



# The Forward

October 2008

## Letter from the Bishop

The traditional Fall Ember Days are just passed. Each of the four seasons of the calendar year have a set of Ember Days set aside for fasting and prayer, and they are considered especially appropriate for ordinations. Seminarians and others in the ordination process send letters or schedule a personal visit with the bishop to reflect on their spiritual journey over the last part of the year. A diocesan bishop has the great privilege of sharing the journey of an ordinand especially during these Ember Days.

The Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee of the Diocese, along with the Bishop, participate in a bi-annual retreat with those considering ordination (in church lingo these people are called aspirants) in which we seek to engage the process of discernment in the



context of community. Bishop Rowley introduced the diocese to this particular model of a bi-annual retreat, and it has borne much fruit. Our next retreat is October 10-11, and I ask your prayers for our time together.

Each of us who are baptized is called to ministry and some are called to ordination. In either case, it is not simply a matter of the individual articulating a call. The community of faith, too, must be part of the discernment. I continue to encourage you to find ways to explore your own call in the context of your community of faith. Maybe you could take a risk and try a new ministry or participate in your

parish or mission in a new way. Stepping out to test our call in community always requires us to make ourselves vulnerable to God and to other people. Our willingness to take that risk opens doors we never thought possible.

As a diocese, we are considering our own ministry together. From time to time it's good to evaluate our direction with the community gathered. Many of you have participated in focus groups or serve as leaders in the diocese and by doing so are corporately testing a call. At the convention we will consider some of our first steps toward a communal vision for our life together. I hope you can attend our convention, and pray for us

as we prepare.

We have a couple of opportunities to celebrate the ordained ministry in the next month. The Diocese will celebrate the ordination to the priesthood of the Rev. Holly A. Davis, currently the Deacon Administrator, at St. John's, Franklin on Saturday, October 18 at 11:00 AM at St. John's. We will also celebrate the ordination to the diaconate of Johanna Baker on Saturday, November 1, at the Cathedral of St. Paul at 4:00 PM. Johanna will be appointed to serve at Holy Trinity Church in Brookville. I hope you can join us for these celebrations.

Blessings,

+ Sean

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## Diocesan Convention 2008

Just a reminder that Diocesan Convention is not that far off! It will be held November 7-8 at the Madera Fire Co. Community Building in Madera, PA, and will be hosted by Holy Trinity, Houtzdale. For more information, please go to [www.dionwpa.org/diocesanconvention2008.htm](http://www.dionwpa.org/diocesanconvention2008.htm). There you can find the resolutions, proposed 2009 budget, and proposed convention agenda, as well as information on hotels and registration.

## My Journey to India Part 2—God’s Itinerary by the Ven. Gail Winslow

Itinerary—the route of a journey or the proposed outline of one.

When God opened the door for me to go with the Thomas family to India, I had no idea what the trip would entail. I soon found out when Siby Thomas gave me our itinerary for the trip. Siby is truly a detail orientated person, one of her many gifts from God. Her travel plans were so well laid out, that even I could follow them and they also made it possible for Barb, my wife (who was not traveling with us), to know every day where we would be. The days we would be tourists, the days we would rest, and the days we would visit the mission work homes (House of Hope, Birds of the Sky and Good Samaritan Home) that Trinity Church has faithfully supported over the last several years.

With everything about packed and almost everything in place for the trip, it was intervention time! God intervened, in the way God intervenes in our lives, some of the time—gently. Gently in that we may not think God’s doing it until we actually sit back and really think about it. Two days before leaving, Barb “just” happened to look at the outreach and mission page of the Cathedral of St. Paul’s website and noticed the picture of a small, older church building with a notation that the Cathedral was helping a parish, also called St. Paul’s, in South India in building a new church that would enable them to continue and expand their mission work. They are outgrowing their current building, Praise the Lord!

Since time was of the essence, I called the Cathedral and was put in touch with Dorothy Konyha. She in turn put me in touch with Sunil Yesudas, an engineer at General Electric, who attended the Cathedral while working in Erie. Sunil currently works and lives in India. It turns out that St. Paul’s is located in the State of Kerala, the same State where God’s mission work through Trinity is taking place.

