



Reformed Episcopal Church

Since 1873

Diocesan Newsletter

Vol II Issue 6

Reformed Episcopal
Church
Diocese of the
Northeast and
Mid-Atlantic

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June
2007

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Men's Retreat Rev. Cedric Benner *Rector, St. Luke's RE Church, New Providence, NJ*

Liebenzell Retreat Center, located in the rolling hills of western New Jersey, was the meeting place for the men's retreat of our diocese on April 20,21. The topic for this year was Men of Vision: Holy War for Humble Warriors using Heavenly Weapons. The Rev. Eduardo Andrade, rector of Good Shepherd R.E. Church, led the discussion on Friday night and spoke about the three phases of spiritual warfare. Phase One involves conquering and battling against our spiritual enemies of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Phase Two focuses on making our borders secure. Unless our borders are indeed secure, our enemies will easily and quickly find their way back into our territory. The battle phase will in fact never end in this life. Phase Three focuses on construction and building. Jesus speaks about building His Church and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:15-20)

Eduardo addressed the question of how we can build a community of Christian men. How is it possible to build solid relationships among men in the 21st Century? With our fragmented and fast-paced lives, the need to build community and accountability is a great challenge facing us. The Gospels and the Book of Acts present an approach that underscores the need for not only quality time, but quantity time as well.

The Rev. Don Stone, pastor of Lehigh Valley Presbyterian Church in Allentown, PA, led the sessions on Saturday, April 21.

These sessions included the Holy War, the Humble Warriors, and the Heavenly Weapons.

To win any kind of war we must know that we are at war, who our enemies are, and what weapons are at our disposal. The holy war we are engaged in is to invite people to come from the kingdom of darkness and sin into the kingdom of light and to grow in sanctification. The war began in Genesis 3 when Adam and Eve listened to Satan instead of God. It's a struggle that runs throughout the entire Bible. We are given a glimpse into the future in Revelation 21 & 22 where the Lord God promises His people success as we place our entire allegiance to King Jesus. Our battle is primarily a spiritual battle. (Ephesians 6:12)

We see aspects of spiritual warfare as our culture has been influenced by secular worldviews which idolize power, money, and pleasure. It is also evident that a spiritual battle is being waged against professing Christian churches who have compromised on such issues as the authority Scripture, Christ as the exclusive Savior of the world, and human sexuality.

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Traditional Liturgical Evangelical Scriptural

During the next session we considered the question, What does the humble warrior look like? The humble warrior must recognize his unbelief and sin and look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Suffering Servant. We must also seek to be God’s servants and agents in the world as we let the light of Christ’s message shine through us. We need to follow Christ’s commands, apply His teachings, and trust in His promises. We mature as followers of Christ when we follow Christ’s instruction and seek after God’s wisdom. By submitting to those over us, we learn obedience. God prepares us to wage war against the powers of darkness, but we must be attentive to our obligations and alert to the schemes of the evil one.

In the last session we considered the weapons of our warfare. God has given us His means of grace, ways by which we grow in our faith and obedience to God. The means of grace are the Word of God, prayer, and the sacraments. (II Timothy 3:14-17; Eph. 6:10-20; Romans 6:4-8; I Cor. 10 & 11) We utilize these means of grace as we assemble with God’s people to worship the Lord and as we commit ourselves to serve the Lord.

In order to for us to grow spiritually and for our character to undergo moral transformation, we must be committed to pursuing godly virtues and the spiritual disciplines. (cf Spirit of the disciplines by Dallas Willard)

The content of the topic of spiritual warfare as well as the discussions were encouraging. We challenged one another to be focused on knowing our enemy and persevering in fighting the good fight of faith in the Lord’s strength, utilizing the weapons of our spiritual warfare. It was very refreshing to gather with men for both formal discussions and informal fellowship.

MEETING LOCATION CHANGE:

The 127th Diocesan Council for the Northeast & Mid-Atlantic will be held at Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, Havre-de-Grace, MD.

Details will follow.

Liturgical Colors

June 3	Trinity Sunday	White
June 10	1st Sun. after Trinity	Green
June 17	2nd Sun. after Trinity	Green
June 24	Nativity of St. John, the Baptist	White

Calendar of Events:

Date	Time	Explanation
Saturday, June 2, 2007	8:30 - 10:00 am	Philadelphia Area Ministerium At Reformed Episcopal Seminary Blue Bell, PA
Tuesday, June 12, 2007	Noon	NY/Northern NJ Area Ministerium at Covenant Chapel Basking Ridge, NJ
Saturday, July 21, 2007	9:00 am - Lunch	Maryland Area Ministerium at Grace Reformed Episcopal Church Havre-de-Grace, MD
Thursday/Friday November 1 - 2, 2007	Mark your Calendar Details to follow	127th Diocesan Council (note location change) Grace REC, Havre-de-Grace, MD