



Greetings!

Our 119th Annual Council convened in Williamsburg February 11 & 12. Our theme this year was "Walking in liberty where Christ has made us free," a celebration of the Feast of Absalom Jones. The Rev. Milton C. Williams, rector of St. Monica & St. James in the Diocese of Washington, honored us as our guest preacher.

Along with the work of Council, two important programs were introduced. One is the New Wine project which gets under way in March with a series of regional conversations about our diocesan mission. The other program is our participation in the rebuilding of the Diocese of Haiti. Both are important to our life together as a diocese of The Episcopal Church. I hope I can count on your participation.

Faithfully, +Holly Hollerith

New Wine: A New Vision & Mission for Southern Virginia

"Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved." – Matthew 9:17

The parishes of Southern Virginia are a diverse group—urban and rural, small and large, contemporary and traditional. Together we are the Diocese of Southern Virginia. We are enriched, and at times challenged, by our differences. Yet we share a common mission and each of us brings particular, vital gifts to that mission.

The world is changing at an unprecedented pace and our diocese hasn't been immune to that change. Our diocesan mission statement, however, is one thing that hasn't changed. It was developed 18 years ago. It's time to take a look at our mission, to listen and talk about who we are and what we are called to do and to be. In 2009 we elected a new bishop to lead us into the future. The need for a clear and compelling mission and vision is more important now than ever.

The first step in this process is listening to the members of our parishes. The new vision and mission for our diocese must come from the diocese itself. All members of the diocese are invited to attend. The information gathered at the meetings will be reported back once all the meetings are complete and will be the material from which our new mission will be developed.

March 12, 2011

Emmanuel, Virginia Beach – 9 a.m. to noon
Holy Trinity, Onancock – 1 to 4 p.m.

March 19, 2011

St. Christopher's, Portsmouth – 9 a.m. to noon
St. Stephen's, Newport News – 1 to 4 p.m.

April 9, 2011

St. John's, Chester – 9 a.m. to noon
Trinity, South Boston – 1 to 4 p.m.

Rebuild Our Church in Haiti

January 12th was the one year anniversary of the devastating earthquake that destroyed Haiti. It was also the kickoff date for an international, church-wide fundraising campaign, *Rebuild our Church in Haiti*. The Diocese of Haiti is the largest in the Episcopal Church. In just 35 seconds, the January 12, 2010 earthquake leveled the churches and diocesan facilities, including Holy Trinity Cathedral in the capital city Port-au-Prince.

There are many governmental and humanitarian agencies, including Episcopal Relief & Development, helping to rebuild housing, health care, and schools, but only we can rebuild our churches. *Rebuild our Church in Haiti* is the first step toward rebuilding the Diocese of Haiti. It is an international, church-wide fundraising campaign.



Barbara Byers (Good Shepherd, Norfolk) will lead our diocese's participation in this important project as diocesan coordinator and will be assisted by convocational and parish coordinators. This is a simple, grass roots appeal, designed to run for 12 weeks beginning Sunday, March 6. Your parish coordinator will bring you details about how you can participate in the campaign.

Meanwhile, you can learn more about the campaign at www.episcopalchurch.org/HaitiAppeal. Our diocese's participation in this process will be vital to the success of the project and, more importantly, to the people of Haiti.

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