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110th Diocesan Convention

Dancing with the Holy Spirit

Rise Thew Forrester

The delegates, leaders and members of the Diocese of Northern Michigan met together for the 110th Diocesan Convention, October 14-16, 2005, in Marquette. Taking as their theme the third question of the baptismal covenant, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?", the convention heard reports of exciting work being done in our midst, and took more steps along our journey with the Spirit.

Fredrica Harris Thompsett, Professor of Historical Theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was the Chaplain for Convention. She offered reflections on the dance of the Spirit in our midst throughout the weekend, beginning with a montage of Holy Spirit images, from ancient mosaics to the new science of fractal images.

"Part of your genius in Northern Michigan is that you know that ministry lies close to the incarnational bone. You know that long relationships have been key, and that they are built up from the gifted ground of baptism. You know that



Fredrica Harris Thompsett speaks to Convention.

what matters is not congregational survival but living out your lives
Continued on Page B...

Reaching Across the World...One with One

Larry Shell

In 1987, when David Bol and Peter Machok were just seven years old, the civil war raging in the Sudan came to their little village in the South and changed their lives forever. Now more than 18 years later, David and Peter found themselves in the Upper Peninsula sharing their stories and future hopes for their home – a home they have



David Bol (left) and Peter Machok (right) shared their story with members of St. Paul's, Marquette

not seen in all these years. On a recent Sunday in October, Peter and David traveled from their current home of Chicago to Marquette to attend services at St. Paul's church and tell their story to an attentive audience. Connie Wilson, Director of Communications at Seabury-Western Episcopal Seminary, was their link to the UP and their driver. Connie had developed a friendship with Mark Engle, Rector of St. Paul's, and of his wife Sharon, when he was serving as Chaplain to the seminarians while on sabbatical a number of years ago.

This past winter Connie and a number of other "missioners" traveled from Chicago to their companion diocese in Africa, the Renk Diocese of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. It was during this trip and in the months that followed that Connie Wilson felt a call to assist in any way possible to improve the lives of the Sudanese people whose lives had been so ravaged by the many years of civil war.

Once back in Chicago she was introduced to David and Peter. They became fast friends and she began working



with them and other "Lost Boys" to assist them in helping members of their families back home. Peter and David, who are cousins, placed a priority on helping two of
Continued on Page C...

Bishop's Address to Convention

James A. Kelsey
 October 15, 2005

Ramada Inn, Marquette, Michigan

Grace to you, and Peace, my sisters and brothers, in the Name of the One who gives us life and awakens us to all of the promises and hope of creation.

In one last desperate and somewhat pathetic attempt to cling to our youth, Mary and I have become fans of a young singer/songwriter named Jason Mraz. We even attended his concert on campus a couple of weeks ago. I'll leave the description of that event to your imagination. Suffice it to say, we were the only ones we saw there within our particular age bracket - or anything close.

But, aside from such embarrassments, one of our favorites is a song by Jason Mraz called "Life is Wonderful", which includes the following lyrics:

It takes a crane to build a crane
 It takes two floors to make a story
 It takes an egg to make a hen
 It takes a hen to make an egg
 There is no end to what I'm saying
 Life is wonderful
 Life goes full circle

It takes a night to make it dawn
 It takes some old to make you young
 It takes some cold to know the sun
 It takes the one to have the other

It takes the one to have the other. You see, it's a matter of perspective. It's a matter of getting out of ourselves; outside of ourselves so we can find ourselves, or re-discover ourselves within the fabric of human relationships; of community. It's like that old Zulu proverb that a person is a person because of people. It takes the one to have the other.

And what does this say about what we are about in this diocese? And about where we are headed?

The Upper Peninsula has a history of being isolated. Not as much these days, with advances in communications and transportation and other technologies, but still, there is woven into the fabric of our culture, and embedded within the emotional psyche of our relationships an inclination towards rugged individualism. That's true of the American culture overall, I know, but particularly in the U.P., I have observed. And all of us participate in that dynamic at one time or another, in one way or another, I suspect. It's something we need to resist, I want to say. And perhaps especially in times such as these.

In a few minutes, we will hear a
Continue on Page D...

