



Delaware Communion is an edition of Episcopal Life and has been in continuous publication since 1976.

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ON THE WEB

www.DiocesefofDelaware.net

Exciting News!

Judith Gregory, diocesan Business Manager and member of the Episcopal Church of Sts. Andrew and Matthew, is taking a sabbatical leave from May through August to work as a financial consultant for the Episcopal Church of the Sudan. Learn more by following the link to Judi's blog on our website and by watching for future stories in the *Communion*.

Convention's Almost Here

Our 223rd convention is coming soon on April 11 & 12 at St. Philip's, Laurel. This year we're blessed to have a combined choir from the southern Delaware churches for our worship. The choir will sing a newly-commissioned anthem, *You Go Before Lord*, with lyrics by Canon Mark Harris and music by George Bayley, both of St. Peter's, Lewes. For convention details, please call the bishop's office at 656-5441.

Diocese of Delaware in the Holy Land

Clergy and laity invited to be part of this January, 2009 pilgrimage organized by the Cathedral Church of Saint John, Wilmington and based at St. George's College, Jerusalem. Details: 654-6279.

DELAWARE Communion

Episcopal Life Edition

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ON THE WEB: Three articles about St. Anne's Episcopal School can be found on our website, including their award-winning Lego teams.

The "Small Church with the Big Heart"

by Jen Mason, editor

In the tiny town of Bridgeville in southwestern Delaware there's a beautiful, little church where 30–40 faithful Episcopalians gather each Sunday to worship together and where they reconvene time and again to do God's work. At St. Mary's, Bridgeville, most of the members grew up in the parish and many family lines go back generations. And now, as their senior warden Elaine Muhlbauer playfully puts it, "Our average age is old!"

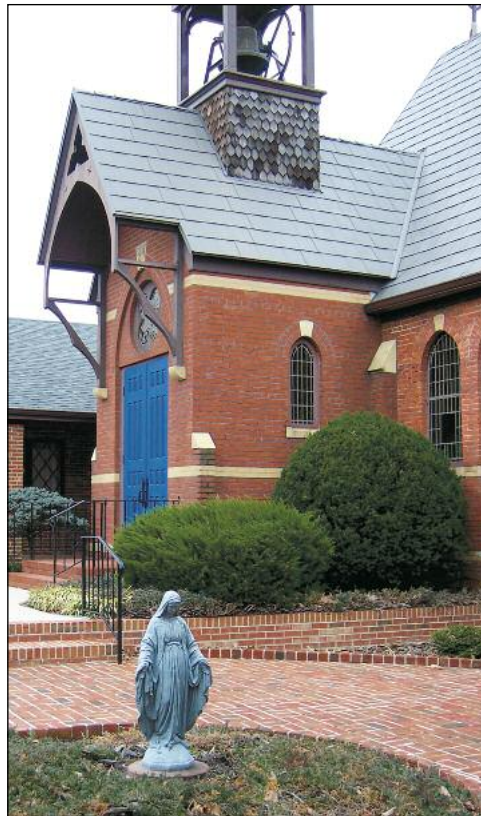
But while seeming limitations like size and age may be a reason to say "we can't do that" for some, they're never a hindrance to the Holy Spirit nor, it seems, to the people of St. Mary's. In addition to all that they do to care for each other and sustain their worship life together, the parish is alive with relevant outreach ministries that serve Bridgeville and beyond – ministries that are yielding beautiful results within St. Mary's parish as well.

The town and the surrounding region, while touched a bit by the recent years of growth in Sussex County, remains a largely modest area, with a significant portion of the population facing issues of poverty – particularly among children. In response, the men and women of St. Mary's have found many ways that they can serve the most vulnerable of their community.

The seed of this kind of service – of seeing a community need and responding to it – was planted decades ago when the parish decided to publish a phone directory for the town. Not only did the people of St. Mary's meet that need, but they subsequently used the advertising proceeds from the book to fund community projects in the public schools, libraries, and so on. Alice Min, who currently leads the phone directory ministry (and who was raised at St. Mary's, moved



Emilia Behr (right) helps a parent find the right size skirt for her daughter. Behr was presented with the Blue Diamond Award from the Woodbridge School District in recognition of the parish's work for local school children.



