

## CANON MISSIONER

*Editor's note: Canon Brall's report was submitted prior to her accepting the position of Director of Field Education at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in October 2015.*

This year I've continued to focus on supporting the clergy and people of St. Barnabas, Brackenridge; St. James, Penn Hills; and St. Thomas, Canonsburg, in the pursuit of their mission and ministry. Each parish has differing needs and my role adjusts accordingly.

At St. Barnabas, I mentored Fr. Frank Yesko through his ordination to the priesthood in January 2015 and worked with the vestry on many details of parish life as this community grows spiritually and numerically. In Penn Hills, I have resourced the Rev. Eric McIntosh as he engages with issues of how the St. James worshipping community might best be introduced and encouraged to grow in the methods and ethos of Episcopal parish life. I helped connect St. James leadership with the New Visions Initiative program offered by the Black Ministries office of the Episcopal Church. St. Thomas in Canonsburg has experienced much transition this year with the January departure of their full-time Rector, Chuck Weiss, and the start of the half-time ministry for newly-ordained Deacon Wally LaLonde. I supervised Deacon Wally and supported the vestry as they began to rethink options for ministry over the long haul. Shortly before his priestly ordination, Wally accepted a call to full-time ministry in New Mexico and the parish learned he would leave in September. I am delighted the Bishop has asked me to serve as part-time clergy there for at least a year to help them process these transitions and find greater stability and hope.

A second focus has involved the Listening Committee visits to all our parishes. I attended all but five of these visits and found myself listening in particular for the many ways in which our parishes express their mission internally and beyond their walls. Visits to 35 parishes revealed that we have 236 unique missionary activities/events/programs that can be divided into ten General Categories (such as food or meal-based mission, children and youth mission, and music and arts-based mission). This list of mission projects is being prepared for wider distribution among our parishes and leadership. Some visits raised issues that required me to further engage with a parish to address a concern. Lastly, I reviewed the final parish reports to identify trends and opportunities that may be helpful to diocesan leadership.

This past fall I was privileged to lead a very capable and gifted team of fourteen women in a fun and successful diocesan-wide mission event, the Baby Shower for Jeremiah's Place, held at Calvary Church on January 10, 2015. Over 100 women attended and thoroughly enjoyed the fellowship. More than 85% of our parishes supported this event in some way and Jeremiah's Place received nearly \$11,000 worth of donations of much-needed items, gift cards and financial gifts. This event was designed to serve as a model from which other mission events could be planned and developed.

I participate in Commission on Ministry and Diocesan Council meetings, and have worked with the Budget and Assessment Working Group on the Mission Grant program for which several parishes have received grants. I bring a diocesan perspective to various other groups such as the Children's Ministry Team, the Calvary Camp Board, and Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. I'm also networking around other possible missional projects related to education and new church plants, at times with leaders from other Pittsburgh judicatories. Finally, I've been engaging clergy and lay leaders about Mary Parmer's *Invite, Welcome, Connect* workshop because I think she offers ideas to strengthen and grow our parishes.

With gratitude for the opportunities to serve Christ with you in mission,  
Canon Cathy Brall+