Policies clear up confusions for Treasurers

Joseph F. Thompson

The Diocesan Finance Committee presented a report on a clarified set of policies and guidelines to Convention October 15. Definitions and ambiguous instructions in the Stewardship and Financial Section of the Annual Parochial Report and the uniformity of the data used to compute the diocesan and regional assessments had in the past generated some confusion for treasurers in the congregations. So, in June, treasurers from throughout the diocese met in Marquette for a workshop titled "Finance and Your Congregation," sponsored by the diocesan Finance Committee. Jim Kelsey, Bishop, had asked Joe Thompson, Linda Vollwerth and Joy Wallace to coordinate the meeting. It was a forum for individual congregational treasurers to discuss problems and questions common to their financial and reporting responsibilities.

At that time, review of the Diocese of Northern Michigan's canonical auditing requirement was given by Kelsey and Graybill. Treasurers exchanged information about procedures currently in use. Each treasurer was asked to send to the diocese the present audit procedure in use in their church, and using this information, a guide was offered at Convention which describes differing levels of independent financial review.

A major portion of the June workshop was occupied with a discussion of what constituted "Operating Revenues" which are the financial base for computing the 21% diocesan assessment. There was considerable diversity in what the various treasurers included and excluded in determining this amount which is sent to the diocese each month. All agreed that uniformity was needed, and the finance committee was asked to respond to this need. In an attempt to give insight to the Finance Committee about the disparities in existence, a questionnaire was distributed to the treasurers present. Ten sources of

income were listed and treasurers were asked to indicate whether each source was included or excluded in computing the monthly assessment. There was surprising uniformity in the inclusion of plate and pledge income and exclusion of restricted funds, in restricted funds give to a church but used for certain purposes, pass-through monies (such as Church Periodical Club, United Thank Offering, Boy Scouts and Habitat for Humanity) and electronic fund transfers to the Congregational Trust Account. However, there was considerable diversity in how treasurers viewed checking and savings account interest, restricted funds for general use, unrestricted funds raised by organizations within the church (bake sales, bingo games, rummage sales, theatricals, musicals, fish fries and pancake breakfasts), interest/dividends/capital gains from the Congregational Trust Accounts and interest/dividends/capital gains from church-held securities. In the time since the June meeting, the Diocesan Finance committee has developed guidelines for exclusion and inclusion of monies for the computation of the monthly assessment.

The topic of individual church insurance coverage was discussed. In the past the diocese had talked about a diocesan-wide coverage of the individual churches. Dick Graybill brought the group up to date about this. The diocese had been unable to find a carrier who would offer a diocesan wide plan which was any better than the already existing individual church policies. In view of this, both Graybill and Kelsey advised each congregations to seek their own coverage and names of available insurance companies were provided.

Monthly financial reports were discussed. There was a great deal of variation in these reports mainly related to the size of the congregation and the complexity of the budget. Each treasurer was encouraged to produce a monthly report which could be clearly understood.

Delighting with the Spirit at Convention

Continued from Front Page...

baptismally. You know that sometimes you have to challenge hierachical, "elite" ways of doing things, even in the Church. I pray you be relentless in this work," she said.

"You also know, there is still work to be done among you and beyond you, the work of sharing God's message of liberation and wholeness. There are new relationships to be formed, new work to be done. And to make room for that, some of the old work will need to be set aside...remember the Spirit is always there, closer to us than we are to ourselves, closer than kissing, constanly begging permission to pray in us, to work

among us," she urged the community gathered on Sunday morning for Holy Eucharist.

One of the new relationships being built is the new board of the Page Center. Several years in the making, their work has been to create the structure to transition the Center to an interfaith, ecumenical place of hospitality. They came to Convention to offer their vision and thanks for the gift the Diocese is offering to the wider UP.

Please see the diocesan website for election results, the Bishop's address, and other updates from Convention, at www.upepiscopal.org.

ANTI-RACISM TRAINING CONTINUES NEXT MONTH

Vince Reed

More than forty members of our diocesan family gathered in Marquette on September 17th to attend an Anti-Racism Workshop lead by Jane Oasin.