St. Mary's began in 1704 as a Chapel of Ease under the Diocese of Easton.

away, retired, and recently returned to find her fellow confirmand, Minnie Short, at the center of parish life), still has a copy of a directory advertisement that her father's business ran back in the 1950s.

Alice is often part of the group that accompanies Sharon Hawk who leads the parish's outreach to a local group home for adults with mental disabilities. Each month men and women of the parish bring their hospitality to the home: leading sing-alongs, sharing yummy refreshments, bringing goody bags and gifts for the residents, and gently giving love and care. "It's not a big, elaborate ministry," says Alice, "but it is one simple way that we can help to care for our community."

St. Mary's also has a group of women, self-dubbed "The Brown Baggers," who started meeting in January of 2003 over their bag lunches to work on projects for the community. The women had an idea for a simple thing that they could do for children in their local school district. They sent a letter to the superintendent, asking if there were young people who might need toiletries that most of us take for granted and offering to assemble "health kits" for the local schools. Sure enough, the district was quick to embrace the idea, and each year the ladies make cloth drawstring bags, fill them with toiletries, and deliver them to the school nurses for distribution to needy kids in the Woodbridge district.

A year or so later, the Brown Baggers noticed an ad in the local paper, looking for school supplies for kids in need. Predictably, this sparked yet another idea. Led by Helen Cameron, the ladies proposed to the district that they provide a school uniform "closet," where families could buy uniforms for a mere 25¢ per piece, with all proceeds donated back to the district's uniform assistance fund. Having already

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St. Anne's Names New Head of School

by Lisa Strong Chase, St. Anne's School, Middletown

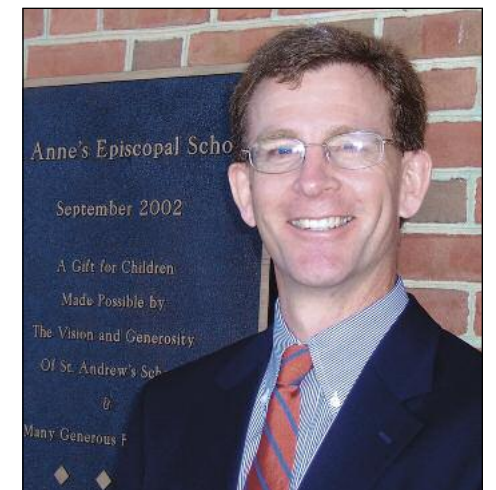
The Trustees at St. Anne's Episcopal School have announced the appointment of Peter Thayer as the new Head of School starting July 1, 2008. Mr. Thayer succeeds G. Harvey Zendt, who co-founded the Pre-K through 8th grade day school in Middletown, DE. Zendt is stepping down in June 2008 to pursue work in the environmental and international peace movements, after nine years of masterfully and lovingly building, leading, and guiding St. Anne's.

Peter Thayer has served as Head of the Middle School at Lancaster Country Day School in Lancaster, PA, from 1989 to the present. He served as Director of Admissions and English teacher at Kent Denver School in Denver, CO, from 1981-1989. He began his career in education as an English teacher and College Counselor at University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan.

Mr. Thayer is a graduate of Williams College; he received his masters degree from The Bread Loaf School of English at Middlebury College.

"As the Search Committee interviewed Peter and as students, administrators, staff members, teachers and trustees talked to him during his visit, it quickly became clear that Peter possessed the qualities we sought for a new Head of School," said Elizabeth Roach, chair of the Search Committee, and a member of the school's board of trustees. "Peter is a brilliant teacher and educator, a thoughtful, versatile and experienced administrator, a man of integrity, goodness and humanity."

Peter Thayer is also an active Episcopalian, serving both as warden and vestry member at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Lancaster, PA. He and his wife, Francie, will be moving to Middletown in the early summer.



