



# LEAVEN

March  
2009

The Occasional Journal of the National Network Of Episcopal Clergy Associations

**NNECA is moving “FASST” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!** The new website is finally a reality. See [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org). We are most grateful to Alan Mead, whose hard work made this a reality. In the spirit of our slogan, “The Clergy Connection,” the new website’s design is the result of a collaborative effort.

The goal of the website is to make the NNECA slogan, “The Clergy Connection,” a reality. Every element of design in the new website is meant to make the site user-friendly and to connect clergy, both members and non-members, with resources. Needless to say there is a price for this. In a very lean economy the Board has made the decision to concentrate our limited financial resources on electronic communication and on General Convention. You’ll hear more about Convention elsewhere. Here, I want to concentrate on how NNECA intends to communicate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The NNECA Mission Statement ( “NNECA seeks, serves, and proclaims Christ by leading clergy in the Episcopal Church into collegial relationships for education, self-care, advocacy, and spiritual growth”) and slogan (“The Clergy Connection”) have been combined in the in the image of a puzzle piece on the website. While this image continues to be a work in progress, the graphic captures the important themes of fellowship, advocacy, support, spirituality and technology—*FASST*. NNECA is moving FASST in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!



*Leaven* will become the “occasional” journal of NNECA. The NNECA Board has determined that regular publication of *Leaven* is simply not good stewardship of our financial resources nor of our environmental resources. Accordingly, *Leaven* will be published “on occasion.” However, regular communication will come through the *Leaven-Fasst*, the new e-newsletter of NNECA. Thoughtful pieces of interest to clergy will continue. There will also be a focus on newsworthy items such as the newly reorganized Pittsburgh association. It is our hope that any clergy not having personal email will use the email of their church or some other convenient place. We want to keep connected?

*Leaven-Fasst* will be available either through subscription or through visiting the NNECA website, where you may sign up to receive *Leaven-Fasst*. Anyone who is interested may receive *Leaven-Fasst*. Of course this means we will no longer ask people to pay for *Leaven* subscriptions. While this step will reduce costs, websites are not free and there are still other costs to running this kind of organization. Sponsoring a booth at General Convention and NNECA’s annual visits with Church Pension Fund and the Church Center, both in New York City, are important ways that the NNECA Board will continue to represent the interests of all of its members. Your financial support, either as a member of a local association or as an associate member, will help us continue this essential work.

The NNECA Board is excited about “moving FASST in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” We invite you to check out our web page. We welcome your comments through your local associations or to any Board members or through the networking forum on the website. Please support NNECA with your prayer and with your financial contributions.

**See page 7 to sign  
up for *Leaven-Fasst***

*Molly Dale Smith*  
Vice-President & President-elect, NNECA

Notes from conversations at The Church Center

On January 19-23, 2009, the NNECA Board made its annual pilgrimage to New York City, to plan its work for the year and to consult with staff officers at both the Church Pension Group and the Episcopal Church Center. At the Church Center meetings were held with: The Rev. Canon Dr. Chuck Robertson, Canon to the Presiding Bishop; Pamela Ramsden – Assoc. Program Officer, CDO and Transition Ministries; The Rev. Canon Angela Ifill – Program Officer, Black Ministries; The Rev. Dr. Fred Vergara – Program Officer, Asian American Ministries; Ann Rudig – Director, Office of Communications; The Rev. Margaret Rose – Director, Mission Leadership Center; The Rev. Suzanne Watson – Director, Evangelism and Congregational Life Center; Terry Parsons – Program Officer, Diocesan Services, Partnership Center; and Donald Romanik – President, Episcopal Church Foundation. Barry Miller, NNECA Board secretary, offers some highlights of these meetings below. For more information go to [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org).

