



Good News

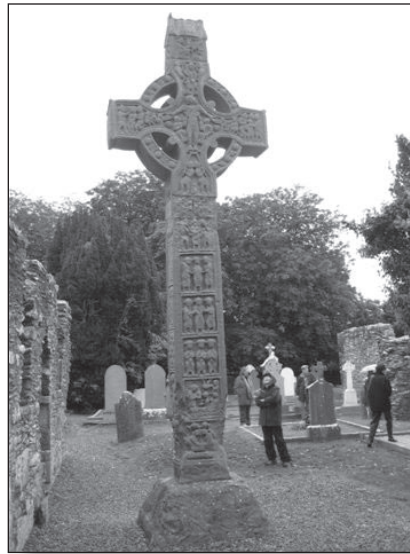
VALLE CRUCIS CONFERENCE CENTER • WINTER 2005-6

DEEPLY ROOTED ON SACRED GROUND

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

My beloved is
the mountain
The solitary
wooded valleys
Strange islands
Silent music

—St. John
of the Cross



Throughout this issue of our newsletter, you can read about what we have been busy doing- signing the final documents for our conservation easements, raising scholarship funds at the Valle Country Fair, beginning the restoration of our historic Apple Barn – and what we are planning for the future – a stellar line up of spring programs, continued planning by our Task Force for our hermitage retreat cabins, and archiving the history of the Valle Crucis Conference Center. I hope you will read all this good news – past, present and yet to come – I hope you will prayerfully consider a year-end gift in support of our ministry. I recognize that there have been many urgent needs this year throughout the world; I also know that we can only continue doing what we have done for the past 163 years with your generosity and your love for this sacred place.

Speaking of sacred places, I want to tell you about an amazing experience I had this fall. After nine years as Executive Director here, I was generously granted a mini-sabbatical so that my wife Jeanne and I could make a pilgrimage to Ireland. We spent a few days on our own in County Sligo and then returned to Dublin where we joined a wonderful group of people for the *Leap of the Deer Pilgrimage*, organized by the National Cathedral's College of Preachers. The tour was led by the Rev. Herbert O'Driscoll and the Rev. Marcus Losack, who shared lectures, slides, poetry and great stories, as well as guiding us to various sites, including the Hill of Tara, Glendalough (St. Kevin's monastic city), Kilkenny, Navan, the Book of Kells at Trinity College, high crosses, and much more. Joan Roberts

of the Cathedral staff beautifully coordinated the tour group, comprised of both clergy and lay people from the United States and Canada.

The site I found most transforming was the Neolithic passage tomb at Newgrange, built around 3200 BC. The amazing design and construction of this tomb certainly erased forever my image of ancient peoples being a simplistic "Flintstones" type. Fred and Barney (even with Wilma and Betty's help) could not have built this magnificent structure. The

Continued on page 5

“It’s not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.” —Mother Teresa

Thank You

CONTRIBUTIONS

Kay and Gordon Irwin
Rogers M. Branson
Anne and Arthur Korff
Gerald and Sandra Calhoun
Pamela M. Barrett
The Furr Foundation
Cynthia Dunlap
Pamela C. Livengood
Peggy Irving
Linda O’Neal
Bill and Shirrlene Seaver
The Rev. Brian and Kathy Suntken
Dick and Margaret Beckman
Bob and Julie Johnson
David and Judy Wall
Elliott and Nivia Woodaman
Dorothy and Harding Hughes, Jr.
Susan B. Morgan
Sandy and Dorcas Jones
Chuck Forester
James and Julie Neudstadt
Jean Hughes
The Byerly Foundation
Wendell J. Seaver
H.C. Howard
The Rt. Rev. G. Porter Taylor
Tom and Tina Barrett

MEMORIAL GIFTS

In memory of Dee Kornahrens by Diana Mast White
In memory of Sarah by Mr. and Mrs. D. Kachoogian
In memory of Bob Lincks by Patricia Bourne Lanier

HONORARIUM GIFTS

In honor of Bridget by Mr. and Mrs. D. Kachoogian
In honor of my friend Nina-Jo Moore
and in thanksgiving for my wife Betty on our
1st anniversary by Roy K. Welch, Jr.
In honor of John Cooper’s birthday by Faye Cooper
In honor of Audrey McBrayer by Gerald McBrayer
In honor of Tom and Susan’s wedding, September 24, 2005
by Tom White

“THE WORK OF
BELONGING TO A PLACE
IS NEVER FINISHED.”