Peter Thayer will be new Head of St. Anne's School. Read more St. Anne's news at www.DiocesefofDelaware.net.

BISHOP'S CALENDAR
March

- 1 Saturday:** Diocesan Acolyte & Choir Festival Evensong, Cathedral Church of St. John
- 2 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, All Saints' Church, Rehoboth Beach
- 3 Monday:** Bishop & Council Meeting, St. Philip's Church, Laurel
- 5 Wednesday:** Morning Visitation, St. David's Day School, Wilmington
- 7 Friday - 12 Wednesday:** Spring House of Bishop's, Camp Allen, Texas
- 11 Tuesday:** Standing Committee, St. Andrew's School, Middletown
- 16 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, St. Martin's in the Field, Selbyville
- 18 Tuesday:** Renewal of Vows with Fredrica Harris Thompsett, Cathedral Church of St. John
- 20 Thursday:** Maundy Thursday
- 21 Friday:** Good Friday - Bishop's Office Closed
- 22 Saturday:** Easter Vigil, Cathedral Church of Saint John
- 23 Sunday:** Easter Sunday, Cathedral Church of Saint John
- 27 Thursday:** Trustees' Meeting, Cathedral Church of St. John
- 30 Sunday:** Morning Visitation, St. Mary's Church, Bridgeville

Support the Romania/Habitat Mission

Find a link on our website to make donations to support the members of Episcopal Campus Ministry's spring break mission to build homes.

More Delaware Articles
can be found on the back cover and inside back cover (pages C & D).

by Wayne P. Wright,
Bishop of Delaware



The first chapters of the Gospel according to John contain some of the most beautiful and powerful stories in the New Testament. This year we will read them during the Sundays in Lent. John the Evangelist was a great storyteller. He had both an eye for the finest detail of daily life and a breathtaking sense of the truth and power found in Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The story of the Man Born Blind may well be John's finest. (See John 9:1-38.) It has a deceptively simple beginning and a familiar setting. Jesus and his disciples are walking down a road together. They see a man who is blind. One of the disciples asks Jesus this question: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" What a thoughtless and cruel question this is. Here sitting in front of the disciples is a poor, suffering person. In ancient times being blind was a far greater personal disability than it is today. Sadly, instead of showing compassion to this unfortunate man, the disciples want to know whose fault it is that he was blind.

This is a very typical human response to suffering. If we can find a reason or a cause for suffering, we don't feel quite as responsible. Being more fortunate, we may even

feel a little superior. After Hurricane Katrina I often heard the question asked: "Why would anyone want to live in a city below sea level?" Or when someone is diagnosed with lung cancer, we all want know if they were cigarette smokers. None of this helps someone who is suffering. They don't need our questions. They don't deserve our judgments or conclusions. The need our compassion, our personal presence,

and our generosity. That is how Jesus responds to the man born blind. "It is not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him," Jesus said to the disciples. Every moment, every occasion, and every human interaction is an opportunity for God's will and purpose to be done.

John the Evangelist then describes the remarkable things that happened next. Jesus bends down. He spits on the dusty ground beside his feet. Between his fingers he kneads the newly-moistened dirt. This is an unmistakable reference to the Book of Genesis. At the dawn of creation after making the heavens and the earth, God formed Adam from the dust. This was the old creation. What Jesus is about to do will be a new creation.

Jesus takes the moist dirt and makes a paste from it. Standing up he smears the paste over the blind man's eyes. "Go," Jesus says to the blind man. "Go and wash." So,

the blind man went and washed. He came back seeing.

Again what follows is remarkable. What has happened is a great miracle. Everyone should be celebrating. But, they are not. Instead, hard questions are asked. How did this miracle happen? Why did it happen? The questions quickly give way to controversy. The miracle itself is soon overshadowed and forgotten. This often seems to happen both in the New Testament and in our own lives. Miracles do happen. But in our own sophisticated cynical fashion we try to explain them away rather than simply accept them. Such is human nature.

