

Youth Council Report to the 222nd Diocesan Convention

Diocesan Youth Events are open to all young people in the Diocese. The purpose of these events is to bring young people together from across the Diocese to make new friends, learn about God, experience the grace of the Holy Spirit, and to live in Christian community together. Our events are gospel-centered: presented creatively in large group, processed in small discussion groups, experienced through games and fellowship, and proclaimed through various worship and music experiences.

Eleven youth programs were offered to our youth from the 6th through 12th grade during 2005.

This summer 9 youth and 4 adults including Bishop Councell traveled to Berea, KY to The *Episcopal Youth Event (E.Y.E.)* There we meet 1500 other Episcopal teens and worshiped, played, and celebrated our faith.

Also, this summer 8 youth and 4 adults traveled to our Companion Diocese of El Salvador in Central America. While there we worked with ERD (Episcopal Relief and Development) in building new homes for the people in the community. We also, spent time making new friends and visiting with some old ones too.

At the 2005 *Spring Youth Event* we learned about relationships and sexuality and at the 2005 *Fall Youth Event* we spoke about stewardship and our roles as Christians using our time, talent and treasures for God. We made over 100 gift bags for the children at Children's Specialized Hospital in Mountainside, New Jersey.

We had spring and fall *Happening* weekends. These weekends were a time of renewal in our faith. Young people spent time with other teens sharing their faith and learning about taking God into our everyday lives.

The Diocese of New Jersey will be hosting the *National Happening Leadership Conference* at Rider University in July 2006.

Remembering our call to reach out to others, we spent a Saturday in December 2005 with the residents at The Evergreens Retirement Community. "T.L.C." (Together, Learning, Caring) Day was our second visit to The Evergreens.

Seven youth and two adults traveled to Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, NC to *Winterlight XXX* the week between Christmas and New Years. This was the third year that we made this journey. We spent the week with 200 other high schoolers seeking a stronger relationship with Jesus Christ.

The 47th Bishop's Ball was held at Trinity Cathedral with over 200 in attendance in January 2006. We worshiped God with a Hip Hop Eucharist. This was a new way of worship for many of us. Over \$3,000 raised from this annual event was given to Episcopal Relief and Development.

We held our first *Senior Retreat* in April 2005. This weekend was held at Ocean Grove, for graduating seniors from high school. We spent the weekend looking ahead and where we might look to find God in our changing world.

Four adult workshops were held for the adults who work with our youth. These workshops offered a time were adults could gather and share ideas while working with teens.

None of these events would be possible without the dedication of the 26 youth and 14 adults who make up the Diocesan Youth Council. This group of young people and adults spends many hours planning, setting up, running, cleaning up, and evaluating each of our events. Their desire to share their faith in God seems to always shine through at each event!

Pictures from many of these events, as well as information and forms for future events are always available on the Diocesan youth website at newjerseyyouth.org.

Faithfully Submitted,

Ms. Lydia Zimmerman-Crumbaugh, Youth Chair, Diocesan Youth Council
The Rev. Deacon Debra Clarke, Program Assistant for Youth Ministry
Canon Kepner Short, Director of Youth Ministry