Oasin is the Social Justice Officer of the Episcopal Church. In this position she is responsible for the implementation of the Church's anti-racism, economic justice and anti-violence programs. As an advocate for social justice and social change, she was a profound blessing in our midst.

Oasin related to participants that her father, a man of color, was repelled from Episcopal church doors with instructions to use the delivery door at the rear of the church. Or—in the matter of worship—to go to the neighborhood "black" church.

So—We have a history in the Episcopal Church. And it is not particularly attractive. And we are called to address the "sin of racism". Participants in the workshop joined in exercises and conversations that invited them to examine racism in their lives and the context that in which they live.

The participants at the September 17th workshop found Oasin to be informed, warm, dedicated, articulate, and playful. She reminded us that we are called to a spirit of hope as we see the face of God in each other no matter of one's ethnicity, color, sexuality, or race.

Our journey towards racial awareness and justice continues. Oasin will join us again on December 3rd in Marquette for a follow-on workshop.

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern Michigan

We envision a world in which all people live together in peace and in harmony with all of creation, where all can contribute and the gifts of all are joyfully received, nurtured, and supported, where our diversity is celebrated in community, and every human being is recognized as having eternal significance.

We commit ourselves to identify, nurture, and support the baptismal ministry of every single member/person of this diocese. The baptismal covenant is our guide and inspiration.

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Meetings and Events

All Times Eastern

NOVEMBER 2005

1-2	Rector/Missioner Gathering	
5	Commission on Ministry 10:00 am	Diocesan Offices, Marquette
12	Preaching Workshop 1:00 pm	South Central Region
12	Celebration of New Ministry 2:00 pm	Trinity, Houghton
14-15	Prov V Ministry Unit	Chicago
18-19	Diocesan Council Goal Setting	Diocesan Offices, Marquette
24	Give Thanks!	

DECEMBER 2005

3	Anti-Racism Training pt2 10:00 am	St Stephen's, Escanaba
16	Diocesan Council 10:00 am	Diocesan Offices, Marquette
17	Commission on Ministry 10:00 am	Diocesan Offices, Marquette
25	For Unto Us a Child is Born!	

JANUARY 2006

21	Diocesan Council 10:00 am	Diocesan Offices, Marquette
28	Coun on Diac Ministry 11:00 am	St John's, Iron River
31	Trust Association 10:30 am	Diocesan Offices, Marquette

FEBRUARY 2006

3-5	ECW Winter Gathering	
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CAMP NEW DAY UP

“I’ll carry you in my heart”

Jacquey Shellenbarger

“The kid leaned over and nudged me in the side. ‘You’re not even gonna remember me, are you?’ I looked at him and said ‘No, I will carry you in my heart for the rest of my life.’ He looked down, nudged me again, and said, ‘Then I guess I might carry you in mine, too.’”

Kai Carrigan offered this story to diocesan convention October 15, as she and Jacquey Shellenbarger gave a report of the continued success of Camp New Day UP, a summer camp for children of incarcerated persons.

Shellenbarger reported that Campers at Camp New Day UP were treated to a week of fun-filled activities again this year. Three one-week camp sessions, two for 9-11 year-olds and one for children 12-14 years of age were attended by 39 campers. This year, because of the warm weather, the children were able to spend more time swimming, which they loved. The children, from across the Upper Peninsula and Lower Peninsula, were treated to good meals, games (both competitive and non-competitive), fishing, swimming, cookouts, campfires, singing, crafts, and many more fun-filled activities. The older children enjoyed yoga classes. A local musician entertained and led group singing around the campfire.

Five children who were too old for Camp New Day UP were given an opportunity to spend a week at Fortune Lake Camp. Tuition was paid for by Camp New Day. It was gratifying to realize that these children wanted to continue their camping experience and for us to have the funding to do this for them. It takes a lot of time, energy and money to continue operating this camp, but for those who get to see and work with the children, first

hand, we know it does make a difference in their lives.

Thanks were given for the work of Mat Metor, who has been the Director for the past two years. A new director has been hired, and planning is underway for the 2006 camping season.