Ultimately in this Bible story the controversies recede and the formerly blind man is left alone with Jesus. Their concluding dialogue goes right to the heart of Christian faith. "Do you believe in the Son of man?" Jesus asks. He answers, "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you." The formerly blind man said, "Lord, I believe!"

Through the eyes of faith this man sees Jesus. His experience has been shared by countless faithful people down through the ages. We sing about it in one of the most popular hymns of all time *Amazing Grace*. "I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see." The lives of the saints both humble and great reveal the same Gospel truth.

Our needs today have not changed. Every night, newscasts bring us cause for concern. The morning paper is filled with uncertain signs of the times. The return of peace is delayed. Credit card bills mount. No one wants to hear the news from Wall Street.

The story of the Man Born Blind is meant for us today. Faith in Jesus Christ changes lives. It opens blind eyes. Another verse of *Amazing Grace* offers this simple assurance of faith. "Thro' many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come; 'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home."

As we look ahead to another Holy Week and Easter season, you will be in my prayers. May Jesus open our eyes that we may see and know the Good News of our salvation.

Wayne

A DECADE OF PARTNERSHIP

Articles about the work of the Diocese of Delaware and the Rt. Rev. Wayne Wright

More Work and More Joy

by the Rev. Earl Beshears, St. Paul's, Georgetown

If Bishop Wright calls you and begins the conversation with, "Good morning, this is Wayne Wright. I would like to meet with you tomorrow and introduce you to some one - we can go to lunch.": Beware! This just might be the beginning of a lot more work and a lot more joy.

This is what happened to me more than four years ago. His call came on a Tuesday morning. "Of course," I reply, "Is there something I should know or do to prepare?" The bishop answers, "No. There is someone from there who has been talking with me, and I want you to meet him."

The next morning, the bishop arrives on time, gives me a hug, and tells me about the Diocese of Delaware's ministries to the

Hispanic community in Sussex County. He tells me how the Episcopal Church helped to start La Esperanza, providing legal and social services to immigrants, and how we also helped start La Red Health Care Center to provide medical services. Before I can ask any questions, we are in his car and on the way to "meet someone."

In the car, the Bishop tells me there is a group trying to provide early childhood learning for children in Georgetown. He tells me how the diocese has a long history of helping with children's education at Saint Michael's in Wilmington and at Saint Andrew's and Saint Anne's schools in Middletown. By now, my head is spinning and before I can ask what this has to do with

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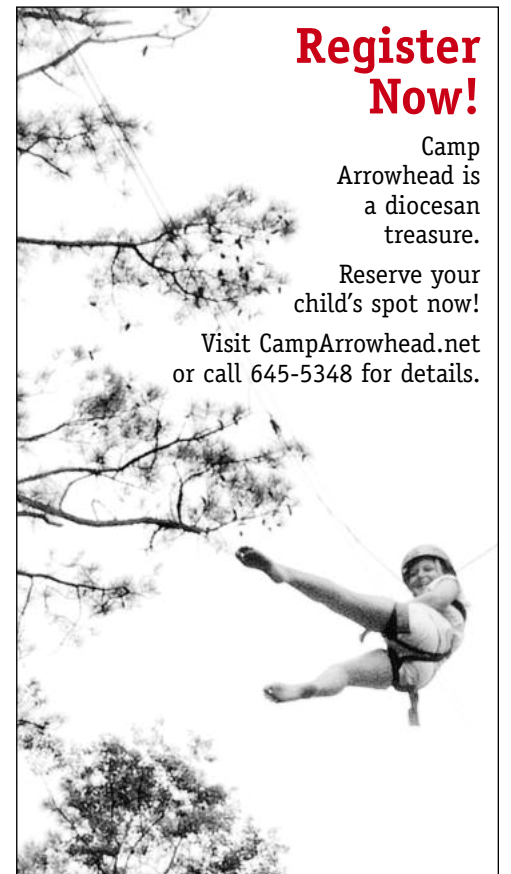
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Register Now!

