

September 2008

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THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST TEXAS, WORLD MISSIONS

Where in the world are we going?

Finding My Mission

I have taught school for the last 25 years. In the spring of 2001, I decided that I wanted to learn something new. I signed up to take a beginning Spanish class for one night a week, and I gave myself permission to quit if I didn't like it. I loved it and continued to take more classes. After two years, I was beginning to wonder what I would do with this new language, and by the spring of 2003, the language study was becoming a passion. I began to pray for a way to use Spanish as part of a mission. I not only wanted to serve, but to serve in two languages.

I retired from the public school system in December '03 and started teaching adults ESL. As I prayed and searched for "my mission," the passion became stronger until the spring of '08 when I read an article in the *Church News* about Vacation Bible School being held in July at the church of El Buen Pastor in Piedras Negras, Mexico. I emailed Betty Chumney to get more information. Two weeks later I got a call from Bobby Hausser who has been doing mission work at El Buen Pastor for several years. I explained that I wanted to serve in two languages and that I wanted to teach ESL. He told me that I should talk with Marielena who heads an ESL program in Eagle Pass. Great! I could plug into that!

We went to Piedras Negras in early May, and I found out that there was no ESL program serving this parish. I realized that after 5 years of praying, I had found my mission. *I was to be the program.* Create it, teach it. I felt great peace and deep gratitude for this answered prayer. My teaching career plus a simple desire to learn something new led me to a passion that resulted in serving those who do not have the resources to pay for a class on their own. It was 7 years from the time I walked into a class to learn until I walked into El Buen Pastor to teach. I am now teaching classes once a month for the school year of '08-'09.

I welcome anyone who is interested in joining me in this teaching ministry. by Sally Weismann

Mark your calendars for the ARTS FESTIVAL & MARKETPLACE, Saturday, October 18. Over 30 artists from around the diocese will feature their jewelry, oils, cards, enamels, prints, ceramics, watercolors, metal works, glass, weavings, sculptures and more. The event is at the Bishop Jones Center at 111 Torcido Rd. in San Antonio and is from 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Admission is FREE and proceeds will support World Mission initiatives of the diocese.

The Bishop Elliott Society: The Fall 2008 Bishop Elliott Lectures
The Rt. Rev. Gary R. Lillibridge, D.D.



Bishop, The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas

Member, Windsor Continuation Group

addressing the theme

“Hard-pressed Jars of Clay”

Bishop Lillibridge will speak on the Lambeth Conference and life in the Anglican Communion drawing on images in 2 Corinthians 4:7-8 and other passages, including 2 Cor. 6:4-10.

Friday October 24—5:00 - 9:00 PM

Registration, Worship, Supper,

Preliminary Address by The Rev. Walter Prehn III, Ph.D. on

“The Lambeth Conferences: Historical Background”

Saturday October 25—8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Breakfast, Addresses & Q&A with Bishop Lillibridge

at

St. Luke’s Episcopal Church

11 Saint Luke’s Lane

San Antonio, Texas 78209

Registration: \$30.00 before October 10 (including meals). After October 10: \$35.00.

Bishop Elliott Society Associates attend at no further cost but must register beforehand.

e-mail inquiries to: Bpelliottsociety@aol.com

What if we went out of business? from Patrick Gahan

Would anyone care? That's the question we asked ourselves, and it hurt a little.

It all started when a group of pastors in the Wimberley Valley agreed to read The Externally Focused Church, by Rick Rusaw and Eric Swanson. The idea was to read the book and then discuss it at our monthly Ministerial Alliance gathering. I was reading through the text, marking various passages, and noting good ideas when I came upon this challenge: "Would your community care if your church went out of business?"

In truth, the Saint Stephen's fellowship would care. Our parish day school community would care. But I doubt the people of Wimberley, Kyle, and South Austin would bat an eye. I first challenged the parish staff, then the Vestry, and finally the congregation with the biting question. The entire leadership agreed that we needed to do business a different way, a way that more clearly follows the ministry of Jesus as illustrated in the New Testament.

First, as The Externally Focused Church advises, we decided to start extending ministry to those who could neither thank us nor do anything to benefit the parish. Second, we determined to become more intentional about our missionary work. Third, we knew it was time to take an honest inventory of the missionary outreach we were already providing.