**Chuck Robertson**

- Manages conflict on church-wide level; newly hired staff:
- Rick Cluett—consultant for reorganizing dioceses
- Mary Kostel—special counsel for property disputes.
- Ann Rudig —new Director of Communications
- New models of ministry being developed in dioceses with geographic challenges, e.g., Eastern Oregon, Western Kansas



**Margaret Rose**

- New Church Center organized into program centers: imagine webs, serving in connector roles.
- New regional centers, a new way of localizing power in the Church:
- Office involved with clergy leadership, NAD, IMN, NNECA, CEPVA



**Suzanne Watson**

- Offers many resources for congregations: DVDs, Books (E-BAR: Episcopal Books and Resources) on leadership, worship, small church growth, redevelopment, church planting assessment.
- See her website: “Connecting People, Inspiring Communities”



**Terry Parsons**

- Help for the “Faithful Remainers” in reorganizing dioceses & “staying” congregations and congregants.
- Redesigning website, working at brand/story/positioning projects.
- Developing liaisons and resources to diocesan offices



**Don Romanik**

- Vestry Development Resources
- Financial Development Resources
- Lay Leadership Development
- Help with Planned giving, capital campaigns
- Consultation in stewardship, endowment management, partnerships and collaborations: “Resources for raising funds in challenging times



**Angela Ifill**

- Mission outreach
- “New Ventures” project to revitalize parishes
- Leadership for Asian American ministries
- SOUL opportunities to unite and learn



## ***NNECA visits the Church Pension Group***

Amidst the snow flurries and cold blasts screaming through the streets of New York, the NNECA Board managed to make its way to 445 5th Avenue, where the Church Pension Group (CPG) is located, to meet with CPG leaders. Dennis Sullivan, Jim Morrison, Pat Coller, Linda Puckett, Tim Vanover, Sally Johnson and Matthew Price gave informative presentations on both the present and future of the Pension Fund.

### **Pension Fund Holding Its Own**

Despite the ups and downs of today's stock market, we learned that the Pension Fund is sound. Yes, there have been losses but none that to date will adversely affect those receiving pensions and we who someday hope to receive them. Fortunately, the CPG has only lost 18.9% of overall value compared to the S&P 500 which lost 37% as of the close of last year. The CPG leadership take their responsibility very seriously and do everything they can do to protect the investment and make it available for future generations. We could not have a better group of people safeguarding our investments, or a more spiritual lay person than Dennis Sullivan, who sees his job as a calling.

### **New Denominational Health Plan**

As many of you have heard or read over the past couple of years, the CPG has developed a new way for Episcopal Clergy to receive health care in the foreseeable future. As we all know, health care insurance is one of the fastest growing expenses for any parish. Unfortunately, the past is only a prelude to the future and costs are expected to climb to impossible heights for any normal parish by 2015. The large parishes will begin to struggle, and the smaller, family and pastoral sized parishes may not be able to supply this important benefit and survive.

There will be a resolution put forth to General Convention in Anaheim this summer for the establishment what is now called the DHP - Denominational Health Plan - for "all domestic Dioceses, Parishes, Missions, and other ecclesiastical organizations or bodies subject to the authority of the Church, for Clergy, and Lay employees who are scheduled to work a minimum of 1500 hours annually.

Dennis Sullivan and others will be traveling around the United States to present regional forums

([www.cpg.org/regionalforums](http://www.cpg.org/regionalforums)) for people to hear about this personally, to ask questions of the staff in person, and to become better informed of the details of the plan.

### **Lay Employees Pension Plan**



*Sally Johnson & Pat Coller talk with NNECA Board Members*

In response to a resolution at the 2006 General Convention, a feasibility study on pension benefits has been completed. The study group will recommend that the 76<sup>th</sup> General Convention adopt a canon mandating pensions for lay employees at the 1000 hour per year level. The contribution rate would be a 9% minimum. It further recommends that, for accountability purposes, the Church Pension Group function as a single provider Plan Administrator. This canon would go into effect in 2012 so that congregations would have time to budget accordingly. A further study will be undertaken on inclusion of Episcopal Schools and overseas Episcopal dioceses. For more information go to [www.cpg.org/aboutus/layemployeesstudy.cfm](http://www.cpg.org/aboutus/layemployeesstudy.cfm).

