

Finding Safe Harbor

By Debra Kissinger

On May 7, 2006 members of the Diocese are invited to attend one of two Safe Harbor celebrations held simultaneously at Trinity Church, Bethlehem and St. Luke's Church, Scranton, 4:00 p.m.

These services will mark the end of our diocesan *Cruising to Equity* journey co-sponsored by *AWE: Children's Ministries* and the diocesan ECW.

Participants are invited to bring children's personal care items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, child sensitive soap, shampoo or children's underwear, hats and mittens for the offering.

Parishes are invited to bring their banner to carry in procession.

Debra Kissinger, missionary to children, and Demery Bader-Saye, missionary to youth, will be the celebrants at the two services. Diocesan youth will be preaching and children will be assisting in leading worship.

Parishes are also invited to bring pictures of their filled boats and any articles printed in their local newspapers and newsletters regarding their efforts to display at the festive reception following each service.

Cruising to Equity is the advocacy and prayer vigil project that began with the diocesan ECW's collection of *Undies for Children at Risk* at our

Diocesan Convention.

Thirty-four churches (sidebar) signed on to the campaign for Children at Risk.

Each appointed a cruise director who kept the parish informed about the journey and challenged members to make a boatload of difference for children in their communities.

Cruising to Equity parishes witnessed for children through prayer, education, worship and action. They placed a boat in their church or parish hall and collected items for the five Ports of Call: Healthy Start, Fair Start, Head Start, Moral Start and Safe Start.

Items collected included everything from children's personal care products and clothes to school supplies and books to food and cuddly toys, blankets, duffel bags and nightlights for children being taken into the foster care system.

Nearly 13 million children in our rich nation are living in poverty which jeopardizes their health, learning, dreams, and very lives. Most poor children live in working families.



Food pantries, homeless shelters, and other emergency services across the nation are facing growing demands as government services are cut and safety nets for the underprivileged are withdrawn.

The needs of children should be a priority for all of us as individuals, groups and communities of faith. Our Baptismal Covenant calls us to put our faith into action by seeking justice for children.

Our Safe Harbor celebrations are open to all who care about the future of America's children. Join in on May 7 at 4:00 p.m in praying for a brighter future for all of God's children and celebrating the success of the *Cruising to Equity* campaign.

Working together, we can make a difference where the needs, hopes and dreams of children are involved. Let's make a boatload of a difference together!

The Rev. Debra Kissinger is diocesan missionary to children and child advocate.

Parishes & Cruise Directors

Allentown, Mediator: Martha Fox
Allentown, St. Andrew's: Thea Prostko
Bethlehem, Trinity: Suzanne Boundy
Clarks Summit, Epiphany: Kathy Whitney
Dallas, Prince of Peace: Jenn Martin
Douglassville, St. Gabriel: Deborah Lenares
Easton, Trinity: Mike and Dotty Viglione
Emmaus, St. Margaret's: Christina Nord
Forest City, Christ Church: Lisa DeMark
Hellertown, St. George's: Gloria Quier
Jermyn, St. James/George: Denise Stoneroad
Jim Thorpe, St. Mark's/John's, Joan DeAcetis
Kingston, Grace Church: The Rev. Geoff Howson
Mt. Pocono, Trinity: Youth Group
Pottsville, Trinity: Dawn Burns
Reading, Christ Church: Jill Braun
Reading, St. Mary's: Linda Soto
Sayre, Redeemer: Betsy Schumacher
Schnecksville, St. Elizabeth's: Robin Netwall
Schuylkill County, North Parish: Susan Noble (Ashland), Bonnie Baker (St. Clair) and Dolores Evans (Frackville)
Schuylkill Haven, St. James: Martha Semar
Scranton, St. Luke's: Beverly Hoeffner
Sinking Spring, St. Alban's: Richard Stevenson
Susquehanna, Christ Church: Tammy Goffa
Trexlerstown, St. Anne's:
Saundra Evans & Richard Davis
Troy, St. Paul's: Sharon Vetter
Tunkhannock, St. Peter's: Dorothy Shaw
West Bangor, St. Joseph's: Joanne Pados
Whitehall, St. Stephen's: Senior Youth Group
Wind Gap, St. Mary's: Millie Scuzzese
Wilkes-Barre, Holy Cross: Sondra Lyon
Wilkes-Barre, St. Stephen's: Barbara Gessner