

The DIOCESE



Photo by Mary W. Cox

“BE LIGHT”

At the close of Trinity Cathedral’s “Awakening” service, Fr. James Reho anoints his wife, Carlanne Scali Reho, who assisted with the music for the service. At left are Billy Mitchum, who led the chanting, and Deacon Charles Cannon.

Parishes reach out to “secular community” with non-traditional worship

By Mary W. Cox, editor

Worshippers sit on cushions around a low table lit with candles in the chancel of Trinity Cathedral, Miami, chanting “Kyrie eleison” to music with a Middle Eastern flavor.

Families, pets and passers-by gather on the grass around a patio at St. Christopher’s, Key Biscayne, while the band—with the rector on guitar—rocks, and pre-schoolers pound on drums or dance on the church lawn.

This is not Sunday morning. This is not Rite II. These are two of the varied Sunday evening worship experiences that churches in our diocese are offering, not only for their members, but also very specifically for their neighbors who might not be attracted by traditional Sunday morning church.

Trinity Cathedral’s “Awakening: A Kirtan Mass” on Mar.15 was the first in a regular series of services that will be held the first and third Sunday evenings of the month at 6 p.m.

Fr. James Reho, Trinity’s assistant, developed and led the service, which followed the rubrics for a “Rite III” Eucharist and included texts written by Reho and approved by Bishop Leo Frade.

In notes about the service provided for worshippers, Reho explained that many people in today’s society have grown up with no religious training. Such persons will not be likely to come to the Gospel through “grand and formal liturgies,” so Awakening offers a more intimate environment that allows an experience of God without formal training or explanation.

The Awakening service is based upon traditions of the early Church, with worshippers gathered close to a low table used as an altar, as they would have been in the first years of Christianity, when the Eucharist was celebrated in homes.

The music used is kirtan, a style of call-and-response chanting accompanied by instruments such as harmonium and hand drum. Based on Middle Eastern and Indian music, kirtan is an ancient form of music

that is probably close to styles of singing used by the early Church; it’s a form that has become known in this country through increasing interest in “world” music.

At the Eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, cheese, olives and grapes are blessed (but not consecrated) for an agape meal—a time of fellowship following the service.

The service closed with each person anointing another with holy

oil, saying “Christ is Light. You are Light. Be Light for the world.”

About 75 people participated in the first Awakening service, at least half of them persons who are not members of Trinity.

A visitor from Puerto Rico who had attended the cathedral’s 10 o’clock service that morning and returned for Awakening out of curiosity was delighted: “I loved it!”

Joe Cummings, a member of the Cathedral Chapter, said, “I’m looking forward to them doing this again.”

Cathedral Chapter member Chris Cooper said that he’d heard one worshiper say, “I’ve never met this Jesus before. This is the Jesus I’ve been looking for.”

Awakening services will be held on May 3, May 17, June 7, June 21, July 5, July 19 and subsequent first and third Sundays at 6 p.m.

On alternate Sunday evenings the cathedral offers a service of Choral Evensong at 5 p.m. Dean Doug McCaleb reflected, “I can’t wait for the first time someone gets the schedule mixed up...’But this doesn’t sound like Choral Evensong...”

The ¡Celebration! service at St. Christopher’s-by-the-Sea is held on the third Sunday of the month at 5 p.m. So far, it’s been held outdoors, on the church’s patio and in the surrounding garden, but the rainy season may change the venue.

Geared toward young families, the 45-minute service is followed by a pizza supper in the parish hall. Worshippers are asked to bring blankets or lawn chairs and are invited to “come as you are—God doesn’t care what you wear.”

The caption on the parish website with the photos from the first ¡Celebration! service describes it as “focused, music-driven, with a message.”

“We use Evening Prayer... and it’s very tightly connected with the music,” said Fr. Burt Froehlich, St. Christopher’s rector.

The parish promoted the new service with ads in the local newspaper and posters around the community. The first ¡Celebration! on Feb. 15 attracted 36 people, including, said Senior Warden Joanna Wragg, “some bicyclists who poked their heads around the hedge when they heard the music.”

“This was a really nice thing for young families



Photo by Cathy Balestra

“MUSIC-DRIVEN”

Young worshippers at the ¡Celebration! service at St. Christopher’s-by-the-Sea, Key Biscayne, participate in making the music that’s at the heart of the worship experience.

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FOURTEEN CONGREGATIONS TARDY IN SUBMITTING REPORTS

In Canon XV, section 1, of the Canons of the Diocese of Southeast Florida, each congregation is required to submit “an accurate statement of affairs of the congregation”—the Parochial Report—by Jan. 31.