Regarding the first, we admitted that our outreach could not always serve our parish development. Jesus calls us to serve others not expecting any gain. So, when we were asked to join other Wimberley churches in an effort to make repairs and enhancements to our public schools one Sunday – we jumped on the wagon. On that day, hailed as the *Big Serve* by all of us, we held only our 8 AM worship. Bishop McArthur presided at the Eucharistic celebration and sent the parish out with Christ's blessing to spend the rest of the day working. The Saint Stephen's crew alone completed an estimated \$50,000 worth of unbudgeted repairs to the primary and secondary public schools. Remember, we have a day school of our own, but the intent of the *Big Serve* was to assist those who cannot necessarily promote the welfare of the parish.

Second, we decided to regularly schedule outreach and celebrate it. Thus, we have determined every seventh weekend will be a *Jubilee* in our parish. The Saturday of that weekend and perhaps during the entire week before, Saint Stephen's will offer an intergenerational opportunity to serve those who cannot pay us back. For instance, this coming Columbus Day weekend, we are sending a clean-up and repair team to Beaumont. Led by Youth Coordinator Tracy Maxwell, we will assist the elderly and the most needy with Hurricane Ike repairs. The next Sunday we will suspend Sunday School in order to offer a breakfast celebration, complete with a Power Point presentation capturing our team's work. In advance of the team going out, members of the parish will be invited to prepare supporting materials for the missionaries and those whom they will serve. In that way, everyone in the parish, regardless of age or mobility, plays a prominent role in the *Jubilee*.

Third, we did need to take an inventory of work we were already doing. Saint Stephen's, like many of our parishes, provides a complete Christmas each year for 75 or more families. Our *Saint Stephen's Santas* provides all the presents for the children, a complete holiday meal, and a generous gift certificate to those we serve. Additionally, our *Saint Stephen's Cares for Kids* effort provides medical care for those children in the Wimberley Valley who have limited or no health insurance. Finally, we send out both Junior High and Senior High Youth

teams – with able assistance from our adults – to spend a week or more serving those most under-served and at risk in our country. For the past two summers, our Senior High teens have served impoverished children at Indian Reservations in Oklahoma and Colorado, and our Junior High teens at the Good Samaritan Center in San Antonio.

The Saint Stephen's fellowship is excited about our future plans to serve. Spurred on by Don Lee and the Water Well ministry team of the diocese, we are hoping to field an intergenerational missionary team ourselves. In our own backyard, we are partnering with the Roman Catholic and Methodist churches in our area to serve the large population of Hispanic day laborers and their families in our community. We have aptly named ourselves *Amigos de Jesus*.

We know that we are just standing on the precipice of this missionary endeavor, but I really do think more and more folks “would miss us if we went out of business!”

Hands of Hope, Nebbi Branch

Helen Schnelzer shared a song that was written by the women of Nebbi who have benefited from the ministry of Hands of Hope. As their lovely tapestries are sold, the women pay school fees for their children, buy needed medicines, purchase seeds for their farms, and provide in numerous ways for their families. This song reflects their joy in a new-found freedom (as expressed in the Embroidery Club Constitution).

Our Constitution states that women and men should have equal rights

And that's why women today have been given the right to do the thing on their own;

Our visitors, what you are doing shows that really you care about us women.

May the Almighty Father reward you big for the great work you are doing with women here.

We can decide on what to do — following the Constitution

We can earn money on our own — following the Constitution

What you have done shows us that the love of God is truly with us through you.

Hu-u-u-u-u-u-u-oyeeeh.

We are no longer goal keepers—according to the Constitution

We can participate in Nation building—according to the Constitution

What you have done is the greatest achievement in the history of women in Uganda.

Hu-u-u-u-u-u-u-oyeeeh.

We can create designs on our clothes—using our imagination

We are nearing brighter future—using our imagination

For all you have done we women say thank you very much

And also you are welcome; you are welcome.

Hu-u-u-u-u-u-u-oyeeeh.

St. Luke's Hosts Mission Rally from Mike Humes

With the help of the St. Luke's (San Antonio) Missions Board and Outreach Board, great ideas and endless vigor proceeded. The Missions Board canvassed neighborhood businesses, favorite restaurants, and friends to donate items for a raffle with tickets priced between \$1.00-\$20.00 as suggested by Kathy Warmack. Raffle items included everything from original artwork, gift coupons, handmade purses, photographic sessions, and jewelry to ceramic piggy banks and other wonderful

prizes with more than 90 items donated. The top prize was a



week's stay (date to be chosen by winner) at Port Royal Condominiums (Port Aransas).

