



October 2, 2008

Lay Edition

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## A Message from the Bishop

### Cain and Abel and Our Upcoming Clergy Conference

When I was thinking about our upcoming clergy conference my mind for some reason went to the story of Cain and Abel. But not for the reason you may be thinking.

I sat down this morning and just read Genesis 1-4, the making of creation through the marking of Cain. In the Cain and Abel story I was struck by how the Hebrew writer laid the ecstasy and hopefulness of birth side by side with the irrationality of jealousy, the madness of murder and the dreadfulness of revelation that tells family secrets.

“Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Where is Abel your brother?’ He said, ‘I do not know; am I my brother’s keeper?’ And the Lord said, ‘What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground.’” (Gen. 4:9-10)

Archbishop Tutu use to say, “I may or may not be my brothers keeper, but I am my brother’s brother. I am my sister’s sister.” That’s not just a nice thought, it may be the difference between the life and death of the social order and the creation itself. And the work of making that truth real by drawing us closer into communion with God and each other is greatly what it means to follow in the footsteps of Jesus of Nazareth who declared his work this way “I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” (John 12:32)

When we gather for our clergy conference on Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup> with Dr. Valerie Batts, this is the goal toward which we strive. To get there we must engage the spiritual and social powers and principalities that will block and seek to thwart this work of reconciliation. Hence our engagement with the dynamic reality of racism as an entry point to all that block and disorders human community that God intends.

To make the face of the Episcopal Church in North Carolina truly reflective of the face of the peoples of North Carolina in all of our God given variety and diversity is an ecclesial goal with profound social consequences. For if Dr. King was right, as I believe he was, this work is the essential work not just of the church, but of our global community. “We shall either learn to live together as brothers and sisters, or we will perish together as fools. The choice is ours, chaos or community.”

That is the high calling of those who would be disciples of the Lord Jesus, daring to follow in the footsteps of the One whose blood, “speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel” (Hebrews 12:24).

Keep the faith,  
+Michael

# OTHER THINGS OF NOTE

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- [Meeting Dates for Diocesan Council and Standing Committee](#)

## 2008 MEETING SCHEDULE

### Standing Committee Meetings

Monday, October 20, 2008 10:00 a.m. Diocesan House, Raleigh

### Diocesan Council Meetings

Thursday, October 16, 2008 10:00 a.m. Diocesan House, Raleigh

## Upcoming Events

- **Thinking Like a Leader**

**October 4, 2008 • St. Anne's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, NC**

Real leadership: Making it Work in Your Congregation. A Seminar/Workshop for Rectors and Lay Leaders  
Sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. For more information and registration, contact  
Bill Wrenn, (919) 834-7474, ext 233, or e-mail [bill.wrenn@episdionc.org](mailto:bill.wrenn@episdionc.org)

- **Duke University's LGBT Center hosts The Rev. Gene Robinson, Diocese of New Hampshire**

**October 6 – 7, 2008 • Duke Chapel, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina**

Contact Chris Helne (919) 684-3567, The Rev. Sarah Ball-Damberg (919) 2876-0624, The Rev. Dr. Jo Bailey Wells  
(919) 660-3576

- **Kingdom Season Retreat**

**October 17 – 19, 2008 • St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, NC**

A weekend retreat celebrating the Kingdom Season. St. Michael's will host the retired Suffragan Bishop of Toronto.  
The Rt. Rev. Michael Bedford Jones, a fourth generation Anglican priest will spend the weekend exploring the  
Eucharistic Scriptural readings for the Sundays in November, including All Saint's Day and the feast of the King.

To make reservations to attend, contact the Rev. Holly M. Gloff (919) 782-0731 or email [gloff@holymichael.org](mailto:gloff@holymichael.org).

- **Doing Theology: DVDs for Parish Study**

**October 25, 2008 • St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Greensboro, NC**

A facilitator's training workshop sponsored by the NC Diocese School of Ministry. Aimed at equipping attendees to lead Adult forum or study about the Theology of Partnership, or the Kingdom of God. RSVP to [Shelley.kappauf@episdionc.org](mailto:Shelley.kappauf@episdionc.org)

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