Camp Arrowhead is a diocesan treasure.

Reserve your child's spot now!

Visit CampArrowhead.net or call 645-5348 for details.

A Few Invitations from Around the Diocese

If you're in downtown Wilmington on a **Tuesday during Lent**, the **Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew** invites you to join them at the corner of 8th and Shipley for **soup** to warm your body and a **Lenten recital** to soothe your soul. Along with the soups there are delicious sandwiches and salads and luscious deserts: everything homemade the old fashioned way. Lunch is served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; and the recital series is at noon, with organ and vocal music. This is a long-standing tradition in our diocese, offering a simple, peaceful way to celebrate a holy Lent together. Now through March 18. Visit www.SsAM.org for information.

Al Holland from **Church of the Ascension**, Claymont, is forming a **bible study oriented toward lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGBT) parishioners**. He writes, "We are fortunate in the Diocese of Delaware to experience such a level of acceptance and inclusion in the life of the church. We serve our Lord in many ways in our congregations. That said, LGBT folks have a unique life experience that is not always understood by the wider church. If you would like to investigate how our life experience is reflected in holy scripture together with other LGBT Episcopalians, please contact me at 798-6683 or office@ascensionde.org. How often and where we meet will be determined by the participants."

The **Spiritual Companions of the Diocese of Delaware** invite you to join them at an overnight **retreat at the Franciscan Spiritual Center** in Aston, PA, on May 19 and 20. The Rev. Carlyle Gill, Priest Associate at St. Peter's, Lewes, is the leader. She is an experienced retreat leader and spiritual director, with a specialty in centering prayer. The Spiritual Companions is a diocesan ministry focused on developing and enriching contemplative practices that nurture a deeper awareness of God's presence in our own lives and in our faith communities. Richard Rohr in *Everything Belongs* wrote, "Prayer is not primarily saying words or thinking thoughts. It is a stance. It's a way of living in the Presence, living in awareness of the Presence, and even enjoying the Presence. The full contemplative is not just aware of the Presence, but trusts, allows, and delights in it." The Franciscan Spiritual Center has accommodations for 20 people, and the cost is \$55 per person. For details contact Barbara Tucker (571-9457, TuckerB15@comcast.net) or Phillip Stephens (656-5443 ext. 109, PStephens@DioceseofDelaware.net).

Paula Hartzell of the **Interfaith Resource Center (IRC)** invites parishes to **invite her to make a presentation about the IRC** to your vestry or education committee, to give them a full, up-to-date sense for what's available for loan from the Center. This is especially helpful as parish leadership transitions over time. The IRC is an excellent source for thousands of titles, saving parishes a trip to the bookstore and compensating for the lack of a local seminary library from which to draw. They're also very open to suggestions for what to add to their collection. Contact Paula at 800-336-6152 or Resource.Ctr@dol.net.

Cathedral Choristers to Sing in New York City



Cathedral Choir School students gear up for a memorable trip.

On June 18-23, boys and girls from the Cathedral Choir School of Delaware will travel with the Cathedral Choir to New York City to sing in some of its most historic churches. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for 30 young people, ages 9 to 17 years, who live in the Wilmington area. While on tour, choristers will stay at the Saint Thomas Choir School and sing at Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue, Saint Bartholomew, Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Trinity Wall Street, and Saint John the Divine.

The cost of the trip is \$1,000 per youth (\$200 per day). Sponsors are needed so that all students, regardless of income, can participate. Sponsorship covers the cost of room and board, round-trip transportation, sight-seeing, and chaperones.

The Cathedral Choir School nurtures and mentors its students through their most at risk adolescent years and provides them with 10 hours of professional choral training, private piano lessons, peer leadership training, and academic and career mentoring each week during the non-school hours. The Cathedral Choir School has been recognized at the White House as one of the best after-school programs in the nation by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Please consider giving a young person an experience of a lifetime! Send donations to: Cathedral Choir School, 10 Concord Ave., Wilmington, DE 19802, Attn: NYC Choir Tour.

