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The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon

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Sharing our stories at Diocesan Convention



Ubuntu--I Am Because We Are--was the theme for the 39th annual Diocesan Convention, Oct. 9-11 in Klamath Falls. In Friday and Saturday sessions, delegates spent time in table groups sharing stories about their lives and faith. Above, Helene Lulich, Trinity, Bend (l) engages her table group, which includes (l to r) Sydney Harrison, Transfiguration, Sisters; Paul Steblein, St. Luke's, Lakeview; The Rev. Canon Lee Kiefer, Redmond; Ron Baker, St. Barnabas, Bonanza; The Rev. Dcn. Janet Warner, St. Andrew's, Prineville and Sylvia Porter, St. Peter's, La Grande. For more on convention, turn to pages 4a and 5a. Photo by Jeanie Senior

Parishes heed advice on flu precautions

"In the midst of the flu season with a new strain of flu among us," Bishop Nedi Rivera is counseling communicants against intinction--dipping the bread or wafer in the chalice.

She suggests "thinking things through in light of science and *for the benefit of the community* rather than our own preferences...It is also important to take precautions that will protect the more vulnerable members of our communities."

Numerous studies, the bishop said, have shown that sharing the Common Cup with proper precautions--wiping the chalice and turning it after each use, "does not increase the chances of getting sick," while intinction, because of the germs on peoples' hands, does.

Rivera said she appreciates "the precautions of sanitizing one's hands before com-

munion, but this practice in and of itself should remind us that to intinct is to put others at risk...I ask you discontinue this practice."

When it comes to communion, one long-held belief -- that it's safer to dip your wafer in the chalice than drink from the Common Cup-- is turning out to be exactly wrong, the bishop said.

It makes sense, The Rev. Sarah Stanton, rector of St. Peter's, La Grande said, "that you are probably safer drinking from the chalice than putting your fingers in it."

The Rev. Frank H. Moss III, interim at Church of the Redeemer, Pendleton, agreed.

"I think the conventional wisdom is that you will spread fewer germs if you intinct than if you drink from the Common Cup; the point of Nedi's letter is that the opposite is true, there are far more germs on our

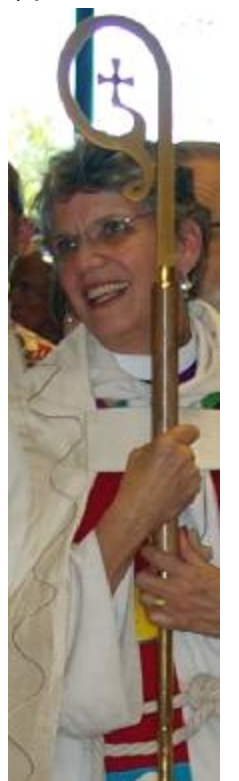
hands."

The bishop noted that the Church has said for centuries that receiving either bread or wine "is receiving Christ fully." One also can come to Eucharist without consuming either bread or wine, "and receive the Sacrament spiritually."

As for exchanging the Peace, said with a little creativity, "we can continue to take delight in our time of reconciliation with one another."

Her preference at the Peace is an embrace, Rivera said, and in the past she's shaken hands with those uncomfortable with a hug.

"Now I put my hands on their shoulders or upper arms and lean toward them in a hug-like movement. In places where shaking hands is the norm, I move my hand toward the elbow in a Roman soldier-type greeting, clapping forearms instead of [to 3a]



Bp. Nedi Rivera



Priests at Diocesan Convention: Jan Kozak, Martha Hurlburt, Richard Thew, Ted Rodrigues

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“We are a church family...we are truly blessed”

By Doug Boone,
St. Stephen's, Baker City

The great thing about being a church family is that we all are here because we want to be; as opposed to being a genetic family. Don't get me wrong, I truly love my family and I know you also love yours. There is an old adage that goes something like this: if we could just pick our family as we can pick our friends.

When one becomes active within a church group, one really does pick a family. We attend St. Stephen's because we want to. This church family allows us to be as active within that family as we wish to be. As we serve each other we also serve our God.

The Parish of St. Stephen's has

evolved into a multi-faceted, multi-talented family. We have come to depend upon each other. We teach each other and we learn from each other. We feed each other. We praise together, we grieve together, we celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. We comfort one another in our time of need. We do all of this and more, not because we must but because we may.

This is a family group that prospers with very little professional assistance. We have raised up from within our parish, spiritual leaders. That was not an easy task, but it was indeed a worthy one. It is also an ongoing task.

As with all families, ours is generational. We have come behind others

and others will follow us. We have been blessed with exemplary examples of worship by those who have preceded us. We must do no less for those who follow us. We are a church family. We are truly blessed. May we continue to prosper through the glory of Jesus Christ.