*Neysa Ellgren & Harry I. Parsell*

The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened. *Matthew 13:33*

# NNECA Presidents, past & present, say "Thanks" to Bud Holland

*On March 31<sup>st</sup> Bud Holland will be retiring from the Episcopal Church Center, having served as the Coordinator for the Office of Ministry Development since 1998. In these pages we offer tribute to the ways in which Bud is a spiritual mentor and guide, champion, hero and friend to many fellow travelers in the Church. During the NNECA conference call with him in January, Bud graciously agreed to continue serving as an advisor to the board.*

## ***From Bruce Robison...***



I had heard "about" Bud Holland for several years, while I was serving in the Central Pennsylvania diocese and he was the highly-regarded Deployment Officer in the Diocese of Pennsylvania: "one of the good guys." I met him for the first time at a NNECA Conference--I think maybe it was in Sacramento, or possibly at the Virginia Seminary--where he was making a presentation in his role as Coordinator of the Office of Ministry Development at Church Center.

Over the years since, in any event, I have come to regard him as a colleague and friend of exceptional intelligence and creativity, and with an abundant passion for ministry and a profound love for the daily life of the Church. A "priest's priest," a wise counselor--and a great storyteller.

I would highlight a few important accomplishments, things that wouldn't have happened if Bud hadn't been there to help them along: the initiative for "Justice and Accountability in the Workplace," a resolution which, over time, was adopted by General Convention (I think with a slightly different name) and which was a critical step in the recognition of the contribution of lay professionals in the ministry of the Episcopal Church; the creation of CEPVA, the Colloquium of Episcopal Professional and Vocational Associations, which brought together Clergy Associations, the Association of Deacons, Christian Educators, Church Musicians, Parish and Diocesan Administrators, and more.; the creation of FOCUS, Families of Clergy United for Support, the first concerted national effort to link and coordinate and build resources for spouses and families of clergy.

Bud and his associates and colleagues, and also our good friends Lynne Grifo and Martin Tsien were there faithfully, always, to be sure that needed direction and resources would be available when and where we needed them. Whether in parish ministry, as a Deployment Officer, or at Church Center, Bud is a man whose life is about building relationships, connections, a spirit of mutuality--and all of that flowing so naturally from his deep faith commitment and his priestly character, his call to a fundamentally Biblical view of the Church as one Body with many members.

There have been lots of good times: fun dinners and receptions and outings of one sort or another at NNECA Conferences or Winter Board Meetings, times of "relaxing around the booth" at General Conventions--Bud being someone who can make even a conference call an enjoyable gathering.

There have been some serious times, too. I think about our trip together with him and Jim Wilson as we traveled as a NNECA Board to St. Paul's Chapel and Ground Zero just a couple of months after 9/11, and I think of many sessions of prayer together during the time when his beloved Ann was going through some pretty difficult health challenges.

In all this, it's an honor for me to have the opportunity to join with the rest of the NNECA family as we pay tribute to this great friend and supporter. Bud: may the years ahead be filled with much joy and blessing for you and Ann--rest, refreshment, health, prosperity, and, I'm sure, many new adventures.

*Bud is a man whose life is about building relationships, connections, a spirit of mutuality--and all of that flowing so naturally from his deep faith commitment and his priestly character...*

# Bud Holland: NNECA CHAMPION



## *From Alan C. Mead...*

It was at NNECA 28 in Hawaii that I first met the Rev. Melford “Bud” Holland. We were both attending a NNECA conference for the first time. I was representing my home association of Central Pennsylvania and Bud was the new Coordinator for Ministry Development for the Episcopal Church. That was in 1998 and Bud and I began a friendship that has continued through the years. Bud became one of my mentors as I grew into leadership in NNECA, first as a board member and then as president. With Bud’s urging I connected with other groups serving the church, particularly lay professionals and CEPVA. It was in these connections across the Church that I grew to marvel at Bud’s ability to connect people and ideas from all areas of ministry with each other in ways that sparked a wonderful creativity.