Two New Books by Diocesan Musician

George Bayley of St. Peter's, Lewes, has just published a new hymn book and an anthem book as well. *101 Hymns and Songs of the Celtic Spirit* by Bayley and the Rev. Dr. Dwyn Mounger features texts from St. Columba, St. Patrick, St. Augustine, George Herbert, Charles Wesley, and Mounger, in addition to Celtic, Gaelic, Medieval texts and others. It includes arrangements of traditional Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and English music, as well as new music by George Bayley and new texts by Dr. Mounger. The one time cost of \$65 for the book entitles the purchaser to photocopy the entire contents for use in church services.



George Bayley

The Deerwood Anthem Book, a collection of 40 anthems, is now also available for \$65 with the same photocopying terms. Use just two or three anthems for your choir and the cost of the book is recovered. Many anthems are particularly accessible for smaller choirs. Full details are posted on www.DeerwoodMusic.com. The books may be ordered from the website or by calling 684-2549. Both books will be on display at the diocesan convention on April 11 & 12.

George Bayley has had a long, rich career in church music. Read the fascinating profile of him by Danny Schweers in the Profiles section of our website: www.DioceseofDelaware.net.

The "Small Church with a Big Heart"

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found a willing and effective partner in St. Mary's, the district jumped at the chance, and for over two years St. Mary's Uniform Closet has been a reliable source for good quality uniforms, shoes, and jackets.

Emilia Behr opens the shop every third Saturday during the school year from noon to 3:00 p.m., typically serving 30-40 families each month, sometimes with lines of customers waiting to have their turn in the little room. She treats each customer with cheerful respect, helping them find the right sizes and styles and enjoying small talk with the parents. She kindly takes down the names and numbers of people who need sizes or styles that she doesn't have on hand, and she faithfully calls them when items come in that will fit their children.

The Uniform Closet started out using a couple of former church school rooms in the parish hall - one for display and one for changing. But today, only the display room remains, while kids try on their clothes in the adjacent restrooms. The reason? As a result of this ministry, this congregation of 20-30 on a Sunday re-started their church school program this fall, registering over 30 children for the program, many of whom came from the Uniform Closet. The formerly unused church school rooms are all



Elaine Muhlbauer, Senior Warden of St. Mary's, chats with a parent at the Uniform Closet.

freshly painted in happy, child-friendly colors and are filled with evidence of vibrant children's ministries. The congregation quite literally has new life.

Not surprisingly, this isn't the end of St. Mary's outreach work. There are at least half a dozen other outreach ministries that the parish's men and women regularly do together. As the motto on their website declares, St. Mary's is the "Small Church with the Big Heart," indeed.

To see the latest events, go to our website's News page: www.DioceseofDelaware.net.

March

1 Saturday: **2008 Diocesan Acolyte and Choir Festival, The Cathedral Church of Saint John, Wilmington, Festival Eucharist 3:00 p.m.** Glen Miller of Kirk in the Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Guest Conductor. Details: 654-6279.

2 Sunday, 5:00 p.m. **Lenten Choral Evensong, Christ Church, Greenville.** Details: 655-3379.

Tuesdays in Lent (to March 18), 12:00 p.m. **Lenten Recitals for Organ and Voice, Saints Andrew and Matthew, Wilmington.** Half-hour recitals in the church with **Lenten Lunches** from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Delicious soups, sandwiches, and desserts at reasonable prices. Details: 656-6628.

7 Friday - 9 Sunday: **Junior Wintercamp.** Details: the Rev. Sarah Brockmann, 443 553-0349 or imabiah@yahoo.com.

9 Sunday 1:00-3:00 p.m. **Learning to Listen: a workshop on non-violent conflict resolution, St. Paul's, Georgetown.** Sponsored by The Episcopal Peace Fellowship of Delaware. Details: 856-2894.

9 Sunday, 4:00 p.m. **Evensong, Immanuel on the Green, New Castle.** Schola from Immanuel's Choir, Lee Dettra, organist and choirmaster. Information: 328-2413.

