



Vergers' Guild of the Episcopal Church

Monthly E-Newsletter



Service through Worship, Worship through Service

Sep-Oct 2006
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The ministry of vergers is growing rapidly in the Diocese of Texas. Since the June 2006 meeting, when we elected the current officers, there have been seven new vergers trained at one church, inquiries from other churches about training and membership, and one inquiry about the availability of a verger's manual, much like an altar guild or acolyte manual.

In their first three months in office the new Executive Board has been incredibly busy. We have updated the web site (www.texasvergers.org), which is also posted on the Diocese of Texas web site (www.epicenter.org). A brand new brochure about our chapter is now available, and will be posted soon on the web site. Thanks to our Communications Chair, an e-newsletter is emailed each month, with copies available on our web site.

The annual March seminar will be hosted for the first time outside of Houston, at Grace Episcopal Church in Georgetown near Austin, on Saturday, March 10, 2007. The seminar will include a choral evensong the Friday night before, speakers from Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest (ETSS) will be chatting with us about liturgy, and the students from ETSS will be invited to attend the seminar.

In the works: a brochure on the training programs that the Chapter offers; appointing trainers in the Houston, Austin, Tyler areas to support our Training Officer to Churches; having chaplains for each area of the diocese; updating the bylaws; regularly posting information and invitations to the dioceses within Province VII and having booths at ECW and Diocesan Council in Austin in February 2007. We have also been in touch with Katrina Packard, who is the new Diocesan Altar Guild Directress. At her invitation we will have a booth at the DAG retreat in March 2007, and we will be involved with her in planning several joint retreats between the DAG and Mace Chapter Vergers in 2008.

Our Training Officer to Churches, Ron Robertson, was very seriously hurt in an airplane accident in early August. Joe Sturdevant, a past president of the Chapter, graciously stepped in for Ron, to take on the training schedule already in progress. Joe is our Interim Training Coordinator, so please direct questions about training to him. Ask him about the training at St. John's/La Porte -- there is a neat story about the training there.

Having an Executive Board is new to our Chapter. Our Executive Board includes the new officers and three others: Joe Sturdevant, Good Shepherd/Tomball; Bid Drake, St James' the Apostle/Conroe; and Anna Goza, St. Christopher's/Houston. They have been very active with the Chapter in the past, serving either as officers or organizers of the Chapter, and provide a sort of "corporate memory" and advisory committee for our Chapter. The officers are Gary Burnhauser, Good Shepherd/Tomball, vice president; Pat Shepherd, St. Mark's/Houston, secretary/treasurer; Bob Bliss, Grace/Georgetown, communications; Ron Robertson, Emmanuel/Houston, Training Officer to Churches; and Peggy Metcalf, St. Mark's/Houston, president.

New Brochure

You can download the new official Walter Mace Chapter Verger brochure from our texasvergers.org web site. Just go to the Resources page and you will find it in a .pdf format.

September Quarterly Meeting

Feasting on a gourmet lunch, good fellowship, and a lively meeting and a great presentation entitled “Planning a Graceful Exit.” Members from Houston, The Woodlands, Tomball, and as far away as Baytown attended the quarterly meeting at Good Shepherd/Tomball. Those of you who were unable to attend missed quite a meeting.

Bid Drake made a presentation on planning your own funeral. She had lovingly prepared an updated manual, based on the Diocese of Texas’ “Making a Graceful Exit”, and Mark and Anna Goza provided CDs that contained the material so that it could be used locally.

“We get baptized, married, confirmed in the Church.” Bid said, “but your funeral is the only occasion where you can truly plan your own liturgy, right down to specifying all of the participants.”

The booklet and the CD contain, in addition to materials for planning your funeral, sample medical directives and durable powers of attorney, acceptable in the state of Texas. The CD allows for easy modification of the materials, to make the booklet local to your church, and both CD and booklet are handy in that they collect in one space all the items and suggestions that you need to know, need to pass on to your family.

Bid Drake, whom you all know as our expert on needlepoint kneelers, is available to make a formal presentation to your church groups. Her email address is

bdrak2939@consolidated.net .