These reports are now submitted online at <http://pr1.dfms.org>.

As of Mar. 30, 14 congregations had not yet submitted a Parochial Report for 2008. The diocesan budget committee is unable to prepare an accurate estimate of next year’s income with nearly 20% of the 2008 year-end reports from congregations still missing.

The list below shows the congregations with Parochial Reports outstanding as of Mar. 30. Rectors and wardens are urged to contact the Diocesan Office if parish records do not agree with the information shown here, or if there are any other questions. ■

2008 PAROCHIAL REPORTS NOT RECEIVED

- St. Christopher's, West Palm Beach
- Chapel of St. Andrew, Boca Raton
- All Saints, Fort Lauderdale
- Atonement, Lauderdale Lakes
- Intercession, Ft Lauderdale
- St. Andrew's, Hollywood
- St. Philip's, Pompano
- Resurrection, Miami
- San Francisco de Asis, Miami Lakes
- St. Kevin's, Opa-locka
- Transfiguration, Opa-locka
- Trinity Cathedral, Miami
- St. Thomas, Coral Gables
- St. Peter's, Key West

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that hate to be separated from their pre-schoolers for worship or, alternatively, forced to shush them in church,” Wragg continued. “The little guys were dancing [and] banging on drums in praise of the Lord. It was just a delight!”

The second ¡Celebration! service, on Mar. 15, featured music by the Christian rock band 40 Days, and had 45 people attending. Worshipers were mostly young families, Wragg said, but there were “one middle-aged couple who showed up because of the notice in the paper, and a three-generation family that was out for a walk, heard the music and wandered on in!”

“This has the capacity to become a significant service,” said Froehlich. “I feel it’s important for us to connect with the secular community at a place where they feel safe.” ■



Photo by Mary W. Cox

THANKING A DEACON

Deacon “Andy” Taylor accepts some praise from retired Bishop Calvin O. Schofield, Jr., who ordained him.

Cathedral gives “Deacon Andy” a Mardi Gras send-off

By Mary W. Cox, editor

Trinity Cathedral’s Mardi Gras celebration this year was not just about pancakes and beads and king cake.

At its traditional pancake supper on Feb. 24 the cathedral also celebrated the ministry of Deacon Charles “Andy” Taylor, who has retired from fulltime diaconal ministry after serving as a deacon in three Miami-Dade congregations—his home parish, St. Stephen’s, Coconut Grove; Resurrection, Biscayne Park; and since 2002, Trinity—and as a chaplain at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami.

Taylor was ordained to the diaconate on Apr. 17, 1991. An experienced journalist, he was serving at that time as diocesan communications officer and editor of *The Net*, a position he held until his retirement from the diocesan staff in the summer of 1995. (He still contributes occasionally to diocesan communications—there’s a story with his byline on p. 15.)

But the ministry that the cathedral honored on Mardi Gras was his outreach to the poor and neglected, working with the cathedral’s feeding program and giving Trinity’s homeless neighbors a sense of self-worth.

“If there was ever someone who had a deacon’s

heart, it is Andy Taylor,” cathedral Dean Douglas McCaleb told Trinity’s members and guests at the celebration. “He has given himself to those on the margins...in countless ways.”

Retired Bishop Calvin O. Schofield, Jr., who ordained Taylor, agreed with that description, saying that Taylor’s whole ministry has been about Jesus’ mandate in Matthew 25 to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and minister to those who are sick or imprisoned.

“The diaconate is the heart and soul of the ministry of the Church,” Schofield said. “Andy represents for me the mind of Christ.”

He thanked Taylor for “what you have done in the church and in the community.”

On behalf of the Cathedral Chapter, the dean presented Taylor and his wife, Johnnie, with tickets for the Clergy and Clergy Spouses’ Cruise the week after Easter, and urged Johnnie to “make him go!”

Acknowledging the tributes, Taylor said, “the thing that has meant most to me is people—the people that have been in my life.”

No one ever completely retires from the diaconate, so he will continue to do some weekday deacon’s masses at Trinity and at St. Stephen’s, and “will be available when needed at the cathedral.” ■

Obituary

BYRON ENGSLOW, MEMBER OF PROPERTY AND LOAN COMMITTEE

John Byron Engslow, who served for five years as a member of the diocesan Property and Loan Committee, died Feb. 18 at his home in Ft. Lauderdale. He was 76 and had been in declining health since suffering a stroke last spring.

Engslow, with his wife, Joan, was an active member of St. Martin’s, Pompano Beach, where he had served on the vestry. He was active in both local outreach ministries and overseas mission trips.