I wasn’t quite sure when to talk to Sunny & Siby about this for a couple of reasons. First, I was their guest on this trip and secondly, I didn’t know exactly where St. Paul’s Church was located in Kerala, if we would be able to get there or if there was time. But God always makes possible the time for His work. And when it comes to doing God’s work, Sunny, Siby, Joseph, Jocelin and Robin also make the time.

Itinerary—the route of a journey or the proposed outline. With the itinerary in place, we’re off to India.



## St. John’s, Sharon, to Host New Zealand Gospel Choir

The Hamilton (New Zealand) Community Gospel Choir will perform a concert at St. John’s Episcopal Church, 226 W. State St., Sharon, PA, on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm. The concert is open to the public and a free will offering will be taken.



The choir has been singing for 20 years and developed an enthusiastic following in New Zealand. They perform Maori, African, and traditional Gospel hymns. Choir members range in age from 18 to 60 and forty-four members will be on this tour. The tour includes concerts at the Riverside Church in Manhattan, NY; Salvation Army Center in Portland, Maine; Syracuse University; and the Spiritus Christi Church in Rochester, NY. Following a sightseeing trip to Niagara Falls, the choir will travel to Sharon where they will be in concert Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> and will also sing at the 10:00 AM service at St. John’s on the following day.

The choir draws its members from many different churches and religious backgrounds and will be sure to please all who attend. Come and be blessed.

**If you have news, story ideas, or pictures that you would like to share with the diocese, please contact Vanessa at the Diocesan Church Center at 814-456-4203 or at [vbutler@dionwpa.org](mailto:vbutler@dionwpa.org).**



The Rev. Susan Buell with her marionette of Don Quixote.

## ¡Hola! - Christian Hospitality in Madrid by the Rev. Mary Norton

This summer, I had the opportunity to travel to Madrid to visit one of our own diocesan clergy, albeit at the moment far flung. The Rev. Susan Buell (formerly of Christ Church, Meadville) opened her doors and the doors of Spanish culture to me in August. We saw Madrid, Toledo and Segovia (my favorite), all in the span of seven days. And we were delighted to be invited by Bishop Carlos and his wife Ana to dinner in the cathedral courtyard along with guests he had brought to visit from Lambeth. Hospitality is alive and well with our friends in Madrid!

## Hurricane Relief Benefit to be Held at St. Peter's, Waterford

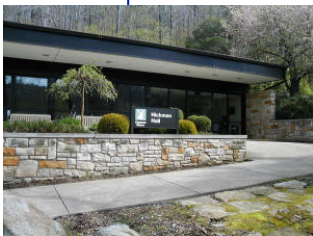
A Hurricane Relief Benefit will be held at St. Peter's, Waterford, on Saturday, October 11 from 2:00-6:00 PM. There will be a spaghetti dinner, for a suggested \$10.00 donation, as well as a Chinese Auction.

Bill and Mona Free, members of St. Peter's, came up with the idea when Bill's family in Liverpool, TX, was heavily affected by the hurricanes. His family and their neighbors had extensive damage done to their homes and have already faced problems trying to make the needed repairs, including slow payment from the insurance companies. Another issue has been a shortage of building supplies, including shingles, in Texas and the surrounding areas. The goal of the fundraiser is to send a truckload of shingles to the area of Liverpool, TX, to assist in the rebuilding effort.



St. Peter's, Waterford

## Clergy Development Retreat



A clergy development retreat will be held from November 16-18 at Olmsted Manor in Ludlow, PA. The retreat will begin promptly at 5:00 PM with Evening Prayer, followed by dinner. The retreat will continue until Tuesday, following lunch. To register for the clergy retreat, please go to <https://secure.accessacs.com/access/memberlogin.aspx>. If you are unable to do that, please contact Vanessa at 814-456-4203 or at [vbutler@dionwpa.org](mailto:vbutler@dionwpa.org) to register. Please register no later than November 7.