Thank you to all who have contributed time, money, and supplies!
(Partially reprinted from The Messenger, St. Paul's, Marquette)

Transitions

Baptisms

Nora Kay Sullivan
Jake Otho Sullivan
Trinity, Houghton

Deaths

Paul Aldrich
St. James, Sault Ste. Marie

Bertie Robertson
St. Paul's, Marquette

Dorothy Kahler
St. Paul's, Marquette

Leonard Platt
St. Paul's, Marquette

Sottile Retires from Family Resource Center

Elizabeth Jacobson

“I nearly lost my mind!”

I can’t imitate Margaret Sottile’s English accent, but this statement was the genesis of the Keweenaw Family Resource Center (KFRC). It is a direct quote. It happened that Margaret and Bill Sottile were married in Florida, and moved to Chicago for him to pursue his Ph.D.

They knew no one. Margaret was home alone with a baby, Richard, and a toddler, Caroline. She had no adult companionship whatsoever. Bill’s work on his Ph.D. was a 24/7 preoccupation; he was gone to the academic world. Margaret was isolated, and overwhelmed.

It was awful. It nearly broke her, she later said. And Margaret is a strong person. And so, some years later when they had moved to the U.P. and Caroline and Richard were in school, Margaret noticed that there were other young

mothers home alone with babes and toddlers. Who were isolated. And overwhelmed.

Margaret’s heart stirred. She cared about those young mothers. And so the KFRC was born, in the early 1990s, and became a Jubilee Center of the Episcopal Church in 1996. It has won many awards through the years, and sent Margaret on journeys most likely never dreamed of when she had those two small children, and felt so alone.

Margaret and Bill retired downstate this fall, and Cathy Benda, who had been the Assistant Director, has become the Director. The KFRC is facing severe budget cuts for the next fiscal year, and is undertaking several fundraising efforts, including gift baskets and Pura Vida Coffee. For more information, please go to the KFRC website, www.kfrckids.org.

ECW Winter Retreat

Franciscan Spirituality

Are you...Striving to be a peacemaker? Passionate about social justice?

Yearning for a deeper relationship with God? Concerned with ecology, the poor and the marginalized?

For the annual Winter Gathering at Marygrove, sponsored by our diocesan ECW, Jim Kelsey has invited three Franciscan friends to come and share with us their spiritual journey and tradition: Sr. Pamela Clare of the Community of St.

Francis, Br. Clark Berge of the Society of St. Francis, and Masud ibn Syedulullah of the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis

You are invited to come to Marygrove to learn more about St. Francis and Franciscan spirituality. Mark your calendar! Beginning Friday, February 3, at 7pm, concluding Sunday, February 5, at lunch-time at the Marygrove Retreat Center in Garden, MI

Sudanese Refugee Ministry

Continued from Front Page...

their cousins leave a refugee camp in Kenya and get enrolled in a private school where they would be fed, sheltered and educated. The tuition for the upcoming school year was more than she could manage and she began to make calls to all her friends seeking assistance.

David and Peter are eager to share their story to all who will listen in the hope that greater understanding of the plight of the South Sudanese will lead to assistance and prayer for their homeland. Members of the congregation sat quietly as David and Peter explained that the Army of the Khartoum government targeted men and boys as potential rebels. As they returned from the bush, they could see the smoke from their village. They had no other choice but to flee and join the company of thousands of others. They made their way to a camp in Ethiopia where they remained until word reached the camp of an agreement between the two governments. Over 12,000 refugees fled towards the border before the advancing Ethiopian army. David and Peter were fortunate to escape on a boat across the river back to the Sudan. They then faced a two month trek across the desert to reach safety in Kenya.

For nine years they survived in the camp, until in 2001 they were able with the assistance of the United Nations to emigrate to the United States. For four years now they have lived in Chicago, attending school, working and sending money back to Africa. However, the situation for young boys and men has not changed significantly in southern Sudan. Both of the young men have a “brother”(what we would call a first cousin) that have been living in a refugee camp in Kenya to stay away from the violence that continues to rage in their home country.

Deng Mawan Nun and Magai Mawat are now attending a private school in Nakuru, Kenya, thanks to a generous initial offering by St. Paul’s church. In August, St. Paul’s vestry approved forwarding \$800.00 to cover the costs of enrolling the two young men this fall. This will cover the cost of the first of three terms. The fundraising to meet the challenge of keeping these two young men in school is underway. Interested individuals can forward their contributions to St. Paul’s Church, Marquette. Mark the payments as directed to the Lost Boys Fund. Any questions can be directed to stpmqt@aol.com or to larry@shell-family.com.