Editor's note:

This piece by Doug Boone first was printed in The Voice of St. Stephen's, the church newsletter. He started writing a column for The Voice of St. Stephen's more than a decade ago, when he was senior warden. Its popularity has kept him writing. Doug is still very active in the church; he's a lay reader and a lay eucharistic minister. He is married to The Rev. Dcn. Connie Boone.

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The Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, founded as the Missionary District of Oregon in 1907, became a diocese in 1970. It includes all of Oregon east of the Cascade Mountains as well as Klickitat County, Washington—some 69,000 square miles. There are 22 parishes and more than 2,600 Episcopalians in the diocese.

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The Episcopal Church, organized in 1789, is a community of 2.5 million members in 114 dioceses in North American and abroad.

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop

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The Anglican Communion is a global community of 70 million Anglicans in 37 member provinces around the world.

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Facebook, Twitter, social media: what do these things have to do with being church?

Last week I attended an interesting lecture given by one of our professors here at CDSP that was called “Tweet If You Love Jesus”. For those of you who have not yet jumped on the latest technological bandwagon, the ‘tweet’ in that lecture title refers to the social media platform ‘Twitter’ on which people can ‘tweet’ each other. A ‘tweet’ is a short message that is broadcast to those people who happen to be following your ‘tweets’... kind of like sending a quick, short note to your friends and family that they receive instantly.



Michelle Meech

Now, I'm not a fan of Twitter myself but I have to admit that I can really see its usefulness after attending this lecture given by Elizabeth Drescher, our professor in Christian Spiritualities. You might be scratching your head and wondering why Dr. Drescher is giving a lecture on the use of social media in church settings. And the answer has to do with something that is very near and dear to our hearts in Eastern Oregon – Total Ministry.

She started her lecture with a brief overview of the history of technology, talking about how the invention of the printing press opened up knowledge to more people, how the invention of the ballpoint pen meant that writers could write all day and be more mobile and how the invention of copy machines enabled people to exchange and interact with written texts in a whole new way. This is a big part of what Total Ministry is about, the empowerment of the entire priesthood of the baptized.

Now that we have much of our news on the Internet, the sharing of that news through platforms like Facebook and Twitter has evolved to a new level. For example, I recently had a series of exchanges on Facebook that gave me an entirely new and deeper understanding of Pope Benedict's recent invitation to Anglican priests to join the Roman Catholic Church. Here is approximately how it went:

Our history professor posted a link to a news article from an online news source (I think it was the New York Times). Many people posted comments on it, including my fellow students and his colleagues from around the country. Because I am following the blog site called Episcopal Café, I read several posts from people within the Episcopal Church and ended up reposting one on my profile that my Facebook friends could choose to read and comment upon. A few days later someone posted a link to

the online video of the Jon Stewart clip that talks about the news story (it's hilarious, by the way) so I passed it along by posting it on my profile. Still after that, someone else posted a NY Times editorial that talks about the story from a secular perspective. The whole time, people are commenting on those posts, commenting on my posts and reposting the stories that they find valuable.

Anyone involved in the conversation now has a much deeper understanding and a much richer opinion of what happened, why it happened, what it means for the ECUSA, what it means for Roman Catholics, how it affects the secular world and what underlying forces are at work in such an event. Much like the printing press, the ballpoint pen and the copy machine, this vehicle called Facebook levels people's access to knowledge in a way that is unprecedented. We can instantly read an article and read a discussion on the article and add to that discussion or ask questions within it.

Recently, I've become a Facebook ‘fan’ of several Episcopal Dioceses – Spokane, Northern California, Olympia – and I am able to instantly receive anything they post. Meanwhile, this all takes very little in terms of ‘know-how’ and nothing in terms of money.

Granted, nothing beats the time we spend in someone's presence – sitting across the table having coffee or in a circle of friends who are learning from one another in an EM class. There is absolutely no replacement for the interaction that takes place in person, or even on the phone.

But I have to wonder... What could these new technologies mean for a diocese like Eastern Oregon which is spread out over a great distance but still has a sense of community and identity as a diocese? And, given that there is a technology divide due to the fact that some of our communities and therefore parishes have limited access to the internet, can such technologies even be used effectively in our diocese? Finally, I wonder what this means for mission in our diocese... if our parishes were more effectively connected, how would that affect the connections between the communities themselves?

If you have thoughts on these questions, I would love to hear them and would also like to know if you'd like to join in a larger discussion about social media. I bet we can even find a social media platform to host the discussion for us. Please email me at mmmeech@earthlink.net

Michelle, a member of Trinity, Bend, is a senior at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley.

Bishop Rivera on flu precautions, intinction, and exchanging the Peace

Beloved in Christ,

Grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

For many people, this flu season has brought with it a host of fears and concerns. With a new strain of flu among us, it is tempting to panic and to rely on reacting to our personal fears rather than thinking things through in the light of science and for the benefit of the community rather than our own preferences. Some of those fears have to do with how to act when we are gathered together in community.

As Christians, we have learned “Be not afraid.” It is also important to take precautions that will protect the more vulnerable members of our communities.