The business meeting was lively. The Chapter formally adopted its own shield, for use on its newsletters, brochures, and letterheads. A brochure about the Chapter has been completed, and will soon be posted on the website. 2007 will be the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Chapter, so rather than having a December social, we will be planning a celebration in 2007. Plans were discussed for a meeting in January, exact date to be announced later. At this meeting a rabbi at a local Houston Jewish congregation will discuss the liturgy at a Jewish service, and how their prayers/liturgy have influenced our own liturgy and prayer books. The March 2007 seminar is well on its way, with plans to have two ETSS professors be speakers on liturgy, and ETSS students be invited to attend. Tentative plans are in the works to have a choral evensong the night before.

We are planning to have a booth at Diocesan Council in 2007, and will share a booth at ECW in October. Three of our members are attending the national meeting in November, and they are presenting our report, handing out our brochure, and reporting on our own Ron Robertson and Jerry Christopher’s health. Two of our vergers will represent us at the ordination of Dena Harrison on October 7.

Next Month In the E-Newsletter

The Consecration of Bishop Dena Harrison was held on October 7, 2006 at Camp Allen. Two members of the Mace Chapter were asked to be Vergers at the ceremony. Insights into producing the ceremony will be discussed. If you are interested in purchasing a video of the ceremony you can go to the Diocesan web site and purchase a DVD for \$15.

Verger’s Cruise

The VGEC annual meeting will be taking place aboard ship in November. If you are going to attend please remember your Chapter E-Newsletter. Take plenty of notes and pictures. Those of us who cannot attend this year’s conference would like to hear everything that happened. The 2007 annual VGEC meeting will be held in Albuquerque, NM. Start making your plans to attend.

Quarterly Meeting

Our next Quarterly meeting will be held in January. Please stay tuned for the time and place.

HELPPPP!!!

The Mace Chapter VGEC is considering having booths at various events over the next six months. These include the October clergy conference, ECW meeting at Camp Allen in October, and Diocesan Council in Austin, February 2006. If you can help the chapter, and our ministry, at any of these meetings, please contact, please contact Peggy Metcalf at mlf1943@yahoo.com. We have the materials, we just need the spokespersons.

The Monthly E-Newsletter

You have now seen the monthly E-Newsletter. What can you expect from the newsletter? What you can expect are articles on what we do as vergers, what we do as Lay Ministers and perhaps what we should be training to do. You will also find stories of interest submitted by our chapter members and from other Chapters of the Vergers' Guild of the Episcopal Church. What you will not find are discussions on either church politics or politics as a whole. If you have materials that you would like to submit please send them to Bob Bliss at: vergers@graceepis.org.

Calendar Events of Interest to Vergers

November 7, 2006

Ordination of The Rt. Rev. Jefferts-Schori, Bishop of the Diocese of Nevada as the 26th Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church

December 2006

Mace Chapter social gathering, place and time to be announced

January 2007

Quarterly Meeting/Mace Chapter Time and place to be announced

February 9-10, 2007

Diocesan Council, Austin, Texas Host church is St. David's, Austin

March 5-7, 2007

Diocesan Altar Guild Retreat, Camp Allen

March 10, 2007

5th Annual Mace Chapter Seminar, Grace Episcopal Church/ Georgetown

February 2008 Diocesan Council, Galveston, Texas

Officers

President

Margaret Metcalf - St. Mark's – Houston — mlfm1943@yahoo.com

Vice-President

Gary Burnhauser - Good Shepherd - Tomball — maesgrampy@sbcglobal.net

Secretary/Treasurer

Patricia Shepherd - St. Mark's – Houston — patannds@hotmail.com

Training Officer

Ron Robertson – Emmanuel – Houston — v224296@aol.com

Joe Sturdevant Interim Training Officer — sturdev@swbell.net

Communications

Bob Bliss - Grace - Georgetown — vergers@graceepis.org

Helpful Links

Vergers' Guild of the Episcopal Church: www.vergers.org

Church of England Guild of Vergers: CEGV

The Hunger Site: www.thehungersite.com

Episcopal Church USA: www.episcopalchurch.org

Episcopal News Service (ENS): www.episcopalchurch.org/ENS/

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD): www.er-d.org

Episcopal Diocese of Texas: www.epicenter.org

"Being Episcopalians": <http://www.epicenter.org/edot/Beliefs.asp?SnID=1719867338>

Forward Movement Reading of the Day: <http://www.forwardmovement.org/todaysreading.cfm>

Finally...

"Invite a Friend to Church"--Share the good news of Jesus Christ with others and invite them to "come and see."

Contact Information

Please address all communication to the following address:

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