Below the Bridge

~Barbara Susan, Web Servant

The new website design progresses! Here is the link to the prototype: <http://homepage.mac.com/dweingarten/upepiscopal/>

We can still use your help on the content and design. We're working on newsfeeds and calendars for current information, and links to sites for more background material. Please email your ideas to me, barbarasusan@upepiscopal.org, or you may send mail to the Diocese. There will also be a page on the website itself for redesign info and comments. Thanks!

Website of the Month:

Official Website of the Mackinac Bridge
<http://www.mackinacbridge.org/>
Please help me choose one of these photos for my column. Or send me one of your photos of the bridge!

Around the Diocese...

Due to short space and time in this issue, some stories will be upcoming in the next Church in Hiawathaland:

Affirmation weekends were held at St. Alban's, Manistique and St. Paul's, Marquette.

St. John's, Munising, celebrated their centennial in September

South Central Region will be hosting a workshop on preaching in Advent on November 12. Look for more information on UPChat or the Website.

Creative Conversations – Interfaith Dialogues, is a weekly gathering of people on Wednesday evenings, at the EACW's Canterbury House in Houghton. Creative Conversations will be a safe gathering to discuss ideas, and is sponsored by the campus ministries of Good Shepherd Lutheran, Trinity Episcopal, Portage Lake United, the Keweenaw Society of Friends (Quaker), and the Keweenaw Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Mike Green, our diocesan community organizing consultant, is preparing a video on Asset-based Community Development, and including a section on our work here in Northern Michigan.

United Thank Offering grant applications are now available from the diocesan office, and are due by January 1, 2006, in order to have time to have appropriate signatures added.

Bishop's Address: A Challenging Gift and Time

Continued from Front Page...

report from our Strategic Financial Planning Group. And some of what they have to say will be pretty grim. It could even get depressing, if we let it. Because there are certain economic and demographic realities which confront us with certain limitations, leaving us with a choice as to how we will respond. We might grow sad and nostalgic about what we once had but no longer have; what we once were but no longer can be... or we might embrace with imagination what and who we are called to be at this time and in this place. It's easy to focus upon what brings fear, but it's more important to get at what brings courage - what brings vision and courage.

As our Chaplain Fredrica Harris Thompsett has been reminding us, it's the Holy Spirit. It's the Holy Spirit who breathes life into our aging bones and who pulls us back together again and inspires us with zest and verve and vision and promise and the energy which stirs us into new life and gets us out of ourselves and back in touch with ourselves and one another and the wider universe which is our home and what this wonderful life is all about.

We are now, in this diocese, in the midst of sizing down from ten full time stipended clergy to nine. What does that mean for us? Are we starting to shut down our engines? Or are we just getting revved up again to move into new partnerships, new relationships, new ways of being together as the Church here & now? And how do we challenge ourselves to re-discover the mysteries of stewardship & evangelism? How do we begin to grow again - numerically and financially? It's an important question - one which has to do, in fact, with our institutional survival.

But, you know, there are more important questions than how and even whether we will survive. More important is this: how will we hold and carry our vision? How will we shape and embrace new dreams? new visions? how will we keep on the path which leads us into deeper personal and spiritual growth, life in community, and mission? How will we be faithful to the One who has created us, who has gathered us, who has sent us to celebrate and serve the reign of Love?

I continue to believe that it is by focusing on our vocation that the challenges about our institutional life will be met. And it takes courage and faith - and exuberant enthusiasm (in the root meaning of that word "enthusiasm" - as being possessed by the spirit of God) to hold on to our vision and our mission at times when we feel the pressures of the marketplace and the competitive world closing in around us.

Are we going to let the fiscal challenges we face define us? Are these challenges of bucks and bricks and the number of butts in the pew going to uncover and reveal what is pathetic about us? Or will they bring us to a place of humility and simplicity of life and passion and compassion and a yearning for our life together that we might re-discover what is at the heart of our faith?