We have learned again and again, our hands can be carriers of diseases and so we wonder about how we should greet one another at the Peace. I think, with a little playful creativity, we can continue to take delight in our time of reconciliation with one another.

My preference at the Peace is to embrace the other, but when I have known the other wasn't comfortable with that intimacy or closeness, I have in the past, shaken hands. Now I put my hands on their shoulders or upper arms and lean toward them in a hug-like movement. In places where shaking hands is the norm, I move my hand toward the elbow in a Roman soldier type greeting clasp forearms instead of hands.

Some folks have always greeted others with their hands in prayer and a short (Namaste) bow that acknowledges the Holy in the other. Keep in mind that what is important here is not our action, but our willingness to be reconciled with one another before we offer our lives to God.

Often we human beings fear the wrong thing and choose a path that is actually less life giving than the alternative – Christianity itself is a case in point. People choose not to trust in the Good News of God in Christ, and find themselves reacting to the world in fear, rather than trust in God.

The Common Cup is a particular example for us Christians. Study after study has shown that sharing the Common Cup, with proper precautions (wiping and turning the chalice after each use) does not increase the chances of getting sick. In recent years we have learned that our hands are far more likely to pass on germs and viruses. Germs and viruses do not survive on dry inanimate surfaces, but continue to live and thrive on our hands.

The practice of intinction, when either you or the minister dips the bread, puts others at risk and is not a loving practice.

For centuries the Church has known and said that receiving in one kind – either bread or wine – is receiving Christ fully. Many alcoholics have not received wine for years, and those who cannot tolerate wheat have often bypassed receiving bread, receiving only wine. In fact there are some for whom both bread and wine are unhealthy who come to Eucharist and receive the Sacrament spiritually.

I understand and hear your fears and concerns. I appreciate the precautions of sanitizing one's hands before communion, but this practice in and of itself should remind us that to intinct is to put others at risk.

I ask you discontinue this practice. If you choose not to receive from the Common Cup, know that you are still receiving all the benefits of God's extravagant Grace. Some will stay at the altar while the wine is being distributed and receive spiritually by touching the base of the chalice or others will simply return to their seats to continue in prayer while others continue to receive.

God's Grace is poured out abundantly in ways we cannot begin to imagine, describe or certainly cannot delineate. As you receive God's Grace in Holy Communion, I hope you will be especially considerate of others – which is a means of Grace in and of itself.

I encourage your continued conversation with me on this matter. In the meantime, take good care of yourselves and take good precautions against the flu as found in other parts of this newsletter.

You continue in my heart and daily prayers.

Bendición,
Nedi

The Rev. Sarah Stanton will retire at end of 2009

The Rev. Sarah Stanton, rector at St. Peter's, La Grande for 6 1/2 years, is retiring Dec. 31.

Stanton, who will be 65 in January, announced her plans in church Nov. 15, and in a letter received by parishioners and others Nov. 16. She will move from La Grande to Lacey, Wash. “to begin a ministry of caring for my parents.”

Her mother and father, both in their

late 80s live in a retirement community in Lacey “and will require some assistance to continue living in their present home.” She said she also wants to spend more time with her children and grandchildren.

“It has been a joy and, at times a struggle, to serve as your priest these last 6 1/2 years,” wrote Stanton, who was ordained to the priesthood 22 years ago. “Although excited about

Bishop reminds us: consider others' health

hands. Some folks have always greeted others with their hands in prayer and a short *Namaste* bow that acknowledges the Holy in the other.”

The Rev. Aletha Bonebrake, a circuit-riding priest whose home parish is St. Stephen's, Baker City, said the bishop's message regarding intinction would be discussed at the first Holy Eucharist held after the statement was released. But she said people seemed inclined to follow Rivera's cautionary message, she said.

In parishes around the diocese, the linked topics of flu and Holy Communion is being raised from the pulpit and in church newsletters.

It also was the subject of discussion at the clergy Collegium, held Nov. 12 in The Dalles.

“I wrote about this in our October newsletter,” Stanton said. “I basically said, because we're a congregation of primarily older people, the most important thing is to get vaccinated against seasonal flu, and I asked people who are sick to please stay home.”

Stanton said they've taught people the new way to cough or sneeze--into the bend of your arm--and joked about doing fist bumps at the Peace in lieu of handshakes.

“I said, if you've got a cold, you can simply let people know you don't want to pass the Peace.”

However, like many priests Stanton has a bottle of hand purifier under the altar. It's been there for several years, a precaution she installed after member of the congregation had had stem cell transplants and were dealing with compromised immune systems.

“After I shake hands with everybody I use the hand sanitizer again, I don't make a big deal out of it, I'm just trying to use common sense,” she said. “It used to be in the Middle Ages that the acolytes would wash the priest's hands.”

Several parishes printed Rivera's statement and made it available to worshippers; some discussed it from the pulpit.

