

## From the Bishop: “General Convention Marked by Respect and Hope”

The 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, recently concluded in Indianapolis, was by far the best - and most positive - of the five that I have attended. How so? In almost every case, disagreement did not manifest itself in division. In all of the “key” votes, bishops and deputies debated and responded in such a way as to minimize the sense of winners-and-losers. Even during the most controversial matters at hand, in which profound disagreements were voiced and significantly split votes resulted, both sides remained respectful and reached out to one another after all was said and done.

For example, with regard to one of the most publicized and momentous resolutions, the authorization of a “provisional” rite for the blessing of same-sex couples, strong conscience-clauses were inserted to protect clergy and congregations whose convictions will not allow for such liturgies. I can tell you first-hand that some of the most vocal support for the conscience-clauses came from those who staunchly supported same-sex blessings. This, for me, is important evidence that Episcopalian inclusivity can indeed embrace both left and right.

I supported the Convention’s resolution not because of the movement of secular culture but out of personal and theological conviction. Moreover, after over 30 years of the Church’s study and dialogues, I believe that it is time to be publically clear about the full acceptance of committed same-sex relationships in the life and witness of our Church. I will continue to honor the convictions of our clergy and communicants who disagree, because in my judgment we have now reached an equitable and workable settlement of this long-running debate. We can now move on to other important matters that require the Church’s energetic attention.

That resolution takes the same track we have had in the Diocese of Virginia for more than a year now. The process I have previously outlined will remain the same - clergy must still submit a fulsome application for my approval to perform such

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## J2A Pilgrimage to NY: Transformative

The congregation blessed and commissioned eight young pilgrims and four chaperones on July 1 for the first ever St. Timothy’s J2A pilgrimage. The pilgrimage took place in New York City from July 3-9. Our “Charge to the Pilgrims” included these words about the ancient discipline of pilgrimage: “Over the centuries, faithful people have traveled forth, leaving the security of home...to seek God in ‘holy’ places. Finding God there, they have returned to their homes to find that God is there also.” The 2012 St. Tim’s pilgrims set out with open hearts and open minds to experience God in a new place and to draw closer to God in community.

We got a chance to put into place many of the lessons we’d learned in two years

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# Fundraisers for St. Mathieu's a Huge Success

St. Timothy's has raised all the money needed to support the 18 students at St. Mathieu's in Chapoteau, Haiti for the coming school year! The Agapes held by the Service Ministry during Lent and the Hope for Haiti dinner in May raised enough money to cover expenses for the students and over \$1,000 of support for Pere Wisnel in his village of Miragoane. The Hope for Haiti dinner raised over \$4,000, of which over \$1,000 was designated for Pere Wisnel.

The Service Ministry now has enough money to support the students this year, and have a cushion for the coming year, to meet our continuing commitment to the 18 children St. Timothy's sponsors. The money specified for both Pere Wisnel and St. Mathieu's will be sent to the respective recipients through the Partnership Program established by the bishop of Haiti.

The Service Ministry is grateful to the congregation for the outpouring of generosity and support for St. Mathieu's. Thank you for your donations and for encouraging your friends and family to donate. We have committed to educating all 18 of our students until they complete their schooling in Chapoteau, so if you haven't had the chance yet, you may still sponsor a child or make a donation for the next school year, or assist the school with building repairs. Write your check to St. Timothy's and put "Haiti school" on the memo line.

In the fall, there will be more news to share with you about the students and the new school year. Thank you for *putting your faith to work* to serve the people of Haiti. +



*Both Wisnel (top right) and Michelin (left) spoke at the Hope for Haiti dinner in May which raised more than \$5,000 for Haiti.*

# Michelin Married; Wisnel Engaged; Both Sent to Léogâne

On July 19, Pere Michelin St. Louis was married by Bishop Duracin to Altigracia in Port au Prince. Scott Zetlan attended the ceremony and reception following. He brought back news that the Bishop has reassigned both Pere Michelin and Pere Wisnel to Léogâne,

an area west of Port au Prince that was the epicenter of the 2010 earthquake, and which remains devastated. Both transfers take effect August 1. Pere Wisnel has also announced his engagement, with plans to be married in December of this year. +



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rites- but starting with the First Sunday of Advent this year (December 2, 2012) the liturgy to be used will be the one approved by the Convention (rather than a specially-composed service in each case).