Jeremy Cooper contributed his cooking skills featuring a delicious barbecue lunch. More than \$3,000 was raised for projects such as the ministry at El Buen Pastor (Piedras Negras) headed by Bobby Hausser and the Trinity Dental Clinic (Liberia) run by Dr. Keith Chapman. Ministry presentations were running continuously on laptops at tables displaying raffle items around the St. Luke's School Gym. Everyone was very happy with the success of the affair.

Join the Fight Against Poverty on Five Talents Sunday – Nov. 16th

Lift villages out of crushing poverty, create jobs and transform lives in the world's poorest regions – by helping your church participate in “Five Talents Sunday” on Nov. 16. Go online now at www.FiveTalents.org or call us at (800) 670-6355 to see how your church can make a lasting difference in the lives of the poor – as Nov. 16 is the date that churches around the world preach on Christ's “Parable of the Five Talents” (Matthew 25:14-30). Join the nationwide discussion on how we can all fight poverty.

Sadly, almost half of the world now struggles for survival on less than \$2 a day. And, many of us despair at the enormity of this challenge. The poor have gifts and talents, and Christian microlending is proving to be a very effective way to lift one village at a time out of poverty. With small loans of just \$50, we're helping villagers with small businesses – like purchasing chickens to sell eggs. Our donations help, help, and help again as these small investments are repaid and loaned out again to others.

See how your church can provide a lasting hand up, instead of just a handout.

Receive the Five Talents Sunday Kit, which includes:

Sermon notes

Poster

Bulletin inserts

Children's activities

Sunday School lessons

Background information on Five Talents' spiritual and monetary investments

Creative suggestions on how all churches can participate

To receive your FREE Five Talents Sunday Kit, please call (800) 670-6355 or go online to www.FiveTalents.org.

Three Dollars Worth of Gospel, Please by D.A. Carson

I would like to buy about three dollars worth of gospel, please. Not too much— just enough to make me happy, but not so much that I get addicted. I don't want so much gospel that I learn to really hate covetousness and lust. I certainly don't want so much that I start to love my enemies, cherish self-denial, and contemplate missionary service in some alien culture. I want ecstasy, not repentance; I want transcendence, not transformation. I would like to be cherished by some nice, forgiving, broad-minded people, but I myself don't want to love those from different races— especially if they smell. I would like enough gospel to make my family secure and my children well behaved but not so much that I find my ambitions re-directed or my giving too greatly enlarged. I would like about three dollars worth of gospel, please.

HARRY CUNKEL, MISSIONARY TO ISRAEL, IS HAVING R & R IN DWTX. CALL MARTHE CURRY FOR MORE INFO (888-824-

690 million Christians today are active in world mission; 1,540 million Christians ignore it.
-Intl. Bulletin of Missionary Research, January 2008

Upcoming Mission Trips: Prayer List

September 28-October 2. MEXICO, PIEDRAS NEGRAS. Constructores Para Cristo. Gary Fuller, Chris & Wayne Godsey, Jack Horton, Julie Ogan, Larry Pirmantgen, Ed Prather, Gary Swearingner, Joe Tidwell—all from St. Helena's, Boerne—joined by Daniel Bellows, Manny De Los Santos, Gail & Paul Montessoro, Stephen Rupp, Rev. Stephen Sanders, Alfredo Seguro, Andrew Toy, Sara Wallace, and Frank Weis from Spring Creek Methodist, Boerne.

October 16-25. HONDURAS. Water Ministry. Drilling, Hygiene. Curt Mowen, Team Leader (210-493-5057, ccmowen@satx.rr.com). *Need team members (Spanish speakers would be helpful.) Please phone or write Don Lee if you are called to work on the team traveling to Honduras (210-219-8585/cell; 830-460-4656).*

November 10-13. ENGLAND. Vulnerable Children. DWTX partners Nicholas Mellor (of Baroness Cox's Humanitarian Aid Trust, HART), Galina Schulz (Hope for Homes), Frank Schulz (Voluntas, Intl.), Georgette Mulheir (Children's High Level Group), Maria Ternovskaya (Our Family Project), Kathy Ryan (Chernobyl Children's Project, Intl.), and Alexander Karankevich (UNICEF) will gather along with Marthe Curry in planning a series of conferences to share best practices and build networking groups with directors of orphanages and children's rehabilitation centers in the former Soviet Union.

November 14-... UGANDA. Women's Ministries. Debbie Gardner will be settling in at the Women's Centre for extended ministry. Marthe Curry will meet with directors of programs.

November 23-27. KENYA. Micro enterprise. Marthe Curry will join Global Mobilization Ministries (GMM) to conduct a conference addressing business planning and management issues for small business owners.