At St. Mark's, Hood River, lay eucharistic ministers got a reminder to use the purificator to firmly wipe the inside and outside of the chalice before rotating it and offering it to the next communicant.

“We're putting the whole letter into the bulletin -- and they do have hand cleaner behind the altar,” said Jan Stalker, parish administrator at Trinity, Bend. “We'll see how people respond to that.”

Trinity's Parish Nurse, Marianne Lebre, also has provided information on the flu, including document discussing the differences between H1N1 flu, seasonal flu and the common cold.

The Rev. Christy Close Erskine discussed the subject in the church newsletter, but people continued to intinct, Stalker said. “Maybe this week they'll fold their arms and be blessed.”

At Redeemer, Moss said, there's a “super active sharing of the Peace. It goes on a long time. There's a lot of sharing of hugs. My feeling is people are pretty well infected before they get to the altar,” he joked. “Our Peace is so active that we have to ring the Sanctus bells to get people to come back to worship.”

Safeguarding against the flu

Some tips for keeping the flu bug at bay:

■ Prevention is most important: wash your hands often and well, or use hand sanitizer; try to avoid contact with sick people

■ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way

■ When you cough or sneeze, if possible cover your mouth with a tissue and throw it away, otherwise sneeze or cough into your raised arm rather than your hand

■ If you think you have the flu, stay at home. The federal Centers for Disease control recommends persons with flu-like illness to stay home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone, except for medical care. Keep away from others as much as possible: phone a friend and ask them to leave needed supplies at your front door.

■ In case you should get the flu: be sure to have a week's supply of soups and bland food on hand as well as a thermometer, any medicines you might need such as fever reducers and cough syrup.

There is a wealth of information at the CDC website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/>



Eastern Oregon Episcopal clergy—deacons, priests and the bishop—gather for a group photo after the closing Holy Eucharist at Diocesan Convention.

An excerpt from Bishop Nedi Rivera's Saturday homily at diocesan convention

“Making a difference in the communities you serve..”

In the six months I have been in Eastern Oregon, I have visited about three quarters of the congregations.

Many of you are in small congregations in small towns. Many of you are struggling, wondering if you can continue to be church as you know it.

On the other hand, many of you know that you matter because you make a difference in the communities you serve.

You provide food pantries, hot meals, shelter from the storm and the cold weather. You have community closets; services for children and you build houses for the homeless. You are part of the local safety net. You also participate in care for the poorest of the poor.

You have partnerships in Central America and Haiti. You make a difference in the lives of remote villages. In ubuntu theology and practice, mission is ‘participating in God’s redemption,’ or better, ‘participating in the image of God’ and that, my friends, sounds like eternal life to me.

What higher calling could there be than participating in God’s ultimate love for the world? How could heaven be anything other than this? Why would we want any life other than a full union with Christ?

We have been baptized into it. We have confirmed our faith – our trust – in ‘his grace and love’. And Grace has been poured out upon us and in us and through us. And each of us, each Christian, each congregation, each diocese, each church, even each communion will bring different gifts, ministries, stories and understanding to that work and vocation. And it is

precisely our differences that make us so essential to one another and to the whole.

Many of you have heard me speak of the particular call of The Episcopal Church in the communities in which we serve.

In several Eastern Oregon communities we are the alternative to literalist and sometimes less inclusive Christian communities. In many of our communities we are the congregation where it is okay to doubt, to wrestle with God, to own up to the struggles we have on our spiritual journey – or to show up in our jeans and tattoos. (Not your grandmother’s church!)

Retired Archbishop Desmond Tutu says that ubuntu can be a corrective to our competitive and striving for success society; that in ubuntu we are known and appreciated for the gifts and the vulnerabilities that we have.

“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.

We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.” Romans 12.4-8

In one congregation in which I served we discovered that people in our neighborhood didn’t know we were a church until we started an after school program and then offered services (of both kinds) on 9/11 and

Thanksgiving Dinner later that fall. Some of the folks who lived across the street were stunned to learn that we weren’t a pre-school, we were a church. For years this congregation had believed that there was nothing they could do in the neighborhood.

Then a seminarian went and met the folks, (wish I could say I had been the wise one, but it was Ellen, not me) learned what was needed and we discerned that we had the gifts to make a difference – so we opened our doors.

In another, where the community believed we had shut down, that we had closed our doors, we opened them wide and welcomed 12-step groups every night of the week and sometimes two or three groups in a night.

We didn’t have much money to give away, but we could be hospitable, and eventually we had a reputation in the community for being the 12-step church. We become the place where 12 Step folks who didn’t belong to a church were buried from. What was old died, and something new was resurrected.

Some of you have similar ministries. None of us does exactly what the other is doing. Fred Beuchner reminds us that vocation is “where our greatest passion meets the world’s greatest need.”

Our passions are different, our communities are different, but our call is the same: “Feed my lambs.”

