Bishop Wayne Wright, who came down to the Cathedral to bless us on our way. After a happily uneventful ride (excepting the projectile chocolate), everyone arrived at the beautiful Embassy Suites, complete with glass elevators, a swimming pool, and several indoor Koi ponds (thankfully, no fishing allowed). After breaking into reconnaissance groups to procure food, everyone returned to the hotel, well fed and ready for a swim! Much splashing ensued, tiring everyone out enough for a good night's sleep (that is, at least for the adults!).

The next morning, an excellent breakfast was followed by a quick trip to the National Cathedral, a truly magnificent structure that is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. As we have done in the past, the group

processed up the aisle as a diocese, led by our Diocesan Cross, newly painted by "Rip" Van Winkle of Immanuel Highlands, and our new Diocesan Banner, created by acolytes at last year's Diocesan Choir and Acolyte Festival. Our acolytes participated with over a thousand others from as far away as Texas and New Mexico, some displaying unusual and creative processional gear!

This annual trip, sponsored by the Diocesan Commission for Christian Formation [D(cf)²], provides an opportunity to thank and celebrate our youth acolytes, who contribute so much to our weekly worship. For many acolytes and adults alike, this trip is an annual treat: an opportunity to spend time in our National Cathedral, to meet and have fun with other youth from around the diocese and nation, and a relished chance to duck flying chocolate. New attendees always enjoy themselves, and most come back year after year. See more pictures on our website, and make plans now to join Christ Church, Dover; The Cathedral Church of Saint John; Immanuel Church, Highlands; St. Thomas' Parish; Church of the Nativity; Calvary Hillcrest; and St. Barnabas at next year's National Acolyte Festival!

Episcopalians Walk the "Walk"

by Maureen Lyons,
Trinity Episcopal
Parish, Wilmington



Episcopalians were walking the Walk on Sunday, September 30 in Wilmington's Rockford Park as they participated in the 21st Annual AIDS Walk Delaware. Members of seven churches, two schools, and innumerable individual Episcopal walkers created a sense of living the Gospel as they raised funds for the state's largest AIDS service organization and provided a living witness of their baptismal vow to seek and serve Christ in all people. Among the those present were Church of the Ascension, Immanuel-on-the-Green, Trinity Church, Old Swedes Church, Immanuel Highlands, the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew, Good Shepherd Church, and many students from St. Andrew's and St. Anne's Schools. The Walk raised \$190,000 for AIDS Delaware to care for persons with HIV/AIDS statewide and for its ongoing educational programs for people in all communities and all ages.

November

2 Friday, 7:30 p.m.
All Souls Requiem Concert, St. Albans, Wilmington. Choirs of St. Albans, St. David's, and St. Thomas's. Offering benefits Interfaith Resource Center. Details: 478-7778.

2 Friday–3 Saturday
10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. (Fri.) & 10:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. (Sat.)
Annual Bazaar, St. James Mill Creek, Wilmington. Luncheon Fri., 11-1; reservation or take-out turkey dinner Sat. Details: 994-1584.

3 Saturday, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
Five Wishes: A Path to a Superior Living Will, St. Anne's, Middletown. Cost \$5. Registration and details: 378-2401 or office@st-annes-church.com.

3 Saturday, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
38th Annual Craft Fair, St. David's, Wilmington. Original crafts; luncheon. Details: 475-4688.

3 Saturday–4 Sunday
Sir Philip Ledger, Musician in Residence at Christ Church, Greenville. Details: 655-3379.

4 Sunday, 5:00 p.m.
Choral Evensong, Sts. Andrew & Matthew, Wilmington. Details: 656-6628 and www.ssam.org.

11 Sunday, 4:00 p.m.
Fortissimo: Song, Spirit, and Mind, First & Central Presbyterian Church, Wilmington. Cathedral Choir School benefit concert for Piano Program. Details: 654-5371; www.CathedralChoirSchoolDE.org.

11 Sunday, 4:00 p.m.
Evensong, Immanuel on the Green, New Castle. Immanuel's Ross Treble Choir; Lee Dettra, organist & choirmaster. Details: 328-2413.