The Convention did address several other critical issues, including the budget, the Anglican Covenant, the nature of baptism and its requirement for admission to the Holy Communion, and the very structure and governance of the Episcopal Church. In each one, there was a high degree of consensus as the classic Anglican *via media* (middle way) prevailed in the various proposals. On baptism, however, the teaching was traditional and clear: Holy Baptism is the ancient and normative way into full, sacramental Christian life. A large majority of the House of Bishops rejected proposals that weakened the requirement of baptism prior to receiving communion, and the House of Deputies concurred. In this, I wholeheartedly agree. I am aware of places that make exceptions to this requirement and I quite understand what people are hoping for in allowing the communion of those not baptized. There are other ways to achieve hospitality and inclusion within a community of faith. Baptism is specifically a part of the Great Commission from Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20) and it remains primary in our discipleship of the risen Lord.

Another area of particular interest was the proposed Anglican Covenant. Because of its provisions for a legalistic process to enforce a kind of uniformity of doctrine and discipline throughout the worldwide Anglican Communion, the Covenant has been controversial in a number of our global Provinces (the Church of England, among others, rejected it). The Convention recognized that the Episcopal Church does not have a real consensus, and declined to take a position on the Covenant itself. Instead, we strongly reaffirmed our commitment to the Anglican Communion and our full participation in its mutual life and ministries. I have been clear that I am vigorously “pro-Communion.” Even so, I oppose the adoption of the Covenant in its present form because I believe that our worldwide fellowship of Churches must be chosen and not required and enforced. To me, this dynamic is at the heart of our very essence. We must be able to honor our faithful differences (many of them cultural and historical in nature) and learn to live together with them. To be sure, this is messy but I am convinced that it is a witness this polarized world desperately needs.

Our presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, paved the way through a brewing controversy regarding the Church’s budget by offering her own detailed pro-

posal, based on the Anglican Communion’s “Five Marks of Mission.” These points were developed by the Anglican Consultative Council (an international, representative body of the Communion) and are as follows: (1) To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom; (2) To teach, baptize and nurture new believers; (3) To respond to human need by loving service; (4) To seek to transform unjust structures of society; and (5) To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and renew the life of the earth. A very fine presentation of the final version of the proposed budget ensured a virtually unanimous vote in favor from the Convention. That in itself was highly indicative of how hard this General Convention worked to achieve broad consensus.

After the Convention adjourned, there appeared two op-ed pieces about our Episcopal Church, one in the Wall Street Journal and the other in the New York Times. Probably most of you have either read, read about or simply heard of these articles. They were both “opinion” pieces, the former chock-full of factual errors and shameless personal invective and the latter based on several unexpressed and very questionable assumptions about our Church and its witness. To me, the quite positive thing about these distressing articles is how strongly a broad range of persons (including conservatives who are usually critical of the Episcopal Church) refuted the writers’ opinions. I would hope that we agree that “opinion” articles, particularly those published in distinguished newspapers, should not be allowed to leave plain fact behind, let alone descend into mean-spirited personal attacks.

General Convention 2012 showed that the Episcopal Church is indeed vibrant and Spirit-filled. Although no one can say that “all is well” - in my view we have some major reality-checks to face - I, for one, came out of our gathering hopeful and encouraged. I also emerged prouder than ever of our Diocese of Virginia. We are strong and very much considered across the Church as a leading and faithful witness. I hope you were able to follow news and perspectives from the Convention in our unique publication, *Center Aisle*. That is a true gift to the Church at large, one that was appreciated by thousands over those long days.

Our great thanks must go to our hard-working deputation, diocesan staff and the several volunteers who were with us. If ever I’m in need of a reminder of the Church at its best I need only think of all of them. With blessings and prayers for all of you,

The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston  
Bishop of Virginia +

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of class and community building youth events. The pilgrimage was an opportunity to “live symbolically for a short time the way we mean to live all the time.” The young pilgrims in particular modeled for us, their adult leaders gratitude, enthusiasm, and receptivity.

During the 7th inning of a Mets game, the youth helped me write my sermon for July 8, and I’d like to share with you here some of their reflections

- “Shake off what is unimportant. You can survive with no AC.”<sup>22</sup> [We stayed in Brooklyn in a huge open room separated by gender and had no AC during the heat wave].
- “You can move on even after spending your money on stupid stuff like a \$4 cupcake.”
- “We had to find our own rest in the city that never sleeps.

Our guides kept us moving until 11:30 at night. Everything was worth doing, but it was too much.

We learned to slow down: some of us stayed behind in the Cathedral of St.



*Chudi Mbonu on a rock in Central park, by Jackson Cramer*

John the Divine to attend the noonday service on July 4th. Others of us napped and played cards for two hours in the

shade on a big rock in Central Park.