“Feed my lambs.” How do we know what Jesus means by that in Canyon City? In Nyssa? In Sunriver? How do we know the ‘world’s greatest need’?

May I offer a suggestion in this beautiful autumn season? Walk your neighborhood. Move out from your church building and see who is there and what is happening there close up and with new eyes. Remember that God’s call is expressed through the voices and cries of those whom we are called to serve.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 25.35f.)

What is it to us that there are typhoons in the Philippines and Vietnam? A tsunami in the Pacific? Flooding in Georgia? Starving people in Haiti? AIDS orphans in Africa? We are because they are? Who are they because we are?

The work that is ours for the next two years is to discover who we are with one another, with our communities and who we are in the larger We -- Who are we not only as congregations in a diocese, but also in an international church, The Episcopal Church, in the communion? How does our relationship with one another help us understand who we are and who we are called to be?

It sounds like circular logic, and in a way it is – an ever-growing spiral of circles moving out from our center in Christ to a wider and wider community – through ever-larger ways of being church.

I am because you are and you are because we are.



Convention focused on EDEO relationships

The 39th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon, held in Klamath Falls Oct. 9-11, was partly about business--but mostly about forging relationships.

Themed "Ubuntu--I am because we are" delegates were assigned to table groups to tell their stories--about themselves and their faith, about mission and stewardship.

In convention business, delegates

- accepted at \$586,548 budget for 2010

- heard that data must be re-entered into a new diocesan accounting program for the years 2004-2009 before those years can be audited

- unanimously elected Terry Rahmsdorff, of Trinity, Bend and Bob Thomson of St. Mark's, Hood River to Diocesan Council

- unanimously elected The Rev. Paul Morton, Trinity, Bend, and Paul Steblein, St. Luke's, Lakeview, to Standing Committee

- heard that \$6,000 has gone from the EDEO to Episcopal Relief and Development so far in 2009

- affirmed the bishop's endorsement of Terry Joakimides, St. Paul's, Klamath Falls, as Secretary of Convention.

- heard a report from the deputies to the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church, held this summer in Anaheim, Calif.

Scenes from convention: above, The Rt. Rev. Nedi Rivera presides at closing Eucharist; right, The Rev. Dcn. Sherry Hartley, former director of Ascension School, holds silver chalice and paten for use in Ascension Chapel, dedicated in her name. Arnold Coe, (far right) head of the Ascension School board, also announced the establishment of a Sherry Hartley Scholarship at Ascension, honoring her decade as camp and conference center director. Hartley also received a special wood cross made by Bob Despain, set with a local gemstone.



Table group talking--(r to l) John Collins, Transfiguration, Sisters; Penny Hamilton, St. Paul's, Klamath Falls, Chester Markley, St. Patrick's, Enterprise; The Rev. Christy Close Erskine, Trinity, Bend; Jean Schadler, St. Luke's, Lakeview; The Ven. James Mosier, archdeacon, St. Matthew's, Ontario.



The Rev. Dcn. Willie Hoffer walks the new labyrinth in the St. Helen's Hall courtyard on the Trinity, Bend campus. photo by Mark Schlerf

Trinity courtyard labyrinth done; columbarium, garden in works

Deteriorated concrete in a courtyard outside St. Helen's Hall, the former Lutheran church that's now part of Trinity, Bend, is being replaced with a sacred space--a permanent labyrinth, a columbarium and a meditation garden.

The labyrinth, already complete, is 17 feet in diameter, in a flowing five-circuit pattern. Its inspiration was what's considered to be the oldest known labyrinth pattern, found on the Greek island of Crete.

A 20-foot long granite-faced columbarium, installed on top of the lava rock wall that is visible on the left side of the photograph, should be

completed sometime this month, said Trinity Sexton Mark Schlerf.

Plans for the meditation garden and benches, along with installation of a new irrigation system, are in the works.

The courtyard is visible from the sanctuary of St. Helen's Hall, in between the building that houses the sanctuary and a classroom building.

Eventually, the courtyard will be available for social space--coffee hours, receptions, and other events.

Besides Schlerf, The Rev. Dcn. Willie Hoffer, Karen Cox, Bobby Fox, Mike McKnight and John Lulich are working on the project.

St. Paul's sets mission trip to Haiti

Eight people from St. Paul's, The Dalles, one from St. Barnabas, Bonanza and a couple from Colorado are flying to Haiti Jan. 10 for a week-long mission trip.

"It's an exploratory trip," said Ron Fullmer. "We will go and find out what it is they really need done, if we're going to have a long-term relationship in Cap Haitien."

Fullmer and his wife, The Rev. Janet Fullmer, have made several mission trips to Haiti. He also is a volunteer with Living Water Intl., a charity repairs and replaces village wells. He will be spending Nov. 29-Dec. 8 in Haiti on his second Living Water trip in 2009, in advance of the St. Paul's trip.

