

Tools for Congregations

The annual Wardens, Vestry & Leadership Gathering will be held this year on Saturday, March 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at American International College in Springfield. Save the date for this important Diocesan event, which offers leaders across the Diocese an opportunity to network with their peers and learn about everything from parish financial management to Christian formation.

Those who have attended past Wardens, Vestry & Leadership gatherings have found the learnings to be invaluable. Here are some comments from participants of last year's event:

◆ Susan Gore, St. George's, Lee: "I've been a warden for many years, and the main thing I took away was [the importance of] communication between wardens and their rectors and parishioners. During times of transition, it's essential to keeping it all together. [In regard to] communication between the rector and warden, you have to have it. A meeting once a month doesn't do it." ◆ Erik Gladwin, St. Andrew's, Longmeadow: "I really was hoping to find some guidance for dealing with the ever-changing youth. Post-modern kids have a lot to teach us."

◆ John Kulig, St. Thomas, Auburn: "I think [one of the things I took away from it was] the complexity of the parish audit. And that's a good thing! It adds accountability to the process."

The leadership gathering begins with registration and coffee in AIC's Cultural Arts Center Lobby at 8:30 a.m., with introductions just before 9 a.m., and a plenary session beginning just after 9 a.m.

A Selection of Workshop Offerings

How to Get Things Done: Project Management for Vestries. Robin Hammeal-Urban This workshop offers practical tools for: ◆ Transforming vision into achievable projects.

◆ Discerning which project/s to move forward. ◆ Determining next steps. ◆ Tracking progress. This workshop is designed to enhance the productivity of all vestries.

37 Ways to Highlight and Form Stewards All Year. Bruce Rockwell If we are to be successful in forming stewards, stewardship, in all its facets, must be a focus throughout the year. We will look at 37 ways to highlight stewardship. Some of them may just be right for your congregation. Bruce Rockwell, the Diocesan stewardship missionary, will facilitate this workshop, which will also feature discussion about what is working in congregations around the Diocese.

Mixed Messages. What Is Your Worship Service Really Saying to Newcomers? Jill Williams In this workshop, participants will hear how the church architecture, bulletin, music, liturgy and much more send strong messages to newcomers about your congregation. They will leave with a broader understanding of the goals for church growth as well as tools for evaluating a home parish

Simple Living: Spiritual Living for Busy People. Jill Williams

Bring your planner or calendar to this workshop, and we'll discuss how to get our spirituality and calendars to stop fighting with each other.

Prayer: A Two-Way Conversation with God. Scott Seabury

We will consider what is prayer, why pray and when, how to pray, conditions for effective prayer, obstacles to effective praying, kinds of prayer and God's response to our prayers.

Setting up a Legacy Stewardship Program: A Round Table Discussion. John White We will share stories about our successes, false starts and road- blocks! Join in the discussion if you are just curious, experienced or committed!