16 Friday & 17 Saturday
Distant Neighbors Fair Trade Festival, St. Paul's, Georgetown. Benefits ERD's work for the Millennium Development Goals. Details: www.StPaulsGeorgetown.org or call 856-2894.

17 Saturday
Parish Life Day, St. Anne's School, Middletown. Details: 656-5441 or www.DioceseofDelaware.net.

27 Tuesday, 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.
Clergy Continuing Education Day, Christ Church, Greenville. Details: 656-5441.

28 Wednesday, 2:00–4:00 p.m.
Workshop with Sybil MacBeth, author of Praying in Color, Algersgate United Methodist Church, Wilmington. Benefits Interfaith Resource Center. Details: www.InterfaithResourceCenter.com. Note: MacBeth is also a presenter at Parish Life Day.

December

See parish & diocesan websites for dates and times of various Advent Lessons and Carols services.

1 Saturday, 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Annual Christmas Bazaar, St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church. Details: 994-6607

9 Sunday, 3:00 p.m.
Messiah Concert, Christ Church, Greenville. Details: 655-3379.

Life of the Spirit Breathed into Old Christ Church



by The Rev. Rita Nelson, Rector,
St. Phillip's, Laurel

On the banks of Chipman's Pond in Laurel is Old Christ Church (OCC), one of about a dozen pre-Revolutionary War churches on the east coast that have remained virtually unaltered since their construction. Built as a Chapel of Ease for St. Bartholomew's Church in Green Hill, Maryland in 1771, the church's native yellow pine interior holds 43 box pews, a two-deck pulpit, and no modern conveniences, such as electricity or plumbing. And now, for the past two summers, OCC has also been home again to the work of the Holy Spirit, as the people of St. Phillip's have organized a regular schedule of services, as well as several special cultural events at the historic site.

Envisioned as an outreach to the community, the season opened with a benefit concert on May 20, featuring an ensemble of the Southern Delaware Choral Society as well as the St. John's United Methodist Church Bell Choir, "Rings of Fire." Worship services

began on Pentecost, with a combined service of three daughter churches: All Saints, St. Luke's, and St. Philip's. Nearly 150 people attended the service, as hymns old and new were sung and prayers were offered. The Rev. Custer Ruley read the Gospel, the homily was delivered by The Rev. Rita Nelson of St. Philip's, and Holy Eucharist was celebrated by The Rev. Jeanne Kirby-Coladonato of St. Luke's. A combined choir filled the church with glorious song and members of all churches participated as lectors, ushers, acolytes, and chalciers.

Regular services were conducted by the people of St. Phillip's each Sunday, with Holy Eucharist offered the first Sunday of each month, presided over by The Rev. Rita Nelson, and Morning Prayer the other Sundays, conducted by St. Phillip's Pastoral Care Team members, Ken Athey, Ray Guest, and Terry Trujillo. Mary Ann Torkelson and Ned Fowler provided musical accompaniment on a keyboard powered by an extension cord connected to a nearby electric pole on the street; and Jeff and Wendy Dolby and Janice and David Kee lead the group of people sup-

porting the services, faithfully spending an hour before and after each service open and closing the historic church. Old-fashioned iced tea, lemonade, and home-baked cookies were served by the pond after each service and guided tours were available.

Attendance averaged about 40 worshippers each Sunday, with almost three-quarters being visitors from the surrounding community and beyond. Since the purpose of re-opening OCC was to reach out to the community, this large percentage of visitors signaled a successful season. On July 1, a "Patriotic Service" and community picnic were held and attendance again swelled to almost 100 worshippers. The summer worship season of twenty services concluded with a joyful Blessing of the Animals on October 7, continuing a tradition begun in 2005.

Another sign of the success of the season was the reemergence of the Old Christ Church League. The League, formed in 1922 shortly after regular services had ceased at OCC, had virtually died out in recent years. But thanks to the vision and energy of the OCC custodians at St. Phillip's, the League now

boasts over 75 active members who are working to support its mission: to preserve the history and building of Old Christ Church and to ensure its future for generations to come. The League is applying for 501(c)3 non-profit status in order to obtain grant funding for what could be substantial restoration & preservation work. Board meetings began in October and an Annual Meeting is planned for early 2008.

