

Youth Report to the 224th Diocesan Convention

We, the Youth Council of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey, represent a vital part of the church. We actively seek to live out our baptismal covenant by becoming examples of Christ's love. As a community, we seek to grow spiritually while working towards peace and justice in the world.

Diocesan Youth Council

September 2007

Diocesan Youth Events are open to all young people in the Diocese. We held eight events in 2007. Each of these events are created by design teams that are staffed with youth and adults from Diocesan Youth Council and clergy throughout our diocese. The foundation of every event is based on our mission statement, the gospel, and The Book of Common Prayer.

This year we took a closer look at working towards peace and justice as we grew spiritually by actively living out our baptismal covenant. We did this by writing letters to officials, sharing information with our parishes, and raising money to assist those less fortunate.

Each New Year begins with the *Bishop's Ball*. Held at Trinity Cathedral, this was our 48th year. The evening began with a concert by Anna Hutto, Sam Hensley and David Bryan. The rest of the evening was enjoyed with much dancing, conversation and laughter. The money raised went to World Vision to help displaced people in Darfur and neighboring Chad. We sent a check for \$3090.

Our youth were pages at Diocesan *Convention*. Also three of our youth were deputies with full voice and vote.

We held our third *Senior Retreat* at the Convent of St. John Baptist. This weekend is for graduating seniors from high school. The time together was spent reflecting on Psalm 138:8, "How can we realize God's perfect plan for us?"

Spring Youth Event was a huge success as we discussed the theme "Got Peace? This event was held for 6th through 12th grade youth.

In July thirty-eight youth and adults boarded a bus for a twenty four hour drive to *Camp Coast Care* in Long Beach, Mississippi to help in Katrina relief work. Many of our lives were changed by the people we met there.

Fall Youth Event theme was "Fear Factor" using the scripture passage Psalm 23 we creatively discussed where God is in the midst of all that is happening in our world. This event was held for 6th through 12th grade youth.

A new event added this year was *Generation* working with Hip Hop Emass we traveled to Camden and had mass, lunch and information fair.

Winterlight 32 was held at Kanuga Camp and Conference Center during Christmas break. This was the fifth year we traveled to Hendersonville, N.C. to attend. Everyone had a great time meeting new friends and re-connecting with some we met before.

Four adult workshops were held, Dr. Carol McCrae spoke about adolescents and self injury, Kathy Pfister (Diocese of North Carolina) spoke about teenage sexuality, Kep Short (Diocesan Youth Director) led a workshop on The Basics of Youth Ministry, and Emily Gowdy-Canady (St. Coulumba's Church, Washington D.C.) addressed creating mission based youth ministry. All adult workshops are free and are held quarterly.

We encourage you to look at the youth website often, newjerseyyouth.org. All pertinent information for youth events is posted. New In December 2007 – Online registration for all youth events through the website.

Faithfully Submitted,

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Cassandra Otten, Youth Co-Chair to Youth Council

The Rev. Debra Clarke, DCN, Program Assistant to Youth Ministry

Canon Kepner Short, Director of Youth Ministry