27 Thursday - 29 Saturday **National Episcopal Health Ministries Conference, Kanuga Episcopal Retreat Center, Hendersonville, NC.** Details: www.EpiscopalHealthMinistries.org or 317-253-1277, ext. 34.

April

13 Sunday, 4:00 p.m. **Evensong, Immanuel on the Green, New Castle.** Choir of Sts. Andrew and Matthew, Wilmington - David Christopher, director. Details: 328-2413.

Plan Ahead

19-20 May **Spiritual Retreat, Franciscan Spiritual Center, Aston, PA.** Sponsored by the Spiritual Companions of the Diocese of Delaware and lead by the Rev. Carlyle Gill. Details: Barbara Tucker (571-9457, TuckerB15@comcast.net) or Phillip Stephens (656-5443 ext. 109, PStephens@DioceseofDelaware.net).

Making Room Together: The People of Christ Church, Dover, Lead Interfaith Effort

The city of Dover had a crisis. It wasn't the kind of crisis that made national news – or even many local news outlets, for that matter, as it happened to people who are invisible to most of us.

Dover's last remaining cold-weather shelter for homeless men was having to close, due to zoning regulations, and the city had no alternative space available. As Celeste Cox, rector of Christ Church, Dover, put it, "Suddenly, with Christmas coming, the words 'No room at the inn' took on a new level of meaning."

So the people of Christ Church, led by Jeanine Kleimo, quickly mobilized themselves and their neighbors. And during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in January, they joined forces with several other area faith communities to launch The Dover Interfaith Coalition Emergency Winter Rotating Shelter.

Their work has been impressive – not just by finding ways to meet this urgent need, but by doing so in a thorough, professional, and loving fashion. The organization of the shelter's day to day operation is elegant in its simplicity – a fact made possible by the tremendous amount of leg-work and prayer in the weeks preceding its launch.

The following is Jeanine's diary from their first day of operations.

SHELTER DIARY: DAY ONE

1:15 Lee [Lee MacCallum, the shelter's manager – a retired Presbyterian from Staten Island who "fell from the sky" and brings 15 years of experience with a rotating homeless shelter in New York] and I meet to set up old Army-surplus cots at Christ Church. This proves to be a bigger task than expected when we find that years of humid storage have shrunk the canvas, making it difficult to stretch to the cots' full length. Two Christ Church parishioners arrive to drop off desserts and are "conscripted" into service. He helps Lee set up cots while she helps me clean them and make them up with bedding.

3:30 With 15 cots set up, we call it quits on that task and Lee and I go over paperwork and processes necessary to make things run smoothly.

3:45 Lee heads over to the intake center, while I run home for fifteen minutes to get a few things.

4:30 Christ Church volunteers and I set up our shelter-site intake table and start preparing coffee and dinner—baking chicken to accompany Olive Garden's generous supply of soup, salad, and breadsticks.

5:50 The first shelter guests arrive in the first of two vanloads. Our first nine overnight guests are men who are clearly glad for a warm place to be on

this cold evening. They are friendly and tired, black and white, young and not so young, with ages ranging from early twenties to early fifties. I check to make sure they have no medications or medical needs and verify their names against the list from the intake center. They help themselves to hot decaf and are assigned beds and storage bins. All settle in easily at tables and chairs, where two begin to assemble a complex jigsaw puzzle while another two play dominoes. A few talk about themselves: One has an ankle broken in three places, preventing him from working. Another stands on the highway dressed as the Statue of Liberty to attract people to get their taxes done by his employer. Three are recognized by some of us as former House of Pride [the site of the former shelter] clients, and we wonder why they are on the street instead. One man invites me to tell him what he can do to help and says he'll be happy to sweep or clean the bathroom. All seem appreciative.

6:15 Intake volunteers and Lee arrive.

6:30 Shelter guests and volunteers gather in a circle to say grace with Pastor Celeste and to enjoy a dinner that resembles every other parish supper we've had in this space.