*The Rev. Melford Elias “Bud” Holland, Jr.*

In every area of ministry within the Church, at every level, Bud Holland has been a central and key connector of people, ideas and ministries. It seems that if a new ministry or idea emerged, Bud Holland was somewhere in the background or serving directly as faculty. However, it is not only at a variety of ministries that Bud has made a difference; but also as one who has continually challenged the system to have fairness and equality for everyone, lay and ordained, who work for the Church, that Bud’s presence and wisdom has been felt. I experienced this many times in my connections with Bud during my tenure as NNECA’s president. He was always ready to help NNECA with its mission to connect and advocate for clergy; and he was equally ready to challenge us to become involved in issues of others, including lay professionals, with issues such as equality in the workplace and retirement plans.

Although Bud is retiring from his paid job, I am certain he will continue to connect people and ideas within the Church. I am so thankful for all that he has done to help NNECA throughout his years at 815, but even more, personally, for his friendship and guidance as one who was always available to answer a question or suggest a resource. Thank you, Bud!

*– Alan C. Mead*

## *From C. Christopher Thompson...*



Melford Elias Holland, Jr, or “Bud” as we know him, the boy from Gauley Bridge, West Virginia is another of the many young men and women who responded to God’s call to ordained ministry from the West Virginia hills. He was ordained in 1968 and has served Christ and the Church ever since. “To Serve Christ and the Church” is the motto for the Diocese of West Virginia.

As current president of NNECA it pains me to see Bud go. Bud is the person we all know who both “knows everybody” and “gets stuff done.” He does both of these with grace, care, love and integrity. He is seemly always available, from early morning to late at night and has an institutional knowledge of the Church that exceeds most others.

This organization has been blessed a hundred fold by Bud Holland’s presence and wisdom. He might not be at “815” as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, but we know he isn’t going to be retired!

## Well done, Jim Boston, Good and Faithful Servant!



This spring as the Rev. Dr. James T. Boston retires from St. Luke's Church, Grants Pass, OR, where he has served as rector since 1987, he will also end his 13-year tenure as the Treasurer of NNECA.

We give thanks to God for Jim's faithful, skilled and steady service over the years. He has seen NNECA through several up-cycles and down-cycles and serves as the current Board's "institutional memory" in significant ways. He has been the point person for many an annual conference, negotiating deals in tight spots, attending to countless details, organizing behind the scenes, telling the hard (budget) truths. He has managed the member database, as well as edited, proofread and sent dozens of LEAVEN journals off to the printer.

That NNECA continues to be a vital institution, working on behalf of clergy around the country, is in large part due to Jim's many wonderful contributions. Thank you and God bless you, Jim!



## NNECA at General Convention—NNECA 39 Annual Meeting

Be sure to visit the NNECA booth

—it will be in a prime location close to the Church Pension Group.

- NNECA 39 Annual Meeting-Friday, July 10 at Hilton—Make your reservation on line
- The Rt. Rev. Eugene Sutton, Bishop of Maryland, will be the NNECA 39 speaker
- Elections for Vice-President & Board members with voting, on Friday, July 10 from 9– 12:00
- Details at [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org)

## A Report From The Pittsburgh Episcopal Clergy Association

In the upending of our diocesan life last October in Pittsburgh there was of course a challenge for our diocesan Clergy Association, as we struggled to sustain our call to deep affection and collegial support in a time of division.

The "realignment" of the diocese came at our Convention on Saturday, October 4. And on the evening before that, our Pittsburgh Clergy Association hosted our last event: the annual "Ball in the Fall"--a dinner dance, with some 50 clergy and spouses "from both sides of the aisle" sharing an evening of friendship, food, and music together. Much laughter, not a few tears.....