Haiti, a desperately poor Caribbean island nation, is one of The Episcopal largest and least affluent dioceses. Visiting Haiti, "we're going to see lots of hands held out to us, because lots of the people are

starving. Many of them, if they get a dinner of rice and beans once a day, they consider themselves fortunate. We're going to see disease, because of the bad water, and the teachers are going to see a second or third rate education system," Fullmer said.

The St. Paul's group will be headquartered in Cap Haitien, a city of about 120,000, the guests of The



Ron Fullmer, St. Paul's, The Dalles, took this engaging photo of Haitian children on a 2006 mission trip.

St. Stephen's outreach extends to troops serving in Afghanistan

For parishioners at St. Stephen's, Baker City, the faraway war in Afghanistan got a lot closer when 2Lt. Sean Tomlinson was assigned to duty there, "somewhere outside Kandahar."

A West Point graduate who was confirmed at St. Stephen's, he is the son of church members Mary and Jim Tomlinson.

His deployment focused the parish on putting together care packages for the young lieutenant to share with

the troops who are part of C Co., his infantry battalion from Ft. Lewis.

Items collected at St. Stephen's, have gone out in 10 boxes so far, with more to come.

Parishioners also got surplus items from local school districts, which were sent to Tomlinson for distribution to Afghan school children.

Senior Warden Joel Bigelow considers the project excellent outreach. And, he said "Sean is such a great kid."



Parishioner Beth Hartwell (r) folds clothes while a mother and her three children choose clothes at the clothing giveaway at St. Mark's, Hood River.

photo by Sue Jenkins

St. Mark's hosts kids clothing giveaway

An October children's clothing giveaway at St. Mark's, Hood River "was a true walk of faith," said organizer Beth Hartwell.

The idea was simple: collect donated clothing from the parish and the community, sort it, publicize the event and on a designated day, open the parish hall and let children and their parents choose outerwear,

boots, and other clothes.

By day's end, 75 children from 37 families, all from local Oregon and Washington communities, had collected bags of clothes.

"We definitely want to do it again next year," Hartwell said, re-naming the event Free Clothes for Kids. "It was such a gift, it just worked for everyone."

Family Ministries leader resigns post

Mary Wells, coordinator of Trinity, Bend's successful Family Ministries program for 18 months, left the job Nov. 1, citing health reasons.

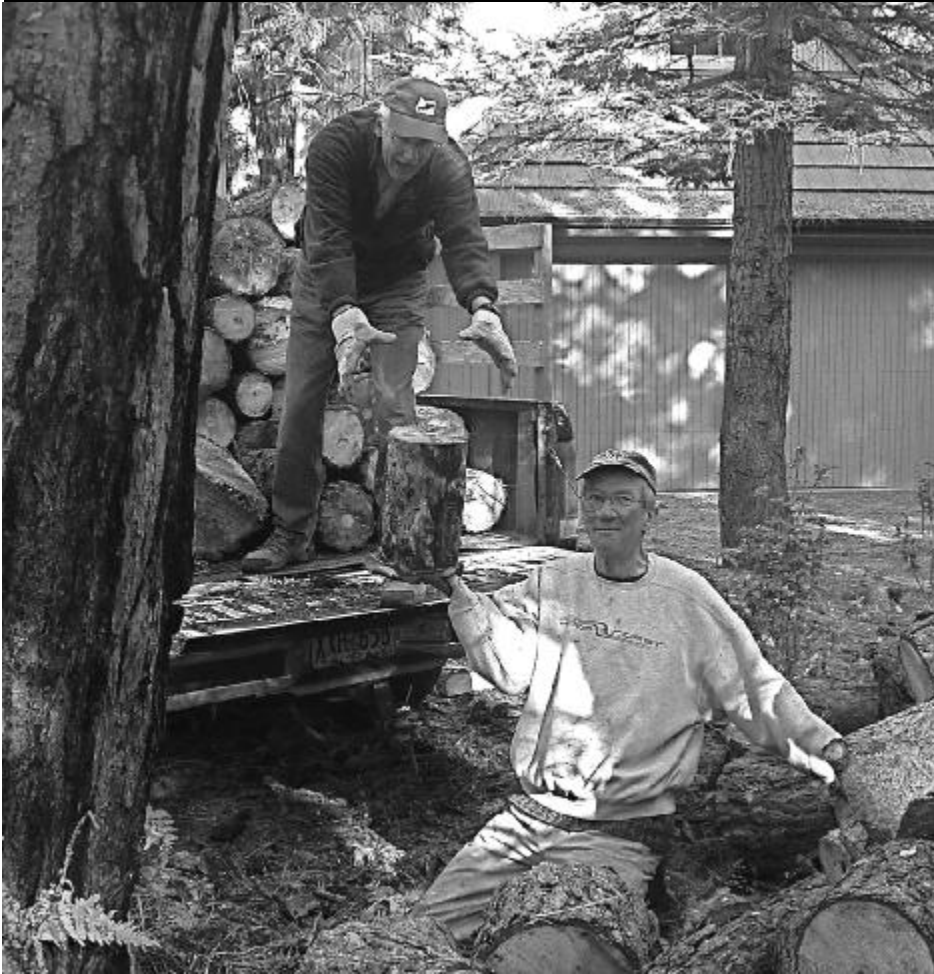
"I am having a flare-up of a rare autoimmune disease that had previously been in remission for many years," she wrote in the *Trinity Trumpet*. "It is abundantly clear that a full time job is not compatible with my now revived health condition and believe me the Family Ministries Coordinator position is full time plus."

