



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – November 2007

Vicar Reports on Connecticut Conference



I want you to know that I had a stimulating and refreshing time at the Clergy Leadership Project (CLP). We had two very challenging speakers, Dr. Hugh O'Doherty and Dr. Eric Law. Dr. O'Doherty teaches at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He was raised in Northern Ireland and has worked extensively in mediating intractable disputes, including those involving Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. Dr. Law is the Founder and Executive Director of the Kaleidoscope Institute for competent leadership in a diverse and changing world.

Both Hugh & Eric presented fascinating insights into leadership and authority and the context in which they are exercised. Much of the conference was experiential and we will have further opportunities to work with both of these presenters, as well as, other leaders in future sessions. My CLP class is looking forward to three more sessions, all of which will be held at the Trinity Conference Center in West Cornwall, Connecticut. Between sessions, we will be in touch with the small groups to which we were assigned. We will be working with the concepts which we have begun to explore. Our next session will be May 4-9, 2008.



"For three things I thank God every day of my life: thanks that He has granted me knowledge of His works; deep thanks that He has set in my darkness the lamp of faith; deep, deepest thanks that I have another life to look forward to - a life joyous with light and flowers and heavenly song."

- Helen Keller (blind and deaf from infancy)

Thanksgiving Celebration and Window Dedication

Please, remember the annual Thanksgiving Eucharist and dinner at St. Paul's. Everyone is invited. Come and bring your friends and family. The service this year will be at 10:30 with dinner to follow in the parish hall.

This year we will have the pleasure of dedicating a new stained glass window in the church. The window is being given in honor of Ted and Frances Harper, long time members of St. Paul's. We hope you will plan to join us for this special event.



St. Paul's Church by Bill Brown

Report from Convocation

The Convocation of the Diocese of the Rio Grande was hosted this year by the Cathedral of St. John in Albuquerque on October 19th and 20th. It was a time of mixed emotions as we began to live into the reality of the upcoming departure of Bishop Steenson and to face the challenges of finding a way forward in the coming transition period. That being said, this convocation was one of the least confrontational and most productive of those I've attended. Perhaps as we came with 'cracks in our façade, those very cracks became openings into which the Holy Spirit could slip.



Friday was filled with the ongoing business of the diocese. Elections were held, reports were given, and the budget for 2008 was presented. Friday evening was a time of celebration at the Cathedral as the Very Rev. Mark Goodman was installed as its new Dean.

The delegates spent most of Saturday morning in small groups discussing the health of the Diocese and our hopes for the future. These discussions were very productive and revealed, among other things, a desire for better communication on all diocesan levels, and a further desire that we not rush into the process of electing a new bishop before we have given ourselves time to heal and to discern how we can best seek and serve Christ in each of our diverse communities.

Convocation of 2008 will be hosted by St. Chad's in Albuquerque on October 24th and 25th.

"In politics, an absurdity is not an impediment."

- Napoleon I

Accomplishments In God's Time

Here are few photos from past years' events in the Big Bend Mission. Identify the event or occasion in all these photos and your name will be announced in next month's Circuit Rider. (Hint: look at past issues of the Circuit Rider at www.bigbendepiscopalmission.org.)



Last Month's Question: Why is our prayer book called the Book of "Common" Prayer?

Answer: On 21 January, 1549, the first Act of Uniformity was passed imposing upon the whole realm of England *The Book of Common Prayer* with the intent that liturgy for worship should be uniform, or held in "common".

This Month's Question: What does the word "Episcopal" mean?

Invitation To Lecture Series from St. James', Clovis N.M.

An open invitation has been sent to members of the Diocese of the Rio Grande to attend the first event in an annual Lecture Series to be held at St. James' Episcopal Church in Clovis, NM, on February 15 and 16, 2008. This year's program takes the form of a Healing Mission and Teaching. The Rev. Nigel Mumford, who has preached and lectured at many churches, colleges, and hospitals in the U.S. and England, will be the keynoter and presenter.

The Rev. Mumford is the Director of Healing Ministry at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center in Greenwich, NY, a ministry of the Diocese of Albany. He is also the author of several books on healing, including *Hand to Hand: A Marine's Journey from Combat to Healing*, which details his transition from serving in Her Majesty's Royal Marines in England to emigrating to the U.S. and becoming involved in the healing ministry.

The Mission is open to all who are interested in the healing ministry of Christ and/or the Order of St. Luke. Several members of St. James' Prayer Fellowship in Alpine are planning to make the trip to Clovis and invite all who might be interested to join them. Associate OSL members Nancy Antrim, Walter Frerck, Virginia Knab, and Bonnie McNamara have been working to fulfill the requirements for becoming full members of OSL and look forward to doing so at a special service during this Mission.



Of additional interest is the fact that Bishop Kelshaw and Hazel will be participating in the mission, and this annual Lecture Series will be named for the Bishop at a special dedication ceremony on Saturday morning.

Registration fee for the Mission is \$45, if paid before January 30, and \$50 thereafter. The Registration fee includes Friday dinner and Saturday lunch. For additional information, including the complete schedule, go to www.stjameschurchclovis.org or call Thelma and Al Hoyle, 837-2088.



Hard Questions

Spiritual growth is a mysterious thing. Sometimes we seem to go for years and feel like we are doing little more than rearranging our "spiritual deck chairs." Other times we see things in new ways very quickly. Spiritual growth occurs through experience, not through intellectual argument. Our daily life experiences contain the potential to open us to God's love. If we are stuck obsessing about the past or worrying about the future, we just might miss God's loving hand in the present moment. Listen carefully, the sound of the deck chairs is fading and God is speaking right now.

- Seth



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