—SCOTT RUSSELL SANDERS

APPLE BARN RESTORATION FUND

Karen Kassinger
Dennis and Margaret Lehmann
Billie and J.B. Clark
Tim and Belinda Forsyth
Alicia and Jim Toomey
Robert and Geraldene Ward
Kay Thompson
In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Duke Tester
by Jean Tester Herman
St. Mary of the Hills Blowing Rock - ECW - Tour of Homes
The Rev. Timothy and Beverly McRee

APPLE BARN WINDOW RESTORATION PROJECT

Sam Tallman
Julia Anne Courtney
Lynne S. Tanner
Sandy and Dorcas Jones
Faye and John Cooper
Dennis and Margaret Lehmann
Walter and Jennifer Browning
Anne Weatherford
The Rhododendron Softball Tournament
- A Valle Crucis tradition since 1973
Jane Smith and Ashly Magg
Matthew and Erin West
Bob and Iona Brigham
Ernestine Tuton
Holy Cross Church, Valle Crucis - ECW
Grace Episcopal Foundation - Grace Church, Morganton
The Rev. Scott and Diane Oxford
In thanksgiving from Robert and Alva Browning’s family
for ministry to others and by others.
In memory of our father Edward Frontis Tester
by Bonnie Tester and JoAnn Tester Adkins
In memory of Kathryn G. Clark by her son Walter Clark
In memory of Jeffrey Richard Moylan by Ralph Tilden
In memory of the faithful departed of St. Alban’s Parish, Hickory, NC.
In honor of our children and grandchildren by Tom and Tina Barrett
In honor of the Bowles Family by Betty Haywood

OTHER GIFTS

13 youth and adults from St. Paul’s - Augusta GA; St. Paul’s - Savannah GA; St. Luke’s - Effingham GA; St. Paul’s - Albany GA came to Conference Center and did trail repair work on waterfall trail and picked up trash along Dutch Creek.
TV with VCR by Walter and Jennifer Browning
Electronic keyboard by Jody and Natalie Eamonn
Batik wall hanging by Elizabeth Tester
A 1812 copy of the Bible by Thomas Scott that belonged to William Thurston who was one of the original members of the Order of the Holy Cross and inscribed from the library of Valle Crucis Abbey by George Atkins.

Valle Country Fair

This year's Valle Country Fair was a resounding success and a true co-operative effort on the part of Holy Cross Church and the Conference Center. A beautiful fall day was greeted by the 135 vendors, 10,000 guests and over 200 volunteers who made it all happen with their hard work and dedication. This year Holy Cross Church was able to raise over \$45,000 which comes from vendor tithes and church food booths. We are so grateful to our "parking partners" at Parkway Elementary School for assisting us in parking almost 3,000 cars and to the Jensen family for allowing us to use their hayfield adjacent to the fair site. All the funds raised will be distributed to those in need in the High Country.

Retreat House Task Force

In December of 2004 the Board of Directors authorized a Task Force to study the need for individual hermitage retreat cabins here at Valle Crucis. Our surveys and conversations have told us that there is indeed a need. If you wish to know more about this project, or how you or your church can help us fund this new ministry, please give Tom a call. He will be happy to answer your questions.



Apple Barn Restoration: Our long awaited Apple Barn restoration project is progressing with the construction and installation of 16 new historically correct windows. Our next step will be to insulate the walls and floor and find and install appropriate interior wood siding. Then with new doors on both floors and a heating system, we will be all set to extend the use of this wonderful part of our heritage for groups staying at the Center who need a larger meeting space.

