



# Good News

*A monthly publication from the Diocesan Office*

*January, 2012*

The Episcopal Diocese  
of Fort Worth

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Rt. Rev. C. Wallis Ohl, Bishop

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## *It's time for annual meetings!*

In the month of January, all congregations will be holding annual meetings. (It's in the diocesan canons – Canon 26.) Every congregation gets to add new members to the vestry, to elect delegates to diocesan convention, and to approve the budget for 2012. New vestry leaders will be named soon, as well, along with stewardship leaders for the coming year. So make sure your congregation gets off to good start.

- Jan. 20 & 21 – Why do we care about health insurance? - at Trinity FW, 6:30-8:30pm Friday and/or 10am-12:30pm Saturday. Toni Marie Sutliff from the Church Medical Trust will offer education and resources to assist congregations, which are mandated to provide health insurance to all clergy and lay employees (1500 hours per year or more) starting no later than Jan. 1, 2013. Vestry members, senior wardens, treasurers, finance chairs, administrators, clergy, and lay employees are especially urged to attend. Why would any of us care? Visit the Church Pension Group website to learn more.
- Feb. 18-19 – Stewardship in all seasons – Trinity FW, Friday, 6:30-8:30pm for wine

and cheese and a facilitated conversation; Saturday 10am – 3pm for theological grounding and practical how-tos for increasing your congregation's stewardship capabilities. Laurel Johnston, stewardship officer for The Episcopal Church, will offer training and strategies for the stewardship teams from congregations in the diocese. Congregations are encouraged to send vestry members, finance committee members, and stewardship leaders, to begin the work that will ensure future funding. Check out Laurel's webpage (<http://www.episcopalchurch.org/stewardship>) and see the new site for The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) (<http://www.tens.org/>).

- March 10 – Diocesan leadership workshop – St. Christopher FW, 10am – 3:30pm. A "must-attend" workshop for leaders in congregations – vestry members, wardens, treasurers, clergy, ministry heads – and those who want to be leaders. Bishop Wallis Ohl will serve as keynoter and will conduct special sessions for senior wardens.

### *Fort Worth Episcopalians will be turning out for the Day of Service*

Our bishop Wallis Ohl was impressed by the high energy generated by the November diocesan convention, the December executive council retreat and visioning work, and the December ordination to the priesthood of Amy Haynie. Now he's challenging us to get to work, teaming with the Tarrant Area Community of Churches, to join with TACC on Jan. 16 for their second annual Martin Luther King Day of Service on their website at . Take a team from your congregation. Get your T-shirts at this website: <http://www.cafepress.com/episcopaldioceseseffortworth>.

### *You're a leader—and one of your jobs is to make more*

I'm told by some of the folks who read Good News that they're a little shocked to read (in the header, above) that they're a diocesan leader. I'm reminded of one of the truisms of the Curillo movement: "If you're following Christ, you're leading somebody" That's one of the reasons it's so important for each of us to have a clear idea who we are, whose we are, where we're headed, and why we're going there. Each person's answers will be different, but all will touch on the idea that as a precious, unique child of God, each of us brings our God-given gifts, talents, and skills to partner with Christ in the work of making the world more loving and more just. Sometimes our ministries take shape in the context of congregation or diocese; more often, it's in the work we do every day.

Each and every leader in the diocese can – really, must – draw new leaders into the work of being the church. How? By listening to what people are passionate about, connecting them with other leaders in the diocese doing the same thing, and mentoring and encouraging the new leaders to undertake the work God is calling them to do, gathering support from the congregations.

At this moment, at the diocesan level, people with passion are needed to serve

- in finance, especially those with a finance, accounting, bookkeeping or legal background
- in Latino / Hispanic ministry
- in drafting diocesan policies
- in assessing and analyzing plans for church buildings.

In the congregations and beyond, there are many more opportunities.

Who do you know who is longing to serve? Please encourage her or him to consider whether God might be calling them to use their gifts in order to make a difference. And encourage him or her to reach out to the groups they want to work with. If you need more information, call or email me – Demi Prentiss, 817-921-4533, [demiديوfw@att.net](mailto:demiديوfw@att.net).

## *Reconciliation is our most important work*

Reconciliation is the work of every Christian. Each of us is called to work at being reconciled and being a reconciler, especially in our own congregations. Learning to do this work internally is essential if we are to be authentic instruments of reconciliation, especially post-litigation. How is that possible?

Here is an example from our own history: David Collins, chair of the Ministry Committee at the 1976 General Convention, addressed the House of Deputies before requesting five minutes of silent prayer to precede the vote on the ordination of women to priesthood and episcopate:

"Mr. President, brothers and sisters of the House, it is late, we are tired and hungry, our blood sugar is low, and we are impatient to vote. Our committee says to you, however, at this point, a unanimous word of reconciliation.

"You may know that reconciliation is not agreement. We will always disagree. Reconciliation is not a device to force people to accept something they don't agree with. It means loving and caring across the deepest and most conscientious convictions we have, and despite those differences, loving and caring....

"Our Lord gave us very few commands. He said, 'Get together, break some bread, love one another as I have loved you.' "

## *Calling all lawyers!*

Attorneys in the diocese are invited to organize, in order to share legal information and projects as a ministry to the diocese and to congregations. Email your contact information to [chancellor@episcopaldioceseforthworth.org](mailto:chancellor@episcopaldioceseforthworth.org).

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