7:05 Two Holy Cross volunteers with what I'll call "food connections" arrive with bags of food – an unexpected



Christ Church leads Dover faith communities in opening doors to homeless men this winter.

surprise – and instructions to pick up free Dunkin' Donuts at 6:00 a.m.

8:30 Dinner volunteers leave, with several of us staying to hang out and make sure that all continues to go well. We have relaxing time talking with one another and with our guests, some of whom move over to their cots to relax.

10:00 Quiet. Everyone is in bed. In a few minutes, our overnight supervisor arrives and he and the overnight volunteer settle in for the night.

Next Day: I arrive at 6:30 the next morning to find breakfast under way, with Christ Church volunteers serving and cleaning up as the guests package snacks for the day in Ziploc bags to take with them. By 7:00, the van has taken the first guys back to New Street, and the parish hall becomes quiet once more.

Visit www.ChristChurchDover.org and click on "Shelter Notes" to read more.

A DECADE OF PARTNERSHIP

continued from inside front cover (Page B)

me, we are walking into a room full of strangers.

I listen as Bishop Wright talks with the group about their dream for a learning center in Georgetown called Primeros Pasos. The bishop listens attentively and then tells them that our diocese has supported educational opportunities in Delaware for more than a hundred years and that their dream is worthy of prayer and consideration. We all shake hands, the bishop and I leave, and he drives me back to Saint Paul's. In the short drive, we agree that Primeros Pasos is a dream worth pursuing. A few days later, I receive a call inviting me to join the Primeros Pasos Board of Directors, and I have been working with them ever since.

As the years have gone by, Bishop Wright has been a working partner in our First Steps Primeros Pasos (FSPP) efforts. Some of the ways he has helped include: giving us guidance and insights for careful planning, supporting FSPP through the Diocesan Council, being our advocate with various funding sources, meeting personally with political and business leaders, and being generous in his private support. Most important I think is that FSPP has been part of the Bishop's regular prayer life.

Since that invitation four years ago to "meet someone and have lunch," much has happened. FSPP is a reality. There is a 14-student licensed program



Georgetown Mayor Mike Wyatt presents a proclamation officially commemorating the opening of First Steps Primeros Pasos, a dual-language early childhood education center on Savannah Road in Georgetown that was supported by our diocese and Bishop Wright. Shown during the festivities are (l-r) Secretary of State Harriet Smith Windsor, Primeros Pasos Board President the Rev. Earl Beshears, Wyatt, and Bishop Wright.

and facility in place with certified teachers; a program to teach parents how to advocate for their children in public schools is beginning soon; and we are making progress toward raising the two million dollars necessary to build a 120-student school. All of this because of so many people, including our bishop, are committed and working so hard to help children have a

chance at a healthy and happy life.

So beware: if Wayne Wright calls and invites you to meet someone and have lunch, there may be an awful lot of work coming your way. However, there will also be an awful lot of joy coming, too. And one more caution: don't necessarily count on the lunch. Four years later, I am still waiting for mine – and it's been worth the wait!

ELECTRIFY YOUR OFFERING!

Several churches around the diocese are now accepting their pledges electronically – whether through electronic funds transfers or credit or debit cards. "It's amazingly simple for both parishioner and parish, with no added cost to the donor and surprisingly little for the church," says the Rev. James Bimbi, Rector of St. James Mill Creek, Wilmington. "My 90 year old mother was the first to sign up in my parish. She just didn't want the hassle of writing a check anymore," he adds.

With so many families moving to paperless bill paying, this is a natural option for parishes to begin offering. The practice also benefits the parish by simplifying bookkeeping, by promoting biblical "first fruits" giving, and by making cash flow more predictable.

While there are several reputable vendors for this kind of service, the diocese, St. James Mill Creek, and the Episcopal Church of Sts. Andrew and Matthew all use Vanco as their provider. Find more information at www.ElectronicDonations.com or call 800 774-9355.

A local provider of these services, used by the Cathedral Choir School of Delaware, is 82North. Find more information at www.82North.com or call Betsey Moran at 655-6531.