New From Blue Ridge Learning Centers

Blue Ridge Learning Centers would like to announce the addition of Kevin Russell to our team of competent staff. Kevin has been working with youth and the challenge course industry for the last five years. Kevin will be calling many of you in the near future to explore your group's needs and how we can best serve your organization. Whether you need fun icebreakers, group problem solving activities or a complete challenge course experience, we have the expertise to make your stay at the Valle Crucis Conference Center meaningful and fun. We can also make your program management life easier by providing a complete program service. Kevin can organize your corporate trip from reservations to outings, your school groups trip from program content to evening program, and your youth and church retreats with appropriate faith based context. So give us a call or drop Kevin an email and let us develop a program for you. kevinr@brlc.org (828)265-0602, www.brlc.net

Year-End Gifts

All of us are aware at this time of year of the many needs of so many worthwhile non-profits. We, too, depend on your generosity. Here at the Valle Crucis Conference Center we hope that you will support our ministry and mission of hospitality by sending us a year-end gift. From the bottom of our hearts we thank you for your gifts and prayers throughout the year. Big or small we appreciate them all!!!



Maintenance Needs

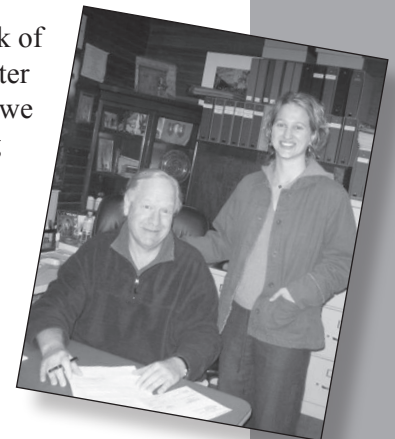
Do any of you have an old (but in good working order) tractor, bulldozer or backhoe at your home or place of business that you would like to donate to the Conference Center? We are in need of any of these items if you know of their availability.

Request for our archives!

If you have any old photographs or other memorabilia that would enrich our archives, please know they would be welcomed (or, if you wish to just loan, we can make copies and return the originals).

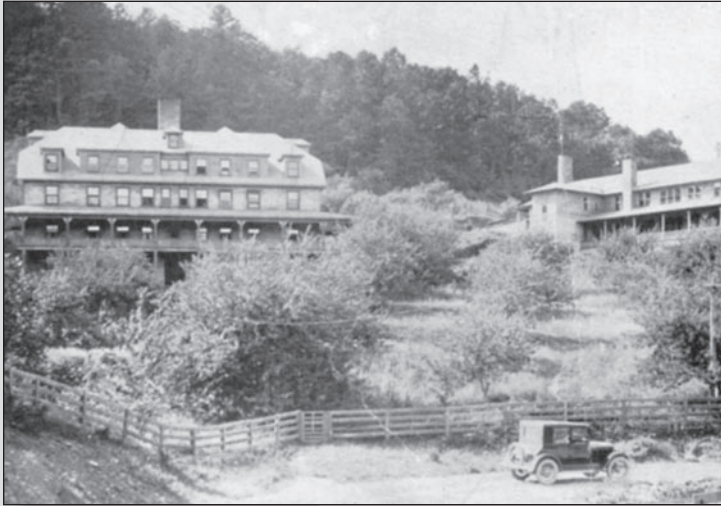
Conservation Easements

In October, thanks to the hard work of Marla Wilson and Teresa Buckwalter of the High Country Conservancy we signed the final documents placing 200 acres of Valle Mountain along Crab Orchard Creek under conservation easements with the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Along with our dear neighbors, Margaret and Ernest Caudill, who placed 33 acres of their land along Crab Orchard Creek under easements, our waterfalls are now protected for future generations to enjoy.



Bits & Pieces

Our Heritage



VIEW UP THROUGH
THE APPLE ORCHARD OF
AUCHMUTY HALL (LEFT)
AND AUXILLARY HALL

1930s

The following excerpts are from a letter dated May 5, 1931 written to The Woman's Auxiliary at St. Phillip's Church in Durham NC. by the headmistress, Isabele Graves.

My Dear Friends:

As I wrote your Secretary in reply to your request for a letter about my work, I appreciate your remembering me as one of the missionaries from our Diocese of North Carolina. I am glad to write, but it is rather difficult because Valle Crucis is so well known.

To those of you who know all about the work, listening to this letter will be an exercise of patience, which I hope will prove a spiritual benefit.

The Rector of the School is the Rev. Leicester F. Kent, who is well know to the Women's Auxiliary, having been a missionary in Alaska for several years, succeeding the Rev. Frederick Drane as Archdeacon of the Yukon.