I believe it is a gift that we are who we are and that we are being offered this new beginning to journey more deeply into the heart of our God of Love in new ways... This is our time. This is our community. How could we have it any other way? ...

Do you hear me? That the existence of the very challenges we face is in fact why we are here - called together in the first place. Those challenges are bringing institutional pressure on us but they are shattering the lives of a significant number of people around us. In the end, it's not about us. But it does give shape to our mission. What threatens to undo us, in fact, is what brings us purpose and meaning.

Listen to some more lyrics of the Jason Mraz song I quoted you at the start:

It takes some fears to make you trust
It takes those tears to make it rust
It takes the dust to have it polished
It takes some silence to make sound
It takes a loss before you found it
It takes a road to go nowhere
It takes a toll to make you care
It takes a hole to make a mountain

It takes all of life - even and especially the depths to which we might sink to help us find ourselves and to find and climb our mountain. So, what is our vision, which we are given to hold and to carry through these challenging days?

At the Goal Setting session for the Diocesan Council last November the following vision statement was reaffirmed:

"We envision a world in which all people live together in peace and harmony with all of creation, where all can contribute and the gifts of all are joyfully received, nurtured, and supported, where our diversity is celebrated in community, and every human being is recognized as having eternal significance."

And our mission statement is this:
"We commit ourselves to identify, nurture and support the baptismal ministry of every single member/person of this diocese. The baptismal covenant is our guide and inspiration."

So how are we to pursue such lofty purpose? Porter Taylor, the new Bishop of Western North Carolina sits with me in a small core group during the meetings of the House of Bishops. And during a conversation last March he told our small group about a book by Ron Rolheiser called *The Holy Longing* which identified four "essentials", or non-negotiable pillars for healthy, balanced people of faith. They are: a life of prayer, life in community, commitment to social justice, and a tender heart. And I want to suggest that these things are pretty essential for a diocese as well.

First - a life of prayer: the journey of personal and spiritual growth as individuals, as communities, as members of a larger faith community and of the larger human family.

There's another line in that same Jason Mraz song that says:
It takes no time to fall in love
But it takes you years

to know what love is.

...

And our life in community - the second essential for healthy Christian identity. As we gather regularly in our congregations and our other associations. We are bound to one another in a sacred friendship. And we have been continuing our journey into ministry development, building up our congregations into ministering communities of faith. Since our last Convention we have had Covenants signed for the Covenant Groups in Ishpeming and Negaunee; we have had Affirmation Weekends in Menominee, Sault Ste Marie, Manistique, and Marquette; we have had the ordination of transitional deacons in Iron River and Calumet, and the Commissionings of new Ministry Support Teams in those congregations will take place within the next few months...

The third essential mark of a healthy life of faith is commitment to social justice. This afternoon, we will receive a series of reports on just some of the ways we have tried to spread Christ's Spirit of love and harmony. ...with significant leadership coming out of our Episcopal congregations. ...

And this is how the sometimes fierce passions which can flame up in our breasts concerning social justice must be tempered with a gentleness of spirit. A tender heart is how Rolheiser describes it - the fourth essential characteristic of a healthy, balanced life of faith...

There won't be a report this afternoon about how we are doing at producing tender hearts. How do you measure it? But without it, isn't the rest of it simply chasing after empty wind? And what more is the spiritual journey about than to become again a people who care, who love, who embrace life as wonderful.

And this is the thing for me, and it's what I want to leave for you to ponder from this address: that I remain convinced that if we keep focused on this deeper journey of a life of prayer, of life in community, of commitment to social justice, and of nurturing our own Tender Hearts, we will regain our focus on a vision which draws us more deeply into the love of Christ even as we journey more deeply into the land where finances and demographics fall short. By keeping focused on the deeper journey, we will not only survive - we will come back to ourselves and we will move on with courage and energy and purpose....

It's like that old Zulu proverb that a person is a person because of people. It takes the one to have the other. It takes no time to fall in love but it takes you years to know what love is...

(The full text of the Bishop's address can be found at www.upepiscopal.org, or by calling the diocesan office at 800-236-0087. We encourage each congregation to download and print a copy of the address for your members.)