On December 16 at 3:00 p.m. a candlelight (at least faux candlelight) service of Lessons and Carols will take place at OCC. This service will feature the Southern Delaware Choral Society ensemble, with lessons being read by members of the daughter churches (All Saints, Delmar, St. Luke's, Seaford, St. Mary's, Bridgeville, and St. Phillip's, Laurel). This event concludes the 2007 season, and all are invited to be a part of this unique worship experience and to join the parishes for another summer season in 2008. For OCC League membership applications or for further information on Old Christ Church, contact St. Phillip's Office at 302 875-3644. And visit www.DiocesefDelaware.net to see more pictures.

St. Anne's School Celebrates St. Francis Day

by Lisa Chase

Thursday, October 4 was a very special day in the life of the church. It was the Feast Day of St. Francis, whose love for all God's creatures was legendary. St. Francis, the Patron Saint of Animals and Ecology, a Roman Catholic Friar in the 13th Century, was raised in a wealthy Italian home; but as a young man rejected his wealth, becoming a simple missionary and serving the poor throughout his ministry. He died at the tender age of 44, but started the Franciscan and Poor Clare movements, along with his friend St. Clare of Assisi.

St. Anne's Episcopal School celebrated this special day by hosting its annual Blessing of the Animals, where St. Anne's families were invited to bring their beloved pets, from frogs and turtles, to kittens, dogs, and even horses. Stuffed animals were also present, and all received a blessing from the four priests, the Rev. Louise Howlett, school chaplain, and the Rev. David DeSalvo, the Rev. Jay Hutchinson, and the Rev. Joy Walton, chaplains at nearby St. Andrew's School.

Francis wrote a *Canticle of the Creatures*, an ode to God's living things. "All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures." Chaplain Howlett reflected, "St. Francis lived outdoors much of the time and came to love the beauty and simplicity of the birds and animals surrounding him. He felt their simple lifestyles and trust in God's provision was an example of faith for all people. He taught people who often feared or neglected animals to embrace them as God's creatures. For many children, animals are their best first teachers about unconditional love and responsibility to others. We cherish them as important members of our families, and we love to pray for them each week at our school chapel services as well as our special blessing of animals



The Rev. Joy Walton blesses Brooke Lawrence's stuffed animal

for St. Francis Day." [Visit the diocesan website for more pictures!]

The mission of St. Anne's Episcopal School is to prepare students for secondary education and lifelong learning. St. Anne's strives to enhance the intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, and artistic growth of its students so that they may realize their potential for good as citizens of local and world communities. For more information about the school, contact Carey Koppenhaver, Assistant Head of School and Director of Admissions, 378-3179, ext. 311.

Affordable, Quality Childcare

continued from front page (Page A)

leagues whose children are growing up with Spanish-speaking friends by offering all instruction in both languages.

The First Steps Primeros Pasos Board took their own first step on September 27 by cutting the ribbon on a multicultural early-learning facility. In addition to Father Earl Beshears, the board includes several Sussex County Episcopal clergy and lay persons, as well as representatives from other civic groups and faith communities. They were joined at the ribbon cutting by our bishop and other dignitaries from the State of Delaware. The facility, across the street from Georgetown's Perdue plant, is a "one room schoolhouse"—a leased, temporary modular classroom with a lovely playground funded by a \$50,000 grant from the USDA—which was inspired as a first step by Judith Gregory, Diocesan Financial Officer. And, as is the case with most first steps, the board's sights are already set on their next one: raising \$1.8 million for a permanent facility to serve up to 100

children by the year 2010.

According to Earl, "The Diocese of Delaware has provided strong visionary, financial, and spiritual leadership to this grassroots community effort. The connection between the diocese and First Steps Primeros Pasos is deep seated—starting with Bishop Wayne Wright. He has been a major supporter of this project for the past four years." As was the case over a century ago, the people of Delaware are needed to effect this powerful vision. Join the bishop and your fellow Delaware Episcopalians in praying for and actively supporting this important work. Contact Earl at frbeshears@ce.net or 856-2894 to see how you can be a part. And continue finding ways to help St. Michael's (they need us as much as ever as funding sources shift)—visit their website at www.StMichaelsDE.org to learn about our continuing legacy there.

Find links to recent news stories about the center on our website: DiocesefDelaware.net.