Valle Crucis School is a boarding school for girls and a day school for boys and girls. The high school is accredited by the State Department of Education. We have added this year a course in Stenography and Typewriting. If we had money enough we would introduce other vocational courses, because we think the usefulness of the school would thereby be greatly increased.

The school buildings are picturesquely located on the side of Valle Mountain. At the entrance to the school stands the beautiful Holy Cross Church built of stone quarried from the school land a little farther up the mountain. The church was built under the leadership of that tireless worker, The Rev. James Preston Burke, who was for five years the beloved Rector of the School and the Mission. The church was designed by Harold Macklin, Architect of Winston-Salem, N.C. Most of the work was done by local men.

The two school buildings, Auchmuty Hall and Auxiliary Hall, are heated by steam and by hot air, and lighted by electricity and both have running water, hot and cold. Nearly all around the school are apple trees, and they are beautiful to behold in May when covered with pink-and-white blossoms and again in the fall when laden with the red ripe apples, and they usually furnish plenty of apples for our table all winter. Indeed, we are having our own apples to cook now.

This is a home school and we do our own housework. Under the direction of the matron our girls keep the bedrooms and halls clean and in order, and each girl does her own laundry. Women from the neighborhood wash and iron the teachers' clothes and wash the linen, and some of the girls in turn mangle and iron the sheets and pillow-cases and table linen. Under the direction of the housekeeper and dietitian the girls cook the meals, set the tables, wash the dishes, and keep the dining room and kitchen in order. The work schedule changes every three weeks.

The rising bell rings at six o'clock every day and Sunday too. We used to get up

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Continued from page 1

stones used in the construction are believed to have come from over 70 miles away; it is a mystery as to how they moved them to the site. The tomb has stayed dry for 5,000 years (not one leak!) and supports 200,000 pounds of rock and earth that comprise the roof. The people that built the tomb at Newgrange (and it must have been built over several generations) artfully constructed the tomb so that it is perfectly aligned with the sun, allowing the sunlight from the fall equinox to magnificently illuminate the very center of the tomb. That only happens for five days each year. Standing inside the tomb, I could not help but think of how marvelously God makes each of us – with minds and imaginations and hearts and physical bodies that can do what sometimes seems absolutely impossible.

Differing from a vacation, to go on pilgrimage means journeying with an openness to being transformed by what one will experience. This venture into pre-Christian and early Christian Ireland has changed forever the way I relate to God and the way I see the world. I am filled with immense thanksgiving for this gift of sabbatical from our Board of Directors.

—Tom Eshelman
Executive Director

“Wilderness reminds us what it means to be human, what we are connected to rather than what we are separate from.”

—Terry Tempest Williams

“Thank you for such warm hospitality.”

—Katerina Gray
NC Circle of Parents Network

at six-thirty on Sunday, but our Rector has our Church service at nine o'clock so that he can go to a mission at Todd in Ashe County for the service at eleven.

At ten o'clock on Sunday we have our Church school for Holy Cross Mission. I have been a substitute teacher in Sunday School for the past two years and now I have the Bible Class regularly for awhile. Among those present Sunday was one of our dear faithful Churchwomen, her husband, and two of her three grown sons.

I play the organ for the service in the church and for the daily services in the Prayer Room, and I have choir practice for an hour Friday afternoons; the girls in the elementary school are in one section and the high school girls in another.

Sunday afternoon some of the teachers take the girls for a walk. There are three groups.

Miss Bouldin and Miss Smith go to our Mission Sunday School at St. Anthony's Chapel up on Dutch Creek. This was my Sunday afternoon work for seven years, but I gave it up the year we were without a Rector for several months, because my duties were necessarily increased. I used to go in our old buggy drawn by our old horse Ilderim, and I could tell of some interesting experiences, but I shall refrain. Your own Eleanor Simpson was one of our faithful helpers at St. Anthony's. She used to walk with our girl helper and Miss Ricaud rode in the buggy with me that year.

Sunday evenings we have a Song Service for the School in the living hall and I play the hymns.

We do not have school on Monday. Then the girls do their washing and some “special cleaning”. The teachers relax or work as they please.

Some of the teachers attend the Women's Auxiliary every other Monday afternoon. We have a good Auxiliary and the attendance has been specially good this year. Miss Ricaud, our president, is a splendid worker. After Miss Horner died I was president for a number of years, but we have succeeded in getting “rotation in office”, which is better for the Auxiliary. The School used to take care of the church the entire year, but for several years now the women of the Auxiliary have taken that responsibility in the vacation, and this increases their interest.

