

The Dean of Trinity Cathedral Reflections to the 225th Annual Diocesan Convention

'Glory to God whose power is working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.'
Ephesians 3:20

My hope at the beginning of 2008 was for us as a congregation to move from survival to celebration. I believe we are slowly accomplishing this dream with lots of assistance not only from Cathedral members, but from Friends of Trinity Cathedral, and our Diocesan family.

Howard Hanchey author of *Survival to Celebration* says ***"contemporary Christian Church is strong on programs and issues and short on the celebration of God's ministry in the world. We can either celebrate the work of God in the world, truly good news or we can celebrate the work of the church in the world. Modern day Christians tend towards the latter and it is killing us."*** My Associates, the Wardens, Vestry, Cathedral organizations and members can report with some measure of satisfaction the accomplishments of 2008.

I want to thank God for them and for you and all the efforts being made to have us live into our new Vision and Mission statements. In May of 2008, I called on one of our new friends – the Rev. Dr. Hugh Brown, Rector of All Saints, Princeton, to lead our Vestry Retreat. His presentation and insights prepared us to enter into conversation with Cathedral members to lay the foundation for the creation of our new Vision and Mission statements.

We presented these to you in mid-September, and were very pleased to hear your input and after a little adjusting, we were quite pleased with the end product.

Our vision –

- A visible agent of God's love in Christ joyfully embracing all people.

Our mission -

- God is here; Jesus loves you. We are a welcoming, diverse community, sharing God's love, spreading the Gospel and caring for all people and God's creation. Come join us.

The Cathedral community is blessed by the support and coming together of our Diocesan family at Acolyte festivals, Absalom Jones Day celebrations, Clergy Days with our Bishop, Ministry Institute trainings, Golf and Community Day celebrations, to name a few of the opportunities where we can come together to do wonderful things with and for our Creator.

I am most appreciative of the support for Cathedral events by member congregations of the Diocese the 50/10/50 program put together by the Friends of Trinity Cathedral was extremely well supported and was one of the major fundraisers for 2008. I want to thank Deacon Frank Castellon and Ms. Clara Gregory for their leadership in this project. We are also grateful for the twenty-two congregations who participated in the 4th Annual Golf Outing and Community Day. Thanks to Chuck Perfater and his committee for their magnificent leadership of this event.

The post Lambeth Province 11 gathering held at the Cathedral, presented another excellent opportunity for persons from throughout our Diocese and communion to come together and share their experience at Lambeth 2008.

Pentecost 2008. We truly experienced God's spirit at work – the Rev. Dr. Georgia Cohen, and the Rev. Margo Simple were our celebrant and preacher respectively. Dr. Cohen was a previous member of the Chapter, and Rev. Simple was here for the funeral services of her grandmother Katherine Cooper – mother of Dr. Paul Cooper.

We were also pleased to host in 2008 the retirement honoring of the Rev. Dr. Peter Bridge. Peter's retirement from Samaritan Counseling Center provided us yet another opportunity to showcase the

beauty of our Cathedral. Join with me at this time in thanking the Associate clergy of the Cathedral – the Revs. Dr. Canon Noel Amadi, Dr. Peter Bridge, Dr. David Cooling, Dr. Howard Wood and Deacon Carol Gilbert for their yeoman service.

In 2009 the Rev. Dr. David Cooling and Dr. Phil Lewis will spearhead an effort to put in place a Planned Giving program for the Cathedral. Planned Giving invites members and friends of Trinity Cathedral to remember and provide for the Cathedral in their Wills and Estates.

In 2008 we received three substantial lump sum contributions from members of Trinity – Betty Ross Robbins, \$10,000, Betty Wherry – \$15,000 and Dr. Phil Lewis – \$70,000. We are appreciative of every donation and contribution given; large and small, but I must say these significant contributions played a major role in our fiscal viability in 2008.

We were also recipients of a significant grant of \$6,000 from the Pearls and Oysters Society formerly the Diocesan Commission for the Disabled, chaired by Donna Devlin, which will enable us to make our Cathedral sanctuary handicap accessible to all persons of our Diocese and Cathedral.

My thanks to the Food Pantry volunteers Janet Thompson, Willie Coleman and company. Many thanks to Andrea John, Regina Zilinski, Georgia Koenig and Howard Ebersole for their work with the Altar Guild Shop. The Altar Guild Shop is a very valuable ministry of the Cathedral and the Diocese. Proceeds from the sale of goods enable the shop to make significant contributions to the Cathedral.

The Dean Adams Memorial Gardens received a major facelift in 2008. We are greatly indebted to Bob Prouty, Steve Simonson, Sue Remmers, the children of the Sunday School and the Altar Guild Shop for making this possible.

I want to thank the staff for their herculean efforts in 2008 – Deborah Ford, Choir Director, Patrice D'Angelo, Cathedral Administrator and Al Shaw, Sexton. Unfortunately we could not afford to retain the services of Fern Harhay and she was laid off June 1, 2008. Steve Simonson was unable to pass the Black Seal License requirements, and combined with very poor attendance in the latter part of 2008, was dismissed as of the end of 2008.

Faith sharing small groups and the development and the unveiling of the Natural Church Development plan was a major part of our work in 2008. We would like to form more of faith sharing small groups in 2009, and we invite more persons to inquire and consider being a part of this aspect of our ministry at Trinity Cathedral.

Our Natural Church Development plan seeks to equip us to be more welcoming. We are also very pleased to have made available a selection of books to all interested persons in Synod Hall. Please make use of this facility as we seek to learn ways to better evangelize.

The Episcopal Church defines the five marks of mission as:-

1. Spread the Good News.
2. Baptize new believers.
3. Alleviate human suffering.
4. Work to transform unjust structures.
5. Care for the earth.

I would like to propose that along with our Diocesan Vision of Spiritual Renewal, we would focus on these marks of mission as we continue our journey from survival to celebration.

The Very Rev. René John
Dean, Trinity Cathedral
January 2009