We watched street performers and learned from them. They were doing what they loved. They didn’t worry about people who got up and left in the middle of their act. They shrugged it off; they sang, danced, and did flips, for whoever was there.

In getting used to the subway, we learned that being polite does not always mean taking turns. It means getting on as fast as you can so that the people behind you can get on.

We learned about peace and quiet on the high line walk in the middle of the chaos of the city.

At Ellis Island we learned to be thankful for where we are. We learned that we have to have a focus—it’s not how fast you get to your destination, the main thing is the journey—how you get there.

That truth became especially clear during our service project. We volunteered with the Relief Bus and served people who were hungry. We heard a message beyond the one we saw on a billboard on the first day: “New York City: Tolerant of your beliefs, judgmental of your shoes.” A homeless volunteer, a native of Manhattan, confirmed that there is some truth in that billboard. He said, “Transients and people who have a lot do not mix. People who are not transient will move to another car if they see a homeless person on the subway. In New York, people are concerned with image. You do not want to associate yourself with people who do not dress right or have what you have.”

As he walked with us to hand out flyers about free food to people, he warned us we might be rejected: “Don’t take it personally. That’s New

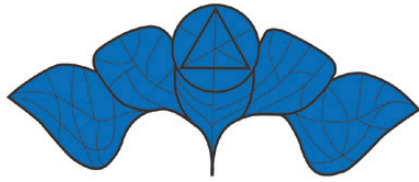
York. We’re naturally suspicious.” There was no bitterness in how he said this. He was matter-of-fact. The words from the gospel again came back to me, “Shake the dust off your feet and follow Jesus!” This homeless man had chosen to shake off rejection and join the journey. He’d originally come to the Relief Bus two years ago because he wanted something to eat, but he never left. He’s been volunteer-



ing four days every week because he likes what they are doing and wants to be part of it.

One woman I met put it best: We don’t just shake the dust off our feet and follow Jesus to harden our hearts against rejection. We keep your hearts and eyes open on this journey. She cautioned, “Be careful who you look at, who you’re looking down on if you want to see God’s face. You might miss Him. The person right around you might be your blessing. Sometimes we turn our blessings away. God comes to us in different ways—in a broken down man, in a little barefoot child, in this lady with no shoes. Stop looking for Jesus with long hair and blue eyes. He’s right here.”

We learned in New York City that we are all transients, all pilgrims on a journey. We are grateful to all of you, our St. Tim’s family for being on the journey with us and reminding us that we are not alone. +



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The Word is published monthly and emailed to members and friends on the first weekday of each month. It also appears on the website ([www.saint-timothys.org](http://www.saint-timothys.org)). If you wish to receive a copy by mail, please notify Keith Nelson Stroud in the church office ([keith@saint-timothys.org](mailto:keith@saint-timothys.org)). Copies of The Word are also available in the office.

### Submission deadline for the next issue: Friday, August 24, 2012

Questions, articles, or ideas, and comments for The Word are always welcome. Send materials via email to [wordeditor@saint-timothys.org](mailto:wordeditor@saint-timothys.org) and put "The Word" in the subject line. Photos are also welcome; please identify key people in photos. Articles or letters may be edited for brevity or appropriateness.

## Welcome, New Members

Welcome to these new members who have joined St. Timothy's in the past month:

*Amelia Marie Hunt*  
*Jace Thomas Wright*  
*Aiden Christian Gallardo*  
*Alexander Patrick Gallardo*  
*Veer Ramam Vadlamani*  
*Dave Mbonu*  
*Emilia Mbonu*  
*Christopher Michael Draper*  
*Daniel Robert Draper*  
*Brian David Horne*

To transfer your membership to St. Tim's, contact Nikki O'Malley ([nikki.omalley@gmail.com](mailto:nikki.omalley@gmail.com)) or fill out the Parishioner Information Form: [www.saint-timothys.org/uploads/docs/info-form.pdf](http://www.saint-timothys.org/uploads/docs/info-form.pdf)

## 2012 Vestry

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For appointments, please call  
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### Service Times

**Sundays**  
8:00 a.m.  
Eucharist, Rite I  
9:30 a.m.  
Eucharist, Rite II  
Godly Play, ages 3-9  
Nursery Care

11:00 a.m.  
Eucharist, Rite II  
Sunday School  
Godly Play, ages 3-9  
Nursery Care

**Wednesday**  
12:15 P.M.  
Eucharist and  
Healing Service

**Saturday**  
7:00 P.M.  
Latino Prayer Service