(Continued in next issue.....)



Come spend
some time on
sacred ground.
*Programs
2006*

PROGRAM DAY: CHOCOLAT FOR LENT

...with the Rev. Jeanne Finan

Friday, March 3, 2006, 10 AM - 3 PM

\$35 includes lunch

Using the themes found in the 2000 Academy Award nominated film *Chocolat*, this retreat day, explores temptation, spiritual growth and transformation/resurrection, offering both spoken and cinematic meditations as well as time for quiet reflection and enjoying the beauty of the landscape at the Valle Crucis Conference Center.

The Rev. Jeanne Finan serves as the Associate Rector at St. Mary of the Hills, Blowing Rock, leads retreats and offers spiritual direction. She is the author of *Remember Your Baptism* (Cowley Publications).

PROGRAM DAY: WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS

...with the Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor

Friday, March 24, 2006, 10 AM - 3 PM

\$35 includes lunch

The word "lent" literally means "to lengthen." This is not a time for guilt and punishment, but is a time to allow the light of Christ to grow in our hearts and souls and minds as the days of the Spring lengthen. On this day we will explore the work of turning away from the forces and habits that bind us and turning toward the new life of resurrection. This turning always involves a dislocation and a sense of the wilderness. We will talk about how we are tempted to avoid our Lenten task as well as how God helps us find our way. Bishop Taylor is the author of several books, a well known speaker and is the 6th Bishop of Western North Carolina.

Program Day:

THE ENNEAGRAM & CONTEMPLATIVE EXPERIENCE

...with the Rev. Bill Edwards

Monday, March 27, 2006. 10 AM - 3 PM

\$35 includes lunch

The enneagram helps us explore natural human characteristics that develop into compulsions. A contemplative awareness of these patterns leads to a humility that is the underlying experience of all spirituality. Those attending this event will discover in the enneagram a spiritual process

for growing from compulsion to contemplation and dividedness to wholeness. Suggestions will be made for prayer and contemplation that will support this process. Even those unfamiliar with the enneagram will find this day speaking to their experiences.

Bill Edwards was the long time rector of Grace Church in Asheville and he is well known in our Diocese. Bill is a much sought after retreat leader on the enneagram.

PROGRAM DAY: APOCALYPSE THEN & NOW!

...with the Rev. Canon Brian Cole

Monday, May 8, 2006, 10 AM - 3 PM

\$35 includes lunch

The Revelation of St. John is a New Testament text that Christians have either ignored or obsessed over with great energy. The current interpretation of Revelation suggested by the *Left Behind* series is only one reading, among many. This day will examine the context for St. John's Revelation, how different interpretations have developed over time and suggestions for how we engage the text now with a sense of hope and not fear.

The Rev. Canon Brian Cole serves as the Sub-dean at All Soul's Cathedral in Asheville NC and is a popular speaker and teacher.

PROGRAM DAY: SPEND A DAY WITH OUR LABYRINTHS

...with Tom Eshelman

Monday, May 15, 2006 - 10 AM - 3 PM

\$35 includes lunch

Learn about the fascinating history of this ancient tool of meditation and prayer as you spend a day walking our indoor and outdoor labyrinth. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring a journal.

CENTERING PRAYER RETREAT

...with the Rev. Thomas Morris, Paul Supina and Joan Hurst

Sunday (starts with dinner), October 1 - Friday (ends after breakfast), October 6, 2006

\$325 includes program, materials, 5 nights lodging and all meals

Due to the nature of this retreat there will be no commuters

This retreat will be limited to the first 18 registrations

This retreat is designed for those who would like a more prolonged experience of centering prayer and who are interested in entering into the more profound levels of spiritual practice in an atmosphere of silence, solitude and community.

Centering prayer is a silent form of prayer that directs a person's attention toward God. It is a prayer form with ancient roots in the mystical and monastic tradition of the Christian faith. The retreat is intended to help persons develop and sustain a regular centering prayer practice.

Nine 20- minute periods of Centering Prayer will be offered daily. Retreat participants will also have opportunities for contemplative worship, instruction in contemplative prayer, walks and hiking around the Conference Center grounds, access to two labyrinths, as well as time for solitude and reflection.