*Bruce Robison's report continues on the NNECA website.*

**Go to [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org)**



### Let us hear from you!

Submit articles, Clergy Association news, & other correspondence for LEAVEN or LEAVEN FASST to:

The Rev. Laurie Rofinot, *Editor*  
[LARofinot@aol.com](mailto:LARofinot@aol.com)

### Membership:

Join NNECA through your diocesan association or individual membership in NNECA is  
**\$65 per year**

Read  
This

**Nothing to it, so just do it!**

## Join NNECA's Networking Forum.. *Get Leaven-Fasst*

We hope you will take a few minutes to visit our web site at: <http://www.nneca.org>. It is nearing a final structure although content will be added over time.

We are building networking capability into our structure at a couple of levels. First, when you visit the site you will notice a "Get Connected" Box on the right. Enter your name and email address and then follow the instructions to connect to one or more online groups, as well as to sign up for *Leaven-Fasst*.



A second option for networking is available through the menu structure on the left side of the home page. Clicking on "Networking Connection" will bring you to NNECA's new forum for open participation and discussion of virtually anything. It can be a place of support as well as dialogue about ideas and issues. Both of these options give Episcopal clergy ways to build online community around the world for mutual support and encouragement.

In addition, the website makes it easy to change your email information yourself, no need for an intermediary.

We hope you will make use of the website, sign up for **LEAVEN FASST** and **GET CONNECTED TODAY!**

*Alan Mead, NNECA Webmaster*

We think our new web site is pretty good. We know it will get better!  
Visit [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org)  
Become a part of building the future today.

## 2008-09 NNECA Leadership

### Board of Directors:

**The Rev. C. Christopher Thompson, President**  
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**The Rev. Ken Beason, Past President**  
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**The Rev. Dr. Molly Dale Smith, Vice President**  
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**The Rev. Dr. Neysa Ellgren, Interim Treasurer**  
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**The Rev. Barbara Bender-Breck,**  
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**The Rev. Jay Geisler**  
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**The Rev. Harry Parsell**  
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**The Rev. Patrick Strohl**  
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**The Rev. Harrison West**  
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### Serving the Board:

**The Rev. Alan Mead, Webmaster**  
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**The Rev. Barry W. Miller, Secretary**  
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**The Rev. Laurie Rofinot, Leaven Editor**  
LARofinot@aol.com Massachusetts

### **NNECA NEWS:**

Jim Boston's retirement as NNECA Treasurer is effective April 1, 2009. Not only Jim has held this position for some time, but he has also served as both Leaven Publisher and as Membership Chair. Needless to say, NNECA is entering into a time of transition as we sort out how these important roles will be fulfilled. The Rev. Dr. Molly Dale Smith is serving as Interim Leaven Publisher. The Very Rev. Neysa Ellgren has agreed to become Interim Treasurer of NNECA. Again, thank you Jim for all you have done for NNECA!



*The Rev. Dr. Molly Dale Smith*



*The Very Rev. Neysa Ellgren*

# Important Note from The President

Dear Sister and Brothers;

General Convention 2009 is fast approaching. The Convention Deputies blog is booming and reservations are being made by Dioceses and groups. NNECA will be there, but only with your help!

General Convention is expensive and NNECA presence is vital. Please assist us in properly representing you, the Clergy of the Episcopal Church, at Anaheim with a financial contribution. You can donate through *Pay Pal* at our NEW website at [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org). or by mailing a check, payable to NNECA, to me at Eastern Shore Chapel, 2020 Laskin Rd, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

Thank you and God bless you,

*C. Christopher Thompson*  
*NNECA President*

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**[www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org)**

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**The National Network of Episcopal Clergy Associations**

*Four Decades of Service to the Clergy of the Episcopal Church*  
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