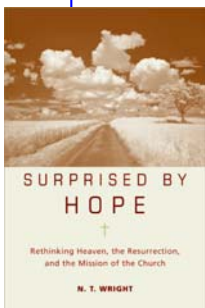
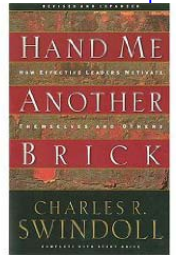
## St. Stephen's Hosts Inquirers' Series

St. Stephen's, Fairview, will be hosting an Inquirers' Series this fall on Monday evenings from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. They will run from October 6-November 10, with the exception of October 13. The series is a course of informal discussion groups on the basics of Christian faith and life in the Church. Anyone interested in deepening their understanding is encouraged to come and is most welcome. The courses will be:

- October 6 - Liturgy: A Language of Symbols - with the Very Rev. John & Sharon Downey
- October 20 - By Whose Authority? Do We Really Need Bishops? - with the Rt. Rev. Sean Rowe
- October 27 - The Church and the World - with the Rev. Don Baxter, Judith Fair, John Rushe, and Bill Ulrich
- November 3 - Anglican Diversity: Challenges for the 21st Century - with the Rev. Geoff Howson & Carly Rowe
  - November 10 - Pray? From a Book? - with the Rev. Geoff Howson

## Books Worth Reading By the Rev. Adam Trambley

In *Hand Me Another Brick: Timeless Lessons on Leadership*, Charles Swindoll uses the book of Nehemiah as a paradigm for good Christian leadership, whether the setting is a parish, a business, or other venture. A longtime pastor and author, Swindoll combines scriptural insight with his own practical experience in ways that achieve his subtitle: *How Effective Leaders Motivate Themselves and Others*. Swindoll is very frank about the need for leaders both to steep any project in prayer and to eliminate their own sinfulness and character defects, and he will ask direct questions of his readers prompting self-examination. At the same time, he addresses such practical issues as planning, dealing with finances, and overcoming intimidation, while providing helpful suggestions. Any parish leaders, clergy or lay, looking to improve their own effectiveness are likely to be challenged by and grateful for Swindoll's work. (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville: 2006)



The Bishop of Durham, N.T. Wright, has been compared to a modern C.S. Lewis. In *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church*, he explains in straightforward language the traditional Christian doctrine of the resurrection. After making an intellectual defense of the bodily resurrection, he goes on to explain why resurrection matters not only for our own understanding of what happens to us when we die, but also for the mission and ministry of the church. Along the way, he argues with those who would immortalize the soul without the body, those who spiritualize the ascension, and those who eliminate Jesus' coming judgment. Throughout, Wright highlights the power of the Christian hope in the resurrection for our lives. A humorous appendix provides two how-not-to examples of Easter services celebrating something besides the bodily resurrection of Jesus on our greatest Christian feast. (HarperOne, New York: 2008)

## Upcoming Ordinations

Please join us for some upcoming ordinations this fall.

The first will be the Rev. Holly Davis' ordination to the priesthood. It will take place on Saturday, October 18, at 11:00 AM at St. John's, Franklin. Rev. Holly will serve as rector of St. John's.

The second will be held on Saturday, November 1, at 4:00 PM at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Johanna Baker will be ordained to the transitional diaconate and has been appointed to serve at Holy Trinity, Brookville.

We ask for your prayers for those being ordained as they embark on their new ministries.

## Bishop Sean's & Canon Martha's Visitation Schedules October 2008

- October 5th - Bishop Sean - St. Laurence, Osceola Mills  
- Canon Martha - St. Peter's, Waterford
- October 12th - Canon Martha - Christ Church, Oil City
- October 19th - Bishop Sean - St. James, Titusville  
- Canon Martha - Memorial Church of Our Father, Foxburg
- October 26th - Canon Martha - Church of Our Saviour, DuBois



Church of Our Saviour, DuBois