The Family Ministries programs will continue uninterrupted, said Julie Lear, chair of the Family Ministries Commission.

The group is preparing a job description and will begin the search for Wells' successor.



News from eastern Oregon parishes



The Rev. Dcn. Roger Fairfield and Rodger Gabrielson (above) load firewood donated by a resident of Black Butte Ranch. Transfiguration's firewood ministry, headed by Fairfield, cuts and delivers firewood to needy local residents who heat with wood. photo by Frank Baldwin

Transfiguration, Sisters

Names, photos and other information about deployed service personnel are posted on a bulletin board at Church of the Transfiguration in Sisters "so parishioners can consider their commitment and pray for their safekeeping and return to their families. We also encourage you to contact them through email or regular mail to express our gratitude for their courage and sacrifice in serving our country in this important way," said the announcement in the church newsletter.

Requested for the bulletin board display is a photo, the name, rank, branch of service and specialty, date and length of deployment, plus contact information and the service member's relationship to a parishioner.

Contact information also is printed on a list that parishioners can take home. The program was initiated by Jean Engstrom and facilitated by The Rev. Ted Rodrigues, Dick Kellogg and Margery Guthrie.

St. Mark's, Hood River

Grade- and middle-schoolers dressed up for some night-before-Halloween excitement at St. Mark's, Hood River.

The party featured games and food and a spooky Dr. Frankenstein's Laboratory in the dark church basement, complete with the classic Possible Body



Sue Jenkins, (l) and Lois Butler, in costume for St. Mark's Halloween Party, watch balloon relay (right).

Parts: eyes (or possibly olives); a nose (or possibly a gherkin); a brain (or possibly a wet sea sponge) and a most convincing heart (or possibly a whole canned tomato.)



St. Stephen's, Baker City

Parishioner Lynne Burroughs "used her excellent auctioneering skills" Oct. 25 to sell six pumpkins for \$205 at the Oct. 25 coffee hour at St. Stephen's, Baker City. Proceeds will go toward the 2009 Vacation Bible School.

This summer's VBS, offered at St. Stephen's for the first time in many years, "was so successful the Vestry unanimously decided to support another one next year," reported *The Voice of St. Stephens*, the church newsletter.

Meanwhile, the church women's group is selling poinsettias in the community, and will have several poinsettias available for sale at St. Stephen's annual Gingerbread Festival on Dec. 12.

All Saints of the Cascades, Sunriver

A mobile information cart, stocked with free printed materials addressing various health issues, living opportunities and more is available in the church entry each Sunday at All Saints of the Cascades/ Sunriver Christian Fellowship. The cart was put together by SCF's Senior Ministry team.

St. James, Milton-Freewater

Retired Whitman College professor Clark Colahan led a three session study on Cervantes' *Don Quixote--The Wisdom of Age* Sundays after church in October and November at St. James, Milton-Freewater.

"It's curious that *Don Quixote* is thought of as a children's book," Colahan wrote in an introduction to the classes. "Though Cervantes knew how to make it appealing to all ages, it is riches for us seniors. The second of two parts, especially, contains his culminating insights into the nature of ambitions, desires and love, what is ridiculously funny and what is truly important in this life, and why Christianity puts us in touch with reality."

St. Peter's, La Grande

"It has become apparent to many of us, including our loyal and long-serving church school teachers, the rector and the vestry that planning for a church school class each Sunday morning is not working. Attendance last year and already this year is sporadic and often non-existent," The Rev. Sarah Stanton wrote in the October issue of *The Fisherman*, the St. Peter's, La Grande newsletter, announcing that there no longer would be Sunday school, effective Oct. 1.

Instead, she said, the nursery attendant will offer Bible stories or videos for children under six. And the church newsletter now includes two new features each month that offer information on practical and spiritual matters for parents and grandparents

"We are fortunate at St. Peter's that children, including infants, have always been welcome at worship. They add a special joy and energy to our services that is appreciated by all." The parish will revisit the issue at its annual meeting in January.

Committees will focus on Ascension's growth, stability

With an estimated value of more than \$4 million, Ascension School Camp and Conference Center in Cove is this diocese's single most valuable asset.

That's just in financial terms, however. Many people view Ascension as the spiritual center of the Episcopal Diocese of Eastern Oregon.