The retreat leaders are the Reverend Thomas Morris, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wilkesboro (336-667-4231), Paul Supina, Coordinator of Contemplative Outreach of Western North Carolina (828-265-5335), and Joan Hurst, Presenter of Contemplative Prayer retreats at The Oratory. All three teach centering prayer and are involved with Contemplative Outreach founded by Father Thomas Keating as a spiritual network committed to living the contemplative dimension of the gospel in everyday life.



“Great Weekend! Thank you!”

— Bert Giles,
Wesley Memorial
United Methodist Church
High Point, NC
who has been coming
to Valle Crucis for
35 years!

Scholarships:

If you wish to apply for a limited number of scholarships which are offered for some of our programs please call for more information.

“...Another wonderful experience. VCCC is ideal for our group. Thanks for everything!”

—John Parcels,
SERMEISS

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

- **Class Size:** We are committed to keeping our class size small as we believe it is in the small group environment that learning and spirituality flourish. Because class sizes are kept small, classes fill quickly. Early registration is encouraged!
- **Price and Room Policies:** Listed prices for programs include room, board, tuition and materials. Most accommodations are double, triple or quadruple occupancy. If you prefer a single room, we will try to accommodate you though we cannot guarantee this until check-in when the final availability of single rooms can be determined. Please notify VCCC in advance if you have any medical needs such as diet or disability accommodations. We are unable to accommodate pets or provide childcare. Smoking is not permitted in any building.
- We appreciate the fact that sometimes things may come up in your busy life that may prevent your attending one of our programs for which you have paid a deposit. In that case we will consider your deposit a donation to our ongoing ministry of hospitality.
- **Meals:** We serve home-cooked, nutritious meals. The fare is hearty. Our kitchen staff will try to accommodate any special dietary needs if they receive 14 days prior notice. If you have any dietary questions, please give us a call.
- **Timing:** Unless otherwise noted, conferences begin with registration and check in at 4:00 p.m. on opening day, followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. They close after the 12 noon lunch on the closing day. To assist our housekeeping staff, we request that you complete your check out prior to lunch closing day.
- **To Register:** A non-refundable, non-transferable deposit of \$50 is required for each course except for single day programs when a non-refundable payment in full is required. Please mail your check with the completed registration form.
- **Directions:** You will receive directions to the conference center with your registration confirmation. We are easy to find and are located just 9 miles outside of Boone, NC (2 hours from Winston Salem; 2-1/2 hours from Charlotte).
- **Commuters:** A limited number of spaces are available in each program for commuters not requiring lodging. The fee does include three meals per day as mealtime is an important part of the program's fellowship. Those who choose to commute are encouraged to make a commitment to full participation in all meals and community activities.

PROGRAM REGISTRATION

(Feel free to copy this form but please use one form per person)

Event for which you are registering: _____

Starting Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Your Faith Tradition: _____

** I would like to room with _____

___ I will not be staying at the Conference Center but will commute.

___ I am coming for a Program Day and will not need lodging.

(if you wish to arrive the night before a Program Day, call to check on room availability.)

Enclosed: ___ Nonrefundable, nontransferable deposit of \$ _____

___ Full payment of \$ _____

Return this complete form with your check (payable to “VCCC”) to the address below. You will receive a registration confirmation with any further information necessary.

VCCC, PO Box 654, Valle Crucis, NC 28691

** *When requesting a specific room mate(s), registration forms and deposits should be mailed together.*



VALLE CRUCIS CONFERENCE CENTER

AT THE HISTORIC MISSION SCHOOL

Telephone: 828-963-4453
Facsimile: 828-963-8806
E-Mail: vccc@highsouth.com
Web Page: www.highsouth.com/vallecrucis

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Valle Crucis Conference Center is to inspire, by loving example and service, those who break bread with us and share in the quest for spiritual renewal, Christian community and stewardship of this sacred place.

The Right Reverend G. Porter Taylor
Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina

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VALLE CRUCIS
CONFERENCE CENTER

Post Office Box 654
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Address Service Requested



EYC - FALL YOUTH CONFERENCE 2005
ENJOYING A MEAL IN THE DINING ROOM

Good News

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
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