He is survived by Joan, their two children, four children from a previous marriage, eleven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The family has asked that memorial donations go to Our Little Roses Ministries, Box 464, Somerset VA 22972. ■



Engslow



Bishop's Spring Conference

Being vital churches in a changing world

By Mary W. Cox, editor

Diana Butler Bass is the author of six books on religion and culture, but she told participants at the Bishop's Spring Conference, Mar. 13-14 at the Duncan Center, "I'm not actually here to fix anything...I have no ten steps or 40 days to anything...I'm just a Christian and a scholar, and a person who's trying to make sense of this life journey we're all on."

She began her presentation by citing a survey released Mar. 9 by Trinity College in Hartford, Conn., that shows a decline of 13 percent since 1990 in the number of Americans who identify themselves as Christian. Fifteen percent of the population now consider themselves atheist, agnostic or "spiritual, but not religious."

The survey, she said, gives "a picture of a country that is in a state of religious change."

These changes are not just affecting the Episcopal Church, she said; all mainline Protestant denominations, as well as Roman Catholics—and even evangelicals—are facing declining membership in a society that is no longer a "culture of inheritance." Religious affiliation is no longer determined by the faith of parents and grandparents, but is, like so many aspects of our lives in a consumer society, a matter of "negotiation"—individual

choice.

We've been the "village church," she said, "but the village doesn't exist anymore." Our "villages" now include the global village and the "virtual villages" in which people connect on the internet.

Cultures are always changing, she said, and the question that always faces Christians is "how does the gospel live, in community, through successive cultures, over time?"

The question we need to ask now is, "How do we need to be transformed, how do we need to change, as the culture around us changes, in order for the things that we love, the Episcopal and Anglican vision of faith, to survive—and not just to survive, but to thrive?"

Our children and grandchildren will live in a completely different world, she continued, and our job is "to build bridges to the future."

During the rest of her presentations, Butler Bass told the stories of her own faith journey and of the 50 "incredibly diverse," spiritually vibrant, mainline congregations that were part of a three-year study that was the source of her book, *Christianity for the Rest of Us*.

In the study, Butler Bass sought to discover if there were a common pattern to what made these diverse churches vital, transformative Christian communities. It wasn't a question of size; the smallest congregation in the study had 35 members and the largest, 3,500.

"There's no moral or spiritual quality to 'big,'" said Butler Bass. "It just means you have a lot of bodies in the building."

Instead, the markers of vitality that she and her team considered were: authenticity (Do the congregation's spiritual practices grow out of their common life?); coherence (Does the congregation practice what it preaches?); and transformation (Does being part of this congregation make people different?)

What Butler Bass and her team discovered was that the vital, vibrant congregations were characterized by intentionality in three interconnected areas—practice, tradition and wisdom.

She offered this definition of practices: "The things that Christian people do that meet fundamental human needs



Photo by Mary W. Cox

JOYFUL START

Members of the New Spirit Gospel Choir from St. Matthew's, Delray Beach, began the second day of the Bishop's Spring Conference with joyful music. Left to right are: Yolanda Spells, Sheila Ivy, Renora Bridgett, Ethel Godfrey and Michelle Spells. Sharing the rich heritage of Anglican and African-American singing has been a tradition at St. Matthew's for many years. See and hear videos of the choir at <http://www.youtube.com/diosefvid>, and see p. 2 for more about the group.

for the sake of God's reign in the world."

Practices, she said, are not simply programs; they may involve programs but are a deeper part of the life of the congregation. "Clergy and church leaders are always looking for a program that's going to fix everything...but ultimately, the congregation has to experience metanoia."

Three key practices that were engaged by many of the congregations in the study were theological reflection,

hospitality and embracing diversity.

Tradition, she said, is an intentional engagement with history and the wisdom of the past. She noted that people choose their traditions, those parts of the past that are meaningful to them as they move into the future, and "as new people choose a tradition, the tradition itself changes."

Wisdom is more about questions

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DISASTER PLANNING, RESPONSE PROGRAM IS NOW ONLINE

In March 2007, 31 congregations in our diocese participated in day-long pilot workshops for a web-based program of disaster planning and response called Riskeeper, offered by Church Insurance Company of Vermont and Church Restoration Group.

After two years of upgrades and refinement, based in part on input from our participating congregations, the program has now been released online and will be available free to all churches that are clients of Church Insurance.

In Southeast Florida the Riskeeper program will be offered in stages: first, to churches that participated in the pilot workshops; second, to congregations that responded to the initial announcement of the pilot program, but were unable to participate; and finally to all congregations insured through Church Insurance of Vermont.

The program allows a congregation to enter essential data—disaster plans,

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