But church camps across the country are struggling. Some are closing. The Diocese of Oregon sold its Triangle Lake Camp a couple of years ago and now shares camps with the United Methodist Church.



Kimseys will lead Christmas retreat in Cove

"The gift of formation...honoring God's presence in shaping our faith" is the theme of the Christmas retreat that The Rt. Rev. Rustin Kimsey and his wife Gretchen will lead at Ascension School in Cove Dec. 28-30.

Participants are asked to prepare for the weekend by reflecting on how their lives have been formed and shaped by significant people, events, readings...whatever has given their lives clarity and meaning.

Among retreat sessions: God's planting seeds of Holy Intention for us, and How does belief become action?

The first session begins after dinner on Monday, Dec. 28 and ends with a 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist on Wednesday, followed by lunch.

Cost of the retreat is \$225 for a single occupancy room in Kimsey Commons; double occupancy at Kimsey Commons is \$175 and a room there for a couple is \$350.

Double occupancy at Barton House is \$125. The fee includes all meals.

Many parishes in the diocese offer adult scholarships for Ascension.

It's also difficult, said Ascension Executive Director Patty Olson Lindsay, "for church camps to compete with all the different things there are for kids to do each summer."

Diocesan Council, Standing Committee and the Ascension School Board recently endorsed a proposal from Olson Lindsay to create four committees that will concentrate on Ascension today and in the future.

The committees, whose members will come from EDEO parishes as well as from the Ascension board and Diocesan Council, include:

A program task force, which would develop programs at Ascension School for both children and adults, as well as outdoor ministries at other places in the diocese;

A site management committee, which would focus solely on maintenance of the facility, including major projects such as roofs as well as minor improvements;

A long range planning and fund development committee, charged with creating a 5- and 10-year vision that includes Ascension's financial needs as well as necessary fund development; and

A marketing and communications committee, to help create a marketing plan, consider programming, promo-



Fall youth retreat campers walk past Morris Hall



Late autumn view from Kimsey Commons, with a dusting of snow on the mountains photos by Jeanie Senior

tion, and pricing.

"In order to make Ascension School a more sustainable facility we need to increase adult programming, increase marketing efforts, support the maintenance of the facility and raise additional funds for larger capital campaign projects," Olson Lindsay said, in a document presented to the council and the school board.

It will take more involvement by more people to realize the goal of keeping Ascension in good health

financially, she said.

Except for the marketing and communications committee, the other groups were proposed for creation after a 1988 Diocesan Council retreat that was followed by a site analysis, study weekend and a diocesan-wide survey.

Ascension's new mission statement emerged from the same process: "to provide a place apart for all God's children to gather and to share... to be refreshed by the joy of God's creation, nurtured in the bounty of holy love and challenged to the ministry of Christ's gospel."

"We need to increase our business to become a financially sustainable part of the Diocese," the director said, noting that Ascension, although beloved, "continues to fail financially. It isn't for lack of love but for lack of income."

Members of Diocesan Council and Standing Committee, meeting at Ascension in mid-November for their annual retreat, suggested expanding the conference center's ability to offer teleconferencing and webinars.

Diocesan Calendar (includes Bishop Rivera's calendar)

Dec 14-Jan 1 Bishop Rivera on vacation
Dec 19 Safeguarding God's People (parts 1 & 2), Transfiguration, Sisters, 10 am - 3 pm
Dec 28-30 *Christmas Retreat, Ascension School, Cove*
Jan 3 Bishop Rivera at Church of the Redeemer, Pendleton
Jan 5-7 Bishop Rivera at Province VIII House of Bishops
Jan 18 Diocesan Office Closed - Martin Luther King Jr. birthday
Feb 19-21 *Lenten Retreat - Ascension School, Cove*
March 18-24 Bishop Rivera at House of Bishops meeting
March 25-28 Bishop Rivera in the diocese
April 2 Diocesan Office Closed - Good Friday
April 9 Commission on Ministry, Ascension School, 10am-3pm
April 9-11 *Ministry Weekend, Ascension School, Cove*
April 10-18 Bishop Rivera in the diocese

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Dec 6 For St. Andrew's, Prineville
Dec 13 For Trinity, Bend
Dec 20 For Ascension School Camp & Conference Center
Dec 27 In thanksgiving for the mission, ministries and witness of the Diocese of Eastern Oregon

Ascension School camp & program calendar for 2010

Feb 19-21 **Lenten Retreat**
 April 9-11 **Ministry Weekend**
 May 28-31 **Work Weekend**
 June 11-13 **Young Adult Camp**--for college students
 June 20-25 **Art Camp** --for grades 6-8
 June 27-July 5 **Senior High Camp**--for grades 10-12
 July 7-9 **Discovery Camp** --for grades pre-K- 2
 July 11-16 **Beginners Camp**--for grades 3- 5
 July 18-24 **Junior High Camp**--for grades 7- 9
 July 25-31 **Combined Camp**--for grades 4-6
 August 5-8 **Adult Education**